



The NET

Sharing fruits of faith in Derry Diocese

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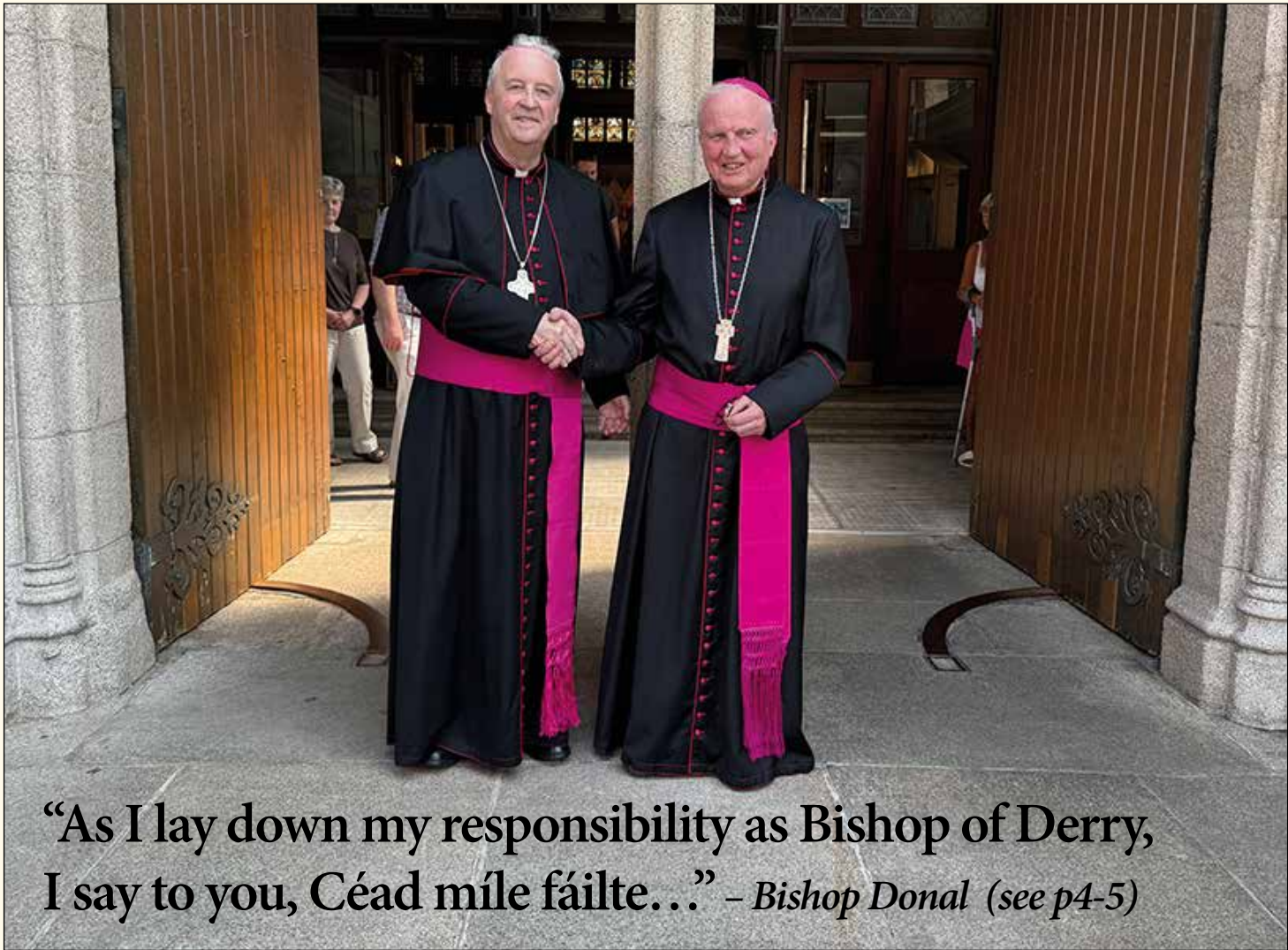
Welcoming Bishop Donal - Kilrea



Welcoming Bishop Michael - St Eugene's



Garden for Our Lady - Draperstown



“As I lay down my responsibility as Bishop of Derry, I say to you, Céad míle fáilte...” – *Bishop Donal* (see p4-5)

Bishop Donal, outside St Eugene's Cathedral, welcoming Bishop Michael Router as Bishop-elect of the Derry Diocese.



Cathedral Club - St Eugene's



Corpus Christi Procession - Gortin



LIFE Camp - Three Patrons



Derry Youth at Parables Talk - Dublin

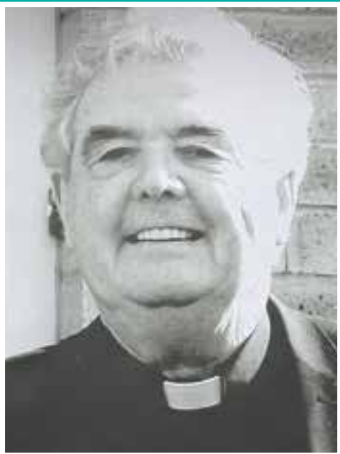
People in focus



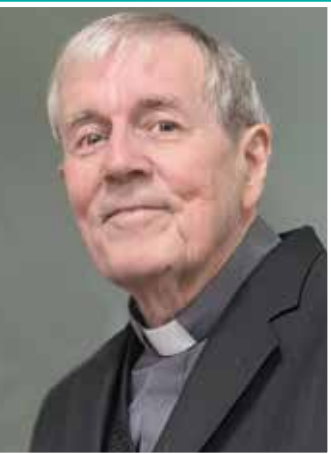
Bishop Michael Router
- Bishop-elect of Derry



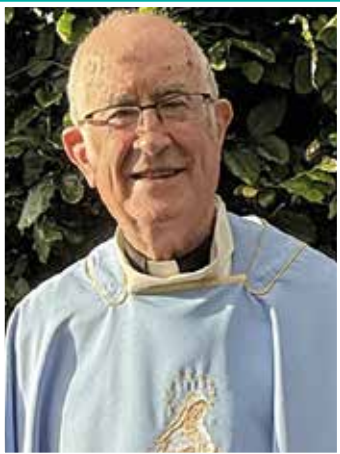
Fr Francis Bradley -
Rouskey & Buncrana



Fr Jack Farrell,
Coleraine & Clonmany



Fr Peter McCawille SMA -
Dregish



Msgr Joseph Donnelly,
Ballinascreen & Steelstown

Also featuring: Young Writers section; American seminarian in Three Patrons; St Eugene's Choral Scholar Scheme; Cathedral & Long Tower LIFE Camps; Andrea Begley's Coleraine faith talk; Fr John Forbes' Poetry Book Launch; Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage; Irish Mass at Granaghan Mass Rock; Irish Section; Celebrating milestone ordination anniversaries; Children's Catechism Club; Vocations News; Features; Parish Post-its & Diocesan Diary; Quiz... and much more...

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The NET

Sharing the fruits of the faith in the Derry Diocese

Contacting us:

If you have a story that you would like to share or an event you would like covered by The Net, just drop an email to editorthenet15@gmail.com or ring/text 07809292852

Bishop Donal reflects on the Pope’s July and August prayer intentions for respect for human life and for evangelisation in the city:

“Let us pray for the respect and protection of human life in all its stages, recognising it as a gift from God.” (July)
“Let us pray that in large cities, often marked by anonymity and loneliness, we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.” (August)

Pope Leo wants to let the message of Christ renew the face of the earth

SINCE the beginning of his time as our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV has not shied away from tackling difficult issues. He has spoken strongly on war, the abuse of power and the issue of refugees. And he has been consistent with his strong, clear, gentle voice.

The two summer themes of prayer for his intentions are very grounded in concrete realities of the 21st century – the widespread threat to human life and the need to bring the hope of the Gospel to our cities, where most people now tend to live. And there is a connection between these two themes.

Human life is threatened at all stages. War and violence are frighteningly widespread. Abortion rates continue to grow both in Northern Ireland and in the Republic. Official statistics indicate that almost 40 babies are aborted on the island of Ireland every day of the year. Bishop Kevin Doran pointed out that the over 10,000 abortions per year in the Republic is equivalent to what would fill about 300 classrooms. In the Republic, the fertility rate is 1.5 children per woman. That falls far below the fertility rate of 2.1 per woman, which is needed for the population to

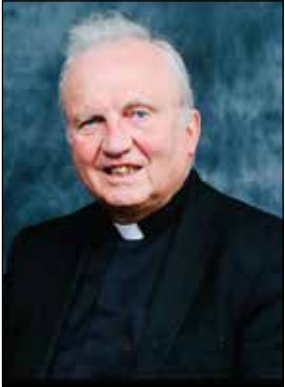
replace itself in the long run. There is also the possibility of legislation to facilitate what is euphemistically called ‘assisted dying’ (euthanasia).

All of this suggests a culture that has fallen out of love with life. Pope Leo asks us to pray that we can move away from what has been called ‘a culture of death’ to a culture that appreciates human life at all its stages.

Another feature of our modern world in Europe is the fact that cities are growing, and rural areas are being depopulated. It is estimated that 74% of Europeans live

in urban areas. In Ireland, organisations such as the GAA are very concerned that many rural clubs are unable to field teams. There is the irony that urban life, where people are living closer together, tends to be lonelier and more anonymous than rural areas, where populations may be more scattered! Isolation can diminish a person’s sense of their own worth. Loneliness can kill.

In an increasingly anonymous world where many live online, Pope Leo challenges us to find ways to proclaim the Gospel of life by building communities.



Bishop Donal McKeown

For many people, belonging is part of believing. After all, faith is not just about accepting that God exists. Faith in Jesus

Eucharistic Adoration in the Diocese

Aghyaran: Thursdays, 10.30am–12 noon.	Sundays, 2-10 pm, St Mary’s Oratory.
Ardstraw West & Castlederg: Fridays, 10.30am –12 noon, St Patrick’s Church.	Cappagh: Wednesdays, 8 -9pm, concluding with Night Prayer; and Sundays, 3.30-6.30 pm, in Christ the King, Strathroy.
Badoney Lower: Tuesdays, after 12 noon Mass until 5 pm, St Patrick’s Gortin; and Wednesdays, Mass 7.30 pm, Adoration and Confession until 9 pm, St Mary’s, Rouskey.	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, Craigbane.
Badoney Upper: Wednesdays, after 7.30 pm evening Mass until 9 pm, St Patrick’s Cranagh.	Clonmany: Tuesdays, 7.30 -8.30 pm, the Oratory of the Assumption, Ballyliffin; Wednesdays, 3-4 pm, St Columbcille Village, Cleagh;
Ballinascreen: First Mondays, from 12 noon-7.30 pm, in Holy Rosary Church, Draperstown.	Fridays, 3-6 pm (Rosary at 5.40 pm), St Michael’s Church, Urris.
Banagher: Thursdays, 10.30-11.30 am, St Mary’s Church, Altinure, and Fridays, 10 –11am, St Joseph’s Church, Fincairn.	Coleraine: Wednesdays, in St John’s Church, 2-4 pm, with Rosary at 3:45 pm.
Bellaghy: Every Friday, from 10 am until recitation of Rosary at 7.30 pm, in St Mary’s Church.	Creggan: Sundays 1.30 pm-6 pm; Mondays 10.30 am - 7 pm; Tue - Sat 10.30 am - 12 pm, Divine Mercy Chapel.
Buncrana: Mondays, Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 6am-10pm, Fridays, 6 am-10 pm and	Donagheady: First Fridays after Mass until 12 noon, St

Mary’s Church, Aughabrack.	7pm, St Mary’s Drumagarnner.
Donaghmore: Tuesdays, 10.30 am-7.30 pm, St Mary’s Church, Sessiaghoneill; Thursdays, after 9.15 am Mass, St Patrick’s Church, Crossroads.	Concludes with Benediction.
Drumquin: Wednesdays, 6 pm until Mass at 7.30 pm.	Lavey: Fridays, after 9.15 am Mass until 5 pm.
Drumragh: Wednesdays, following morning Mass, Sacred Heart Church until 5.30 pm.	Leckpatrick: Wednesdays from 8.15 am–5 pm.
Dungiven: Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 9am-6 pm, and Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9 am-8 pm, in Adoration Chapel.	Lifford (Murlog): 9.30 am - 12.30 pm
Errigal: Mondays, after the 10 am Mass until 2.30 pm, St Mary’s Church, Ballerin.	Limavady: First Sunday of each month from 3-5 pm in Christ the King Church (with Confessions), and on Thursdays in St Mary’s Church, from 1-6 pm.
Fahan: Fridays after 10am Mass, St Mura’s Parish Church.	Magilligan: Wednesdays, 3-7 pm; First Sundays, 3-6 pm, St Aidan’s Church.
Greencastle (Tyrone): Thursdays, 6-10 pm, St Patrick’s Church.	Melmount: Mondays, after 10 am Mass until 6 pm.
Greenlough: Thursdays, 9am–5 pm, St Oliver Plunkett’s Church.	Moville: Mondays, 2-9 pm, and Wednesdays, 6-9 pm, St Pius X Church.
Iskaheen: Tuesdays, from after 10 am Mass until 2 pm, St Patrick’s Church.	Newtownstewart: Thursdays, 6.30-7.30 pm, Oratory of Mary, Mother of God.
Kilrea: Mondays, 12 noon -	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.
Strabane (Camus): Every day from 10.30 am-1 pm in the Adoration Chapel (Oasis of Peace), at the back of the Church.
St Columba’s Long Tower: Wednesdays, after 10 am Mass until 7.30 pm Mass.
St Eugene’s Cathedral: Sundays, 3-6 pm, and Tuesdays, 10.30 am-7.20 pm.
Three Patrons: Tuesdays from 11 am-7 pm in Our Lady’s Chapel, St Joseph’s Church, Galliagh; Wednesdays from 10.30 am-7 pm, in St Patrick’s Church, Pennyburn, and seven days a week in the Adoration Room in St Brigid’s Church, Carnhill, from 8 am until 8pm.
Urney & Castlefin: Tuesdays, 12 noon-8 pm, St Anthony’s Chapel.
Waterside: Mondays, 11.30 am-12.30 pm; Wednesdays, 6.30-8.30 pm, Strathfoyle; Thursdays, 1-6 pm, Immaculate Conception Church; Fridays, 1-6 pm, St Columb’s Church.

Send any additions/amendments via: editorthenet15@gmail.com or 07809292852.



The NET

Sharing the fruits of the faith in the Derry Diocese

Supporting us:

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

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

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

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The ministry of

The NET

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

A letter of appreciation from Lourdes Pilgrimage team...

“Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with You” (Lk 1:28)



Dear Derry Diocesan Pilgrims to Lourdes,

WE hope this message finds you well and filled with fond memories of our recent pilgrimage. We are writing to extend our heartfelt thanks to each of you for your contributions, dedication, and presence throughout this spiritual journey.

To our pilgrims, your dedication, openness, and willingness to explore this spiritual pilgrimage created a truly uplifting and reflective experience for everyone involved. Your participation brought warmth and inspiration to the entire group.

To our staff, your tireless support behind the scenes ensured the pilgrimage ran smoothly and safely. Your organization, careful planning, and attention to detail allowed participants to engage fully in moments of reflection, prayer, and fellowship.

To Bishop Donal and our clergy, your prayers, wisdom, and meaningful reflections added profound depth to the pilgrimage.

Your presence nurtured faith and understanding, giving lasting significance to this collective experience.

To our youth pilgrims, your energy, joy, smiles and openness to God's voice brought a fresh light to our pilgrimage. You reminded us that faith is alive, vibrant, and ever-growing. Your courage to step away from the familiar and embrace this sacred adventure to Lourdes has inspired us all.

To our youth leaders, your guidance, encouragement, and example strengthened the sense of community and belonging throughout the pilgrimage journey. Your leadership helped forge connections among participants and fostered unity at every stage.

To our music ensemble and choir, your beautiful voices and dedication brought an additional layer of spiritual richness to our pilgrimage journey. Through both song and accompaniment, you lifted hearts, deepened reflection, and strengthened the sense of togetherness. Your

performances not only enhanced our gatherings but also created moments of joy, reverence, and communal inspiration that will be remembered fondly by all participants.

To our medical team, your quiet vigilance, compassionate care, and tireless service ensured that we could travel with peace of mind. You were a living example of love in action, tending to needs seen and unseen, and we are deeply grateful for your dedication. May Almighty God bless all your generous hands and hearts.

Together, each of you contributed uniquely to the success and impact of our pilgrimage to Lourdes. Your presence, commitment, and care turned this pilgrimage journey into



Continued from p2

involves building up the Body of Christ in all its diversity. St John Paul II emphasised that we need to develop a 'spirituality of communion', that is, a way of being church that reaches out and include, a way of living which - in the words of Pope Francis - builds bridges and not walls.

However, in urban areas, where churchgoers have a range of accessible churches, communities may take forms that are different to what happen in the country areas. Church communities can be remarkably diverse - with all ages, many races and people of different economic possibilities. Parish premises in the cities and towns can be used to provide opportunities for people to gather from a wider geographical area.

But Pope Leo has not just been concerned about combating loneliness. He has encouraged us to not be divided by those who promote racism or sectarianism. We cannot say that we love Jesus, who has the message of eternal life, if are misled by a message that we must hate some groups of people who are different - just because they are different. Communities with a clear sense of pride in themselves

are normally very well able to welcome and celebrate diversity. Those from different cultures and traditions are made in God's image and likeness and should never be demonised or labelled.

And this emphasis on diversity and community brings me back to the Holy Father's message on loving life. Communities can support their members to cope with the pain of being human and to love life even when the going gets tough. Loneliness and isolation can make it much harder for people to keep going when illness or death strike.

Pope Leo - like his predecessors - wants to let the message of Christ renew the face of the earth. In 'Magnifica Humanitas' (MH), he wrote about two biblical stories. The fragmentation at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11) was the result of arrogance. The prophet Nehemiah prayerfully wanted to rebuild Jerusalem and bring the people together. In MH (par 210), the Holy Father calls us to build the civilisation of love. That involves choosing to resist the temptation toward arrogant individualism by respecting life and building community.

That gives us much to pray about - and to put into action

not only a meaningful spiritual experience but also a lasting memory for all involved that will remain in our hearts.

Each prayer you offered, each kindness you shared, and each moment of reflection along your pilgrim journey in Lourdes has left a lasting imprint - not only on the places you visited, but on the hearts of all who walked beside you with devotion, unity, and hope.

You have reminded us all that the Derry Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes is more than travel; it is a unique sacred weaving together of souls, stories, and purpose. Of the 'Yes' that changed everything for Our Lady. Of the 'Yes' that changed everything for St Bernadette. Of our 'Yes' that will change everything for us.

May the blessings and grace you all sought return to you in abundance. May the peace of Christ you carried be a light to others. And may the memories of this year's 2026 pilgrim journey to Lourdes continue to inspire and bless your days ahead.

Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us.

St Bernadette, pray for us.

May Almighty God go with us all.

With sincere gratitude and blessings,
The Lourdes Pilgrimage Office
Team 2026.



New Shepherd announced for Diocese...

With Pope Leo XIV accepting his resignation, Bishop Donal extends...

Céad míle fáilte for Bishop-elect of Derry



IT has been an eventful summer for the Derry Diocese, with Our Lady very much at the centre of it all. July started off with the annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to the Marian Shrine of Lourdes, in France, and August began with the Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage to the Marian Shrine of Fatima, in Portugal. And, in between, on the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, came the big announcement that the Diocese has been waiting on since Bishop Donal reached the age of retirement on his 75th birthday over a year ago...that a new bishop has been appointed by Pope Leo XIV.

As word spread of the imminent announcement in St Eugene's Cathedral on the morning of

Thursday, July 16, members of the clergy and the laity gathered in the Mother Church of the Diocese for the occasion. While there were tears as people thanked Bishop Donal for his leadership, saying that they would miss him, there was also a warm welcome for the newly appointed shepherd, Bishop Michael Router, who has served as auxiliary bishop of Armagh since 2019.

The 61-year-old native of Virginia, in Co Cavan, will be installed as Bishop of Derry on Sunday, September 20, at 3 pm in the Cathedral. Until then, Bishop Donal has been appointed as the Apostolic Administrator, maintaining the essential

governance of the Diocese.

The statement that Pope Leo XIV had accepted Bishop Donal's resignation as Bishop of Derry, and nominated Bishop Michael as the new Guardian of the See of St Eugene, was made by the Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland, His Excellency Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor, whose resignation as Papal Nuncio had also been accepted by the Holy Father a few days earlier, on July 11.

Introducing the Bishop-elect of Derry to those gathered in the Cathedral, Bishop Donal went on to assure him: "Taking on a new task can be a daunting experience, but, as a man of prayer following a divine calling, your motto reminds us that it is done with the inspiration 'into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit'. And I can assure you of a very hearty welcome from the laity, Religious and clergy of this diocese, as well as wider civic society. There is a long-standing tradition here of the churches being seen as valuable partners in civic society – and of great collaboration between the various religious traditions in the area."

Experience

Highlighting the "great experience and wisdom" that Bishop Michael brings with him to the Diocese, he noted: "As a Cavan man, you grew up with the experience of life in a border county and for the last seven years you have ministered in a cross-border diocese. Your priesthood began as a curate in a parish – the place where the heart of diocesan priestly ministry is to be found. Parish ministry has remained an important part of your priesthood."

"In addition, you have experience in education, as both a teacher and in support bodies for education. This has given you an appreciation

of the vibrant contribution of education to building a hopeful future for young people."

Referring to his experience of diocesan administration, both in his native Kilmore Diocese and in the Archdiocese of Armagh, Bishop Donal went on to remark: "A key part of your pastoral outreach has been in the area of Adult Faith Formation and Pastoral Renewal. This is an urgent area of ongoing development in Derry, and you will bring great wisdom to that mission here."

"As Auxiliary Bishop since 2019, you have experience both of the diocesan Church and the national Church at its various levels. And you bring one more valuable talent. You have an interest in Gaelic Football and Basketball, and have played and coached both of those!"

"I firmly believe," he concluded, "that your arrival for this new chapter in the more than 850-year history of the Diocese of Derry comes at a turning point, when your wide range of skills, experience and insights will be invaluable. We are all called to be missionaries of the third millennium, in a context where there is a deep hunger for good news. Many are crying out for compassion and hope, but we have positive and encouraging signs of green shoots here in this diocese and in other places."

"As I lay down my responsibility as Bishop of Derry, I say to you, 'Céad míle fáilte, is beannaithe an té atá ag teacht in ainm an Tiarna' - Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. The diocesan church in Derry is waiting for your leadership. Today, I thank God for your willingness to respond positively to the Lord's call."

"As you prepare to walk among us as our shepherd in a number of weeks, 'Bail ó Dhia ort agus ar do shaothar inár measc' - God bless you and your work among us."



New Shepherd announced for Diocese...

Placing his journey with the Derry Diocese under the protection of Our Lady of Mount Carmel...

Bishop Michael Router sustained by belief that God is in control



DEEPLY aware of his own limitations in processing his nomination by the Holy Father to serve as Bishop of Derry, Most Reverend Michael Router found himself returning to the words that have guided him for the past seven years of his episcopal ministry – ‘In Manus Tuas Domine’ – into your hands, O Lord.

Explaining, in his statement following the announcement, that his episcopal motto captures the belief that it is God who is in control, Bishop Michael said: “It is a belief that has sustained me through many unexpected turns in my ministry and it sustains me again today as I begin my journey in this great diocese.”

Going through the emotions of shock, surprise and delight, the Bishop-elect of Derry said that he that he had heard so much good about the Diocese and described the appointment as “an immense honour.”

“The reputation of Derry,” he stated, “resonates across Ireland and the world as a vibrant place of culture and historical heritage that is famous for its peace building, ecumenism music, drama and poetry. As a keen sports enthusiast, I look forward to living in a Diocese that is the home of such an iconic football club as Derry City and is, of course, a hotbed of GAA and other sports across Derry, Donegal and Tyrone. As a lifelong Bristol City fan, I don’t think I will annoy too many local football fans, but being a Cavan GAA supporter could engender some debate during the height of the Gaelic Football season.”

Noting that the Diocese of Derry is a Church “shaped by the faith of generations since the time of St Patrick, St Eugene and St Columcille, nourished by the witness of so many people, sustained through times of persecution and hardship and strengthened by communities whose love of Christ has endured despite every challenge,” Bishop Michael said: “It is a privilege beyond words to be called to serve the priests, religious and lay faithful of this diocese. I hope that I am granted the strength, health and wisdom to live up to this calling.”

He then acknowledged Bishop Donal’s years of ministry in leading the Diocese “with courage and generosity”, remarking: “He has guided the Diocese of Derry through a period of significant social, cultural and ecclesial change. I thank him sincerely for his faithful service, and I assure him of my prayers and support as he enters a new chapter in his own life.”

Bishop Michael went on to express gratitude to Derry native, Archbishop Eamon Martin, with whom he served in the Archdiocese of Armagh for the past seven years, “His encouragement and pastoral wisdom have helped me enormously. I have learned much from his deep faith, his calm leadership and his unwavering commitment to the mission of the Church, and for this I sincerely thank him.”

He continued: “I also thank the priests and people of the Archdiocese of Armagh who made me feel so at home over the past seven years, with the warmth of

their friendship and the depth of their faith.”

Reflecting on the pathways of his life up to this moment, the 61-year-old recalled: “I was born and raised in Virginia, Co Cavan, in the parish of Lurgan, the most southern parish in Ulster. A long way from Malin Head! My parents, Tony and Nora, my sisters, Breda and Martina, the priests, religious and teachers who shaped my early years, gave me an appreciation of the goodness that exists in ordinary parish life. Looking back now, I realise how profoundly those early experiences formed my vocation.

True strength

“During almost four decades of priesthood, I have been privileged to serve in schools, parishes, diocesan pastoral ministry and in episcopal leadership. Everywhere I have served, in the Diocese of Kilmore, the Archdiocese of Dublin, and in the Archdiocese of Armagh, I have encountered people of remarkable faith and generosity. Those experiences have taught me that while systems and structures are important, the true strength of the Church has always been found in the faith of the people. Thankfully, that faith remains very much alive today. Yet, we must also be honest about the challenges and difficulties before us.”

“The Church in Ireland,” he stated, “finds herself in a very different position from that which it held even a generation ago. We no longer occupy the centre of public life. Many people, particularly younger generations, no longer identify naturally with the institutional Church. The wounds caused by abuse and failures of leadership continue to cause severe pain and upset for many, and we must never cease asking forgiveness, listening with humility and working patiently towards healing and reconciliation.

“Alongside these realities, we face declining numbers of clergy, changing parish structures and the onerous task of passing on the faith in an increasingly secular culture. These realities cannot simply be ignored, nor can they be solved by nostalgia for a past that cannot return.

“Managing change is perhaps one of the greatest responsibilities entrusted to Church leaders today. But change is not simply about reorganising parishes. It is about conversion. It is about asking ourselves what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church at this moment in history. For this reason, I believe that synodality is not simply another programme or administrative initiative. It is the way in which the Holy Spirit is inviting the Church to renew herself in our times and grow into a deeper relationship with Christ.

“When Pope Leo XIV first greeted the world from the balcony of St Peter’s Basilica, he reminded us that ‘we want to be a Synodal Church.’ Those simple words express something profoundly important. Synodality is not primarily about meetings or committees. It is about learning once again to walk, pray, listen and discern together.”

Bishop Michael added: “As your bishop, I will minister among you not with all the answers but with a willingness to listen, especially to those who have become distant from the Church, those who feel hurt or disappointed, and those who continue to search for meaning. Our task is to find common ground and a way to walk together with confidence in the power of Jesus Christ working through us. If the Church is truly to renew itself, and become more effective, then she must deepen the bonds of communion, encourage greater participation and recommit herself to its mission of saving souls, by bringing people into a deeper, more authentic, relationship with Jesus Christ.

“This mission has social consequences. It cannot be removed from the daily life and concerns of people. Throughout my ministry, I have spoken often about the devastating effects of drug and alcohol addiction within families and communities. Addiction continues to destroy lives quietly and relentlessly. It is one of the great social injustices of our time.

Addiction

“While every community suffers, socially disadvantaged areas often carry a disproportionate burden. The Church must continue to stand alongside families affected by addiction, to support recovery, to advocate for effective rehabilitation services and to encourage policies that place the dignity of the person before every other consideration. The measure of any society is found in the way it treats its weakest members.

“The dignity and sacredness of life from conception to natural death must also be upheld and promoted. There cannot be peace at any level, socially, domestically or personally, unless we respect and defend life in all its stages.”

Noting that the people of Derry were particularly aware that peace is precious, Bishop Michael said: “The peace we enjoy today was not achieved easily. It came through extraordinary courage, sacrifice, forgiveness and perseverance. Yet peace is never something that can simply be inherited. Every generation must choose it anew.

“The wounds left by conflict continue to affect many families and communities. Healing remains unfinished. Reconciliation remains an ongoing task. The Church has

an essential role in helping people to build bridges rather than walls, to seek understanding rather than division and to ensure that future generations inherit not only peace, but a culture capable of sustaining peace.”

He went on to highlight the importance of the global picture, saying: “On this day, 81 years ago, the very first nuclear bomb was detonated. It was, and it is, a sad reminder to us all of our capability for self-destruction and of the evil that we can inflict on each other. Our world today is as strife-ridden and unstable as it has been since the end of the Second World War. The devastating use of technology in warfare, the concentration of power in the hands of an ever-smaller circle of wealthy elites, and the rise of political extremism, that often scapegoats the poorest and most vulnerable people, has led to this situation. It is imperative that we individuals and as a community continue to call out injustice, inequality and discrimination, wherever it occurs, or else we will descend into a world of chaos and hopelessness.”

With it being the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Bishop Michael extended good wishes to the Carmelites in Termonbacca, and all the religious across the diocese, who he looks forward to meeting in the coming months.

He added: “As we begin this journey, we place ourselves under the protection of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Mary teaches us what true discipleship looks like. In her own life, she listened before she spoke herself. She trusted when the future was uncertain. She remained faithful beneath the Cross. She gathered with the disciples in prayer as they awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit. She continues to accompany the Church on every

stage of her pilgrimage. May She accompany the Diocese of Derry, our country and our world in the years ahead.

“I know from experience that I can do nothing worthwhile without the power of the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire me. So, for a moment now we will pause in prayer and call upon the Spirit to be with us today and every day, so that the Lord who has begun His good work among us will bring it to completion.”

Holy Spirit

Bishop Michael then prayed: “Be present with us, O Holy Spirit, for it is in your name that we have gathered here today. In the challenging and uncertain times ahead, we ask you to help us in all our affairs, enter into our conversations and instruct us in how we should act. Let it be you, first of all, who inspires all our ideas and interactions.

“May you, who love justice, help us to keep justice and charity at the forefront of our thoughts. Grant also that we may act always with wisdom and prudence. As we walk the road together, may the Holy Spirit open our hearts to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and help us to recognise Jesus Christ in the breaking of bread.

“Jesus is the One who breaks down the barriers we often build between us. May the Spirit open our eyes to His presence and help us to share with our sisters and brothers the good news that He is alive and active among us. Keep us, by the gift of your grace, in harmony with Your will, so that we may live as one with You, who with the Father and the Son, live and reign, God for ever and ever. Amen.

“Our Lady of Mount Carmel, pray for us, St Patrick, pray for us, St Eugene, pray for us, St Columcille, pray for us.”



Derry youth journey to Dublin for inspiring encounter with Fr Mike Schmitz

by Bethany Doherty



ON Monday, July 20, a group of youth - and young at heart - from all across the Derry Diocese, headed off on the road to Dublin to join over a thousand other young people from across the island of Ireland for a special evening Mass, followed by a night of reflection with Fr Mike Schmitz, American priest and digital evangelist.

After a wonderful journey down, socialising and chatting about our favourite videos and ways to watch/listen to Fr Mike, we made it to a packed St Kevin's Church, on Harrington Street. The crowds in the church really spiked our enthusiasm for being part of such a special celebration. The

musicians and choir made up of young people from all over Ireland, many of whom sang together at the Jubilee for Youth last year in Rome, were fantastic.

Many from our group were privileged to sit right at the front of the church, and we were especially proud to have Sarah O'Hagan, from the Parish of Desertmartin, represent our Diocese by reading a Prayer of the Faithful during the Mass.

One moment that was particularly moving was when Fr Mike began his homily and spoke about a "full circle moment", explaining that the priests who had taught him growing up had all

been from Ireland, and that he was so grateful that he could come to Ireland and have this opportunity to serve where the men came from who once served him.

After a beautiful liturgy, we then made our way outside the church, where many socialised and reunited with others from across the multiple dioceses represented as we made the short walk to the national stadium.

Fr Mike spoke about five different parables in a profoundly engaging way. In the Parable of the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin, he reminded us that Jesus is saying to us through this, "when you are lost, and you believe that you're nothing special, you are relentlessly pursued." He also talked about how Confession is not a place of shame and defeat but a place of victory - and not victory for us, the victory is actually The Lord's, as this was the whole reason He came to Earth; to die on the Cross for our sins to be forgiven!

Fr Mike also talked about the idea that some have that we can just drift to Heaven, saying: "Life is not a cruise ship, it's a battleship",

encouraging everyone to remain vigilant against the evil one who seeks to steal what is sown in our hearts. We must work, sacrifice and serve The Lord with everything that we have and with our whole hearts. As St Paul says, "Run so as to win."

Then, in a Q&A session, Fr Mike answered some questions that were, again, very insightful. We were filled to the brim with food for thought!

It is safe to say, from the standing ovation given at the end, that everyone in the stadium came away deeply inspired to go out and spread the Gospel message, and motivated to keep fighting the good fight of faith where God has placed us right now in our lives. We returned home with full and grateful hearts to God for a fantastic day of fellowship and renewal.

Another highlight of the day was seeing the newly appointed Bishop for our diocese, Bishop Michael Router there, who was delighted to see Derry youth there and stopped for a chat with us.



Draperstown school's 'Garden for Our Lady' features in 'Sacred Spaces' booklet

by Corinne Coyle

IT was with great pleasure that St Mary's PS, Draperstown, welcomed Dr Aidan Donaldson and Dominic Donnelly, representing the Down & Connor Catholic Schools' Support Service, to celebrate the publication of their latest booklet, 'Sacred Spaces'.

We are especially proud that our beautiful 'Garden for Our Lady' is featured in this publication, recognising it as a place of prayer, reflection and inspiration for our school community.

Located within the garden area, at the entrance to our Nurture Nook, the garden represents the source of nurture and care that lies at the heart of our school.

The seeds of this special space were sown in 2021, when our

Building Supervisor, Nuala, worked with the children in the two sacramental classes to create a gift for Mary during the month of May. Together, they transformed a small overgrown plot into a sacred space of peace and reflection.

Our inspiration came from Felicity Surridge's book, 'A Garden for Our Lady - Reviving the Ancient Tradition of Mary Gardens', which helped us to appreciate the significance and beauty of Mary Gardens.

Faith is central to life at St Mary's and is reflected in our school values, our relationships and the choices we make each day. "We have faith" proudly stands as a core value as you enter our building, reminding us that faith is active

and lived out by how we care for one another and our community.

Our Garden for Our Lady provides a quiet space where our children and staff can pause, reflect and connect with their faith, helping us to remain grounded in our values and guided by our beliefs.

Sincere thanks to Aidan and Dominic for taking the time to visit St Mary's, and for the important work that they do in recognising and promoting the enduring value of Catholic education and its vital role in nurturing faith, belonging and community.

Reflecting on the visit to St Mary's, Dr Donaldson said: "On behalf of myself, Mr Donnelly, and the Down & Connor Catholic

Schools' Support Service, we wish to thank Ms Coyle and all of her staff for the wonderful welcome and time spent at St Mary's. It was simply joyful, uplifting and inspirational.

"In particular, we thank Nuala and young Ethan, who was a perfect guide and fantastic ambassador for the school.

"The story of 'Our Lady's Garden' in Draperstown has encouraged many other schools throughout Ireland to follow the example of St Mary's Primary School and to create their own sacred spaces, connecting school and parish.

"All at St Mary's PS deserve great credit for their creativity and initiative. You really have planted seeds in the hearts of many."



Casey Burgess, a seminarian for the Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire, USA, who was on a pastoral assignment at Three Patrons Parish, Derry from June to July, shares his vocation story...

God knows me and calls me by name



American seminarian, Casey Burgess, currently at the North American College, in Rome

“FOR God knows me and calls me by name...” Thus begins a prayer of St John Henry Newman that my mother had taped to the windowsill over our kitchen sink. It remained there many years, wrinkled by splashes of dishwater, and although I don’t remember making much effort to pray it, its words sunk in. It continues: “God has created me to do Him some definite service.” I have always had a sense that, in God’s good order of the world, everyone has their place, and I wanted to know mine.

I was raised in a Mass-going Catholic family, but there was nothing spectacular about our devotion. My own personal faith woke up, so to speak, at age 15 when I learned about the Protestant

Reformation in school. Catholic schools are rare in my area, and most schools teach religious history from a secular perspective with traces of America’s Protestant roots.

I saw the drastic effects of religious convictions on the course of world history, and this convinced me that religion is not a matter of personal belief, but of the most important truth. I didn’t want to be wrong, and as I evaluated the conflicting messages I was being taught, I was soon convinced of the truth of the Catholic faith. I began to meet people who lived this truth, who sought Christ and His Kingdom before all else and were deeply joyful as a result. I soon knew that I wanted to direct the rest of my life toward God, the fullness of Truth

and Love, and to help others do the same.

With this desire, I sought the purpose that Newman’s prayer promised for me. As I progressed through school and decisions approached, I wanted someone who, knowing me and the needs of the world, would show me my place in it. I got lots of suggestions, but nothing seemed to fit.

At 18, I entered university despite not having chosen a degree programme, which is relatively common in the US. I tentatively began studying history, psychology, and philosophy, but as I returned for my second year, I was increasingly worried that I was on the wrong track entirely. Externally, everything was going well: I had good grades and good friends; I was growing in my faith in the university’s Catholic campus ministry; and I had a good girlfriend. For, seemingly, no good reason, I just knew something wasn’t right.

I had thought of priesthood once before, at age 17, but I had quickly put it out of my mind. Suddenly, it returned and remained, quiet but steady. At first, I had no desire to even consider it, but it wouldn’t go away. Whenever I turned my mind to it, it grew more persistent. I told my closest friends, half hoping that they would call the idea crazy, but they supported it.

Discomfort

As I learned the theology of vocations, especially of the call to priesthood, everything lined up with my experience. It explained my otherwise unexplainable discomfort with the current direction of my life. Further, it explained so many of my desires: to teach; to lead people to God; to serve the place I come from; to be God’s instrument in reaching whoever He wanted to reach.

I had wanted to be directed by

someone who knows me well, and God was answering this prayer Himself! Soon, I wanted to be a priest, and it was as if I had always – unknowingly – wanted it.

I left school and worked for two years, first mowing the grass at a golf course, then as a parish janitor. I found a priest to give me spiritual direction and guide me through my discernment, and I began helping with the youth group and liturgical ministries. I prayed more regularly, especially in Eucharistic Adoration and through St Ignatius’s Spiritual Exercises. Many conversations and events confirmed the call.

Finally, as I was on the verge of deciding to apply, I went to Mass and heard the Gospel account of the feeding of the five thousand. Jesus saw the crowds following Him and was “moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd” (Mk 6:34). Even though He was seeking rest with His disciples, His compassion moved Him to teach them and feed them with multiplied loaves and fish. This famous miracle began with Jesus’s heart being moved for His people. As I heard it, my heart was moved too, and I wanted to share in Jesus’s shepherdly care for His flock. The first intercession that day was: “For a positive response from all those called to shepherd God’s faithful.” Checkmate.

I completed my fourth year of seminary formation this spring, and I have three remaining before priestly ordination. My seminary story could be even longer than my story of getting there, but that’s for another day! In short, God has proven to me that He has created me with a purpose, and that seeking Him and His Kingdom does indeed bring deep, lasting peace and joy.

Everyone has a vocation, whether it is to consecrated religious life, the priesthood, marriage, or consecrated single life. But before

John Henry Cardinal Newman Prayer

For God knows me and calls me by my name...
God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me, which He has not committed to another. I have my mission – I never may know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.

Somehow, I am necessary for His purposes...
I have a part in this great work. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good. I shall do His work. I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it, if I do but keep His commandments and serve Him in my calling.

Therefore, I will trust Him...
Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away. If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him; in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him; If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him. My sickness, or perplexity, or sorrow may be necessary causes of some great end, which is quite beyond us.

He does nothing in vain...
He may prolong my life; He may shorten it; He knows what He is about. He may take away my friends; He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate; make my spirits sink; hide the future from me. Still, He know what He is about. Let me by thy blind instrument. I ask not to see; I ask not to know; I ask simply to be used.

that, everyone is called to holiness, to be God’s son or daughter. As we learn to see His work in our daily lives, it becomes easier to see His will in bigger decisions. Seek Him, and you will find your vocation! I would encourage any young person to consider priesthood or religious life, because you may discover God giving you the grace to give yourself to Him in this way. “Do whatever He tells you”, as Mary said at Cana, and you will find yourself at the great wedding feast of the Lamb.

Three Patrons Parish schools enjoyed seminarian visit

DURING his pastoral placement in the Three Patrons Parish, Casey Burgess, a seminarian at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, was delighted to spend time talking to Primary 6 and Primary 7 pupils in the parish

schools. The children listened attentively throughout his presentation on his vocation and journey towards Priesthood, and were eager to learn more, asking many thoughtful and insightful questions afterwards.



Young Writers share thoughts...

IN this summer edition, Niamh shares her enjoyment of visiting churches during her travels, and how the differences in decor have helped her appreciate the diverse creativity and devotion of Catholics in other parts of the world, in gathering to pray and encounter God.

Researching the Didache, Ryan discovers that, while this highly regarded, early Christian living guide was kept out of the canon of the New Testament, it is a must read for Christian living even today. And Conor writes about Emperor Constantine, the first Christian Roman emperor.

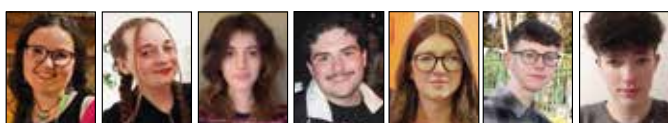
Sharing his experience of simple contemplation of the scene of Our Lord on the Cross in prayer, James urges others to spend time gazing upon the Crucifix for a deeper sense of the vocation of a Christian, while Harry, also focusing on the Cross, highlights the need to embrace the Cross in order to share in the glory of Christ.

Alannah reflects on her growing realisation that God tends to speak loudest in the small moments, and that we just have to keep looking for Him and listening.

Cara-leigh shares about her call to spend a year evangelising with Holy Family Mission, and Erin writes about her fantastic experience at Fr Mike Schmitz' Parables Talk in Dublin.



Farragh Ferry, Derry City Deanery | Cara-leigh Doherty - Derry City Deanery | Alannah Gormley, Derry City Deanery | Nieve Browne, Derry City Deanery | John Augustine Joseph, Derry City Deanery | James Tourish, Derry City Deanery | Erin Whoriskey, Derry City Deanery | Ryan Duffy, Derry City Deanery



Bláthnaid McMenamin - Co Tyrone Deanery | Ellie Donnelly, Derry City Deanery | Clodagh McDermott, Derry City Deanery | Seán McLaughlin, Co Tyrone Deanery | Niamh Sharkey, Derry City Deanery | Harry Mason, Derry City Deanery | Conor Sharkey, Derry City Deanery

God's presence shines in every corner of the world by Niamh

ONE of the most beautiful things about being Catholic is knowing that no matter where you travel in the world, you can always find a church. Although the Mass is the same, every chapel has its own unique style that reflects the culture, history and traditions of the people who worship there. From grand cathedrals, with soaring stained-glass windows, to tiny village chapels tucked away in the countryside, each one reminds us that the Church is truly universal.

On a recent trip to Portugal, I discovered a small chapel that has stayed in my memory. As I stepped inside, I expected the usual candles and flowers, but instead I noticed delicate fairy lights draped around the statues and along the walls. The soft glow filled the chapel with

warmth and created a peaceful atmosphere that made me stop and take everything in.

At first, it seemed unusual, but the more I looked around, the more it felt like a beautiful expression of faith. The lights reminded me that Christ is the Light of the World and that every culture has its own way of reflecting that truth.

Travelling has shown me that chapels are much more than buildings. They tell stories about the people who built them and the communities who continue to pray in them. In Ireland, many chapels have a simple and familiar beauty, with stone walls, colourful stained glass and statues that generations of families have prayed before. In Italy, churches are often decorated with detailed frescoes, marble floors and magnificent

Fr Mike Schmitz event encouraging and challenging by Erin

ON July 20, I was privileged to attend Fr Mike Schmitz' Parables Tour in Dublin. Fr Schmitz is a well-known American Catholic priest, particularly for his Ascension Presents YouTube series and his 'Bible in a Year' podcast.

His first ever visit to Ireland was attended by hundreds from across the country. What I found most inspiring was the large number of young people who attended this event, many coming in full buses with youth groups, to share their faith with one another.

The event began with Mass in St Kevin's Church, which was full to capacity and almost overflowing out the doors. Fr Mike gave a touching homily about his own connection to Ireland, not only because he has ancestors from Cork, but especially because most of the priests who influenced him growing up in Minnesota were from Ireland. This created a sense of pride in our Irish faith, as he believed these people made him who he is today.

Afterwards, the crowd made their way to the National Stadium in Dublin, where almost 2,000 gathered to hear Fr Mike speak, covering some of the parables of Jesus. The specific parables he mentioned were Luke 15 (the Parable of the Lost Sheep); Matthew 13 (the Parable of the Sower); Luke 16 (the Parable of the Dishonest Steward); and Matthew 25 (the Parable of the Wise Virgins and Foolish Virgins).

I found him entertaining to listen to, as he has a good sense of humour and breaks up his serious points with jokes. He also made movie references from 'Forrest Gump' and 'Up' to explain his points and keep the crowd engaged. He got across his points with confidence and used personal stories, some slightly self-deprecating, to stress how much Jesus loves us.

One of the most memorable and moving stories was about a 15-year-old girl who had been involved with his chaplaincy and had lost her life to cancer. Although this was emotional, it also gave hope, as the girl not only prayed to God for healing, which would lead people to glorify Him, but that even if He did not heal her, that people would see how she died and glorify Him. I imagine this was inspiring for the younger generation of Catholics who were there to keep spreading their faith. There was a mixture of crying, laughing and sounds of agreement from the crowd throughout his talk.

After this, there was a Q&A with Colm Flynn. I felt that it was a good idea to have the questions submitted online via QR code, as it allowed people to remain anonymous and, therefore, ask more interesting and personal questions. These covered broader topics which had not already been mentioned, like views on pre-marital sex, preparing for marriage, and dating someone of a different faith. As well as these, he answered deeper questions, such as why evils like childhood



cancer exist if God is real. This allowed Fr Mike to be direct and firm without being pushy. He remained sensitive and light-hearted during his answers, and some silly questions broke up the more serious ones, such as "What's your third favourite reptile?"

I found it admirable how Fr Mike was able to give coherent and engaging answers to any question, without any preparation, as he had no idea beforehand what the audience would ask. The Q&A session allowed Fr Mike to describe to the audience how our faith can answer questions we may encounter in everyday life, and how it can encourage rather than discourage us.

He described the Church as not as a museum for saints, but a "hospital for sinners,"

emphasising that we do not need to be perfect to experience the strength of Jesus' love. Fr Mike finished up the evening with a blessing of bibles and religious objects, and thanked everyone who came.

Reflecting on this experience, I feel encouraged in my own faith and reminded of the importance of sharing it with others. I found it to be a great reminder that there are many young people who share the same beliefs as me, despite the fact that it does not always feel like it, and that we can all support one another. It also challenged me to think about important questions and dilemmas others may have, which I personally do not. Overall, I found it an uplifting and memorable experience, and I hope that Fr Mike will visit Ireland again soon!

"Seeing different chapels has encouraged me to appreciate the creativity and devotion of Catholics around the world. It has also reminded me that our faith is alive and expressed in many different ways."

Seeing different chapels has encouraged me to appreciate the creativity and devotion of Catholics around the world. It has also reminded me that our faith is alive and expressed in many different ways. Sometimes we can become so used to our own parish church that we forget

how wonderfully diverse the Catholic family really is.

The next time you visit another country, take a few moments to step inside a local chapel. Look carefully at the details, notice how people pray, and reflect on what makes it unique. You might be surprised by what you find.

As I learned in that little Portuguese chapel glowing with fairy lights, even the smallest details can point us towards the light of Christ and remind us that God's presence shines in every corner of the world.

Young Writers share thoughts...

The Didache by Ryan



THE Didache (pronounced Did-a-key), or sometimes called the ‘Teaching of the Twelve Apostles’, is an early Christian text that is dated by most scholars to the late first early second century. It is a catechism for new converts, a manual for the basics of Christian living and a liturgical guide. The Didache was highly regarded by many early Christian authors and theologians. The text, while heavily respected and used for instructions in the Early Church, was kept out of the canon of the New Testament as it lacked any verified apostolic authorship and universal agreement on its divine inspiration. Following the fourth century, the text became lost to history and, for centuries, it was considered lost, until 1873, when it was rediscovered.

In modern day, it is usually included among the second-generation of Christian writings known as the ‘Apostolic Fathers’. While the Didache was never entered into the final canon of the New Testament, it remains a useful guide for Christian living even today. It can be seen as the basic teachings of the Gospel condensed into tiny pieces of wisdom, alongside giving insight into first-century Christian liturgy and worship. I will spend this article giving a summary of the Didache, however, I would urge you to go read the text for yourself

Chapter I
- The Two Ways
“There are two ways, one is life and one of death, and there is a great difference between the two ways.”

The Way of Life
This is the opening of the first chapter to the Didache. It continues to say that the ‘Way of Life’ is that you shall love the God who made you, second to love your neighbour as yourself. This is a near direct quote of Matthew 22:37-39: “He

said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ This is then followed by the Golden Rule.

This opening allows for the early converts to Christianity to immediately learn the core of the teachings of Jesus. The text continues on to say “Now the teaching of these words is this. Bless those who curse you, and pray for your enemies, and fast for those who persecute you”. The rest of the chapter goes on to retell many of the teachings by Jesus: turning the other cheek; going an extra mile for someone; to give and not expect a return. All these teachings are shown in the Didache in a simple format and is clearly a piece of its time, being a piece from the birth of Christianity.

The chapter goes on to list the Ten Commandments alongside some extra commandments, such as not to practise magic or sorcery. All this falls under what the Didache calls the Second Commandment of the teaching. The chapter has another sub-heading called ‘The Fences’. It is my favourite part of this text and gives advice on how to live your life. It opens by saying: “My Child, flee from every evil thing and everything that is like it.” Followed by things you should not do and what those deeds, if done, can lead to. Anger leads to murder, complaining leads to blasphemy, do not lie as it leads to theft, and do not deal in omens as it leads to idolatry. It also tells you to hate all hypocrisy and everything that is not pleasing to The Lord. It also states to seek out, every day, the company of the saints that “you may find rest in their words”.

The Way of Life section ends by stating: “Confess your sins in church, and do not go to prayer with a guilty conscience. This is the Way of Life.” Through this

we see that, as far back as the first century, intercession of saints and Confession are important parts of the Christian life and should be followed. The Way to Life shows us that we should love, bless, fast and give. We should remember and honour God, to hold onto good teachings and that Christians should be meek, long-suffering, blameless, gentle and good.

The Way of Death
This part of the Didache opens by saying: “But the way of death is this. First of all, it is evil and full of curses: murder, adultery, lust, promiscuity, theft, idolatry, magical arts, witchcraft, robbery, false testimony, hypocrisy, duplicity, treachery, pride, malice, stubbornness, greed, foul language, jealousy, arrogance, and boasting.”

The way to Death is filled with sins and character flaws within a person and should be avoided. The way to death lists 40 sins and calls for Christians to avoid them at all means. This section of the first chapter ends by stating: “Beware, lest anyone lead you astray from this way of righteousness, for he teaches apart from God. For if you can bear the whole yoke of the Lord, you will be perfect; but if you cannot, do as much as you can.”

The Two Ways of Chapter One makes a lot of use of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount, with The Beatitudes making an appearance alongside the Ten Commandments, combining the both into one chapter of instruction on how to live a Christian life.

**Chapter II
- Instructions for Catechumens**
This chapter serves to show its readers the regular church practices, opening with a discussion concerning food; telling Christians not to eat food that has been sacrificed towards idols,

a controversy that can be found in Acts 15 and 1 Corinthians 10. It goes on to discuss baptism, telling its reader to “baptize the catechumen in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Following this, it tells us to baptise in running water or, if running water isn’t available, use other forms of water. If cold water is not available, we are to use warm. And that if we have neither, we are to pour water on the head three times, each time for each member of the Trinity; The Father, The Son and the Holy Spirit. Through this, we see that no matter what, no matter the means, we should be baptised. It also states that before the baptism, both the baptiser and the catechumen should fast, and ends by saying that the catechumen should fast a day or two before.

The next part in Chapter 2 is concerning fasting and tells us to not let fasts fall on the same day as the hypocrites, which draws reference to Matthew 6:16, “And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward.” This section goes on to state that we should fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, instead of Mondays and Thursdays. The next section tells us not to pray as the hypocrites do and to instead pray as The Lord commanded in His Gospel, and then instructs us to pray The Lord’s prayer three times a day.

Following this, it goes on to discuss the Eucharist, giving specific prayer to be said when sharing the cup and the bread. It also states that the Eucharist should only be shared with those who have been baptised, and following the eating of the bread a third prayer was to be said. It then goes on to say: “But permit the prophets to offer thanksgiving as much as they desire”, showing how, at the time, it was up to the leader of a congregation as to how much Eucharist was to be received, compared to now where it is at every Mass. After the Eucharist, it talks about the Approved teacher for the church, stating: “Whoever comes and teaches you all these things that have been taught before, receive him. But if the teacher himself turns aside and teaches a different doctrine that subverts what has been taught before, do not listen to him. If his teaching fosters righteousness and the knowledge of the Lord, receive him as the Lord.”

**Chapter III
- Life in the Community**
This chapter opens with a section concerning the apostles and prophets, telling us to act according to the Gospels’ teachings. This section almost certainly draws reference to 1 Corinthians 12:28, which states:

“And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues.” The Apostles mentioned are not the original 12, but instead travelling representatives of the church, and they were to be taken care of for a day or two, before the apostles were to be sent on their way to continue their work. It states that if the apostle stays three days, he is a false prophet, also saying that when he leaves, he is to receive nothing but bread and that if he asks for money, or anything more than the bread, he is also a false prophet.

The Didache then goes on to say: “Do not test or judge any prophet who speaks in the Spirit. Every other sin will be forgiven, but this sin will not be forgiven.” It continues on to say: “And not everyone who speaks in the Spirit is a prophet, but only he who follows the ways of the Lord. From his behaviour, then, you will know a false prophet from a true prophet.” It shows that these prophets are to be examined on the basis of their actions. If their teaching matched their actions, they were to be accepted. This segment ends by saying: “If anyone says in the Spirit, ‘Give me money’, do not listen to him. But if he tells you to give to others who are in need, let no one judge him.” Which reinforces the teaching that selflessness is a necessity within Christianity.

The next part of Chapter 3 covers hospitality to travellers. Telling Christians to receive everyone who comes in the Name of the Lord, and that you should examine him and learn his situation. If he is only passing through, you are to help him as much as possible, but he cannot stay for more than three days. If he wishes to live with you, the Didache states that if he knows a trade, allow him to stay and earn his food. But if he doesn’t know a trade, he is to be judged, and it is up to you to decide if he can stay, but he cannot live idle. If he wants to stay idle, “he is trafficking upon Christ”, and we are to beware of such people. After the hospitality, the Didache talks about supporting ministers. Telling the people of the time that every minister is worthy of his food and that he is like a worker.

The next follows a part on the sacrifice. It tells us to gather together each Sunday, and break bread and give thanks, telling us to first confess our sins so that our sacrifice may be pure. This is clearly discussing Mass and telling Christians to come together on a Sunday. It tells people to reconcile before offering their gift at the altar, saying: “And let no man, having a disagreement with his brother, join you until they have been reconciled, that your sacrifice may not be defiled”.

Following the sacrifice, Chapter 3 speaks on Church leaders

and tells the early Christians to appoint for themselves bishops and deacons who are worthy of The Lord, stating: “Men who are meek and not lovers of money, and who are honest and proven,” and telling the people not to hold them in contempt. After this it is onto the community’s disciple. The Didache tells the Christian community to reprove one another not in anger, but in peace, as is found in the Gospel, and to “Shun anyone who has sinned against his neighbour; do not say a word to him until he repents.” It also instructs to say your prayers and to give alms, showing that you should do everything in accordance with the Gospel of our Lord.

**Chapter IV
- The Lord is Coming**
Chapter four is the shortest chapter, and serves as a warning and guidance. It is, perhaps, the strongest part of the Didache. I cannot describe it myself in any way that does it justice, so I will simply give it to you in full...

“Watch over your life. Do not let your lamps burn out, nor your waist be ungirded, but be ready, for you do not know when our Lord is coming. And gather together frequently, seeking what is necessary for your souls, for all your years of faith will count for nothing unless you are perfected in the last days. In the last days, false prophets and corrupters will multiply, and the sheep will turn into wolves, and love will be turned into hate. As lawlessness increases, men will hate and persecute and betray one another. And then the Deceiver of the world will appear as a son of God, and will do signs and wonders, and the earth will be delivered into his hands. He will commit abominations which have never been seen since the world began. Then all mankind will come to the fire of testing, and many will fail and perish. But those who endure in their faith will be saved by him who was accursed. And then shall the signs of the truth appear: first a sign of a rift in the heavens, then a sign of a voice of a trumpet, and thirdly the resurrection of the dead. Yet not of all, but as it was said: The Lord shall come and all his saints with him. Then shall the world see the Lord coming upon the clouds of heaven with power and dominion to repay each man according to his works, with justice, before all men and the angels. Amen.”

To conclude, the Didache is an early handbook for the earliest of the Christians to walk just following the life of Jesus Christ. I, again, urge you to read it yourself. It, unfortunately, does not have any clear author, but is still recognised as a formidable and powerful piece of early Christian writing, with St Clement of Alexandria, Origen and Athanasius all referencing and quoting the text.

Young Writers share thoughts...

Preparing for Holy Family Mission Year *by Cara-leigh*

THIS past academic year was my last year of secondary school, which prompted the inevitable question: "What are you going to do when you leave school?" For most of my peers, this meant the clear-cut road to university or the world of work, but I was unsettled with both of these options. This led me, through prayer, to Holy Family Mission.

The idea of doing a mission year after school first came into my mind around November time of last year, when I recognised the desire in my heart to evangelise to the people of my own country; to help bring Ireland back to its Catholic roots. I was familiar with the different lay missionary organisations across the country from attending faith events like Youth 2000.

Although I had met a few people who had completed Holy Family Mission, I wasn't very familiar with the organisation. I followed them on Instagram, and when I saw that the applications were open, it prompted me to look on their website and, after a few minutes of reading, I felt the pull in my heart almost immediately.

When I finally made my decision to apply, I spent weeks filling out the application, which was only the first step in the three-step process. Throughout the period of application, there were times when I was a ball of nerves and times when I was completely calm. Throughout it all, I remained content in the knowledge that if the Lord was truly calling me to Holy Family Mission, I would be accepted, and if not, it simply meant it wasn't in His plan. Even though at times I was in a bit of a frenzy of concern about what I



Cara-leigh with some of those who attended and helped organise a fundraising event.

was going to do in September if I didn't get accepted, as I hadn't even applied for university!

When I received the email to tell me that I was accepted, I was overwhelmed with joy and knew that God's hand was in it.

I begin Holy Family Mission in September. Each missionary is asked to give a contribution of €4,800 (approximately £4,165), which covers food, accommodation, electricity, etc, for the entire year (September-June).

In order to be able to make this contribution, I am currently running different fundraising events and asking those who are able to consider making a donation towards my mission year. I would greatly appreciate it, if you are in the position, to consider making a donation. If not, prayer is a powerful tool and I ask that you pray for me!

If you do wish to make a donation, you can scan the QR code.

If you want to learn more about Holy Family Mission, you can visit their website: holyfamilymission.ie.



Faith in the small moments *by Alannah*

IN society, people often expect us to have everything figured out: our future; our friendships; even our beliefs; hard subjects that rarely anyone is certain of. However, faith doesn't show up in big dramatic moments, like movies, books and shows dramatise it to be, it shows up quietly, in the small parts of everyday life; a sign of a loved one from an animal or nature, or a prayer granted true.

Personally, faith is in the decision to be kind when it is easier not to be, when it is easier to be cruel instead of being patient. It is in forgiving those who have wronged you, even when it is hard.

A quote that I hold close to myself when in hard times is: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy...it keeps no record of

wrongs" (Corinthians 13:4-5). This quote reminds me to be kind, even when it seems the hardest thing to do.

Often, I feel pressure to be the 'perfect' Christian, but I am learning that faith isn't perfectionist resilience, patience and kindness. I am starting to understand that God doesn't just meet us in Church, or at times when we need Him most. He meets us in the hallway at school, in the bus seat on the way home, in the late-night thoughts when everything feels too overwhelming.

God is already in the small moments; we just have to notice Him. We just need to keep showing up, keep listening, and keep looking for God in the small moments, because that is where He

tends to speak the loudest.

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy... it keeps no record of wrongs"
(Corinthians 13:4-5).

Let the cross be a daily guide in our lives *by James*

WHEN we contemplate Christ's love for us, abundant as it is, may we never shy away from the greatest expression of that for us, the image of our Lord on the Cross, bloody and beaten, totally rejected by the world.

So much has been written about this central act of our faith, so much theological debate and writing, so much commentary, yet what strikes me often, is not the great in-depth analyses, or even words spoken about our Lord's crucifixion, but rather it is the simple contemplation on the sight of the cross.

Truly, whether it be a crucifix in our homes, or in the chapel, wherever we may be, we can use that small opportunity to think for

ourselves.

I find something quite profound arises, not when we simply view the symbol, but when we see it for what it is. Surely that requires some disposition towards interior thought, but not a whole lot.

I try to, at least at times, think of our Lord on the Cross in prayer. Not really with any commentary or even adding any thoughts with it, but just simply picturing that scene. It can be something that jolts you into action, something that provokes the sense of vocation as a Christian, that through His death, we really are meant for more.

I would implore all Christians to spend some time looking at the Cross, at the depiction of our Lord crucified. Let whatever springs to

mind be organic.

May it be a guide in our daily lives, as we realise that there is no glory of the Resurrection, without first, the suffering of the Cross.



Emperor Constantine...the first Christian Roman emperor *by Conor*

EMPEROR Constantine was known as the first Roman emperor to adopt Christianity and end the persecution of Christians in the Roman empire. He founded a new Roman capital for Christians, known as Constantinople. It was the capital of the Byzantine empire, which was later conquered by the Ottoman empire in the 1500s and was renamed to Istanbul.

He was born in Naissus, located in modern day Serbia, to his mother, Heena, who was later canonised as a saint for converting her son to Christianity. His father was a military officer, who allowed him to rise to a high rank in the military. He fought in the Roman civil wars against the Britannia province of Rome and fully united it by 324AD.

He was baptised by Eusebius of Nicomedia in 312AD, who was an Arian bishop. He played a vital role in the Edict of Milan, which legalised Christianity in 313AD and pushed Christian culture to the Roman nobility and public, providing the religion great legitimacy across the many regions of the Roman empire, from Anatolia to Britain.

He likely did not convert for political reasons as Christians made up 10-15% of the Roman empire and were often in lower classes. He was said to have stated that the strength of the religion would strengthen the empire as it promotes perseverance. He put an end to many practices, such as gladiators and crucifixion of prisoners.

Rome under Constantine was not the first Christian nation.



Armenia, in 301AD under King Tiridates II, was the first Christian nation, which was previously Zoroastrian (an eastern religion prevalent in Mesopotamia and Persia) and Aksum, now modern-day Ethiopia. However, his role was much more significant, as he ruled over a much larger domain in the most prosperous part of the world at that point in time. It established all the major Christian communities across Europe. He built many churches across the empire, such as St Basilica in Rome and Church of Holy Sepulchre, which were crucial for establishing Christianity in Italy and the Levant.

He is also seen as a very controversial figure, as he killed his second wife in 326AD. He also had his first son, Crispus, killed after he found out that he allegedly had an affair with his stepmother, but many still consider the conditions to be mysterious. In addition, he brutally crushed his opponents in the Roman civil war, which would not align with Christian values.

Overall, we can look at Constantine as one of the core leaders of ancient nations, who brought Christianity to the forefront of major religions. He, undeniably, had a huge impact in the acceptance of the religion and building of early churches.

Young Writers share thoughts...

The Cross and the spiritual life

by Harry

FOR many centuries, the masters have realised that in the centre of Catholic spirituality is the Cross. As you wake up, it should remind you of the seriousness and ugliness of sin, and that, for the day ahead, you must die to sin and live for Christ.

In the book, 'The Imitation of Christ', by Thomas à Kempis, the author expounds that many want to enjoy the glory of Christ but few want to share in the Cross. However, we must embrace the Cross to share the glory.

Throughout the Gospels, the Cross and glory is a theme interwoven. For example, in the incarnation, God becomes man, and the angels are singing and kings bowing, yet He is placed in a wooden trough, foreshadowing the death on the wood of the Cross.

We often also fall into sin due to our feeble nature, but the Cross is there to remind us of God's great love, which is greater than all our sins. He shed all His blood, when only a drop could have sufficed, just to show you He loves us.

The Cross is the remedy for our vices, purifying us when we

Many want to enjoy the glory of Christ, but few want to share in the Cross.

However, we must embrace the Cross to share the glory.

embrace it. Aquinas calls it the school of virtue, as on the Cross Jesus embodies many virtues:

- Humility - Christ humbles Himself to become man and die for us;
- Obedience - He obeyed the Father's will to the point of giving up His own life;
- Patience - He was abandoned, hurt, betrayed and humiliated, yet He didn't retaliate;
- Charity - The Cross is the

highest form of love;

- Mercy - He asked forgiveness for those crucifying Him;
- Fortitude - He endured suffering for the sake of good;
- Detachment - On the Cross, He is stripped of possessions, comfort, friends and reputation.

May the Cross of Christ always be a school of virtue, helping us in our daily life, in our journey on the way to Heaven.

Sunshine and good conversation at Young Writers meet-up

Some of the Net Young Writers meeting with Bishop Donal and his nominated successor, Bishop Michael Router, on the day that the news was announced that a new Bishop for the Derry Diocese had been appointed by Pope Leo XIV.

Joining them at Cloisters Café, in the basement of Aras Cholmille, Long Tower, with its wonderful view of the City, was American seminarian, Casey Burgess, who is studying in Rome.

Helping out in the Three Patrons Parish for a few weeks, Casey had expressed an interest in meeting the Young Writers after reading their articles in 'The Net'.



Gortin Corpus Christi

Fr Roland Colhoun leading the Primary 4 children of St Patrick's School, Gortin, Co Tyrone, in the Corpus Christi Procession on Saturday, June 6, a week after their First Holy Communion.



St Eugene's Choral Scholar Scheme continues to flourish

PRESENTATIONS of this year's awards to the Cathedral choral scholars took place on Sunday, June 7, after 12.30 pm Mass, at which the scholars sing weekly with the adult choir. The scheme, established in 2022, encourages students over 16 and in full-time education (including mature students) to contribute to the music ministry of the church, in return for a monthly stipend based on attendance. In addition, there are currently two bursaries available to students, each worth £250.

Ciaran McAlister Memorial Award

This award was established in memory of Ciaran McAlister, a gifted singer and dedicated member of St Eugene's Cathedral choir for over 15 years. Ciaran, a mainstay of the bass line, contributed much to other elements of parish and community life as well. Sociable and outgoing by nature, Ciaran could always be relied upon to fulfil his responsibilities faithfully and with humour.

After he died unexpectedly in January 2024 following a short illness, it was felt fitting that Ciaran should be commemorated by the institution of an annual award for the benefit of the St Eugene's Choir Choral Scholars' scheme. The award is presented to the scholar who best displays the qualities of commitment, reliability and musicality exemplified by Ciaran.

Although it was exceptionally difficult to select a recipient this

year, given the dedication and commitment of all the scholars in this group, the award was allocated to Bebhinn Magee, in recognition of her reliable attendance and her improvement in musical performance over the year. The award and bursary for £250 were presented on behalf of the choir by Mrs Phyllis McAlister, mother of Ciaran.

Ongoing musical formation

The second bursary is to facilitate further study or experience of choral music. Last year, this was used to assist two of the scholars attend a week-long, international, liturgical music conference in Warsaw, focussing particularly on Gregorian chant.

This year's recipient, Holly Hutcheon, has been provisionally accepted to Corpus Christi College Cambridge and applied to join the College choir there. Following her academic offer, she was invited to send a recording, provide a reference and attend a video interview. Holly obtained an excellent reference from the choir director, and the 20-minute interview focussed heavily on her experience as a scholar. Her interviewer was extremely impressed with the range and depth of musical repertoire that she has been exposed to as a choral scholar, and deeply appreciative of the level of commitment she has displayed through her participation in the scheme, since this is essential for the College choir. She has

been accepted as a member and is looking forward immensely to continuing her choral experience in this new environment. Acknowledging the social benefits of choral membership, Holly is hoping/confident that involvement in the College choir will enable her to make new friends and adapt to university life more easily.

Holly was presented with her bursary by Maghnus Monaghan, choir director, and Bishop McKeown was on hand to offer congratulations also.

The Choral Scholars' Scheme provides young singers with invaluable experience of sight-reading and working as a member of a musical ensemble. It develops

students' singing technique and gives opportunities for solo performance. Former scholars have gone on to follow related courses, one at King's College London and two at Queen's University Belfast, while others are now pursuing non-music related courses.

Seven students have participated in the scheme each year thus far,

and it is hoped to bring this up to 10 students per year, with spaces currently available for male student voices. Anyone interested in joining the scheme or making a financial contribution may contact the choir director at magnusmonaghan@hotmail.com. New adult members (particularly males) are also welcome.



Winner of the Ciaran McAlister Memorial Award winner, Bebhinn Magee, with Ciaran's mother, Phyllis, and Cathedral Choir Director, Maghnus Monaghan.



St Eugene's Choral Scholar bursary winner, Holly Hutcheon with Choir Director, Maghnus Monaghan, and Bishop Donal.

Cathedral & Long Tower LIFE Camp

another great success

by Lauren Doherty - Schools Liaison Co-ordinator

WITH fantastic weather to kick-start the summer holidays this year, we were off to a great start for our 2026 Summer LIFE Camp! Over 150 children and 35 volunteers came through the doors for the parishes of St Eugene's Cathedral and St Columba's Long Tower.

With registration opened from the mid-term break in February of this year, spaces filled up pretty quickly, giving us an idea early on that we had a busy start to the summer holidays!

LIFE Camp 2026 began with our opening Mass on Sunday, July 5, celebrated by Fr Paul Farren in St Eugene's Cathedral. All families and campers came along to the Mass, took part in our Offertory procession, readings and Prayer of the Faithful and, after Mass, collected their t-shirt and information pack. All smiles, all set and ready to go!

Returning to the wonderful location of St Mary's College, we were very fortunate with the weather this year, enabling us to have lots of fun both indoor and outdoor with a range of activities, whilst soaking up the sun!

Faith Formation started off each day. We wanted to invite our young people to strengthen not only their own personal faith, but to share and learn from one another. This year, we introduced Adoration as part of the Faith Formation lesson. We were blessed to have a visiting

seminarian from America, Casey Burgess, who helped us explain the meaning of Adoration to the younger campers. This went down very well and we were very thankful for Casey's help, support and guidance.

The children took part in a variety of different activities for faith formation, including a prayer walk, music lessons, Confession script, movies, books and faith, guided meditation, Adoration and much more. With Rosary bracelet making a firm favourite at last year's Camp, we were delighted that the wonderful Teresa was able to return this year and provide a fantastic workshop in helping the campers create their own bracelet! Our John Paul II Award volunteers and coaches also took part and enjoyed being creative. We were very thankful to our Parish Administrator, Fr Paul, who blessed each Rosary bracelet made by the campers at our closing Mass.

Our busy timetable was packed with a range of activities for the children to enjoy throughout the week! Each day was full of fun! An added extra this year for our afternoon session was 'Dance with Ellen'. This was a big hit with all our budding dancers and performers! Ellen took all ages through wonderful routines, added props to enhance the performance, with even some of the first-time dancers able to perform in our LIFE Camp

Talent Show! It was fantastic!

Our jam-packed timetable included activities such as arts and crafts, team building exercises, problem solving activities, football, obstacle course, ultimate survival, to name but a few. With campers ranging in year groups from Primary 3 – Primary 7, we encouraged our young people to mix with new campers in different groups and create new friendships with like-minded people.

We are very grateful to the priests from our neighbouring parishes who came along to hear Confessions. At the morning faith formation lesson, the children were preparing for Confession with the help of their coaches, by answering a range of questions and studying the Act of Contrition before making their Confessions. A great example for our young campers was shown by some of our JP II volunteers who attended Confessions also.

One of the highly anticipated days of the week at LIFE Camp, for not only the campers but our volunteers and coaches as well, is the Talent show! Children from P3-P 7 showcased their many talents in front of our panel of judges and their fellow campers! This year, we had acts of singing, dancing, comedians, magicians, dance troops and many more. A hard task was left for our judges to pick winners to be presented with

awards at our closing Mass the very next day.

On our final day of LIFE Camp, Fr Paul celebrated the closing Mass in thanksgiving for a wonderful week! Family and friends of our campers were invited along to the Mass, and it was lovely to see such a great crowd of smiling faces to end our LIFE Camp 2026. Our award ceremony took place after the Mass, where we had presentations for Boy and Girl 'Camper of the Week', 'Group of the Week' and, of course, our highly anticipated Talent Show winners!

Our LIFE Camp wouldn't be possible without the work of our extremely dedicated JP II award volunteers, coaches and facilitators. We are extremely grateful for their time, effort and energy in making sure each camper had a fantastic week! A special thank you to the staff of our parish school, St Mary's College for such fantastic facilities, which enabled us to run the camp with such ease. And a massive thank you to St Eugene's Scout Group's Celine Taylor, Teresa Peoples and Ellen Casey, who shared their talents and facilitated such great workshops for our children throughout their time at camp.

It was a fantastic, sunny, fun and enjoyable week for our parish, and a great start to the summer holidays for all!



LIFE Camp brings faith, fun & friendship to Three Patrons Parish

by Teresa McDaid Parish Catechist

THE Three Patrons Parish, Derry, held a wonderful LIFE Camp at St Columba's College, this summer. Derry's oldest and largest grammar school, welcomed 155 children for a week of faith, fun and friendship.

We were blessed to have the support of seven coaches and 24 dedicated volunteers from the Pope John Paul II Award and the parish community, who gave so generously of their time and energy throughout the week.

Last but not least, a big thank you to McDaid's Bakery for sponsoring daily buns for our coaches and volunteers!

The camp was led and supported by parish catechists, Teresa McDaid and Kathryn Ellis, together with leader, Sean McColgan. Each morning began with faith formation, focusing on the themes of truth, love and showing kindness to others. This included learning about the Rosary, while contemplating on a decade as they walked from one activity to another with visiting

seminarian, Casey Burgess, who is studying in Rome. The children were also fascinated by visits to the College oratory, where they questioned Casey about the tabernacle, chalices and Eucharist.

Across the week, the children enjoyed a wide range of activities, including football, netball, Zumba, arts and crafts, music, circus skills, drum skills, a talent competition and much more. Each child took home Rosary beads and framed artwork, paintings, and bracelets they had designed with the help of cousins, Emma Redmond and Sean Kerlin.

Each day, it was a joy to see the children happy and excited as they

built friendships, learned to share, showed kindness to one another and spoke about their thoughts on God. They enjoyed wonderful lunches with the coaches and volunteers in the main hall, followed by free time to play before the afternoon sessions began.

The week concluded beautifully with Confessions and Mass celebrated by Bishop Donal McKeown. The children assisted reverently with the readings and prayers of the faithful. This was followed by awards for the children, and heartfelt thanks to all the coaches and volunteers, who helped make the camp such a memorable success.

Closing Prayer
Lord Jesus, thank you for the joy, friendship and faith shared during our LIFE Camp. Help our children to grow in truth, love and kindness, and may they always know Your presence in their lives. Bless our families, coaches, volunteers and parish community, and guide us all to follow You each day. Amen.



Remembering the floating moments in life, Fr John P Forbes launches...

Poetry reflections raising funds for Sr Clare Cause & Children in Crossfire



Fr John with Shaun and Jennifer Monaghan, and, right, Brendan McKeever, publisher.

OVER the summer, Fr John P Forbes has been busy promoting his book of poems that he launched at a gathering in the upper room at Aras Cholmcille, Long Tower, in late June.

Entitled, 'Reflections Through Poetry – Remembering the Floating Moments of Life', proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to Children in Crossfire and towards supporting

the Cause for Sr Clare Crockett's canonisation.

Fr John dedicated the book to "the encouragement and friendship of the people of the parishes" in which he had "the honour to serve", including the Long Tower, where he is happily helping out in his retirement years.

In the preface to the book, he wrote: "When I was studying for Priesthood, in my last few months

I began to worry, 'am I worthy for such a huge position?' So, I put my anxiety into poetry because it helped me sort it out in my mind."

He continued: "I compared myself to a couple getting married. They spend time individually thinking about their future. They might also share their thoughts with each other. But I felt on my own. It was an anxious time and fear almost stopped me following the need I had in my head. Then I began to think that the couple could also have doubts but 'love' allowed them to step into the dark. And so did I."

Noting that the second part of the book of poems came to him after ordination, while working in different parishes, Fr John wrote: "The joy in my life, the beauty God gives us in nature, the struggles people have in relationships are described in the poem 'The Boat', and also in 'The Lines On Her Face'."

Expressing the hope that readers

enjoy at least some of the poetry in the book, he noted: "Some might help with problems; others might bring back memories of Christmas' past."

Thankful for the encouragement and support of Fr Gerard Mongan, Adm Long Tower, and Shaun and Jennifer Monaghan, for their help in compiling the book, and Brendan McKeever for his guidance and publication of the book, Fr John is deeply appreciative of the many people who came to the launch and the various book signings in parishes where he had ministered over the years.

The sale of the 800 printed copies is going very well, with remaining copies available in the Aras Cholmcille shop and in Long Tower Parochial House. Costing £10, the proceeds will be presented to the two charities in September. For further information, Fr John can be contacted via forbesjohnp@gmail.com.



Fr John with Richard Moore, founder of Children in Crossfire, one of the charities to benefit from the proceeds of the poetry book.



Coleraine Parish News

Andrea Begley hails faith for resilience in vision loss

AMONGST a series of parish events in May was a talk by Co Tyrone singer and 2013 winner of the RTE programme 'The Voice', Andrea Begley, who was accompanied by her husband, Leon.

Speaking to a large gathering in Aghadowey Parish Hall on the night of Tuesday, May 19, Andrea shared how a deepening of her religious faith had helped her remain resilient despite being left with 10 per cent vision.



Suicide Prevention talk raises awareness

AGHADOWEY Hall was the venue for an ALPS Charity talk on May 20, when Ray Cullen, of the mental health charity, spoke on the topic of Suicide Prevention.

Most of those who attended welcomed the opportunity for training in suicide prevention, so a 4.5-hour course has been arranged to take place in the hall in September.

Ray is pictured with Ronan Gilchrist and Diana Doherty, of the Aghadowey Hall Committee.



Cathedral Parish News

Following footsteps of Sts Francis, Clare, Rita and Carlo Acutis...

A special time for Cathedral pilgrims in Assisi

by Anne Marie Hickey, Pastoral Coordinator

ST Eugene's parishioners took part in a very special pilgrimage in May to Assisi and the surrounding holy places, walking in the footsteps of some of the Church's most beloved saints. Fr Paul Farren led as spiritual director, assisted by Fr Colum Clerkin.

The pilgrimage began in Assisi with a visit to the Papal Basilica of St Mary of the Angels, home to the precious Porziuncola Chapel, the small chapel so closely associated with St Francis and the beginnings of the Franciscan movement. Pilgrims also visited the Rose Garden, a peaceful reminder of the forested area where St Francis and his friars once lived in prayer, simplicity and fraternity.

A visit to San Damiano offered pilgrims time for quiet reflection and private prayer. It was here that St Francis heard the voice of Christ calling him to "rebuild my Church", a moment that changed the course of his life. San Damiano was also deeply connected with

St Clare, who lived there with her sisters and died there in 1253. The group continued to the Basilica of St Clare, where pilgrims had the opportunity to venerate the mortal remains of St Clare and view relics connected with both St Clare and St Francis. Later, they visited the magnificent Basilica of St Francis, with its famous frescoes by Giotto, the monastery, and the crypt where St Francis is buried. Holy Mass was celebrated in the Chapel of St Bonaventure, providing a prayerful end to a day centred on the Franciscan story.

The pilgrimage also included a day in Roccaporena and Cascia, places associated with St Rita, known as the saint of impossible causes. Mass was celebrated at the Sanctuary of Roccaporena, with the Sacrament of Anointing also celebrated during the Mass. Pilgrims had the opportunity to visit places linked with St Rita's life, including her birthplace and family home, before continuing

to Cascia to visit the Basilica where her mortal remains are preserved. The group also visited the lower Basilica, which houses the Eucharistic Miracle of Cascia.

Another highlight of the pilgrimage was a visit to Orvieto, one of Italy's most beautiful and historic cities. Mass was celebrated in the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, in the Chapel of the Corporal, a place closely linked with the Eucharistic miracle that helped inspire the Feast of Corpus Christi. Pilgrims also had free time to explore the city, enjoy lunch, and take in the beauty of its streets, shops and sacred heritage.

On Friday, the group visited the ancient church of Santa Maria Maggiore, also known as the Sanctuary of the Spoliation, where the mortal remains of St Carlo Acutis are housed. St Carlo, the young computer programmer who used his gifts to catalogue Eucharistic miracles from around the world, continues to inspire

people of all ages, especially the young. Mass was celebrated at his shrine, followed by free time to enjoy Assisi and visit other important landmarks.

The pilgrimage concluded on Saturday, May 23, with a Closing Mass at the Basilica of St Mary of the Angels, returning once more to the Porziuncola, the spiritual heart of the Franciscan story. From Assisi, the group travelled to Rome Airport for the journey home. Damien Kearney, of Anam Cara Travel, coordinated the travel arrangements and was a fantastic guide on Pilgrimage.

This pilgrimage was a grace-filled time of prayer, reflection, fellowship and renewal. Through the example of St Francis, St Clare, St Rita and St Carlo Acutis, pilgrims were invited to deepen their faith, rediscover the beauty of the Eucharist, and return home strengthened in their Christian journey.



Cathedral Club celebrated another successful year of faith & fellowship

by Anne Marie Hickey

THE Cathedral Club is a parish social group that meets each Thursday, after 10 am Mass, in our Parish Hall. Over the past year, the group has enjoyed a varied and engaging programme of activities designed to promote friendship, learning, well-being, faith, and community involvement.

The programme included regular social gatherings and chatting sessions, providing members with opportunities to meet, support one another, and strengthen friendships. A number

of informative presentations were delivered on topics such as living safely, community safety, women's safety, stalking awareness, and issues affecting older people.

Our strong links with local schools continued through visits from our Parish primary and post primary schools. These intergenerational encounters were greatly appreciated by both the young people and group members.

Well-being and spiritual development remained important aspects of the programme.

Members participated in Guided Meditation sessions, a visit to the 'Story of Derry' Exhibition at the Tower Museum and an Advent Pilgrimage.

Cultural and community activities included a visit from 'The Villagers', a performance by St Mary's Traditional Music Group, and engagement with various community organisations and speakers. Two summer concerts by the local traditional musicians, Grupa Ceol Beag, were also delivered in the Cathedral Hall.

The year concluded with an End-of-Year Party, celebrating another successful year of fellowship, learning, faith, and community engagement. We are grateful to all who contributed to the programme, particularly our guest speakers, local schools, community partners, volunteers, and parish staff. Their support helped create a welcoming and enriching experience for all participants throughout the year.



Kilrea Parish News

Warm welcome for Bishop Donal at St Mary's Drumagarner



Maghera Parish News

Great turnout for Irish Mass at Granaghan Mass Rock

MASS was celebrated in Irish on the evening of Tuesday, July 7, at The Mass Rock in Granaghan by Fr Paddy Doherty, PP Maghera.

The annual Mass was much anticipated by the local and visiting congregation, of over 100 people, gathering at the original historic Mass Rock in fine weather.

Volunteers from Charn Tóchair Community Association carried out great work, supported by Mid-Ulster Council, to clear an accessible route through the ancient graveyard to the overgrown, secluded location.

Music on an accordion instrument, befitting the celebration of Mass, was memorable. Light refreshments were served afterwards.

Thank you to all involved.



Mass for parish housebound & sick a time of healing by Angela Lagan

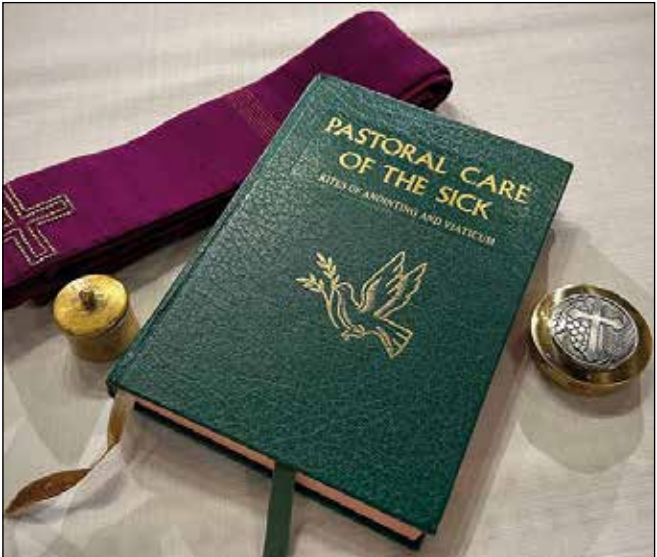
THE annual Parish Mass and Healing Service was concelebrated by Fr Paddy Doherty PP and Fr Kieran O'Doherty in St Mary's Church, Maghera, on Saturday, June 13, at 3 pm, for the Housebound and Sick of the parish.

The Mass is always well attended and is supported by Society of St Vincent de Paul members, and Parish Pastoral Council members were also in attendance.

The congregation are seated in alternate rows to facilitate the priests' distribution of The Eucharist and Anointing of the Sick in their seat, during which time the choir set the scene under the direction of Brendan McKenna.

There was also blessing with relics of St Pio and St John Paul II at end of Mass for all the congregation.

Refreshments were enjoyed in the Fair Hill Youth Club, where a large team prepared the hall and served lovely tea, assisted by the Pope John Paul II Award students. Thank you to all who participated in the preparation of this joyful occasion.



The Great Shrines of France *by Dr Seán Beattie*



Vision of Sr Mary Margaret in Paray-le-Monial, France

THE Diocese of Derry participated in the Worldwide Marian Procession in June this year. The event was marked in six continents. Some of the great shrines of Western Europe in France, Spain and Portugal were involved. In terms of pilgrimage, many members of the Diocese will be familiar with Lourdes in particular. Among the many thousands of shrines in France, 19 are regarded as 'villes sanctuaires' (holy places).

I have a particular interest in the Shrines of France, as I was part of a small group from Moville Parish which participated in a tour of the shrines in that country some years ago. The priest in charge was the late Fr Hugh Gallagher,

then curate in Moville. We took the scenic, or slow route, driving to Rosslare and taking the ferry to Le Havre, a journey of about 24 hours. The mode of transport on the Continent was a Volkswagen 1300 Beetle, a cramped but lively car and ideal for both the great motorways of France and the narrow, winding mountain passes we travelled in the Pyrénées.

Our destinations in France included Lisieux, Lourdes, la Salette, Ars, Paray-le-Monial, Nevers and Paris. The tour involved three weeks' driving and that included up to 400 miles on some days.

Lisieux

Lisieux is the great shrine of St

Theresa, the Little Flower. Her arm is preserved in a reliquary in the Basilica. She was born in Alençon on January 2, 1873, and died as a Carmelite nun on September 30, 1897, aged 24. St is Patron of the Foreign Missions.

Leaving Lisieux, we headed for Lourdes, but broke the journey at Libourne, travelling through Alençon, Le Mans, Tours, Poitiers, Angoulême, and Barbezieux, a distance of 374 miles.

We had a long journey ahead, so we set off at 6.45am for Lourdes, a distance of 148 miles, travelling through some well-known French towns, such as Cadillac, Roquefort, and Tarbes. We managed to sample the strong, pungent flavours of the cheeses of Roquefort, a temporary nod to the culinary fame of the regions we went through, driving past the meadows of Ségala and the sheep folds dotting the Grands Causses. At Tarbes, the signs for Lourdes were few and pointed in the wrong direction to the world-famous shrine. At one of the petrol stations, a French man told us that the town had a Communist Mayor and he had little interest in promoting his nearest neighbour! To put this in context, Communism was at that time regarded as one of the great threats to western democracy. I can understand the chagrin of tourist chiefs watching thousands passing their town as they headed

to Lourdes.

Lourdes...the premier shrine

Nothing can prepare the pilgrim for a visit to the greatest shrine in France. The story of the humble shepherdess, who lived a short time on earth, is extremely moving.

On a grand scale, there is the spectacle of the torchlight procession as darkness falls and thousands of candles illuminate the town. The Basilica of the Immaculate Conception is awesome when the full liturgy of pilgrimage is celebrated.

The presence of so many invalids is a reminder of the gift of health and the spirit of hope surrounding a Lourdes pilgrimage.

La Salette

Following our stay in Lourdes, we travelled via Narbonne to the shrine at La Salette, some 1,800 metres high in the mountains. At the time of our visit, there was only a Basilica and two hostels, souvenir shops and a handful of houses, and barely accessible by road.

In this remote, desolate region, Our Lady appeared to two peasant children, a 15-year-old girl called Melanie and an 11-year-old boy named Maximin, on Saturday, September 19, 1846. The message was one of prayer and penance, similar in content to her message at Lourdes years later. A revelation

for Irish pilgrims, she spoke of the famine in the region a year earlier, an echo of the Great Famine in Ireland.

No longer remote, as the fame of the shrine has grown in recent years, following the upgrading of the access road, some 300,000 pilgrims salute Notre Dame de La Salette annually. Pilgrims must look after the body as well as the soul; the mountainous region celebrates foods with a Mediterranean touch, such as cheese gratins, fine pork dishes and poultry of the best quality.

Paray-le-Monial

Paray-le-Monial is a shrine in the Charolais region of France. A Benedictine Abbey was founded here in 973, so its claim to sanctity has deep roots. It was here that a mystic, Sr Margaret Mary Alacoque had a vision of Christ, which led to devotion to the Sacred Heart.

The First Fridays – attending Mass on the first Friday of every month – was promoted here, although the celebration of the First Fridays is not as common as in former years.

Ars

Our pilgrimage continued as we drove a further 70 miles to the small village of Ars. A priest, Fr John Vianney, later saint, known as the Curé of Ars, ministered here and was renowned for his piety and his one-line sermons.

I recall visiting the parochial house – now a museum – which

exhibited his metal-framed bed, in which the Devil attacked him and tried to set the bed on fire. Today, there is a fine Basilica. We stayed in a modest 'Pension', which was originally an orphanage, founded by the saint.

Nevers

Out next stop was the town of Nevers, where the body of St Bernadette is on display in her coffin.

Paris

Our final visit was to the chapel in the Rue du Bac, a short walk from the tourist sites of Boulevard Saint-Germain, with its world-famous Café de Flore, a haunt of Samuel Beckett when he lived in the City. The street takes its name from the ferry (le bac) that operated from close by. The saint associated with the chapel is St Catherine Labouré. It was here that the Miraculous Medal originated.

Our three-week pilgrimage was organised by a Pomeroy-born priest, Fr Hugh Gallagher (1913-1990), who grew up in Strabane. He promoted Marian devotion and is buried in Clonmany, Co Donegal, his final post as parish priest. He kept a diary of his travels and, in the final page, he thanks those who helped him fulfil a lifelong dream. Personally, I am grateful to him for organising the pilgrimage and for a copy of his diary, which he presented to me.

Devenish Island and the monastic call *by Fr Roland Colhoun*

DEVENISH Island is one of the most beautiful places in Fermanagh, even on a wet day. It was somewhat inclement on the second Thursday of June, but our little group of priests was undeterred. Devenish is a beautiful setting in lower Lough Erne, two miles north of Enniskillen. For me, it was a field trip for our Glenock Church project, part of my research into ancient monasteries. The interest arises largely because my parish of Newtown Stewart had several religious houses, in early and late medieval times, not least the landmark monastery of St Eugene in Ardstraw.

Contemporaneous with Ardstraw, Devenish is cherished by the people of Fermanagh, being perhaps its earliest and most significant sacred site. One of the best preserved of ancient Ireland's holy places, its monastery was founded by St Molaise in the sixth century. Molaise of Devenish – not his contemporary, St Molaise of Leighlin – is known as one of the 'Twelve Apostles of Ireland'. A century before them, St Patrick inspired the nation to turn to Christ. He couldn't have foreseen it, but his mission gave rise to a golden era of religious houses, in a Church which rapidly became the most monastic in Christendom.

Islands

Islands were attractive to monks of that epoch because of the solitude they offered for prayer and detachment. Some accounts say Devenish had 1,500 scholars at its height. An island within a lake, like Devenish, is not as rugged and windswept as an Atlantic location such as Inismurray, off the coast of Sligo, another of Molaise's foundations. Still, monks are hardy creatures who seek penance and mortification, and there are no leisurely monasteries, whatever the setting.

Devenish Island is fascinating as a window into antiquity yet breathtaking in its beauty and simplicity. It is a mile-and-a-quarter long and two-thirds of a mile wide, accessible only by boat. No causeway was ever constructed. The island has not had any inhabitants since 1922, and the lack of vehicular traffic has ensured that the place remains a peaceful destination for visitors. As a protected Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI), the rich wet grasslands enable its wildlife to thrive. The 154 acres have a slight gradient with a central ridge rising to 211 feet. Its original Irish name is 'Daimhinis', meaning 'Island of oxen', probably because its grassy terrain provided extensive pasture for cattle.

The boat trip from Enniskillen takes a leisurely 20 minutes, and

from the water one can see the principal features of the ruined monastery. There is, in remnant form, a small 12th-century oratory called St Molaise's House, which had a stone roof, the 'Teampall Mór', which served as the parish church for centuries, and St Mary's Abbey, probably built by the Augustinian Order in the 15th century.

The most striking feature is the bell tower from the ninth or 10th century. Eighty-one feet tall, it was most likely constructed as a response to raids by the Vikings, who plundered and burned Devenish in 827 and 923. The tower was a refuge for the monks, with its door high above ground level and the ladder drawn up. It is astonishing that the tower remains intact because the monastic walls and the other structures were gradually dismantled after the dissolution. The stones were taken for building projects, such as the Royal Military Barracks (1790) – now Enniskillen police station – and multiple houses and farms on the mainland. With today's appreciation of historic buildings, the recycling of yesteryear looks like an act of systematic vandalism.

Two Monastic Eras

There were two chapters in Ireland's medieval monasticism. The first millennium had the

native Irish establishing the religious communities (St Brigid, St Columba, St Bronagh, etc). The second millennium saw the arrival of the new Orders from Continental Europe, beginning with the Benedictines at Christ Church, Dublin in 1074, followed by the Cistercians at Mellifont, Co Louth, in 1142. Many of these monks availed of older sites that needed renewal or had fallen out of use.

The Augustinian Order came to Devenish Island, probably in the 12th century, and erected buildings in the European rectangular style, replacing the ancient Irish circular structures. Sadly, everything came to an end when the Crown seized the religious houses of Britain and Ireland, beginning under Henry VIII in the 1530s. With the signing of the Treaty of Mellifont (1603) and the subsequent collapse of Gaelic Ulster to the Plantation, Devenish, like hundreds of other sacred sites, had to be abandoned and stands idle to this day.

Most of us will never join a monastery or convent, but we are all asked to "proclaim that the Kingdom of God is close at hand" (Matthew 10:7). Furthermore, the hunger for solitude with Christ is deep in every heart. Not everyone realises this need for prayer, but it is innate. For you and me, a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the quiet

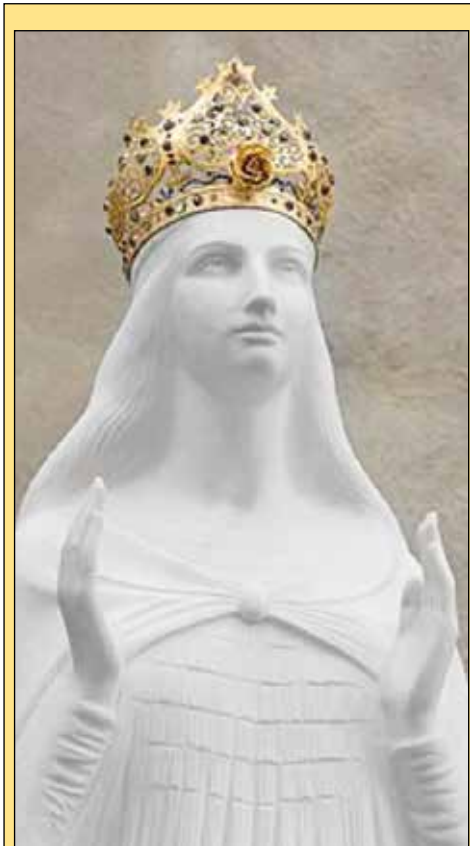
of the day is our monastic cell. The family Rosary is our Divine Office. The alarm clock is our convent bell. The Sunday Mass is our summons to the community chapel. The parish congregation is not made up of monks or nuns, but Christ wants everyone to discover that material goods alone do not satisfy.

And, of course, God continues to call young people to the religious life in our day. May the example of the religious communities, ancient and modern, inspire us to be generous, faithful and fruitful. After all, it is our duty to "proclaim that the Kingdom of God is at hand".



Fr Roland Colhoun and colleagues visiting Devenish Island, Co Fermanagh, on June 11.

Eangach



Dealbh de Mhuire san áit ar sheas sí i gCnoc Mhuire

Paidir do Mhuire an Chnoic

A Mhuire an Chnoic, a Bhanríon na hÉireann, Thug tú dóchas do do mhuintir in uaireanta na trioblóide agus thug tú sólás dóibh in uaireanta an bhróin.

Thug tú inspioráid do mhórán oilithrigh a bheith ag guí go muiníneach chuig do Mhac diaga, ag cuimhneamh ar ar gheall sé, “Iarraigí agus tabharfar dóibh, lorgaigí agus gheobhaidh sibh

Cuidigh liom gan dearmad a dhéanamh gur oilithrigh muid ar an bhealach chun na bhFlaitheas. Líon mé le grá agus cúram do mo bhráithreacha agus mo shiúracha i gCríost, go háirithe dóibh siúd a chónaíonn liom. Tabhar sólás dom nuair a bhíonn tinneas, uaigneas nó líonn dubh orm.

Teagasc dom an dóigh le páirt a ghlacadh san Aifreann Naofa ar bhealach níos urramaí. Tabhair dom grá níos mó d’Íosa sa tSacraimint Naofa. Guigho rm anois, agus ar uair mo bháis. Áiméan

A Mhuire na nGrás

A Mhuire na nGrás is a Mháthair Mhic Dé Go gcuire tú ar mo leas mé.

Go sabhála tú mé ar gach uile olc Go sabhála tú mé idir anam is chorp.

Go sabhála tú mé ar muir is ar tír Go sabhála tú mé ar leac na bpian.

Garda na nAingeal os mo chionn Dia romhaim is Dia liom.

Pilleadh ar Chnoc Mhuire

Roinnt míonna ó shin, ba é ábhar an ailt anseo ná eachtra a thit amach oíche amháin i gCnoc Mhuire, in 1872. Chomh maith, bhí sracfhéachaint ar na gnéithe ar leith an eachtra agus cuid den suntas a chuirtear le Cnoc Mhuire ón am sin ar aghaidh. Ba mhaith an rud é pilleadh arís air anseo leis an scéal a scrúdú giota níos doimhne. Mar a tharlaíonn sé, bhí deis agam féin pilleadh ar an áit féin idir an dá linn agus – cé nach raibh rud ar bith thar a bheith speisialta fá mo thuras féin ansin deireadh seachtaine amháin – mothaím go bhfuil meas agam ar Chnoc Mhuire atá níos daingne ná roimhe.

Ach ar dtús, is fiú machnamh arís ar mhionsonraí an eachtra féin. Ar an oíche sin, chonaic slua rud osnádúrtha ag balla binne na heaglaise – triúir osnádúrtha ina seasamh agus uan ina sheasamh ar altóir, timpeallaithe ag slua aingeal. D’aithin muintir na háite gurbh iad na daoine Naomh Iósaeif (ceann cromtha agus ag guí), Muire Máthair Dé (ag amharc i dtreo na bhflaitheas agus lámha ardaithe sa ghuí, agus coróin ar a ceann) agus Naomh Eoin Baiste (ag seanmóireacht agus na scríoptúir ar oscailt aige). Agus d’aithin siad an t-uan mar Íosa (.i. Uan Dé) faoi ghlóir ar an altóir. Is féidir léamh fán fhianaise a thug na daoine seo – agus neart eolais a fháil amach fá seo sa mhúsaem i gCnoc Mhuire.

Tá caitlicigh cleachta le rudaí mar seo a tharla roinnt áiteacha eile, a

bhfuil próifíl ard acu, amhail Lourdes nó Fátima. Tá gné mór amháin de scéal a dhéanann é a idirdhealú uathu – an ciúnas. Tháinig Muire le teachtaireacht ar leith sna cinn eile, thart ar an domhan. Labhair sí le daoine, agus thug sí teachtaireacht dóibh a raibh cuspóir ar leith léi (tugann Muire Mháthair cúram dá clan). Ní dúradh focal ag Cnoc Mhuire, ach d’fhan na daoine ag amharc, ‘fhad a bhí sé ar siúl. Is é seo ceann de na nithe is speisiúla fá chás Chnoc Mhuire.

Spréigh clú agus cáil na n-eachtraí seo ar fud na hÉireann, agus roimh i bhfad, thosaigh na sluaite ag teacht ar oilithreacht. Tógadh scrín bheag ar an láthair. Ansin, tháinig na míorúiltí! Bhí oilithrigh a fuair leigheas i ndiaidh dóibh teacht ar cuairt, nó paidreacha a rá chuig Maighean an Chnoc. Is léir gur spréigh níos faide i gcéin, m.sh. tháinig litir ón Astráil, scríofa ag Ardeaspag lena bhuíochas a léiriú as an leigheas a fuair duine thall. Tá fianaise ar na rudaí seo le feiceáil go fóill san iarsmalann i gCnoc Mhuire inniu.

Rinne an Eaglais fiosrú ar chuntais na ndaoine a chonaic an taispeánadh agus dheimhníodh go raibh an fhírinne i gceist. Ó shin i leith, mhéadaigh suntas Chnoc Mhuire i saol an chreidimh in Éirinn. Tógadh an Baisleac mór atá ann anois, chomh maith leis na rudaí eile ar an láthair: seipéal an athmhuintearais, seipéal na Sacraiminte Naofa. Tá seipéal



An mósáic sa Bhaileac i gCnoc Mhuire

tógtha ar an láthair ar ar tharla an taispeánadh, agus deilbh de na figiúir san áit chéanna agus a bhí siad in 1872. Tógadh aerfort sa cheantar

fosta – Aerfort Iarthar na hÉireann – agus tagann oilithrigh idirnáisiúnta ar cuairt.

Cad é an teachtaireacht dúinn inniu?

Is é seo an áit a n-éiríonn an cás speisiúil – níl aon teachtaireacht ann – ní sa ghnáthbhealach cibé. Tháinig Muire, Iósaeif, Eoin, agus Íosa (mar aon le haingil) agus ní dúirt siad focal amháin. Na focail a deirtear nó nach ndeirtear, agus na rudaí a dhéantar nó nach ndéantar – bíonn sin uilig d’aon turas, agus is cinnte go raibh rud ar leith le rá ag muintir neimhe.

Is dócha gurb é ceann de na rudaí is suntasaí ná an *siombalachas*. Chuaigh muintir na hÉireann fríd dhrocham ar fad sna blianta roimhe sin – an Drochshaol – agus dúirt an sagart paróiste 100 aifreann ar son anamacha na ndaoine siúd a fuair bás. Tá sé amhail is gur léiríodh cineál de chomhartha do na daoine nach raibh Dia ná Muire balbh ar a gcuid urnaithe agus a gcuid impi, d’ainneoin an chruatain.

Tá seans gurb é taispeánadh an Chnoic an t-aon cheann inar tháinig Muire agus coróin ar a ceann – Banríon na bhFlaitheas. Síltear go mbaineann seo leis an leabhar sa Bhíobla *Apacailipsis Eoin*. Bhí lámha agus súile Mhuire ardaithe i dtreo

na bhFlaitheas, bhí sí ag guí. Bhí Iósaeif ag guí fosta, i dtreo Íosa ar an altóir. Nasctar Eoin leis an leabhar *Apacailipsis* fosta. Eisean a scríobh é, ach thuig an slua a chonaic é, go raibh an leabhar *Apacailipsis* ar oscailt aige. Seo leabhar sa Bhíobla ina bpléitear eachtraí tábhachtacha a tharla, atá ar siúl, agus atá le tarlú amach anseo go dtaga Críost in athuair.

Taispeánadh Eocairisteach a bhí ann fosta! Is minic a labhrann muid fá Mhuire an Chnoic (agus is ceart dúinn) ach is léir go raibh Íosa ar an altóir ann. Is soiléir an siombalachas sin. Is é Íosa an tUan a cuireadh chun báis – is í an íobairt sin an rud atá san Aifreann. Is é an tUan sin an Eocairist a itheann muid agus a ólann muid. Ba é an t-aifreann a choinnigh na daoine ag dul in uaireanta deacra. D’aithin an Pápa Proinsias Cnoc Mhuire ina Scrín Idirnáisiúnta Mhuire & Eocairisteach.

Is é an ciúnas ceann de na rudaí is tábhachtaí fá Chnoc Mhuire. Iarrtar ort a bheith ag machnamh agus ag guí. Tá slua na bhFlaitheas ag iarraidh ort díriú ar nithe ar leith i do shaol san am ina bhfuil muid. Bí ag brath ar Mhuire

agus ag guí, ag brath ar Iósaeif. Amhail na daoine fadó, tiontaigh ar Dhia i lár an chruatain, is cuma cén rud a bheas ann sa toadhchaí (*Apacailipsis*).

Go lárnach, is é Íosa an tUan, Arán na Beatha, an Eocairist, an té ar cóir dúinn a bheith ag brath air.



Celebrating ordination anniversaries...

Diamond Jubilarian testifies to joy of priesthood



CELEBRATING 60 years of priesthood, Msgr Joseph Donnelly opened the homily for his Diamond Jubilee Mass by quoting St Paul's words to his disciple, Timothy – "I am reminding you to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you."

"In that statement," he explained, "lies an authentic reason for celebrating the Diamond Jubilee of Ordination to Priesthood...It is a celebration in gratitude for a gift – the gift of priesthood to the Church – a gift expressed in the celebration of the Eucharist and in the preaching of the Gospel Word."

Wearing light-blue vestments bearing a beautiful image of Our Lady, Msgr Joseph added: "It is also a celebration in thanksgiving, in honour of our Blessed Mother, Mary, Mother of God and Mother of priests."

Welcoming all gathered in Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Steelstown, the parish where he now lives since retiring as parish priest of Drumragh, Omagh, the 84-year-old recalled a recent visit to Maynooth for the Jubilee Celebrations, saying: "Members of the various ordination classes – Silver, Golden and Diamond – were there. There were even two priests present who were ordained 70 years ago. Among the Diamond Jubilarians you can guess what the main topic of conversation was about. It was mostly, 'who is still alive and who is dead since we last met?' There is nothing like a Jubilee to remind you of your mortality! Nevertheless, it was good to meet up and compare notes."

Msgr Joseph was the main celebrant of the Mass on the evening of Friday, June 19, and he was joined on the altar by a Canon lawyer friend from America, Fr James Conn, who celebrates 60 years as a Jesuit, Fr Paul McCafferty VG, and Fr John McDevitt, former Steelstown PP, with Bishop Donal presiding, and Fr Declan McGeehan, current parish priest

of Steelstown, and Fr Peter O'Kane assisting. In addition, present were a number of fellow priests from around the Diocese, members of Msgr Joseph's family, friends and parishioners, with many tuned in on-line, including his sister, Anne and family in Canada.

A native of Ballinascreen, Msgr Joseph came third in the family of five born to Mary (nee Kelly) and Joseph Donnelly, which included two older brothers, Sean and Seamus, now deceased, and two younger sisters, Anne, Canada, and Maire, Maghera.

As well as the influence of growing up in a traditional Catholic home, his faith and vocation were nurtured through the clerical heritage of both parents' families. His mother's brother, Fr Mick, was a Columban priest. She also had an uncle, Joseph Kelly, who was a teacher and later joined the Carmelites in Dublin, while his father's grand-aunt had three sons ordained to the priesthood. One ministered in an American diocese, another was a priest in Westminster – Msgr James Moyes, and the third, Fr John Moyes ministered in the Parish of Garvagh, in the Derry Diocese, and is buried there.

His home parish and school communities – Straw PS and St Columba's College, where he boarded for five years in the late 50s – also played an important role in his formation in the faith and the path to priesthood that led him to the seminary at Maynooth.

Following in the footsteps of his older brothers, he served on the altar of St Columba's Church, Straw, and remembers serving at the Mass celebrating the centenary of the Church in 1953. The two priests that stand out most in his memory of those bygone days are the late Fr Michael Collins and Fr McNally, who had a big influence on him.

Recalling that the notion of priesthood had been there from

an early age, Msgr Joseph said: "Priesthood was always somewhere in my mind, particularly with my mother's clerical connections, and this was developed during my time at St Columba's. By the time I met Bishop Neil Farren to indicate my desire to go to Maynooth, I would have had a strong feeling that I was being called to be a priest."

He went on to reflect on his time in the seminary, saying: "About five from the Diocese went to Maynooth at that time, and there would have been other fellows from St Columba's already there. Back then, the first three years involved doing a BA Degree, and I studied Latin, French and Scholastic Philosophy. I would have preferred to study Irish, but French turned out to be very useful as, in the early 60s, a lot of research on Scripture was coming from the Ecole Biblique, in Jerusalem, and was published in French. However, I regret not pursuing Irish. My grandmother on my father's side was one of the last native Irish speakers in Ballinascreen."

Sport

"We had lectures on a daily basis, but there was also a good bit of sport, which was a blessing as a relief from the study. I had played Gaelic football for Ballinascreen and had a couple of County medals at Club level, so it was good to continue to play at Maynooth. Derry would also have been known for its soccer, and so I played for the Diocese of Derry as well. Then the rugby got going and I enjoyed that too. It was good entertainment."

While he enjoyed the seminary, both of his parents passed away during this time; a year-and-a-half before his ordination.

Ordained with 64 others in St Patrick's College, Maynooth, on Sunday, June 19, 1966, by the Archbishop of Dublin, John Charles McQuaid, Msgr Joseph recalled there being a surplus of priests in the Derry Diocese at that time, adding: "Apart from a month's supply work in Strabane in July, 1966, my first appointment in the Diocese was not till Halloween that year to the Parish of Drumragh, Omagh."

In 1968, he was appointed to St Columba's College, Derry, where he spent 10 happy years as spiritual director and teacher of Religious Education during a time of transition for the College, with the relocation from Bishop Street to new premises on the Buncrana Road.

"The exam programme was also developing at that time," recalled Msgr Joseph, "with A-level

RE recognised as a qualifying subject. It was a very interesting programme to work on."

During this period, he also assisted in the Marriage Tribunal, which was in a process of transition as well, with Regional Marriage Tribunals being set up in the country.

"As much out of curiosity as of genuine interest," remarked Msgr Joseph, "I spent the summer of 1977 in the Boston Metropolitan Tribunal in order to find out how they did things across the water. At that time, the American Church had special norms, for a limited period of time, for processing marriage cases, in some ways similar to the norms that Pope Francis introduced subsequently for the universal Church."

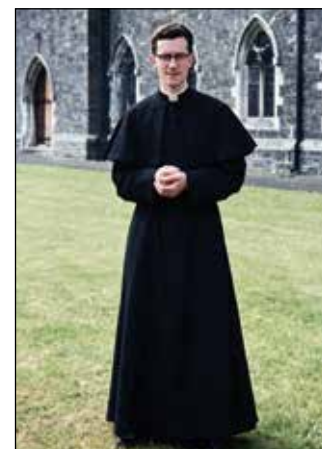
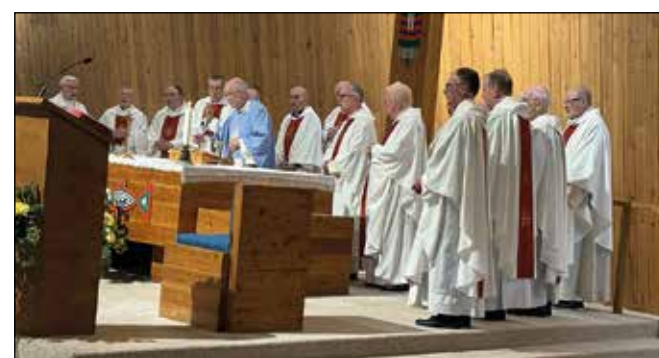
"While in Boston, I was advised to pursue studies in Canon Law. Bishop Daly very kindly encouraged me to do so. From 1978-1980, I studied Canon Law in the Catholic University of America, in Washington DC, and acquired the necessary degrees for work in the Tribunal."

He went on to recall: "At the end of my studies, I took quite ill and ended up in hospital. Thanks to the great kindness and care of good friends there, I was restored to health and am forever grateful to those friends who have since gone to their eternal reward."

Returning to Derry, he was appointed to St Brigid's, Carnhill, in September 1980, where the administrator, the late Fr Seamus O'Connell, ensured that he had a year of recuperation until he was appointed as Director of the Diocesan Pastoral Centre in Bishop Street, where he spent the next 15 years working mostly with the Regional Marriage Tribunal. He also assisted in parishes at the weekends, particularly St Brigid's, Carnhill, and, later, Maghera, and had some diocesan responsibilities for a period as Vicar General for Bishop Daly and Bishop Hegarty. During this period, in 1993, he was elevated to the rank of Monsignor by Pope John Paul II, on the recommendation of Bishop Daly, for his valuable service to the Church through his involvement with the Marriage Tribunal.

In 1996, he was appointed as parish priest of Iskaheen & Upper Moville. His first time to take responsibility for a parish, Msgr Joseph recalled: "It was quite a challenge at first, but I soon experienced the support and care of a parish community. I spent six happy years there."

His second appointment as parish priest saw him return



Celebrating ordination anniversaries...

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to the Parish of Drumragh, in 2002, where he ministered to a community devastated by the consequences of the Omagh bomb a few years earlier.

"The community worked together to overcome the effects of the tragedy and showed a resilience and determination that was noted throughout the country and beyond," commented Msgr Joseph, adding: "There were other sad and tragic events too and, each time, the people of the parish and extended community cooperated in the aftermath in a show of support and solidarity."

"I had the privilege of serving in Drumragh for 15 years, and knew the support and care of the people first-hand. I came to an understanding, and this seems a truism, that it is the people that make the parish. The priest serves, but the people call the priest into service. It has been my great privilege to learn the call of the priesthood among the people of Drumragh over those years."

Marriage Tribunal

Alongside parish ministry, Msgr Joseph was involved with Marriage Tribunal work for over 53 years, including at national level, and retired from it just over a year ago.

Commenting on the experience, he said: "It was a form of ministry that I enjoyed, with good support from others in the field. There were many sad and difficult cases. Many people got a lot of healing from the process, through getting an opportunity to talk it out. Some marriages had broken down within the first few years, and others could have been after 30 or 40 years."

Retiring from active parish ministry in 2017, Msgr Joseph now happily helps out in the parishes of Steelstown and Culmore. He remarked: "At a time when the number of priests is far reduced from the time that I was ordained, I am glad to be of some help. As long as I am able, I hope to do so."

Highlighting that the Gospel passage read at his Jubilee Mass (Jn 21:15-17) had touched on the essence of all priestly ministry, Msgr Joseph said: "The Lord is confirming Peter in the role of pastor of the flock. There is one requirement for that ministry. Peter is asked three times did he love the Lord. Three times he affirmed his love."

"Love is the essential requirement – love of the Lord in Himself and in His presence in the community of believers. And the Lord returns that love a hundredfold. I have been blessed all my life with the love of my family, of my friends, of my colleagues in ministry, of the people I served. Such affirmation is a source of comfort, strength and joy."

The joy of priesthood

Msgr Joseph concluded with a note on the joy of priesthood,

which had been a theme reflected on during a recent priests' retreat in Dromantine: "In these troubled times, those two – joy and priesthood – are not often associated. I can testify to the truth of that link. A priest by the name of Fr Stephen Rossetti wrote extensively on the subject and was quoted during the Retreat."

"Fr Rossetti stated – 'Priesthood is not only a satisfying and meaningful life, but also there is the sound of joy buried in our hearts that makes us at home wherever we are. Most of the time, this joy is slightly below the surface, out of sight from others and, often, out of reach from our own conscious selves. But it is there...bringing peace and contentment'."

"I know the truth of that statement and I know it springs from the pastoral ministry. And I have the people to whom I ministered to thank for the privilege of experiencing that joy."

Having dedicated the celebration of his Diamond Jubilee to the honour of the Blessed Mother, Mary, Msgr Joseph felt there was no better way to finish than by using Mary's song: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."

The seed for his love for Our Lady was first sown in the family home through the praying of the Rosary every evening and a general devotion to Mary. And, in recent years, he has enjoyed going on pilgrimages from Holy Family Parish, Ballymagroarty, to Lourdes and Medjugorje. He has also been associated with the Intercession for Priests since the early 80s, which involves the praying of the Rosary and Eucharistic healing for the spiritual and pastoral renewal of Catholic priests. Created by the late Fr Kevin Scallion and Sr Brieghe McKenna, the Intercession for Priests ministry includes an annual Day of Prayer for Priests at the international Eucharistic and Marian Shrine of Knock, in Co Mayo, and a week of prayer in Maynooth, starting on August 10 this year.

Thanking all who had helped with preparations for his Jubilee Mass and the refreshments after, and those who had taken part in the liturgy, including the wonderful Folk Group, Msgr Joseph expressed delight that so many had joined him afterwards for refreshments in the nearby Steelstown PS, and enjoyed a slice of scrumptious anniversary cake!



Celebrating ordination anniversaries...

Porridge in the morning and prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament core part of life for...

Fr Jack Farrell celebrating 70 wonderful years of priesthood



THE celebration of Fr Jack Farrell's Platinum Jubilee was a wonderful community occasion in Clonmany, with parishioners joining residents and friends of St Columbcille Village, and around 20 members of the clergy, in marking the Coleraine native's 70 years of priesthood.

Bishop Donal was the main

celebrant of the anniversary Mass in St Mary's Church on the evening of June 17, and he was joined on the altar by Fr John McDevitt, PP Clonmany & Culdaff, and Clonmany natives, Fr Michael Canny and Fr Paul Farren, and Fr Michael Sweeney.

The young people of the parish were involved in the liturgy, with

local school children leading the Prayer of the Faithful.

Honoured to deliver the homily on such a special occasion, Fr Paul Farren remarked: "It is an incredible milestone to reach. You could only be full of joy to witness this day."

Congratulating Fr Jack, and expressing gratitude to God for calling him to priesthood, and for his 'yes', Fr Paul went on to highlight another special anniversary within the Church this year: "We celebrate the 800th anniversary of the death of St Francis of Assisi. It is incredible to think that St Francis was only 730 years dead when you were ordained!"

Recalling the story of St Francis being asked by Jesus to repair His Church, and him repairing the one he had been kneeling in when the request came, only to come to realise that Jesus had meant to build up the Church as in the Body of Christ, the people of God, Fr Paul said that he was reminded of this when thinking about Fr Jack's 70 years as a priest.

"You built churches, you repaired churches," he noted, adding: "You built Burt Church, the building of the Millennium. When you came to this parish,

you set about repairing all three churches. You did it in record time and left substantial money in the bank too.

"However, like St Francis, your vision went beyond the buildings. You built up the people of God, and you did it in a very simple, consistent and clear way, with a message that you never deviated from. After 70 years that message is embedded in you and you continue to proclaim it today."

Having previously asked the 95-year-old what he would like him to say at his anniversary Mass, Fr Paul told those gathered: "The first thing he said was, 'Tell them I was lucky I wasn't fired!' When we got over that point, Fr Farrell told me, 'Without exposition of the Blessed Sacrament we are lost. It is all about Jesus present in the Blessed Sacrament.' Fr Farrell went on to say, 'You have to appreciate the people. If you haven't the people with you, you have nothing. Meet the people and talk to them about Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament'."

Adding that Fr Jack then said something that revealed so much about him today, and something that transforms lives, Fr Paul went on to quote him, saying: "Learn to love to pray and do it every day.



Celebrating ordination anniversaries...

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That is the most important thing.”
“At the end of our chat,” he continued, “Fr Farrell paraphrased the Gospel we have just heard. He told me when Jesus was sending the Apostles out to the neighbouring villages to proclaim the Gospel, the Apostles asked what are we to say to the people. Jesus told them to tell the people the Master loves you.

Blessed Sacrament

“All that Fr Farrell told me in preparation for his Platinum Jubilee was all that he said over so many years as a priest. He told us, and he continues to tell us, that Jesus loves us and that we need to pray, and that we need to pray in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, and to pray to Mary, our Mother.”

Quoting the words of Mother Teresa, “The fruit of silence is prayer, the fruit of prayer is faith, the fruit of faith is love, the fruit of love is service, the fruit of service is peace,” Fr Paul remarked to Fr Jack: “This sums up what you live and to continue to teach us after 70 years.”

Fr Jack was ordained by Archbishop John Charles McQuaid, along with 72 others, including Fr Joe Carolan, Fr George McLaughlin and Fr John Ryder. The places where he ministered included: Basildon, in the Brentwood Diocese; St Columb's College; Craighane; Burt, Inch & Fahan; Melmount; Knockmoyle; Dungiven; San Diego; Moville; and, finally, 30 years ago, he was appointed to Clonmany.

“Really, when you think about it,” remarked Fr Paul, “your ministry to date has been divided in two. There were the first 40 years preparing to come here to Clonmany, and 30 years to date here in Clonmany!”

“Clonmany is so glad that you are still with us 30 years later and, today, on this 70th anniversary of your ordination, we can say that we have adopted you as one of

our own!”

At the end of Mass, Clonmany parish priest, Fr John McDevitt extended congratulations to Fr Jack on behalf of the parish community, which prompted applause from the congregation. He then announced that Pope Leo XIV had sent his blessing for the Platinum Jubilarian, and this was presented to Fr Jack by Fr Michael Canny.

The fabulous choir for the Mass set a joyous tone for the occasion, which continued with lively music and song very much part of the celebration afterwards in St Columbcille Village, where Fr Jack resides and enjoys the best of care. As well as a delicious, hot finger-buffet, there were sweet treats, including ice-cream served with wafers featuring a facial image of Fr Jack.

Reminiscing later with some former parishioners, Fr Jack recalled his first, unintentional expression of interest in priesthood: “Dr McGurk taught me in St Columb's. One day he asked the boys if any were thinking of going to Maynooth. I put my hand up, but I hadn't been thinking of going!”

Reflecting on the parishes he had ministered in, he recalled: “I worked in England after I was ordained, and the parish priest said to me to go around knocking on every door to find out where the Catholics were. I enjoyed doing that and the people were mostly very friendly.”

Saying that the parishioners in the various places he had served had been “good people”, he went on to say that he was “very fond of Clonmany”.

Born in 1931, Fr Jack said of his big age: “I feel good. I'm 95 and waiting for the knock on the door, but I say that I don't want to hear any knocks today. I am up every day. I don't have many pains and I take my food. I have a lot to be grateful for.”

Sharing the secret of his long life, he revealed: “Eating porridge in the morning!”



Celebrating ordination anniversaries...

After an eventful start to priesthood, from burning protests on streets of Derry to welcoming bonfires on hills around Rouskey on evening of his Ordination Day...

Fr Bradley celebrates 30 years ministering under protection of Our Lady



MISSING out on celebrating the Silver Jubilee of his priesthood due to Covid restrictions, Fr Francis Bradley was delighted to be able to celebrate his 30th anniversary with family, friends and parishioners in Inishowen, where he is responsible for two parishes, and in Rouskey, Co Tyrone, where he was born and reared.

The parish priest of Buncrana, and Burt, Inch & Fahan, welcomed Bishop Donal, fellow priests, and the large congregation to St Mary's Church, Cockhill, for the Pearl Anniversary Mass on Sunday, June 28.

Present for the occasion were retired parish priests, Fr Neil McGoldrick and Fr John R Walsh, who were remembered by Fr Francis for their particular contributions to the occasion of his ordination.

Ordained by Bishop Seamus Hegarty in St Eugene's Cathedral, along with Joe Gormley and Kieran Page (now resigned), he recalled: "We were graciously accommodated that day by a very helpful Cathedral Administrator – one Fr Neil McGoldrick. Bishop Hegarty had asked that we discontinue the tradition of going to hotels for receptions, instead, we were to use other venues. My family and guests had a reception at St Columb's College, where we were accommodated by a very helpful President, Fr John R Walsh.

"And that really has been the theme of the priesthood for me since, while I am in any place to be of service to God's people, it is really they who have accommodated me, with my cracks and flaws. And together with Fr Baker and Fr Brady, it is my unexpected privilege now to be serving as a priest alongside Fr Walsh and Fr McGoldrick."

Reflecting on the society into which he was ordained on July 7, 1996, Fr Francis said: "It was the day of the second Drumcree protest in Portadown...as we stretched out on the sanctuary of the Cathedral and the Litany of the Saints was chanted over us, Brid Rodgers of the SDLP was lying out across the Garvaghy Road demanding that the rights of the residents be upheld; a different type of litany was being chanted over her! 1996 was midway between the 1994 ceasefire and the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. As we left the city that evening to

make our way back to Tyrone, the Bogside and the Waterside were on fire, with burning barricades everywhere; Loyalist farmers had blocked most roads through Newbuildings and all the way to Strabane.

"But this scene of hostility and protest gave way to a much more welcoming atmosphere, for as we approached the valleys at home a golden glow lit the sky, as 12 bonfires had been lit in celebration on the 12 Sperrin hills and Mutterloney mountains around home. And what I feel in my heart that I'm celebrating today is that, by God's gift, that fire of faith is still burning in me and in us, in the parish from which I came and these parishes in which I'm privileged to serve - in so many homes and places; it's alive in each of our lives.

"Sometimes we are tempted to see only the flaws and weaknesses of our own lives, the Church of which we're part, or the world in which we live. But what the priesthood has taught me is that the fire of faith is alive not despite our flaws and weaknesses, but because of them. Faith is not about us, it's about God's great love, the golden repair of His mercy and the delight He takes in us. And, truth be told, we all need moments like this to rekindle that fire."

Saying that he had found that fire rekindled in so many ways over the past 30 years, the 56-year-old continued: "I have experienced a real sense of welcome and hospitality from so many people in that time. While my role as a priest is to welcome people whatever their background or experience, and to encourage them in making a place available to them in the community of the Church, over and over and over again, I, like most of my brother priests here, have been more the beneficiary of the hospitality and welcome of others.

Sacrifices

"There are sacrifices which we must make, yes, but they are no more demanding than the sacrifices many people must make – parents looking after children, an elderly couple looking after each other, a teacher dedicating herself to her pupils, a nurse to her patients, a man or woman working long hours so that a family or a business can be kept afloat. While we, as priests, have many people who cooperate with us in our work – offices, agencies, co-workers – there are other hidden people whose quiet generosity and personal friendship go far beyond what we might see as reasonable. These people are you. In so many ways, your help and support, your friendship and kindness, the fact that you ask us to help you in prayerful support, make our lives better and our ministry more effective. Your company is invaluable.

"And, yes, there are many miracles brought about by this, not just by the prayers of the priest but by the kindness of his people. It was thanks to the faith and kindness of my parents, Mickey and Eileen, and so many of you, that I was allowed to hear God's call. And, as Christ has said, even a cup of cold water given will not go unrewarded."

Recalling Bishop Hegarty telling them on their ordination day to have faith and courage as they ministered, Fr Francis said: "Not only did he encourage us to care for those whom we would serve and commend us to the care of those we would serve, but he placed us under the protection of Mary."

He concluded: "As I thank God and you for the blessing of celebrating this Pearl Anniversary of 30 years of priesthood, I am particularly thankful for the slow unfurling of the liquid gold of God's grace, a gentle, unforced rhythm I experience every day, especially in prayer. It is not an overnight transformation; it is the quiet, daily realisation that you and I are held, accepted exactly as we are, and steadily being made new. And this is my prayer for each of you. It is such a joy as a priest to eaves-drop on God's quiet unfolding of His mercy. I thank Him and I thank you for that joy."

After Mass, the celebrations continued in the Inishowen

Gateway Hotel, where over 400 people enjoyed a turkey and ham dinner, followed by apple tart and custard, before the floor was cleared for dancing to 'Hitched'. An impressively huge anniversary cake, in the shape of a bible, was also enjoyed.

Presentations were made to Fr Francis, including a specially commissioned painting of the life-size statue of Friar Seamus Hegarty that had been erected last year at Fr Hegarty's Rock. Delighted with the painting, he was also very moved by tributes paid to him, including one by his eldest nephew, Daragh, and Fionán Bradley, MC for the proceedings, who spoke of how, as parish priest, Fr Francis often stands at the altar and celebrates different moments for families, but on this special occasion the tables were turned, and the families stood at the altar celebrating him.

In the tribute on behalf of his family, Daragh said that it meant a lot to see so many people present who had been part of Fr Francis' priesthood journey during the past 30 years.

Sharing a funny memory, Daragh said to his uncle: "When I was younger, I used to genuinely think you were the smallest priest in Ireland...and I'm still not entirely convinced that I was wrong! But what you may have lacked in height, you more than made up for in heart, presence, and the way you always seemed to stand a little taller when someone needed you.

"That's really what stands out most about you - your kindness and your steady support. Whether it was advice, encouragement, or simply being there, you've always had time for people and you've always made them feel valued. That's something we've felt very strongly as a family, and something we never take for granted.

"You've been a constant example to all of us - not just as a priest, but as a person. If anyone ever asks what a good life looks like, I think yours would be a pretty strong answer. You've been the best example our family could possibly have. So, tonight is really just a small way of saying thank you for 30 years of service, for the lives you've touched, and for simply being you. Congratulations, Fr Francis, and here's to many more years ahead."



Celebrating ordination anniversaries...



Thanking God for the blessings of 30 years as a priest, Fr Bradley urges Rouskey faithful to...

Pray for more labourers in the harvest

ST Mary's Church, Rouskey, in the Parish of Badoney Lower, Co Tyrone, was the scenic, rural setting for the celebration of a second Mass to mark Fr Francis Bradley's Pearl Anniversary, this time on the actual date that he was ordained to the priesthood 30 years ago... July 7.

Old family friends and neighbours were joined by members of Fr Francis' family for the evening Mass, which he concelebrated with Fr Brian Donnelly PP and Fr James Devine CC, priests of the Sperrins Pastoral Area.

Naomh Iosáf Community Choir travelled all the way from the Illies, outside Buncrana, to provide the magnificent music and singing for the home celebration of their parish priest's three decades of priesthood.

During his homily, Fr Francis reflected on his 18-year journey from Rouskey to the parishes of Desertegney & Lower Fahan (Buncrana) and Burt, Inch & Fahan, saying: "With 12 years behind me there now, and many more, I hope and pray, before me, in celebrating 30 years of priesthood, what I have discovered in the parishes I now serve is exactly the same faith and kindness and devotion as I saw and experienced in this parish as I grew up.

"In both places, God hides in plain view; He's right before your eyes,

right within your reach. I guess that what I've learnt these past 30 years is that, five years ago, when it was our Silver Jubilee, we were in the midst of lockdowns and Covid. Nothing was possible. I remember coming here to the chapel, this evening five years ago, and celebrating Mass with my family and two friends. Dad was here and Mam was resting in the graveyard close by. Now, they both rest there and we're back again. I remember their faith and devotion to one another, and the goodness and kindness of their hearts and souls, which has left a lasting legacy in their wake.

"The reason I am celebrating 30 years is that, five years ago, when it was our Silver Jubilee, we were in the midst of lockdowns and Covid. Nothing was possible. I remember coming here to the chapel, this evening five years ago, and celebrating Mass with my family and two friends. Dad was here and Mam was resting in the graveyard close by. Now, they both rest there and we're back again. I remember their faith and devotion to one another, and the goodness and kindness of their hearts and souls, which has left a lasting legacy in their wake.

"Tonight, I want to honour that legacy and tell you that it is the joy of my heart to witness that legacy borne out by many more people. There are real treasures to be found here, and they're not all buried beneath the ground or the subject of Government enquiries. For those who wish to stop for a moment and reflect, they are easily discovered, for they are in the air we breathe, in the help we offer one another, in the prayers we say and

the good we wish upon all whom we meet. That is the lasting legacy of these Mutterloney Mountains."

Commenting on the current situation in the Church, Fr Francis said: "In this parish, which, despite the hard work and diligence of three priests - Fr Donnelly, Fr Devine and Fr Colhoun, has no resident priest, and this despite having provided priests to the diocese for decades and centuries, we know only too well the need to pray for and support the prospect of a Vocation to the Priesthood. If we continue to do that, then there will be more priests.

"As Jesus did in the Gospel, so today we all need to put a limit and curb on evil, to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom, and to cure all kinds of sickness and disease, especially hopelessness and fatigue. And priests need priests as much as lay people do. We thank God for the priests we have, and we pray that there will be more labourers in the harvest.

"When I was ordained, I think I was the tenth priest in just over 100 years from the townland of Aughnamerrihan, and there were only 14 houses in it at the time. Interestingly, one of those priests now lies buried at the door of the chapel in Cockhill, where I live - Fr Peter Tracey, who was

one of my predecessors as Parish Priest of Buncrana. He was born at Cloughfin, Cookstown, but his roots lay in Aughnamerrihan, and he died on September 23, 1944. More priests will come - of that, I am sure!"

Concluding by thanking God for the blessings of 30 years as a priest, he added: "I thank God for each of you here and for many more besides, and as one, we pledge our hearts and souls to working together in the vineyard of the Lord, sowing seeds of hope and reaping a harvest of joy."

Congratulating Fr Francis on behalf of the parish, and thanking him for his 'yes' to the calling to priesthood and service to the Diocese, Fr Donnelly went on to speak of the need for this precious gift.

Noting that Pope Leo XIV had highlighted the importance of proclaiming the Gospel, Fr Brian said: "We are all called into this orchestra of faith, the Gospel. We all have different talents, but together we form the Body of Christ."

All were invited to Rouskey Community Centre across the road for refreshments and a slice of the giant anniversary cake, and to enjoy the musical entertainment.

Celebrating ordination anniversaries...

Wonderful celebration in Dregish for SMA Golden Jubilarian

THE Golden Jubilee of Fr Peter McCawille was an opportunity for the people of Dregish, and in many parishes beyond, to express their appreciation of the SMA Father for his unstinting ministry amongst them since returning home on retiring from missionary service.

The Dregish Community Group organised a celebration Mass in St Mary's Church on Friday, June 12, the Feast of the Sacred Heart, and refreshments afterwards in St Eugene's Hall.

Overwhelmed by the number of well-wishers, Fr Peter told 'The Net' that he felt "greatly blessed" in being able to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of his ordination in the church where he was ordained 50 years ago.

"It was a wonderful gathering of family and friends from many different local parishes," he said, adding: "Thanks to them all for their thoughtfulness, devotion and generosity."

Born on July 13, 1948, in Omagh County Hospital, Co Tyrone, he was the second in a family of four boys and one girl born to Nora (nee McCanney, a native of Sloughan Glen, Drumquin) and Peter McCawille.

His primary education, from 1954 to 1960, was at Envagh Primary School, which was a stone's throw from his home. He recalled being "enormously influenced by the headmaster Charles McGrath", who taught

him "a love of words and an enthusiasm for language". He went on to attend Omagh Christian Brothers' School, from 1960-1967, where he completed his A-levels in French, Latin and Irish.

Reflecting on his first contact with the SMA, Fr Peter recalled: "It came about in 1962, during a few days' family holiday in Bundoran. For no particular reason, I wandered down to the beach on the first morning, where I spotted half a dozen fellas playing soccer on the smooth sand. I had long ago developed a great interest in soccer, though I also played Gaelic, but not with the same interest or enthusiasm."

"While standing on the fringes observing the game, one of them, Fr Brian O'Kane, SMA, asked if I would like to join in. Only then did I discover they were seminarians studying for the priesthood and, interestingly, another member of the group was Barney Curley, at that time a seminarian and later a professional gambler and race horse owner."

"I had never heard of the SMA or Dromantine, where they were then studying, until that encounter in Bundoran."

SMA proposal

He continued: "Over the next few years, I thought a little about priesthood but made no definite decision about joining until a SMA Vocations Director arrived

at the school one day to talk to me, just before I completed my A-levels. He made a proposal which appealed to me in regard to joining the SMA and continuing my third-level education."

"A few months later, a letter arrived at my house. I had already skedaddled to the Isle of Man for a summer job, to avoid being at home when the letter arrived, since I had not mentioned to anybody that I had been entertaining even vague thoughts about becoming a missionary."

"However, in September 1967, I took my first steps in the direction of being a priest when I joined my classmates and began the Spiritual Year in a place called Kilcolgan, Co Galway. The Spiritual Year was completed in July 1968 and, in October 1968, I was enrolled at UCC for an Arts degree."

In December 1968, the SMA authorities decided for the first time in the history of the Irish SMA Province that the following September, 1969, two classes of SMA students should move from Dromantine College to Maynooth College for the beginning of the 1969/1970 academic year.

"From 1969-1976," said Fr Peter, "I spent among the most rewarding years of my life up to then, studying in Maynooth, which was then buzzing with life, having welcomed a huge number of lay students who enrolled at St Patrick's College to pursue a secular degree, though they were

not enrolling at the Seminary, which was on the same campus."

On June 27, 1976, he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Edward Daly in St Mary's Church, Dregish, and three months later, in October 1976, he was appointed to serve in Ilorin Diocese, Nigeria, where he spent the next 14 years, until he was recalled to Cork city to take over as editor of the SMA Magazine, with a circulation of 75,000 issues six times a year.

Fr Peter was editor from December 1989 to March 2000, when he returned to Nigeria and spent the next 21 years fundraising for the education and training of young Nigerian students, who were beginning their studies to become SMA missionaries, like their Irish SMA counterparts did in bygone years.

When he came home on leave in July 2021, Fr Peter's missionary career was prematurely interrupted in February 2022, when he had a stroke, and he decided to bring to an end his African adventure.

For the past few years, Fr Peter has been exercising his pastoral ministry in a number of parishes in the Archdiocese of Armagh, and the Dioceses of Derry and Clogher, which is greatly appreciated by both clergy and laity.



Fr Peter with extended family.



Fr Peter with Fr Brian O'Kane SMA and Fr John Gilmore, Aghyaran.



Fr Peter with his siblings, l-r, Gerard, Noreen McElroy, Michael and Willie.



Ruach...Breath of the Spirit

Behold The Lamb of God by Fr Eamonn Kelly

WHEN Jesus was about to leave this earthly life, He made a promise that He would remain with His people for all time. In this promise, Jesus gave us the Eucharist, the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. Jesus left this memorial of His suffering and death to remind us that we are merely passing through this life and that He has a bigger plan for us all.

When we celebrate Eucharist, we unite our lives, our sufferings, our joys, our loss, or happiness and our grief with the experience of Jesus so that, as Jesus was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we might bring new and deeper hope into our lives. We have the promise of Jesus to rely on – "I am the living bread which has come down from Heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh for the life of the world."

The Eucharist is an amazing reality. It is a reality for which the disciple would give his life. For the believer it is the source and summit of faith. For the non-believer it is the silliest thing imaginable. Between these two flagpoles of opinion, there are a thousand million ideas on the Eucharist and the meaning of the Body and Blood of Christ. However, while all the ideas and opinions exist, they cannot all be truly valid. To deepen our understanding and be authentic in our believing, we need to go to the source of our teaching on Eucharist and ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten us.

The celebration of Eucharist did not take place by chance. It was prepared for. It was planned. The disciples, as practicing Jews, wanted to celebrate Passover and so did Jesus. In Mark's Gospel (12:14-16), we read: "On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrifice the Passover lamb, His disciples asked Jesus, 'Where do you want us to go and prepare the Passover so you may eat it?' So, He sent two of His disciples and told them, 'Go into the city, and a man carrying a water jug will meet you. Follow him. Wherever he enters, tell the owner of the house, The

Teacher says, where is the guest room for Me to eat the Passover with My disciples? He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready. Make the preparations for us there.' So, the disciples went out, entered the city, and found it just as He had told them, and they prepared the Passover."

Passover

None of the disciples would have been under any illusion that the Passover celebration would be central to Jesus and His ministry. The preparations would include getting the room physically ready, preparing the food and wine, and especially getting the proper size and weight of Lamb that would be eaten by all present.

As the disciples and Jesus gathered in towards the table, each one was familiar with the ritual – the words, the symbols, the gestures, the dress code and the offerings. It would have been a startling moment when Jesus changed the old into the new; when He took the familiar and made it unique; when He took the tradition and created a new, fuller meaning. The physical change was not lost on the disciples.

You can almost see their surprised faces as they realise what is happening. They probably look at one another to see if others are noticing the change as well. The gasp of surprise is almost audible, when we consider the shock of the disciples as Jesus changes the words used in tradition for centuries and replaces them with new phrases, meaning, significance and importance. You can almost feel the fierce gaze of the disciples and apostles as they look to see if Peter and John and James were in similar shock.

Taking the bread and wine, using the direct words "This is My body," "This is My blood," Jesus changes the past into the present, the future into the now, history into this moment and the action of God Almighty into His own deeds. Taking the words, "Do this as a memorial of Me," Jesus transfers the reality of salvation from the nation of Israel to all humanity, and moves

a memorial of old to a new and ever-present truth. In this ordinary and extraordinary moment, the Christ bursts the narrow understanding of love of a single nation, to replace it with the enormous love that God has for people, all people.

In this moment, the Lord Jesus replaces the Israelites crossing of the Red Sea with all humanity crossing over from death to life, through the Blood present in the chalice that would be poured out on the Cross. In this change of the Passover, Christ tells clearly that the Body present on the table would be from now on, and always, the one, single sacrifice that would take away the sins of the world. In this inspiring instant, the lost paradise of Adam and Eve is restored as humanity is freed from sin and darkness. The sinner has a passageway to God; the lost sheep has a shepherd and the people who were thrown aside have a way to eternal glory.

New Teaching

Each disciple, each apostle

heard. Each disciple, each person present saw. Things would never be the same again. All through His public ministry, Jesus had told the authorities that they had strayed from the teaching of God. Now, He had proclaimed a new teaching and, through it, humanity could come back to right relationship with God. This teaching was about including all, offering forgiveness to all, embracing all, encouraging all, allowing all to know love, including all and holding all. This moment took all that He had done to a new level, all that He had achieved to a new understanding. Here and now, His mission was stated clearly, His reason for being on this earth was defined, His purpose was written in the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity that was shared with others that evening in the Upper Room.

The newness was not lost on the disciples who were gathered, but it would take time before they could grasp its meaning. Over the upcoming weeks, they would get

opportunities to discuss the change Jesus had made in the Passover. It would take the outpouring of the Holy Spirit before they would begin to truly take on board what had happened in the moment of time that changed everything. Right from the outset, the Eucharist would bring division and would be a reality that would cause conflict. This is not because of the Eucharist, but because of man's inability to take on board how fully they are loved.

It would take time for the apostles to comprehend what had taken place as Jesus celebrated the Last Supper. It would take Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to enable the disciples to proclaim that what Jesus had left us in the Eucharist was the reality of His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.

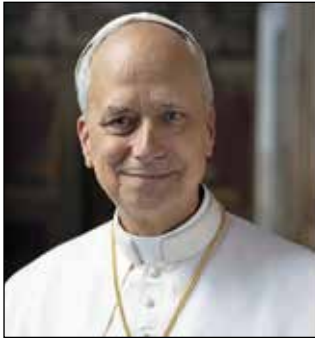
It is important for us to ask the Holy Spirit to help us in our understanding of the Eucharist. It is good to reflect on the Eucharist and its meaning in our lives. The disciples went to the table expecting what they had often experienced before, and came away from the table with total connection with

Jesus, their leader, companion and saviour. Jesus had given Himself to the disciples by His own inspiration and authority.

As our faith develops, you and I are asked to believe more firmly in Jesus Christ. There is much doubt about these days, with many so-called experts telling us that the central teaching of the Catholic Church has no meaning. Yet, in the Gospel, Jesus tells us, "If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you will not have life in you." I would rather listen to Jesus than to the so-called experts.



Pope's monthly intention



The Holy Father has asked for prayer during The Holy Father has asked for prayer during July and August for:

Respect for human life (July)

Let us pray for the respect and protection of human life in all its stages, recognising it as a gift from God.

Evangelisation in the City (August)

Let us pray that in large cities often marked by anonymity and loneliness, we find new ways to proclaim the Gospel, discovering creative paths to build community.

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 John Gilmore (July 1st)
Fr Joseph Gormley (2nd)
Fr Eamon Graham (3rd)
Fr Dermott Harkin (4th)
Fr Karl Haan (5th)

All Priests (6th)
All Priests (7th)
Fr John Irwin (8th)
Fr Charles Keaney (9th)
All Priests (10th)
Fr Gerald Hasson (11th)
All Priests (12th)
Fr Seamus Kelly (13th)
Fr Edward Kilpatrick (14th)
All Priests (15th)
Fr Charles Logue (16th)
Fr Paul McCafferty (17th)
Msgr Bryan McCanny (18th)
Fr Michael McCaughey (19th)
Fr Andrew McCloskey (20th)
Fr Patrick Lagan (21st)
All Priests (22nd)
Fr Noel McDermott (23rd)
Fr Eamon McDevitt (24th)
Fr John McDevitt (25th)
Fr Christopher McDermott (26th)
Fr Kevin McElhennon (27th)
Fr Declan McGeehan (28th)
Fr Dermot McGirr (29th)
All priests (30th)
Fr Brian McGoldrick (31st)

Fr Neil McGoldrick (Aug 1st)
All Priests (2nd)
Fr James McGonagle (3rd)
Dr James McGrory (4th)
Fr Daniel McFaul (5th)
Fr Edward McGuinness (6th)
Fr Micheal McGavigan (7th)
Bishop Donal McKeown (8th)
Fr Con McLaughlin (9th)
All Priests (10th)
All priests (11th)
Fr Peter McLaughlin (12th)
All priests (13th)
All priests (14th)
Fr Peter Madden (15th)
Fr Anthony Mailey (16th)

Archbishop Eamon Martin (17th)
Fr Gerard Mongan (18th)
All Priests (19th)
Fr Sean O'Donnell (20th)
All priests (21st)
All priests (22nd)
All Priests (23rd)
All Priests (24th)
All Priests (25th)
All Priests (26th)
All Priests (27th)
Fr Colm O'Doherty (28th)
Fr Kieran O'Doherty (29th)
All Priests (30th)
Fr Francis P O'Hagan (31st)

Praying for and promoting vocations to diocesan priesthood

THE members of the Derry Diocesan Vocations Council meet regularly to promote vocations to the diocesan priesthood.

Towards the end of August, they hope to attend the annual Conferences for RE teachers in St Columb's College, Derry, organised by the Diocesan Catechetical Centre, where they will encourage the RE teachers and their colleagues, especially Careers teachers, to raise awareness of the possibility of a priestly vocation among their students.

This summer, the Diocese

celebrated the ordination of Stephen Baxter to the priesthood, and we wish him every blessing in his future ministry.

All being well, the Diocese will have three seminarians studying at the Beda College in Rome, two studying in Maynooth, and one beginning his propaedeutic course at the Irish College in Rome, beginning next January.

Please keep these men in your prayers as we continue to pray for an increase in vocations to the diocesan priesthood.

A PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS TO THE DIOCESAN PRIESTHOOD

Lord Jesus, give us happy priests.
Happy because they know they are called by
You and are your friends.
May those who have been given the grace of
a priestly vocation
welcome it with gratitude and responsibility.
May they nourish it with Your Word, Your
Sacraments, and Daily Prayer.
We ask You, Lord, for pastors according
to Your will –
Priests who will seek out the lost, serve the poor,
and humbly guide those entrusted to them.
Mary, Mother of Priests, pray for us.
St Joseph, Father of Priests, pray for us.

(Based on the words of Pope Leo XIV)

Anyone considering a vocation to the diocesan priesthood, please talk with
your local priest, or contact the Diocesan Vocations Director, Fr Pat O'Hagan,
at (028) 7938 6259 or at 07703444280.

Parish Post-its

For additions/amendments please email: editorthenet15@gmail.com or message 07809292852

Aghyaran

Weekend Mass Times: 7.30 pm Vigil, and 11 am on 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month.

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 noon Mass until 5 pm on Tuesdays, and in St Mary's, Rouskey, after 7.30 pm Mass on Wednesdays, with an opportunity for Confession, until 9 pm.

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.

Confessions: Confessions are available on Saturdays at 12 noon in Sacred Heart Church, Plumbridge, and before the 7.30 pm Saturday Vigil Mass in St Patrick's Church, Cranagh.

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

Ballinascreen

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.

Legion of Mary: The Legion meets on Wednesday evenings at 5.45 pm. Anyone willing to do Our Lady's work is asked to call Patricia on 028 71417867.

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 and 9.15 am on alternate Sundays in St Joseph's Church, Fincairn, 10.30 am in St Mary's Church, Altinure, and 12 noon on alternate Sundays in St Peter's & St Paul's Church, Foreglen.

Bellaghy

Adoration: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in The St Carlo Acutis Adoration Chapel on Fridays from 10 am-8 pm, with the Rosary for Vocations at 7.30 pm.

Weekend Mass Times: 5.30 pm Vigil livestreamed to Bellaghy from St Oliver Plunkett's Church, Greenlough; Sunday, 9.45 am in Bellaghy, live-streamed to Greenlough.

Buncrana

Garden Fete: The annual Garden Fete takes place on Sunday, August 23, from 3-6

pm, in the grounds of Scoil Mhuire.

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 every Monday-Thursday 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.

Carndonagh

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

Castleberg & Ardstraw West

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

Weekend Mass Times: 6.15 pm Vigil and 11 am, Castleberg; 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-Thursday, 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

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 from 6.15-6.45 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: 7 pm Vigil, 12 noon, Christ The King, Strathroy; 9 & 11.15 am, St Mary's, Killyclogher.

Cemetery Blessing: The Blessing of the Graves will take place on Sunday, September 6, at 3 pm.

Carndonagh

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

Castleberg & Ardstraw West

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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

Holy Well Rosary: On Saturday, August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven, the Rosary will be prayed at 3 pm at the holy well of St Eigne, in Mamore Gap. All welcome.

Graves' Blessing: The Blessing of the Graves will take place on Sunday, August 16, at 3 pm in Clonmany, 4 pm in Cleagh, and 5 pm in Urris.

Legion of Mary: The Legion of Mary pray the Rosary for peace on Wednesday evenings at 8.30 pm at the Grotto beside St Mary's Church. All are welcome.

Vocations Society of St Joseph: The Vocations Society of St Joseph in the parish has eight members and meets on the first Monday of each month. They fundraise at least once a year and contribute a donation to the Society annually.

Exposition: Exposition of The Blessed Sacrament in the Oratory of the Assumption, Ballyliffin, on Tuesdays, 7.30-8.30 pm; and in St Mary's (in room behind altar), on Wednesdays, 2.30-3.30 pm, and in St Michael's Church, Urris, on Fridays, 3-6 pm (Rosary at 5.40 pm).

Confessions: Confession is available in St Mary's Church from 7 pm on Fridays, in lead up to 7.30 pm Mass, 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; 9.45 am, Our Lady of the Assumption, Aghadowey.

Creggan

Bible Study: St Mary's Bible Study Group meets in the Mercy Chapel for a sharing of the readings for the Sunday Mass on Wednesdays from 4-5 pm, followed by the Rosary. New members are welcome.

Sycamore: The Sycamore sessions continue in St Mary's Parochial House Conference Room on the second and fourth Fridays of the month, running from 6-7 pm. The sessions are an opportunity to explore faith, ask questions and meet people, and include a short film and friendly chat over a cuppa. The next dates are February 27; and March 13 and 27.

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

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

Desertmartin

Michael English Concert: A fundraising concert in support of the parish will take place in St Patrick's Church, Keenaught, on Friday, October 2, at 8 pm, when Michael English & Band will provide uplifting music. Tickets are £30 and available from Heron's Shop, Moneyneena Post Office, and Desertmartin and Ballinascreen Parish Offices, or online with Eventbrite.

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)

Lough Derg: A group from the Parish are hoping to visit Lough Derg for a one-day retreat on Saturday, August 29. If you would like to join email - donagheady1@aol.com before Friday 21, to register your interest and help us make transport arrangements. The cost will be €50/£45 for day on the island, including tea/scone on arrival plus lunch. Bus will be an additional cost... we will know nearer the time how much, depending on numbers.

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)

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,

Parish *Post-its*

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 5 pm, and 11 am on 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays.

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 6.30 pm.
First Saturdays Devotion: First Saturday Devotions take place in Sacred Heart Church, beginning at 9.10 am with a 15-minute meditation, followed by the praying of the Rosary, then the celebration of Mass at 10 am, with Confessions afterwards. The intention is to make reparation for the sins committed against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
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 in Sacred Heart Church.
Weekend Mass Times: 5.30 pm Vigil, 10 am and 12.30 pm, Sacred Heart Church; 10.30 am, St Mary’s Drumragh.

Dungiven
Legion of Mary: The Legion of Mary meets every Tuesday at 7 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. And we host the Rosary on the first Monday of each month, at 7 pm, in Emmaus Hall, beside St Patrick’s Church. Special intentions are prayed for and light refreshments provided.
Knock Pilgrimage: The Legion hopes to organise a Day Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine on Sunday, September 28, subject to sufficient interest. To register interest text Mary McKnight on 07548887853, or leave your name at the Parish Office. The approximate bus fare will be £25 per person.
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 Thursday, 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 9.30 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, Drumsurn; and 4.30 pm, Immaculate Conception, Gortnaghey.
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: 4 pm, Saturday, and 11 am Sunday.

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
Grotto Blessing: The new Grotto, dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes, will be blessed on Saturday, August 15. Mass will be concelebrated at 5.30 pm by Bishop Donal and Fr Pat, and there will be refreshments afterwards in the Bann Valley Hall.
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, live-streamed to Bellaghy; 11 am, live-streamed from Bellaghy.

Iskaheen, Drung & Muff
Cemetery Blessings: The Blessing of the Graves will take place in Drung on Sunday, July 26, at 1.30 pm; Muff on Sunday, August 9, at 3 pm; and Iskaheen on Sunday, August 9, at 5 pm.
The Blessing of Children’s Graveyards will take place on Sunday, August 23, at 1 pm in Ballyargus and at 1.30 pm in Drung.
Pilgrim Walk: On Sunday, August 16, the Pilgrim Walk to St Patrick’s Well will take place, leaving McNally, Ture, at 3 pm.
Children’s Graves Blessing: The Blessing of the Children’s Graveyards on Sunday, August 23, will take place at 1 pm in Ballyargus, and 1.30 pm at Drung.
Adoration: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Tuesdays after 10 am Mass, until 2 pm, in St Patrick’s Church, Iskaheen.
Divine Mercy: Divine Mercy Devotions take place on Wednesdays after 10 am Mass in Sacred Heart Church, Muff.
Rosary: The Rosary is prayed before all weekday Masses. St Peregrine Novena & Blessing: The St Peregrine Novena Mass and relic blessing takes place on the First Fridays at 7 pm, alternating between the three parish churches.
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; 5 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 Drumagarnier. 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, Drumagarnier; 12 noon, St Mary’s, Craigavole.

Lavey
Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Fridays after 9.15 am Mass 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: 8.30 am alternate Sundays, St Mary’s Church, Cloughcor, and St Joseph’s Church, Glenmornan; 12.15 pm, 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; 9.45 am.

Limavady
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.
Eucharistic Adoration: Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Mary’s Church on Thursdays, from 1-6 pm.
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
Parish Sports: The annual Malin Head Sports will take place on Sunday, August 16, at 2 pm.
Parish Shop: The Malin Parish ‘Good as New’ Shop will be downstairs in G&S Supermarket from Monday, August 3, until Friday, September 11.
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.
Graves’ Blessing: The Blessing of the Graves will be on Sunday, August 23, at 2 pm in Lagg and 4 pm in Aughaclay.

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
Music: Music continues on Thursday evenings at 8 pm in Moville Men’s Shed. Love Music? Just Show Up! Singers, players, and socialisers alike are all welcome for a relaxing evening at one of the few Shed activities open to both men and women.
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. If there is a fifth Sunday in the month, the 11.30 am Mass is celebrated in St Pius X Church.

Sion Mills
Bible Study: A Bible Study group meets on Wednesday evenings, from 7-8 pm, in the parish room next to Sion Mills Church. This group shares on the Gospel reading for the coming Sunday.
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

Parish Post-its

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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 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: 4.30 pm Vigil, 11 am Sunday.

Templemore – St Eugene's

Bishop Daly Exhibition: An exhibition of 'Bishop Daly – A Man for all Seasons' will run from August 8-18 in the Conference Room above the sacristy in St Eugene's Cathedral, Creggan Street, Derry, BT48 9AP. Open from 11 am until 4 pm, the Exhibition celebrates the life, influence, work and legacy of Bishop Edward Daly.

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

Annual Healing Novena: The annual Solemn Healing Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help, for the nine Sundays before Christmas, will run from October 25 to December 20, starting at 6 pm. Celebrating the Jubilee of St Francis of Assisi, this year's theme is 'Make me a channel of your peace.'

'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.

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

One-Day Marian Pilgrimage: The Parish has organised a one-day Marian Pilgrimage across the Diocese, from Ardmore to Lavey, on Tuesday, August 18, from 9 am to 5 pm, in honour of the Feast of the Assumption. Pilgrims will pray a decade of the Rosary at each of the five churches dedicated to Our Lady (Ardmore, Altinure, Gortnaghey, Maghera, and Lavey). Refreshments will be provided in Dungiven and a meal in Maghera. The cost is £40. For booking, call 028 71262360, or call into the Parish Office.

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.

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 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 Columb'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 from 11.30 am – 12.30 pm, and Wednesdays from 6.30-8.30 pm; in Immaculate Conception Church on Thursdays, 1-6 pm; and in St Columb's Church on Fridays, 1-6 pm.

Vocations Society of St Joseph: The Vocations Society of St Joseph in the parish has nine members, and meets monthly in the Parish Hall after 10 am Mass on Wednesdays. They pray for Vocations to the Priesthood and for priests and religious life, and support seminarians. The Rosary is prayed every Thursday at 9.30 am for priests.

Confessions: St Columb's – Saturday after 10 am Mass, Monday–Friday 7-7.25 pm, before evening Mass; Immaculate Conception – Saturdays 5.30-5.55 pm, before Vigil Mass; St Oliver Plunkett – Saturdays 5.30-5.55 pm, before the Vigil Mass.

Weekend Mass Times: St Columb's, Saturdays, 10 am and 7 pm Vigil, Sundays, 10 am, 12.30 pm, 6 pm; Immaculate Conception, Saturdays, 6 pm Vigil, Sundays, 10.15 am & 12.15 pm; St Oliver Plunkett, Saturdays, 6 pm Vigil and 11.15 am; St Mary's Oratory, Sundays, 9.15 am.

...other Diary Dates

Bishop Daly Exhibition: An exhibition of 'Bishop Daly – A Man for all Seasons' will run from August 8-18 in the Conference Room above the sacristy in St Eugene's Cathedral, Creggan Street, Derry, BT48 9AP. Open from 11 am until 4 pm, the Exhibition celebrates the life, influence, work and legacy of Bishop Edward Daly.

Portglenone Prayer Group: The Portglenone Charismatic Prayer Group, that meets weekly on Tuesday nights in Bethlehem Abbey, is hosting a set of talks entitled 'Faith under the Radar' on August 11 & 18. These talks will look at lesser-known men and women from the Bible, but who were important to God and His plan. The speaker is Mrs Ann Bell.

Youth 2000 Fest: The annual Youth 2000 Summer Festival takes place in Newbridge College, Co Kildare, from August 13-16 for young people aged 16-35. This is a donation only event, with free buses available across the country and all meals included. Expect inspiring

talks and workshops, Mass, music, prayer and plenty of opportunities to chill out and meet other young Catholics. Whether you are new to the faith or looking to be refreshed, all are welcome. To register, or for more information, visit: youth2000.ie or follow @Youth2000Ireland.

Young Adult Catholic Conference: The Legion of Mary is hosting a Young Adult (18-40) Catholic Conference on Saturday, August 29, in Dublin. Entitled 'Embrace the Grace', the conference will run from 9.30 am until 6 pm, and will be held in the Legion's De Montfort House, Morning Star Avenue, Dublin 7, D07 VA03. Tickets are available at www.eventbrite.ie (search 'Embrace the Grace'), with a standard ticket costing 20 Euros and Early-Bird tickets (booked before August 1) costing 15 Euro. For further information contact deusetpatria@gmail.com.

Catholic Mothers Annual Mass: The Catholic Mothers Ireland Annual Mass and

Family Day will take place in the Iona Retreat Centre, Termonbacca, on Sunday, September 6, at 2 pm, with Mass celebrated by Bishop Donal. All are welcome. Donation only on the day. To book, email: info@catholicmothers.ie.

RISE: A vital new community initiative, RISE is dedicated to supporting the families, friends, and loved ones of those living with addiction, and a gathering will take place on Sunday, September 13, in The Everglades Hotel, Derry. The event aims to bring together people who may feel isolated, overwhelmed, or unaware of the support structures available to them as they navigate a loved one's addiction. The foundational message of RISE is that recovery and healing involve the whole family. Organisers are designing the day to serve as a safe, welcoming space where people can share experiences, build meaningful connections, and discover where they can turn for help.

Marriage Enrichment

Parish Post-its

...other Diary Dates cont.

Weekend: Marriage Encounter Ireland are hosting a Marriage Enrichment Weekend from October 2-4, in the Focolare Centre, Curryhills, Prosperous, Co Kildare. This positive, joy-filled experience is guided by presenting couples and a priest in an atmosphere of warmth, prayer and deep Christian faith. Couples are invited to register online at www.marriageencounter.ie.

WYD Seoul 2027: World Youth Day will take place in Seoul, Korea, in the summer of 2027, when thousands of young people will gather in pilgrimage with Pope Leo XIV.

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.

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. There is a weekly prayer hour on Mondays in the Termonbacca St Therese Chapel, which contains first-class relic of St Therese, praying for her intercession, 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.

Ladies' Bible Study: Ladies interested in coming to a deeper understanding of scripture are welcome to come along to the Ladies' Bible Study in Termonbacca, Derry, every Tuesday evening from 8:30-9:30 pm. It is led by Fr Stephen Quinn ocd, who is currently working

through the Gospel of Mark, which is the Gospel for Mass for this year. This Bible Study is open to all women who are interested in coming along. There is no need to book, you can simply show up. For further information contact Termonbacca on 028 71 262512.

Servant Sisters: The Sisters of the Home of the Mother are hosting weekly formation meetings on Tuesdays, at 7.30 pm, in the Parochial House at Cross, Killygordon, (F93PN0X), and the weekly Holy Hours on Thursdays at 7 pm.

Holy Souls Prayer: Under The Gaze of Our Lady of Montligeon, the Holy Souls of Purgatory Prayer Meeting takes place on 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 will also meet in Termonbacca on the last Wednesday of every month, from 12.30-1.30 pm.

Diocesan Diary

New Bishop: The new Bishop of Derry, Bishop Michael Router will be installed in a ceremony in St Eugene's Cathedral on Sunday, September 20, at 3 pm.

Accord Derry: Marriage Preparation Workshops will take

place in September and November as follows - September 25/26 and November 20/21. These courses are now online for booking at www.accordni.com. Please note that Accord Derry will not be facilitating courses during October or December.



DDS Daily Masses 2025-2026

St Eugene's
17 Jan, 9 Mar, 29 Apr,
19 Jun, 9 Aug, 29 Sep, 19 Nov

St Columba's
18 Jan, 10 Mar, 30 Apr
20 Jun, 10 Aug, 30 Sep, 20 Nov

The Three Patrons
19 Jan, 11 Mar, 1 May,
21 Jun, 11 Aug, 1 Oct, 21 Nov

St Mary's, Creggan
30 Nov 2025, 20 Jan, 12 Mar, 2
May, 22 Jun, 12 Aug, 2 Oct, 22 Nov

Our Lady of Lourdes
1 Dec 2025, 21 Jan, 13 Mar, 3 May,
23 Jun, 13 Aug, 3 Oct, 23 Nov

Holy Family
2 Dec, 2025, 22 Jan, 14 Mar, 4 May,
24 Jun, 14 Aug, 4 Oct, 24 Nov

Culmore
3 Dec 2025, 23 Jan, 15 Mar, 5 May,
25 Jun, 15 Aug, 5 Oct, 25 Nov

Glendermott
4 Dec 2025, 24 Jan, 16 Mar, 6 May,
26 Jun, 16 Aug, 6 Oct, 26 Nov

Donagheady
5 Dec 2025, 25 Jan, 17 Mar, 7 May,
27 Jun, 17 Aug, 7 Oct, 27 Nov

Leckpatrick
6 Dec 2025, 26 Jan, 18 Mar, 8 May,
28 Jun, 18 Aug, 8 Oct, 28 Nov

Ardmore
7 Dec 2025, 27 Jan, 19 Mar, 9
May, 29 Jun, 19 Aug, 9 Oct

Strathfoyle
8 Dec 2025, 28 Jan, 20 Mar, 10
May, 30 Jun, 20 Aug, 10 Oct

Camus
9 Dec 2025, 29 Jan, 21 Mar, 11
May, 1 Jul, 21 Aug, 11 Oct

Urney & Castlefin
10 Dec 2025, 30 Jan, 22 Mar, 12
May, 2 Jul, 22 Aug, 12 Oct

Mourne
11 Dec 2025, 31 Jan, 23 Mar, 13
May, 3 Jul, 23 Aug, 13 Oct

Donaghmore
12 Dec 2025, 1 Feb, 24 Mar, 14
May, 4 Jul, 24 Aug, 14 Oct

Termonamongan
13 Dec 2025, 2 Feb, 25 Mar, 15
May, 5 Jul, 25 Aug, 15 Oct,

Langfield
14 Dec 2025, 3 Feb, 26 Mar, 16
May, 6 Jul, 26 Aug, 16 Oct,

Sion Mills
15 Dec 2025, 4 Feb, 27 Mar, 17
May, 7 Jul, 27 Aug, 17 Oct,

Ardstraw East
16 Dec 2025, 5 Feb, 28 Mar, 18
May, 8 Jul, 28 Aug, 18 Oct,

Ardstraw W & C'derg
17 Dec 2025, 6 Feb, 29 Mar, 19
May, 9 Jul, 29 Aug, 19 Oct

Clonleigh
18 Dec 2025, 7 Feb, 30 Mar, 20
May, 10 Jul, 30 Aug, 20 Oct

Drumragh
19 Dec 2025, 8 Feb, 31 Mar,
21 May, 11 Jul, 31 Aug, 21 Oct

Cappagh
20 Dec 2025, 9 Feb, 1 Apr, 22
May, 12 Jul, 1 Sep, 22 Oct

Greencastle
21 Dec 2025, 10 Feb, 23 May,
13 Jul, 2 Sep, 23 Oct

Badoney Lower
22 Dec 2025, 11 Feb, 24 May,
14 Jul, 3 Sep, 24 Oct

Badoney Upper
23 Dec 2025, 12 Feb, 25 May,
15 Jul, 4 Sep, 25 Oct

Maghera
24 Dec 2025, 13 Feb, 5 Apr, 26
May, 16 Jul, 5 Sep, 26 Oct

Desertmartin
25 Dec 2025, 14 Feb, 6 Apr, 27
May, 17 Jul ,6 Sep, 27 Oct

Faughanvale
26 Dec 2025, 15 Feb, 7 Apr, 28
May, 18 Jul, 7 Sep, 28 Oct

Claudy
27 Dec 2025, 16 Feb, 8 Apr, 29
May 19 Jul, 8 Sep, 29 Oct

Banagher
28 Dec 2025, 17 Feb, 9 Apr, 30
May 20 Jul, 9 Sep, 30 Oct

Ballinascreen
29 Dec 2025, 18 Feb 10 Apr, 31
May 21 Jul, 10 Sep, 31 Oct

Dungiven
30 Dec 2025, 19 Feb, 11 Apr, 1
Jun, 22 Jul, 11 Sep, 1 Nov

Limavady
31 Dec 2025, 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, 17 Apr, 7 Jun,
28 Jul, 17 Sep, 7 Nov

Bellaghy
6 Jan, 26 Feb, 18 Apr, 8 Jun,
29 Jul, 18 Sep, 8 Nov

Lavey
7 Jan, 27 Feb, 19 Apr, 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 2025 / 2026

Magilligan
12/5/25

Granaghan
1/2/26

Termonamongan
2/6/26

Ardstraw West
/Castlederg
3/6/26

Cappagh
4/10/26

Donagheady
5/1/26

Donaghmore
6/5/26

Langfield
7/3/26

Badoney Lower
8/7/26

Greencastle
9/4/26

Leckpatrick
10/2/26

Clonleigh
11/6/26

Forty Hours - August & September

Sun 2 Aug	St Joseph's, Glenullin	Garvagh
Sun 2 Aug	Desertegney	Buncrana
Sun 9 Aug	St Michael's, Urris	Clonmany
Sun 9 Aug	St Oliver Plunkett's	Greenlough
Sun 16 Aug	Our Lady of the Wayside	Greencastle
Sun 16 Aug	St Patrick's	Donaghmore
Sun 23 Aug	St Mary's, Bocan	Culdaff
Sun 23 Aug	St Matthew's, Drumsum	Dungiven
Sun 30 Aug	St Columba's, Straw	Ballinascreen
Sun 30 Aug	St Mura's	Fahan
Sun 6 Sept	St John the Baptist	Granaghan
Sun 6 Sept	St Mary's, Cockhill	Buncrana
Sun 6 Sept	Immaculate Conception	Camus
Sun 13 Sept	Christ the King	Limavady
Sun 13 Sept	St Columba's, Drung	Iskaheen
Sun 13 Sept	St Mary's, Castlefin	Urney & Castlefin
Sun 20 Sept	St Pius X	Moville
Sun 20 Sept	St Aidan's	Magilligan
Sun 27 Sept	St Mary's	Creggan, Derry
Sun 27 Sept	St John's	Coleraine

I will give you rest *Fr Johnny Doherty CSSR*

A few years ago, a young Spanish student was learning English in Donegal. She was part of a school group who were living with families in the town. They learned English at class during the day. But they also learned the local Donegal English from the families that they were staying with – and it is not always the same as the official language!

One day, she asked the man of the house about the Spanish word 'manana'. This is a word that the Spanish use to put things on the back burner. She had been told that it means 'tomorrow morning'. Was there a Donegal word for it? The Donegal man looked at her and said: "Cuttie, dear, there is nothing as urgent as that around here!"

Holidays

These months of July and August are the great months of holidays for many of us. It is not that we are all on holidays for all this time, but it does mean that we see this as a different time, with a different pace of life.

Usually, the weather is fairly good at this time of the year. People are generally more relaxed as they go about their business and as they plan on doing something special for a week or two, or maybe only for a day or two, as this is all they can afford.

Brochures abound, promising happiness and enjoyment of all kinds, both outdoors and indoors, morning, noon and night. There is something for everyone. And I hope that everyone can avail of something of what this summer offers.

A different kind of brochure!

In the Gospel of the 14th Sunday of Ordinary Time, which we

celebrated on Sunday, July 5, Jesus said to His disciples, and says to us: "Come to me all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest". This is the Word of God that introduces these two months for us as followers of Christ. And it is very fitting, as we look for what can refresh us and bring us forward personally and as a couple, or as a family, or as a faith community, to the months ahead.

When we come to Christ for rest and for fulfilment, His word to us is always the same: Love God and love one another. This is the only way to full human life and happiness. It can be applied in different ways at different times. And it certainly can be applied differently during these months of the summer.

Love God

1. During the holidays, it is very important to make time for Sunday Mass, including the Saturday Vigil Mass. We can find a Catholic Church in almost every place we visit. The language of the Mass might be different but the mystery of God's love is the same, and can be experienced equally everywhere. And, if we cannot find a Church, we can always join in with Mass online, even in our own parish at home.

This is a great way to experience the universality of our Catholic faith and worship. It is also a good way to help the places that we are in to experience us. It is important to make yourselves known to the people of the place you are holidaying in, so that they too can rejoice in the wider Church to which we all belong.

Your stay in any place will be greatly enriched by this connection with the community of faith. It

becomes more than a place of the sun and becomes a place of home for us.

A word to our own parishes at home: During these months of July and August, there are often people from other countries or other parts of the country visiting our own parishes. It is so important to keep an eye out for them and make them welcome among us. It would be good if there was a small group who would make this their ministry during this time – the ministry of hospitality.

2. Regular times of prayer are also very important for these months of the holiday season. This is true of the times when you are actually on holidays, as well as the times that you are at home. It is not about trying to make the holidays a kind of spiritual experience, as you would do when you go on a retreat. It is rather about letting the spiritual part of your life be enriched by the leisure of the holiday spirit, as well as enriching it.

a. Personal Prayer: A few minutes of personal prayer each morning and each night can put your heart and mind at peace. This is so important for being able to enjoy yourself each day. Many people use the Morning and Night Prayers that we have on our Clonard.com Facebook page.

b. Couple Prayer: If you are a married couple, it is so important that you pray regularly together, so that you can face everything else together as you use these months to refresh yourselves. I send out a weekly 'Couple Prayer' to a good number of married couples. If you would like to avail of this contact me on dohertyjohnny@gmail.com. This is free of charge!

c. Family Prayer: For holiday

time, as indeed for most other times, one of the simplest forms of Family Prayer is to pray a decade of the Rosary together. If, on occasions, there is not time for this, just pray an Our Father, three Hail Marys, and a Glory be to the Father, and bless each other with the sign of the Cross on your foreheads.

Love one another

Christ's recipe for happiness and peace and refreshment is always two-pronged! Love God and love one another. He turns us outwards, or maybe inwards to the very depth of our being, to find there the power of life. He turns us to God. And He turns us to one another to find, with one another, the way to the fullness of life.

During the holiday time, we can easily depend on the more surfacy things of life to bring us what we need for our fulfilment. These surfacy things – like sport, partying, sunshine, and exercise, etc - are all very important, especially for our personal wellbeing. But, the question we need to ask ourselves is how can we use these things to help bring us closer to one another and, so, into the peace that only God and our loved ones can bring us? The fulfilment of Christ's promise: "Come to me and I will give you rest".

1. Married Couples: When I think of building relationships, I automatically think first of this most intimate of all relationships – that of a couple committed to each other in marriage all the days of their lives. Much of my life as a priest has been spent in the company of such couples, encouraging them to keep working at their love for each other and

benefitting from the results of their work, through the energy for good that they generate.

The key to this is that couples dedicate good, regular, creative time to each other. At the time of holidays, this is even more important than ever. They can easily get so caught up with all the activities of the holiday that they have no energy for the romance of their love.

2. Family: July and August are months when the schools are all closed. Families are under the particular pressure of the children of all ages being often at a loose end. Family life is more important than ever. And the most urgent thing for family life at this time is how parents give themselves to their family growth.

This is particularly true when a family goes away on a holiday together. For the adults, the most important feature of the holiday away might be the place that they are in or the exciting activities that are available. For the children – and this holds for all ages – the most important thing will be how their parents give them their time and attention and affection. Parents have to continually learn this lesson and respond to it.

3. Friends: These months of July and August can provide a good opportunity for strengthening friendships that we have because we have time in which to meet with them. Or this can be a good time to renew friendships that may have lapsed because of being so busy during the rest of the year.

Someone wrote: "My only sketch profile of heaven is a large blue sky, and in it are my friends – every one of them." Make contact with some of them now and see what happens.



Fr. Johnny Doherty CSSR

Conclusion

"Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest." How we need to hear those words of Christ today and to give heed to them. People find it so difficult to relax and to be thankful for all the wonderful things of life. Our world needs the witness of people who are willing to take time for their love relationships, in ways that say that these are the most important parts of life.

We give this witness by taking the time for the Sunday Mass each week – but it is so important to really take the time and not just rush in and out again!

We give this witness as married couples who take time regularly to grow in their love for one another, especially by doing courses that will help them grow in their love.

And we give this witness when parents give good time regularly to their children, so that the children can grow up knowing how much they are loved and treasured, and so can bring that knowledge to others throughout the journey of their lives.

Happy holiday time!

Reflections from a Catholic perspective... Navigating spiritual frustration and finding healing

Go! Make disciples of all nations! *by Sinéad Strong*

WHAT a year it has been so far in Ireland. There is a real sense among the faithful that something is happening, and that the Holy Spirit is moving powerfully among us. We have been blessed by the visits of many well-known Catholic speakers from America, including Scott and Kimberly Hahn, Fr Chris Alar, Nikki Kingsley, Fr Mike Schmitz, Jeff Cavins and Steve Ray. Each came to share wisdom, tell the story of their own journey, and encourage us to live as intentional disciples of the Lord.

Their message was clear...we can read the books, listen to the podcasts, and fill ourselves with knowledge of the faith, but that knowledge must eventually move outward. Like the first Apostles, we are called to go and make disciples of all nations.

As Jeff Cavins said, "The great adventure is bringing the faith from the book to the pavement. There is no point in knowing your

faith if you don't do anything with it." Knowledge matters, but it can never replace a living relationship with Him.

CS Lewis made the point that the word 'priority' came into fashion in the 14th century and originally meant 'in the first place'. It was not until the 1940s that it became pluralised. Today, we speak easily about having many priorities, but, in reality, there should be only one, God.

If God is truly our priority, then discipleship cannot remain an idea we admire from a distance. It must become a daily response; a willingness to let Him shape our choices, our relationships and the way we speak about the faith.

These events have not simply filled halls or brought well-known Catholic speakers to Ireland. They have stirred something deeper; a renewed hunger to know Christ, to live the faith with courage, and to carry that faith beyond the walls

of churches and conference rooms. That is where the real work begins, because inspiration is a gift, but discipleship is a response.

Jesus chooses you, and your part is to respond with your 'yes'. He is not asking first for perfect ability, but for availability. When we make ourselves available to Him, especially in prayer, He can work through us in ways we could never manage on our own.

All of these speakers tell us the same thing: we need to develop our relationship with Jesus.

We need to know Him intimately, to recognise His movements in our hearts and in our lives, and to make time for prayer. Spending time in His presence is not an optional extra, it is where discipleship begins.

Does God have your permission to love you as you are right now? So often we keep waiting, until I am holier, until I am better, until I am fixed. But God is not waiting

for some future version of us before He draws near. We need to let Him love us now, because in receiving His love we allow Him to heal us. We need to get out of the way and let Him make us saints.

Fr Mike spoke about how stories can move our hearts. They have the power to change our minds, soften our resistance, and even alter the direction of our lives. That is why sharing the faith is not only about explaining doctrine, it is also about witnessing to what God has done in us.

So, how do we share Christ with others? The Church gives us the kerygma; the simple, joyful proclamation of the Gospel. It begins with what God has done for us, before it asks what we must do in response.

1) God loves you and has an amazing plan for your life.

2) Sin has disrupted God's plan for our lives.

3) Jesus loves you so much He died for your sins.

4) He calls on us to repent, which means radically reorienting our lives towards God.

5) Be baptised and receive the power of the Holy Spirit—the gifts of faith, hope and charity, and the courage to go out and do things you never thought you would do.

6) Become a member of His household.

7) Go out and make disciples.

It is simple and it is the truth. This is not meant to be a checklist that we recite point by point in every conversation. Rather, we learn to weave these truths gently into our relationships with others, accompanying people on their journey of discovery and helping them realise that they are fearfully and wonderfully made, loved beyond measure, and worthy in the eyes of God.

This is the invitation before us

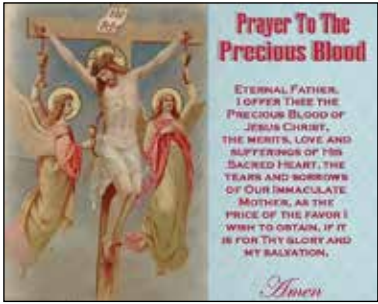
now...to let Christ love us, heal us, form us, and send us. Ireland does not need spectators of the faith, it needs disciples who are willing to pray, to listen, to speak, to serve, and to walk patiently with others. If we give God our 'yes', He can use our ordinary lives in extraordinary ways. So let us go and make disciples not only in faraway nations, but in our homes, our parishes, our friendships, our workplaces, and on the pavement beneath our own feet.



Children's Catechism Club - C3

by Veronica Harley

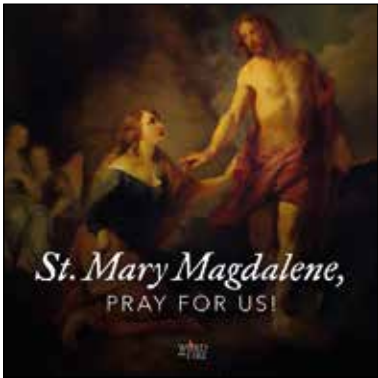
HELLO children. Welcome to the months of July and August. Summertime has arrived. These are fantastic months, filled with fun and plenty of things to keep you amused.



Precious Blood of Jesus - July

The month of July is dedicated to the Precious Blood of Jesus. We all have blood in our bodies. Blood helps us to live and stay healthy, therefore, we know how important and precious blood is. The Church and the sacraments, which we receive, have all come about through the precious Blood of Christ, which was poured out on the Cross when Jesus suffered and died for us.

Saints of the Month
St Thomas the Apostle - July 3
St Benedict - July 11
St Mary Magdalene - July 22
St Bridget of Sweden - July 23



St Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene was one of the women who accompanied Jesus and His Apostles during their travels, caring and supporting them. She was close to Jesus and played a major role in the events surrounding His death and resurrection. Over the centuries, there has been some debate about who Mary Magdalene really was. Some have thought that she was the sister of Martha of Bethany (Luke 10:38-42), and the sinner who dried Christ's feet with her hair. Despite any of these problems, the existence of Mary Magdalene is not questioned. She is known for her sincere conversion and generous heart.

Mary Magdalene is very important because she was a devoted and committed follower of Jesus, who witnessed some of the most important moments of His life. She accompanied Jesus on His last journey to Jerusalem, and was present at the crucifixion, keeping

vigil.

Three days after His death, Mary went to the tomb where Jesus had been laid, intending to anoint His body. When she arrived, she found the rock that covered the tomb had been rolled back and the body was gone. Mary ran to who she thought was a gardener standing nearby, but it was only when the man spoke her name that she recognised Him as the risen Lord. Jesus told Mary to go and tell the apostles that He was ascending to the Father (Jn 20:17). Mary Magdalene announced to the Apostles that she had seen the Lord, and told them what Jesus had told her. Mary Magdalene was the first evangelist, a messenger of the good news.

We celebrate the feast day of Mary Magdalene on July 22. Her feast day reminds us of how anyone can transform their lives if they are truly repentant. Mary Magdalene has always been an example of great love and forgiveness of someone who grasped God's love for humanity and spent her own life bearing witness to that love.

Sts Joachim and Anne - Parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary

July 26 is the Feast of Sts Joachim and Anne. It is by tradition that Joachim and Anne are considered to be the names of the parents of Mary, the Mother of God. There is no historical evidence about their lives or names, and the only stories which exist come from legends and traditions. But it is not important to know all the historical detail about these two people. What we need to focus on is why the Church honours them. It is true that the parents of Mary did nurture her and mould her to be the worthy Mother of God. It was their strong faith, their teaching and guidance that assisted Mary in responding to God's request to be the mother of His Son in faith (CCC 494).

This feast day is dedicated to grandparents because Joachim and Anne are the grandparents of Jesus. It helps grandparents to remember the important role they have within their family and community, to ensure that they remain witnesses and guardians of the faith, which needs to be kept alive for future generations to come.

This feast day has a special message for younger generations too. It helps them to understand that the older people who are part of our extended families, or live in our communities, have a wealth of knowledge,

experience and a true devotion to their faith in God. Consequently, their opinions and advice should not be dismissed or considered outdated, but be viewed with respect and appreciation of the wealth and riches they continue to give us in the great gift of faith.



The Blessed Sacrament - August

The month of August is dedicated to the Blessed Sacrament. The Blessed Sacrament is the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Special times are set aside in our Churches called 'Adoration', where we can come and worship Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, the Eucharist (CCC 1178).

The Blessed Sacrament reminds us that even when Mass is not celebrated, Jesus in the Eucharist, is still present in the Church.

*O Sacrament most Holy,
O Sacrament Divine
All praise and all thanksgiving
Be every moment Thine*



Saints of the Month
St Dominic - August 8
St Clare - August 11



St Bartholomew - August 24
St Augustine - August 28

The Transfiguration

The Feast of the Transfiguration is August 6. On this special day, we celebrate how Jesus showed Himself to be truly divine to the three Apostles who accompanied Him to the top of Mount Tabor.

In the Gospels, we hear how Jesus took with Him Peter, James, and John, and went up the mountain to pray. While the disciples were there with Jesus, Elijah and Moses appeared to speak with Him. Then, before their eyes, Jesus was transfigured, completely changed, and His face and clothes becoming dazzlingly white!

The Feast of the Transfiguration helps us to see, as the Apostles saw, that Jesus is really and truly God (CCC 554-555). This same Gospel story is heard during the second Sunday of Lent every year. It is part of the Lenten readings to remind us that the Apostles were given great hope at seeing Jesus in His glory before He was put to death and crucified. Likewise, we can reflect during Lent on the glory and joy which we will celebrate in the Easter story which will follow.

Assumption of Mary into Heaven is celebrated on August 15. The Assumption of Mary means that She was taken up into Heaven, body and soul. Mary's body was always pure. She gave birth to the Son of God, therefore, God rewarded Her by taking Her pure immaculate body into Heaven (CCC 966).

Mary now reigns as Queen of Heaven and Earth. She is our Mother, who listens to our prayers and asks Jesus for special graces for us. On the Last Day, in the General Resurrection, we too hope to enter Heaven with our newly glorified bodies. Our resurrected bodies will not suffer any illness nor need food or drink but, instead, will be splendid and eternally beautiful.



If we use our bodies for doing good while we are alive, we will share the heavenly reward. On this great Feast, we ask the Blessed Mother of God to guide, protect and care for us.

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The beautiful Feast of the

Quiz Time with Lawrence

1. In what European country is the city of Dubrovnik?
2. In the catering industry, what name is given to the most senior chef after the Head Chef?
3. What South American country is the world's largest exporter of bananas?
4. Who was named 'Player of the Tournament' at this year's World Cup finals?
5. Whose first hit single was a 1986 song called 'West End Girls'?
6. How many bottles of Champagne make up a 'Magnum'?
7. For what did Bev Craig make the news in recent weeks?
8. What nationality is England's new Test Cricket Head Coach, Stephen Fleming?
9. What 19th century war was fought between Russia and the Ottoman Empire?
10. How many numbers are there on a standard European roulette wheel?
11. What TV programme features presenters Jules Hudson, Alistair Appleton and Nicki Chapman?
12. In which English county is the popular resort village of Cartmel?

13. In what role did Jodie Whittaker carve her own slice of TV history on Christmas Day 2017?
14. In Athletics, how many events make up a Heptathlon?
15. What popular breakfast cereal boasted in its 1970s and '80s TV commercial, "We bet you can't eat more than two?"
16. When the popular quiz show 'Mastermind' was relaunched in 2001, which English broadcaster and former barrister replaced Magnus Magnusson as its presenter?
17. What ingredient gives Thai Green and Thai Red Curry their distinctive colours?
18. Who is the current Mayor of Derry & Strabane?
19. Who is the current head coach of the USA men's national football (soccer) team?
20. What European river flows from the Black Forest in Germany into the Black Sea in Romania?
21. What was Eddie Murphy's detective name in the 'Beverly Hills Cop' movie franchise?
22. What is the main ingredient used in making Hummus?
23. Who was recently appointed to the role of First Secretary of State and Deputy Prime Minister of the UK?
24. In which Irish county are the fields of Athenry?
25. What is the chemical symbol for lead?

Quiz Answers: 1, Croatia; 2, Sous Chef; 3, Ecuador; 4, Rodri (Spain); 5, The Pet Shop Boys; 6, Two; 7, She replaced Andy Burnham as Mayor of Manchester; 8, New Zealand; 9, Crimean War; 10, 37 (36 + zero); 11, Escape to the Country; 12, Cumbria; 13, She became first female Dr Who; 14, Seven; 15, Shredded Wheat; 16, Clive Anderson; 17, Chillli peppers; 18, Grace Uí Niallais; 19, Mauricio Pochettino; 20, The Danube; 21, Axel Foley; 22, Chickpeas; 23, Louise Haigh; 24, Galway; 25, Pb.

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

Let Your Light Shine!

Catholic Mothers Ireland Annual National Mass



**Date for your Diary:
September 6th**

**Catholic Mothers Ireland is
hosting a special Mass to mark
another year of fellowship,
prayer & teaching.**



**Sunday 6th September
2026, 2 p.m.**



Termonbacca Derry



**The Mass will be celebrated by
Bishop Donal McKeown.**

**All mums & families are
warmly invited to attend
& join in prayer
Donation only on the day**

**To book, please email:
info@catholicmothers.ie**

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Moville, Newtownstewart, Omagh, Plumbridge, Sion Mills, Steelestown, Strabane, Swatragh, Templemore - Long Tower and St Eugene's, Three Patrons, Waterside

Clonmany, Coleraine, Creggan, Culladuff, Culmore, Desertmartin, Donnyloop, Drumquin, Dunamagagh, Dungiven, Fahan, Faughanvale, Garvagh, Gortin, Greencastle,

Greenlough, Iskaheen, Killyclogher, Killygordon, Kilrea, Lavey, Leckpatrick, Lifford, Limavady, Maghera, Magilligan, Malin, Melmount,