



# The NET

Sharing fruits of faith in Derry Diocese

ISSUE 108. JUNE 2025

No Fixed Charge.  
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Celebrating St Columba - Long Tower.



Corpus Christi - Newtownstewart.



Celebrating 50+ years total abstinence  
- Three Patrons.



Fan the flame - Celtic Park, Derry.



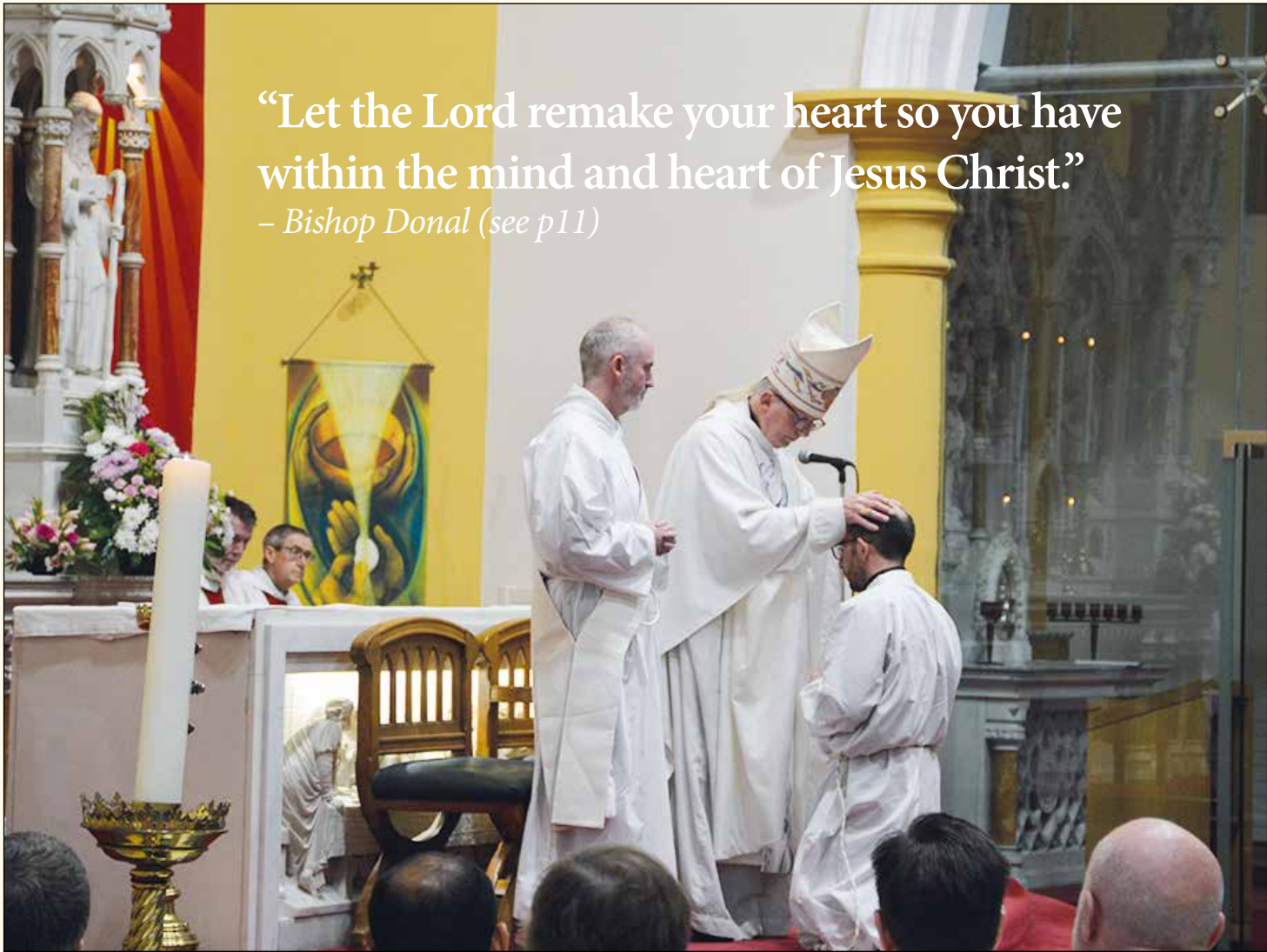
Pioneer Thanksgiving Mass - Drumquin.



Sacred Heart Novena & Relics - Leckpatrick.



Sacred Heart Statue blessing -  
St Eithne's PS, Ballymagroarty.



“Let the Lord remake your heart so you have within the mind and heart of Jesus Christ.”  
- Bishop Donal (see p11)

Diaconate ordination of Stephen Baxter in St Columba's Church, Waterside.

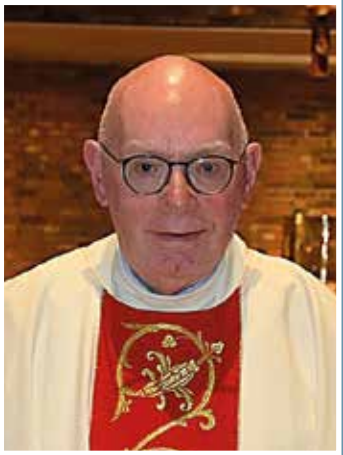
People in focus



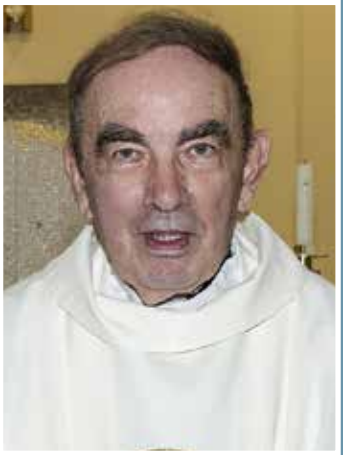
Deacon Stephen Baxter,  
Waterside.



Fr Charlie Keaney, PP  
Granaghan.



Fr Michael Doherty, PP  
Melmount.



Fr Paddy Doherty, PP  
Maghera.



Tina McAteer Wallace,  
Muff, Co Donegal.

Also featuring: Young Writers' section; Ciaran McAlister Award; St Joseph's Boys' School, Derry; St Brigid's College, Derry; Young Muff artist's winning 'Heart of Eternal Love' image; Children's Catechism Club - C3; Ordination Golden Jubilee celebrations in Granaghan, Melmount & Maghera; Three Patrons' 'Care for Creation' talk; Sacred Heart feature; Flame of Love cenacle; Features; Diary Dates; 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**

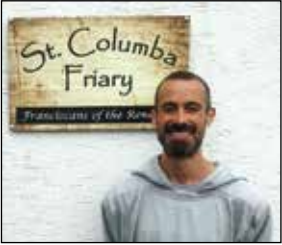
Fr Francesco Gavazzi, CFR, reflects on the Pope’s June prayer intention that the world might grow in compassion: *Let us pray that each one of us might find consolation in a personal relationship with Jesus, and, from His Heart, learn to have compassion for the world.*

Only those intimately connected to Jesus bear good fruit of compassion and every other virtue

FR Benedict Groeschel, CFR, the founder (or ‘instigator’ as he preferred) of the CFR community, was a self-professed ‘saint watcher’. In fact, he wrote a book called ‘Travellers Along the Way’ about all the holy men and women he knew or met personally during his lifetime. One of them was an Irish Capuchin priest named Fr Isidore Kennedy, OFM Cap, who was born in 1897 in Co Tipperary. After joining the Capuchins in 1915 and his ordination to the priesthood in 1924, he was transferred to the Irish Capuchin mission in the US. He suffered from tuberculosis since he was 17 and, at one point, spent four years in hospital. Despite this suffering, he served with great joy and compassion the people in lonely parishes around the

US, especially the poor. Where did he learn this compassion? This joy? Where did he ‘get it’? Towards the end of Fr Isidore’s life, Fr Benedict was invited to give a retreat at the friary where Fr Isidore was stationed. Upon his arrival, Fr Benedict was told by the superior at the friary that ‘we have a saint’. At the end of the retreat, Fr Isidore went to confession and Fr Benedict joked that he was afraid his hand would fall off when giving him absolution! Here is the short dialogue that followed that confession between the two priests: “Father, you have a secret,” said Fr Benedict. “A secret?” asked Fr Isidore. “Yes, a secret,” said Fr Benedict. “Well, I suppose I have a little secret,” admitted Fr Isidore. “Would you tell me?” asked Fr Benedict. “Well then it wouldn’t be a secret,” joked Fr Isidore. “Well look,” said Fr Benedict, “I’m interested in the spiritual life and I like to help people. I won’t tell a soul...till you’re dead.” (Fr Benedict assures us that he kept his word!). “Well, it aint much,” said Fr Isidore. “Well, what is it?” asked Fr Benedict. “Well, it’s sort of an imagination, and it comes to me every day, but especially when things aren’t just up to the mark. When things aren’t just up to the mark, it comes to me that I’ve spent my whole life sitting in the place of St John at the Last Supper.” There it is. The source of Fr Isidore’s compassion, joy in the midst of suffering, and

ultimately, holiness. St John sat next to Jesus; he was closest to the Lord’s heart. In his own way, Fr Isidore did the same. Fr Benedict was amazed that libraries of books have been written on contemplation, but this man gave him a definition of Christian contemplation in one sentence. I think it reveals something else too. Only those who remain intimately connected to Jesus bear the good fruit of compassion and every other virtue. Only those who remain branches united to the vine of Jesus bring forth the true and lasting fruit of charity. Only those who drink deeply from the source of true life can overflow with true life for others. I heard it said once that ‘intimacy is not transferable.’ In other words, I can’t ‘pick up’ or ‘catch’ someone else’s intimacy with Jesus. I can be inspired by it and it can increase my desire for it, but ultimately, intimacy exists uniquely between one person and another. No matter how saintly Fr Isidore was, his intimacy with Jesus was not simply ‘transferred’ to Fr Benedict by being in his presence. He could give him his secret; he could not give him this intimacy. Fr Benedict was still left with the one essential thing to do, the one thing necessary: to grow in his own intimacy with Jesus Christ. With this, we will grow



Eucharistic Adoration in the Diocese

**Aghyaran:** Thursdays, 10.30am–12 noon.  
**Ardstraw West & Castlederg:** Fridays, 10.30am–12 noon, St Patrick’s Church.  
**Badoney Lower:** Tuesdays, after 12.30 pm Mass until 5 pm, St Patrick’s Gortin.  
**Badoney Upper:** Wednesdays, after 7.30 pm evening Mass until 9 pm, St Patrick’s Cranagh.  
**Ballinascreen:** First Mondays, from 12 noon–7.30 pm, in Holy Rosary Church, Draperstown.  
**Banagher:** Thursdays, 10.30–11.30 am, St Mary’s Church, Altinure, and Fridays, 10–11am, St Joseph’s Church, Fincairn.  
**Bellaghy:** Every Friday, from 10 am until recitation of Rosary at 7.30 pm, in St Mary’s Church.  
**Buncrana:** Mondays, Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 6am–10pm, Fridays, 6 am–10 pm and Sundays, 2–10 pm, St Mary’s Oratory.  
**Cappagh:** Wednesdays, 8–9pm, concluding with Night Prayer, and Sundays, 3.30–6.30 pm, in Christ the King, Strathroy.  
**Claudy:** Tuesdays, after 10am Mass until 8 pm, St Patrick’s Church, Claudy, and Wednesdays, after 10 Mass until 8 pm, St Joseph’s Church, Craigbane.  
**Clonmany:** Tuesdays, 7.30–8.30 pm, the Oratory of the Assumption, Ballyliffin; Wednesdays, 3–4 pm, St Columbcille Village, Cleagh; Fridays, 3–6 pm (Rosary at 5.40 pm), St Michael’s Church, Urris.  
**Coleraine:** Wednesdays, in St John’s Church, 2–4 pm, with Rosary at 3:45 pm.  
**Creggan:** Sundays 1.30 pm–6 pm; Mondays 10.30 am - 7 pm; Tue - Sat 10.30 am - 12 pm, Divine Mercy Chapel.  
**Donaghedy:** First Fridays after Mass until 12 noon, St Mary’s Church, Aughabrack.  
**Donaghmore:** Tuesdays,

10.30 am–7.30 pm, St Mary’s Church, Sessiaghoneill; Thursdays, after 9.15 am Mass, St Patrick’s Church, Crossroads.  
**Drumquin:** Wednesdays, 6 pm until Mass at 7.30 pm.  
**Drumragh:** Wednesdays, following morning Mass, Sacred Heart Church until 5.30 pm.  
**Dungiven:** Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 9am–6 pm, and Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9 am–8 pm, in Adoration Chapel.  
**Errigal:** Mondays, after the 10 am Mass until 2.30 pm, St Mary’s Church, Ballerin.  
**Fahan:** Fridays after 10am Mass, St Mura’s Parish Church.  
**Greencastle (Tyrone):** Thursdays, 6–10 pm, St Patrick’s Church.  
**Greenlough:** Thursdays, 9am–5 pm, St Oliver Plunkett’s Church.  
**Iskaheen:** Tuesdays, from after 10 am Mass until 2 pm, St Patrick’s Church.  
**Kilrea:** Mondays, 12 noon - 7pm, St Mary’s Drumagarnier.  
Concludes with Benediction.  
**Lavey:** Fridays, after 9.30 am Mass until 5 pm.  
**Leckpatrick:** Wednesdays from 8.15 am–5 pm.  
**Lifford (Murlog):** 9.30 am - 12.30 pm  
**Limavady:** Sundays from 3–5 pm in Christ the King (with Confessions).  
**Magilligan:** Wednesdays, 3–7 pm; First Sundays, 3–6 pm, St Aidan’s Church.  
**Melmount:** Mondays, after 10 am Mass until 6 pm.  
**Moville:** Mondays, 2–9 pm, and Wednesdays, 6–9 pm, St Pius X Church.  
**Newtownstewart:** Thursdays, 6.30–7.30 pm, Oratory of Mary, Mother of God.  
**Sion Mills:** Adoration takes place in the side chapel (Oratory) and will be available every day during the Church’s opening hours, moving to the main body of the chapel on Fridays, from 11am–6.50 pm, ending with Benediction before 7 pm Mass.  
**Steelstown:** Mondays, from after 10 am Mass until 6.50pm.

**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 8 pm.  
**Urney & Castlefin:** Tuesdays, 12 noon–8 pm, St Anthony’s Chapel.  
**Waterside:** Mondays, 11.30 am–12.30 pm, St Oliver Plunkett, Strathfoyle; Thursdays, 1–6 pm, Immaculate Conception Church; Fridays, 1–6 pm, St Columb’s Church.

Please send any additions/amendments via: [editorthenet15@gmail.com](mailto: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.

## Donating

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Send cheques: The NET, via Bishop Donal McKeown, Diocesan Offices, St Eugene’s Cathedral, Francis Street, Derry, BT48 9AP

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.

# Ciaran McAlister Memorial Award winners Warsaw-bound



Mrs Phyllis McAlister presenting the Ciaran McAlister Memorial Award for Commitment to this year's recipient, Keyla Duffy.

NOW in its second year, one of the Ciaran McAlister Memorial Awards of £250 is helping to fund an expenses-paid trip to Warsaw in July for this year's St Eugene's Choir Choral Scholar scheme recipients, Keyla Duffy and Ellen Harkin, who will be spending a week participating in an international choral conference on liturgical music along with other choir members.

Keyla (Alto) was also chosen to receive the Award for Commitment, which included a £250 cheque, and was presented on behalf of the choir by Mrs Phyllis McAlister, mother of Ciaran, following the 12.30 pm Mass in St Eugene's on Sunday, June 15. The 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, was sociable and outgoing by nature and often enlivened rehearsals with an injection of humour. He contributed much to other elements of parish and community life too, as a Eucharistic minister, a voluntary member of the Catechetical Centre adult faith formation team and dedicated member of the Irish Red Cross, serving at many public events in this capacity. In each of these roles, as in his working life, he fulfilled his responsibilities quietly and faithfully. After Ciaran died unexpectedly in January 2024 following a short illness, it was felt fitting that he should be commemorated by the institution of an annual award for the benefit of the St Eugene's Choir Choral Scholars' scheme. This scheme, begun in 2022, encourages young singers in full-time education to join the choir. In return for a weekly stipend, they attend rehearsals and sing at all the liturgical services of the

Cathedral. This provides them 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. There are currently two bursaries available to students, each worth £250. One is given for commitment, the other to facilitate further study or experience of choral music. Seven students have participated in the scheme each year thus far; it is hoped to bring this up to 10 students per year, with spaces currently available for male student voices. Anyone interested in joining or donating to the scheme may contact the choir director at [magnusmonaghan@hotmail.com](mailto:magnusmonaghan@hotmail.com).



Keyla, her grandparents, and Mrs McAlister.



This year's choral scholars with Mrs Phyllis McAlister (two missing from picture).



Choir master, Magnus Monaghan with Keyla Duffy and Ellen Harkin, who will be attending an expenses-paid trip to Warsaw for a week in July, to participate in an international choral workshop.

## Newtownstewart children enjoy Corpus Christi procession



Some of the children from St Patrick's Primary School, Newtownstewart, who led the Corpus Christi Eucharistic procession with Fr Roland Colhoun at the Oratory of Mary, Mother of God, on Sun, June 22. (Photograph by Nicole Quinn)

### Reflection continued from p2

in every virtue. Without this, not even working miracles has any lasting value (see Mt 7:22-23). Towards the end of his life, one of Fr Isidore's superiors apologized for giving him so many lonely assignments. "Oh, I was never lonely," he said, "how could I be lonely with the Blessed Sacrament?" He meant it. The Blessed Sacrament is Jesus. Specifically, His Sacred Heart. Simply trying harder to be more compassionate, patient, kind or

courageous is not enough. These virtues originate in the Heart of God. We need only go to the source to receive them. The source is the Heart of Jesus. At the Mass we offer God (Jesus) to God (the Father) and God offers Himself to us. God the Father receives the perfect offering of God the Son. Will I too receive Him? If I am open to it, the fire of mercy in His Heart can catch fire in mine. Fr Isidore Kennedy and all saints, pray for us!

## St Eithne PS families receive special memento of new Sacred Heart statue blessing

ST Eithne's Primary School community had a very special celebration before going off to enjoy their summer break, when Ballymagroarty Holy Family Parish Priest, Fr Joe Gormley came along and blessed their new Sacred Heart statue on the eve of the Feast of the Sacred Heart. The occasion was particularly special as it marked the 350th anniversary of the apparitions of the Sacred Heart to St Margaret Mary Alacoque, and followed the Consecration of Ireland to the Sacred Heart by Archbishop Eamon Martin, Primate of All Ireland in Knock on Sunday, June 22. During the blessing ceremony, Fr Joe shared some of the history of the statue of the Sacred Heart and, after blessing the statue, each family received a framed picture of the Sacred Heart to bring into their homes. Fr Joe also encouraged everyone to look at the welcoming arms of the Sacred Heart statue on entering the school each morning in the future.



## Fan the Flame

Confirmation children at this year's Fan the Flame ceremony encouraged to...

# Speak to the world of God's love as pilgrims of hope

CELTIC Park welcomed around 3,000 young people from throughout the Diocese, who had received the Sacrament of Confirmation this year, for the 19th Fan the Flame ceremony.

While dark clouds hung heavy with rain in the sky, threatening to soak the children carrying their school banners in the colourful opening procession, which also included special guests, a number of priests and Bishop Donal, the sun emerged as the bishop stepped onto the podium to speak to the gathering that had just been enthusiastically singing the hymn, 'Shine, Jesus Shine!', and the occasion passed rain-free.

Amongst the guests were the new Mayor of Derry and Strabane District Council, Councillor Ruairi McHugh, and John Keenan, Chairperson of Doire GAA, who welcomed everyone to

Celtic Park.

The 2025 theme for the annual Fan the Flame Mass on June 5 was 'Pilgrims of Hope', in keeping with this Jubilee Year in the Church. Heartily embraced by the schools, the children came dressed in creatively designed t-shirts and flags reflecting the theme. They had also prepared for the Mass by completing reflective journals.

Richard Moore, accompanied by members of the Long Tower Folk Group, helped set the tempo for the joyous occasion celebrating the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which were highlighted in some of the banners displayed.

Pupils from various schools took part in the Liturgy of the Word and the Offertory Procession, with pupils from schools in the Maghera Parish leading everyone in signing the final hymn, 'He's

got the whole world in His Hands'.

During his homily, Bishop Donal spoke to the young people about how advertising encourages them "to look well on the outside".

Highlighting the message of a particular advertisement, "...because I'm worth it", he remarked: "The message here seems to be, 'I am worth something only if I spend a lot on money on how I look on the outside.' However, it is not what is on the outside that matters, but the inside. I can look lovely on the outside but feel empty on the inside. Too many people feel that they are worth very little. But to you who were confirmed, God says that you are worth everything."

"Why did God send Jesus to walk with us? Why did Jesus take our sins on the cross? Why did God the Father raise Jesus from

the dead? Why did Jesus send us the Holy Spirit?"

Bishop Donal went on to tell them: "You have a choice. You can spend the rest of your life complaining or you can choose to be heroes and do something about the mess around you. Be light to the world and salt to the earth."

"The theme of this Holy Year asks us to be pilgrims of hope. Offer hope. Tell the world that God loves us, because we are worth it. Believe in the God who believes in you and you will change the world."

Organised by the Diocesan Catechetical Centre, the ceremony brought together a generous team of volunteers of all ages and skills, including young people from second-level schools in the Diocese.



Fan the Flame



# St Joseph's Boys' School a Rights Respecting School *by Fiona Page*



St Joseph's Boys' Rights Respecting ambassadors

AS the world celebrates our new pope, Leo XIV, we remember the words of Pope Francis: "The path to peace calls for respect for human rights, in accordance with the simple yet clear formulation contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose seventy-fifth anniversary we recently celebrated" (Hernández,

2024). In response to this and firmly rooted in our Catholic ethos, St Joseph's Boys' School, Derry, is proud to be a 'Rights Respecting School'. Following in the example of Jesus, who showed us the importance of children, we have successfully achieved the 'Rights Respecting Schools Silver Award'

and are working towards the 'Gold Award'. We are working with UNICEF UK.

UNICEF states that the Rights Respecting Schools Award ensures that schools 'create safe and inspiring places to learn, where children are respected, their talents are nurtured, and they are able to thrive. Our Rights Respecting Schools Award embeds these values in daily school life and gives children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens' (UNICEF, UK, 2025).

## What does it mean to be a Rights Respecting school?

Together, young people and the school community learn about children's rights, putting them into practice every day. This can be seen in our class, assemblies and during the children's free time. Within our Rights Respecting School, children's rights are promoted and realised, adults and children work towards this goal together.

The Award recognises our school's achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the

Rights of the Child into practice within our school community and beyond.

The children's rights are the basis of all UNICEF's work and come from The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It is the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced and is the most widely ratified international human rights treaty in history (UNICEF UK, 2025).

## Rights Respecting School Ambassadors

Our Rights Respecting School ambassadors are 10 boys from across the school community. Leading the schools' Rights Respecting ambassadors, I meets with the boys regularly to take the lead in developing and delivering the school's Rights Respecting action plan.

The groups focus is:

- To ensure that the whole school is aware of the Rights Respecting Schools Award.
- To provide a link between children and young people, teachers, senior management

team, governors and the whole school community.

- To regularly feed back to the school community about progress, including to the SMT, governors, staff and parents.

- To prepare for the assessment by collating evidence and being able to meet with the assessor(s).

Some of the things that have been implemented this year so far include a Rights Respecting School notice board and Children's Rights posters in every class, as well as an assembly discussing children's rights. We have also developed a whole school action plan in response to what our students need. The Rights Respecting school team completed a whole school survey with our students to gauge their responses to issues, such as what would make them feel safe in school. We have also been organising a morning of celebration of different cultures for pupils who have moved here from a different country.

Over the next few months, we will keep you updated on our progress and include articles based on issues concerning children's

rights throughout the world!

*References: About the Rights Respecting Schools Award - UNICEF UK (2025) Rights Respecting Schools Award. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/the-rssa/about-the-rssa/> (Accessed: 09 June 2025).*

*Hernández, D. de J. (2024) Pope calls for respect for the authentic meaning of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Political Network for Values. Available at: <https://politicalnetworkforvalues.org/en/2024/01/pope-calls-for-respect-for-the-authentic-meaning-of-the-universal-declaration-of-human-rights/> (Accessed: 09 June 2025).*

*What is the UN Convention on Child Rights? (2024b) UNICEF UK. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/> (Accessed: 09 June 2025).*

*What is the UN Convention on Child Rights? (2024a) UNICEF UK. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/> (Accessed: 09 June 2025).*

# St Joseph's Olive Branch for Gaza fundraiser

ST Joseph's Boys' School, Derry, launched its first appeal to raise funds for the people of Gaza in November 2024. There had been growing discontent amongst some professionals about the humanitarian crisis in Palestine and the lack of response and action from those in education and positions of power.

A team of three, Mrs Ann Marie Meehan, Mr Gerry McBride and Mrs Marie Therese Newton organized a Coffee Morning and raised £2,400. This money was donated to a charity group, Uisce for Gaza, which had contacts with Mohammed, a displaced teacher from North Gaza, who was then delivering sponsored trucks of water to communities located outside of the reach of mainstream humanitarian organizations.

Mohammed recorded the trucks, funded by St Joseph's, being delivered to the people of Gaza and shared the video with Uisce. This spurred the team of three on, determined to go 'bigger and better' with the next fundraiser.

Olive Branch for Gaza was launched June 16-19, with various events held throughout the school, such as the sale of chocolate hampers, a 'Sponge the Staff event, and a 'Fast for Gaza' completed by staff and students alike.

"Starvation makes no noise. Help us fast loudly. Demand an end to war", was the sentiment of the day.

Events culminated in a Coffee Morning held for students in the school and the wider community.

The event was well attended, with many representatives of various political parties, as well as community groups and well-known humanitarians and activists. Our very own Bishop Donal McKeown took time out from his hectic schedule to drop in for a cuppa.

Cakes, pastries and hot food were donated by the local community and retail outlets, as well as mums and dads, grannies and grandads, carers and friends of St Joseph's.

The final count on donations has yet to be completed, but it will certainly exceed the previous

fundraiser. Our students, staff, principal, parents and families, the local community and political representatives have all been so generous with their time and donations. We are in awe, humbled and very grateful.

The humanitarian crisis deepens in Gaza as this is written. St Joseph's is in this for the long haul. We will continue to support our families in Gaza and live as a Right's Respecting School, citizens of our community, town, country and the world.

Siobhain Grogan, Uisce for Gaza, commented: "Hopefully the kids in

your school, when they look back in years to come, will be proud that when other people turned away and turned a blind eye, they did something and stood up for the children and people of Gaza."

Finally we pray for peace in Gaza and a return to some kind of normality. In the words of our dear Pope Leo XIV: "I renew my heartfelt appeal to allow the entrance of dignified humanitarian aid to Gaza and to put an end to the hostilities."

(Compiled by Ann Marie, Gerry and Marie Therese.)



# St Brigid’s College community...alive in Christ *by Shauna Sharkey*



ST Brigid’s College - Coláiste Bhríde – in Derry, is a school where students have endless opportunities to experience the Living God. This year’s theme for Catholic Schools Week was ‘Alive in Christ’ and, as a school, we spent the week reflecting on how Jesus lives in our community. We began the week by celebrating the many friendships and families that make up our school community.

Catholic Schools Week is an important week in our school calendar as we focus on the gift that is Catholic Education. We keep Christ at the centre of our school with Morning Prayer, Mass in the Oratory, Reconciliation Services, and our Annual Mission Week.

St Brigid’s College first began Mission Week 10 years ago. The vision of the Mission is to celebrate our Catholic faith, and to show that it is alive and very much something that we are proud of.

Our banner which is displayed on the gates during Mission Week is a statement. It states that our school is a Catholic school, and we are fulfilling Jesus’ command “to go out and preach the good news.”

A key speaker is invited each year to give their testimony to the pupils. These testimonies, of how God has been present in their lives, inspire our pupils to grow in faith. Previous speakers have included: Philip Mulryan, ex-Manchester United player, who is now an ordained priest; Matthew Harte who tragically lost his sister Michaela in 2011; and John Pridmore, a former London gangster turned Catholic evangelist, who now travels the world telling people about God.

This year, we had the privilege of hearing the story of Meabh Carlin. In 2011, while attending a World Youth Day in Madrid, Meabh was hit by a taxi and suffered severe injuries. In her testimony, she shared how her faith was tested and strengthened because of the accident. Each day of Mission Week focuses on a particular theme, and Meabh shared her story on Day 1, ‘God’s Love’. Meabh spoke openly about how her life was changed in an instant, saying: “After I woke up, I had a new perspective and new outlook on life,” and she believes that this was all because of God’s love for her. Her story was harrowing,

yet uplifting and filled with hope because of her relationship with God.

On Day 2, pupils and staff experienced ‘God’s Healing’ through a Eucharistic Healing Service. During the service, we were invited to touch the humeral veil, just as the woman with the haemorrhage touched the cloak of Jesus in the Gospel. Pupils and staff often report that this is their favourite day, with many having encountered the peace and healing powers of Jesus. Also, during Mission Week, pupils have the opportunity to attend a Reconciliation Service and celebrate Mass in St Brigid’s Chapel, Carnhill.

Our motto for Mission Week 2025 was “Everything is possible for one who believes.” We believe that this is an important message for both students and staff, that if we are truly alive in Christ then anything is possible. If we live a life with God, then we can overcome any challenges or obstacles that we may face.

**Rosary**

An important way in which we are ‘Alive in Christ’ is through the prayer life of the school. An example of this is our regular class visits to the chapel to pray and spend time with Jesus in meditation. Also, during the month of May, we invite different members of our school community to lead us in the Rosary. This act of worship has inspired several of our Pope John Paul II students to form a new prayer group called ‘The Knights of Our Lady’. These students meet once a week, after school, to pray the Rosary together. They have been role models for the younger students by showing courage in practicing and spreading their faith.

Further to this, we showed we are ‘Alive in Christ’ when we walked with Christ on two occasions this year, firstly at the Eucharistic procession of Our Lady of Guadalupe in December and, secondly, when we joined with people from our city on February 1, St Brigid’s Day, to make a procession from the Long Tower Chapel. During these walks with Jesus, we prayed for our families and our whole school community.

Also, our J.O.Y group hid numerous ‘mini-Jesus’ around the

school for students and staff to find during Lent. The title of this invitation was ‘Find Jesus this Lent’.

One of the highlights this year for the RE Department, and the school, would have to be our pilgrimage to Medjugorje, led by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. This year the group consisted of five members of staff and 20 pupils. We were especially blessed that our principal, Mr Ó Mianáin, was able to make the pilgrimage and who said of the experience: “The school pilgrimage to Medjugorje was such a spiritually uplifting experience. The peacefulness and tranquillity that is present in Medjugorje enabled me to reflect on and strengthen my faith enormously. The pilgrimage was even more special by having the Franciscan Friars with us, to provide spiritual guidance throughout the week. It was great to see our pupils immerse themselves in their faith freely and actively participate in and lead the Rosary.”

I think this sums up our experience perfectly, and would agree that part of the joy felt by staff on the pilgrimage is witnessing

our pupils fully participating in building their relationship with God. Whilst in Medjugorje, we completed a range of activities, such as climbing Apparition Hill and Cross Mountain. We also visited a Mary’s Meals office and an orphanage, ‘Mother’s Village’. Before going on pilgrimage, each student raised money for both charities through various sponsored tasks. This is one of the ways in which we teach the importance of ‘Love of Neighbour’.

Going on pilgrimage offers our students the opportunity to experience their faith in a deeply personal way. Many return home with a renewed passion for their Catholic faith. It certainly sets a fire within their soul and, in turn, this positively impacts the development of faith in our whole school. At the heart of St Brigid’s College is Jesus Christ, and this is the reason why we, as a staff, strive to ensure that our pupils become the best versions of themselves. We want them to see themselves the way God sees them, and this is what it means to be truly alive in Christ.



## Young Writers share thoughts...

*THIS month, Carragh shares the effect of prayer on the brain, with those who pray regularly noting that it helps them to feel more hopeful and less anxious, while Sean writes about faith and science, pointing out that while science can tell him a lot about how the world works, it can't tell him why it works or why it came to be.*

*Reflecting on his involvement with youth groups, James writes about young people's hunger and desire for tradition, and Harry shares ways of discerning a priestly vocation.*

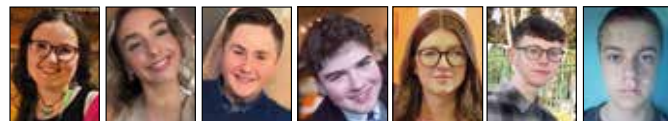
*Having recently visited the Shrine of St Margaret Clitherow, Bláthnaid reflects on the Catholic convert and martyr's inspiring story of hiding fugitive priests in her home and educating children on the Catholic faith, putting her own life at risk.*

*Writing about the miracles that set Italian teenager, Carlo Acutis on the path to being canonized a saint, Luke gives a reminder that miracles still happen today as in the days of the Early Church.*

*Niamh writes about the family being the first school love where, growing in holiness through prayer and perseverance, we become a reflection of the Holy Family.*



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



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

## Ways of discerning a call to priesthood by Harry

DISCERNMENT for priesthood is a great thing. Something that the Church encourages is that every single male, who is serious about his faith, should consider priesthood.

By using the word 'altar', I will give ways to discern which, from my own experience and the wisdom of priests, have helped me in discernment

Ask: Jesus tells us, "Ask and it shall be given unto you" (Mt 7:7-8). Have confidence that He will respond to your ask.

There is a saying in Derry that goes, "A shy wain doesn't get any sweets." It is the same way for discernment; how will you know if you don't ask God in prayer?

Listen: I remember Fr Sean O'Donnell saying that God gave us two ears and one mouth, so shouldn't we listen twice as much as we speak? Let us say: "Speak, for your servant is listening" (1 Sam 3:10).

Talk: Talk to your parish priest, a spiritual director, a holy man/woman, the Vocations Director, Fr Pat O' Hagan, and, if possible, those who are in seminary.

Altar serving: If you got a pound for every vocation that came from altar serving, you would be able to afford some of the posh houses in



Culmore...Ha! Ha! On a serious note though, altar serving allows us to fall in love with the Mass, to hear the Lord's call in silence, reverence and beauty.

I have been an altar server for over a year now and it has enriched my discernment for priesthood greatly, for just a love of serving and learning.

Here are also some famous priests who were altar servers: Pope Pius X; Pope John Paul II; and Archbishop Fulton Sheen.

Respond to God's call if He is calling you to priesthood, such as by going to the Vocations Director, visiting a seminary and even going to seminary if you are 18+, because Christ asks us to 'Come and see' (John 1:39).

## Martyred St Margaret Clitherow an excellent example of selfless devotion to God and love of Christ by Bláthnaid

RECENTLY, whilst visiting York, my sister and I had the opportunity to visit the Shrine of St Margaret Clitherow. A humble little chapel, in a house that used to belong to the Clitherows along the Shambles, the sense of quiet and reverence inside was nothing short of remarkable. A vast contrast to the hustle and bustle of tourists just a few feet away, on the other side of the window, it was a wonderful break in our day to both reflect on the life of such a courageous Saint, and to commemorate her love for the Lord.

An Englishwoman born in 1556 to Protestant parents, Margaret grew up in a time where the Church was a divided issue in England, meaning she spent the first 18 years of her life as a Protestant. In 1571, she married a fellow Protestant, a widower named John Clitherow. He was a successful butcher, and the couple had three children whilst living in their house on the Shambles, which today acts as the Shrine. John himself grew up in a Catholic family, but converted to the English state religion years before getting married.

However, it was through John's family that Margaret was introduced to Catholicism and, despite it being illegal and becoming increasingly dangerous to practice, she converted to the

faith in 1574. Her brother-in-law was a priest and, regardless of it being considered an act of treason to do so, Margaret felt it was so important to bring people closer to the true Church that she let secret Masses be celebrated in her home. A devout woman, on fire with love for Christ, she wanted to promote the Truth that she had discovered to others, so she began hiding fugitive priests in her house to protect them and ran a small school for children to educate them on the Catholic faith.

Her husband, John, had been understanding in all of this. Although he continued practicing Protestantism, he agreed to let their son go abroad to train for priesthood, whilst continuing to pay his wife's fines for not attending church services. However, the authorities questioned John on his son's travels, which resulted in the Clitherow house being searched – meaning that the hiding place for priests, which held vestments and chalices, was discovered and Margaret was sadly arrested.

Throughout her trial, knowing the risks for her family and those she had practiced Catholicism with, she refused to plead. The punishment for doing so at the time was being crushed to death. However, Margaret demonstrated her true sainthood



when she did not fear this, but instead wrote to a friend saying: "The sheriffs have said that I am going to die this coming Friday; and I feel the weakness of my flesh, which is troubled at this news, but my spirit rejoices greatly. For the love of God, pray for me and ask all good people to do likewise."

At only 30 years of age, Margaret Clitherow was martyred on Good Friday, March 25, 1586, in York, as she lay under a door and felt each of her bones brutally break, dying in just 15 minutes. A commendable young woman, who acts as an excellent example of selfless devotion to God and love of Christ. She understood the Way, the Truth and the Life that is Jesus, and was prepared to sacrifice her own life for doing so.

St Margaret Clitherow was

canonised on October 25, 1970, by Pope Paul VI, as one of the 40 martyrs of England and Wales. Her feast day is celebrated on March 26. Her Shrine is along the Shambles in York, as I've mentioned, with Mass being celebrated there on Saturday mornings. Furthermore, a relic believed to be her hand is housed at Bar Convent, York.

A Saint whom I must admit I hadn't heard of before, but am very glad that I have now been introduced to, St Margaret's story is nothing short of inspiring. Sitting in the pew of her Shrine, I couldn't help but be reminded of Matthew 10:28, "Do not fear those who can kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell."

## Catholics of a new age...the hunger of young people for tradition and challenge by James

IN my time involved with youth groups in person, as well as online, one thing that has become absolutely salient, is that there exists a hunger and desire from young people for tradition. There is an attraction to some of the more 'traditional' elements of the faith. Many young people are finding the Latin Mass to be a particular place of comfort for them, they love the use of incense, the bells and Latin during prayer and the Mass.

I've spoken to many young people and the answer as to why isn't so complex as it may seem to be for some. Young people are growing up in an increasingly secular world, that is obvious to all, however, with this tidal wave of secularism comes an amass of sin, distraction and, indeed, a culture that does not place living a holistic and faithful life as one of its top priorities.

When young people nowadays practice their faith and go to Mass, it is not necessarily because that is what they grew up with that they are seeking that nostalgia, as, due to the fact we live in such a post-modernist age, many of these young people may not have even went to Mass when they were younger. The pandemic certainly had an impact I feel, with so much isolation, so much time to themselves, there was a resurgence in interest in the Church. Like in my own case, many young people picked up a Bible for the first real time and read it, studied it, learnt it. When confronted with the truth, with the absolute logical conclusions and teachings, particularly those found within the Gospels, it is hard to reject that.

On the point of tradition, however, I think it is largely because of this. The challenge.

Young Catholics nowadays, have only ever known a secular world and, indeed, seen the fruits of this new age. In their rejection of this, they reject what is popular amongst their contemporaries, setting them apart - not always an easy thing to grapple with. And so, when young people do this, why would they do it just a little bit. Young people don't want to dip their toes in the water; they want to perform a full front flip somersault into the water of faith. If young people are going against the tide in such a dramatic way, well then, they are going to go all the way. They want to seek the traditional beauty of the faith that had so much merit in the world.

The promise of a challenge invigorates so many young people. If something is without difficulty to obtain, where is the value found in it? Of course, this

is not a concept that covers all, but it is one to ponder on.

When I attended my first ever Sunday Latin Mass, a valid and licit one in Belfast I should add - the priest's homily got right down to business, with a strong focus on the issues of forgiveness, penance, mortal sin, even hell. It is serious stuff, but that's because it is. We are in the line of work that is primarily focused on the salvation of souls, not of making people feel good about themselves. Now, of course, this is not to make a contrast between modern and traditional. The Catholic Church today is the same one as that existed in the penal times and before. The Mass, whatever the rubrics surrounding it, has always been about the sacrifice of Christ and His message at the Last Supper of offering Himself to the world.

## Young Writers share thoughts...

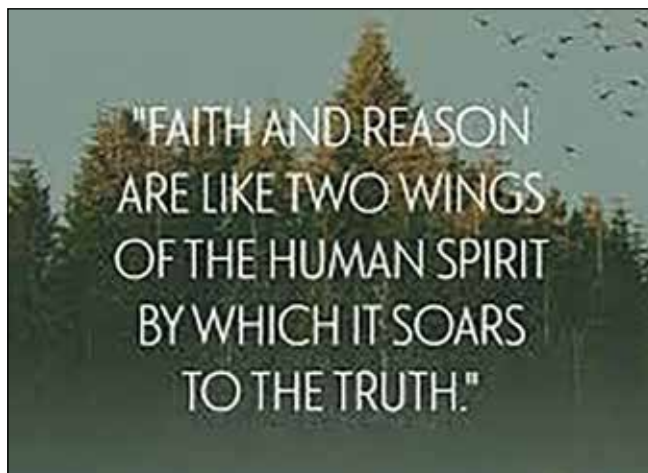
### Faith & Reason *by Seán*

THE division between Christianity and science is a sad and unfortunate product of human desire to reclaim our best qualities for ourselves, when in fact we should credit God for them. For centuries, the scientific Enlightenment has cast light on many of the world's numerous mysteries, and for some this was the foothold found leading towards secularisation. Unfortunately, many people have agreed with this and find science to be an alternative to God.

In Psalm 19:1 is written, "The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the work of His hands." The Lord is like an impeccable sculptor, fashioning for us a universe so fabulous that we can hardly begin to fathom its extents.

I always found this outlook to be totally illogical. It was difficult to wrap my head around why scientific complexity would hamper someone's faith in God. If anything, I found that the sheer complexity of the scientific world only strengthened and bolstered my belief. Science can tell me a lot about the world, how it works in all of its vastness and minuteness. The problem is, it only tells me how the world works or how it came to be. It can never tell me why it works or why it came to be.

Pope St John Paul II wrote critically about those who divide science and religion rather than view them as compatible. He said: "Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can bring the other into a wider world, a world where both may flourish." Many of the greatest scientific achievements come about thanks to our religion and how it drives us forth to understand the universe that we live in. The legendary Isaac Newton saw the greatness of our existence and found no other way to explain



its presence or possibility than through God. We can understand some elements of it, but not why anything is here. Newton said: "Gravity explains the motion of the planets, but it cannot explain who set the planets in motion. God governs all things and knows all that is or can be done."

Albert Einstein is considered to be one of the scientifically smartest people to have ever walked the face of the earth. He looked upon this plane of existence and found that God was necessary, and that religion and science are not at all conflicting but entirely complementary to one another. Einstein wisely said: "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind."

As Catholics, rather than dismissing science as a diminishment of faith, we should venerate it as the path to human flourishing. Our purpose is to gather as much knowledge of this world as we can, and the word 'scientia', from which 'science' is derived, is the Latin word for knowledge. We should strive to be knowledgeable. For those driven only by science, their practice becomes stale and cold, as they look upon the complexity of the world and view it as spontaneous and accidental, the product of pure chance, purposeless and lacking in meaning.

This dismisses the idea of Imago Dei, that we are made in God's likeness. In Genesis 1:27, it is said, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female he created them." Dismissing our own God-given dignity and worth, calling us the spontaneous products of evolution, eradicates the perception of mankind's entire being. Religion and science should work hand-in-hand, a unified force driving us towards eudaimonia and glory in the image of God.

To conclude, the idea of religion and science being separated, one shunning the other as too progressive, and one shunning the other as too backwards, is a limitation to the true potential of human progress. While we squabble, mankind can never truly come to know God's creation in all of its glory and splendour.

Pope St John Paul II famously said in his 'Fides et Ratio' essay in 1997: "Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth - in a word, to know Himself - so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves."

### Effects of prayer on the brain *by Carragh*

"PRAY for each other so that you may be healed." Prayer is the foundation of faith - a source of safety, guidance, and divine connection. While its spiritual power is undeniable, prayer also has profound effects on the human brain. It nourishes both body and soul. Studies show that when we pray, we grow in empathy, forgiveness, and compassion. Science is beginning to affirm what believers have always known: prayer changes us.

Prayer has always been central to Christian life; a sacred means of communion with God, a refuge in times of trouble, and a wellspring of strength. For generations, believers have turned to prayer not only for comfort and clarity,

but to align their hearts with the will of the Lord.

Recent scientific research reveals that prayer activates the brain's release of serotonin and dopamine - the very chemicals that bring calm, joy, and emotional balance. Those who pray consistently report feeling more hopeful, less anxious, and more emotionally resilient.

The peace that flows from a faithful prayer life is no coincidence; it is a divine gift, given by God to His creation.

As St Paul reminds us, "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." Prayer does exactly that. It draws our attention away from the noise of the world and fixes our minds on



eternity. It sharpens our thoughts, strengthens our spirits, and brings our whole being - heart, mind, and soul - into alignment with God.

### Family is the first school of love *by Niamh*

FAMILY is the first school of love, where we learn the foundational values that shape our hearts and our faith. In the Catholic teaching, family is more than a biological bond, it is sacred. Loving and respecting our family members is not only a moral duty, but a reflection of our love for God Himself.

The fourth Commandment, "Honour your father and your mother", reminds us that respect begins in the home. This commandment extends beyond obedience in childhood; it calls for a lifelong gratitude, reverence, and support for one's parents and elders. St John Paul II often emphasized that the family is the sanctuary of life, and that mutual respect between generations strengthens society.

Love within the family must be more than sentiment, it must be active and sacrificial. St Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 13 that love is patient and kind, not envious

or boastful. This kind of love requires daily effort like listening with compassion, forgiving with sincerity, and offering our time generously. In moments of tension or disagreement we, as Catholics, are called to choose peace over pride and reconciliation over resentment.

Whether young or old, strong or weak, each person carries within them the image of God. In a world that often values people based on what they can produce, Catholic teaching reminds us that our worth lies in our very being. This belief challenges us to care for aging parents, or support a sibling in difficulty.

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, offers a model for our own families. Their unity, humility, and faith provide a beacon of hope. Though they faced hardship, they remained rooted in love and trust in God. We are called to do the same, especially in a time when



family life is often strained or undervalued.

To love and respect your family is to live the Gospel in its most personal and practical form. Through prayer, presence, and perseverance, we can create homes that are full of peace and joy. As we grow in holiness together, we become a reflection of God's own family, offering light to a world in need of love.

### The miracles of Blessed Carlo Acutis *by Luke*

BLESSED Carlo Acutis is set to be canonised on September 7, as the first millennial Saint, after his canonisation was postponed following the death of Pope Francis.

Generally, to become a saint a person needs to be credited with two miracles. Carlo Acutis is no exception, with two miraculous healings blessing those who prayed to him for help. Of course, Saints themselves do not perform these miracles. Instead, it is believed that they intercede on a person's behalf before God.

To be canonised, a person needs to have been dead for at least five years and to have been a holy person, a servant of God. Additionally, they need one miracle before they can be beatified. There are exceptions to this rule, such as in the case for martyrs.

After being beatified and receiving the title of 'Blessed', a second miracle is necessary for someone to be canonised, typically one occurring after the beatification.

In the modern day, almost all miracles are healings. For someone's recovery to be verified as a miracle, relevant medical experts must be consulted and declare that the healing was not just incredibly lucky, but scientifically inexplicable.

The first of these was the healing of Matheus Vianna, a four-year-old Brazilian boy who



suffered from annular pancreas, a rare birth defect that affects the pancreas, a part of the digestive system and endocrine system. It has several functions including creating enzymes for digestion and hormones to help regulate blood sugar. With this condition, a person's digestive system does not function correctly.

Matheus weighed only nine kilograms, suffered abdominal pain and vomited so frequently that he could barely keep most foods down, surviving almost exclusively on protein and vitamin shakes. He was not expected to live long. That all changed after touching a relic of Carlo Acutis. The little boy wished that he would stop vomiting and soon after his condition mysteriously improved. He could consume normal food without adverse effects for the first time.

The second miracle was the healing of Valeria Valverde, a

21-year old Costa Rican woman who suffered a near-fatal head injury after falling off her bike in Florence. She needed an emergency craniotomy (a form of brain surgery) to reduce the pressure on her brain. Her condition was critical. Soon after her mother prayed for her recovery at Carlo Acutis' grave, she regained the ability to breathe without the use of a ventilator, partial control of her upper limbs as well as speech. She left the intensive care unit 10 days later. Her physical therapy, which was expected to be lengthy, lasted only a week.

Events like these are a reminder to us that miracles are not just something that happened many years ago, in the early days of Christianity. God is all around us, and miracles still happen to this day. It's something we can often forget, but I think a reminder is valuable.

# May the blessing of Colmcille come upon you all in your pilgrimage of faith

– Bishop Boyce

THE Patron Saint of Derry, St Columba was again honoured on his June 9 Feast Day with the traditional Rosary prayed in Irish outdoors at the Long Tower Calvary, followed by Mass and a bag-pipe led procession down to the Holy Well.

This year, the celebrations at St Columba's Church were led by the retired Bishop of Raphoe, Dr Philip Boyce OCD, with Lumen Christi pupils taking part in the liturgy, and amongst the congregation were Dana and her husband, Damien Scallon.

Expressing his happiness to be in the Long Tower for the special celebration, Bishop Boyce told those gathered in the church and online: "I was baptized here, so it is lovely to come back and say Mass whenever I get the chance, especially on this wonderful Feast of St Colmcille; may he be with us always and guide us."

During his homily, he recalled the story of Colmcille, born in Gartan, Co Donegal, in 521 AD, who became known as 'the Dove

of the Church'.

"He was of royal lineage," noted Bishop Boyce, "but he left all this aside in order to follow The Lord as a monk, and founded several monasteries, including one in Derry and his last one in Iona.

"To leave one's family of a tribal kingdom meant to lose one's social status. It was a significant act of trust in The Lord. His strong faith led him to leave Gartan and Derry, his monastery, and his native country; such an act was called a green martyrdom."

He then put it to his listeners: "Would we be able to name another person who was born in Ireland around 521? Probably not. It shows how worthwhile it is to live a good and saintly life and follow the call of The Lord. We are all called to holiness; it's not just for those canonized saints. The call to holiness comes from our baptismal grace.

"We remember Columba today because he was a man of God, a man of prayer, a saint, a messenger from God. Nature and



creation raised his mind to the unseen presence of his Creator."

Bishop Boyce added: "He had to learn to control his tempestuous Irish spirit and did a long, hard penance at Iona.

"On the night of his death, this Holy man knew his last hour was approaching that he had waited long for. He went to the Church and his disciples found him lying before the altar. Before breathing his last, he looked around with a wonderful look of gladness on his face. He said that he could see angels coming towards him.

"He died giving his blessing to his monks. May that blessing

come upon you all, and your children and grandchildren in your pilgrimage of faith, and keep you safe in the love of Christ."

Long Tower Folk Group led the singing, which concluded with all joining in with the much-loved hymn paying tribute to St Columba, the beloved patron of their town.

After the traditional procession to the Holy Well and blessing of the water, which many took away in bottles for their homes, all were invited for refreshments and musical entertainment in the local school assembly hall.



Ordaining Waterside parishioner, Stephen Baxter to diaconate, Bishop Donal said...

Let the Lord remake your heart so you have within the mind and heart of Jesus Christ

ONE of the highlights of the special celebrations in honour of the Sacred Heart in the Diocese during the month of June was the ordination to the diaconate of Waterside parishioner, Stephen Baxter.

The ceremony was celebrated by Bishop Donal on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, June 27, and was a beautiful, reverent and uplifting occasion for all those gathered in St Columb's Church, Waterside, Derry, especially the Glendermott faith community.

Reflecting on this step closer to being ordained a priest, Deacon Stephen told 'The Net': "It was a special time on the day itself, from an earlier feeling of hoping that everything would be prepared on time, to an anticipation of 'this is happening' and having to just relax, realising that so many people had prepared so well for the ceremony and it was now in the hands of the Lord.

"I had seen so many ordinations of deacons, but this was now my turn – which isn't easy when you are not used to being the centre of attention! I had knelt on that red carpet hundreds of times as an altar boy 38 years earlier and had read many more times from the ambo over a period of 25 years. This was different. I was lying flat on the floor hearing the Litany being sung, which is one of the special parts of the rite, and it was the time I felt truly in the hands of the Lord – that whatever challenges the life of ministry brings, it will all be fine.

"We bring what little we have to the table and, like the feeding of the 5000, Jesus takes what little we have and multiplies it to bring about the true spiritual nourishment for the good of others."

Noting in his homily that the diaconate ordination was taking place "amid a series of Feast Days, all of which shed some light on what Stephen is being ordained to be and to do," the Bishop said: "This is the Feast of the Sacred Heart and in the middle of the

Synod on Synodality, Pope Francis published an encyclical letter last autumn, 'Dilexit Nos' (He loved us) on that theme. We have also celebrated the birthday of John the Baptist and Sunday is the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul."

Reflecting on these celebrations, beginning with John the Baptist, he commented: "St Augustine has a lovely idea about who John was, as one preparing the way for the Lord. Augustine recognised that John knew he was not the one who had to be centre stage. John was the voice – but Jesus was the Word.

"The temptation for those involved in church ministry is to think that our popularity or skills have to be centre stage. Our task is to make disciples for Jesus, not fans for ourselves. People will respect and value those who find ways to make Jesus known and loved. That is why crowds flocked to the apostles after Pentecost. They came because they heard the Good News of God's love and forgiveness, not because they liked St Peter's voice and hairstyle."

Turning to Stephen, Bishop Donal told him: "You are being ordained to be a full-time minister of Jesus, but as an earthenware vessel bearing a treasure. You are called to be a servant of the Word made flesh. Merely offering shallow, religious-themed entertainment is not the mission that John the Baptist had or that you will have. In an age of influencers and those who market themselves, remember that you come with empty hands. Invite people to contemplate and to meet Jesus. As St Paul wrote. Jesus is "our wisdom, our virtue, our holiness and our freedom" (1 Cor 1:30). Our task is to walk with people down the road, never to get in the road."

Sword of the Spirit

Considering the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, celebrated in the church for many centuries, he continued: "Stephen will know the great figures in front of St Peter's

Basilica. On the one side is a huge statue of St Peter's carrying the bunch keys, reflecting the words of Jesus that He would give Peter the keys of the Kingdom. And, at the other corner, Paul is portrayed with the book of the Word and the sword. This reflects the words of St Paul to the Ephesians "take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Eph 6:17). These two statues speak of who we are as the Church.

"As we, together, discern the future path along which God is leading us, be nourished by the Word, proclaim the Word of God who is Jesus and teach people to encounter the Word made flesh in the daily decisions of their own lives. Teaching them about the Word of God is not enough. Helping them to meet the Word in the concrete circumstances of their lives is the key to building the Kingdom. Leadership or ruling is not about having power. It is about enabling Jesus to be Lord in the church and in the communities with whom you work."

Going on to focus on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, Bishop Donal said: "It is important to note that the revelations to St Margaret Mary Alacoque (between 1673-75), like any other such apparitions, never teach something new. The final revelations about God are found in the Bible. Thus, this Feast celebrates, in a very visual and concrete way, what we have always known about the story of our salvation. We were all made in the divine image and likeness. When we went astray, God so loved the world that He sent His only Son to die so that sin and death might be defeated. And the Holy Spirit leads the church to bring that healing mercy to the world. That is the story that links together all the stories of the bible, and it is the narrative that we declare each time we recite the Creed."

He explained: "The devotion to the Sacred Heart began to flourish 350 years ago in the

17th century, after the decades of war and turmoil that followed the Reformation. In an age of confrontation and condemnation, the love of the suffering Jesus, revealed on the Cross, came to the fore as a counterbalance to any angry defence of church teaching that seemed to be very widespread.

"Today's feast is a counterbalance to some temptations in the church today, and to the widespread antagonism in international and local politics. For some, there is the temptation to have a model of church that forgets that God is love and that God so loved the world that He sent His only Son to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Jesus gave His all on the Cross when His heart was pierced, and all seemed lost."

Bishop Donal went on to tell Stephen: "Love your people so that they will know that they are loved by God. For there are many who feel harassed and dejected, unloved and hopeless. Know that you are loved and then you will have something to share from your own experience. In the words of John the Baptist's father, 'You shall make known to God's people their forgiveness of all their sins through the loving kindness of the heart of our God who visits us like the dawn from on high'. Stephen, let the Lord remake your heart so that you will have within the mind and heart of Jesus Christ.

"This year is the Jubilee of Hope. So many people are crying out for hope in a fragmenting world. Bring the hope that comes from the Good News. Offer courageous and collaborative leadership. Nourish yourself in prayer at the heart of Jesus and make that love accessible to those who most need to know they are loved. Thank you for your generosity. May the Lord bless you as you seek to be faithful to the generosity of God."

The celebration came to a conclusion with refreshments for all in the Parish Hall.



Stephen prostrated during the Litany of the Saints.



Deacon Stephen with his parents, Charlie and Sadie.



Vesting with the assistance of Fr Sean O'Donnell.

# Ordination Golden Jubilees

Supported by his fellow ‘Golden Wonder’ jubilarians...

## Fr Charlie Keaney thankful for priesthood and prayers, patience and love of many

THE first of the three Golden Jubilee of Ordination to the Priesthood celebrations in the Diocese during June was that of Fr Charlie Keaney, PP Granaghan, with St John the Baptist Parish Church filled with many people whose lives he has touched over the years in parishes he has ministered in.

The main celebrant of the Mass of Thanksgiving on the wet and windy night of June 2, Fr Charlie was joined by a number of fellow clergy, including the other two Golden Jubilarians, Fr Michael Doherty, PP Melmount, and Fr Paddy Doherty, PP Maghera, with Bishop Donal presiding.

Ordained on June 1, 1975 in his home chapel of St John's in Coleraine, Fr Charlie's enthusiasm and joy hasn't waned over his 50 years of priesthood, and was matched during the Mass of Thanksgiving by the joyous singing of the choir.

Referring to the autobiography of award-winning Australian novelist, Morris West, the Coleraine native recalled: "He stated that when you reach the age of 75, there should be only three phrases left in your vocabulary – 'Thank you, thank you and thank you.' I am not 75 yet, but it is so near that I can almost touch it, so I think Mr West's advice applies to me this evening."

He went on to say: "First of all, I thank God. On my ordination card 50 years ago, I used a piece of Scripture from 1 Timothy 1:12, 'I give thanks to Christ Jesus, our

Lord, who is my strength, who has considered me trustworthy and appointed me to His service.' So, I thank God for this gift that He has given me, as unworthy as I am.

"At the bottom of my ordination card, I thanked my parents. I had the most wonderful parents and they had a very strong faith, which they handed on. I thank my schools; they were very important to me. I loved my first school, St John's PS, in Coleraine, which was run by the Sisters of Loreto. Religion was very central to the day and we knew our catechism off by heart."

Fr Charlie also gave thanks for the inspiring priests of his childhood, saying: "My vocation grew at home, school and from the clergy in the parish."

Pointing out that his anniversary date of June 1 had been "the splendid Feast of the Ascension of the Lord", he noted that Jesus had instructed His disciples to go make disciples, baptise and teach, adding: "That was more or less the instruction that the bishop gave me at my ordination. It was a great privilege to administer and celebrate the Sacraments over the years, and to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

"We begin every Mass by asking God's forgiveness and each other's forgiveness. Amongst the first disciples Jesus chose, one denied Him, another betrayed Him, and the others ran away from Him, and things haven't changed one bit over 2,000 years. We rely on

Jesus, 'who is my strength'; we are His witnesses."

Reflecting on his long 50-year journey, Fr Charlie said: "I have made mistakes. I tried my best in all the parishes I was in – the Cathedral, Steelstown, Omagh, Ballykelly, Limavady, Buncrana, Coleraine and here in Granaghan. If there is anyone over the years that I have hurt, ignored, neglected, disappointed or dismissed in any way, I apologise. I didn't do it deliberately and I am sorry."

He continued: "Over the years, I have been deeply humbled by the people God has put in my path. The tens of thousands of parishioners who have supported and carried me. It has been your prayers, patience and love that have been a big part of my journey."

Expressing appreciation for the continued friendship and support of his former seminary classmates, Frs Paddy and Michael Doherty, Fr Charlie also called to mind Diamond Jubilarians, Fr Oliver Crilly and Fr Kieran O'Doherty, and the late Fr Colm Diamond, who would have been celebrating 60 years of priesthood too.

### Change

At the end of the ceremony, Bishop Donal shared some thoughts, remarking that much has changed over the last 50 years: "The Troubles have left their mark through death and injuries and divided communities, and, in the church, we have scandals and

secrecy, less clergy and people at weekly Mass. Seminarians are mostly not coming straight from school now and there is talk of parish amalgamations.

"Fr Charlie and his contemporaries have lived through great changes; we now have a technologically much more advanced society and, socially, a much more fragmented society. But a lot had changed in the previous 50 years as well, from 1925-75, through poverty, war and emigration. The world is always changing – and we are changing with it.

"It is important that we look back with gratitude not because things were easy, but because we trust that God is always at work in our lives, even in our Calvaries. Nothing can separate us from the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus Our Lord."

"As communities and church, we face many challenges," he added, "poverty for many, threats of war, addictions, violence (including domestic), and few positive role models.

"There are many questions about: how we make Jesus known and loved in a very secular world; how we build communities of faith in a fragmenting world; how we bring the Good News of Jesus to those who are harassed and dejected like sheep without a shepherd, in a world of bad news; how we gather to celebrate our faith and minister to one another, in a world with less emphasis on clergy. This year, we have seven



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priests who will not be available for service after the summer, with none to replace them.

“But we give thanks for the past: for the graces of the past, despite the mistakes; for the good people whom we have gotten to know; for the faithfulness of God who can write straight on crooked lines; and we face the future whatever it holds.

“Tonight, we give thanks for Fr Charlie Keaney, specifically his last eight years here in Granaghan, and pray that God who has begun His good work in this parish will bring it to completion.”

Recalling his induction by Bishop Donal, as parish priest of Granaghan on All Ireland Sunday 2017, Fr Charlie remarked: “I landed on my priestly feet. I have enjoyed all the parishes that I have been in. It is great to see people here from all these different parishes, including a couple that I married 50 years ago.”

Pointing out that he was wearing the vestments that he had been ordained in, Fr Charlie quipped: “The old fella sticking out of them hasn’t worn as well as the vestments themselves!”

During the refreshments



# Ordination Golden Jubilees

Thankful for 50 years of priesthood...

## Fr Michael Doherty prays for God’s continued blessing of priests’ words in spreading Gospel



MASS for the spread of the Gospel was celebrated in St Mary’s Church in the Parish of Melmound, Strabane, on June 16, to mark 50 years of priesthood of its parish priest, Fr Michael Doherty, and that of Maghera parish priest, Fr Paddy Doherty, and Granaghan parish priest, Fr Charlie Keaney, who joined Fr Michael on the altar.

Welcoming Bishop Donal, fellow clergy, parishioners of Melmound and Sion Mills as well as those from parishes he had served in, and pupils and past pupils of the schools he had been involved in, Fr Michael also warmly welcomed life-long friends and his family, thanking them for their support, “especially in recent years, in sickness and health.”

Recalling that when he, Fr Paddy and Fr Charlie were ordained that they were commissioned to

spread the Gospel, the Derry City native went on to say: “We join in prayer, this evening, thanking God for the gift of priesthood and that He continue to bless our words, and that of all priests, in spreading the Gospel.”

Amongst the clergy present was Fr Pat O’Hagan, from the Glebe, Sion Mills, who shared his connection with the 75-year-old Golden Jubilarian during the homily, saying: “I’ve known him for a considerable chunk of the past 50 years. His first appointment was to the Parish of Drumragh, Omagh, and one of the many duties he had there was as Chaplain to the Christian Brothers’ School where I was, as we say nowadays, in sixth form. In fact, he was the first person to whom I mentioned the possibility of having a vocation to the priesthood.

“I would have met him regularly

over the following seven years, on his regular visits to Maynooth and during the holidays. I actually spent the night before my ordination in the Cathedral presbytery, in Derry, where he was serving as a Curate at that time. That wasn’t too long before he was appointed to Melmound, where he has spent the last, almost, 37 years as curate and parish priest.”

Referring to the theme of the anniversary Mass, ‘The Spread of the Gospel’, Fr Pat said: “This is what Fr Mickey was ordained to do, and which he has done faithfully in this Diocese over the past 50 years; building on what we heard about in tonight’s Gospel, the falling of the seed of faith on the fertile ground of his late parents, Margaret and Harry. Their faith and practice, the faith of the family and community he grew up in, the influence of teachers and friends

over the years, are all part of the scaffolding and the fabric of the man and priest he became and still is.”

He continued: “Let’s look at those 50 years of priestly service in the light of our other reading this evening; we heard about believing with your heart and professing your faith with your mouth. We heard, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’ But those feet must be sent if the good news is to be heard. The good news has to be seen and heard in the life and in the words of the preacher. Seeing is believing! Hearing leads to faith in the good news of the love and mercy of God made visible and real in the life of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. That’s the message we preach above all others.

### Faithful preachers

“St Francis sent his disciples out to be faithful preachers of the Word of God, telling them to do so in a way that would have been considered very radical, modern, very out of keeping with the times they lived in. He told them to preach, yes, but to use words only when it was absolutely necessary! The kind of preaching he knew would be most effective would be the example of their lives and their capacity to love. Is that, perhaps, why the late Pope Francis



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asked us to limit our sermons to eight minutes?

“Fr Mickey has done both – he has preached in this and other sanctuaries and settings, and he has witnessed to the presence of Christ’s Holy Spirit in him by his ministry among the people of the parishes to which he was sent to minister and serve, with a particular emphasis on the sick, wedding couples, and schools.”

Fr Pat also noted that Fr Michael had been the Vocations director for the Diocese from 1984 to 1992, a role that he himself took on over three years ago. Taking the opportunity to ask for prayers for vocations to the diocesan priesthood, he highlighted that there would be seven priests less serving in the Diocese of Derry after the summer.

Thanking God “for the privilege of knowing and working with Fr Michael Doherty over almost 50 years,” Fr Pat added: “I thank God, and him, for his guidance and friendship, cemented, I would say, during our eight years together in this parish, from 2001-2009. We had a unique relationship; sometimes he said that he wondered who was PP and who was the curate!

“I’ve always looked up to him – as a mentor, as a colleague, and as a friend, and I’m delighted to be part of these celebrations here this evening, in this parish where we ‘soldiered’ together for eight very happy and fulfilling years, and I am honoured to have been asked by him to preach at this Jubilee Mass.”

In conclusion, he wished Fr Michael the traditional blessing and good wish: “Ad multos annos – many more years of ‘Peace, Love, and Joy’ in your ongoing ministry and in your retirement.”

During the Mass, Holy Cross College pupils led the Prayer of the Faithful, and Fr Michael’s grand-nieces and nephews brought forward the Offertory Gifts.

Towards the end of the ceremony, Bishop Donal commented on the occasion, saying: “This is the end of an era, and what a wonderful way to celebrate it for Fr Michael after 38 years here, and also for



the Parish of Melmount, for this man has been here for a large part of its 87-year history.”

Adding that we were moving towards the end of an era for the church in Ireland, he said: “At last, we are talking about moving from a clergy led church to a clear emphasis on Communion, Participation and Mission. The purpose of the church is not just to provide religious services, but to build welcoming communities and involve that community in taking responsibility for its work, and focus on getting good news to those who need it most.

“We all like what we are accustomed to. Fr Michael was very dependable, and the response of the parish was phenomenal a few years ago when he was ill. We give thanks for him, and Fr Paddy and Fr Charlie.

“We give thanks for the generation of clergy who struggled through years of violence and suffering (1975-2025), and have offered all sorts of support and service. We acknowledge the mistakes of the past and the present, and remember people hurt in the context of church.”

Delighted that Fr Michael “is so well to enjoy retirement”, Bishop Donal remarked: “He may retire as PP but will never ease to be MD - big-hearted, generous and positive.

“We trust that the God who has been faithful to us in the past will continue to lead us into the unknown future.”

All were invited afterwards to ‘The Den’, the neighbouring Melmount Centre, for supper.



Ordination Golden Jubilees

Feeling privileged on Golden Jubilee to have received gift of priesthood...  
Fr Paddy Doherty thankful for blessings of working together on journey towards Christ



THE third celebration of this year's Golden Jubilarians ordained by Bishop Edward Daly in June 1975 was in the packed St Mary's Church, in Maghera, on June 19, for Fr Paddy Doherty PP, who has spent 23 of his 50 years of priesthood there to date.

This year's Jubilee of Hope in the Church featured in the Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated by Fr Paddy, alongside his good friends from seminary, Frs Charlie Keaney and Michael Doherty, and Diamond Jubilarian, Fr Kieran O'Doherty, priest in residence.

A large number of fellow priests attended, with Bishop Donal presiding.

Also in attendance were Rev Johnathan Brown, Rector Church of Ireland, Maghera & Killelagh Parish, and Rev Dr Gareth Stewart, Presbyterian Church, Maghera & Killelagh Parish.

Welcoming everyone, there was one person whom the Buncrana born priest was particularly delighted to have present, his Godmother, Mary Toye. He remarked: "When I said that my Godmother was coming, people

looked at me, but she is spritely!"

Ordained on June 15, 1975, in St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn, Fr Paddy went on to minister as curate in St Brigid's Carnhill until 1984, then Killyclogher (1984-1991) and Maghera (1991-2000), where he was chaplain to St Patrick's College, before returning to Carnhill as administrator (2000-2004), after which he was appointed parish priest of Ardstraw West & Castlederg (2004-2009), and then PP of Glendermott, Waterside, Derry, (2009-2011), before returning to

Maghera as parish priest.

Reflecting on his 50 years as a priest during the homily, Fr Paddy said: "Priesthood is a gift and a privilege, and I am grateful to everyone who has been part of the journey with me: my family; parish; classmates; and the priests in our parish and our schools and colleges. I am so happy that so many of you have come here this evening. Thank you."

"Gratitude is the main response I can make to God and to you for the grace of priesthood. I feel blessed in so many ways and, on this occasion, I wish to acknowledge those blessings."

"I am grateful for the love and faith of my late parents and family, and for a home where faith was lived out with prayer and devotion to Mass. I salute them and appreciate how fortunate I was and am."

Born in Meentahalla, in the Illies, Buncrana, Co Donegal, Fr



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Paddy grew up in Derry and attended Long Tower School and then St Columb's College, before going to St Patrick's, Maynooth.

**Build community**

Recalling his first appointment after ordination to the new parish of St Brigid's Carnhill, with Fr Jim McGonagle and the late Fr Seamus O'Connell, he said: "It was an opportunity to build community and to take a fresh approach to ministry. I saw many leaders emerging in a young church."

Fr Paddy went on to share the motto he included on his ordination card, "Together we search and journey towards Christ," and noted that throughout his priesthood he had experienced that "working together brings great blessings", adding: "Where there is teamwork great things can happen."

He also shared a Vatican II quote: "The future of the universe rests with people who will provide generations with reasons for living and reasons for hoping," remarking: "As priests, we have tried to do that. The source of our hope is the Eucharist. Hope provides the basis for commitment too – where we have a spirit of hope, we have much commitment. With faith, there are many pockets of hope around us. Because we believe, we must be

people of hope."

Fr Paddy concluded by acknowledging the value of the schools and colleges, and all who work in various ministries and committees, expressing his appreciation.

"With you," he said, "I thank God for all the blessings He has given us, and thank Him too for the blessings He is going to give us in the days and weeks ahead."

Grateful that Fr Paddy isn't planning "to go off into the sunset yet", Bishop Donal spoke at the end of the ceremony to thank God for his ministry in the different parishes he was appointed to.

"South Derry is not his native soil but, like the Good Shepherd, he knows his flock," remarked the bishop, adding: "He has been faithful to his calling, ministering with a shrewd, pastoral heart. He has baptised, anointed, married, consoled and buried thousands, and often gone home to an empty house, maybe happy, tired or upset, but found support in prayer and grace."

"There is still a need for those who will celebrate faith, hope and love. It is not easy, but nothing worthwhile is."

All were invited for refreshments afterwards at the Watty Graham's GAA Club, where tributes were paid and gifts were presented to Fr Paddy on behalf of the parish in appreciation of his "selfless efforts behind the scenes and always going the extra mile."



**Mixed emotions for Diamond Jubilee celebrations**

THE Parish of Maghera had two special celebrations during June. As well as gathering to mark the Golden Jubilee of parish priest, Fr Paddy Doherty, they also helped their priest-in-residence, Fr Kieran O'Doherty, celebrate his Diamond Jubilee. Full coverage of Fr Kieran's celebration will be in the next edition.

There was sadness in the Diocese when the news broke that the other Diamond Jubilarian, Fr Oliver Crilly had passed away a few days after celebrating his 60 years of priesthood in hospital.

The parishioners of Urney & Castlefin, where Fr Oliver had resided, had been looking forward to a big celebration in the parish to mark this occasion with him. Instead, they gathered in St Mary's Church, Castlefin, to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee Mass he had hoped for, before his remains were taken back to the Greenlough Parish he had retired from as parish priest, for his Requiem Mass. Full coverage of the Jubilee Mass and Requiem Mass will be included in the next edition.



**Pope's monthly intention**

*The Holy Father has asked for prayer during June for:*

**That the world might grow in compassion...**

Let us pray that each one of us might find consolation in a personal relationship with Jesus and, from His Heart, learn to have compassion for the world.

**Prayer for Priests**

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

As they stand before us as

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

Give them the grace they need to respond generously to you, and the courage to proclaim your Word of justice, love and truth. Bless, in a special way, Your servant Father, Send your Spirit upon him So that he may always walk in the path of faith, hope and love, in the footsteps of Christ, the eternal priest, who offered Himself on the cross for the life of the world. Amen.

**Remember in prayer:**

Fr James Devine (June 1st)

All priests (2nd)

- All priests (3rd)
- All priests (4th)
- Fr Peter Devlin (5th)
- Fr Fintan Diggin (6th)
- Fr Brendan Doherty (7th)
- All priests (8th)
- All priests (9th)
- All priests (10th)
- All priests (11th)
- Fr Michael Doherty (12th)
- Fr Patrick Doherty (13th)
- Mgr Andrew Dolan (14th)
- Fr Brian Donnelly (15th)
- Msgr Joseph Donnelly (16th)
- All priests (17th)
- All priests (18th)
- All priests (19th)
- All priests (20th)
- All priests (21st)
- Fr Jack Farrell (22nd)
- All priests (23rd)
- Fr John Farren (24th)



- Fr Neil Farren (25th)
- Fr Paul Farren (26th)
- All Priests (27th)
- Fr John Forbes (28th)
- Fr Eddie Gallagher (29th)
- Fr Paul Fraser (30th)

**IS GOD CALLING YOU?**

**DERRYVOCATIONS.ORG**

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

# Pilgrims of Hope Jubilee Year 2025

## Shrines of France by Oliver Barrett



ON June 3, a group of pilgrims left from the Derry Diocese to visit four of the shrines of France and venerate the relics of four of the 250 incorruptible saints of the Church. Under the spiritual direction of Fr Roland Colhoun, Fr John McCallion and Fr Timothy from Ardee, we departed from Dublin to Lyon then onward to Paray-le-Monial to spend three nights at the Sanctuary of the Sacred Heart.

### Paray-le-Monial

It was here, in the Monastery of the Visitation, Christ appeared several times to St Margaret Mary Alacoque from December 1673 to 1675. Christ revealed to her His divine Heart passionate with love for all, and gave St Margaret Mary the mission of spreading the message and devotion to the Heart of Jesus throughout the world. With the help of Blessed Claude de la Colombiere SJ, who declared that the revelations were genuine, Margaret Mary promoted the devotions of the nine First Fridays and the Holy Hour, and through her efforts the Feast of the Sacred Heart was established.

### Ars-Sur-Formans

While staying in Paray-le-Monial, we took the short trip to Ars to venerate the incorrupt remains of the Curé d'Ars. St Jean-Marie Vianney lived from 1786 to 1859 and was finally recognised as a saint for the entire Church in 1925. According to the science of the saints, he is the patron saint of Parish Priests, and his Feast Day is celebrated on August 4. His is an example to everyone who thinks they are not smart enough to serve God because, despite his poor record of studies, he was ordained on August 12, 1815.

He was assigned as Parish Priest to Ars-en-Dombes in 1817,

a remote, sleepy town of 250 parishioners. At that time, Ars had the reputation for being the worst parish in France and very little was expected from Fr Jean-Marie Vianney. However, thanks to his fasting from all food except the humble tuber, and his spending many hours hearing confessions, miracles of grace occurred there. He often spent up to 12 hours hearing confession in winter and 16 hours in summer. It is true to say that the confessional is the only place a priest can dwell.

He opened a free school for girls, laying the foundation for the establishment of La Providence in 1827. La Providence became a shelter for orphaned and deserted children and today Perpetual Adoration occurs in the Providence Chapel.

For the Jubilee, a Plenary Indulgence, a grace offered by God, is available to all who visit the Sanctuary of Ars and: pass through the door as a pilgrim; receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation; participate in Eucharist and receive Communion; live a time of prayer; and perform a concrete act

of charity.

### Nevers

On Friday, June 6, our group of pilgrims departed from Paray-le-Monial to the Convent of St Gildard in Nevers, where the incorrupt remains of St Bernadette Soubirous are laid. The Virgin Mary appeared to St Bernadette from a cave in Lourdes, France, in 1858. St Bernadette was possibly the poorest girl in France at the time of the apparitions.

The first apparition occurred when Bernadette was collecting firewood near the cave at Lourdes. She said "the lady dressed in white" appeared about 18 times from February 11, 1858, to July 16, 1858. When Bernadette asked her who she was, She replied, "I am the Immaculate Conception". The statue of Our Lady of the Waters, a statue St Bernadette said most resembled the lady in white in her apparitions, is in the gardens of the sanctuary in Nevers. We celebrated the Eucharist in the Novitiate Chapel and venerated the incorrupt remains of St Bernadette in Bernadette's Chapel.

### Lisieux

On Saturday, June 7, we began our journey north to Lisieux. Enroute, we stopped off in Tours to celebrate the Eucharist in the crypt beneath the Basilica of St Martin de Tours and venerate his relic.

St Martin de Tours is the patron of Soldiers and Catechumens. We learnt of a cap stone in the crypt donated from Long Tower Parish, in recognition of St Columille's pilgrimage to the Shrine of St Martin de Tours. We subsequently learnt about the connection between Desertmartin Parish, in Co Derry and this Saint.

St Martin de Tours lived from 316 to 397, and his relics were the oldest venerated on our pilgrimage. A soldier of the Roman Army, he



converted to Christianity after a dream and was instrumental in rooting out the heresy of Arianism from the priesthood at that time. Reluctantly, he was elected Bishop of Tours in 371.

He is unique in that he was not canonized in any formal way, but rather became a saint through popular devotion. He preferred a simple chair to a bishop's throne, ate humbly and thought of nothing as his own.

"O God, you called the peacemaker blessed. Grant us the grace to struggle for peace in our world."

After travelling onwards from Tours to Lisieux, we spent the last three days of pilgrimage in and around Lisieux. On Sunday, June 8, we celebrated the Eucharist in the Louis and Zélie Martin Shrine in Alençon. Before Mass, Sr Margaret Mary, an Argentine nun from the Carmelite Order, told us how Sr Clare Crockett really inspired her and how she was sure we had a saint in Heaven. She expressed her desire to visit Derry one day because of its connection to Sr Clare. What I thought to be just a new cult in Derry, turns out to be something bigger and more far reaching, as other pilgrims assured me that the revival of the faith in Ireland would begin in the Derry Diocese because of Sr Clare Crockett.

At the Shrine, we saw where St Thérèse of Lisieux was born



and the house of Louis and Zélie Martin, before travelling onwards to spend the afternoon at Mont Saint-Michel in Normandy.

On Monday, June 9, we celebrated the Eucharist in the Basilica of St Thérèse in Lisieux before visiting La Maison Des Buissonnets, the house where St Thérèse told her father that she was entering the Carmelite Convent, Le Carmel.

On our final day, we celebrated the Eucharist in Le Carmel and venerated the incorruptible remains of St Thérèse, before departing for Paris to catch our flight back to Dublin.

"Oh, little flower, within the hour, show thy power."

Our pilgrimage coincided with the visit of the relics of St Margaret Mary Alacoque and St Claude de la Colombière to the Sacred Heart Church, Derry Road, on the outskirts of Strabane, from the Friday, June 13 to Thursday, June 19.

## Great turnout for Diocesan Sacred Heart Novena week hosted by Strabane Pastoral Area by Oliver Barrett

WITH great anticipation, the Sacred Heart Church community, within Strabane pastoral area, welcomed the relics of St Margaret Mary Alacoque and St Claude de la Colombiere on Friday, June 13. The relics were brought in reliquaries by Benedictine Monks from Silverstream Priory, as part of the Sacred Heart Crusade for the Jubilee year 2025.

The presence of the relics marked an important milestone in the history of the Strabane Pastoral Area. It was a unique privilege for all involved and an opportunity for the entire community to work together. The visit of the relics was part, if not the highlight, of our Parish Sacred Heart Novena, which was one in a series taking place throughout Ireland with the aim of rekindling devotion to the Sacred Heart in Ireland. In a way, the Sacred Heart Crusade is Pope Francis' parting gift to the Church

in Ireland.

The hosting of the Novena for the Diocese, from June 13-19, represented months of preparation and collaboration between parishioners in the pastoral area, the parish pastoral council, diocesan representatives and priests in the pastoral area.

The opening Mass of the Novena, on Friday, June 13, was celebrated by Bishop Donal McKeown. Each day of the Novena was punctuated with occasions for prayer, devotion and veneration of the relics. Attendance was notable at the 7 am Mass, midday Mass and evening devotions. The evening devotions consisted of an insightful Q&A with a guest speaker, and a time of Adoration and prayer. Each evening reflection began with the recitation of the Rosary, and devotions included the Litany of the Sacred Heart.

There has been a long-standing

tradition of devotion to the Sacred Heart in Ireland. Previous generations, who did not have the opportunity to travel on pilgrimage to the Visitation Convent in Paray-le-Monial, or did not have the opportunity to venerate relics, had a strong devotion to the Sacred Heart. That is why there is a Sacred Heart picture or statue of the Sacred Heart in many of our homes. The Novena presented an opportunity to reignite this devotion.

It is right and fitting that we journeyed with St Margaret Mary Alacoque and St Claude de la Colombiere during the Novena. At a time when Christian fervour was growing cold, with the assistance of her spiritual director St Claude de la Colombiere, St Margaret Mary Alacoque recalled the great love God had for His people. Thanks to her we celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

St Margaret Mary Alacoque received the devotion to the Sacred Heart, from 1673 to 1675, at the end of a period in church history known as the Reformation. The Reformation, which lasted loosely from the 14th century to the 17th century, represented a time of great upheaval within Christendom. I find it ironic that the Lord revealed the love of His Sacred Heart to St Margaret Mary Alacoque at a time when reformers criticized the Catholic Church for its veneration of relics and statues of saints. The reformers believed that saints are 'invisible'. That is why we only see statues of the saints and veneration of relics in the Catholic and Orthodox churches, not in reformed churches.

During the Novena, those who participated had the opportunity to light candles for intentions and make petitions to the Sacred Heart. We also had a Novena prayer that

we recited daily. I am certain that the presence of the relics and the Novena will have many benefits

for the faithful in the pastoral area and beyond and will sustain us throughout the year.

### Prayer to The Sacred Heart

**O Most Sacred Heart of Jesus! O fount of every good! I adore Thee, I love Thee, and I repent sincerely of my sins. I offer Thee my poor heart. Do Thou make it humble, patient, pure and in all things conformed to Thy will. Grant that I may live in Thee, and die for Thee.**

**Protect me in dangers, console me in afflictions! grant me health of body, succour in my temporal needs, Thy blessing upon all my works, and the grace of a happy death.**

## Welcoming Mass for Sacred Heart Saints' relics a special occasion

THE arrival of the relics of St Margaret Alacoque and St Claude la Columbiere in the Derry Diocese, during June, was marked by the celebration of Mass by Bishop Donal in Sacred Heart Church, in the Strabane Pastoral Area.

The beautiful floral displays in the sanctuary greatly enhanced awareness of the sanctity of the contents of the reliquaries during the Mass, and veneration of the first-class relics afterwards.

St Margaret Mary was a nun at the Visitation Monastery in Paray-le-Monial, in France, who received numerous visions and revelations from Jesus, including 12 promises for those devoted to His Sacred Heart. Her reliquary contained a piece of a right rib, a piece of a left rib and the left kneecap.

St Claude, a priest of the Society of Jesus (Jesuit), was the French priest who was the confessor and spiritual director of St Margaret Mary, and is known for the role he played in spreading devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Bishop Donal was joined on the altar by Fr Basil Mary McCabe, Benedictine Prior of Silverstream Monastery, in the Diocese of Meath, Fr Michael McCaughy PP

Strabane Pastoral Area, Fr Declan Boland, priest-in-residence, and Fr Peter O'Kane.

The Mass of welcome on Friday, May 13, also marked the opening of the Novena to The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, which was held on nine consecutive Fridays in different churches across Ireland between May 2 and June 27.

Welcoming such a great turnout for the Mass and veneration of the relics, as the Parish Novena got underway, Fr Michael remarked: "I was ordained in Sacred Heart Church, Omagh, so the Sacred Heart is very special to me and it is wonderful to have these relics here."

During his homily, the bishop spoke of how devotion to the Sacred Heart began to flourish 350 years ago in the 17th century, after the decades of war and turmoil that followed the Reformation, saying: "In an age of confrontation and condemnation, the love of the suffering Jesus - revealed on the Cross - came to the fore as a counterbalance to an angry defence of church teaching that seemed to be very widespread."

He went on to highlight that the revelations to St Margaret Mary Alacoque, between 1673-75, like

any other such apparitions, never teach something new, adding: "The final revelations about God are found in the Bible. Thus, this novena celebrates, in a very visual and concrete way, what we have always known about the story of our salvation. We were all made in the divine image and likeness."

"When we went astray, God so loved the world that He sent His only Son to die, so that sin and death might be defeated. And the Holy Spirit leads the church to bring that healing mercy to the world. That is the story that links together all the stories of the bible, and it is the narrative that we declare each time we recite the Creed."

He went on to say: "The powerful message that is celebrated today is important in every age. God wins the victory over sin and division by superabundant love revealed in Christ's heart that bled for us."

In this age of secularism and individualism, Bishop Donal stated: "The Sacred Heart calls us to lift our eyes from self-preoccupation to the one who hangs on the cross out of love for us. God helps us to be and to become what we are called to be. The Sacred Heart calls us into relationship with God and with

others."

Encouraging thanksgiving today "for the love that the Father has lavished upon us by letting us be called God's children" (1 Jn), Bishop Donal continued: "Let us commit ourselves to not be ashamed to have signs of our faith around our homes; promise to keep our prayer focused on the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord (St Paul) and resist the temptation to major on the anger of God; ensure that all our discussions about the future of the church take the pierced heart on the Cross as our starting point; and consider the First Friday devotions."

Before inviting the congregation to come forward to venerate the relics at the end of Mass, Fr Michael said that all were welcome to return over the following days of the Novena, and thanked those from the three Pastoral groups who had organised it and the choir for the beautiful singing.

Fr Basil spoke words of thanks for the welcoming of the relics to the area and Diocese, and then read a prayer of consecration. Veneration came to a close with Fr Peter leading the Litany to the Sacred Heart and other Sacred Heart prayers.



## West Tyrone Pioneer Mass of Thanksgiving on eve of Sacred Heart Feast



ON the eve of the Feast of the Sacred Heart, a Mass was celebrated for members of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association in the West Tyrone Pastoral Area by Fr Thomas Canning, in St Patrick's Church, Drumquin.

Welcoming everyone, Fr Thomas, who became a Pioneer in his early 40s, noted that some have been members of the Association for 10, 25, 50, 60 and 70 years.

In his homily, he shared how the great witness of pioneers he had met inspired him to join the Association.

Saying that he had always respected people who had made the commitment to abstain from alcohol, Fr Thomas remarked: "I used to be very impressed whenever they would wear their Pioneer pins, especially at social gatherings, which some of us would easily identify alcohol with. I was always convinced that they were never worn for show."

"Whenever I saw anybody wearing a pioneer pin it used to make me stop and think. Being in contact with so many Pioneers made me realise that it doesn't mean we stop living altogether. We can still go out and be sociable as

much as anyone else."

Recalling a particular experience, he said: "I think in a special way of one young teacher who used to get youth to wear a Pioneer Pin with a smile. Whatever way she taught them caused many of them to be so convinced. Being at her funeral and seeing her Pioneer Pin being brought up in the Offertory Procession, which she had even worn on her wedding dress, left an impression on me."

"So, it was from that time on that I decided to become a Pioneer, though not right away as I wanted to spend a year growing into it by going to meetings, and doing research into what the Pioneer Association is all about."

"I hadn't realised how much devotion to the Sacred Heart is an integral part of Pioneer spirituality. I also did a retreat based on a programme about becoming a Pioneer for life and, after that, I felt the call to really make that life-long commitment and then took the pin."

He continued: "I find that prayer helps me in some way to stay steadfast to that commitment, especially the recitation of the Heroic Offering each week. Our Pioneer gathering once a month

in the parish, during which we pray the Rosary around the Sacred Heart candle, do a bit of study and chat, also helps us all to stay steadfast in our commitment. I find that gathering so important as a way of supporting one another."

"We celebrate this Mass of Thanksgiving, as we celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Heart, for all Pioneers in the West Tyrone Pastoral Area - Castlederg, Aghyaran and Drumquin - especially those here celebrating 60, 50 and 25 years as Pioneers."

"It is important that others realise that we are not here as a campaign against drink altogether, but to promote temperance and to discourage, as much as possible, abuse of alcohol and drug abuse, which has damaged so many lives for so long."

Noting that the Pioneer Association was founded in Dublin in the Presbytery of

St Francis Xavier Church, on Gardiner Street, in December 1898, by Jesuit, Fr James Cullen, Fr Thomas added: "Initially, it was established to combat alcohol abuse amongst Irish Catholics. It is not anti-alcohol but aims to promote peace and harmony through abstinence and spiritual practices."

"Its mission is to address the problems in society caused by excess alcohol consumption and drug usage. This we do through prayer and faith; example; and activities based on presenting alternatives to individuals, particularly to the young."

"The vision of the Association is to help build a society where people live to their full potential and where alcohol can be enjoyed in moderation, avoiding all the ills that arise in society from excess in its use."



Drumquin Pioneers, Brigid Gormley (60 years) and Paddy Montague (25 years).

## Three Patrons Pioneers celebrate 50 years and more of total abstinence



In the lead-up to the Feast of the Sacred Heart, Fr Micheal McGavigan, PP Three Patrons, presented Pioneer Pins and certificates to local members of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association, following the celebration of Mass in St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn, Derry. Photographed with Fr Micheal are Bernie Millar, Martin Gillen, and Margaret Mullan, who each received Lifetime Pioneer Pins, and Kathleen Moore, who received a 50-year Golden Pin for herself and one on behalf of her sister, Anna Doherty, in St Patrick's Church Derry. (Photograph by Gerry Temple)

## Recovering from a hectic but blessed month travelling around churches with a Sacred Heart statue, Tina McAteer Wallace shares the inspiring faith journey that has transformed her into...

### A walking slogan and song for the Lord



IN this month of the Sacred Heart, Muff mother, Tina McAteer Wallace shares the story of her devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the transformation journey she has been on that led to a special experience with one of the Sacred Heart statues blessed in Rome for Ireland by the late Pope Francis I.

Recalling the blessing of her first-born on her life at a crucial time, and the start of her devotion to the Sacred Heart with her father passing away on the Feast of the Sacred Heart 14 years ago, the 47-year-old highlights the freedom that comes with surrendering all to God and the power of the Holy Spirit to evoke change through a deepening love for the Divine.

Tina is the second eldest of three girls and two boys born to Anne and John McAteer in Muff, Co Donegal, with the first-born boy sadly passing away aged three months. Growing up in a faith-filled family, Tina particularly remembers Granny Lewis, her maternal grandmother, being the backbone of faith in her life.

"We would have taken her to Mass and always said the Rosary in the car. Another memory is of her sitting under the big picture of the Sacred Heart she had in her home. When mum and dad were at work, Granny Lewis would have looked after us and prayed over us going out the door to school. Those prayers have stuck with me and, these days, when I am saying the St Michael Archangel prayer I think of her," said Tina.

She continued: "We had a family prayer life and would have prayed the Rosary in our own family home too, and I remember praying this particularly when there was a threat of wars in the world. Mum's faith is very strong and dad would have come to Mass with us as a family too.

"We received all the sacraments of our youth, but nothing really stands out for me about the preparation for receiving them. I am homeschooling my girls now and have learned so much reading the Bible, including the Commandments, and these along with the sacraments mean so much more to me now."

After primary school, Tina attended Carndonagh Community School and then went to Magee to achieve a BA Hons in Hotel & Tourism Management, and a Diploma in Industrial Studies.

She recalled: "The first three years of university were a blur with all that goes with student life, but even during college I remained in my faith. I remember being out all night partying and then going to Mass. I probably would have been better not to receive the Holy Eucharist as I wasn't in a state of grace. Sin wasn't as obvious to me back then. I loved to party and drink, and I loved the men. I have dealt with a lot of my own shame and have experienced a lot of inner healing, by the grace of God.

"I graduated when I was 21 and went to Dublin, where I worked in a shop. I continued living my life with God in it, seeking Him out and going to Mass, but I was also living the ways of the world."

Going on to work for a marketing company, where she met the father of her first-born, Jack, Tina said: "We were only going out a short time when I fell pregnant. With my mother a teacher and being from a strong Catholic family, I felt that I had brought shame upon my family. I was petrified to tell my mother, as I was the first one to become pregnant outside marriage in the family, and then she was petrified to tell her mother. However, my Granny Lewis was very close to God and would have got premonitions, like dreams, and when my mother went to tell her about my pregnancy, Granny could sense that something was wrong and said to her, 'What's wrong? Is it Tina?' Then she said, 'It's ok, that wee baby is a gift.'

#### Blessing

"Jack is one of the biggest blessings in my life, saving me from going down the road of drink. He was, without doubt, a saving grace. I am very pro-life and believe that every baby is a blessing. Unfortunately, my relationship with his dad was not a healthy one and so it didn't work out."

She continued: "I was a broken girl, with no confidence. My sister introduced me to a deck of angel cards, which helped me a lot at the time. If I wasn't feeling great, I would just pick a card and get some positive message, for example, about forgiveness, but then I started to delve into New Age. It started out as innocent, then I went on to become a certified angel card reader. I was hooked. I did crystal therapy too and was doing a course on the seven archangels, even though there are only three mentioned in the Bible. I would have used these

at different times in my life, for example, when my father passed away, I went to someone like a medium who read things about loved ones. I didn't know that it was against our faith and very unsafe. You are not dealing with God's Holy Angels here.

"People came to me to do readings for them. Looking back, something was always keeping me safe. I had 10, if not more, decks of these cards. People asked me if I could tell their future and I replied that I didn't do that, but that I could read cards about what was happening in their life and see if I could advise them. When it came to making money from card reading, I didn't take it but instead would have said go and say a prayer, or light a candle for someone, if they felt that they had got anything from the reading. I felt pushed to make it a profession, but something didn't sit right with me about that. I just wanted to bring people closer to God."

By this stage, Tina had met and married Kevin Wallace, and had given birth to her second child, Mia. She went on to share an experience that led to a major change in her life 10 years ago, saying: "I was in the middle of doing a course on the archangels, when we lost our baby, Johanne through miscarriage. My husband and I went to chat to a priest and, in the course of our conversation, he looked deep into my eyes and said, 'Your soul is in danger.' He said this two times. It must have been because of something I had said.

"I remember walking down the corridor crying my heart out. When my husband said that we could have another baby, I told him that I was crying about what the priest had said. It really unsettled me, but I realise now that it was probably God sowing the seed to get me out of card reading. I thought I was destined to work alongside one of the archangels with the cards to bring peace to the world.

"After this, I went to a priest during a retreat, telling him that I had been told my soul was in danger, and asking if that was right. I told him that I was reading angel cards and doing the archangels course, and asked if I was doing anything wrong. He said that I wasn't, probably because he didn't know that it was wrong, so I continued to do it for another two or three years.

"The Christmas after I had lost Johanne, I felt a pull to leave my job. I was so conflicted, but left my job not knowing that I was pregnant with Estelle and went on doing the angel card readings."

#### Encounter

However, in the lead up to the Irish abortion referendum of 2018, Tina had an encounter that

led to a massive change in her life.

"I am strongly pro-life," she said, "and met up with a local woman in Tank & Skinny's to discuss going around the houses campaigning for life. She started talking about her own past and, as I listened, I felt as if someone was talking to my soul. What she was saying was mirroring my life. She was talking about how she got into pro-life, and when I disclosed the things that I was doing she encouraged me to come away from this, as she knew that I wanted to be living in my faith and had good Catholic roots. She gave me the contact number for the Franciscan Friars. I had never heard of them but felt that this was something I had to do.

"I then met with Fr Isaac and, as we spoke, a lovely feeling came over me. There was a huge Divine Mercy image and I felt that it had come alive. There was a warm feeling in that room and I realised that it was the Holy Spirit revealing God's love for me. Fr Isaac said that I had to renounce all the card reading and New Age practices. This was new territory to me, but I knew in my heart that I had to do it. When he said that I had to burn the cards, I was shocked and said, 'I'm not burning all my cards!' But he told me that I had to.

"I had loads of cards and was crying as I burnt them, and I know now that that was me being purified. I had to get rid of a lot of stuff, including the crystals. I asked if I could keep them as ornaments in the garden, but he said 'No!' So, I got rid of the crystals, and if I get anything that feels off now, I get rid of it. That was the start of my clearing out all New Age stuff and the more I got purified of it, the more I was freed from the things in my life that were not of God. I got filled with God's love and loved Him more and more. Now, I can't get enough of Him. The Lord fills my life."

Happy to be continually transformed by the Holy Spirit, Tina was delighted to be introduced to the Cursillo community five years ago: "About two years after I started the process of getting rid of New Age stuff, my sister said to me about me doing a Cursillo weekend. I hadn't heard of Cursillo and so knew nothing about it. On the weekend, I felt like a kid in a sweet shop. I was in a room of women full of love for Christ and I was mesmerized by the way they spoke and sang about Jesus. Their love was tangible.

"Listening to hymn singing always made me feel emotional and their singing about Jesus, along with other parts of the Cursillo weekend, was a most beautiful experience which I think everybody should have. I didn't know that it was the Holy

Spirit working in me, but it was the same feeling that I got when discussing my faith with the friars.

"After my Cursillo weekend in February, unfortunately Covid kicked in and we had the first lockdown in March. I struggled with that at the start. I wanted more of whatever Cursillo was, but we couldn't meet up."

#### Public prayer

She continued: "When I look back, I see that the Holy Spirit was awakened in me and I began to have a more intimate encounter with the Lord, as I was seeking Him in a different way with chapels being closed. In January 2021, I got involved in public prayer with some members of Human Life International (HLI), including a young family. We met at the Grotto at St Brigid's, Carnhill, to either pray there or as we walked. I was so inspired by the young family walking the streets with their beads, praying.

"At first, I was thinking 'We're praying in public, people will be looking at us,' but every time I did it, I got stronger. Now, I lead the Holy Face Vigil on Good Friday in public, in my home village of Muff, at the same time as 500 other groups around Ireland. We have been doing the Holy Face Public Vigil in Muff now for three years, and I am so proud that my husband and children also stand out there along with others from Muff, and some come from Derry to join us too.

"It is an honour to pray in public and be a witness. I do the same for

Our Lady. On the Saturday closest to May 13, the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima, we honour Our Lady with a public Rosary, and we do the First Saturdays as well in St Joseph's Galliagh. Sometimes we stay at the Grotto and pray the Rosary, and other times we walk the street and hand out roses and prayers.

"God is always so many steps ahead of us. When I was joining HLI in prayer and being inspired by them, I didn't think that later on I would be leading public prayer. I love being that witness, as it is an opportunity to let the Holy Spirit use me to inspire others to come back to the faith."

Another positive to come out of the Covid lockdown period for Tina was her greater appreciation for and awareness during the celebration of Mass: "The restrictions in the North lifted before the South, so I started going more to Mass in St Joseph's, Galliagh. I have the most profound memory of Fr Isaac saying Mass there around Easter. It was alive for me for the first time. I was hooked on every word and this is still the case now. I try to absorb as much as I can from Mass. I was so thankful to be back in Our Lord's presence. Mass has taken on a completely different meaning for me and I try to go daily. It is not a chore now; I want to be there. I love to receive Our Lord each day, even when I go on holiday I have to be close to a church. I love the Eucharist.

"When I started to get to know the Lord more, there was a lot



St Patrick's Church, Claudy.

*continued from page 20*

more reverence. I became more aware of who I was in the presence of and who I was to receive. I got a very strong prompting to receive Him on my tongue and didn't know what to do, as there was still a lot of restrictions related to Covid. But I built up the courage to do so, and then I started going down on my knees to receive Him in the humblest way that I could. Others in my family started to do this too. I feel the Lord deserves so much more reverence than we give Him.

### Serve

"Everything is different to me now in how I approach and receive Him at Mass, and hearing His name taken in vain pains me. Every day, I just want to know and serve Him more, spreading devotion to Him and consoling Him. Everything that I say and do is for the Lord. It has not been an easy path. It is not common-place to go on your knees to receive, so I had to battle with this, asking myself do I care what people think or the Lord?"

Following the Lord more closely led to Tina home-schooling her children, which is a decision she struggled with but doesn't regret.

She commented: "I prepared Estelle for her First Holy Communion and learnt so much myself. When I was reading her books, it was all about looking after your soul and trying to follow God's ways. I can feel God more and more telling me that He is in control."

"The girls were both happy in school and had good friends, but I was getting it so strongly to take them out of it. If they struggled socially as a result, I was for sending them back to school, but God hasn't let us down. He is amazing. What He brings you to He will bring you through, and the girls even see this too. We are following Our Lord's ways in the best way that we can. Through their learning, I have learnt so much. I battled with doubt about it for ages, though the girls were happy. It is only this last while that I have accepted and surrendered to God's plan."

"I feel that if God has a mission for you, He is preparing you in the background. He equips you for whatever is needed. I am learning more and more to surrender. There is freedom when you really learn to put your trust in God. We have no idea what is going to happen from one day to the next, but when you surrender to God there is a peace. Everyday, I am learning something new. Every day is a school day."

Thankful to have a strong support network, Tina said: "It is not easy following Our Lord. We have to stand out and stand up, there is no other way. I am here to serve God. The Franciscan Friars have been a massive help on my journey, and we are also blessed to have so many Masses, Adoration, Confession and retreats around Derry compared to other areas."

We are blessed with good priests too.

"St Pio Café is also fantastic. After Mass in St Joseph's, Galliagh, I can go into the café for a cup of tea and the Friars are about to chat to or hear Confession. The people I meet in the Café are great. We all share this love for God, and it is so beautiful to sit with people and enjoy a laugh too."

### Fellowship

"I was a real party girl and loved my drink back in the day, but if you invited me to a party now I would hesitate, however, mention a retreat and I am there. When I go to faith events, I meet people that I have seen before and are more like family now. My wee Galliagh gang are great. They are the nicest people and I look forward to seeing them at Mass on Tuesdays and Thursdays and going to Pio House Café afterwards to get some hugs. I see the love of Our Lord in these people, and I have seen so many people totally transformed by fellowship. We need this as it is a lonely path, though the Lord is with us. It is good to be with people who are on the same path, to laugh and cry with them."

"I also go to Living Disciples and love the praise and worship there, being able to praise the Lord with every lyric. Any music CDs that don't sit well with me now, be it sexual or crude language etc, I get rid of them."

As well as praying novenas and other devotions, Tina is now doing the 46-day Consecration to Our Lady's Mantle: "When you get to know Jesus, you can't do it without Mary. I pray the Rosary and Divine Mercy every day, along with going to daily Mass if I can. As a mother myself, I have great devotion to Our Lady and consecrate my family to the Holy Family. St Anthony is also a best friend to me and my family, who are seeing for themselves God at work through St Anthony finding lost things and answering our prayers promptly."

Going on to share her special devotion to the Sacred Heart and a precious gift from her son, Tina said: "My daddy passed away on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, which that year was on July 1. When my daddy died, I was very lost. I was doing the Sacred Heart Novena at the time and have developed a devotion to the Sacred Heart because of what God has done for me and my family through trials and struggles."

"Jack is an amazing artist and I would have suggested to him from time-to-time to draw me an image of Jesus. Then, last Christmas, he went to get something from the car and when he walked in and showed me the Sacred Heart picture he had sketched, I was deeply moved by how inspired it was. I just felt that it was anointed. It just radiates off the page and is now my favourite image of the Sacred Heart."

She added: "In response to my reaction, Jack got the image

professionally copied for other people. When I said to him if he was hoping to make plenty of money from this, he said that he wasn't looking for money, that he just wanted to spread the image. Many people now have it framed in their homes."

"Then someone asked about prayer cards with the image on it and Jack got to work on that. Meanwhile, I started praying to know what prayer to put on it and kept getting one that I had learnt from my Granny Lewis as a child, 'Jesus meek and humble of Heart, make my heart like unto Thine. Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in You.' This is a simple and very powerful prayer, but I wondered if it was the prayer God wanted on the card."

### Confirmed

"I was praying about this and one night, around Easter-time, I was at 'Living Disciples' in Galliagh and a box with St Faustina's messages was passed around. My eyes fell on the words at the end of the quote I got, 'For I am meek and humble of heart', and I felt confirmation about the prayer for the card."

"In Jack's image, Our Lord's Hand is on His Heart and He is looking up to the Father with tears in His eyes. The quote started with the words, 'Fix your eyes upon Me', so we ended up putting the full message of St Faustina on the prayer card. What I love about this message from Jesus to St Faustina, for the prayer card with Jack's Sacred Heart image, is that Jack was born on the Feast of The Divine Mercy."

With such a strong connection to the Sacred Heart, when Tina heard that the Sacred Heart statues were going around Ireland, she immediately thought it would be great to get one of them to Derry: "I talked to the Galliagh people I know about it and they said I should make enquiries to Three Patrons parish priest, Fr Micheal McGavigan. I contacted him and he said that it was fine. In my head, I was only getting the statue for the churches in Three Patrons and Sacred Heart Church, Muff. That was the plan. I had no idea what I was letting myself in for."

"I contacted the Sacred Heart Crusade, who put me in touch with a lady in the Raphoe Diocese. It was one of the four statues blessed by Pope Francis. I collected it from Ballybofey and was told that I could have it for the month of May. Then obstacles started coming. I was thinking that I needed to contact different parishes and my good friend, Lisa, offered to help with this. We put together a list of 12 other chapels in Derry and I tried to make a schedule."

"Then I was asked if I had the permission of the bishop; this was the night before I was to take it to a parish. So, I made contact with Bishop Donal and got the go-ahead. The whole month of May was hectic, trying to co-ordinate a schedule which fitted with when priests wanted it. My

husband and friend were brilliant. Some parishes did more than others and one that stands out is the Cathedral, where Fr Shaun Doherty celebrated a votive Mass before the statue left there."

"In the midst of all this, I received the relics of St Margaret Mary and St Maria Goretti, so I asked them if they wanted me to take these relics with me. It was a Friday night Votive Mass in honour of the Sacred Heart for families, and people got to venerate the relics afterwards. It was a very special time."

Explaining how she ended up with these relics, and the significance of one of them in particular in her life, Tina said: "My full name is Margaret Mary Martina. I was named after my two grannies who had very strong faith. A couple of years ago, my youngest daughter, Estelle and I were picking a saint for the year to walk with. When we were putting the saints' names into a bag, I saw St Margaret Mary and I said to Estelle, what are the chances of me getting this saint. There were a few of us doing prayer together and I asked them if they wanted to pick a saint and I picked out Margaret Mary...I couldn't believe it."

"There was a little message with each saint's name and the one on mine, St Margaret Mary, was to spread devotion to the Sacred Heart...that was about two years before I got involved in this Sacred Heart Crusade. It seems clear to me now that Our Lord wanted me to spread that devotion in taking the Sacred Heart statue around chapels."

### Relic

She continued: "A friend of mine at a Flame of Love prayer night, in Termonbacca, had a relic of St Margaret Mary. I couldn't believe it and explained that she was my namesake. They let me have the relic, as well as one of St Maria Goretti. I got to keep them with me for a week, so I took them to Mass with me and the St Pio House café, and everywhere I went, to give blessings."

"Termonbacca had a Sacred Heart Retreat on and they got a big surprise when I came up with the statue for them to have during the retreat, and then I took up the relics when I went to collect the statue."

Exhausted but sad when it came time to hand the statue back, Tina had a special moment when she attended the Consecration of Ireland to the Sacred Heart, in Knock, sometime after. She recalled: "I was sitting looking at the four Sacred Heart statues on the altar in the Basilica and had the beautiful, peaceful thought that I had walked with one of them for a month, and even had it in my home for one night when I couldn't get it to the next church after having collected it from another. I contacted the Crusade to ask if it was alright for me to keep the statue in my home that night and they said of course, that I was the custodian of it for that



St Joseph's Church, Craigbane.



Relic blessing in Cathedral.



Tina with the Sacred Heart statue in St Columb's Church, Waterside, Derry

month."

"I don't do stuff for God to get anything back, but because He is worth it," remarked Tina, adding: "I will never be able to pay Him back for all that He has done for me and my family. When you put yourself out for God, He won't be outdone in repaying you. I live my life now for Jesus. I don't really care what people think of it. As long as I know that my heart is aligned to His and that I'm doing it for the right reason. I want to be leading a good life and bring that joy to people, especially now

when this world is so broken."

"Jesus is transforming me from the inside out. I still have a lot to learn. I don't want to be over the top, but I can't keep my love for God in. Even my music and clothes reflect this, as I'm like a walking slogan and song for the Lord. When your eyes and heart are open, you really want everyone else to experience it, but I have to accept that not everybody is ready for it and try hard to meet others where they are at. God blesses people for different missions, and is certainly blessing me on mine!"

# Muff artist's 'Heart of Eternal Love' image wowing hearts near and far



WHEN Muff artist, Jack McAteer Wallace presented his mum with a Christmas gift of a charcoal drawing of Our Lord, featuring His Sacred Heart and eyes looking heavenward, the 24-year-old had not expected the impact it had on her, never mind the response by many others when it was shared via

social media.

The striking black and white image (see back page) also wowed the scoring collectors of the 2025 American Art Collectors Choice Awards, leading to his 'Heart of Eternal Love' entry being awarded first place in Category 4 – Charcoal/Ink/Graphite Figure.

The Awards attracted entries from artists in 49 countries and were scored by 15 revered art collectors, who selected Jack's graphite figure to be included in this year's 50 categories of the best contemporary art in the world.

Speaking to 'The Net' before setting off for three months in Chicago, on a J-1 visa to work for a music event caterer, Jack shared how the encouraging reaction to his Sacred Heart image has prompted him to think more seriously about using this God-given gift, not so much for financial profit but to touch people's hearts like his mum's was.

Through the American Art Collectors Choice Awards his 'Heart of Eternal Love' piece has been commissioned at \$3,500. Commenting on this, he said: "The most I have ever sold art for in the past is £300, so this is a big jump, but this image will never be sold. If people want copies I have some spare, or can order some."

He added: "This wasn't about profit. Just before last Christmas, I felt prompted to create an image of the Sacred Heart for my mother. It only took me about 20 hours to complete it, so one of the fastest sketches I have done. It was created in a complete state of flow and I felt a sense of peace when I was

working on it.

"When I saw mum's reaction to the sketch, I thought...what if I could do that for someone else?"

Jack graduated with an Honours Degree in Social Care last October. For the last two years, his primary job has been working as a social care worker with young people in residential care, while doing podcasts and artwork in his spare time.

## Care and creativity

Describing himself as not goal orientated but more interest-based in what he does, Jack said: "Care and creativity are my main two components. I like to be able to give back. My motto would be to create more than consume as we are living in a very all-consuming world."

Regarding his art, he added: "I always draw from a reference. I use an app. Sometimes I would be drawing something by drawing hundreds of little boxes, and I wouldn't know what it is that I am actually drawing until it is finished."

"I am currently pursuing a PhD in Social Robotics in AI. As much as it is very beneficial, AI and Robotics can never replace God. I saw an AI-generated image of Jesus online and, with so many AI images flooding our feeds, I wanted to reclaim that space by creating

my own hand-drawn version; one that felt personal and imperfect in a human way."

He continued: "I felt that I could relate to the image I was creating. It reminded me of my mum. It was quite cathartic; I released something while drawing it and realized that I am to create. It re-instilled peace in me as I wasn't confident about my art. I didn't feel like it had to be a perfect Jesus image as there is no such thing. Whatever way I drew it was my version of Him."

Regarding his faith, Jack commented: "While I would doubt a lot of things, my faith has been getting stronger this past while. I have come to the realization that God is not necessarily conventional. I find God through my work in the social care setting and through my art, while my mum finds Him in prayer. I like to think that because I am not conventional, I can be more relatable to people, which helps in my work and conversations to break down stigma."

"My family have been so supportive, giving me the chance and space to find my own path. That is unconditional love and acceptance, and that is God."

He went on to comment: "What I like about faith is the community element, pulling us back from individualism."

And the faith community online and surrounding his mum, Tina, were instrumental in Jack's image also being used on prayer cards that have not only gone out throughout Ireland and to England, but also further afield to places like America and Canada.

"I posted the image on to the social media platform, Reddit," recalled Jack, "and a few people asked if they could use it for Confirmation cards in places like England and America."

"This led to mum getting the idea to create prayer cards, using the Sacred Heart image that I had created on one side and a prayer that came to her on the other side. It is a nice connection to have my art and mum's faith expressed on one card."

"There have been about 2,000 prayer cards distributed at this stage, and we gifted many of them to retreats, etc, all over Ireland. I might leave one somewhere in Chicago for the Pope!"

"When I get back from Chicago," he added, "I plan to sketch images of Mother Mary and others and exhibit my work. I have done over 100 portrait drawings in the last five years."

To contact or view Jack's work online, just search for Jackmcsart, or email him at jackmcsart22@gmail.com.

## First Friday Devotion to the Sacred Heart

*"I promise you, in the excessive mercy of My Heart that My all-powerful love will grant to all those who receive Holy Communion on the first Friday for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance; they shall not die in my disgrace nor without receiving the sacraments; My divine Heart shall be their safe refuge in that last moment." - Our Lord to St Margaret Mary Alacoque.*

To complete the First Friday Devotion, one must receive Holy Communion on each First Friday, which must be consecutive and be made in honour of, and in reparation to, the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

### Act of Reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Sacred Heart of Jesus, animated with a desire to repair the outrages unceasingly offered to Thee, we prostrate before Thy throne of mercy, and in the name of all mankind, pledge our love and fidelity to Thee!

The more Thy mysteries are blasphemed, the more firmly we shall believe them, O Sacred Heart of Jesus!

The more impiety endeavours to extinguish our hopes of immortality, the more we shall trust in Thy Heart, sole hope of mankind!

The more hearts resist Thy Divine attractions, the more we shall love

Thee, O infinitely amiable Heart of Jesus!

The more unbelief attacks Thy Divinity, the more humbly and profoundly we shall adore It, O Divine Heart of Jesus!

The more Thy holy laws are transgressed and ignored, the more we shall delight to observe them, O most holy Heart of Jesus!

The more Thy Sacraments are despised and abandoned, the more frequently we shall receive them with love and reverence, O most liberal Heart of Jesus!

The more the imitation of Thy virtues is neglected and forgotten, the more we shall endeavour to practice them, O Heart of Jesus, model of every virtue!

The more the devil labours to destroy souls, the more we shall be inflamed with desire to save them, O Heart of Jesus, zealous Lover of souls!

The more sin and impurity destroy the image of God in man, the more we shall try by purity of life to be a living temple of the Holy Spirit, O Heart of Jesus!

The more Thy Holy Church is despised, the more we shall endeavour to be her faithful children, O Sweet Heart of Jesus!

The more Thy Vicar on earth is persecuted, the more we will honour him as the infallible head of Thy Holy Church, show our fidelity and pray for him, O kindly Heart of Jesus!

O Sacred Heart, through Thy

powerful grace, may we become Thy apostles in the midst of a corrupted world, and be Thy crown in the kingdom of heaven. Amen

### 12 Promises to St Margaret Mary

\*I will give them all the graces necessary for their state of life.

\*I will give peace in their families.

\*I will console them in all their troubles.

\*I will be their refuge in life and especially in death.

\*I will abundantly bless all their undertakings.

\*Sinners shall find in my Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.

\*Tepid souls shall become fervent.

\*Fervent souls shall rise speedily to great perfection.

\*I will bless those places wherein the image of my Sacred Heart shall be exposed and venerated.

\*I will give to priests the power to touch the most hardened hearts.

\*Persons who propagate this devotion shall have their names eternally written in my Heart.

\*In the excess of the mercy of My heart, I promise you that My all-powerful love will grant to all those who will receive Communion on the First Fridays, for nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance: they will not die in My displeasure, nor without receiving the sacraments; and my Heart will be their secure refuge in that last hour.

## Drumragh Queen of the May prayer service



ON the beautiful sunny evening of Sunday, May 4, a lovely prayer service to crown Our Lady as 'Queen of the May' was held at the Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, outside St Mary's Chapel, Drumragh.

The Grotto once stood on the grounds of the Loreto Convent, Brook Street, where generations of children stopped to pray on their way to school. The Loreto Sisters kindly donated the Grotto to Drumragh Parish and it was relocated outside St Mary's Chapel in September 2024.

To commemorate the Grotto's first May in its new site, the Prayer service, organised by Fr Hassan, included the Rosary and hymns to Our Lady sung by the Drumragh Parish choir. Local lady, Babs Barrett made a stunning floral crown which she presented to Sister Anne O'Toole, Loreto Sister. Sister Anne then presented the crown to Maeve McCrystal, Head Girl of Loreto Grammar, Omagh, who represented all Loreto students and placed the crown on the statue of Our Lady.

The photo below includes: Sr Deirdre Bannon, Loreto Sister (who taught in Omagh Loreto Primary School for many years); Sr Geraldine McAleer, Loreto Sister (who worked as an administrator in Omagh Loreto Grammar); Fr Eugene Hassan, Parish Priest of Drumragh; Maeve McCrystal, Head Girl of Loreto Grammar, Omagh; and Sr Anne O'Toole, Loreto Sister and Pastoral worker in Drumragh Parish.

# Derry pilgrims of hope amongst thousands in Knock for renewal of Consecration to Sacred Heart



AMONGST the thousands of people of all ages gathered around the Apparition Chapel at Knock's International Eucharistic and Marian Shrine for the end of the Eucharistic Procession on the Feast of Corpus Christi, and that earlier had filled the Basilica for the renewal of the Consecration of Ireland to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, were many from the Derry Diocese, including Dana and Archbishop Eamon Martin.

The Consecration had first been made 150 years ago, and its renewal by the Primate of All Ireland on June 22 was a fitting celebration in this Jubilee Year of the 350th anniversary of the Revelations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to St Margaret Mary Alacoque in France.

The relics of St Margaret Mary, and those of St Claude la Colombiere, which have been travelling around the island, were present for veneration in the Basilica, along with the four Sacred Heart statues that were blessed in Rome, in January, by Pope Francis, and that have also been on pilgrimage around Ireland to mark the 2025 Jubilee of Pilgrims of Hope.

Another special touch for the occasion was the Apostolic Blessing of the Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, sent by Archbishop Edgar Pena Parra, Substitute for the Secretariat of State for the Holy See, to Archbishop Eamon.

Sending good wishes to all gathered, Pope Leo prayed that the occasion would provide "a grace-filled opportunity for all participating to deepen their devotion to the merciful heart of Christ, and to grow in zeal for spreading the saving message of the Gospel and promoting Christian charity among their

brothers and sisters." The following is Archbishop Eamon's homily during the celebration of Mass, prior to carrying out the Consecration.

Beginning with a quote from the pastoral letter of the Irish bishops sent on Passion Sunday 1873 to announce their intention to consecrate Ireland to the Sacred Heart of Jesus – 'There are many weighty evils, my dear people, pressing on the Church of God throughout the world, and there are many dangers encompassing and threatening ourselves near home. The spirit of irreligion and infidelity is growing strong every day' - the Archbishop said: "Sadly, in many ways the bishops' words relate to the circumstances of today, in 2025, as we gather here at Knock Shrine to renew the consecration of our country to the Sacred Heart.

"There are indeed many weighty evils pressing on the Church of God throughout the world today. Recent research has found that thousands of Christians are victims of harassment, verbal abuse and violence – churches are burnt, believers are abducted, imprisoned and some are even killed for their beliefs - including 200 Christians brutally murdered in Nigeria just over a week ago.

### Culture of life

"Nearer home, many dangers continue to encompass and threaten our communities - like homelessness, hopelessness, the scourge of addictions, suicide and self-harm, abortion and pressure for euthanasia. How much we need a culture of life; a society where peace, reconciliation and the dignity of every human person are promoted!

"It is a great blessing that we gather here today, joined in prayer by thousands of others in homes, parishes, religious communities and prayer groups across the island of Ireland and beyond, not just today, but throughout June - the month of the Sacred Heart - and for the rest of this Jubilee Year of Hope.

"We realise, of course, that the consecration is not some kind of miraculous panacea for all of the ills and struggles of Church and

society. It is not something we passively receive from on high; no, consecration to the Sacred Heart asks for our cooperation - it demands our personal commitment to spread Faith, Hope and Love.

"We make this consecration confident in the promises made known to St Margaret Mary Alacoque 350 years ago - promises of graces, of comfort and blessings, of peace, mercy, and the gift of perseverance in the face of suffering and death. We trust in God that this consecration, and the Sacred Heart Crusade across Ireland which has been accompanying it, will spark a renewal of faith and unleash a powerful rejuvenation of mission to proclaim the good news in our country and beyond.

"It is providential that our gathering is taking place today on the Sunday of Corpus Christi, the Solemn Feast of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Pope St John Paul II always said that Sacred Heart devotion is at the same time a Eucharistic devotion.

"Today we desire to consecrate to the most Sacred Heart: ourselves, our home, our family, our parish and Ireland our country. We ask the Sacred Heart to have mercy on our suffering world in which He chose to dwell as one of us, to pour out the treasures of His light and love so that, as our late Pope Francis put it, the world may regain the most important and most necessary thing of all - its heart.

### Change

"For the publication of what was his last encyclical letter in October 2024, entitled Dilexit Nos (He loved us), Pope Francis reminded us that the world can change, beginning with hearts that are close to the heart of Jesus. That is our prayer here today in Knock, in the exalted heavenly company, I trust, of Mary and Joseph and Saint John the Evangelist, who appeared here together in 1879, just six years after the Irish bishops had consecrated our country to the Sacred Heart.

"I can't think of any three hearts closer to the heart of Jesus of Nazareth than those of Mary, Joseph and St John. To think of the heart of our Blessed Mother, pregnant with Jesus - His tiny heart beating to the rhythm of hers; or of St Joseph nursing the infant Jesus close to his heart; and of St John at the Last Supper, resting his weary head close to the heart of Jesus, drawing, as St Augustine put it, from that secret fount of wisdom - dear friends we are in great heavenly company today!

"And we can include in that so many other holy men and woman throughout the centuries, who desired to be as close as possible to the beating heart of Jesus -

people like St Margaret Mary Alacoque, St Gertrude (who said she felt so close to Jesus that she could hear his heart beating), St Therese of Lisieux, St Faustina, St Charles de Foucault. How much we, like them, long to rest our heads on that Sacred Heart which is on fire with the Holy Spirit and is burning with love for us.

"On this Feast of Corpus Christi, I think also of St John Henry Newman who believed his closest encounter with the living heart of Jesus was when he received or adored the Eucharist. That's when 'heart speaks to heart', he said, and he would pray: 'O most Sacred, most loving Heart of Jesus, you are concealed in the Holy Eucharist, and you beat for us still...O make my heart beat with your Heart' (26 DN).

"Friends, our consecration today is a heartfelt plea to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus to nourish our lives with His Word and strengthen us with the Sacraments - especially with His Body and Blood in the Eucharist - the sacrament of love.

"We ask this grace not only for ourselves but for everyone who is dear to us - and especially those who may have drifted away from practice of their faith - that our names and their names may be written on his heart, engraved in letters of love.

### Heart to Heart

"St Augustine said that our hearts are restless until they rest in Jesus. That is why we pray for an intimate Heart to Heart encounter with our Lord and Saviour: that we might weep to see His wounded heart crowned with thorns and pierced through on the Cross for our sake; that we might find comfort in His forgiving heart which lights the way to the home of our merciful Father who loved us first; that we might draw life from His compassionate heart from which flowed blood and water - the wellspring of the sacraments and the inexhaustible source of eternal life.

"The first message received by St Margaret Mary is well worth remembering today. She wrote: "He asked for my heart, which I asked Him to take, which He did and then placed myself in His own adorable heart, from which He made me see mine like a little atom consumed in the fiery furnace of His own".

"Dear friends, He asks for our hearts. Let Him have them! And, in return, He will give us fresh hearts - a new heart even - a heart transplant! Perhaps that is what our world needs now - a heart transplant!

"At the Second Vatican Council it was said that the imbalances affecting the world today are in fact a symptom of 'a deeper imbalance rooted in the human heart...And every one of us needs



a change of heart' (GS 82).

"With God's help, today's consecration will motivate us to radiate the light of faith, hope and love, especially to the poor, the suffering and those who are most in need. It will set us on fire with the Holy Spirit, it will lift up our hearts, and give us like St Therese, 'a thirst for souls'.

"Dear brothers and sisters, do not be surprised if that is what

you feel after today's consecration, a call to go out and confront those 'weighty evils that are pressing on the Church of God throughout the world', and 'the many dangers encompassing and threatening ourselves near home.'

"Do not be afraid - today's consecration will give you a new heart - a heart of love that can in turn give fresh heart to our troubled world. Amen."

## Prayer for Consecration to Sacred Heart

*LORD Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, Saviour of the world, gathered together in Your Name, we consecrate to your Most Sacred Heart: ourselves; our home; our family; our parish; and Ireland, our country. We are in great need of your love and protection.*

*You have invited us to come to you, especially those who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and you have asked us to remain in your love. We turn to you today, from the depths of our hearts. Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, we place all our trust in you.*

*We desire to be close to your beating heart, which is on fire with the Holy Spirit, and is burning with love for us. We weep to see your wounded heart, crowned with thorns and pierced through on the cross for our sake.*

*We find comfort in your forgiving heart, which lights the way to the home of our merciful Father, who loved us first. We draw life from your compassionate heart, from which flowed blood and water, the wellspring of the sacraments, of grace in the Church, and the source of eternal life.*

*Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, nourish our lives with Your Word, with the strength of the sacraments, and especially with Your Body and Blood in the Eucharist - the sacrament of love. Carry us in Your heart. May each of our names be written on Your heart, engraved in letters of love. Have mercy on our suffering world, in which you chose to dwell as one of us.*

*Pour out the treasures of your light and love so that our world may regain the most important and necessary thing of all: its heart. We believe that the world can change, beginning with hearts that are close to your heart. Be alive and at work in us so that we may radiate faith, hope and love - especially for the poor, the suffering, and those who are most in need.*

*May your Sacred Heart continue to pour forth the streams of living water that can heal the hurt we have caused, strengthen our ability to love and serve others, and inspire us to journey together towards a peaceful, just, and fraternal world.*

*Lord Jesus Christ, King of love and Prince of peace, reign in our hearts, our homes, and in Ireland, our country. Conquer all the powers of evil and bring us to share in the victory of your Sacred Heart. May all we say and do give glory and praise to You and to the Father and the Holy Spirit, God, living and reigning for ever and ever. Amen.*

*O Jesus, through the most pure heart of Mary, we offer You all the prayers, works, and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart. O Jesus, meek and humble of heart, transform our hearts to be like yours. Amen.*



# Barrack Hill and the Penal Laws

by Dr Seán Beattie

BARRACK Hill is a landmark overlooking the ancient plain of Maghtochair, which stretches as far as the waters of Trabreaga Bay in the Inishowen peninsula, the most northern part of the Diocese. It is an iconic site because of its place in the social, religious and cultural history of the Diocese. Early peoples found a natural woodland here, but this has disappeared as trees were cleared for settlement and farming. In the absence of an archaeological dig, no evidence has remained of the first settlers.

## Ecclesiastical History

In the Plantation of Ulster, Inishowen was allocated to Arthur Chichester. Minor tenants acquired lands surrounding Barrack Hill. In the early 1700s, Barrack Hill was the site of a number of 'little altars', as noted by Maghtochair, who wrote a history of Inishowen. The setting was ideal as a relatively safe place of worship because it had a broad perspective over the entire countryside. The movements of the infamous priest-hunters could also be observed. The story of Barrack Hill, Carndonagh, Co

Donegal, is a microcosm of how the Penal Laws operated.

## The Penal Laws

In the early 1700s, the country experienced the repressive impact of the notorious Penal Laws. In the first, in 1695, Catholics were not allowed to keep weapons. In an effort to destroy links between Catholics and their continental allies, Catholics were forbidden to go overseas for the purpose of education; they were also banned from running schools and from teaching. The Bishops' Banishment Act required all regular clergy to leave the kingdom in 1697. Some were permitted to remain provided they registered, as ruled by the Registration Act (1704).

The most extreme was the Act to Prevent the Further Growth of Popery, also in 1704; Catholics were prohibited from buying land or inheriting it from Protestants. Later legislation prevented Catholics from careers in law or holding government offices. They were also excluded from Grand Juries, which were later replaced by County Councils. As the century progressed, it was impossible

to implement the laws fully and many of the extreme restrictions were relaxed or abolished.

In more peaceful times, Dean O'Donnell built the first Catholic chapel in the town in the 1780s, in the shadow of the hill. Thus, Barrack Hill is an important location in the ecclesiastical history of Carndonagh, a sacred meeting place where the faithful came to worship. It is also symbolic of the resurgence of the Catholic Church in the face of such draconian legislation.

## Changing Roles

While the impact of the worst evils of the Penal Laws eased later in the 1700s, Barrack Hill assumed a new status in our military and social history. When the country was experiencing unrest, the government decided to erect a barrack on the hill, a prudent move in view of the regular threats of invasion and social disorder. Thus, the barrack played an important military role and army regiments were based here. A well has recently been discovered on the site. The building was a standalone L-shaped structure, as can be seen

in a map in the book by Maura Harkin and Sheila McCarroll, 'Carndonagh', published in 1984.

## A Military Base

For over 200 years, the army barrack was the main architectural civic landmark in Carndonagh and was easily seen by visitors on the approaches to the town. The occupation record of the barrack can be traced relative to the political state of the nation at any one time. Thus, during the Poteen Wars of the early 1800s, British Army regiments were in occupation and it was a busy military base. It was from here that mounted military patrols set out to destroy the illicit distillation industry that thrived in the peninsula to a greater extent than in any other district in the Diocese.

The barrack was in the charge of a Captain Rankin in the 1830s, one of a network of military bases in the peninsula. The structure was not, however, large enough to house a full regiment of soldiers. For example, when the Repeal movement presented a threat to the peace in the early 1840s, soldiers were deployed in the



Church of the Sacred Heart, Carndonagh, Co Donegal, not far from the unique Carndonagh Cross

Workhouse before it was occupied by inmates.

## In peacetime

In times of peace, however, the barrack did not house soldiers, but it was often leased to minor gentry, military personnel, strong farmers, business people and others. From the diary of J N Thompson, a "small landlord" as he called himself, it is noted that in the 1850s, the barrack was occupied in a caretaker capacity by a Captain Metcalfe, who had a wife and five children, one of whom was a noted harpist. Thompson himself lived there for a time and he regularly referred to it as the "Barrack on the hill" in his diary. He used the fields nearby for agricultural purposes. Maps of the period show a broad thoroughfare

which provided access for soldiers and military equipment, linking Chapel Street to the base. The lands immediately surrounding the barrack were referred to as "the Barrack grounds", where soldiers carried out military exercises.

The hill also featured in the War of Independence and the Civil War. Carndonagh was the Headquarters of the regional division of the Royal Irish Constabulary and the town was consequently a target for attack.

In 1945, the Church of the Sacred Heart was erected on the site and today stands in a prominent position, dominating the town and surrounding countryside. It represents the resilience of faith over repression.

# The Corpus Christi procession

*A powerful, public and visually stunning celebration of Catholicism*

by Grace Carlin

IN this article, I critically consider one of the most powerful, public, and visually stunning celebrations in the Catholic calendar – the Corpus Christi procession.

Corpus Christi means 'Body of Christ' in Latin. The feast celebrates the real physical presence of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist. Not symbolically, not metaphorically, but really, truly. Bread and wine become His Holy Body and Blood. This is the source and summit of our Catholic faith (CCC 1324).

During Covid, priests like Fr John Carlin from St John Fisher Chapel University Parish in Auburn Hills, Michigan, boldly took the Blessed Eucharist onto the streets in Corpus Christi procession.

The Feast of Corpus Christi was officially established in 1264 by Pope Urban IV, after a visionary nun, St Juliana of Liège, had mystical experiences calling for a feast in honour of the Blessed Eucharist. The Supreme Pontiff wrote a Papal bull called 'Transiturus de hoc mundo', where he literally said that this feast would help the Church "bring to mind the memory of God's boundless love."

## Walking Theology – The Procession

Corpus Christi processions became huge, especially in medieval Europe. Priests would

carry the monstrance, a golden sun-shaped item displaying the Blessed Eucharist, under a canopy. The procession would walk through the streets, people kneeling, singing, and prayer. Oxford theologian, Dr Carolyn Muessig describes Corpus Christi processions as "mobile sermons" – teaching Theology without a word. Pope Benedict XVI also called them a "confession of faith – walking with the Lord." And Pope Francis also approved of them in Rome, as does Pope Leo XIV today.

## Culture and Corpus Christi

Culturally, this was huge. Ireland, Italy, France, and elsewhere all bear a rich history of Corpus Christi processions. Today, Italian and Spanish cities like Orvieto and Seville still draw pilgrims with massive Corpus Christi processions. It's where theology meets theatre.

What about Corpus Christi College?

One of Cambridge University's oldest colleges is literally called Corpus Christi College. But how? Founded in 1352 by a group of townspeople. The Guild of Corpus Christi was devoted to the Blessed Eucharist and wanted a college to form priests and scholars rooted in the Catholic faith. Corpus Christi remains one of the few Oxbridge colleges founded by laypeople.

Its crest has a chalice and host – the Blessed Eucharist defines its identity. Corpus Christi isn't just a name, it's a mission.

## Why it Matters Today?

So, does this medieval pageantry matter in 2025? Yes. As Anglican theologian, Rowan Williams once said: "If the Eucharist means anything, it means learning how to be the kind of presence Jesus is." In a world where religion feels private, Corpus Christi goes public. It says: Our faith walks, shines, takes up public space. It's not about showing off – it's about showing up. Bringing Christ into your neighbourhood, school, Insta scroll, and your doubts.



This year's Corpus Christi procession in Ballinascreen

# Three Patrons 'Care for Creation' host Trocaire talk on Guatemala



THE Three Patrons 'Care for Creation Group' hosted a Trocaire talk in the Emmaus Room at St Patrick's, Pennyburn, on Thursday, March 27.

The Group has been active since after the Covid lockdown, operating initially in a rather low-key way. It is committed to winning hearts and minds towards looking after our common home, as inspired by Pope Francis' historic 2015 letter 'Laudato Si'.

Since around 2023, the Group has raised its profile by recommending content for Prayers of the Faithful at weekend Masses, by making contact with local authorities, the community and voluntary sector and others responsible for the public realm, and by creating and maintaining an environmentally-focused insert in the Three Patrons Parish Newsletter. The Group has also been active on the ground, participating in replanting and rewilding in the grounds of the three Parish churches.

The Emmaus Room event was the first of a series of planned public meetings, when the 'Laudato Si'

climate change and transnational corporate predation.

The indigenous Mayan poor are supported to implement self-help programmes, including a remarkable flooding early warning system and the establishment of native seed banks. The latter are critical because genetically altered seeds propagated by Monsanto, among others, have introduced chemicals into the soil, which degrade the natural environment and leave it vulnerable to climatic events like wind and flooding.

Sadly, the appetite in America and Europe for palm oil by-products is an excuse for destroying large parts of Guatemala, home to a culture which has looked after and preserved an area once described as the lungs of America for thousands of years until now!

Pope Francis' exhortation that the cry of the earth is the cry of the poor is being heeded, but time is running out, so the Care for Creation Group is hoping and praying for success in their mission.



Alejandra and Roisin sharing information about Trocaire's Guatemalan Programme, the focus of this year's Lent.

# Ruach...Breath of the Spirit

## Pilgrimage by Fr Eamonn Kelly

RECENTLY, I drove two fellow priests into town so that they could get the bus on the first stage of their trip to Lourdes. They had planned every aspect of the trip, and it was a real honour for me to take them to the bus. It was still dark at 4.40 am, when I shook their hands and wished them well on the journey to that lovely shrine where Mary continues to give peace to many people.

On my way home, I recalled the two times that I had headed to the famous Grotto in southern France. As I reminisced internally, a simple thought struck me: should I plan a trip for myself to the Massabielle Grotto where St Bernadette encountered the Mother of God? From that wonderful spot, countless people have wonderful stories to tell of all sorts of happenings, from great miraculous healings to the acceptance of a situation to the realisation of the love of God. As

I drove along the familiar roads to my home, I wondered if there was a message for me in the lovely honour of taking my two friends to the start of their pilgrimage.

The early morning sun was beginning to appear, and headlights gave way to dips. The internal thought process was having a right old battle between 'yes, a trip to Lourdes would be a nice thing to do' and 'no, that is not for you at this moment in time.' Neither side of the debate was conceding and neither side was getting a clear majority of support. And then, I turned on to my driveway and saw a lamb standing alone, frightened by its separation from its mother and now more frightened by the approaching car. It was bleating as much as it could.

I stopped and got out. Strangely, the lamb did not run. I went straight up to it and picked it up. The bleating was frantic. It was easy

to understand what had happened. The lamb had got under the gate and onto the driveway and it could not figure out how to reverse its actions. I lifted it over the sheep wire that surrounds my house and within seconds mother ewe and her lamb were reunited. The bleating stopped. I got back into the car and parked it in front of the house. As I opened the front door of the house, a single bleat went up and, for some strange reason, the thought in my head said, 'You are to go nowhere except into the heart in order to know the lamb.' I went to the kitchen and put the kettle on, and the thought remained: 'You are to go nowhere except into the heart in order to know the lamb.'

### Reflection

Over the past few days, I have given this thought a lot of reflection and time. I am conscious that many will say that these things are only accidental circumstances and that we should not read too much into them. Yet, God spoke to Joseph in

a dream; there is a talking donkey in Numbers 22:22; Ananias, in the Acts of the Apostles, was told by God to go Straight Street and cure an enemy of the fledging church; and the flying eagle gives serious warnings in Revelations (8:13). Why did that lamb not follow its nature and run? It had just stood still and allowed itself to be picked up. Doing nothing but bleating, it allowed itself to be reunited with its mother.

God can use any means that God wants to communicate with His people. The Holy Spirit is not limited to a few tried and tested ways to deliver a message. We can recall the unbelief of Thomas that led to a high degree of faith; the fixation with truth of Saul of Tarsus that led to the amazing writings of St Paul; the exile of St John to the island of Patmos that led to the evangelist writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and the words of an angel spoken to the young Virgin Mary that led to the Word-made-flesh and the love



that God has for humanity being expressed in Jesus Christ.

I really hope that my two colleagues enjoy their stay in Lourdes and receive many graces and blessing. As for me, I will not be going to Lourdes at this time for I am heading out on another pilgrimage, one that is about 45 centimetres in length. I am leaving the head and heading for the heart, so that I can meet the Lamb without blemish who did not run, but stood still, and allowed Himself to be arrested so that He could take my sins and leave them on the Cross. I am going to go to the place where the Son of God exchanged death for life, so that I can stand still and be engraved in His victory. I am going to cry out until I know the words 'into your hands I commend my spirit'. If you wish, you can come on this pilgrimage too.

# Lighting up Derry and beyond with the Flame of Love by Barry Mallet



DERRY, the land of St Columcille, continues in leading the charge in the revival of the faith in Ireland and beyond. After the phenomenal success of the world-wide Eucharistic Procession from Derry on February 1, the Feast of St Brigid, another fruit has begun to blossom as a result, which has caught the attention and devotion of so many.

The Flame of Love devotion, which already has world-wide devotion and has many cardinals, bishops, and clergy onboard, such as the famous exorcist priest, Fr Jim Blount, has now been established in Derry under the leadership of two local men, who have set up a Monday night Rosary prayer group in Termonbacca Carmelite

Monastery. Every Monday night, at 7 pm, you can join in person or from home via YouTube Termonbacca Derry.

The launch night on Monday, May 12, was attended by 40 people and viewed online by over 225 homes. This was a phenomenal launch for a prayer group. The second Monday followed suit, then on Saturday, May 24, the Feast of Our Lady Helper of Christians, there was a Flame of Love full-day retreat in Termonbacca. This was attended by 55 in-person and an astounding 550 online viewing.

Celebrating Holy Mass, and one of the special guest speakers, was none other than Derry's adopted son, Fr Antonio Maria Diez de Medina of the Franciscan Friars.

With Anthony Hogan effortlessly co-ordinating the day, there were guest speakers, the celebration of Holy Mass, talks and questions about the origins, and church approval, of the Flame of Love.

The event was a tremendous success. Some local prayer groups were invited to participate in the day's events, such as the Legion of Mary, the Holy Face, Sacred Heart Crusade, the Children of the Eucharist, and Kerrytown Shrine.

The Flame of Love is a movement of love, a movement of grace, and is about the famous Unity prayer. The aim is to continue the weekly Rosary prayer nights and, on the first Monday of every month, invite a different prayer group to join in, because this is a community and we want everyone - families, fathers, men, boys, children, mothers, daughters - to feel welcome. The first group invited is the Legion of Mary, who are actively out knocking on doors in Derry, bringing the statue of Our Lady into people's homes and promoting the Rosary.

### Spread

In this way, it is hoped to help spread the flame of love and bring the devotion that our forefathers had to praying the family Rosary back into every home in Derry. Through the live feed, the hope is to bring the Rosary back into homes

using the power of the internet for something good. Another hope is that this will evolve into Derry becoming known as the City of the Rosary. The aim is to unite various prayer groups and, through this, unite the Body of Christ, which is the Church.

With the island of Ireland to be consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary this year, a prophecy of St Patrick comes to mind, that a light will shine from the North of Ireland and spread throughout the whole land, and then on through the whole of Europe. The light could well be the light of the Sacred Heart devotion, which is dying out, but will hopefully be re-ignited in the hearts and the minds of many, who will then pass the flame onto the next generation, our children, who are our future. It has been said that a nation that forgets its past or its children has no future.

We, in the Flame of Love weekly Rosary prayer group intend to invite the Children of the Eucharist, Cursillo, and all the prayers groups, to join in with us, and we are going to all the schools in Derry to get the children involved too.

Be part of the light, join in every Monday night at 7 pm at Termonbacca, or join in online at YouTube Termonbacca Derry. Let Our Lady's love into your home and into your heart. Ave Maria.



Parish *Post-its*

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

**Ardstraw East (Newtownstewart)**

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

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

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

**Weekend Mass Times:** 11.30 am, St Eugene's Glenock.

**Badoney Lower (Gortin-Rouskey)**

**Adoration:** Adoration takes places in St Patrick's Gortin, after the 12.30 pm Mass until 5 pm on Tuesdays, and in St Mary's, Rouskey, after 7.30 pm Mass on Wednesdays. **Weekend Mass Times:** 7.30 pm Vigil, St Patrick's, Gortin; 10 am, St Mary's, Rouskey.

**Badoney Upper (Plumbridge-Cranagh)**

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

noon Mass on Saturdays in Plumbridge.

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

**Ballinascreen**

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

**Adoration:** Eucharistic Adoration takes place in Holy Rosary Church on the First Mondays from 12 noon until 7.30 pm.

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

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

**Ballymagroarty**

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

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

for veneration.

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

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

**Banagher**

**Blessing of Graves:** Graves will be at St Peter & St Paul's, Foreglen on Sunday, August 17, after 12 noon Mass; and at St Mary's Church, Altinure, on Sunday, September 7, after 10.30 am Mass.

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

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

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

**Bellaghy**

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

**Buncrana**

**Garden Fete:** The annual Garden Fete will take place on Sunday, August 24, in the grounds of Scoil Mhuire from 3-6 pm. This year there will be many new attractions for all the family to enjoy. A meeting for volunteers will take place in St Mary's Hall on Wednesday, July 30. Note to crafters – limited tables available to display and sell crafts, for 20 Euro fee. To book, contact Parish Office on 0749361253.

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

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

Fridays, 6am-10 pm, and on Sundays 2-10 pm.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Burt, Inch & Fahan**

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

**Weekend Mass Times:** 6 pm Vigil, 10.15 am, St Aengus' Burt; 9 am, Our Lady of Lourdes, Inch; 7.15 pm Vigil, 11.30 am, St Mura's, Fahan.

**Castlederg & Ardstraw West**

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

**Weekend Mass Times:** 6 pm Vigil and 11 am, Castlederg; 9.30 am Dregish; and 12.30 pm Drumnabey.

**Cappagh (Killyclogher)**

**Padre Pio Prayer Group:** Cappagh Padre Pio Prayer Group Pilgrimage 2025 will take place from September 10-17, visting the shrines of Assisi, Giovanni Rotondo and St Michael's cave. Cost: £1,135 pps. For information contact: Marie on 07799112224 or Clare on 07778025587.

**Eucharistic Adoration:** Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Wednesday from 8-9 pm in Christ the King, Strathroy, concluding with Night Prayer, and on Sunday from 6-7 pm, in Christ the King, with Devotions and Benediction.

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

**Legion of Mary:** Legion of

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Carndonagh**

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

**Castlederg & Ardstraw West**

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

**Weekend Mass Times:** 6 pm Vigil and 11 am, Castlederg; 9.30 am Dregish; and 12.30 pm Drumnabey.

**Claudy**

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

**Rosary:** The Rosary is prayed on the Parish webcam from St Patrick's Church, Monday-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 to join.

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

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

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

**Clonleigh (Lifford)**

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

**Clonmany**

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

**Weekend Mass Times:** St Mary's Church, Clonmany, Vigil 6.30 pm (Rosary at 6.10 pm); Sunday 11.30 am; St Michael's Church, Urris, Sunday, 10 am

**Coleraine**

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

**Exposition:** St John's Church Monday Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Wednesdays in St John's Church, from 2-4 pm, with Rosary at 3.45 pm.

**Weekend Mass Times:** 6 pm Vigil, 11 am, St John's; 7.30 pm Vigil, St Mary's Dunboe; 9.45 am, Our Lady of the Assumption, Aghadowey.

**Creggan**

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

**Adoration:** Exposition of Blessed Sacrament takes place in the Divine Mercy Chapel on Sundays from 1.30

pm - 6 pm, Mondays from 10.30 am - 7 pm, and Tuesday – Saturday from 10.30 am - 12 pm.

**Bereavement Support:** Parish Pastoral Bereavement Support. The Parish Pastoral Bereavement Support Group meets on the second Sunday of each month at 3 pm in the Parochial House community room. All are welcome to share a cup of tea, have a chat, remember and talk about their loved one and find support with others experiencing similar feelings. In addition to the group, there is an ongoing opportunity to speak on a one-to-one basis with an experienced grief counsellor. The contact number for more information on the group or to arrange one to one support is 07907085178.

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

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

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

**Culdaff**

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

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

**Desertmartin**

**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.

**Donaghedy**

**(Aughabrack & Dunamanagh)**

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

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

**Donaghmore**

**(Killygordon)**

**Holy Hour:** Prayerful



# Parish *Post-its*

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

**Adoration:** Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Tuesdays, 10.30 am-7.30 pm, St Mary's Church, Sessiaghoneill; Thursdays, after 9.15 am Mass, St Patrick's Church, Crossroads. Weekend Mass Times: 6 pm Vigil, 10 am, St Patrick's; 8 pm Vigil, 9 am & 11 am, St Mary's Sessiaghoneill.

**Drumquin**

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

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

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

**Drumragh (Omagh)**

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

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

**Adoration:** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in Sacred Heart Church on Wednesdays following 10 am Mass until 5.30 pm.

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

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

**Confessions:** Confession take place on Saturdays after 10 am Mass and after 6 pm Mass in Sacred Heart Church. **Weekend Mass Times:** 6 pm Vigil, 9 am and 12 noon, Sacred Heart Church; 10.30 am, St Mary's Drumragh.

**Dungiven**

**HOPE Camp:** The HOPE Summer Camp Dungiven Parish takes place from July 28-August 1 for 150 local children.

**Concert:** Dungiven Community Choir Concert will take place in Dungiven

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Errigal**

**Adoration:** Eucharistic Adoration takes place on Mondays after 10 am Mass in St Mary's Church, Ballerin, until 2.30 pm.

**Rosary & Chaplet:** The Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet are prayed in St

Joseph's Church, Glenullin, every Wednesday evening at 6.30 pm.

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

**Faughanvale**

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

**Vocations Society of St Joseph:** The Faughanvale Branch meets in St Mary's Church on the second Monday of the month (not Jan July, August) following morning Mass. They pray for and sponsor vocations to the priesthood. New members are needed. The meeting only takes less than an hour.

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

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

**Granaghan (Swatragh)**

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

**Greencastle**

**Divine Mercy:** The Divine Mercy Chaplet is prayed on the First Tuesday of every month at 12.15 pm before Mass in St Patrick's Church, Greencastle.

**Adoration:** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in St Patrick's Church on Thursdays, 6-10 pm.

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

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

**Greenlough**

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

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

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

**Iskaheen, Drung & Muff**

**Cemetery Blessings:** The blessing of graves will take place at Drung on Sunday, July 27, at 3 pm; Muff on Sunday, August 10, at 3 pm; and Iskaheen on Sunday,

August 10, at 5 pm.

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

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

**St Peregrine:** The St Peregrine Novena Prayer and veneration of relic takes place on the first Friday of each month, alternating between the three churches.

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

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

**Kilrea**

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

**Stations of the Cross:** The Stations of the Cross are prayed on Sundays in St Anne's Oratory at 7 pm, with Confessions beforehand from 6.30-6.50 pm.

**SVP:** The St Vincent de Paul Thrift Shop is open on Saturdays from 10 am -1pm.

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

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

**Lavey**

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

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

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

**Leckpatrick**

**Knock Pilgrimage:** The Strabane Parish Pastoral Area Pilgrimage to Knock takes place on Saturday, July 26, led by Fr Michael McCaughey, PP. Luxury coach departs St Patrick's Church car park, Murlog, at 7.30 am. Mass will be celebrated by Fr Michael in the Apparition Chapel at 12.30 pm. Cost for bus/evening meal - €30 per person. To book a seat

contact James: 0858767999, Mary: 0877625237 or Bernie: 07853272541.

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

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

**Lifford (Murlog)**

**Knock Pilgrimage:** The Strabane Parish Pastoral Area Pilgrimage to Knock takes place on Saturday, July 26, led by Fr Michael McCaughey, PP. Luxury coach departs St Patrick's Church car park, Murlog, at 7.30 am. Mass will be celebrated by Fr Michael in the Apparition Chapel at 12.30 pm. Cost for bus/evening meal - €30 per person. To book a seat contact James: 0858767999, Mary: 0877625237 or Bernie: 07853272541.

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

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

**Adoration:** 9.30 am-12.30 pm. **Confessions:** Saturday, 6-6.15 pm **Weekend Mass Times:** 6.30 pm Vigil; 11 am.

**Limavady**

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

**Children's Prayer:** A Children's Prayer Group is held in the Drummond Hotel, Ballykelly, on the First Saturday of every month, from 2.30-3.30 pm. All welcome. Contact: Kathy on 07538749627.

**Weekend Mass Times:** 4.30 pm Vigil, 9 am, 12 noon, Christ the King Church; 6 pm Vigil, St Finlough's Church; 10.30 am, St Mary's Church.

**Maghera**

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

**Pray & Play:** The Maghera Parish Pray and Play for Parents, Grandparents & Tots (three years old and younger) meets every Friday, in the Fairhill Youth Centre, after the 10 am Mass. It runs from 10.30 am until 12 noon.

**Confession:** Daily after morning Mass (except Sunday

and Holydays), and St Mary's at 7 pm on Wednesdays (before evening Mass) and Saturdays at 11am/12noon and 5.30pm/6.15pm

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

**Magilligan**

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

**Malin**

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

**Melmount**

**Exposition:** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place in the church on Mondays

after 10 am Mass until 6 pm. The Rosary will be recited prior to closure of Adoration at approximately 5.40 pm. Everyone is welcome.

**Weekend Mass Times:** 7 pm Vigil, 10.30 am and 12.30 pm.

**Moville**

**Stations of the Cross:** The Stations of the Cross are prayed after 10 am Mass on Fridays.

**Prayer:** The Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet will be recited in St Pius X Church, Moville, at 7.30 pm every day, from Sunday – Friday.

**Adoration:** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Mondays, from 2-9 pm, and Wednesdays, 6-9 pm, in St Pius X Church.

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

**Weekend Mass Times:**

mary's meals STEP by STEP to FEED the next CHILD

**SUNDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> AUGUST 2025**

**DERRY/L'DERRY** (2 BRIDGES WALKS)

**to START/END @ SAINSBURY'S** (CAR PARK)

**START: 12.00AM FINISH: 2.00PM (6MILES)**

We would love for you to join us for one or more of our Mary's Meals sponsored walks in solidarity with the children who walk miles to school to receive Mary's Meals each day.

A great opportunity to get out in the fresh air and meet new people in support of a great cause.

It takes just **£19.15** to feed a child with Mary's Meals for a whole school year.

To register online visit: [bit.ly/stepbystepwalk](http://bit.ly/stepbystepwalk) For more info contact: Helen Quinn, 078 1444 1701 Registered charity 30022046

mary's meals OMAGH GROUP

**15<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary fundraiser**

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize** OVERNIGHT STAY at Redcastle Hotel & Spa. Moville Co. Donegal

**2<sup>nd</sup> Prize** €50 VOUCHER (Holyrood Hotel, Bundoran)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Prize** MEAL FOR 2 15 Prizes in total

**BUY a BOOK** and feed a child for 6 months

**Tickets £2 each or 3 for £5** Draw to take place end of August 2025

For more info contact: | Phone: 078 2286 8752 | [register@marysmeals.org](mailto:register@marysmeals.org)

Parish *Post-its*

*continued from page 27*

6.30 pm Vigil, 10 am, St Pius X Church. 11.30 am on alternate Sundays in St Mary's Ballybrack, and St Columba's Ballinacrae.

**Sion Mills**

**Adoration:** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place on Fridays, from 11 am-6.50 pm, ending with Benediction before 7 pm Mass.

**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.

**Weekend Mass Times:** 6 pm Vigil; 9 am & 11 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)**

**Knock Pilgrimage:** The Strabane Parish Pastoral Area Pilgrimage to Knock takes place on Saturday, July 26, led by Fr Michael McCaughey, PP. Luxury coach departs St Patrick's Church car park, Murlog, at 7.30 am. Mass will be celebrated by Fr Michael in the Apparition Chapel at 12.30 pm. Cost for bus/evening meal - €30 per person. To book a seat contact James: 0858767999, Mary: 0877625237 or Bernie: 07853272541.

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

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

**Adoration:** Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament takes place every day, from 10.30 am-1 pm, in the Adoration Chapel (Oasis of Peace), which is situated at the back of the Church.

**Prayer Group:** The Contemplative Prayer Group meets on Mondays at 8 pm in the Prayer Room in the Parochial House. All welcome. Entry by Parish Priest's front door.

**Society of St Joseph:** The St John Vianney branch of the Society of St Joseph (the three combined Strabane parishes) meets on the first Tuesday of the month, excluding January, July and August, with Rosary in the church after 10 am Mass and continues in St Patrick's Hall. More people are encouraged to join in this

prayer for new students to join the priesthood. The Society assists Irish and overseas student. Please contact Margaret Harte on 028 71 883159.

**Padre Pio Mass:** The Padre Pio Mass takes place in the Church on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 pm, with Rosary beforehand at 6.40 pm.

**Grotto Rosary:** The Rosary is recited at the Grotto on the last Sunday of each month. Everyone is welcome.

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

**Templemore – St Eugene's**

**Eucharistic Adoration:** Every Sunday, there is Eucharistic Adoration from 3-6 pm and every Tuesday from 10.30 am until 7.20 pm.

**Matt Talbot 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**

**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**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Women's Bible Study:** Women's Bible Study takes place on Wednesdays from 7-8 pm, in the Upper Room, St Brigid's Church, Carnhill.

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

**Family/Youth Mass:** A Family/Youth Mass is celebrated every Sunday at 6.30 pm in St Joseph's Church, Galliagh. Everyone is welcome.

**Be Still:** Be Still is a Men's Prayer and Friendship Group that meets every Thursday night from 8.15-10 pm in Our Lady's Chapel, within St Joseph's Church building, Galliagh. Its mission as a group is to provide a safe place where men can pray and share in a confidential and supportive setting. All men are welcome.

**Holy Hour:** A Holy Hour for the Unborn & Expectant Mothers takes place on Thursdays at 7 pm in Our Lady's Chapel, St Joseph's Church, Galliagh. All welcome.

**Adoration:** Eucharistic Adoration takes place in Our Lady's Chapel, St Joseph's Church, Galliagh, on Tuesdays from 11 am until 7 pm.

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

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

**First Saturday:** On the First Saturday of each month, after 11 am Mass in St Brigid's Church, Carnhill, there is Adoration and Rosary, ending with Divine Mercy and Benediction at 3 pm.

**Living Disciples:** Living Disciples meet on Tuesdays at 7.30-8.30 pm in St Pio House, St Joseph's Church grounds, for Praise & Worship, friendship and a cup of tea. All welcome.

**Holy Face Devotions:** Devotions to the Holy Face of Jesus takes place every Tuesday after 11 am Mass in Our Lady's Chapel, St Joseph's Church, Galliagh. All welcome

**St Pio Mass:** A monthly Mass in honour of St Pio takes place on the first Monday at 7 pm in St Patrick's Church, Pennyburn.

**Healing Night:** A Healing Night with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal takes place monthly on the first Friday, from 7-10 pm, in St Joseph's Church, Galliagh. Everyone welcome.

**Holy Souls Prayer:** Under The Gaze of Our Lady of Montligeon, the Holy Souls of Purgatory Prayer Meeting takes place on Mondays after 11 am Mass in Our Lady's Chapel, within St Joseph's Church, Galliagh, in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. The next monthly meeting for the intercession of Priests takes place on Tuesday, December 10, at 12.30 pm in Termonbacca.

**Vocations Society:** The Vocations Society of St Joseph hold monthly meetings on First Fridays after 10 am Mass, in the Emmaus Room, Pennyburn. New members welcome.

**Women's Laugh & Craft:** The Women's Laugh & Craft Group meets every Monday from 7-9 pm in the Kildare Room, St Brigid's, Carnhill. £3 per class. Spaces limited.

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

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

**Weekend Mass Times:** 6.15 pm Vigil & 9.45 am, St Patrick's, Pennyburn; 5 pm Vigil, 10.30 am & 12.30 pm St Brigid's, Carnhill; 11 am, 12.30 pm (An tAifreann

Naofa), and 6.30 pm Youth Mass, St Joseph's Galliagh.

**Urney & Castlefinn**

**First Saturdays:** The First Saturday Devotion and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will take place in St Columba's Church, Doneyloop, from 12 noon until 1 pm on the First Saturday of each month.

**Adoration:** Weekly Eucharistic Adoration takes place in St Anthony's Chapel every Tuesday, from 12 noon until 8 pm.

**Cenacle:** The Cenacle for Priests takes place every Tuesday in St Anthony's Chapel immediately after the 7 pm Mass.

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

**Waterside & Strathfoyle**

**Lectio Divina:** Reflect on the Scriptures with Lectio Divina in the side chapel in St 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, 11.30 am-12.30 pm; in Immaculate Conception Church on Thursdays, 1-6 pm; and in St Columb's Church on Fridays, 1-6 pm.

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

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

Join us for

# FIRST SUNDAY ROSARY

LIFE ANNON BEACH

EVERY FIRST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AT 3PM

OUR INTENTIONS:

- World Peace
- Protection of the Unborn Babies
- Triumph of Our Blessed Mother's Immaculate Heart

"PRAY THE ROSARY EVERY DAY TO OBTAIN PEACE FOR THE WORLD AND THE END OF WAR" - THE LADY OF THE ROSARY"



Diocesan *Diary*

**Lough Derg:** The Diocese of Derry Three-Day Pilgrimage to Lough Derg starts on Friday, July 25 and concludes on Sunday, July 27. For those wishing to avail of transport, a bus will depart after 10 am Mass in St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry, on the Friday, and will travel via Lifford and Ballybofey. Cost: £95/€110 (including transport). Pre-booking is required. Please contact Tony Brennan on tony.brennan@derrydiocese.org or phone the Diocesan Office on 0044 28 7126 2302 for a booking form. Alongside Knock Shrine and Croagh Patrick, Lough Derg is one of three esteemed traditional pilgrimage locations to be designated by the Irish Bishops' Conference as national places of pilgrimage in the present Jubilee Year.

**Masters in Catholic School**

**Leadership:** The Derry Diocesan Catechetical Centre, with St Mary's University, Twickenham, offers the Masters in Catholic School Leadership. This post graduate degree is dedicated to the professional development and spiritual formation of Catholic school leaders. It is a great opportunity for those currently in leadership roles and those who aspire to, or have an interest in, leadership roles within the Catholic School system. If interested in registering for the Masters in September 2025 or for more details, please contact Diocesan Catechetical Centre on 028 71264087 or Email: tferry@derrydiocese.org.

...other Diary Dates

**Termonbacca Summer Scheme:** The summer scheme for young people, aged 8-14 years, will take place from August 18-22. Each day will run from 12-4 pm and the total week will cost £20 per child. Applications can be completed at the link below:  
https://forms.gle/q5EX9RPCBspBKivS7.

**World Grandparents Day:** World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly will be marked at Knock Shrine with the annual National Grandparents’ Pilgrimage to Knock, on Sunday, July 27. The theme this year is: Blessed are those who have not lost hope (Sir 14,2). Anointing of the Sick will take place at 2.30 pm; Mass will be celebrated at 3 pm, followed by Rosary Procession. Everyone is invited to this joyful occasion of prayer, blessing, celebration and inter-generational unity. The ceremony will be livestreamed on knockshrine.ie for those who would like to participate online. Children are invited to write a prayer for their grandparent(s), or their elderly relative or friend, and

send it to Knock Shrine (either by post or with someone who is attending the pilgrimage). The children’s prayer intentions will be remembered at Mass on the day.

**Reek Sunday:** Reek Sunday falls on July 27, when thousands of pilgrims from across Ireland and beyond are expected to scale the 765 metres (2,520ft) of Croagh Patrick, just outside of Westport. The theme for Reek Sunday 2025 is ‘Christian Hope’, and this year’s pilgrimage will continue the 1,600-year-old tradition of people climbing Ireland’s Holy Mountain to pray and participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Eucharist at the summit.

**Fr Jack Gallagher Cycle:** The annual Fr Jack Gallagher Cycle will take place on Sunday, August 3. There will be music, refreshments and raffles on the day! Registration begins at 9.15 am and cycle starts at 10 am. Entry is £10, with all proceeds going toward Foyle Hospice. For more information, call Andrew Barr on:

07791760237. You can also arrive and register on the day of the cycle.

**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 following Wednesdays from 12.30-1.30 pm – May 28 & June 25.

**Polish Mass:** Mass for the Polish community is celebrated in the Church of Christ The King, Strathroy, Omagh, on the first and third Sunday’s of each month at 10 am, and at 9.30 am every second and fourth Sunday in the Divine Mercy Chapel, at St Mary’s Church, Creggan, in Derry City.

**Stations of Cross:** On the First Friday of each month, after 10 am Mass in St Eugene’s, there is a silent procession from the Cathedral to St Columba’s Church, Long Tower, meditating on the Stations of the Cross.

**Coastal Rosary:** Rosary on the Coast for world peace and the protection of unborn babies takes place at Lisfannon Beach, Buncrana, on the first Sunday of every month at 3 pm, and at Benone Strand on the third Sunday of every month, at 3 pm.

**Men’s Rosary:** The Men’s Rosary

takes place on the first Saturday of every month at Market Street, Omagh (opposite Primark) and at the side of O’Neill’s Sports Store, near Guildhall Square, at 1 pm. All Welcome!

**Sr Clare Mass:** Mass in honour of Sr Clare Crockett is celebrated on the second Sunday of each month, at 7 pm, in Termonbacca. All welcome. The Mass is streamed live via Termonbacca YouTube channel.

**Reading with the Carmelites:** The Carmelite Fathers at Termonbacca hold a monthly session of ‘Reading with the Carmelite Saints’, to explore learning friendship with Christ through the example of the Carmelite Saints. It takes place on

the third Thursday of the month at 7.30 pm.

**Healing Night:** The monthly Healing Night with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal in St Joseph’s Church, Galliagh, in Derry, takes place on the First Friday of each month, at 7 pm.

**Sr Clare Rosary:** The Sr Clare Rosary continues every Monday night, at 8.30 pm, in St Joseph’s Room, at the Carmelite Retreat Centre, Termonbacca.

**Matt Talbot Society:** The Matt Talbot Society Mass, praying for those suffering from addiction, is offered for those enrolled on the first Monday of every month in St Eugene’s Cathedral, at 7.30 pm.

DDS Daily Masses 2024-2025

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

|                                                                                   |                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 27 May, 17 Jul ,6 Sep, 27 Oct                                                     | 2 Aug, 22 Sep, 12 Nov                                                   |
| <b>Faughanvale</b><br>26 Dec 2024, 15 Feb, 7 Apr, 28 May, 18 Jul, 7 Sep, 28 Oct   | <b>Fahan</b><br>11 Jan, 3 Mar, 23 Apr, 13 Jun, 3 Aug, 23 Sep, 13 Nov    |
| <b>Claudy</b><br>27 Dec 2024, 16 Feb, 8 Apr, 29 May19 Jul, 8 Sep, 29 Oct          | <b>Clonmany</b><br>12 Jan, 4 Mar, 24 Apr, 14 Jun, 4 Aug, 24 Sep, 14 Nov |
| <b>Banagher</b><br>28 Dec 2024, 17 Feb, 9 Apr, 30 May 20 Jul, 9 Sep, 30 Oct       | Carndonagh13 Jan, 5 Mar, 25 Apr, 15 Jun, 5 Aug, 25 Sep, 15 Nov          |
| <b>Ballinascreen</b><br>29 Dec 2024, 18 Feb 10 Apr, 31 May 21 Jul, 10 Sep, 31 Oct | <b>Malin</b><br>14 Jan, 6 Mar, 26 Apr, 16 Jun, 6 Aug, 26 Sep, 16 Nov    |
| <b>Dungiven</b><br>30 Dec 2024, 19 Feb, 11 Apr, 1 Jun, 22 Jul, 11 Sep, 1 Nov      | <b>Iskaheen</b><br>15 Jan, 7 Mar, 27 Apr, 17 Jun, 7 Aug, 27 Sep, 17 Nov |
| <b>Limavady</b><br>31 Dec 2024, 20 Feb, 12 Apr, 2 Jun, 23 Jul, 12 Sep, 2 Nov      | <b>Culdaff</b><br>16 Jan, 8 Mar, 28 Apr 18 Jun, 8 Aug, 28 Sep, 18 Nov   |
| <b>Magilligan</b><br>1 Jan, 21 Feb, 13 Apr, 3 Jun, 24 Jul, 13 Sep, 3 Nov          | <b>1ST FRIDAY MASS FOR LIVING MEMBERS 2024 / 2025</b>                   |
| <b>Coleraine</b><br>2 Jan, 22 Feb, 14 Apr, 4 Jun, 25 Jul, 14 Sep, 4 Nov           | <b>Ballinascreen</b><br>06/12/2024                                      |
| <b>Garvagh</b><br>3 Jan, 23 Feb, 15 Apr, 5 Jun, 26 Jul, 15 Sep, 5 Nov             | <b>Banagher</b><br>03/01/2025                                           |
| <b>Kilrea</b><br>4 Jan, 24 Feb, 16 Apr, 6 Jun, 27 Jul, 16 Sep, 6 Nov              | <b>Bellaghy</b><br>07/02/2025                                           |
| <b>Greenlough</b><br>5 Jan, 25 Feb, 7 Jun, 28 Jul, 17 Sep, 7 Nov                  | <b>Coleraine</b><br>07/03/2025                                          |
| <b>Bellaghy</b><br>6 Jan, 26 Feb, 8 Jun, 29 Jul, 18 Sep, 8 Nov                    | <b>Desertmartin</b><br>04/04/2025                                       |
| <b>Lavey</b><br>7 Jan, 27 Feb, 9 Jun, 30 Jul, 19 Sep, 9 Nov                       | <b>Dungiven</b><br>02/05/2025                                           |
| <b>Moville</b><br>8 Jan, 28 Feb, 20 Apr, 10 Jun, 31 Jul, 20 Sep, 10 Nov           | <b>Errigal</b><br>06/06/2025                                            |
| <b>Granaghan</b><br>9 Jan, 1 Mar, 21 Apr, 11 Jun, 1 Aug, 21 Sep, 11 Nov           | <b>Greenlough</b><br>04/07/2025                                         |
| <b>Buncrana</b><br>10 Jan, 2 Mar, 22 Apr, 12 Jun,                                 | <b>Kilrea</b><br>01/08/2025                                             |
|                                                                                   | <b>Lavey</b><br>05/09/2025                                              |
|                                                                                   | <b>Limavady</b><br>03/10/2025                                           |
|                                                                                   | <b>Maghera</b><br>07/11/2025                                            |

MEDJUGORJE



MEDJUGORJE YOUTH WEEK

Pure in Heart Ireland Young Adult Pilgrimage  
(participants are to be aged 18-35)  
Group Leader: Michelle Kelly.  
Joined by Spiritual Director Fr. Alan O'Sullivan.

02<sup>nd</sup> August 2025

7 nights

€799 per person sharing a room.

» Direct return flights from Dublin to Dubrovnik

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» 7 nights Dubrovnik House

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» Single supplement Optional

For information :

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Forty Hours - 2025

|             |                             |                            |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Sun 6 July  | Sacred Heart                | Carndonagh                 |
| Sun 6 July  | St Joseph’s, Craighbane     | Claudy                     |
| Sun 6 July  | St Patrick’s, Cranagh       | Badoney Upper (Plumbridge) |
| Sun 13 July | St Eugene’s, Moneyneena     | Ballinascreen              |
| Sun 13 July | St Patrick’s, Aghaday       | Malin                      |
| Sun 20 July | St Columba’s, Ballinacrea   | Moville                    |
| Sun 20 July | St Mary’s                   | Bellaghy                   |
| Sun 27 July | Inch Church                 | Fahan                      |
| Sun 27 July | St Mary’s, Knockmoyle       | Cappagh                    |
| Sun 3 Aug   | St Mary’s Oratory           | Buncrana                   |
| Sun 3 Aug   | Star of the Sea, Malin Head | Malin                      |
| Sun 10 Aug  | St Patrick’s                | Clonleigh                  |
| Sun 10 Aug  | St Joseph’s, Glenullin      | Garvagh                    |
| Sun 17 Aug  | Desertegney                 | Buncrana                   |
| Sun 17 Aug  | St Michael’s, Urris         | Clonmany                   |
| Sun 24 Aug  | St Oliver Plunkett’s        | Greenlough                 |
| Sun 24 Aug  | Our Lady of the Wayside     | Greencastle                |
| Sun 31 Aug  | St Patrick’s                | Donaghmore                 |
| Sun 31 Aug  | St Mary’s, Bocan            | Culdaff                    |

# World without end *Fr Johnny Doherty CSsR*



Fr. Johnny Doherty CSsR

WHEN I begin to read a new book, I am always tempted to read the last few pages first and then, when I know where it is going, I go back to the beginning and read from there. Sometimes, I give into this temptation and at other times I don't. Either way, I enjoy reading.

## St Luke's Gospel

For us, as people of faith, the month of June is introduced by the account of the Ascension of Christ into Heaven. This is taken from the end of St Luke's Gospel. Everything in the Gospel, from the conception of Christ in the womb of Mary to the death of Christ on the Cross on Calvary, and the many stories of His Resurrection, has been leading to His return to the Father, where He will live eternally.

Our faith teaches us that just as Christ who came from God and has gone back to God, so each one of us, who have also come from God, are on our journey back to God. Everything in our lives throughout that journey should reflect our origins and prepare us for our destination. That is what following Christ means for us.

## A journey, not a destination

In my early years as a priest,

someone gave me a poster for my office. The scene on it was of a beautiful sunrise. The message was: Life is a journey, not a destination. That poster has been very important for me all through the years.

When we treat life as a destination everything is about the present. The past is gone. The future has not yet come. So, the only important thing is to get the most out of the present. That all seems right no matter how you see life. But when the present is all that matters, it can become a very self-centred place to be.

When we think of life as a journey everything changes. With any journey the two things that we always look at are: a) Where are we going? b) How do we get there? Both of these questions mean that we constantly have to make decisions that will shape our lives.

## People of faith

For us, as people of faith in Jesus Christ, the answer to that first question is clear. We are destined for eternal life. As Christ journeyed from conception to death and Resurrection and, ultimately, to returning to the Father, so we, each one of us, are making that same journey. This is true of every human person, not just of those who believe but also true of those who do not believe even that there is a God.

Eternal life though is not just something in the far distant future. It is a way of life that we learn now on the journey of life. Jesus said of Himself: "I have come that you may have life and have it to the full." And He told us how we can reach the fullness of life that we will be living for all eternity: "This is my commandment, love one another as I have loved you."

That is the answer to the second question above – How do we get to where we are going? The only way to the fullness of human life is the way of love – love of God with our whole hearts, our whole souls, our whole minds, our whole strength. And to love our neighbour as ourselves.

For those who do not believe in God, the place to start and to find their way forward is obviously in the love of their neighbour. This will eventually lead us all to belief in God and to love of God.

## Journeying is natural

There is nothing more normal in human life than journeying. It is the whole story of our existence. Our bodies can be tracked from the moment of conception, through pregnancy to birth, to childhood, adolescence, maturity, middle age, old age, natural death. And the same is true of our brain, and also of our feelings and responses to life. We are forever changing and growing.

In spite of this, we are also very inclined to want everything to remain the same. We do not like change. But we cannot prevent it. So, it is very important to live managing the changes that need to be made so that we can live fully in the present in ways that are preparing us for what is ahead – eternal life!

## Marriage – a good example

The marriage relationship is a very good example of all I have been saying. It is the story of two people who meet, fall in love, grow in love to such an extent that they want to spend the rest of their lives together. They decide to get married; they prepare for marriage so that they can be as sure as possible that it is right for them. Then they get married. So far so

good!

The temptation for them now is to think that they have arrived. They talk about settling down. If they think of themselves as having arrived at their destination by getting married – and unfortunately too many couples do this – they begin after a while to take each other for granted. This is particularly true of the couple who may have been living together before they got married. They still love one another. They still care for one another. But they can lose the joy and the gladness of their love. And marriage can become very ordinary and even, at times, a burden.

## Marriage is a journey, not a destination

The truth is that, for this couple, their marriage is now part of the journey of life for each of them. They are given to each other to help bring each one to God. Their marriage in itself is a journey into becoming one in love and discovering the wonder of God in their human love.

It is said that a successful marriage is one between two people who enter into between 15 and 20 different marriages with one another in the course of their lifetime. It is always changing. Their challenge is to be alert to one another always, so that their marriage can be as good as possible for each other in all the changes of their lives.

## A Pilgrim People

The Second Vatican Council, which took place in the 1960s, was a very significant time in the story of the Catholic Church and, indeed, in the story of the Christian Churches generally. Over 60 years later, we are still only beginning to put into effect what

took place there.

One of the great insights of the Council was when it described the Church as a Pilgrim People, a People on the move throughout the history of the world. We had gotten used to thinking of the Church as having already arrived. Everything is already settled by Christ's death and resurrection. In a way that is true. But in another way, we have to learn that we continue the journey of faith that was begun with the death and resurrection as we are all gathered, and as we gather the people of our own world, into the Kingdom of God. Faith is a journey, not a destination. We have a responsibility for the success of that journey.

## An important pattern

The Church has a very important pattern, each part of which is geared towards keeping us moving forward with joy and hope in our life of faith and love.

**1. Personal prayer:** Each of us is asked to make a commitment of faith each day through prayer – morning, evening and sometime during the day. Family prayer should also be part of this, where possible. Make each day a new day.

**2. Sunday Worship:** Each Community of the Church – parish or faith community – makes a fresh start each week by the celebration of the Eucharist. Everyone has a responsibility to be part of this if at all possible. This is also a good pattern for married couples and families to have in their life together.

**3. Liturgical Year:** The Universal Church, which includes each community and each person throughout the world, makes a fresh start with the Liturgical Year, which begins on the First Sunday of Advent and ends with the Feast of Christ the King. The Scripture Readings of the Sunday Eucharist for each Sunday of the year are arranged throughout the year for

our inspiration and empowerment to live for the world we live in. Marriage and family life could well follow this pattern by making a fresh start at the beginning of each Liturgical Year.

Most of the Sunday Masses are referred to as Ordinary Time. This is because the Church's year is peppered with special occasions and seasons like: Advent/Christmas; Lent/Easter; Pentecost; and with special feasts of Christ, Mary, and the Saints. Marriage and family can also follow this by celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, etc, which will serve to bring the couple and/or the family closer together.

**4. Three-year Cycle:** The Church has organised the Scriptures for Sunday Mass in such a way that we hear the full story of creation and salvation by hearing the full Scriptures every three years. It is a time for a major review of where we have come to in the past three years as individuals, as couples and families, as parishes or faith communities, and as a Universal Church, and where we can move to in the three years ahead.

What a wonderful thing for all of us to do every three years in all the important aspects of our lives, so that we can keep moving forward gently but firmly in our faith, hope and love.

## Conclusion

The journey of faith, hope, and love can be a wonderful and exciting journey the more each of us enters fully into it. If we sometimes drop out of it, or if we sometimes go off on a sidetrack, we can always come back at any time and join in the full celebration of God's love through the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Forgiveness. We are all needed by one another. We all have gifts of grace to bring to one another. Thank you for what you have already contributed to the journey of each of us.

# Hope for Ireland *by Sinéad Strong*

WHAT an incredible journey this Year of Hope has been so far! I've felt truly blessed to have had the chance to be involved in so many wonderful celebrations and initiatives. One of the highlights for me has been the Pilgrim Passport introduced by the National Shrines. It's such a brilliant idea; travelling to Knock, Croagh Patrick, and Lough Derg, getting your passport stamped and then receiving the Pilgrims of Hope badge as a keepsake. It's such a meaningful way to enrich your faith, while creating unforgettable memories.

## Rosary Rally

Another unforgettable experience was celebrating the 40th anniversary of the All-Ireland Rosary Rally. It was such a powerful testament to the strength of prayer and Marian intercession in our lives. I found Bishop McKeown's homily incredibly inspiring.

He said: "Rooted in the wisdom of the ages, the Rosary can free us to be like Mary, open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit,

able to listen for the footsteps of Emmanuel, who is God with us, on our journey." These words really resonated with me. They are a beautiful reminder to slow down and embrace prayerful contemplation, something we all need in today's busy world. The meditative rhythm of the Rosary creates such a sacred pause, a chance to breathe, reflect, and refocus on God's purpose for us. It is such a beautiful way to reconnect with Him and let the Holy Spirit guide us.

## Sacred Heart

Another deeply moving moment was when Ireland was reconsecrated to the Sacred Heart Crusade during the Sacred Heart Crusade in Knock, on the Feast of Corpus Christi. It felt like such a pivotal moment, calling us back to prayer, penance, and divine mercy.

Archbishop Eamon Martin's words really struck me: "We are living in a time of great need for God – for faith, for hope, and for love. Our age presents many challenges to our faith, to

our families and, indeed, to the deepest core of our humanity." His reflection was such a poignant reminder of the struggles we face in a world where secularism often threatens the foundations of faith and community.

Consecrating ourselves to the Sacred and Immaculate Hearts gives us an anchor – a source of strength to help us navigate the storms of life with renewed purpose. This consecration wasn't just a gesture or a case of paying lip service; it was a heartfelt call to each of us to live out hope and mercy in our daily lives, to shine Christ's light in a world that so desperately needs compassion and love.

And the turnout for these events was incredible – over 10,000 people at each one! Those numbers speak volumes about the hunger for spiritual connection and renewal in Ireland. It is so uplifting to see this kind of devotion and enthusiasm, especially in a time when the Church faces so many challenges. Across dioceses, there's

been a wonderful resurgence of retreats, workshops, and prayer vigils. These gatherings bring people of all ages together and are more than just faith practices, they are lifelines for people seeking solace, community and a deeper connection with God.

## Sacred Places

Something else that has been inspiring is the growing interest in pilgrimages to lesser-known holy sites. Shrines dedicated to saints like St Brigid and St Columba have welcomed more visitors, and it is heartening to see this renewed appreciation for Ireland's rich spiritual heritage. There's something so profound about walking in the footsteps of saints and experiencing these sacred places. Often tucked away in quiet, remote areas, these sites offer a chance to step back from the busyness of life and immerse yourself in reflection and prayer. They are such a beautiful reminder of the legacy of holiness that has shaped Ireland and continues to inspire us today.

## Anniversary

And, of course, this year holds special meaning for us at Catholic

Mothers Ireland as we celebrate our 10th anniversary! This milestone comes at such a fitting time; a period of spiritual renewal and community engagement in the Church. Over the past 10 years, Catholic Mothers Ireland has grown into such a vibrant community; a real pillar of support for mothers and families raising their children in the faith. It has been such a joy to see mothers come together to share their joys and challenges, finding strength in one another and in their shared commitment to the Gospel. This anniversary isn't just about looking back, it is a call to keep going, to keep nurturing faith in our families and passing on the beauty of our traditions to future generations.

## Hope

As we move through these sacred months, the Year of Hope continues to invite us to think about how we can spread the Gospel's message of love, forgiveness, and compassion. This theme of hope feels especially relevant in today's world, where so many people are searching for meaning and connection. Let's stay rooted in prayer and grounded

in the knowledge that God is a loving and merciful Father who walks with us, helping us through moments of uncertainty and lighting our paths with His eternal love.

Hope isn't just a theme for the year, it is a journey, a challenge for each of us to be beacons of hope in our homes, our communities and beyond. By embracing the sacraments, diving into Scripture, and committing to acts of kindness, we can show the world the transformative power of God's love. Whether it is through small, quiet gestures or bigger acts of service, each of us has a role to play in building a culture of hope and renewal. In doing so, we honour the rich history of faith that has shaped Ireland for centuries and ensure that it continues to flourish for generations to come. Together, let's rise to this call and make hope shine brightly in our world.

*If you are interested in finding out more about Catholic Mothers Ireland, please visit [www.catholicmothers.ie](http://www.catholicmothers.ie).*

# Children's Catechism Club - C3

by Veronica Harley

HELLO children. Welcome to the month of June and the lovely summer days. This month is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This year we celebrate the beautiful feast day on June 27. On the following day, we rejoice on the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. God is Love and the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the human sign of God's love for us. Jesus' Sacred Heart is overflowing with love for all humanity.



Sacred Heart of Jesus  
Sacred Heart of Jesus, I trust in You.  
Sacred Heart of Jesus, I believe in Your love for me.  
Sacred Heart of Jesus, Your Kingdom come.

The Immaculate Heart of Mary leads us closer to God and shows us how we should love Him. Mary's heart is Immaculate. This means it is pure and without sin (CCC 411) and that She is the only fully human person who can love God in the way that He should be loved. Devotion to Mary's Immaculate heart allows us to honour Her holiness (CCC 971) and brings us closer to God (CCC 969).

Immaculate Heart of Mary  
O Virgin Mary, My Mother. I give to your Immaculate Heart, my body and my soul, my thoughts and my actions.  
I want to be what you want me to be and do just what you want me to do.  
I am not afraid because you are always with me. Help me to love your Son, Jesus, with all my heart and above all things.  
Take my hand in yours so I can always be with you.

We continue to celebrate the Easter season and, with Summer upon us, we wait eagerly for the marvellous Feast of Pentecost, the Descent of the Holy Spirit and the beginning of the Church. During this month, we will also celebrate the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven, Trinity Sunday and the wonderful Feast of Corpus Christi. The month of June is bursting with Christian joy.

## The Ascension of Jesus (CCC 659)

“Then He took them out as far as the outskirts of Bethany and, raising His hands, He blessed them. Now, as

He blessed them, He withdrew from them and was carried up to Heaven.” (Luke 29:50). The Ascension of Jesus is a mystery of faith. It always falls 40 days after Easter, which is a Thursday, but the Irish Church now celebrates this important Feast on the following Sunday. The word ‘Ascension’ means to go up and, on this day, we remember how the earthly body of Jesus went up into Heaven. Jesus was with His disciples on the Mount of Olives outside Jerusalem. He told them that soon they would receive the power of the Holy Spirit and to go to preach the Good News of His Resurrection to the whole world. After Jesus ascended, an angel appeared and promised that one day Jesus would return.



## Saints of the Month

June 1 - St Justin Martyr  
June 3 - St Kevin  
June 9 - St Columba  
June 28 - St Irenaeus

## Pentecost

Pentecost is celebrated 50 days, or the seventh Sunday, after the Resurrection of Jesus and concludes the Easter season. The word ‘Pentecost’ means 50 and marks the Descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles. For this reason, it is often called “the birthday of the Church” (CCC 1076). This year we celebrate the wondrous feast on Sun, June 8.

At Pentecost, Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and the disciples were in an upper room in a house in Jerusalem. While they prayed together, a strong wind came up with a loud noise and flames of fire came to rest above the heads of the apostles. Immediately, they were inspired and filled with courage and strength to go and



spread the word of God. On that first Pentecost Sunday, over 3,000 people were converted and baptised.

## Trinity Sunday

Trinity Sunday is celebrated on the first Sunday after Pentecost and lasts only one day. This is symbolic of the unity of the Trinity. On this day, we remember the truth that God is Father, Son (Jesus) and Holy Spirit. It is a central mystery of our faith (CCC 234) and a little difficult to understand that there can be one God yet three persons in God. The bible reveals that there is only one God but that this God is three; the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The word we use to describe this 3-in-1 God is ‘Trinity’. This word is made up of the word ‘Tri’, which means three, and the word ‘unity’, which means one or being unified together.



## Corpus Christi

The glorious Feast of Corpus Christi is celebrated after Trinity Sunday, which usually happens between late May and early June. The name ‘Corpus Christi’ is the

Latin term for ‘Body of Christ’ – the Feast of the Holy Eucharist. The actual feast day of the Eucharist is Holy Thursday, the celebration of



the Last Supper. However, because of the sad events which are recalled in Holy Week, the Eucharist is given its own special day to celebrate – Corpus Christi.

## Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles

On June 29, we celebrate the special feast day of the two principal apostles, Peter and Paul. These two men were among the first to spread the message of Jesus’ teaching.

St Peter was a fisherman whom Jesus called to be one of His apostles. He followed Jesus, learned from Him and loved Him. This great apostle's name was Simon, but Jesus changed it to Peter, which means ‘rock’. “You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church” (Matthew 16:18). Peter was the prince of the apostles, the



first leader of the Church – the first Pope.

St Paul was a Roman citizen and a Pharisee, who did not meet Jesus in His earthly days. Paul hated the first Christians and made them suffer for believing in Jesus. Paul was converted to Christianity after he experienced a vision of the resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus. He became a powerful teacher and preacher, always trusting in God.

We honour these two great apostles: Peter, our leader in the faith, and Paul, its fearless preacher.

## St Joseph, Hope and Protector

During this Jubilee Year of Hope, we can look to St Joseph as a true model of hope. He was the earthly protector of Jesus and Mary, who always showed faith and trust in God’s plan. This humble role that St Joseph carried out with patience and steadfast faith inspires hope in all of us.

St Joseph persevered in challenges, trusting in God and finding strength in His grace. His role as protector of the Holy Family also extends to the Church, making him our guardian of faith and hope.



The life of St Joseph teaches us that hope is not just a nice idea. It is a virtue that grows through faith and trust in God, even in our darkest moments.

## Quiz Time with Lawrence

1. In what Irish county would you find the Cliffs of Moher?
2. Which US President was first elected to the White House in 1992?
3. The River Towy flows through what area of the UK?
4. What country recently won the World Cup of darts?
5. From what classic musical does the song ‘The Black Hills of Dakota’ come?
6. What whole number is the square root of 196?
7. In which English county was the TV sitcom ‘Last of the Summer Wine’ set?
8. In which part of the human body is the stapes bone found?
9. What colour are Mickey Mouse's shoes?
10. What country is said to have invented ice cream?
11. In what US state is the city of Baltimore located?
12. Who starred alongside Jennifer Lopez in the 2001 romantic comedy, ‘The Wedding Planner’?
13. For what rock band is Dave Grohl the lead singer?
14. How many numbers are there on a regular European

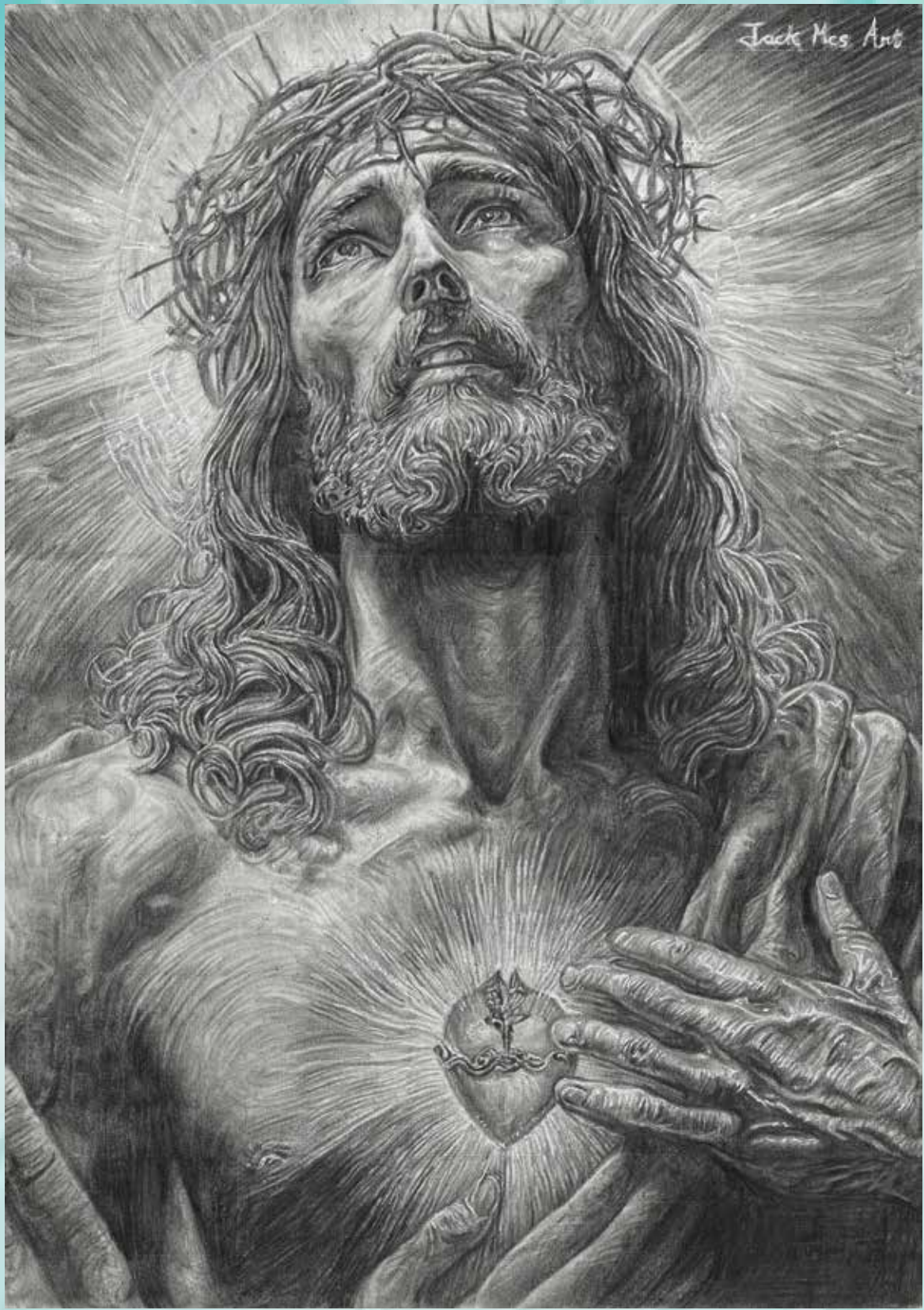
roulette wheel?

15. Which football team won the English Championship play-off in 2025; securing their place in this year's Premier League?
16. Who wrote the classic novel ‘To Kill a Mockingbird’?
17. In a classic episode of TV's Fawlty Towers, what dish was said to contain Apples, Celery, Grapes, Walnuts and Mayonnaise?
18. What was surrealist artist, Salvador Dali famous for painting?
19. In what century was Joan of Arc burned at the stake?
20. What US actor voices five different characters in the animated series ‘Family Guy’, and was also the voice of the title character in the movie ‘Ted’?
21. Of which country is Phnom Penh the capital city?
22. Scottish biologist, Alexander Fleming is credited with discovering what?
23. Who was the first footballer to be sent off twice while playing for England?
24. What is the chemical symbol for gold?
25. What planet is closest in distance to the sun?

Quiz Answers: 1, Co Clare; 2, Bill Clinton; 3, Wales; 4, Northern Ireland; 5, Calamity Jane; 6, Fourteen; 7, Yorkshire; 8, The ear; 9, Yellow; 10, China; 11, Maryland; 12, Matthew McConaughey; 13, The Foo Fighters; 14, 37 (1-36 plus ‘zero’); 15, Sunderland; 16, Harper Lee; 17, A Waldorf Salad; 18, Melting clocks; 19, Fifteenth; 20, Seth McFarlane; 21, Cambodia; 22, Penicillin; 23, David Beckham; 24, Au; 25, Mercury.

Aghyaran, Ardmore, Ardstraw West & Castlederg, Ballinascreen, Ballymagroarty, Banagher, Bellaghy, Buncrana, Carndonagh, Claudy, Clonmany, Coleraine, Creggan, Culladuff, Culmore, Desertmartin, Donnyloop, Drumquin, Dunamaghy, Dungiven, Fahan, Faughanvale, Garvagh, Gortin, Greencastle,

# Let Your Light Shine!



**“Fix your eyes upon Me and live according to what you see. I desire that you penetrate into My spirit more deeply and understand that I am meek and humble of heart.”**  
***(St. Faustina's Diary, 526)***

*'Heart of Eternal Love' image by Muff artist, Jack McAteer Wallace (see story p22)*

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

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

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