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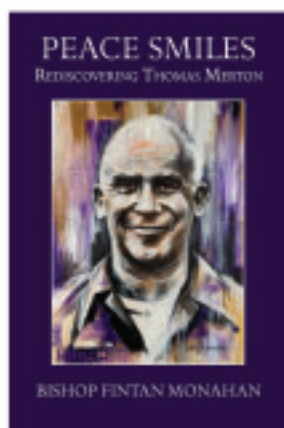
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# COMING SOON

## Autumn Publications from Veritas



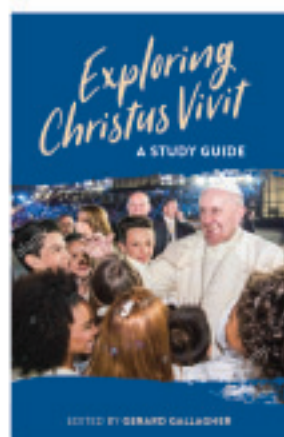
ISBN: 978 1 84730 970 9  
PRICE: €9.99/£8.99\*

### Peace Smiles: Rediscovering Thomas Merton

BY FINTAN MONAHAN

Bishop Monahan explores Merton as artist, social critic, ecumenist and champion of anti-war and anti-racist causes until his untimely death at the age of fifty-three in 1968.

Bishop Monahan shows us, above all, that a profound hope breathes within Merton's writing that we too can find our way home by remaining authentic and true to ourselves. As Bishop Monahan shows, this quest for authenticity and truth became a lifelong search for Merton.



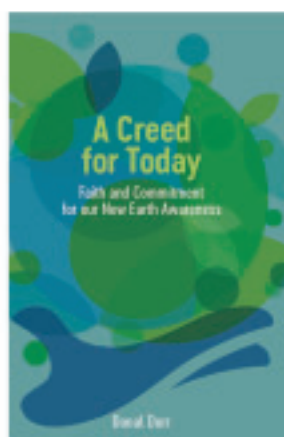
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### Exploring Christus Vivit: A Study Guide

BY GERARD GALLAGHER

In this instructive companion volume, Gerard Gallagher invites a selection of people who work in the area of youth ministry to discuss key themes from *Christus Vivit* and to explore practical ways in which young people today can navigate life's challenges and setbacks, while still 'walking the path to holiness'.

Questions included at the end of each chapter are designed to prompt further contemplation and would make an excellent aid to those studying *Christus Vivit* in a group setting.



ISBN: 978 1 84730 938 9  
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### A Creed for Today: Faith and Commitment for our New Earth Awareness

BY DONAL DORR

Following the success of his widely acclaimed *The Pope Francis Agenda*, renowned theologian Donal Dorr returns with a topical new work that explores the interplay between ecological theology and spirituality at this critical juncture in the twenty-first century.

Rather than seeing ecological theology as an adjunct to Christian doctrine, Donal Dorr views it as central to our understanding of Catholicism today and integral to understanding our relationship with the natural world. Espousing what he dubs a 'new earth awareness', the author lays out a compelling vision for how we should live at both a spiritual and practical level in terms of our Christian faith and the attendant responsibility to care for our planet.

\* Prices subject to change

# Editorial

## A Seventy-fifth Anniversary of Shame

Fr John Cullen  
Editor



**Intercom** is a Catholic pastoral and liturgical resource magazine published by Veritas, an agency established by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference. Some of the content of *Intercom*, along with occasional resources not published in the printed edition, can be accessed for free, on [www.intercommagazine.ie](http://www.intercommagazine.ie).

A full digital subscription is also available. (Ten issues per year, including double issues for July-August and December-January.) Correspondence for the editorial board should be sent to the Chairperson, c/o Columba Centre, Maynooth, Co Kildare. The views expressed in the features, letters and book reviews are not necessarily those of the editor, nor do they necessarily express the official views of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference.

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### Design & Typesetting

Colette Dower, Veritas Publications

Printing: Walsh Colour Print, Kerry

### Circulation

Subscriptions and change of address notifications should be sent to:

Intercom Subscriptions

7/8 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1, Ireland

Email [intercomsubscriptions@veritas.ie](mailto:intercomsubscriptions@veritas.ie)

Tel +353 (0) 1 878 8177

Fax +353 (0) 1 878 6507

Annual subscription

Ireland: €70.00 (Each additional annual subscription €24.50)

UK: stg £69.00 (€77) (Each additional

annual subscription stg £24.50/€27.25)

Airmail: €87.00/US\$90 (Each additional

annual subscription €36.50/US\$38)

**Please make cheques payable to  
Veritas Company DAC**

### Advertising enquiries to

[intercomadvertising@veritas.ie](mailto:intercomadvertising@veritas.ie)

Notices for Gazette to

Email [intercomgazette@veritas.ie](mailto:intercomgazette@veritas.ie)

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Tel +353 (0) 1 878 8177

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Hiroshima Peace Memorial

August 2020 marked 75 years since nuclear bombs were detonated over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The two bombs, eerily codenamed *Little Boy* and *Fat Man* devastated these cities, seared thousands of people to death and caused life-long radiation damage. The bombing was called 'a rain of ruin from the air' by the United States President, Harry Truman.

Several countries continue to maintain, develop and enhance their nuclear capability. The United States alone spent \$35.4 billion on nuclear weapons in 2019. Pope John XXIII called for the disarmament of nuclear weapons in his 1963 *Pacem in Terris* encyclical. Pope Francis firmly condemned the possession of Nuclear Weapons during a special Vatican conference on Nuclear Disarmament in 2017, saying that they delayed and prevented peace on earth.

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown us how our health, environment and economics have suffered. The nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki give us a glimpse of the horror and consequences of the use of these weapons of mass destruction. Unlike the pandemic, we know what we have to do to prevent a nuclear attack. We are dilatory on this perilous issue.

The 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted by the United Nations. 193 countries are members of the United Nations. 38 countries have signed and ratified the Treaty. Ireland joined the UN in 1958 and signed this Treaty in 2017, but has said that it will ratify it sometime in the future. This is unnecessary procrastination. Ratifying this Treaty is Ireland's call to stand tall with honour and continue its unique contribution to world peace.

It requires that fifty countries ratify the treaty to have a normative standard of International Law against the possession and the development of nuclear weapons. Maybe Ireland's new role on the United Nations Security Council will be a voice of influence on the necessity for nuclear disarmament in the world. Banks and financial institutions also need to divest from supporting the huge network of companies that produce or maintain nuclear weapons. Churches and all faith groups have a pivotal role here as instruments of peace. 'Whoever has ears to hear – let them listen' (Mt 11:15). We have failed this hearing test so many times ...

Pope Francis visited Japan in 2019. He met two survivors of the Hiroshima nuclear attack at the Peace Memorial Park. The eloquent silence of his encounter with Yoshiko Kasimoto and Kōji Hosokawa was profound. Pope Francis spoke a prophetic message to an apparent deaf world: 'The use of atomic energy for the purposes of war is a crime not only against the dignity of human beings, but against any possible future for our common home.'

*John Cullen*



# Prayers and Reflections for September

## Pope's Intention for September

Universal: we pray that the planet's resources will not be plundered, but shared in a just and respectful manner



Photo: istockphoto.com

## The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary – 8 September

'Let all creation sing and dance and unite to make worthy contribution to the celebration of this day. Let there be one common festival for saints in heaven and people on earth. Let everything, mundane things and those above, join in festive celebration. Today this created world is raised up to the dignity of a holy place for him who made all things. The creature is newly placed to be a divine dwelling space for the Creator.'

*St Andrew of Crete (650-740). Office of Readings*



## The Holy Name of Mary, (Luke 6:43-49)

'A church that is a mother goes along the path of tenderness. It knows the language of caresses and the gaze that knows compassion. Without this dimension it is solely a masculine church that sadly becomes a church of old bachelors, who live in isolation, incapable of love, incapable of fecundity. Without the woman, the church does not advance. This attitude of woman comes from Mary because Jesus willed it so.'

*Pope Francis when he announced the new feast in 2018 of Mary, Mother of the Church*



## The Exaltation of the Holy Cross – (John 3:13-17) – 14 September

O faithful Cross you stand unmoved  
while ages run their course;  
foundation of the universe,  
Creations binding force.

*Liturgy of the Hours, hymn for the Feast, third verse*

## The Motto of the Carthusians founded in 1084

*Stat Crux dum in volvitur orbis .  
The Cross is steady while the world is turning.*



## Prayer for Grandparents



Photo: istockphoto.com

Lord Jesus,  
help families and society to value the presence and roles of grandparents.  
May they never be ignored or excluded,  
but always encounter respect and love.  
Help them to live serenely and to feel welcomed  
in all the years of life you give them.

*From the prayer composed by Pope Benedict XVI in 2008 for the Catholic Grandparents Association*



## Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Archangels – (John 1:47-51) – 29 September

The three names of the Archangels end with the word 'EL' which means God. God is inscribed in their name and nature. They are God's messengers. They bring God to us. They remind us that God is closer to us than we are to ourselves. Angels always address us: *Do Not Be Afraid*.

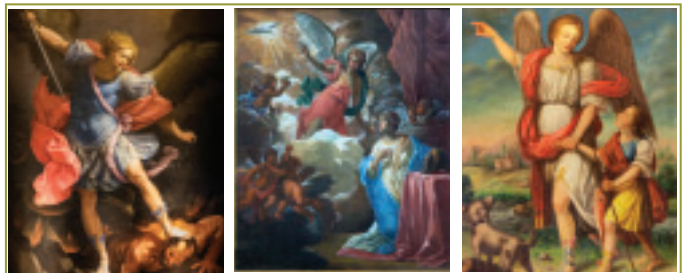


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## St Jerome – (Luke 9:57-62) – 30 September

Jerome centred his life on God's Word. Jerome said: 'Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ.' By carrying the Word of God within us, we also carry eternity. Jerome said: 'Seek to learn on earth those truths which will remain valid in heaven.'



Photo: istockphoto.com

# Get Connected

## Pointers on Being Parish on Social Media

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**W**ho is looking after your parish social media and are you confident that they know what they are doing? This is a question I have addressed in the past in this column but some recent postings on some parish social media accounts have prompted me to revisit the question again.

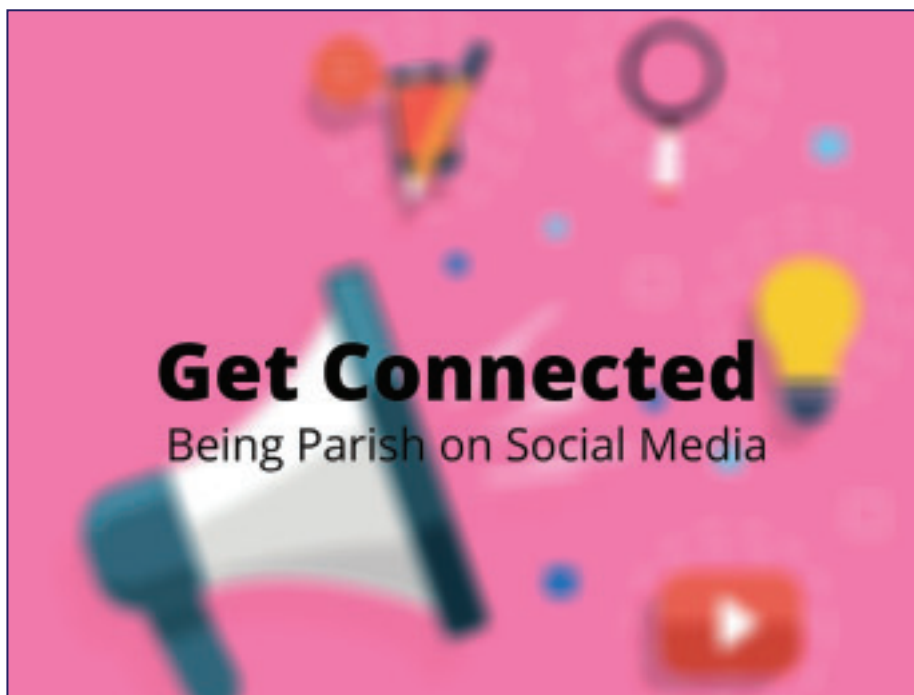
When did you last take a look at your parish social media accounts? Do you check what content is being posted in the name of your parish? Do you have a posting policy for the platforms that your parish is on? Do those managing your Facebook page understand Church safeguarding policies when it comes to posting images of children?

The reason I am coming back to this issue is because I have noticed a trend on some parish social media accounts in recent weeks and months. The issues range from using parish social media to promote personal agendas to the sharing of photos of primary school children giving their name, school name and the names of their parents and grandparents! In other incidences you wonder if you are following a faith account or just another community account posting updates about local road closures. Where has the faith gone?

These issues are thankfully few and far between and may simply be because the person or persons looking after your accounts have not received guidelines and/or training on how to be parish on social media.

This is a really wonderful definition of parish: The parish is where the Church lives. Parishes are communities of faith, of action, and of hope. They are where the gospel is proclaimed and celebrated, where believers are formed and sent to renew the earth. Parishes are the home of the Christian community; they are the heart of our Church. Parishes are the place where God's people meet Jesus in word and sacrament and come in touch with the source of the Church's life.

If you look through your parish social media posts over the last few weeks and months – can you honestly tick many/any of the above boxes? Are those people following your parish Facebook and Twitter accounts 'meeting Jesus in word and sacrament' in what is being shared online?



It might be timely as we return from the Summer break and as the parish gets busy again after the Covid-19 lockdown to offer some pointers on being parish on social media and setting some guidelines in place.

Firstly, a quick 10 point checklist for those managing parish social media accounts:

1. Ponder before you post. Think before you Tweet. Think inspiration before sharing on Instagram
2. You are what you share – be careful how you represent yourself online if you are a parish, diocese, etc.
3. Do not be someone who creates or spreads fake news – this includes fake virus warnings, fake hacking claims etc.
4. Share without expectations of Retweets or Likes. Don't be tempted to spam or overshare. It takes time to build your community and less is always more.
5. Give guidelines and training to those managing your accounts.
6. Share digital smiles, engage calmly and respectfully.
7. Examine all aspects of a photograph before hitting share. Be aware of safeguarding policies on sharing images of children on a parish social media account.

8. Check Spelling and Grammar and DO NOT WRITE IN ALL CAPS BECAUSE THAT TRANSLATES ONLINE AS SHOUTING!

9. Don't add people to groups without their permission.

10. Use tagging and hashtags #wisely and #sparingly and don't tweet all at once – schedule or space your posts over the day/week.

### A Posting Policy for Facebook

Creating a dedicated Posting Policy for Facebook is also something well worth considering. There are lots of examples available online of what these look like.

Your policy should have a short message of welcome, a disclaimer about comments left on your page. A list of actions that are unacceptable. Ideally the guidelines should go live as the page goes live but it is never too late to put a posting policy in place. The policy should end with a disclaimer.

You don't want to discourage interaction on your Facebook Page but you do have a responsibility to those using your page to ensure that their experience on the page is one of welcome and positivity.

Training and guidelines are the way to go when you hand over responsibility for your parish social media to an individual or a team. Also, be sure to check in with them regularly to offer support!

# COVID-19 and an Ordinary Life

Dr Orla Walsh  
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School,  
Sisters of Cluny,  
Chapelizod, Dublin



Photos: iStockphoto.com

'Someone I loved  
once gave me a box  
full of darkness.  
It took me years to understand  
that this too, was Gift.'

These lines are from Mary Oliver's poem, 'The Uses of Sorrow.' They have come to my mind many times since the day we learned that Covid-19 was a dangerous disease.

I am an ordinary person, living an ordinary life. Each day, I try to do something extra-ordinary that is authentic as well as rooted in integrity. Something, maybe just one thing. Many of one's daily dialogues can be inauthentic and lacking in integrity, perhaps for no particular reason, nevertheless they are. Since Covid-19, I have worked to change this. Intention and purpose have become two of my most internalised words. For example, I now eat with intention, I now run with purpose. This may sound trivial, but I have learned that these perhaps-mundane acts, when practiced with intent and purpose, can lead one's mindset and 'soulset' to scaffold the less mundane and ordinary practices. The enforced stopping has helped me to embrace the art of stillness, being still and finding the sacred. This has been managed on a daily basis and I am purposelessly and intently working on mastering it.

Covid-19 has been a devastating blow for the world. It has brought intense loss and pain for many. As I write this, my father's only living sibling, at 99 years of age, has just been taken into hospital. God bless her, what a terrible illness to have to endure in your 100th year.

But I am writing this article about the changes it has effected within my life to date. March 12 was an ordinary day, and we were going about the busyness of the school day. The Taoiseach spoke from Washington DC to tell us that school was about to close and we had a few hours to leave, with all that we needed to take up residence in our 'home school'. This happened and although we have experienced teething and tension, our



wonderful school community has pulled together and managed well.

Being at home, as one of five, all day every day, posed a different type of challenge. I hadn't realised that the one-hour commute to and from work gave me what I have come to label as 'preparation and process hours'. I don't have those any more, as it takes less than one minute to walk down the stairs and another in the evening to get up from the laptop and walk into the kitchen. From the very early stages of lockdown, I realised I was missing something: yes the pain of commuting. That quiet time in the car had left a void for me.

So, I filled the void. I now get up and run first thing, or simply sit outside and listen. I've experienced an 'Aha' moment with both of these activities. The running is a beautiful thing as my companion is our cockapoo, Ozzy, who is strapped to my waist, while together we tear through the ruins of Trim. The sitting and listening is also with Ozzy, as we sit outside and listen to the birds. All my life, my mother has asked me to listen to the birds, I have always agreed but never got around to it. Now I am completing both of these practices with intent and purpose. I have

realised that an ordinary life can be extra-ordinary without a thing being sourced on Amazon, fitted by a fitter, applied or attached by anyone or anything. It is simply a most beautiful gift for the mind and soul to realise that God has given us everything we need to be fulfilled and to experience the extra. Jesus told us many times: be still and know that I am God. Fr Richard Rohr writes that stillness and silence become intermingled with the experience of God; it is in that place that we experience the most profound reality of the sacred. It is in that space that I have learned the following truths:

- The birds are beautiful to watch and to hear. They sing to each other and to you. They are exquisite in their flight and they are bold with their ambitions. I should have listened earlier but am grateful I am listening now.
- I need to breathe through the day and not breeze through the day. Last year, Fr Tony Coote died of motor neurone disease. He lived approximately eighteen months after being diagnosed. He said that it was in those months that he worked the hardest





and experienced the most during each day, because every minute of every day now really mattered.

- God's DNA is in everything. Outside, I have found myself pondering all sorts of things: Does an ant have a tongue? How do the poppies turn to face the sun each day? The beauty of each creature carries the DNA of the creator. In Genesis 1:3, God said: 'Let there be light, and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness.' God gave us light to see from the very beginning, and we often choose to remain in the darkness.
- We are all in different boats but fighting the same storm. When I meet a neighbour, I speak with intent. We look at each other, we converse about this and that, nothing really, but this gives a sense of the communal, more than it ever did before.
- Family time is precious time. Covid-19 has afforded me the opportunity to

live, all-day every-day, with those I love most in the world. Apart from the food bills, the messiness, the protein-shake necessity, and the fact that the hot water is hardly ever available for me, I am filled with gratitude for my family.

- The Rosary can change a life. On Mother's day, I visited the Blessed Sacrament chapel to pray for my mother. While inside and alone, it dawned on me to call her. I asked her to put her phone on speaker. With her brother, we prayed the rosary together. This began and offered so much comfort to each of us that we kept it up. This is seven weeks later. We have now prayed forty-nine rosaries together, and we name one hundred and twenty-two family, neighbours and friends in our daily prayer. It is an honour and a privilege I am filled with gratitude for. The gift of peace and prayer with my eighty-three year old mother is sacred.

- I am not an accident. I have learned that I was created on purpose, with purpose and for purpose. God has created me for a reason. How wonderful to embrace this reality. What I do on purpose today will be involved in my future. So now I try to live with great purpose.
- 'Thy will be done'. A summary of psalm 91: 'The will of God will not take you where the grace of God will not protect and sustain you.' Alleluia.

The great Saint John Henry Newman said: 'to be human is to change, to be perfect is to change many times.' It is now time to change in the pursuit of perfection. Covid-19 has caused us to try and recover something that was lost in our world a long time ago; to break free from the hurriedness and heaviness of life that causes us to live in the darkness, consciously or subconsciously saying a definite 'No' to the light God gifted us with from the beginning of time.





Photo: istockphoto.com

# The Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor

In the 2015 Encyclical *Laudato Si'* On Care for Our Common Home Pope Francis was emphatic that 'a true ecological approach *always* becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear *both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*.'<sup>1</sup> In the 2020 Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation to the 'beloved Amazon', *Querida Amazonia*, Pope Francis' first dream is a social one: 'I dream of an Amazon region that fights for the rights of the poor, the original peoples and the least of our brothers and sisters, where their voices can be heard and their dignity advanced.'<sup>2</sup> In fact, he emphasises as essential the link between the ecological and the social, stating: 'We do not need an environmentalism "that is concerned for the biome but ignores the Amazonian peoples".'<sup>3</sup> Environmental degradation and human rights abuses often go hand-in-hand. Pope Francis describes this practice in the Amazon region where the 'colonizing interests that have continued to expand – legally and illegally – the timber and mining industries, and have expelled or marginalised the indigenous peoples, the river people and those of African descent, are provoking a cry that rises up to heaven'.<sup>4</sup> Trócaire's Business and Human Rights campaign has also drawn attention to the big businesses who often deny the rights of local peoples as well as damage the environment through acquiring – legally and illegally – land for mining or growing valuable crops large-scale, goods that end up with us as the consumer.<sup>5</sup>

## The entire material universe speaks of God's love

Climate Justice is therefore a question of justice more generally, not an optional module for those with a special interest. In striving to care for the planet, we are acting justly to our fellow creatures and to the environment, but also to future generations and to the most vulnerable communities in the world who will suffer most from the devastating effects of climate change. We are also acting justly toward our God who has created this beautiful world in which we live. In a sermon to agriculturalists, Saint John Paul II said: 'Within the movement of nature, tranquil and silent but rich in life, there continues to palpitate the original delight of the Creator.'<sup>6</sup> The poet Gerard Manley Hopkins expressed it in these words: 'The world is charged with the grandeur of God.'<sup>7</sup> Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'* expounded that 'Our insistence that each human being is an image of God should not make us overlook the fact that each creature has its own purpose. None is superfluous. The entire material universe speaks of God's love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God.'<sup>8</sup>

In a world where natural resources risk becoming privatised we must remember that the beauty and bounty of the earth was made by God for all, not for an exclusive few. We know that the climate change is, even now, affecting the poorest and most vulnerable in our world the most. Those who live in small coastal villages and those whose livelihoods depend on agriculture, patterns of

migration in the natural world, and the ebb and flow of the seasons. Those who have little money or resources to fall back on if crops fail or rains don't come. Those who suffer from the effects of dirty air and water. We have a responsibility to recognise that the earth and all its wonders are a gift from God. We have a responsibility to care for that gift in harmony with nature to ensure its survival. Pope Benedict XVI in *Caritas in Veritate* explains: '[N]ature speaks to us of the Creator (cf. Rm 1:20) and his love for humanity. It is destined to be 'recapitulated' in Christ at the end of time (cf. Eph 1:9-10; Col 1:19-20). Thus it too is a 'vocation'. Nature is at our disposal not as a heap of scattered refuse, but as a gift of the Creator who has given it an inbuilt order, enabling man ... 'to till it and keep it' (Gn 2:15).'<sup>9</sup>

## Back to Business as usual?

In recent times we have seen all too clearly that how we act in our local context affects the world in our increasingly globalised reality. The coronavirus pandemic also causes us to reflect on our 'old normal' to see if it really was working for all. Pre-pandemic Ireland was considered a developed country with a successful economy yet it had a housing and homelessness crisis, poverty and in-work poverty, was not fulfilling its climate justice targets, was seeing the demise of rural areas, the majority of those with a disability were excluded from work, marginalised groups remained 'outside' such as the Traveller community, and there was a mental

health and suicide crisis. Were we succeeding in terms of authentic human development and integral ecology?

The arrival of the coronavirus to the island of Ireland was a devastating turn of events that resulted in suffering and loss of life. Some of the most marginalised in our society suffered most, including and most especially the elderly and vulnerable. The public health measures brought in to tackle the crisis urgently made us look anew at what is possible, made us see more clearly the parts of society that may normally be ignored and made us value the really important things in life. We were also forced to radically change our normal ways and routines and Governments too were forced to make sweeping, unprecedented changes to the delivery of public services, some of which may have been unimaginable before. Before we rush then to reclaim what we deem normal, let us reflect on what we can learn from this crisis and see the opportunities not for returning to, but for moving forward into a new way of living where we strive to value all creation.

### A new way of living

Simplicity, moderation, discipline have always been valued by our Christian faith which reminds us that we are more than what we have or the material goods that we possess. As the 2014 Pastoral Reflection on Climate Change from the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, *The Cry of the Earth*, reminds us, by living a life of greater detachment from material goods and in making even small sacrifices for the good of others and of our planet, we may find that we are more, not less content. With having to travel less or consume less goods, we are no longer enslaved to our happiness depending on the next purchase or trip. We may find a slower pace of life leads to less stress and more time to focus on others, ourselves and our faith. Many people's experiences in the difficulties of the last few months have also illuminated this reality. In the darkness and suffering which this pandemic has wrought and continues to wreak, let us not lose sight of some of the learnings and lessons; We are global citizens interconnected like never before and this applies to our impact on the environment, our buying habits, the businesses we engage with and the standards we hold; We are all vulnerable; Some of our most important fields of work and workers are paid least and experience difficult or precarious working conditions including those involved in agriculture and food production; Many of our countries rely on migration and migrants who positively benefit our societies and work in our health system, our food supply chains and so on; What we deemed impossible is

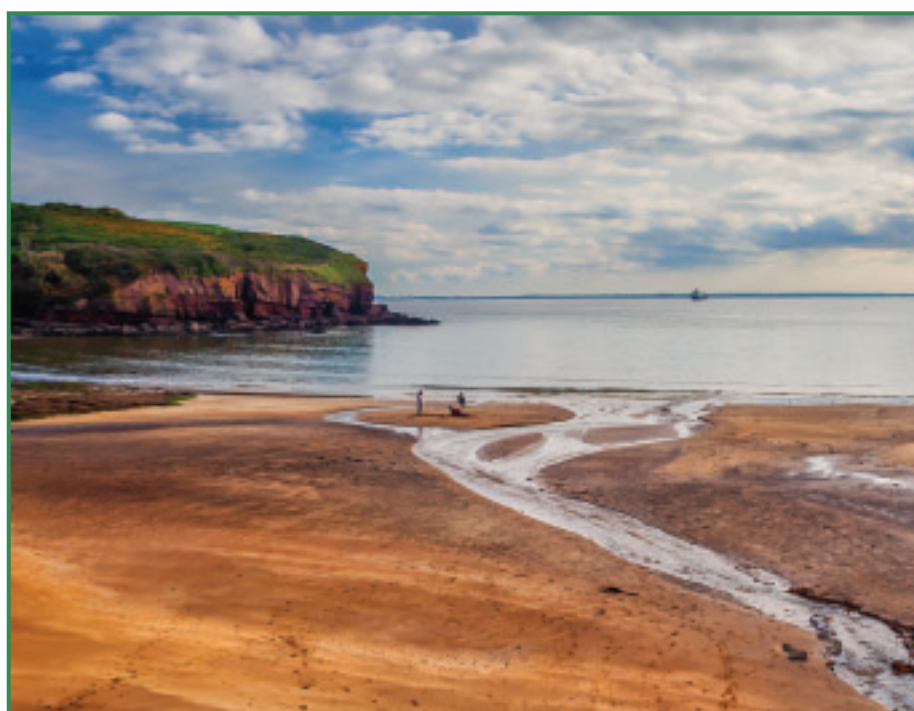


Photo: istockphoto.com

not; and what we refused to change, we had to change.

Pope Francis has called attention in *Laudato Si'* to Saint Francis as 'the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically ... He shows us just how inseparable the bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and interior peace.'<sup>10</sup> In his 1990 World Day of Peace message, Saint John Paul II also reflected on the link between certain approaches to affluence and ecological devastation and human deprivation: 'Modern society will find no solution to the ecological problem unless it takes a serious look at its lifestyle. In many parts of the world, society is given to instant gratification and consumerism while remaining indifferent to the damage which these cause ... If an appreciation of the value of the human person and human life is lacking, we will also lose interest in others and the earth itself. Simplicity, moderation and discipline, as well as a spirit of sacrifice, must become part of everyday life, lest all suffer the negative consequence of the careless habits of a few.'<sup>11</sup>

We must learn to examine our consciences over our decisions in the simplest acts of daily life. Simplicity of living might be our route back to wonder and awe – one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit – to return to 'the newness that was in every stale thing when we looked at it as children: the spirit-shocking wonder in a black slanting Ulster hill' as Kavanagh put it in his poem *Advent*. In *The Cry of the Earth* Cardinal Brady wrote that 'In addressing the challenge of climate change, everyone has a part to

play. Every action taken in favour of a just and more sustainable environment, no matter how small, has an intrinsic value. Action at a global level, as well as every individual action which contributes to integral human development and global solidarity, helps to construct a more sustainable environment and, therefore, a better world.'<sup>12</sup> Let us begin then, today.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html), n. 49.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20200202\\_querida-amazonia.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20200202_querida-amazonia.html), n. 7.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20200202\\_querida-amazonia.html#\\_ftn2](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20200202_querida-amazonia.html#_ftn2), n. 8.

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20200202\\_querida-amazonia.html#\\_ftn2](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20200202_querida-amazonia.html#_ftn2), n. 9.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.trocaire.org/business-and-human-rights>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/The-Cry-of-the-Earth-A-Call-to-Action-for-Climate-Justice-2014.pdf>, p. 14.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html), n. 84.

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20090629\\_caritas-in-veritate.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html), n. 48.

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html), n. 10.

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/peace/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_mes\\_19891208\\_xxiii-world-day-for-peace.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_19891208_xxiii-world-day-for-peace.html), n. 13.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/The-Cry-of-the-Earth-A-Call-to-Action-for-Climate-Justice-2014.pdf>, p. 4.

*The role of the Council for Justice and Peace is to support the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference in promoting the social teaching of the Church and to advise on issues of social concern, both nationally and internationally.*





# World Day of Migrants and Refugees

## 27 September 2020

Photo: iStockphoto.com

*'Like Jesus Christ, forced to flee. Welcoming, protecting, promoting and integrating internally displaced persons'*

**W**e have been celebrating the World Day of Migrants and Refugees since 1914. It is an opportunity and an occasion to express concern for different vulnerable people on the move; to pray for them as they face many challenges; and to increase awareness about the opportunities that migration offers.

The 106th World Day of Migrants and Refugees will be celebrated on 27 September 2020. As the title for his annual message, Pope Francis has chosen 'like Jesus Christ forced to flee'. The message focuses on the pastoral care of internally displaced people who currently number over 41 million worldwide.

The title makes clear the message of Pope Francis, originating in the experience of the young Jesus and his family as displaced persons and refugees. This experience provides a specific Christological grounding for the Christian action of welcome or hospitality.

The message 'is an invitation to discover them, to discover that they exist and that they are here among us; in our own country, in our own diocese, in our own parish.'

According to the 2020 Global Report on Internal Displacement, there are an estimated 50.8 million internally displaced persons worldwide. Among them, there are 45.7 million displaced due

to conflict and violence and 5.1 million who were forced to move because of disasters.

In his message, the pope said the sufferings endured by internally displaced persons have only been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic.

'In the light of the tragic events that have marked 2020, I would like this message, although concerned with internally displaced persons, to embrace all those who are experiencing situations of precariousness, abandonment, marginalization and rejection as a result of COVID-19.'

Recalling the day's theme, the pope said that Jesus, Mary and Joseph experienced the same 'tragic fate' of the displaced and refugees, a fate 'marked by fear, uncertainty and unease.'

Displaced people, 'offer us this opportunity to meet the Lord, even though our eyes find it hard to recognize him: his clothing in tatters, his feet dirty, his face disfigured, his body wounded, his tongue unable to speak our language.'

As we reflect on the pastoral challenge to 'welcome, protect, promote and integrate' migrants, we are encouraged to expand on those verbs to further explain the church's mission.

Pope Francis said that the precariousness experienced by many today due to the pandemic 'is a constant in the lives of displaced people,' and 'all too often we stop at statistics' and fail to understand the suffering of those on the margins.

'But it is not about statistics, it is about real people!' he said. 'If we encounter them, we will get to know more about them. And knowing their stories, we will be able to understand them.'

To be close to displaced persons, means to serve them and not turn them away due to fear and prejudices that 'often prevent us from becoming neighbours.'

Sharing, an essential element of Christian life, is another important aspect that allows for men and women to 'grow together, leaving no one behind,' the pope said.

'The pandemic has reminded us how we are all in the same boat,' 'Realizing that we have the same concerns and fears has shown us once more that no one can be saved alone.'

Pope Francis said the coronavirus pandemic also serves as a reminder of the importance of co-responsibility and that in order 'to promote those whom we assist, we must involve them and make them agents in their own redemption.'

'To preserve our common home and make it conform more and more to God's original plan, we must commit ourselves to ensuring international cooperation, global solidarity and local commitment, leaving no one excluded.'

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The Holy Fathers message reminds us that as Catholics we are called to stand with immigrants and refugees as our brothers and sisters. This is what we as Catholics do.

- Pope Francis invites us to be part of a culture of encounter as we welcome, protect, integrate, and promote immigrants and refugees in our midst.
- Immigration is about real people who are trying to find a better life and a new beginning. It's about families. As Pope Francis stated, 'Each migrant has a name, a face and a story.'
- Welcoming immigrants is part of Catholic Social Teaching and reflects the Biblical tradition to welcome the stranger.

\* \* \*

Dear Jesus, Our journey through life is long and hard. We cannot make this trip alone; we must walk together on the journey. You promised to send us a helper, your Spirit. Help us to see your Spirit in those you send to journey with us. In the refugee family, seeking safety from violence, Let us see your Spirit. In the migrant worker, bringing food to our tables, Let us see your Spirit. In the asylum-seeker, seeking justice for himself and his family, Let us see your Spirit. In the unaccompanied child, traveling in a dangerous world, Let us see your Spirit. Teach us to recognize that as we walk with each other, You are present. Teach us to welcome not only the strangers in our midst but the gifts they bring as well: the invitation to conversion, communion, and solidarity. This is the help you have sent: we are not alone. We are together on the journey, and for this we give you thanks. Amen.

You are the God who bears the brunt of the question, 'Why didn't you stay where you belong?' You feel the red-faced embarrassment when we hear, 'Keep your distance, you foreigner, with your different-coloured skin and your strange-sounding speech, with your culture, food, religion, and clothing that are inferior to my own.' You are the God who sits alongside of us who work in sweatshops, with our bloodshot eyes and aching fingers squinting under the soulless glare of a florescent light. You are the God who rises early in the morning with us as we go to harvest fresh vegetables and fruits picked with fingers stained by the pesticides and fungicides that penetrate our skin. You are the God who stands with us in the chill of the morning in the parking lot at Home Depot, with anxious stomachs hoping that we too would be picked to work just for that one day. Loving God, as we stand before you today, help us to remember that when we speak of immigrants and refugees, we



speak of Christ. Hear our prayers for necessary, just, and comprehensive immigration reform. Make us strong in the work for immigrant justice and remind us that our work is no easier than the everyday work of our immigrant sisters and brothers. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen. (adapted from [Justiceforimmigrants.org](http://Justiceforimmigrants.org))

\* \* \*

### A Prayer for Immigrant Children

Loving Father, in your infinite compassion, we seek your divine protection for refugee children who are often alone and afraid. Provide solace to those who have been witnesses to violence and destruction, who have lost parents, family, friends, home, and all they cherish due to war or persecution. Comfort them in their sorrow, and bring help in their time of need. Show mercy to unaccompanied migrant children, too, Lord. Reunite them with their families and loved ones. Guide those children who are strangers in a foreign land to a place of peace and safety. Comfort them in their sorrow, and bring help in their time of need. Show us how we might reach out to these precious and vulnerable children. Open our hearts to migrant and refugee children in need, so that we might see in them your own migrant Son. Give us courage to stand up in their defence against those who would do them harm. For this we pray through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen

\* \* \*

Pope Francis' Prayer suggested by the example of Saint Joseph at the time he was forced to flee to Egypt to save the child Jesus.

Father, you entrusted to Saint Joseph what you held most precious: the child Jesus and his Mother, in order to protect them from the dangers and threats of the wicked.

Grant that we may experience his protection and help. May he, who shared in the sufferings of those who flee from the hatred of the powerful, console and protect all our brothers and sisters driven by war, poverty and necessity to leave their homes and their lands to set out as refugees for safer places.

Help them, through the intercession of Saint Joseph, to find the strength to persevere, give them comfort in sorrows and courage amid their trials.

Grant to those who welcome them some of the tender love of this just and wise father, who loved Jesus as a true son and sustained Mary at every step of the way.

May he, who earned his bread by the work of his hands, watch over those who have seen everything in life taken away and obtain for them the dignity of a job and the serenity of a home.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, whom Saint Joseph saved by fleeing to Egypt, and trusting in the intercession of the Virgin Mary, whom he loved as a faithful husband in accordance with your will. Amen.

Fr Willie Purcell  
Immigrant Council of the  
Irish Bishops' Conference





# The End of Civil War Politics:

## Una O'Higgins O'Malley, founder of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation

I grew up in East Clare, then known as 'De Valera country.' Some of my earliest recollections were fights on a fair day, where civil war politics were played out in the street, between those who were for and against the treaty which caused the partition of the island. My family weren't political. My mother was a war widow, an Irish emigrant, who became a nurse and midwife during the Second World War, and met and married a Canadian in the British Army, who was killed outside Rome in a trucking accident in the last days of the war. I never knew that my mother had married previously until much later in my own life. Silence! My mother eventually married my father, and our main preoccupation then was economic survival. The advent of free education gave many of us, like me, a route out of poverty and more opportunities.

I went to school in a classroom with a green map of Ireland on the wall, which had a large orange blob on the top right-hand corner. Heroic history stories always involved dying for your country; living for it was not part of the narrative. At the bottom of the hill in the small town where I grew up, I passed a crumbling Protestant church on my way to school; as I moved into my late teenage years, it disappeared altogether. I never heard anyone talk about the people who went to church there. Who were they and where did they go? Did they decide to leave? Were they forced to go? Or was it too cold a place to stay after the new State was formed? More silence!

Like all young people then, I had a passing interest in the past and listened to stories that defined and solidified a sense of identity which was not often questioned. I watched the Northern Ireland conflict, like many in the Republic, through the lens of a black and white television, glad that it was 'up there' and not 'down here.' Much later, I learnt about discrimination, toxic theologies, and the fear, misunderstanding and humiliation that made up the complexity – to quote the late Seamus Mallon – of our Shared Home.



Photos courtesy of the author

In July 2005, my youngest son William was on his way to work as a young architect in London. On the tube, somewhere between Aldgate and Liverpool Street, a bomb exploded in the carriage where he was sitting. Although seven people in the carriage were killed, he managed to get out with extensive but not life-threatening burns. His life was changed forever and mine took another turn also. The personal became political.

Asked by a gentle Northerner, I joined the Board of the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation, a peace centre that had been in existence since 1974, set up as a response to the outbreak of violent conflict in the north.

As newly-elected chair, I was preoccupied with the devastating impact of the 2009 recession on the Centre, the

loss of skilled staff and international volunteers, and the threatened shut-down of the Centre. In time, things stabilised and I discovered many remarkable women and men, from different faiths and none, who were appalled by the violence often perpetrated in the name of religion, and who, as a result, decided to take a stand



Above: Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation

Left: Una O'Higgins O'Malley

for peace. They worked together to transform a ramshackle collection of buildings that had served as a military barracks, a reformatory for boys and young men, and a centre for German refugee children. It was now a peace centre with the mission of reconciling divisions and political conflicts which were a legacy of the partition of the island of Ireland and the subsequent Civil War. Among these remarkable women and men, I encountered Una O'Higgins O'Malley.

Una O'Higgins O'Malley was the daughter of Kevin O'Higgins, the first Minister for Justice of the Free State Executive after partition. Although she was only five months old when her father was assassinated in 1927, the loss of her father and his legacy of forgiveness were the dominant influence that explains much of her public life. A relative of her father's assassin reported his dying words: 'I know who you are and I know why you have done it and I forgive you but this will have to be the end of the killing.'

Her daughter Iseult remembered being told by her mother that as a child she found herself having to console total strangers who would start weeping for her father on being introduced to her. In an interview with the late Marian Finucane to celebrate thirty years of Glencree's work for peace, Una talked about the 'black lava' that came over her when she heard that one of the assassins had danced on her father's grave, and which dissipated when she was inspired on Good Friday to have a Mass said for her father, those who killed him, and both of the Civil War political traditions.

A committed Catholic, reconciliation and justice were deep themes in Una's life. While the peace movement was central to her life's work, her involvement always stemmed from a feeling that injustice was happening and something should be done. She was involved in helping to get Meals on Wheels going in the Mater Hospital, and she campaigned on the appalling state of housing and conditions for travellers in Dublin. She also assisted in the production of the MacBride Commission on penal policy, and campaigned for the Irish Council for Civil Liberties. Her decision to run as an independent in the 1977 general election campaign, on a reconciliation and justice platform, put her in direct conflict with the party representing her family tradition, but she was convinced that the issues of reconciliation, social justice and

Garda misconduct required her to take a stand. She was also a strong believer in the ecumenical movement.

However, it was the peace movement that eventually came to absorb most of Una's efforts. From the early days of protesting against the IRA outside the Sinn Féin offices, through the running of holidays in Newbridge for pensioners from Northern Ireland, to the establishment and development of the Glencree Centre, the abiding theme was always the necessity for the people of this island to learn to forgive and accept each other.

Before the words 'soft power' or 'soft diplomacy' were ever spoken, Una practiced it, bringing together political leaders and influencers not just from the North but from Britain, to have quiet conversations, away from the media, on contentious issues. These conversations had the aim of leading to greater understanding of the 'other.'

Before the United Nations ever decided (through UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security) to recognise the crucial role that women play in peacebuilding, women have been at the heart of building peace on this island and in many areas of conflict around the world.

Una died in 2005, and today, facilitated dialogue is at the heart of the work of Glencree, where we continue to work towards the creation of all-island



Photo: iStockphoto.com

peace, dealing with the legacy of a violent past, the implications of the UK decision to leave the European Union, and the resulting constitutional question. Our recent work with refugees and asylum-seekers who have made Ireland their home is new, but much needed to combat racism and xenophobia.

Global peace and security are serious challenges for governments, multilateral organisations, societies, and peoples of the world. Glencree has reflected on its global responsibilities for peace, and is working toward the development of a Global Peace Campus, a place that would welcome countries in conflict, a place to learn about Glencree's experience and dynamic dialogue process, and to learn new ways of addressing violent conflict in collaboration with others.

Una's favourite quotation from her father came from one of his letters: '...but we carried our brick and we laid it fair and square and as well as we knew how.' The same can be said of her and Glencree.

*Learn more about our work and support it*  
[www.glencree.ie](http://www.glencree.ie); #Glencree4peace

*Barbara Walshe is a  
 restorative practitioner  
 and chairs the Board at  
 the Glencree Centre for  
 Peace and  
 Reconciliation  
 #glencree4peace*





# Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me

From 1936 until 1939 the unfolding horrors of civil war pierced like a bayonet the wounded and bleeding heart of Spain. Atrocities, mindless destruction, and revenge further tore a fractured and divided people apart and the legacy of this bloodshed remains a delicate and sensitive subject. In the midst of bullet shots, scattered propaganda leaflets and crumbling masonry, a German born Mexican photographer was busy friezing history in black and white. Hans Gutmann (later Juan Guzmán) had joined the International Brigade in 1936 and throughout the three year duration of the conflict would capture over 1,300 photographs, providing an invaluable historical account. One in particular, a portrait of Marina Ginestá I Coloma, a reporter, activist and member of Unified Socialist Youth won him international recognition. Revolution never looked so good! Marina stands imperiously on top of the Plaza de Cataluña. A rifle is strapped in cavalier fashion across her shoulder and her upturned chin and windswept visage appear in victorious contrast to the fire blackened silhouette of Barcelona Cathedral behind her. The image is an impressive one, but not quite accurate. Marina was a reporter, not a fighter, and her weapon is only artistically symbolic. This pose for the camera would be the only time during the war that she would ever carry a gun.

There is another portrait taken by Gutmann that is worthy of our attention. To my mind it is far more powerful, more abiding and authentic than the reporter with her rifle. The viewer beholds a close up, intimate study not of a face, but of a soul. A young man stands in scrubland. His clothes are dirty. His white shirt is missing buttons and completely out of place in the fields. His sleeves are rolled just above the elbow. He is many weeks unshaven and his temples are a tousled mess of corkscrew curls. Despite an unkempt and dishevelled appearance he carries the noble bearing of a gentleman, albeit one in need of a bath. He stares directly into the camera with an incredible expression of calm and dignified resistance. This young priest knows that the second the last



Photo: Juan Guzmán, wikipedia.org

photograph has been taken he will be shot dead in cold blood, and still he smiles.

Fr Martin Martinez Pascual was a Diocesan Labourer Priest of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He taught Latin in the seminary in San Fulgencio and was prefect of St Joseph's College in Murcia until the outbreak of war when he went into hiding to remain close to his family and the people of God. Eventually he was forced to reveal himself so as to attempt to speak to a judge on behalf of his father who had been arrested simply for being the father of a priest. Thus he was captured. When he was shot by firing squad at the cemetery in Valdealgofa he was only twenty five years old. His crime: his anointed hands and a heart consecrated in Holy Orders. I keep an image of this Blessed's photograph on my desk in the study at the presbytery, because I can think of no other portrait which communicates not simply the countenance of the subject, but also the miracle of martyrdom itself. His eyes burn incandescently with the grace of God, and when you return his gaze from a desk piled high with folders, letters and rotas you realise that Gutmann has provided the world, not with a photograph of a murdered political enemy, but with an icon of a saint.

Blessed are you ... Working in an urban parish I have come across hostility with increasing familiarity. One recent conversation on the street was

interrupted by a passersby screaming into my face 'when will we be rid of you?' For years unpleasant words and phrases (which do not merit publication) have been shouted on occasion with such venom, even during the liturgy, that it can leave you disorientated, even shaken. And a socially acceptable attitude of ridicule and belittlement has begun to seep even into the occasional wake house, which prompts you to wonder why the relatives asked for you to come at all. One thing is clear, the more 'freedom' Ireland seems to attain, the angrier its people seem to become. Our Lord awaits us in our house oratories, and there in the refuge of his sanctuary he whispers the Beatitudes. 'Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.'

It is difficult to feel 'blessed' let alone 'happy' as other translations describe, in such a culture, and yet that is what Jesus instructs us to be. God's logic is different from that of humanity, and our standards of success or failure are not His. For instance, Jesus doesn't ask us to be popular. What a relief when that sinks in! He doesn't caution us to be nice and inoffensive. He doesn't mandate that we take an active part in secular, social and sporting life. Of course there is nothing wrong with being community oriented, well mannered and sociable, as long as the price of fitting in isn't leaving Our Lord at home. How many colleagues of

mine have sat through hours of cultural pastimes in which they have neither the slightest interest nor inclination simply to be with their people? And they are to be commended; they have much more patience than me! The theology of presence is still felt by Irish clergy, but now more and more of 'our people' feel uncomfortable around us. Collars irritate them, but so do public manifestations of prayer, and Christian values. In that environment why should we want to fit in?

The Beatitudes reassure us, comfort us, and encourage us that we are not failing when we do not attain earthly success. Jesus whispers to us that when certain people despise us because of our faith in Him, we should be happy. That means we're actually Christians. What an important teaching of Jesus this is, and yet it is not one I ever recall having preached upon, nor indeed heard from the pulpit.

How beaten up we can feel. How useless, and unsuccessful in our endeavours, like the young priest from Bernanos' novel, and we think this is all new. By the standards of the world are we not failing? And yet we can work in relative freedom, we have our safe houses in our parishes; we enjoy the good will of many parents, grandparents and the enduring people of God. We can forget that actually we still have it quite easy. I have never had to go into hiding like Fr Martinez Pascual. I have never seen churches razed to the ground like those people of Madrid, watching the black smoke of convents, monasteries and churches choke the skyline of their smouldering, riotous metropolis in 1931. What are a few swear words by comparison? What is a little social marginalization? Did Our Lord not suffer as much? Did his own neighbours not try to throw him from a cliff? Should we not prepare ourselves to be treated like he was?

Nothing enkindles the imagination quite like a photograph. How did Hans Gutmann come to find himself at an obscure cemetery in Valdealgofa? He was a man of strong political conviction. We can deduce that by not absenting himself from the execution, he either tacitly approved of the young priest's murder, or at least he deferred to the workings of civil war 'justice'. In the moments leading up to the death of Fr Martin there are three surviving photographs of which I am aware that have been attributed to him. In one he is smiling, in one laughing heartily with a guard, which out of context could easily be misconstrued as his brother and



Photos: Juan Guzmán, wikipedia.org

friend, and the final portrait, eyes front, chest out and hands on hips; a veritable pin-up of Catholic martyrdom. Did Gutmann grieve I wonder when the guard pulled the trigger? He certainly preserved the photographs which so easily could have been lost forever, and Fr Martin's name would have dissolved anonymously among those of 6,800 murdered clergy and religious from those bloody three years of war.

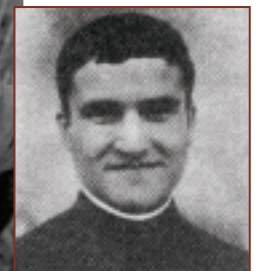
And yet, can we be sure that it is actually him? Was Gutmann there at all? A recent documentary on the BBC argued against such a possibility, but this hardly surprises me. After all, Catholic's aren't really allowed 'heroes' anymore in popular culture. If we regard the portrait less as a work of history and more as a work of art it does not matter. Consider the painting of the great Florentine artist Fra Filippo Lippi. No one has ever captured, to my mind, a more tender depiction of the Blessed Mother of God than he. The fact that his model was one Lucrezia Buti, religious sister, the artist's mistress and mother of his child does not scandalise the student of the History of Art, nor challenge venerable Marian devotion. Naturally the artist would choose the most beautiful woman in his world to sit for the Italian Renaissance's premier role! The depiction of our Classics scholar-priest friend is no different. How best could a photographer



Above: Marina Ginestà at the top of Hotel Colón in Barcelona, by Juan Guzmán

Left: Blessed Martin Martinez Pascual by Juan Guzmán

Below: Martin Martinez Pascual, before the Civil War



recreate heroic Catholic witness than with the right choice of model? If it is Bl. Martin the Church rejoices in historical evidence. If it is not, the true account of Bl. Martin has been made more widespread courtesy of an iconic retelling of an historical event.

Whatever his own private intentions Gutmann may be likened to a modern day icon writer, providing the people of God with a portrait of a saint; and for a very average priest working in an Irish town his photographs remind me that no matter what the day may have in store, to count my blessings.

Note: See link to BBC documentary:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7\\_EO\\_8PopdQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_EO_8PopdQ)

Fr Paul Murphy  
St Peter's,  
Drogheda, Co Louth





# Mental Health

by John Cullen, Editor



Photo: iStockphoto.com

If people were falling and breaking legs and shoulders across the county, editorials would be demanding an inquiry. Health and safety requirements would change with newly adopted protocols and policies. But when reviews about mental health issues affecting many people of all ages – with the instance of prescription drugs, there are reserved reactions and sluggish responses to this stark reality.

One GP's comment is insightful: The patients we see don't really have depressive illness, they have 'rotten life syndrome.' Amid chronic pain, anxiety and social isolated alienation, dependency on pills becomes a constant companion in the darkness of deprivation. The Covid-19 pandemic brought to the surface the need for mental health support for those who were in hospital with the virus as well as those who were front-line carers entrusted with looking after those hospitalised with the virus.

The philosopher Gabriel Marcel (1889-1973) distinguishes between a problem and a mystery. A problem is generic. You see a broken window or a computer glitch and it needs fixing. It is a

straightforward solution. A mystery is unique. It is one of a kind that you have never managed before. It has multiple origins and you cannot understand it from outside. You need to bring your whole life experience to enter it. Often it is the flip-side of something good and wonderful.

Mental Health is often treated like a problem. But I wonder if it might be better understood as a mystery. The mind is a physical thing – but it is not like a leg, arm or rib cage. Its trials are seldom ones that medicine alone can fix. Such struggles are unique to each person's story.

I saw a graffiti message spayed on a wall in London which was a quote from Gandhi (1869-1948):

*I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet.*

Perhaps it is helpful to reconsider most of the world's woes as mysteries rather than problems. The core of our faith teaches us that God sees the world – not as a problem to be solved – but as a mystery to be entered into. Christianity maintains that Jesus doesn't fix everything at arms-

length of social distancing, but comes among us, humbly entering and sharing our mystery.

Mental illness can seldom be fixed in an instant. The language of problem and solution can lead to stigmatising and labelling people in unhelpful ways. Amid multiple policy and community strategies, we need patience and endurance, a sense of awe and discovery to be aware – to borrow from a line – by W. B. Yeats (1865-1939) 'that I being poor' need to 'tread softly' and enter the mystery or our own mind before tip-toeing into the mind of another lest I 'tread on their dreams.'

William Shakespeare (1564-1616) fuses mind and heart together with this relevant question:

*Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased;  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow.  
Raze out the written troubles of the brain.  
And with some oblivious antidote  
cleanse the stuffed bosom of that  
perilous stuff  
which weighs upon the heart?*  
(Macbeth Act 5, scene 3)

# Book Review

Fr Chris Hayden  
Former Editor  
of Intercom



## RAPHAEL'S WORLD

9781788121231 • €19.95

Michael Collins

Messenger Publications, 2020

As the title suggests, this is not simply a biography, but a work which locates Raphael of Urbino (1483-1520) in his broad historical and cultural context. The publication is nicely timed for the 500th anniversary of the artist's death.

When, in 1420, after its century-long exile in Avignon, the papacy returned to Rome, the Eternal City was in a poor state; the Forum was, Collins notes, 'little more than a field of felled columns and a farmyard of pigs, cattle and chickens.' The city cried out to be restored and not, of course, for reason of pomp or vainglory, but for the consolidation of the papacy and the edification of the faithful! The project of restoration would not be properly underway until the papacy of Sixtus IV, which began in 1471.

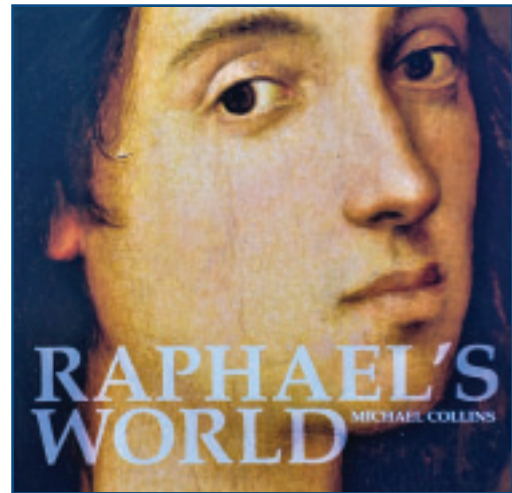
Sixtus, the *Renovator Urbis*, built a new chapel – the Sistine Chapel, later to be so stunningly decorated by da Vinci and Raphael – on the foundation of the *Cappella Magna* of the Apostolic Palace. In the same period, the rise of the Florentine banking family, the de'Medici, meant that generous sponsorship of the arts was available. Add the wealth beginning to flow in from the New World (Columbus had set sail in 1492), and the funds available for 'edification and consolidation' were virtually limitless.

The career of Raphael coincided not only with the availability of funds, but also with developments in artistic technique, notably the shift from egg to oil, in which tempura gave way to oil-based paints that allowed for greater shadow and depth. In addition, being much slower to dry, the oil-based media allowed the artist greater scope to correct and modify as he worked.

Raphael's genius was evident from early on, although like other apprentices, he was required to imitate faithfully the style of his master before being allowed to pursue his own style. Interestingly in this time of Coronavirus, Raphael's first commission, which was for a banner, followed an outbreak of plague. The banner depicted, among others, St Rocco (Roch), patron of those afflicted by plague.

Fr Collins' description of the surge in art and building also – and perhaps unintentionally – points to an ambivalence in the High Renaissance glories of Rome. The artistic glories reached their zenith in a short enough time, and that zenith sadly coincided with a nadir in the lived faith of the Church. Given the wealth, ambition and intrigue which were never far in the background, that coincidence was as predictable as it was sad. But for all that, the glories have outlived the intrigue, and we are the beneficiaries.

At the papal court, Raphael enjoyed the patronage of Pope Julius II, a patronage which launched him to new heights of fame, while also consolidating Julius's standing as a patron of the arts. The same Pope was happy to have the building of St



Peter's Basilica supported by the sale of indulgences, a policy which, as Collins notes, 'unwittingly supplied the pivotal point that would lead to the Reformation just a decade later.' Indeed, there can hardly be a student of ecclesiastical history who has not heard, in some translation or other, Cardinal Tetzel's infamous indulgence-campaign slogan: 'As the money in the chest rings, then the soul from the fire springs.'

There is a grim if somewhat amusing juxtaposition between Raphael working feverishly at his art, while his patron, Pope Julius, wars with similar zeal against various states to the north. Even Julius' failures worked in Raphael's favour: in 1511, returning from an unsuccessful campaign, Julius commissioned plenty of art to show that he was still in command!

When Julius II died, in 1513, he was succeeded by Giovanni de'Medici, as Pope Leo X, also a great patron of the arts. The year after his coronation, Leo appointed Raphael as chief architect of St Peter's Basilica, a position which would be taken over by Michelangelo on Raphael's death in 1520. In 1514, Pope Leo commissioned Raphael to design a set of sixteen tapestries for the Sistine chapel. The tapestries were executed in Flanders from the artist's cartoons – detailed drawings the actual size of the projected work. This geographical development helped to spread the artist's fame in northern Europe.

The most amusing sentence in Fr Collins' book – at least in the impression of this reader – is: 'In the summer of 1516, Annone, the pope's elephant, became ill.' The unfortunate creature died after suffering the indignity of being administered gold suppositories by Pope Leo's personal physician. This episode, hardly central to any major developments, captures something of the frivolity and waste that would soon catalyse truly epochal change, in the Reformation and its wake.

This short and most worthwhile book conveys the artistic brilliance of Raphael. It also, less directly, shows him as a player in the profligate cultural bubble which was to burst in 1517, with permanent consequences for Europe. And yet, to repeat, the glories have outlived the intrigue, and we are the beneficiaries.



# Covid-19 Pandemic and the Church – Reflections from Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth

Dr Aoife McGrath is  
Director of Pastoral Theology  
at St Patrick's College,  
Maynooth



*Faculty members (Philosophy and Theology) at the Pontifical University, Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co Kildare have been reflecting on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic from its social, human, philosophical and theological perspectives. We present the first in this series.*

## Post-lockdown, can the Church return to 'business as usual'?

**A**s we move tentatively through the phases of Ireland's *Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business*, church doors are reopening for in-person, socially distanced liturgies. While for many this is a long-anticipated moment, we should ask ourselves are we truly ready? Our focus may well be to get back to 'business as usual,' but to what 'business' are we returning?

The 'newsworthy' impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the life of the Church has been centred on the sacraments. This year Easter was celebrated remotely, and the sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation were postponed until late summer/autumn. Baptisms and Weddings were likewise delayed. The most radical and tangible transformation has been to Funeral ceremonies and the daily or weekly celebration of the Eucharist.

In the era of lockdown, priests (sometimes with a few lay ministers) continued to serve their communities by celebrating Masses remotely, for the intentions of the faithful, either from empty churches or their own homes. The Mass came into our homes via radios, televisions, smartphones and computers. We watched, waited and prayed, in anticipation of being re-admitted to communal worship.

For some, these past months have been a fruitful time for creative and revitalised personal prayer practices. However for the majority, the absence of communal prayer and receiving the sacrament of Communion has been sorely felt.

As a lay theologian, I found the feast of Corpus Christi, on 14 June, particularly challenging. I sat alone in my house facing a screen, watching, as a priest celebrated Mass alone from his home. As he read from Deuteronomy, I wondered

whether this pandemic was our 'vast and dreadful wilderness,' meant to humble us, not just for God to know our innermost hearts, but for us to know ourselves.

The feast usually speaks to me of our relationship with Christ and with all his baptised followers; of a food that nourishes us, his disciples, co-heirs of – and co-responsible for – Christ's mission throughout the world. This meaning is made tangible in our companionship, through our physical presence together, in our mutual sharing in the Eucharistic meal, and our collective sending forth.

This year, however, I felt only absence: the isolation of one individual facing another who could neither see me nor know that I was present with him. Our dissonance was compounded by his inadvertently leaving insufficient time for me to respond to the prayers; my silent watching while he ate and drank.

As I recited the Spiritual Communion prayer, I reacted strongly to its words: this absence was not just about me and my heart, nor only about me being united wholly with Christ. I remembered the words of Pope Benedict XVI, 'I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own. Communion draws me out of myself towards him, and thus also towards unity with all Christians.' (*Deus Caritas est*, 14).

In this vision, love of God and love of neighbour cannot be separated. Being present together for the Eucharistic meal helps to nourish our relationships with each other, so that we can truly be united with God. But our living communion faces new challenges because of the coronavirus.

This evolving world we live in has opened up what some have called a 'twin consciousness,' at once a feeling of

connectedness, mutuality, solidarity, and cooperation in the face of common adversity, and simultaneously an awakening of divisions and gross inequalities, competition for essential supplies, and survival of the fittest in failing economies.

Where is the Church as a sign, instrument, and advocate of communion in such a world?

When Pope John Paul II spoke of a 'spirituality of communion' he meant the ability to think of others in faith as 'those who are part of me'; the ability to share the joys and sufferings of others, to offer them 'deep and genuine friendship,' and 'make room' for them in our lives. The great challenge of this millennium, he said, was 'to make the Church the home and the school of communion' (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*, 43). His words have taken on new meaning in 2020.

For the majority of Catholics, phase three reopening will be the first opportunity to participate in Mass and receive Eucharist since lockdown began. I wonder, following our experience of 'church' and Mass over these past four months, what meaning will the sacraments hold for us now? Will laypeople fall into the habit of watching/observing, while the priest is active/doing?

Will we fear spreading the virus so much, and be so used to our isolation, that our companionship is weakened? Will the Eucharist be nourishment for our individual spirituality, rather than nourishment of the Body of the Church for its wider mission?

Will we choose to live a *spirituality of communion*, not just when we are gathered for Eucharist, but every day? How do we take responsibility for our share in this business? Can we give communion a home, and share our learning with others?

# INTERCOM CROSSWORD

NO 227 BY GINGER

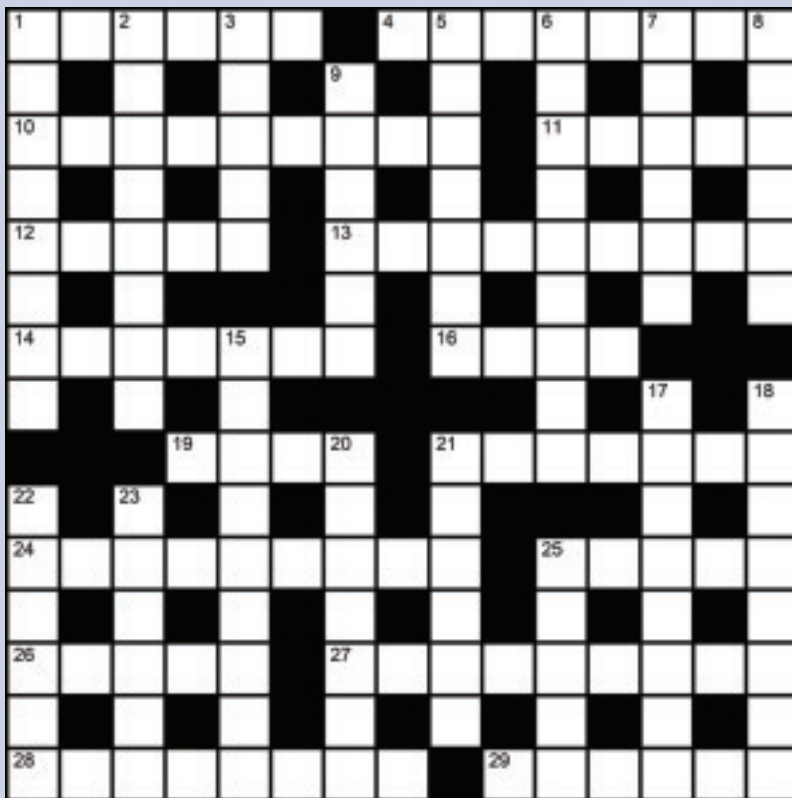
## SPONSORED BY VERITAS

### ACROSS

- 1 Get head of protocol to speak for club (6)
- 4 Abbreviate a covenant (8)
- 10 Bury yield and mediate (9)
- 11 Biblical town in profile, we hear (5)
- 12 Pamphlet on stretch of land (5)
- 13 Evangeliser proving more sin is wrong (9)
- 14 Con shows old breviary section (7)
- 16 Bad demon decapitated (4)
- 19 Peel sound fruit (4)
- 21 Peter is troubled, gets a pause for rest (7)
- 24 Air beacon collapses through lacking oxygen (9)
- 25 Parking by a row of soldiers as a practical joke (5)
- 26 Picture of string and broken harp (5)
- 27 Reptile or ice-cold variety (9)
- 28 Remaining is ruled a mistake (8)
- 29 Relaxes after a century, and stops completely (6)

### DOWN

- 1 Priest in trouble, though sanitised (8)
- 2 Aimless chatter takes in right Roman ruler (8)
- 3 Rue headless bird (5)
- 5 Supervise bishop's position (7)
- 6 Verifies if site set for construction (9)
- 7 Burning paintings around the study (6)
- 8 Poor tuner gets point for term of office (6)
- 9 Sunday talk seen in browser Monday (6)
- 15 Disinterred fragmented heated urn (9)
- 17 Lie saint revealed about prayers [1909] (8)
- 18 Ken seems beaten into submission (8)
- 20 Biblical mother finds ancient stringed instrument near California (7)
- 21 Cleric in Politically-Correct Order (6)
- 22 Animal and evil European man missing (6)
- 23 As it's up to boys to provide dishes (6)
- 25 Examination to be headed by professional (5)



### JULY/AUGUST SOLUTION

Across: 1 Good Samaritan, 8 Gobi, 9 Andalusian, 10 Atoned, 11 Listener, 12 Schoolboy, 14 Melt, 15 Begs, 16 Stressful, 20 Ordinance, 21 Unwell, 23 Stronghold, 24 Acne, 25 Arts and crafts. Down: 1 Gnostic, 2 Onion, 3 Scandal, 4 Middle-of-the-road, 5 Relish, 6 Tasteless, 7 Nearest, 13 Organ loft, 15 Biretta, 17 Ecuador, 18 Uplands, 19 Enigma, 22 Wharf.

Name .....

Address .....

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**VERITAS GIFT TOKENS**  
**FOR THE FIRST THREE CORRECT ENTRIES DRAWN**

Crossword to be returned by 10 September to September 2020 Crossword,  
Intercom Editor, Catholic Communications Office, Columba Centre, Maynooth, Co Kildare.  
One entry per person. Photocopies acceptable with a satisfactory explanation – at the Editor's discretion.  
Airmail subscribers may send by fax to Int + 353-1-6016401. Please give full postal address.  
Correct solution in October 2020 *Intercom*. Winners announced in November 2020 edition.



Veritas full page ad

# Never Let a Crisis go to Waste

There is inevitably a moment when the penny drops. The instructors in the leisure centre pulled over the covers on the twin Jacuzzis just as I climbed out of the pool, and just then I knew things were about to change. Thankfully, I got to stretch out one last time in the sauna before the curtain finally fell. I dropped into the supermarket next door before beginning my journey home. There were five tills open and queues were forming. The madness had begun.

An obstruction had fallen into the river of life. The extraordinary was about to become, rapidly, part of our natural routine. Our daily lives were diverted into what was to be revealed for many as a cul-de-sac from which there was no immediate reverse. Strange and unprecedented things began to take place. Life was and remains convulsed.

There is a well-attested capacity within nature and within humanity to heal what has been wounded and to piece together the fragmented shards of life. We rest from meeting the demands of others; our solitariness can become a source of restorative renewal; the compass is being re-set. Life is a powerful force that creates and re-creates, constantly renewing the face of the earth. Our hope is well-grounded. People are naturally resilient and cultures that adapt are the ones that survive.

Our principal weapon during the Covid-19 pandemic has been solidarity. Like a lightning flash suddenly illuminating the landscape with intensity, we have been revealed to ourselves. The pandemic has been both an eye-opener and a rebuke. We moved rapidly from the



Photo: iStockphoto.com

narcissistic language of individualism and selfism to the rhetoric of fraternal concern. Solidarity suddenly became our principal shield. A sense of unity quickly coalesced. Standing apart, we learned to stand together. We developed a new respect for the army of all-but-invisible servants who keep the wheels of civilised living turning. The under-the-radar, easily forgotten, have become the heroes of the drama. We have discovered the saints who live next door.

The over-blown speeches that mark the beginning and often the end of such catastrophes have, as always, been left to the public figures and politicians. Will there be a normal to return to? Has too much now changed for us to return to the status quo ante? 'The time is out of joint,' as Hamlet famously said. Our habitual calendars have been shredded. We can

always find good in the face of adversity, but an ordeal is a very real thing and it remains an ordeal. Meantime, we are all skippers in our little cabins, steering our way through the unmapped and unknown. Our inner resources and creativity have been harnessed. Emergencies spark ingenuity in some instances. Many people have re-discovered the great indoors. Our awareness and identity as a nation state and as distinct families has been raised. The trauma of the moment has, in some instances, allowed the big questions to break through.

Despite the silence of the empty churches, the echoing Word is being heard. The vanities and nonsense of the entertainment world have been stilled. Our spiritual emaciation is exposed. This may even be a gift that providence has granted us. 'The scourge that assails you raises you up and shows you the way,' according to Pere Paneloux in Camus' novel, *The Plague*. It is in moments of misfortune that we can become accustomed to the truth, and the truth, as the evangelist John famously reminded us, will set us free.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Beloved Mother, help us to realise that we are all members of one great family and to recognise the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

*Pope Francis, from his Prayer for the Month of May 2020*

Fr Michael Murtagh  
Dunleer  
Co Louth





# Belonging, Believing, Behaving



Photo: iStockphoto.com

**A**s I look back on the development of my faith while I was growing up, I notice there was a certain order. First came believing – in God, in Jesus, and in the Holy Spirit. Then behaving – believing required that you had to behave in a certain way: do this but don't do that. Lastly came belonging – faith gave you a sense of belonging to family, to a faith community and yes, even to God himself. This was the order of priority: believing, behaving and lastly, belonging. The older I get, the more convinced I am that a sense of belonging to God comes first, not last. Only when we realise that we belong to the God who created us and who loves us can we come to believe and see how both belonging and believing shape behaving.

In the Jewish life of worship in the Old Testament, priests like Abraham and Moses offered sacrifice to God as an expression of the faith that although humans were stewards of creation, all God had made still belonged to Him: 'Look, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth and everything on it' (Deut 10:14); 'Arise, O God. Judge the world, for all nations belong to you' (Ps. 82:8). The

Jewish life of sacrifice and worship celebrated the faith of Israel that God was still the sovereign owner of all the created order, including humans themselves.

Furthermore, a key part of God's plan to save all creation was to choose for himself a people who would be a sign and instrument of his saving love that unites all things. This chosen people would be a people who belong to God Himself: 'For you are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth' (Deut 7:6-8). This was the heart of the covenant God established with Israel.

This theme of belonging finds its fulfilment in the New Testament, beginning with the Gospels. In the accounts of Jesus' baptism in the river Jordan, the Father's voice declared Jesus as his beloved Son 'in whom I am well pleased' (Mt 3:17; Mk 1:8). Therefore, from the very outset of his public ministry, Jesus' life was claimed by his Father. When he was found in the Temple, and later in the Gospels, Mary learned the painful lesson that although Jesus belonged to her, his mother, as Son he

ultimately belonged to the Father, and the Father's mission to him was to save the whole world (Mk 3:31-35; Mat 12:48-50; Lk 2:41-50, 8:19-21). Then, in fulfilment of the Old Testament where God chooses a people as a sign and instrument of salvation, Jesus the Good Shepherd gathers this people, declaring that 'the sheep that belong to me listen to my voice' (Jn 10:27). Christ is the shepherd who gathers the people who belong to the Father.

The theme of belonging was taken up strongly by St Paul. He reminds the Christians in Rome that 'by his call you belong to Jesus Christ' (Rom 1:6). To have the Holy Spirit is to belong to God, for 'anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him' (Rom 8:9). Paul reminds the Corinthians: 'you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God' (1Cor 3:23). For Paul, Christ's claim of us is greater than that of any other group, body or person. That is why he identifies belonging as the core issue behind unity: the Corinthian Christians did not 'belong to Paul' or 'belong to Peter' but to Christ (cf. 1 Cor 1:12).

This Scriptural theme of belonging to Christ is seen at the beginning and end of

the life of a Christian. As a priest, I am always struck by the words at the beginning of the rite of baptism, when I trace the sign of the cross on the child's forehead with the words: 'I claim you for Christ our Saviour by the sign of the cross and I invite your parents and godparents to do the same.' This claiming by Christ of the life of the child takes place through the Church. It is through the Church as the Body of Christ that this belonging is lived out. In baptism, we can say that while God claims us as Father, the Church claims us as Mother.

Fast forward to the end of life, and the funeral of the baptised Christian. As the body of the deceased is brought into the church, the priest or deacon prays: 'May the Lord claim you as one of his flock.' Therefore, at the beginning of life and at the very end, the Christian is someone whose life is claimed and belongs to another, namely to God.

How extraordinary and counter-cultural this is! We might protest: 'no one claims my life but me,' 'My life belongs only to myself.' Our culture tends to define identity in terms of what we possess rather than who possesses us. Yet this truth of belonging is the faith of the Church; it is a pivotal truth, one which Bishop Robert Barron reminds us of in his series 'Untold Blessings: Three Paths to Holiness' (see [www.wordonfire.org](http://www.wordonfire.org)). Bishop Barron states that we are called to 'find the centre' who is Christ; he urges us: 'know you are a sinner,' and insists: 'your life is not about you but about God's purposes for you.' This last pillar prepares us for mission and reminds us that we don't belong to ourselves but first to God our Father.

This message is in continuity with examples from some of the greatest saints, who knew this truth in their bones. A key moment in the life of St Francis of Assisi was when he realized he belonged not to his earthly father but his heavenly one: 'From now on I want to say 'Our Father who art in heaven,' not 'My father Peter Bernadone'.' Similarly, St Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower, came to realized: 'I no longer belong to myself, I am totally surrendered to Jesus, so He is free to do with me as He wills.'

Together with St Francis and St Therese, a slow realisation unfolds in us that we are not orphans in this world, but are claimed as God's own. We belong to Him. To be human is to belong, for belonging ties together both our existence, our be-ing, and our desires,



The Baptism of Christ by jacopo tintoretto

our long-ing. This is why it is so important to belong.

In the light of this belonging to God, believing in him becomes clearer. Believing becomes our 'yes' to God's prior 'yes,' God's 'yes' to us. Faith becomes an acceptance of the truth that we are God's, that we belong to him and he claims us as his own. Faith in Jesus gathers us together as the sheep that belong to him and who listen to his voice. Gathered in the family of the Church, every other belonging is subordinate to our belonging together, to him and in him.

Then comes behaving. Evangelisation doesn't lead with what we should or shouldn't do. Discipleship is not simply a code of ethics; rather, it is a way of life that flows from a living relationship with our loving Father who claims us as a son or daughter.

Belonging, believing, behaving. I have come to realise that this is the right order. We believe in the One who claims us and we behave according to what we believe. So if you read these words and wonder what your life is all about, perhaps the real question is not 'who am I?' but 'whose am I?' As this question surfaces in your heart, remember that you were marked by the sign of the cross at your baptism and claimed for Christ as one of his own. In prayer, may you hear the gentle whisper of the Father's voice: 'You belong to me. You are mine.'

Fr Billy Swan,  
St Aidan's Cathedral,  
Enniscorthy, Co Wexford,  
is Vocations Director for  
the Diocese of Ferns and a  
regular contributor to the  
'Word on Fire' website.





## Our new editor, John Cullen

John Cullen is a priest from the Diocese of Elphin. It is his hope that *Intercom* will be a welcoming space that encourages us together to find, feed and further the awareness of God's presence in all our lives.

'*Intercom* is a door, wide open to all, especially to the people who sense that they do not belong or feel at home in our Church' (John Cullen).



Photo Editor

## Fr Danny Murphy finishes term as Liturgy Secretary

Fr Danny Murphy completed his term as the Episcopal Conference Secretary for Liturgy and Director of the National Centre for Liturgy at the end of August 2020. Bishop Francis Duffy, as chairman of the Council for Liturgy, thanked Fr Danny for his excellent work as Secretary and Director over the last seven years.



Fr Danny, a native of Macroom, Co Cork, was ordained in 1991. He served as curate at St Colman's Cathedral, Cobh and as Diocesan Master of Ceremonies before studying at St John's University, Collegeville.

On completing an MA in Liturgical Studies in 2000, he became Cloyne Diocesan Director of Liturgy.

He has served on the Council for Liturgy since 1999. We wish him well as he returns to the Diocese of Cloyne.

### New Secretary for Liturgy

The Bishops have appointed Fr Neil Xavier O'Donoghue as the Episcopal Conference Secretary for Liturgy. A native of Ballincollig, Co. Cork, Fr Neil studied at Seton Hall, NJ, ordained 2000, followed by liturgical studies at St Vladimir Orthodox Seminary, NY and University of Notre Dame. He was awarded PhD from the Pontifical University of St Patrick's College, Maynooth in 2006. He has been vice rector of Redemptoris Mater Seminary in Dundalk and has worked in parishes in the diocese of Armagh before appointed lecturer in systematic theology at Maynooth in September 2018.

## Statement from Fr Paul Dempsey, Bishop-elect of Achonry Diocese



Photo: Brenda Drumm

Fr Paul Dempsey (left), with Fr Dermot Meehan, Administrator of Achonry Diocese

Father Paul Dempsey, Parish Priest of Newbridge and Bishop-elect of the Diocese of Achonry issued the following statement on Wednesday 17 June:

'It is a source of joy for me to know that we now have a rescheduled date of Sunday 30 August for my Episcopal Ordination as Bishop of Achonry.

I requested the postponement of the ceremony, which was originally scheduled for 19 April, in light of the coronavirus pandemic. It was a difficult decision but I felt it would not have been appropriate to proceed with the ordination at that time.

I am grateful to Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo, Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland, and to the priests, religious and faithful of the Diocese of Achonry for their patience and understanding as we have been dealing with the unprecedented consequences of Covid-19 in our country and in our world. I am especially grateful for the support of Father Dermot Meehan who has administered the diocese over these challenging weeks and months.

As I prepare to leave Kildare & Leighlin Diocese I offer my renewed thanks to Bishop Denis Nulty and to the people and priests of the diocese, especially the people of Newbridge Parish for their support at this time.

I ask for your prayers as I prepare to take on the role of shepherd in the Diocese of Achonry.'

## Crossword winners

The winners of the June 2020 Crossword competition:

1. Maureen Boland, Avondale, Waterford
2. Kathleen O'Grady, Dalkey, Co Dublin
3. Sr Catherine Maguire, Tramore, Co Waterford

## Pope Francis appoints Fr Martin Hayes as New Bishop of Kilmore

On 29 June, Pope Francis appointed Fr Martin Hayes, a priest of the Archdiocese of Cashel & Eml, as new Bishop of Kilmore.

A celebration of Mass in the cathedral of St Patrick and St Felim in Cavan town took place with Papal Nuncio Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo, Fr Martin Hayes and priests of the Kilmore Diocese in attendance.

‘The Church of the future is about the increased involvement of lay people; of people and priests working together. My brief, initially, will be to listen, learn and draw upon my recent experience of pastoral planning’ – Bishop-elect Hayes

Photos: Newly appointed Fr Martin Hayes (at Mass – top) and being congratulated after by parishioners after Mass (below).



Photos: John McElroy



## World Mission Sunday, 18 October – Save the Date!

This year, World Mission Sunday will take place over the weekend of 18 October. Similar to the Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land and Peter's Pence, it is one of the three yearly Universal Church collections. Over the weekend of the 18th, all World Mission Sunday Mass collections and donations, including those from the most impoverished churches in the developing world, will be offered to support the Holy Father's Universal Solidarity Fund. This Fund is a lifeline, not only for missionaries, but also for the future of the Church, as it supports missionary activities in over 1,100 mission dioceses, mostly in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

This year's theme '*Together We Can Do More – Blessed are the Peacemakers*', is highlighting that our Church is a global community that must stand together, if it is to do more. It also recognises our missionaries as peacemakers, who, like Jesus, the Prince of Peace, emulate love and harmony as they reconcile fragile people, from fractured communities, with God and with each other.

World Missions Ireland, the Church's official charity for overseas mission, coordinates World Mission Sunday activities throughout Ireland. Each year, they prepare the Mission Month Pack, which all parishes and congregations will receive in late September. The Pack will help guide communities to enrich daily liturgies and celebrations, for the entire month, and not just on World Mission Sunday. So, keep an eye on your letterbox!

For more information about this vital celebration, contact **World Missions Ireland** on 01 497 2035 or go to [www.wmi.ie](http://www.wmi.ie).

