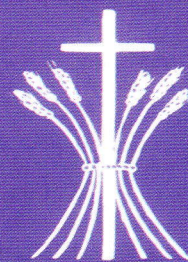


The Sheaf

ST. JOSEPH'S YOUNG PRIESTS SOCIETY

www.stjosephsyoungpriestssociety.com



23 MERRION SQUARE, DUBLIN 2, IRELAND.

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AUTUMN 2014

OUR NEW CHIEF CHAPLAIN

Dear Friends,

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has appointed me to take over from Fr John Gilligan as Chief Chaplain to the Society. Though in my 40s, I was only recently ordained for the Archdiocese of Dublin on 3 June 2014. Following this the Archbishop appointed me to Clondalkin Parish and the combined parishes of Neilstown, Rowlagh/Quarryvale, Bawnogue, Deansrath and Shruteen. I have also been appointed to assist Fr John Gilligan (Director of Vocations) with vocational work for the diocese. I am very happy with these appointments and look forward to growing into my new roles and ministry as a priest.

I am familiar with St Joseph's Young Priests Society. When I was a student at St Patrick's College Maynooth, I was aware of the ongoing support that the Society gave to me and to my fellow seminarians, through their prayers and financial assistance. My uncle Bill McEntee is a member of the Rathcoole branch of the St Joseph's and over the past number of years, I have come to value and appreciate the great work that the members as individuals, do for vocations to the priesthood.

I grew up on small farm outside Rathcoole, Co Dublin, which is in Newcastle parish. I am the middle of five children. My father died in 1981 and my mother Mary is still hale and hearty. Growing up, the family Mass, the daily family rosary and devotions have always been a part of my life, nourishing my faith and vocation. I went to Holy Family National School in Rathcoole Co Dublin, secondary school at St Patrick's Community College (Vocational School) in Naas, Co Kildare and have a degree in Business studies (Marketing Management) from the College of Marketing and Design Mountjoy Square Dublin. In the late 80s jobs were scarce, so I emigrated to London after qualifying. I lived and worked there for 3 years,

mostly in HR and gift retail. In the early 90s, I travelled and worked in Australia for a year and then on to India for another year, where I worked with Blessed Mother Teresa in Calcutta. This was a transformative experience for me, encountering the love and mercy of God in my life, through my ministry with the poorest of the poor. Though I had felt the call to priesthood early on in my life, it was there that I felt God's call most clearly. So I joined the priestly branch of Mother Teresa's Order called the Missionaries of Charity Fathers in 1993. I then spent 4 years in Mexico and a year in Rome, studying philosophy and theology and working with the poor as a professed member of the community.

In 1998 I decided to leave the Order and returned to Ireland where I spent eleven enjoyable years working in the Motor Industry as a car salesman. In 2008, I again felt the call to priesthood, this time to diocesan life, and contacted Fr Eamonn Bourke (Vocations Director at the time) and entered Maynooth in 2009 where I continued with my studies in theology. On 14 November 2013 (Feast of St Laurence O'Toole), I was ordained deacon and on 3 June this year was delighted to be eventually ordained a priest in the Pro-Cathedral for the Archdiocese of Dublin.

My various ministries during my formation over the past 5 years include time spent with Crosscare (the social care agency for the Dublin Diocese), chaplain/catechist at St Brigid's National School, Kilbride Co Meath, Chaplain at Mountjoy prison, Dublin, Hospital chaplain at National Rehabilitation Hospital, Dun Laoghaire, 3 months CPE chaplaincy training at Veterans Hospital, New York, and parish pastoral placement in Brackenstown Swords, Co Dublin.

The priesthood is a calling. Christ asks of some men the sacrifice of their lives in following him as his more intimate companions. From all eternity, certain

men are called to the priesthood. It is a call inscribed in their nature and because of this, is a call that will bring them fulfilment. The priesthood is not simply one occupation among many. It is a way of life through which God invites a man to enter more deeply in relationship with him. The Priesthood serves every good human need. And where there is human need, there is the Catholic Priesthood.

Men and women from every age have asked themselves the question, 'What is the meaning of my life?' and 'Where am I to find the happiness that I desire?' Our being cries out for meaning, for purpose, and, if we are honest with ourselves, for love. We know that God has not left us alone. He has heard our cries for love, for mercy, for justice, for beauty, for goodness, for truth. And he has loved us so much that he has become man and dwelt among us. He has sent his son, Jesus Christ, as an answer to human longing. Christ instituted the priesthood so that we would not be alone. It is the priest who makes present Christ himself in the Eucharist through the daily offering of Holy Mass. It is the priest who leads men and women to God. The world needs priests, because ultimately the world needs Christ.

I feel so happy and blessed to have been called to the priesthood. I look forward to offering and using all my gifts and life experience in my ministries and roles with vocations and the St Joseph's Young Priest Society. Let us continue to pray and work together to encourage vocations to the priesthood.

I wish to thank all the members and benefactors of St Joseph's Young Priests Society. Together, let us pray that the Lord of the harvest may send more labourers to His harvest. I look forward to meeting and working with you all in the time ahead.

God bless,

Fr Séamus McEntee

Catholic Comment,
47 Moanbane Park,
Kilcullen,
Co Kildare.
30 Sept 2014



Dear Editor

Yesterday was the Feast of the Archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, heavenly patrons of communications and broadcasting so we thought this would be a good time for a quick update on some of what Catholic Comment has been doing over the past few months.

Catholic Comment Media Interviews

As you know, our main *raison d'être* is to offer speakers to the media to throw light on the message and vision of the Catholic faith. This is the area on which we focus most of our efforts and the area we would most like most to build up further. We are regularly contacted by some of the largest broadcasters in both radio and television in Ireland.

Since our last update back in April, some of the programmes our speakers have contributed to include:

- BBC Radio Ulster (Petra Conroy - on the Redefinition of Marriage Referendum)
- The Vincent Brown People's Debate on TV3 (Jackie Ascough, Petra Conroy, Ann Murray, Frank Hurl - on Homophobia)
- RTE Radio 1 Drivetime (Petra Conroy - The Redefinition of Marriage Referendum)
- RTE1 TV's Morning Edition programme (Paddy Scully - The Canonisation of Saints John XXIII and John Paul II)
- Prime Time (Frank Hurl - the right of schools to employ staff who will uphold their core principles)
- Local stations including KFM (Kildare), WLR (Waterford), Highland Radio (Donegal), Tipp FM (Tipperary), 96FM (Cork) on topics ranging from women writing to Pope Francis about their love for a priest, to whether the Church loves and accepts children born through IVF (We do!)

Catholic Comment - Addressing Conferences and Groups

In addition to our media contributions, members of the Catholic Comment team are often asked to speak to groups and conferences, explaining the unique Catholic Voices approach to communicating the faith, an approach which includes seeing those we debate with as people loved by God whose passion for their cause is often based on values that are rooted in Christianity: care for the rejected in society, the right to freedom of conscience and belief, the duty to have regard for the dignity of every person, the importance of marriage and of children etc. Our approach aims to begin the debate with those shared values, making it easier to explain how the Catholic vision is always founded on such values.

Most recently our speakers have contributed to the Net Ministries Conference in Donegal (Paddy Scully) and to the Legion of Mary Youth Conference in Dublin (Catríona Curran).

Catholic Comment Speakers Workshops

To help keep our panel of speakers up to date and ready for action, we regularly send the team resources on current media debates, and two or three times a year, we hold day-long workshops on key issues.

Our most recent of these was on 19th of July and dealt with the upcoming referendum which will ask the Irish people to redefine marriage. If the referendum were to be passed, the

man-woman relationship with a unique connection to having and bringing up children would be gone from Irish law - a very radical step indeed. We looked at the implications of this and at how the case for marriage can best be made in the forthcoming debate.

Resources on Current Media Stories of Catholic Interest

Redefining Marriage

Our next newsletter will include some material that might be useful as the marriage referendum draws closer.

In the meantime we strongly recommend 'What is Marriage - Man and Woman: A Defense' by Girgis, Anderson and George. The book presents a reasonable and compelling case to readers, whether they are people of faith or not. Ryan Anderson summarises some of the arguments in a 20 minute video 'What is Marriage - Man and Woman - A Defense Part II'.

Synod on the Family

We now have the Extraordinary Synod on the Family in Rome, called last year by Pope Francis (5 to 19 October 2014). The theme of the synod is 'The Pastoral Challenges of the Family in the Context of Evangelisation'. One issue making the headlines is the thorny topic of the divorced and remarried receiving the Eucharist, but the synod will also discuss matters such as cohabitation, divorce, and the state redefining marriage in the name of equality - a topic very relevant to us here in Ireland in the coming months.

The Catholic Bishops of Ireland website offers information on the synod including a link to the Working Document (Instrumentum Laboris) as well as the 'Prayer for the Synod' - you might like to print that out and put it somewhere handy.

The Catholic Voices blog is always an excellent source of background material and explanation of Catholic media stories. A very useful post from last year will help remind you what the synod is about and what to expect from the days ahead: Francis calls new style synod to boost the family.

In the last few days, an open letter on the state of the family, signed by marriage experts and advocates all over the world, has been sent to the members of the synod. Irish signatories are David Quinn, Director of the Iona Institute and Fr Vincent Twomey.

Family and Relationships Bill

David Quinn has responded to the release this week of a new version of the General Scheme of the Children and Family Relationships Bill: 'Minister Fitzgerald says that the Bill puts the interests of children centre stage, but in fact it gives far more weight to the desires of adults,' David said.

He called for the Bill to be amended in order to properly protect the natural ties between children and their parents and to properly protect the status given to marriage by the Constitution. David's blog post from November 2013 on the Bill is also very useful: Alan Shatter's Brave New World of Intentional Parents.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful in your own efforts to communicate the faith wherever you are, whether in the media, in another public forum, or with your own family and friends.

Keep up the good work and please be assured of our prayers.

Best wishes,

Petra Conroy

Project Coordinator

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Addressing the congregation at St Catherine's church Ballapousta Ardee on 5 October, the celebrant Fr Peter McAnenly, Vocations Director for the Archdiocese of Armagh said:

You're all very welcome as we gather this afternoon here in Ballapousta for this special Mass for St Joseph's Young Priests Society. It's lovely to see so many of representatives from the different branches across the diocese, who have come together for our Mass, and to pray for our students who are in formation and also our priests; but we also come to pray that more men will respond to the call of God and give of their lives for service as priests at this time.

And we've come together on this 'Day For Life', it was Saint John Paul II who asked that a Sunday be set aside each year when people throughout the world would be encouraged to celebrate and give thanks for the great gift of life. And he asked that people be encouraged on a day for life, to pray that the unique and sacred gift of life itself which comes from God be always revered and respected.

Yesterday we celebrated the feast of St Francis of Assisi and as we know, St Francis was a great lover of life. We're told that as a young boy, he went off with some of his friends to war, seeking fame and glory but they returned a short time later, totally shattered by their experience of death and human suffering. And from then on, his life turned around and he began to value life every single day and not just human life, but also the life of animals and plants and even the sun, moon and stars. From then on, he began to see beauty in everyone and in every living thing and he began to see that every form of life reflected the goodness/love of God. ...

And so, on this day for life, we're being reminded that God has given us life so that we may have it and have it to the full and as we offer this Mass, we pray that we may always respect life and especially human life as a great and wonderful gift from God

We've gathered as members of St Joseph's Young Priests Society and as we come together, we're conscious of the ongoing decline in the number of priests in our diocese at the moment. And whatever about the current reality and the number of priests that we have, I think that that number is going to decline even more in the future and that presents a further challenge for all of us.

As we are well aware, our Church needs priests and we need them to celebrate the Sacraments, to be with us in our moments of joy and sadness and to help us to understand the Good News of God's love for all.

One of the many things that inspires me about the work of St Joseph's is the great witness that you give. For many years you've been responding to the call of Olivia Taaffe, your founder. Olivia was a woman who believed that all Catholics had a responsibility for the well-being of the Church. And so she focused her efforts on supporting priestly vocations in whatever way she could. And over the years over 100,000 people have become involved in the work of her society in parishes all across the country. I think there's something like 470 branches in Ireland at the moment.

I've often thought of the great powerhouse of prayer that it is and how

diminished our Church would be if it weren't for your good work and for the good work that the different groups do, and very often in very simple and very modest ways.....but doing so much not just to foster vocations but also promoting the vocation of the laity and also promoting a greater understanding of the Mass.

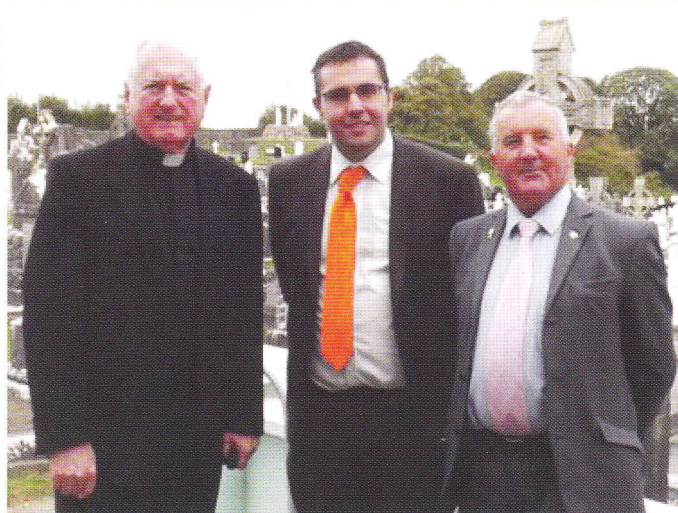
As Vocations Director, I meet regularly with men who are in discernment.....men who are quietly reflecting on the call to priesthood. And I believe that where they are at, is partly the fruit of your work and the work of so many people like yourselves. And while the Lord has called men to priesthood in the past, he's still calling and he will continue to call men and women to share in his work as priests or religious in the building of his Kingdom in the future. And if anything I think that we all need to be praying for a greater openness.... that all of us may be more open so that we may hear God's call and in turn know what it is that he wants of us as we live our lives....

Today, we not only remember the purpose of St Joseph's Young Priests Society but we also acknowledge the fact that we're all involved in the building of God's Kingdom among us. And we pray that through our continued work and effortsthat more men and women will give of their lives not just as priests and religious.....but we pray too that many more will give of their lives in living out their faith and become more actively involved in building God's Kingdom in their parishes and in their local communities.



The 14th century castle-keep of Smarmore Castle Ardee where the Society's foundress Mrs Olivia Taaffe spent, as she herself said, the 27 happiest years of her life prior to the deaths of her husband and only son, a student at UCD.

Smarmore Castle one of Ireland's oldest buildings, in the Taaffe family from 1320 until it was sold in the mid 1980s, currently offers stylish accommodation in an elegant setting. It has just five bedrooms. They are spacious and distinctive.
www.smarmorecastle.com



Fr John O'Leary PE AP Ardee/Collon Parish, David Greer Armagh Diocesan President and Tony Melia a Trustee of the Society at Ballapousta on 5 October for a Mass for Vocations with a remembrance of Mrs Olivia Taaffe the Society's foundress buried at Ballapousta.



Preparing for a Mass for Vocations prior to an AGM of St Joseph's Young Priests Society in the Dublin parish of Our Lady of the Rosary Harold's Cross on 2 September, Frs Gerry Kane PP Harold's Cross, John Flavin CSSp, Paul Francis CP, John Gilligan Adm Westland Row, Deacon Chris Derwin, Frs Séamus McEntee and Damian Farnon.

Newly ordained Fr McEntee has been appointed by Archbishop Martin to work assisting Fr Gilligan Director of Vocations for the Dublin Diocese.



On 5 July Very Rev John Murray (Diocesan Vocations Director) lead the Down & Connor seminarians on a mini pilgrimage around the Downpatrick Co Down's local sites associated with St Patrick. Included in the photo outside St Patrick's parish church are the ladies of the Downpatrick branch of the Society who kindly provided lunch.



George Dee president of the Society presented Fr Séamus McEntee with a stole on the occasion of his first visit to the Society's House, as Chief Chaplain.

*God our Father, you made each of us
to use our gifts to be the
Body of Christ.*

*We ask that You inspire young people
whom you call to priesthood and
consecrated life to courageously
follow your will.*

*Send workers into your great harvest
so that the Gospel is preached,
the poor are served with love,
the suffering are comforted,
and your people are strengthened
by the Sacraments.*

*We ask this through Christ our Lord,
Amen.*

Recently Deceased

VOCATIONAL BRANCHES

Insurance Branch George O'Doherty,
Dermot Kelly

Licensed Trade Nell (Ellie) Palmer

LOCAL BRANCHES

Ardee Detta Brandstatter, Phyllis Osborne,
Phyl McKenna, Mary Grimes, Gerry Brennan,
Tony Murphy, Monica Carragher

Ardfield/Rathbarry Mary O'Donovan, Jo Twohig,
Margaret O'Donovan

Armagh Una McGeary, Mary Murnin, John Finn,
Annie Murphy

Ballyphehane Peggy McCarthy, Mai Buckley

Ballymena Annie McAvoy, Jean Neeson

Blackpool Noreen Lynch, Angela O'Brien

Boosterstown Ronnie MacDonald (Branch
President)

Christ the King, Turner's Cross Carmel
Kavanagh, Deirdre Horgan

Churchtown Betty Fogarty

Dollymount, St Gabriel's Dorothy Boyne

Dundalk Pdraig Herr, Dolly Roddy

Dundrum Nora Boyle

Ennis Denis Horgan, Mary Whyte

Gurteen Gerry Shannon

Kilglass/Enniscrone Michael Dowd

Kilkenny, St Canice's Liam Brady, Renee Murphy,
Josephine Ryan, Monica O'Connell

Killester Rita Grimes

Killorglin Dorothy Lynch, Eileen Hannon,
Mary Marmion

Lisdowney Susan Meegan

Monasterboice Kevin Martin

Mourne Rd, Dublin Joe Giles (Bene Merenti
recipient)

Portadown Loretta Dunbar Broussard,
Elsie Cusack

Quin Branch Bridie Doherty

Sixmilebridge Mary Keogh, Angela Glynn,
Ita Tagny, Breeda Murphy

St John the Baptist, Clontarf Eamonn Healy,
Danny McCormack

St John Vianney, Ardlea Madeline Butterly

St Kevin's, Harrington Street Mary Allen (Branch
President)

St Mary's, Limerick Breda McNamara

St Munchin's, Limerick Josephine Geary

St Patrick's, Kilkenny Seán Cantwell, Mary Ward

Thomastown Mary White

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ANONYMOUS DONATIONS €10, €123.05