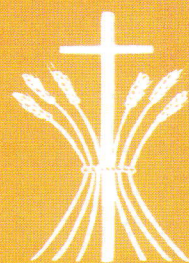


The Sheaf

ST. JOSEPH'S YOUNG PRIESTS SOCIETY

www.stjosephsyoungpriestssociety.com



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SUMMER 2014

PROVINCIAL CONGRESSES – 2014

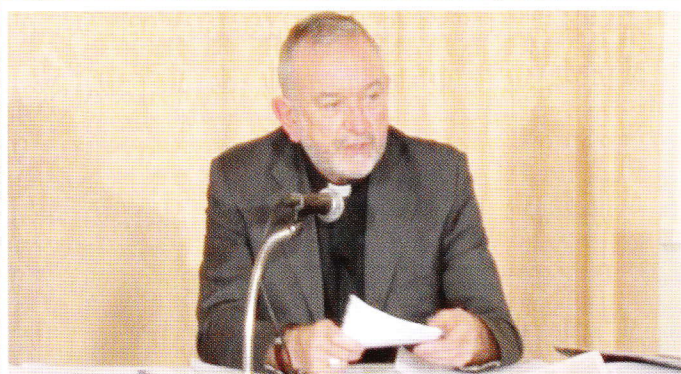
In anticipation of the Extraordinary Synod on the Family to be held 5th to 19th October 2014, Saint Joseph's Young Priests Society asked the Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland, Archbishop John Charles Brown, if he would care to suggest a general theme for talks at our four provincial congresses at Ennis, Kilkenny, Knock and Monaghan, and his response was that "The family as the foundation of human society and as the 'domestic church'" might be suitable.

Subsequently, and entirely without cost to the Society, EWTN Global Catholic Radio and Television Network filmed the talks at the four Provincial Congresses, and you can now watch these

talks 'On-line' via the internet (on your computer or iPad) by going to www.ewtn.ie and choosing 'EWTN Spotlight' on the Top Menu Bar. See the four speakers and listen to their very different individual presentations within the Nuncio's suggested general theme.

Do please take a while to experience and enjoy these wonderful talks.

Incidentally, if you are new to EWTN and would like a monthly free programme guide, write to EWTN at PO Box 352, Limerick or 3 Wellington Park, Belfast BT9 6DJ.



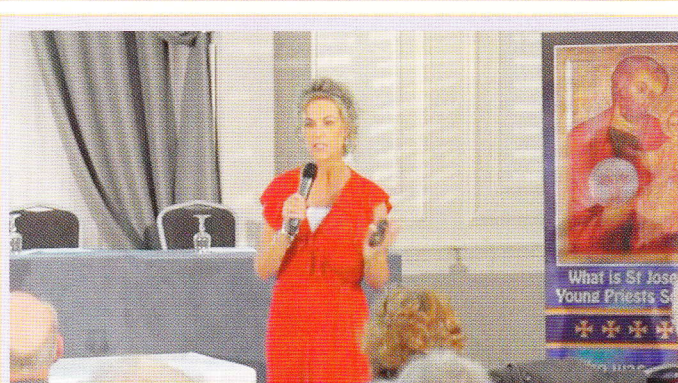
"Saint Joseph, Faith and Family"
*Bishop Kieran O'Reilly SMA, Bishop of Killaloe
Old Ground Hotel, Ennis*



"The family as the foundation of human society and as the 'domestic church'"
*Deacon Fergal O'Neill, Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin.
Langton's Hotel, Kilkenny*



"You renew the Church in every age by raising up men and women outstanding in holiness"
*Fr Willie Purcell, Diocese of Ossory
St John's Care Centre, Knock*



"From Adults to Elders: Handing on the Joy of the Gospel"
*Orla Walsh, Mother and Religious Educator
Hillgrove Hotel, Monaghan*

BLESSED BE SAINT JOSEPH, HER MOST CHASTE SPOUSE

Episcopal Ordination of Fr Kevin Doran as Bishop of Elphin

'I would hope that in the very near future, we will – as a diocesan community – develop a new strategy for the promotion of vocations and of a vocational culture'

– BISHOP DORAN

The Episcopal Ordination of Fr Kevin Doran who, when as National Co-ordinator of Diocesan Vocations 2000 to 2006 was also Chief Chaplain to Saint Joseph's Young Priests Society, took place in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception Sligo on Sunday 13 July 2014. The Society was represented at the ceremony by Eileen Sparling President of the Society during Fr Doran's tenure and by Patrick Hayes Cashel Provincial President.



In the course of his talk at the cathedral, Bishop Doran had this to say:

In the few weeks that I have been here in Elphin, I have been very impressed by what I have seen. The Churches I have visited are beautifully maintained, which suggests to me that people take pride in their parishes. More importantly, on the pastoral level, I have noticed that young people seem to be actively involved in the life of the Church. Elphin received a very positive report from the National Board for Safeguarding. This is good news but, of course, we need to remain alert to the risks, which are, sadly, part of our social reality today. Other signs of growth in the diocese include the formation and ordination of permanent deacons and the diploma in adult faith formation.

Needless to say, there are many challenges which we will need to face together in the coming months and years. These include the absence of young adults from many of our rural communities because of the lack of suitable employment; the loneliness and isolation of elderly people as a result of the tendency to focus businesses and essential services in larger population centres. In advance of the next Synod of Bishops, Pope Francis has already engaged in a very extensive consultation

of the lay faithful on the question of marriage and family life, and we too need to be attentive to this question, helping young people to commit to marriage as a Christian vocation and ensuring that they find support in our parish communities as they try to live their commitment.

People have quite rightly identified vocation as one of the key challenges facing the diocese and I want to share a few thoughts with you on that. In the first place vocation does not begin when people are teenagers or young adults. It begins when God calls us into life and when, through Baptism he invites us to be members of his family. It makes no sense to expect that people can be ready to commit to any Christian vocation, marriage, priesthood, religious life, or diaconate, if they have not first of all been helped to recognise God's invitation in Baptism and to respond to it. This is what needs to happen in our families and our parish communities, just so that young people can grow to maturity as Christians, recognising their responsibilities within the community. Then, gradually and with the encouragement of those around them they can begin to discern how God wants them to live this gift of faith that they have been given.

In recent days, I have participated in a number of celebrations to mark the golden jubilees of priests and two things

have struck me. In the first place, the priests themselves seem to be happy and fulfilled in their lives. Alongside that, people seem genuinely to value the ministry of the priest in their community. Pope Francis himself has acknowledged that "lay people are, put simply, the vast majority of the people of God" (EV 102). Priesthood is what might be described as a minority vocation, at the service of the majority. But, for

some reason, when the question of vocation to priesthood arises, there seems to be an assumption that the priest will come from someone else's family or from some other community. Why do you think that is?

I was at the month's mind Mass for Fr. John O'Rourke, who died since I was appointed, and his parishioners are understandably anxious to know when their new priest will be appointed. There will, hopefully be a short term answer to that question but, taking the long-term or even the medium-term view, the reality is that the bishop can only send priests to parishes, if the parishes send candidates who can be prepared for ordination.

I would hope that, in the very near future, we will – as a diocesan community – develop a new strategy for the promotion of vocations and of a vocational culture; a strategy to which we can all commit. For the moment, however, I want to offer you a challenge. We have 100,000 parishioners (give or take); we have six deaneries. Will you find one suitable candidate for priesthood in each deanery between now and Easter and invite him to contact me or one of the members of the vocations team. Together, then, we can accompany these men in a process of prayerful discernment, not just so that we can fill vacancies, but so that God's will can be done and so that his kingdom may come.

'How's that lad of yours in Maynooth getting on?'

A reflection by Fr Dermot Meehan, Parish Priest of Swinford, speaking at Knock on the occasion of the Society's annual pilgrimage, 28 June 2014

It was the summer of 1979. I was eighteen years old and had just completed my first year as a seminarian at St Patrick's College, Maynooth. In the kitchen of our house at home one evening, I was chatting with my mother. She had been in town earlier, doing some shopping and at the checkout of our small local supermarket she got into a conversation with an elderly man. He had been a tailor, was retired and cared for his wife who was housebound due to old age and infirmity.

In the course of their conversation, the man asked my mother, 'How's that lad of yours in Maynooth getting on?' All these years later, I can't remember her reply but I do remember what he said to her next. He said, 'Tell him the missus and myself say a prayer for him every night.'

And when my mother told me, I was deeply moved. I only knew this man and his wife to see and, at the time, was amazed that they would pray for me. In the years since, I have realised that their prayer was an indicator that they valued the vocation to priesthood, especially when that vocation came from their own parish community.

As members of St Joseph's Young Priests Society, you value the vocation to priesthood. You show that through your prayer for seminarians and your practical support for them, as the Society has done since its foundation. Your prayer and

practical support is very much appreciated by seminarians. I know that from experience as for eight years, from the mid-1990s, I was privileged to be part of the formation team in Maynooth. What you do was particularly appreciated by those who came to the seminary from the world of work rather than straight from school, young men who had been used to earning a wage and the independence that comes with that and were reluctant to turn to parents and family for financial assistance when they returned to the status of students.

While practical support of seminarians is part of the wonderful work of the Society, more important is your prayer for those studying for the priesthood...and for vocations. Continuing to pray in the face of fewer coming forward from our parish communities to study in seminaries and houses of formation says clearly that you still value the vocation to priesthood...and that means so much to seminarians and to all of us who serve as priests. Despite declining vocations in our current culture and an ageing population of priests, your continuing prayer is more important than ever.

Fewer priests in active service in parishes is creating a crisis in some of the dioceses in our country. Faced with crisis, we can learn from the example of St Joseph, the patron of your Society. When you think about it, the Gospels present him as a man

familiar with crises. In the Gospel passage we've just listened to, Joseph faces one such crisis: Mary, his betrothed and beloved, is with child and he is not the father. We are told he is 'a man of honour' or, as another translation puts it, perhaps more accurately, 'a righteous man'. Among the Jewish people, 'righteous' means a person who is attentive to God and intent on following his ways.

Someone seeking to follow God's ways would surely pray for guidance when faced with crisis and it is not difficult to imagine Joseph praying in this situation or when faced with the crisis of having to flee to Egypt to escape the horrors planned by Herod or again, at that anxious time when the young Jesus is missing for three whole days. Though it is not recorded in the Gospels, Joseph, the righteous man, would seem to be a person of prayer for we see the fruits of his prayer in his following the guidance of God that comes to him in dreams. Joseph trusts God and experience teaches us that that trust comes through prayer.

When crisis comes, it is important to continue to pray. Prayer teaches us to trust, so that no matter how dark or uncertain situations seem, we sense the powerful presence of God and learn, as Joseph did, that Mary's child is indeed the pledge that God is with us....always!

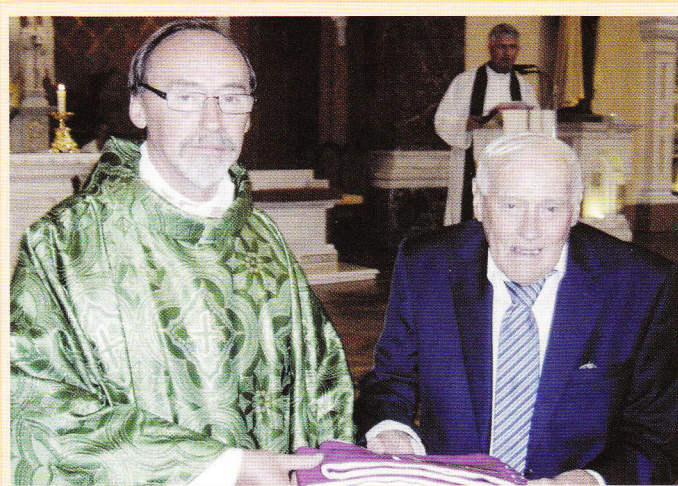


Members from Clonakilty Branch and their friends were among the first arrivals at Our Lady's shrine at Knock for the Society's annual midsummer pilgrimage on Saturday 28 June



New priests for the Diocese of Dromore. Frs Brian Fitzpatrick and Colum Murphy pictured after their ordination by Bishop John McAreevey at the Cathedral of Sts Patrick and Colman, Newry, on Pentecost Sunday 8 June. There were almost 1,000 people at the ceremony

photo Newry Democrat



Fr David Casey was ordained for the Diocese of Limerick on Saturday 19 July by Bishop Brendan Leahy at St John's Cathedral. Fr David celebrated his First Mass next day in his native parish church, St Joseph's at 11.30 Sunday Mass, at which Florence O'Mahony president of St Joseph's branch presented him with a stole



ExploreAway is a programme which provides the opportunity for single men and women aged 21-40 who are interested in exploring religious life and the priesthood in a reflective and prayerful environment.

The programme involves five residential weekends based in Dublin. The weekends provide input on vocation call, discernment, prayer and religious life - its core values and the various ways it is lived.

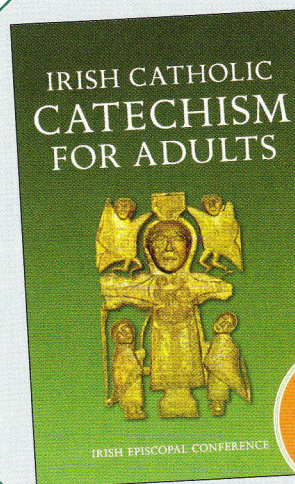
For more information, you can enjoy a relaxed afternoon with some good pizza and chat to follow, by booking with Sr Gabrielle Farrell 087-3584447 or Fr Alan 085-7664480

SUNDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2014 2-6pm St Teresa's Church, Clarendon Street, Dublin 2

SUNDAY 12 OCTOBER 2014 2-6pm Clonard Monastery, Belfast, BT13 2RL

www.exploreAway.net

www.vocationsireland.com



Veritas offer a 15% discount
to members of the Society

for On-line purchase of the new catechism published at €24.99.

The discount is applied at the checkout page by clicking the 'apply voucher' button.

15% OFF

The code is:
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Recently Deceased

VOCATIONAL BRANCHES

Bankers Branch Pamela Croghan

Electrical Industries Michael O'Connor (former National President of the Society)

Insurance Séamus Mangan, Colm Daly, Michael Bradley

Pharmacy Branch Pat O'Brien

LOCAL BRANCHES

Arklow Betty Gregory

Ballyphehane Kieth Twomey

Ballymun, Our Lady of Victories Jo Moran

Ballyroan Pat Russell

Blackpool Hanna Murphy

Christ the King, Turner's Cross Sheila O'Riordan

Church of the Resurrection, Galway Una Meehan

Cleenish Thomas Aidan Cullen, Sadie Day, Eugene Maguire, Winnie Brady, Roseanne McGovern, Raphael

Ferguson, James Melahophy, Martin Convey, Elizabeth

McElhill, Frank Cox, Carmel Cox

Drumragh, Omagh Annie Sharpe

Dundrum Michael O'Connor

Gilford Jean McKivergan, Maureen Byrne, Joanie Duffy, Eileen Kennedy

Kilkishen Peter Considine, Mrs O'Halloran

Knockninny Peter Curry, Mary Mulgrew, Mary McKenna, Bridie Kelly, Tony Burke, Tommy Leavey, Mary Fadden, Gabriel Donohoe, Eugene Maguire, Anna Drumm, George Davis

Leixlip Brendan Cosgrave

Limavady Bernadette Forrest, Dominic O'Brien

Marino Branch Maureen Walsh

Melmount James Maguire

Mountnugent/Balinacree Madge Gaffney, Sr Mary Connaughton, Marcella Hennessey, Eamonn Tuite Snr, Mary Magee, Paddy Lord, Eva Blake, Eileen Gaffney, Terry Connell

Oola Nora Ryan

Pettigo Kathleen Kane, Pauline McCrea

Portadown Jim McKeever, Michael Marley

Portmarnock Joe Reale

Rahan May Fogarty

Rathgar Tess Conway

Skerries Noelle Dowling

St John the Baptist, Clontarf Susan Shanahan, Ita O'Kelly

St Munchin's, Limerick Nora Hayes, Celine Woulfe, John Neylon

Trillick Frank McClenaghan, Paddy Maguire, Alice Campbell, Mary McBride, Bridget McCarney, Thomas Maguire

General Mary McCarthy, Fr Seán Hayes SMA

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ANONYMOUS DONATIONS €100, €100, €100, €30.