

The Sheaf



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ST. JOSEPH'S YOUNG PRIESTS SOCIETY

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AUTUMN 2018

"The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World"

Humans of World Meeting of Families 2018 is a Facebook page dedicated to all those people associated with the World Meeting of Families 21-26 August 2018.

Humans of WMOF2018 was inspired by Humans of New York, which began as an attempt to catalogue the city's inhabitants in photo form, but expanded to include a short interview, and glimpse into that person's everyday life. Our stories are linked by themes of family and faith.

Among the 'Humans of WMOF 2018' are a number of priests and brothers who have shared their own personal stories of faith and family life. Included below is an abridged version of these stories, but if readers of THE SHEAF would like to read more, they could visit www.facebook.com/humansofwmof2018.

Father Bryan Shortall, OFM Cap, Parish Priest of St Michan's, which is along the Dublin Diocesan World Meeting of Families pilgrim walk.

Growing up in Dublin, the family unit was very united, but I'd prefer the family of today. Simply because, when people emigrated in the 1980s, it was a dreadful wrench on the family unit. Now, they are united despite the distance, thanks to Skype and social media – the world is much smaller.

We were an ordinary suburban Dublin family, at a time when people hadn't an awful lot. It's not a cliché to say it – we were happy. There were a lot of challenges in the Ireland of the 70s and 80s though, with recession, unemployment, and a lot of lads I grew up with decided to go to the UK or the USA.

I joined the Capuchin Order straight out of school, and have been Parish Priest in St Michan's, in Dublin's 'Law Quarter', for the past eight years. We have a fantastic community, the families are the kind we talk about and reminisce about when we were small – kids being able to go into each other's houses, the kettle always on,



the fire lit. I often call the members of the local community 'the extended family' because they literally live next door to each other.

Fr Damian McNeice, Master of Ceremonies to Archbishop Diarmaid Martin, and 'team assistant' priest in Our Lady Mother of Divine Grace Parish, Ballygall, Dublin 11.

There were seven of us in the family home on the Navan Road in Dublin 7. It was close-knit and happy. My parents gave us a lovely upbringing, with daily examples of faith lived as love. Without prayer, I'm rudderless.

I have very strong memories of us all leaving home early on the morning of Saturday, September 29, 1979, to walk to the Phoenix Park for the Papal Mass. Dad had undergone heart surgery, so was in hospital at the time. And, afterwards, because there were no buses running that day, my Mum and my eldest brother walked several miles to the hospital to visit him. He was blessed with a pair of Rosary beads that Pope John Paul II had given one of our curates, which was a lovely gesture. My Dad died suddenly three years later, aged just 48.

Over the decades, our family has spread out, but my mother still lives in that same house, with the garden my father planted, and I get to see her at least once a week, most often for Sunday lunch!

What keeps me going in the midst of the myriad of work to be done before the upcoming visit of Pope Francis in August is the depth of goodness and faithfulness in the people who will be part of the World Meeting of Families 2018, both volunteers and participants, and those working on the events.

Fr Colin Rothery, the Dublin Archdiocesan representative in Rome for the World Meeting of Families 2018.

I'd never thought about becoming a priest until God started knocking hard on my door when I was about 30 and, eventually, I started listening. I've just celebrated 9 years being a priest, and have found out that my granny always said I'd be one!

I got a great foundation in the faith from my parents. We've always been a family where Christian values, such as doing our best, working hard, respecting everyone, and trying to be kind and truthful, were in the background of our daily choices. Our weekly trip to Mass reinforced our faith together.

These days, when I'm with my Mum, my three sisters, and their seven children, we have a lot of laughs just catching up, sharing a cup of tea or a meal together. God chose to grow up in a family and live an ordinary life for 30 years – family has always been the place where we learn who God is and, it's the only place we can learn to be human. And if we don't know who God is, or how to be human, society goes downhill pretty fast. Faith is my rock, whatever the world throws at me.

**Brenda Drumm
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Rev John Regan SAC at his ordination to priesthood on 24 June by Most Rev Michael Neary Archbishop of Tuam in St Mary's church Westport for the Pallottine Fathers. Michael Flanagan Westport president of the Society presented Fr Regan with a stole on the happy occasion.



Mass on the occasion of the Society's pilgrimage to Our Lady's Island in July was celebrated in the Church of the Assumption rather than in the open as has been the custom heretofore. The celebrants were Fr David Vard who was also the homilist, Fr Billy Caulfield ordained June 2017, Fr Patrick Cushen PP Ferns, Fr Seamus McEntee ordained June 2014 and Fr Gerry McSweeney West Virginia.



Olivia is remembered at her place of Baptism in June 1832 at Corofin Co Galway, but her real memorial is surely the many thousands of priests who were supported in their clerical studies up to ordination. Her first priest ordained for a religious congregation was Fr Richard Judge CM who was appointed in 1910 to Beirut in the Lebanon. From 1939 to 1958 he was Vincentian superior at Alexandria in Egypt. He returned to Beirut in 1958 where he died on 3 November 1960. He was an exemplary priest-teacher.



Fr Billy Caulfield assisted with the hearing of personal confessions prior to Mass at Our Lady's Island on 22 July. The glorious weather that day encouraged most pilgrims to process around the island during the recitation of the rosary before returning to the church for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.



Fr Seamus McEntee, Chief Chaplain to the Society and His Grace Most Rev Eamon Martin Archbishop of Armagh Primate of All Ireland at Ballapousta church, last resting place of Mrs Taaffe

FAMILIES AND THE SOCIETY

Hello everyone,

It's great to be able to share a few words in this edition of *The Sheaf* dedicated to the World Meeting of Families (Aug 22 - 27). As you know the theme for the ninth World Meeting of the Families in Dublin is, **The Gospel of the Family – Joy for the World!** This joy-filled message about the pastoral care of families has its roots in the apostolic exhortation by Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*. It's a great opportunity for families around the world to come together to reflect on key aspects of *Amoris Laetitia* which is that the Church's teaching on the family is not a 'problem to be solved', but is in fact a positive and liberating gift for the world. And so, the gatherings over the five days will try to communicate and distil for our times the beautiful and prophetic vision of God's plan for marriage and the family.

The World Meeting of Families brings us special blessings of course with the presence of Pope Francis with us for the last two days of the gathering. It is our hope that the spotlight shone on the family will lend hope and encouragement to families, to married life, to young and old alike and that it will be an opportunity for us all to grow and be renewed in our faith, in our own particular vocation and in our love of God and his Church.

Archbishop Eamon Martin said that he has come to see that the family was not simply the object of ministry and evangelisation, but it is a powerful agent of evangelisation. "As the 'school of humanity' and the 'domestic Church', it is in the family that values are transmitted, the wisdom of generations is passed on, the choices between right and wrong are evaluated, connections with the past are made, links with other families are made and upheld. It is in the family that we first are loved and where we first learn how to love. It is in the family that we discover who we are, where we have come from, our inter-generational relationships, our links with a place, with the land and a worshipping community, our rootedness in culture and language."

It's been said that Pope Francis has a special place for Ireland in his heart

when it comes to families, and that Pope Francis himself chose to bring this great gathering of the universal church to Ireland rather than leave the decision to a committee. Pope Francis is the 'Pope of the Family' because Irish people can see and appreciate that Pope Francis has a clear understanding about the daily realities of family life with all its ups and downs, the joys but also the challenges. Speaking to newlyweds he famously advised them, "Argue as much as you want. If the plates fly, let them. But never end the day without making peace. Never!" Pope Francis speaks up for families, he speaks up for life and I know myself from working with young people as a Chaplain in DCU, that in Ireland young people in particular are very encouraged by his messages particularly around social justice issues such as migrants and refugees or caring for the environment.

Each one of us knows, the vital role our own families and family members have played in our lives, many who may now have gone on to their eternal reward. We know how strong family ties are, what the tradition of family is and the support that our families have given each of us throughout our lives whatever our vocation is.

For us as members and supporters of St. Josephs Young Priest's Society, family plays a particular role as the seedbed for vocations to priesthood and religious life. The family, Saint John Paul II said, is "the primary and most excellent seedbed of vocations to a life of consecration to the Kingdom of God." It's often in families that strive to witness to and live out their faith in prayer and service, where vocations to priesthood and religious life are born and nurtured in the early years, where they are encouraged and supported along the way through family involvement and especially by prayer.

I know how important prayer was in my own life growing up and which no doubt helped in forming my relationship with God and nurtured my vocation to become a priest, though perhaps I didn't appreciate it as much as I should have at the time. I recall my mother getting us ready for Mass every Sunday and how we often 'protested' as we had to turn

the telly off to pray the family Rosary together, or my mother sprinkling us with holy water and saying prayers with us to our guardian angel each morning as we set out school. Or her sharing stories about her parents faith and growing up in Wicklow and setting out on a pony and trap early on Sunday to travel a few hours to get to Mass for 8am, or stories about her two aunts who were on the missions with the sisters of St Joseph of Cluny, or attending my first cousins ordination when I was 17. I remember when studying for the priesthood in Mexico and Rome, how I so looked forward to receiving a letter from my mother each week, filled with bits of news from home, and her prayers of encouragement and support, as she rushed to write the letter before cycling down to the village for Mass every morning and then posting the letter after Mass. And there are so many other stories of faith and prayer that continue to support me in my ministry now as a priest that are too numerous to mention but remind me of how, 'faith is caught, not taught' as the saying goes.

Pope Francis makes a special connection between praying for vocations and family. In 2013 on World Day of Prayer for Vocations he said, "Behind and before every vocation to the priesthood or to the consecrated life there is always the strong and intense prayer of someone: a grandmother, a grandfather, a mother, a father, a community.... This is why Jesus said: "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest," that is, God the Father, "to send out labourers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38). Vocations are born in prayer and from prayer; and only through prayer can they persevere and bear fruit."

And so, may these days before, during and after the World Meeting of Families be a time of great blessing and renewal for all families and individuals throughout Ireland. May we as members of St. Joseph's Young Priests Society grow stronger in our conviction and prayers that the Lord will indeed inspire more men to hear and answer the call to priesthood.

Fr Séamus McEntee
Chief Chaplain to SJYPS

THE SOCIETY'S FRENCH INSPIRATION

St Joseph's Young Priests Society was started by Galway born Olivia Blake. Her mother died shortly after her birth in 1832, resulting in her grandmother and aunts raising her and her sister. They moved to Dublin when she was a child. She was brought up in a strong religious environment and received a private education, mainly from French Governesses. Due to this she was greatly influenced by the church in France and Italy while growing up. Over the years this French influence increased further, and she spent her early twenties finishing her education in Paris.



*Mrs Olivia Taaffe,
the centenary of whose
death in 1918 occurs.*

In France, she came across Eucharistic Adoration and Processions of the Blessed Sacrament and was impressed by the widespread devotion at such ceremonies. She also grew a great love for St Joseph, husband of Mary the mother of Jesus, during her time there.

In 1867 she married John Taaffe, who, like her, had a keen interest in the work of the Jesuits and a great devotion to St Joseph. They lived in Smarmore Castle Co Louth for 27 years and had one son, who later died at the age of 22. When Olivia was widowed shortly after that, she moved to Dun Laoghaire and later still to Donnybrook, Dublin.

During their marriage, Olivia and John had travelled throughout Europe. While there she encountered something that was greatly influential with her. A priest at Maranville in France had founded a movement for friends of St Joseph, and he had a few boys from poor families in his parish helping him with the liturgies there. The boys were taught Latin and other subjects, while also helping out at the various devotions celebrated at the shrine in honour of St Joseph. Benefactors, who would later finance their higher education for the priesthood, spiritually adopted these boys. This gave Olivia an idea.

After the death of her husband and son, she found great consolation in devoting herself to the Confraternity of St Joseph. This was the Irish branch of the confraternity that she had joined in Maranville. She soon decided that if its work could be done in France, then why not in Ireland too?

Enlisting help from a Jesuit, Fr Joseph Darlington and imitating the French model, she began to produce an English version of the French shrine's newsletter La Gerbe, calling it St Joseph's Sheaf, which was first issued on a feast of St Joseph in 1895. Her first appeal in Ireland was for assistance for a young alter boy in Dun Laoghaire. He had all the dispositions and the wish to be a priest, but his parents were not in a position to pay for his education. Along with putting up some of the money for him, she also looked for support from readers of St Joseph's Sheaf.

The appeal was successful, and the young man was able to go to Mungret College Limerick for his formation. As a result of this success, she began looking for funds to help many more men in their journey to priesthood, and by the end of the second year the readers were contributing to the support of ten students. St Joseph's Young Priests Society had begun.

Olivia died at her final home in Donnybrook on 3 May 1918.

Now 100 years later the efforts of her Society in continuing her work with the generous help of many, many people are shown in the chart below -

Year to June	Students		Total	Total	Ordinations to Priesthood
	Irish	Overseas	Students	Expenditure	
2014/15	114	586	700	€869,587	159
2015/16	111	590	701	€816,922	120
2016/17	94	570	664	€772,842	176

Please continue to support and promote the work of the Society

Our bank details are:

Bank of Ireland, College Green, Dublin 2, Ireland.

Sort Code 90-00-17 Account 17125395

BIC: BOFIE2D IBAN: IE3BOFI 9000 1717 1253 95

Your donation will be most gratefully acknowledged on receipt.

Papal Blessing

In appreciation of the work and fidelity of St. Joseph's Young Priests Society in fostering vocations to the priesthood, His Holiness Pope Francis cordially imparts the requested Apostolic Blessing invoking abundant divine graces to the President, Committees and Members of St Joseph's Young Priests Society.

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Recently Deceased

BRANCHES

Ballinlough Jackie Twomey

Ballyphehane Christina Donnelly

Ballinahinch / Killoscully Kathleen Collins, Patsy Gleeson, Tommy McLoughlin

Bantry James O'Sullivan

Boyle Sr Mary McDermott

Caherdavin Anna Connolly, Delia Hinchey

Cashel and Golden Kitty Devitt, Paddy Phelan

Castlepollard Dympna O'Neill

Derrygonnelly / Botha Michael McLaughlin, Agnes McHugh, James Hoy, Teresa Gainsford, Mamie Leonard, Albert McCauley

Enniskillen Arthur Hogan, Julia Masterson, Sean Magure, Murty Cornyn

Faughanvale (St Mary's) Philomena Donaghey, Charlie Proctor

Graiguenamanagh Tim Connolly, Margaret Moran

Killesher Adrian Connors, James McManus, Brendan Cassidy, Bridget Quigley, Martina Kelly, Murty Cornyn, Kathleen Smith

Knockninny Branch Bridget McCormack, Bridget Seery, Joe McAloon, Dermot McBrien, Brian Maguire, Andy Murphy, John Coleman, Tom Reilly, Pat Dolan, Larry McCauley, Frank Maguire, Maida Curry, Adrian Connors

Lough Margaret Houlihan

Lurgan Maurice McGeown, Molly McDonald, Mary McIntyre, Michael Breen, Sean McCavigan, Pauline Totton

Macroom Noreen O'Sullivan

Maghera Seamus Lagan, Tillie Doherty, Ben Convery, Margaret Chambers, Pauline Sargent

Portadown John McCooy, Sean Kelly

Skibbereen Betty Murphy, Mena Daly

St John's, Coleraine Dick Levear

St John Vianney, Ardlea John Hannon

St Patrick's, Cork Georgina Walsh

Templetuohy Alice Bergin

Trillick Michel McCaughey, Willie McElholm

Westport Margaret Moran, Fr Patrick Burke