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Catholic Monthly Newspaper

No. 232 April 2017

250,000 copies nationwide

www.alive.ie



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'Media, politicians using Tuam to signal their own virtue'

BRENDAN O'Neill, editor of *Spiked*, has sharply criticised the political and media response to the Tuam Babies case, finding "something deeply disturbing, even ghoul-ish", in the discussion.

He also criticised the rush to judgment before all the facts are known.

The prominent liberal campaigner recognised that the women and children who lived and died in the home were gravely wronged.

"But the mawkish discussion of Tuam, the transformation of it into fodder for tabloid outrage and ostentatious emoting on Twitter, is an ugly spectacle," he wrote.

Much of the discussion was "virtue signalling – an attempt to advertise one's own moral goodness by poring over the depravity of bygone eras."

It was also "fake news". For O'Neill, the impatience with fact-gathering was particularly striking. "These Tuam ghouls cannot wait for all the information, they have virtue to display."

The Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes confirmed what was already known, that babies and young children were buried in the grounds of the Tuam home.

It said "significant quantities of human remains have been discovered" in a "long structure divided into 20 chambers". The structure "appears to be related to the treatment/containment of sewage and/or waste water", but it has "not yet determined if it was ever used for this purpose".

O'Neill noted that it is still not known how many bodies of the 796 babies who died at the home between 1925 and 1961 were found or how they were buried.

But that didn't stop "tabloids from crying 'Mass grave... discovered in sewage tank', as the *Irish Sun* did."



Tuam grotto

Nor did it stop journalist Donal O'Keeffe, "from tweeting: 'It was all true. Every word. 796 babies dumped in a septic tank in Tuam'."

And it didn't stop Emer O'Toole outraging *Guardian* readers "with the image of children 'lying in that septic tank'."

These "works of the imagination" were, according to O'Neill, "intended to conjure up images of evil nuns hurling tiny corpses in with the sewage. But there's nothing to show that this happened."

Commission criticised

He also criticised the Commission for going to the media before informing the Coalition of Mother and Baby Home Survivors, who were shocked by this tactic.

The Commission's "urge to emot publicly, to display its 'shock'," he believed, overrode the usual decorum of informing individuals of the possible discovery of family members' remains.

"Nothing, not even basic civility, can be allowed to stand in the way of virtue-signalling over Tuam," he commented.

For him, the discussion has been "unhinged" for some time. In 2014, when Tuam first arose, for example, "a writer for the *Derry Journal* said: 'This is our nation's holocaust'. And Pat Flanagan at the *Irish Mirror* referred to it as 'our own little holocaust'."

Using the H-word implied that the nuns killed children, casually, on a mass scale. "Yet there's no evidence for any such thing."

Indeed, that the children buried in what may have been "a kind of catacomb" were "swaddled up", as one eye-witness described it, suggests they were not simply "dumped".

Again, a blessing ceremony and the setting up of a grotto by local people when the structure was discovered in the 1970s "suggests the town of Tuam, and Old Ireland more broadly, was not a foul place. It had many good people in it, concerned for the dead."

O'Neill recognised that anyone who calls for an open mind until the facts are known "risks being denounced as an apologist for horror."

Writing "as an atheist" in the *Irish Times*, he observed that he had "no interest in defending the Catholic church." His concern was "to defend science, rationalism, and approach history in a measured way."

But the ghouls were "running ahead of the facts and turning this into a black-and-white morality play, in which they star as paragons of decency against hellish nuns."

In this, he said, they revealed that they had what they claimed to hate, "a preference for moral zealotry over reason."

Papal Nuncio

■ Archbishop Charles Brown (right) is leaving Ireland, having spent five years here as nuncio. A good friend to *Alive!* he will be remembered with much affection and gratitude as he moves to his new post in Albania.



World leaders duped by fake science on global warming

BARACK Obama and other world leaders who signed a major agreement on tackling climate change, in Paris in 2015, were duped, it seems, by fake scientific research that exaggerated global warming.

A high-level whistleblower has claimed that the world's leading agency for climate data rushed out a sensational but seriously flawed report, to promote the idea of global warming and pressure world leaders to take action.

Despite internal opposition, America's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) pushed ahead and published the flawed report, ignoring its own rules on scientific integrity, for political rather than scientific reasons.

The story begins in 2013 when the UN's Panel on Climate Change, drawing on the work of hundreds of scientists around the world, revealed that there had been a "pause" or "slowdown" in global warming in the previous 15 years.

Scientists couldn't explain the "pause" because the level of CO2 in the atmosphere had continued to rise.

Then, in the lead-up to the Paris Conference, the new NOAA report appeared, claiming that there had been no such "pause", and that world temperatures had actually been rising faster than expected.

This fitted the agenda of global warming believers and increased media demands for action.

Misleading

But the *Mail on Sunday* has said that whistleblower Dr John Bates, "a top NOAA scientist with an impeccable reputation" has shown it "irrefutable evidence that the NOAA paper was based on misleading, 'unverified' data."

In a lengthy interview he claimed that it contained faulty research data and was not subjected to NOAA's rigorous internal evaluation process, which he himself had devised.

At the time Bates vehemently objected to the paper being published, but was overridden by his bosses in NOAA.

What became known as the Pausebuster Paper was launched in a blaze of publicity, became headline news in the world's media and was repeatedly cited by politicians and policy makers.

Bates has accused the principal author of the paper, Thomas Karl, of "insisting on decisions and scientific choices that maximised warming and minimised documentation."

This, he said, was "an effort to



discredit the notion of a global warming pause," and was rushed out so that it would "influence national and international deliberations on climate policy."

Karl, at the time, was director of the US Centers for Environmental Information, the NOAA section that produces climate data.

Influenced by the report, leaders agreed to give \$100bn each year in extra "climate-related" aid to the developing world, and to cut 40% of CO2 emissions across the EU by 2030.

The report, published in the journal *Science*, was, according to Bates, based on two flawed sets of data, one for land temperatures, the other for sea temperatures.

Unreliable methods

The *Mail* reported that NOAA has decided that the sea dataset will have to be replaced "because it used unreliable methods which overstated the speed of warming."

And with the land dataset, bugs in the computer software "rendered its findings 'unstable'."

Moreover, "none of the data on which the paper was based was properly archived."

This obligatory requirement is to ensure that raw data and the software used to process it are accessible to other scientists, so they can check NOAA results.

The US parliament's Science Committee earlier challenged to the flawed data, but NOAA mounted a cover-up, falsely claiming that no one had raised concerns about the paper internally.

The chair of the Committee, Lamar Smith, has now thanked Dr Bates "for courageously stepping forward to tell the truth about NOAA's senior officials playing fast and loose with the data in order to meet a politically predetermined conclusion."

When the report was published the BBC announced that the pause in global warming was "an illusion caused by inaccurate data" while a US magazine described the report as a "science bomb" dropped on warming sceptics.

News that the report was seriously flawed, however, has received far less attention from the global media, allowing the "fake news" story to stand.

Being sold more protein than they need

CONSUMERS are being misled once again by the advertising industry, being encouraged this time to buy high-protein foods they don't need.

Sports fanatics and gym-goers are the ones most likely to be taken in by the latest fad.

With the market for high-protein foods exploding, according to *Euromonitor*, experts are advising people that they are already getting more protein than they need.

The sports nutrition market grew by 160% in five years while sales of protein bars in 2015 were up by 63% in a year. In 2016 40% more high-protein products were launched than the previous year.



Among the brands that launched enhanced protein versions were Weetabix, Shreddies, Mars, Snickers and Batchelors Cup-a-Soup.

But UK dietitian Anna Daniels told the *Guardian* that "people have a misconception they need more protein whereas actually the

majority of us are getting adequate protein – our requirements are quite low."

She explained that an athlete will have a higher requirement but can get it from eggs, yoghurt, meat.

Tom Sanders, a retired professor of nutrition and dietetics, said people were being taken in by "nutri-babble".

"There's been a lot of hype in gyms pushing high-protein shakes, there's also a need to get rid of a waste product from the dairy industry, which is whey protein," he said. "It's a way of selling a cheap product at a high price."

We live in a culture that cannot accept love



THE OPEN DOOR

Pop star Justin Bieber, in a rather cruel song, repeatedly tells a former girlfriend, "Oh, baby, you should go and love yourself".

Justin picked up this cheap advice from today's pop psychology and counselling which promote the same idea.

People seeking emotional help are regularly told that the root of their problem is that they don't love themselves enough.

It's a distorted way of looking at life and emotional distress, but there is a grain of truth in it, if we can find it.

At conception we begin a lifelong journey to discover who we are and what we are about. This is one big difference between ourselves and our pet cats or cows.

The cow never has to ask what its life is about, or even what dinner table it will end up on. And it knows how to love itself - it avoids pain and grazes on.

Lots of human beings, of course, are like that: they think that life is about avoiding pain and snatching brief moments of happiness.

But even the most foolish of us realise that, in the long run, this is not a satisfying view of life. We sense that we are more than meat on legs, that we were made for greater things.

Depressing

It's extremely frustrating and depressing, however, if we can find no pointer to where those greater things or "perfect happiness" might lie; if we're being told that hope is ultimately doomed, a confidence trick.

No surprise then, that so many people turn to drugs, sterile sex, obsession with work or sport, happy pills, consumer goods or to bitter anger expressed in protests and even violence.

Yet love keeps triumphing: a family caring for a sick granny; parents devoting themselves to their children; the million little kindnesses we receive and often take for granted each day.

The question about the purpose or meaning of life is a bit like a car engine: even when we are not thinking about it, when it seems to be the last thing in our minds, it is



Justin Bieber

still driving us along.

But like the engine, the question of what our lives are about needs regular attention. We need to ensure that it is still unsettling us as it is designed to do.

Big surprise! The "meaning" question quickly leads us back to the issue of love: is loving others better than selfishness?; why?; who or what should I love?; why should I love if it costs me?

There are also the many people who yearn to love but feel unable to do so. They shrink from physical contact, fear rejection or feel emotionally frozen, disconnected.

This often results in intense anxiety, isolation and loneliness. And

brings us to a different side of love.

Bieber's self-help "love yourself" ideology is a poor answer to a really big question: Am I lovable? Am I worthy of love?

It is parents and family who begin to answer that question long before we even ask it. And, just as important, who train us how to accept love and respond to it.

When things go wrong in a home, through lack of affection, cruelty, alcohol problems, violence, family breakdown or whatever, then we don't learn that we are lovable. Or how to accept love. From this come so many of life's problems.

Loved by God

Long before the psychologists got going, the great insight of Christianity, developed from Jewish prophetic teaching, was the realisation that we are lovable because we are loved by God.

The whole Christian teaching on Creation comes down to this, that God loved each one of us into existence and into community. And in doing so he freed us to be able to accept and to give love.

Only a culture that has gone off the rails, as modern culture has, would think that the answer to our isolation and loneliness is to "love

ourselves".

How pathetic that advice is when put beside the call to understand the depths of God's love for us. Reflecting on this love is where we learn that we are lovable.

Even when we rebelled against him God continued to care for us, sending his Son to save us from the disaster we brought on ourselves.

Yet, by a series of twists and turns, Western culture is closing itself more and more against God's love.

If the absence of human love can be so harmful in our lives might we not suspect that denying God's love for us would be devastating for society, for families and for individuals? Isn't that evident already?

Why then would parents, for example, deprive their children of the knowledge of a love that would give joy and utter solidity to their lives?

We are God's children, coheirs with Christ to eternal life. Such expressions attempt to capture the depth of God's care for us, revealed especially in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Reason alone tells us that only the fool thinks there is no God. Or that life has meaning without his love.

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Media face identity crisis as new era begins

by Gerard Murphy

NO PROMINENT politician has ever treated the media with the disdain, even mocking contempt, which President Donald Trump is showing.

Many politicians have felt as Trump feels towards the media establishment but they feared the media's power to harm them.

They had to grin and bear it when journalists exposed wrong-doing but also when they were unjust or acted like bullying thugs.

But Trump is different, having come to the White House owing the media nothing.

During his campaign practically every major news outlet across the country and abroad opposed him and what he stood for. Some 360 US titles backed Hillary Clinton against a paltry 11 for Trump.

In a trade that prides itself on its heterodoxy, support for diversity and unconventionality, this was a remarkable display of conformism.

Here was the ultimate in unconven-

tionality, a candidate who was subverting the whole way of doing politics, and the media couldn't adapt, couldn't handle it.

Instead, they did everything they could to destroy him on behalf of Clinton and the political status quo.

'Abandoned'

Adam Moss, editor of the award-winning *New York* magazine, for example, said that as a rule his operation tries to be even-handed.

But with Trump, he admitted, "we abandoned that because we felt the threat of his candidacy and presidency was too great." His magazine joined the Clinton campaign.

Nobody has asked what this meant in practice. Or why the public should now trust Moss's coverage of Trump.

The *New York Times* had 18 journalists "fact-checking" the TV debates. The aim: to nail Trump. Again, why should anyone now trust the NYT's reporting?

So Trump, having beaten the full might of the media and the political



• Adam Moss: who would now trust his coverage of Trump?

establishment, sees little reason to respect or fear them now.

Ed Pilkington of the *Guardian* was amazed that "61 million Americans were unfazed enough by the idea of a serial liar in the Oval Office to vote for him."

These voters, and probably many more if the media had been impartial, believed it would be far worse to have Clinton in charge. Pilkington, living in the media bubble, still can't grasp that.

Key question

Which takes us to the key question: What do the media really object to in Trump? Certainly his past history and some of his current policies contain many objectionable things.

But that does not really explain the media's bitter hostility. The real issue seems to be the revolution that Trump is ushering in.

The 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall began a promising new era, with a global culture based on human rights.

But this was soon hijacked by the left, exploiting the machinery of the UN, the EU and various global agencies, and largely funded by the astronomical wealth of US foundations.

Marguerite Peeters describes this globalist ideology, its jargon and methods and the threat it poses, in her

booklet, *The new global ethic: challenges for the Church*, available online.

At its core, it is a ruthless drive to replace Christianity with a new global politics and culture of despair.

Peeters wrote: "Under the guise of a 'soft consensus', the global ethic hides an anti-christic agenda rooted in Western apostasy and driven by powerful minorities at the rudder of global governance since 1989."

The media, stupidly anti-Christian, became missionaries for this new global culture.

But in recent times a massive backlash, disparagingly called "populist", has erupted against this elitist ideology. Trump rode it to power, opening a new era. Here is the real root of the media's antagonism.

Where do the media go now? They may continue to be what Trump calls "the Opposition", leaving themselves exposed to the charge of "fake news".

Or they may give up campaigning for a passing era and return to the job of balanced reporting.



Monthly Musings

By Mattie McGrath

Mattie McGrath is an Independent TD for Tipperary South.

Six issues relating to children

IT IS, I believe, hugely significant that six of the greatest issues we as a nation confront today revolve around or relate to children and child welfare. They are:

- The Citizens Assembly: many of us believe that this is nothing but a political alibi designed to give the government cover when it comes to repeal of the 8th Amendment;
- The 'Grace' Commission which seeks to investigate the appalling and systematic maltreatment of the physically and intellectually disabled in state supported foster homes;
- The 'Tuam babies' investigation which has horrified and unsettled everyone of good will;
- The campaign to develop the new National Children's Hospital at St James' in Dublin. The most eminent



• Artist's impression of new Children's Hospital.

consultant paediatricians warn that this will result in totally avoidable deaths and certain disability for some categories of sick babies;

- The scandal of almost 2,500 officially homeless children;
- And last, but by no means least, the record numbers of children on

long term HSE waiting lists.

What does all of this say about us as a society?

How are we to interpret the fact that as a nation we have subjected and continue to subject children to standards of care at every stage of their lives that falls short of even the most minimal requirements?

The attempt to put the different 'historical realities' in context will not suffice, even if there is an important and necessary place for such a process.

We must confront the fact that we have sins to confess and profoundly deep wounds to heal.

We must honestly question and examine if the 'structures of sin' which St John Paul the Great spoke about, existed here as they did elsewhere.



for now at least, despite the unanswerable objections to its proposed location in a heavily congested part of Dublin city.

Prioritising delivery of 'the project' over good clinical outcomes demonstrates that children are not the central concern. A trophy

political project has become a poisoned chalice.

What about those children who are being denied the basic right to decent shelter and accommodation? We know that a significant proportion of them are living in conditions of horrendous psychological stress.

Violence and neglect

All these issues point to an undercurrent of violence and neglect that is still being perpetuated upon innocent children in our society.

It is clear then that as a society we still have profound challenges

to face in terms of genuinely safeguarding the interests of children.

They also highlight a very stark reality: that the failure to nourish and cherish our children is not something we can parcel off as a legacy issue.

As Christians, we must try to renew our culture from within. We must seek in all things to heed with urgent priority the words of Our Lord:

"See that you do not despise even one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels always see the face of my Father in heaven" (Matt 18:10).

Incompetent, callous HSE

IN ALL the above there is, at the very least, one thing constant, despite the passage of time: the continuing triumph of the powerful over the powerless.

This is crystal clear when it comes to addressing the 'Grace' case. The failures here are part of a pattern that has become increasingly and traumatically familiar in our society.

Parents, with the best interests

at heart, and children with the greatest hopes, are betrayed and violated by a HSE system that is as ignorant and callous as it is incompetent.

This is the same system that operates with bewildering dysfunction when it comes to prioritising sick children on waiting lists. Only when the glare of the public spotlight is thrown on it, does it respond.

Another example

Let us take another example: the proposed National Children's Hospital. Already hundreds of millions over budget, it is proceeding

Unesco distorts climate report to help Oz tourism

THE UN heritage agency, Unesco, removed all mention of Australia from a major report on global warming after the Canberra government objected that the claims in it might harm the country's tourist industry.

An earlier version of the report had a key chapter on the Great Barrier Reef, said to be in serious danger, and two shorter sections, one on the Tasmanian forests.

But Australia's environment department objected that experience "had shown that negative commentary about the status of world heritage properties impacted on tourism."

As a result, every reference to Australia was removed from the report, "World Heritage & Tourism in a Changing Climate".

But the decision to alter the report astonished some people while it raised questions about the reliability of the information contained in other UN reports.

Will Steffen, a retired professor who heads Australia's Climate Council, described the omission as "frankly astounding".

"I've spent a lot of my career working internationally," he told a newspaper. "It's very rare that I would see something like this happening."

"Perhaps in the old Soviet Union you would see this sort of thing, where governments quashed information because they didn't like it. But not in western democracies. I haven't seen it happen before."

A year earlier the Australian government persuaded Unesco to not list the Great Barrier Reef in its list of "World Heritage Sites in Danger".

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Patient may sue if not told of risks in med procedure

THE Royal College of Surgeons (RCS) has warned UK doctors and hospitals they may be sued if a patient undergoing a medical procedure is not told the risks involved.

New RCS guidelines stressing a patient's right to be informed about even small risks will transform the doctor-patient relationship, and are likely to impact the abortion industry.

The latest guidelines follow a 2015 ruling by the UK Supreme Court, in the Montgomery case.

Traditionally in the health service it was up to doctors to decide what risks to communicate to patients.

But the court, said the RCS, "changed this and held that doctors must ensure patients are aware of any and all risks that an individual patient, not a doctor, might consider significant."

"In other words, doctors can no longer be the sole arbiter of determining what risks are material to the patient." The ruling will radically change the present paternalistic approach in medicine.

"Doctors and hospitals will now have to change the processes they use when seeking patient consent," warned the Royal College. Otherwise they may face "a dramatic increase in the number of litigation pay-outs."

An RCS spokesman said: "It's easy to see how in many hospitals gaining a patient's consent has become a paper tick-box exercise, hurriedly done in the minutes before a patient is wheeled into theatre for their procedure..."

"Patients must [now] be given



New guidelines may have big impact on abortion industry.

enough time to make an informed decision about their treatment."

One area that could be significantly affected by the new law is the abortion industry and its shabby treatment of vulnerable pregnant women.

A recent investigation by the *Mail on Sunday*, for example, claimed that "doctors at Marie Stopes, the second largest abortion provider in the UK, are approving thousands of abortions a year for women they have never met."

'Breaking the law'

Philippa Taylor, a bioethicist with the Christian Medical Fellowship, in London, welcomed the new guidelines, arguing that until now the Supreme Court ruling had not had the impact and received the publicity it deserved.

In effect, said Taylor, "doctors need to tell their patient all the options and risks, and let the patient choose. Those who ignore or withhold information from their patients, even about a very

small risk, may now be breaking the law."

Medical guidelines already stressed the need for doctors to ascertain the beliefs and values of the patient before deciding what action to take.

"Now," said Taylor, "the law makes it clear that the key questions to be asked are: 'Would a reasonable patient want to know this information?' 'Would this particular patient consider it to be important and relevant information?'"

An unexpected spin-off from the ruling, she believed, is that the process of obtaining consent for the abortion of an unborn child may need to receive closer scrutiny.

"The new ruling has made it clear that in the consent process doctors should explore options with that specific patient in mind," she said. "Those who ignore or withhold information due to bias or paternalism are breaking the law."

As a result, abortion doctors may be acting illegally if they "withhold information on the risks of abortion... such as the now well recognised link with later pre-term deliveries, the link to adverse mental health consequences, and even on the possible link to breast cancer, evidenced in some research."

Also likely to come under scrutiny is the dubious practice by which "pro-choice" pregnancy counselling agencies are part of the abortion industry.

It remains to be seen if medical guidelines in Ireland will also change to reflect the new "patient-centred" approach to medical care.

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How to cope if you're "running late"

Quite a few articles have been floating around about how being late is a sign of intelligence and optimism. So just how bad is it to be late all of the time? Is there hope for the tardy? Or is the idea of 'productive lateness' nonsense?

I'm going to unpack everything from the best and worst excuses for being late to work, the pro's and con's of being late, and what the Bible says about the topic.

First of all, consider what we can do when we're running late, as according to thebalance.com. Because let's face it, it's bound to happen eventually.

A survey conducted by CareerBuilder reports the most common excuses employees give for being late for work: traffic, sleep schedules, and weather conditions are the top three.

But those are all pretty boring, so let's take a look at the more "creative" approaches: *Employee claimed a zebra was running down the highway and held up traffic* (this turned out to be true).

Employee couldn't eat breakfast – he ran out of milk for cereal and had to buy some before getting ready for work. This one amazes me – if the bloke is big enough to have a job, surely he's big enough to come up with an alternative breakfast?

Favourite

One of my favourites: *Employee was late because he fell asleep in the car when he got to work.* So this person – whoever he is – got up, got ready, beat the traffic, and pulled into work – then fell asleep before stepping out of his car. I love it.

Slightly more distressing excuses included: *Employee accidentally put superglue in her eye instead of contact lens solution and had to go to the emergency room.*

Employee said a hole in the roof caused rain to fall on the alarm clock and it didn't go off. (Surely they could have just said the alarm didn't go off instead of making it sound like an alien attack).

Employee was watching something on TV and really wanted to see the end. At least they're honest. *Employee got a hairbrush stuck in her hair.* Been there.

These excuses are mostly bananas. But if you ever

want to get yourself fired – at least you've now got some ideas.

But what can we do when we know we're going to run late, that we cannot beat the inevitable?

Number one on the list is to let your boss know asap. Make it as personal and as early as possible. Secondly, be as honest as you can.

Trip up

Not only is lying against the 8th Commandment, it can also trip you up very easily. It's much worse to get caught out in a lie than to be late in the first place, so don't be tempted to twist your tongue.

Nor should you fall into the blabber-mouth's trap of oversharing. Your boss doesn't need to know too much about your bodily functions, personal relationships, or anything like that.



Sometimes it's good to hold back a little, and you might also avoid the problem of sharing so much that it sounds like a story, even if it isn't.

Use excuses sparingly. The first time you blame a stomach bug for your lateness, it demands sympathy. The second time, it raises questions. The third time, you will probably need to reassess your diet and your career – excuses are supposed to be exceptional, not routine.

Finally, be thoughtful about when you skip work. If you need to book an appointment, book it as early or as late as possible so that you're not taking a chunk out of the middle of a productive day.

Perhaps the most responsible thing to do, and your boss will appreciate it, is to come in early or leave later to make up for the missing time.

This may sound like a lot of responsibility, but remember – you're doing well if you haven't been late because you ran out of milk, fell asleep in your car, or put superglue in your eye.

The YOUTH FORUM



With Katie Ascough

Pros and Cons of being late

I'll start with the con's (credit to Inc.com): Being late is impolite, it implies that "My time is more valuable than yours. Even if you earn more".

Your unspoken impoliteness can also demoralise employees and put-off business partners. So basically, if you want to rake in the cash, be on time. Or even better, early.

Another reason to not be late, one that is selfish but true: you won't be at your best. Only an arrogant person would not care even a little bit about what other people think when they walk in late.

Unless you are that person, it's better to save yourself the hassle and just get your patootie there on-time.

Multi-tasker

On the other hand, being late isn't always something to beat yourself up over. Some argue that being late is a sign that you're a multi-tasker – you're so busy getting stuff done you lose sense of time.

Again it's argued that it's your positivity that makes you tardy. The idea is that the positive person always overestimates the time they have. They are not stupid, just overly optimistic and think they have time to do more than they do.

My best friend once told me on the phone that she'd be over in half an hour, after she had dinner and taken a shower.

I pointed out to her that she lived 15 minutes away, her dinner wasn't even ready yet, and girls take more than 5 minutes to get showered and beautified.

It wasn't that my friend is dumb, she's just got an optimistic outlook on life and time. (And I love her all the more for it!)



What the Bible says about being late

■ There may be no commandment stating "thou shalt not be late", but several pieces of Scripture do relate to tardiness. One of the first to keep in mind is: "...the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

Never forget that God knows your heart's intention. If you end up being massively late because of circumstances beyond your control, don't sweat.

But if you are 5 minutes late because you'd rather put your time before someone else's, you might want to rethink your motives.

Another good verse to remember is "love is not rude" (1 Corinthians 13:5). If being late is rude (it usually is), and we are to love our neighbour, by substitution we should not be late.

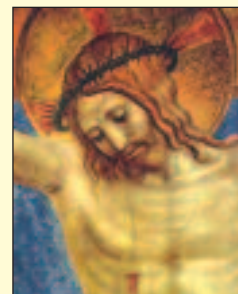
As a general rule of thumb, we should remember: "whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men" (Colossians 3:23).

If you were meeting with Jesus, would you be on time, or would you hold back five minutes so you didn't have to stand there awkwardly before he arrived?

Not to bring in the guilt factor, but I at least know I'd be making more of an effort than I currently do.

Friday is Special because Sunday is special

An invitation to Catholics to take up again the ancient custom of abstaining from meat each Friday in honour of Christ's passion and death.



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LEAFLETS AVAILABLE

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Praying together for your marriage

by Peter Perrem

For St. Teresa of Avila prayer was a conversation between friends. "Prayer is nothing more than spending time alone with the one I know loves me," she wrote.

St. Thérèse of Lisieux described it like this: "For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy."

The flip side of this is the importance of listening in prayer, in getting to know God so we can love him. Hence the importance of *listening* to his Word in Scripture where he reveals himself to us, in word and deed.

In marriage, one of the most intimate things we can do together as a couple is to pray together.

Saying prayers like the Rosary is necessary and beneficial, but that is not what I'm talking about here.

I am referring to more personal intimate prayer that involves praying about our relationship and about what is affecting us in our marriage.

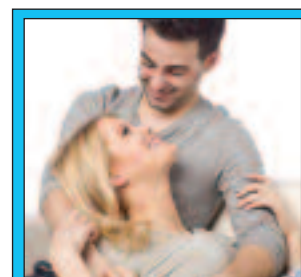
This involves a considerable level of trust and presupposes we share some level of faith together. You might say this is the *spiritual intimacy* which helps to support emotional and physical intimacy.

Without virtue and the ability to die to ourselves and be generous, kind and other-centered, real love cannot flourish.

Growing in virtue, countering egoism and self-centredness, and helping each other to do so, enriches natural love, especially when life is difficult.

From this we can see why vulnerable communication and prayer are connected, and why in a marriage both are so essential. Without vulnerable communication we become strangers to each other.

St. Thomas Aquinas stressed the essential connection between knowing and loving God. You cannot love God effectively in terms of a deep friendship unless you know



MARRIAGE MATTERS

him. The same is true of human relationships.

We build trust and understanding by self-disclosure through real and vulnerable communication and by empathetic and open listening to our spouse. In this way we deepen our love and understanding.

Real and honest

Making time and space to pray together as I have described it may be a bit awkward and a bit embarrassing at first.

But it is a great way of making sure we communicate at a real and personal level on a regular basis, ideally each day. It does not have to long or elaborate, just real and honest.

As Catholics we profess the "Mystery of Faith" in the Creed on Sundays and we celebrate it in the Sacraments, especially in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. But it must be lived every day if it is to impact our lives.

"This mystery requires that the faithful believe in it, that they celebrate it, and that they live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God. This relationship is prayer" (Catechism no. 2558).

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Editor's Jottings

A closer look at stories in the round...



'Post truth' society is doomed to fail

US JOURNALIST David Roberts was, it seems, the first to use the phrase, "post-truth politics", and soon the rest of the world's media herd picked up on it.

The UK *Guardian*, always quick to embrace the latest fad, called Trump and Boris Johnson, then campaigning for Brexit, "masters of post-truth politics".

Brendan O'Neill, editor of *Spiked*, complains that the phrase "post-truth" is now "applied sweepingly to whole sections of society whose crime is that they don't hold the same opinions or ideas as the political and cultural elites."

O'Neill is right in saying that liberals use the phrase to bash what they consider "the moronic masses" who voted for Trump in America and Brexit in the UK.

But the phrase itself is getting at something important, and deserves a closer look.

It is not simply saying that politicians tell lies – we have known that for a long time. But in the past they generally tried to hide their lies, to appear truthful.

Today, on the other hand, they no longer think that truth matters. Caught out lying they simply shrug and "move on". We shrug too, and put them back into power. It is the Age of the Shrug, as an old priest said.

Again, the media have become, to a massive extent, agenda-driven; they become part of various fashionable campaigns, such as Clinton for President, "gay" demands, abortion, and Secularist religion.

This means that "news" stories are selected because they "work" to advance a particular cause. And stories that don't promote an agenda, or obstruct it, are ignored.

Corruption

Post-truth journalism now also shapes our media, not least the toxic *Irish Times*-RTE axis. This is abusive propaganda, a corruption of the valid role of the media in a free society.

What makes this media groupthink so bizarre is that otherwise intelligent journalists unite in backing causes that are easily shown to be false or destructive.

Behind this corruption of politics and media lies the secularist obsession with "choice" and its disdain for Truth. In our battles to get what we want, truth is simply a weapon to be used to our advantage.

As a result, there is now a widespread contempt for the media. Society is becoming ever more fragmented, as happened in Protestantism.

Disregard for truth eventually devalues debate, replacing it with protests, frustration, anger and even violence.



Kevin O'Sullivan, *Irish Times* editor and Noel Curran, then DG of RTE.

Wrong to play on emotions to advance evil

WE can sympathise with the shock and distress of parents who are told that their unborn child is seriously disabled and will probably die at birth or very shortly afterwards.

In that state a couple need sensitive support from family and their medical professionals to enable them to come to terms with the shock, and to love their little sick baby.

A doctor's duty is to do everything possible to care for both patients, the mother and her child, and not write

one off.

If a doctor suggests in any way that a child is less precious because he or she is seriously ill, the doctor commits a grave injustice, betraying both the parents and the child.

The failure of professionals to fully value the life of any unborn baby may undermine the courage and love of parents to protect their child and may contribute to a decision to abort the baby.

Surely this should be considered inhuman cruelty and



Elizabeth Morales holds her baby sister Angela, born with anencephaly, but is now 3 years old.

professional negligence, nor should we allow it to be presented as "care".

If parents, in a state of emotional turmoil and betrayed by family and medical professionals, do abort their baby and afterwards regret it, again we can have great sympathy for them.

Horror

We can understand the horror of parents who look at the poisoned body of their tiny baby and think, "Dear God, what have we done?"; who realise that the "pro-choice" rhetoric has led them into terrible evil.

We can understand the deep anger and bitterness of a woman against her boyfriend or husband over his cowardly failure as a man and a father to protect her and their baby.

We can understand the intense resentment and hostility of parents towards the professionals who betrayed them with their pseudo care. And we can recognise the parents' need for healing in

so many different ways.

On the other hand, they may seek to justify what they did, perhaps joining the pro-choice campaign, even using their experience to campaign for the ending of legal protection for other mothers and unborn children.

Irish "pro-choicers" seek to present these bereaved parents' distress as due to the difficulties of travelling to England for an abortion.

But this diverts attention away from the far greater source of distress, their realisation that they failed their vulnerable child, that they disobeyed a fundamental moral principle, do not kill an innocent human being.

If they now harden their hearts in this way they will obstruct their own healing.

But they are also exploiting people's kindness and sympathy, in order to push an evil agenda. And that needs to be recognised, not least by radio and TV presenters.

It also needs to be pointed out, gently but firmly, that deliberately ending the life of a sick unborn baby is never an act of love.

To present it as love only distorts our sense of right and wrong, corrupts our notion of justice and harms our society.

People who use their own tragic experience to campaign for evil are not entitled to special treatment. Justice demands that they be challenged by the media as vigorously as any other campaigner.

Shakespeare's real lesson for us today

WILLIAM Shakespeare wrote his famous plays during the decades when Crown authorities were using all their powers, including massive fines, torture and execution, to wipe out the Catholic faith in England.

In March 1605, shortly after James I became king, Venice's ambassador spoke with Robert Cecil, the power behind the throne, about "the extraordinary movement" against Catholics.

He pointed out that "though the Catholic religion is prohibited in many countries in none is it persecuted as here."

Cecil admitted: "there is no doubt but that the object of these laws is to extinguish the Catholic religion in this country."

For some 350 years it was believed that Shakespeare had almost completely ignored the burning religious issues of his time in his writings.

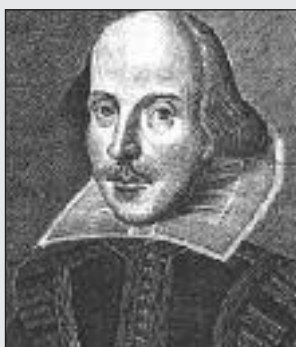
Essential reading

But in recent decades many scholars have challenged that view, among them Clare Asquith, whose pioneering work, *Shadowplay*, reads like a detective thriller.

It is essential reading for anyone interested in Shakespeare, especially teachers.

Asquith discovered a coded language in the great playwright, and that he used it to courageously comment, precisely as a committed Catholic, on the political and religious developments in England as they occurred.

The hidden issue in *Julius Caesar*, for example, is papal



William Shakespeare

authority while *Macbeth* was drastically rewritten after the Gunpowder Plot.

For Asquith, "the hidden level makes it clear that for all his surface neutrality, the driving force behind Shakespeare's work was profound commitment to the traditional, sacramental life of the country, threatened in his day with extinction."

This hidden level "reveals that it took not only intellectual brilliance but exceptional courage and constancy to produce some of the greatest plays ever written."

What relevance have that courage and constancy today? Life is not as dangerous now for Catholics as it was in Shakespeare's time.

But a massive drive, at many levels, is under way in the modern world to wipe out the Christian faith and replace it with a culture of despair.

Too often Catholics are utterly blind to what is going on. Shakespeare teaches us the need to be informed about the destructive forces at work in our society.

And he inspires us to be creative, committed and, above all, courageous in witnessing to the supreme joy and hope of the Gospel.

A change of mind

TROPFEST, held near Sydney, bills itself as the world's largest short film festival. This year the winning film was a 7-minute Australian black comedy about euthanasia, "The Mother Situation".

An elderly woman wants to die "with dignity", and her three adult children arrive to bid her goodbye. Each of them is sad at what is to happen... until they learn that "Mum has changed her mind".

Excellent acting, clever dialogue, sharp directing, and an off-the-wall plot make this a very funny film, despite the topic. And it's free to view online (google: Bioedge, The mother situation).

Director Matt Day explained that both house prices and suicide are a regular topic of conversation in Sydney.

The idea for the film came when he overheard someone say: "Well he's going to be fine when his parents die because he's got the house at Balmain and the place on Pearl Beach."

Day did not set out to make an anti-euthanasia movie, he just wanted to make a funny film.

Nevertheless, he did highlight a key factor about euthanasia - the role that vested interests, often in the form of family members, can play in pushing an elderly or sick person to end his or her own life.

Far from "dying with dignity" they die with a sense that they are unwanted, that even the family they spent their life caring for wants to see an end of them.



Media manufacture fake news story about Pope

■ A twisted news story completely falsifying what Pope Francis said about hypocrisy and the harm caused by scandal was recently spread by mainstream media across the English-speaking world.

It was, in fact, "fake news", coming from sources we are supposed to trust. As a result, millions of people were seriously misled about what the Pope said.

If we cannot trust the big newspapers, and the news agencies they rely on, to report truthfully on a simple issue, how can we trust them when it comes to complicated economic or political stories?

Media Watch

The manufacture of the fake news story about the Pope took place in three steps.

Step 1: Francis gave a homily on the theme of scandal, pointing out that many Christians do not live in keeping with their faith. This hypocrisy gives scandal to others, sometimes leading them astray even about the importance of being a Christian.

"How often have we all heard people say 'if that person is a Catholic, it is better to be an atheist',"

said Francis.

He was pointing out that Christians' hypocrisy can give a false picture of Catholicism, even to the point where it misleads some people to think it would be better to be an atheist than a Catholic.

For Francis such a misunderstanding is a serious error.

Same source

Step 2: The news agencies Reuters and Associated Press (AP) sent out a report on the homily to various news outlets.



Pope Francis

Both agencies, it seems, used the one journalist.

His report had the Pope "suggesting it was better to be an atheist than one of many Catholics who he said lead a hypocritical double life."

But the Pope "suggested"

nothing of the sort. In fact, he believed the very opposite. While he could understand some people taking such a view, he was clearly distancing himself from it. He wanted better, not fewer, Catholics.

Instead of simply reporting the facts, however, the reporter for the agencies made his own peculiar "twist" the news story.

In this way a simple, passing remark by the Pope in a weekday homily was turned upside down and sensationalised. Intentional or not, this was the first distortion of the story. It was already "fake news".

And it was carried by the *Irish Independent* (journalist **Emile Laurac**), the *Guardian* and a host of media across the globe.

Headlines

Step 3: A final distortion was introduced by the headlines given to the story by many of the media.

CNN had the headline: "Pope suggests it's better to be an atheist than a bad Christian." He didn't. Nobody "fact-checked" the story.

But other media went further and had the Pope "saying" what he didn't even suggest.

The *journal.ie*, for example, stated: "Pope Francis says it's better to be an atheist than a 'hypocritical Catholic'." No he didn't. Nor anything like it.

Again, in the *Irish Independent*, the headline was: "Better to be an atheist than a Catholic hypocrite" - Pope. And the

Guardian had, "Pope Francis: better to be an atheist than a hypocritical Catholic". All fake news.

It is ironic that the mainstream media, what Trump calls "the Opposition", are so concerned about fake news on the internet when it is thanks to the internet that we can now see their own fake news.

And if they can't or won't give an accurate report on a simple homily by the Pope, how can we trust them on complicated or controversial issues?

The media, it seems, have learnt nothing from the refusal of UK and US voters to trust them on important issues. And religious faith is an important issue.

Stifled debate

■ The media endlessly debate the role of the Catholic Church in society. Never do they debate the place of secularist ideology, which is now the State religion.

Secularist religion and morality are being promoted vigorously by the State, abetted by politicians, civil servants, colleges, the media and lobby groups funded by the State and George Soros & Co.

With no public mandate for this religious policy, the State is drastically changing our society, spreading a culture of despair.

Yet these crucial issues are never debated in the media. Rather, the media stifle such debate. Which reveals how biased and out of touch with reality our journalists are.

Young more likely to distrust media

■ **Kate Shanahan**, head of journalism at Dublin IT, is concerned about the spread of "fake news" on social media, and especially its impact on young people (Irish Times 23/2/17).

But **Kate** doesn't seem to grasp the full depth of the "fake news" crisis for the media and for society.

She quoted a Stanford University study "which concluded that the social media generation cannot distinguish between what is true and untrue online."

Perhaps not. But true/untrue is not just an issue for young people or online. Fake news is as much an issue for TV viewers and national newspaper readers.

Indeed, it is thanks to the internet that people can now read original texts, fact-check, and expose distortions and lies in what "mainstream" media report.

Kate worried about research which found that younger Irish



Kate Shanahan

people "trust media even less than their adult counterparts, a pattern repeated in other surveys worldwide."

But surely this is a welcome development. Too often now the mainstream media are in "campaign mode", "a tool in the service of an

ideology", pushing some agenda. So why would *anyone* trust them?

Nor did **Kate** think that younger audiences would eventually move to "trusted news and broadcast sources." Rather, they were more likely to apply the "fake news label" to all media.

The real problem, however, is that the "trusted sources" do not deserve our trust (see, for example, Pope story on this page).

But there is a far deeper issue involved in all this. The rot is so deep that a young "pro-choice" Trinity College student, for example, can argue that the unborn child is a human being only if the mother thinks it is human.

Here she is echoing the whole pro-choice and media lobby. So the real crisis, **Kate**, is not "fake news", it is disregard for the truth, a loss of contact with reality. That's where you need to start with your students.

FILM Review Arrival

Paramount Pictures • Directed by Denis Villeneuve

What is that bond that brings strangers and different civilisations together and unites them? Communication.

Louise Banks (Amy Adams), a linguistic professor, lives a solitary life. Outside of work she pays little attention to the world, her mind always filled with memories of her deceased daughter. But the world soon comes calling.

Twelve mysterious spacecraft appear at different locations around the globe. Every eighteen hours a doorway to each vessel opens allowing a delegation of humans in.

Clearly the occupants wish to communicate with humanity but no-one can understand what they are saying. Louise is drafted in to

help decipher their language.

Though terrified, she ventures into one ship and encounters utterly alien creatures. They are physically beyond imagination, and their language and "writing" bear no resemblance to anything in our culture.

But for Louise language is as much about empathy as syntax. Over time she develops, piece by piece, a basic grasp of the aliens' grammar as well as establishing a relationship of trust with these incredible beings.

She also begins to realise that how they communicate is related to how they exist, which is on an entirely different plane to humanity. It is a slow process though and unfortunately the wider world will not wait.

Different nations have their own interpretations of the aliens' intentions, with many fearing that this is an invasion. Mankind is on the verge of war. A simple mistranslation of even one word could lead to global catastrophe.

Arrival is science fiction but not about spaceships and special effects. It is more cerebral with mind-bending ideas that will keep you thinking long after you have watched the movie.

It illustrates how important words are and the consequence their meaning can have. The film is also about existence and existing. How we understand those has even more consequence than mere language.



Amy Adams and Jeremy Renner in *Arrival*.

COMMENT

St. Mary's Priory, Tallaght, Dublin 24.
Tel: 01-4048187 Fax: 01-4596784 E-mail: alivepaper@gmail.com

Wimpy men

Irish men, including so many Catholic men, are turning more and more into wimps. And they're bringing up their sons to be the same. They lack conviction, confidence, commitment and, above all, courage.

As a result, they are easily fooled by the latest left-wing nonsense, and are intimidated into silence.

It is the crazies in the media who now tell them, for example, how they should think, when they should feel indignant and about what issues.

Marxist feminist ideology in particular, has played a major role in robbing men of a sense of their identity and turning them into silent bystanders or servile fellow travellers with those promoting an irrational, anti-human agenda.

The morality of "choice", which dominates our society, means that Soros-funded groups and those with media support for their aims can manipulate the public to support virtually any absurdity.

How could men ever have been led to believe that they could ignore God and his commandments in their lives?; that higher wages for more consumption is the purpose of life?; that booze and sport is the best we can do for happiness?

How have a growing number of men come to think that they can keep a woman waiting for years for marriage, giving her the demeaning, second rate label of "partner"? Why would any woman *want* to marry such a gutless guy?

How has our society come to accept that men have some kind of right to walk out on their wives and children to set up home with another woman?

How have men been fooled into believing that the protection of marriage and the family is not their responsibility?

Savage notion

Above all, how could any man, indeed any human being, accept the corrupt and savage notion that brutally ending the life of an unborn child is "a woman's right to choose"?

What kind of spineless wimp does it take to betray his girlfriend or even his wife, in a time of crisis, to ignore or deny his grave responsibility to do everything possible to protect his own unborn child?

We need a revolt against this kind of destructive feminist ideology that is bringing so much misery on so many people. And the revolt should be led by men.

Men need to have the courage and the conviction to stand up, not just for their own personal beliefs, but for something more fundamental: for the Catholic faith, for truth, justice and goodness.

Each man in his own particular situation needs to man up, beginning today.

Alive!

Nigeria: 'no urgency to proclaim gospel'

A NIGERIAN archbishop has issued a powerful call to the Church in his own country to make a deeper commitment to the Catholic faith and to the work of evangelisation.

For him perhaps the greatest challenge facing the Church in Africa at present, is complacency and a lack of missionary commitment among priests and religious.

From 30 years experience as a priest, "one of the serious deficiencies" he had observed among both priests and religious was "the lack of a proper sense of mission, lack of serious missionary commitment and lack of missionary creativity."

This lack, said Archbishop Mathew Ndagoso, often shows itself in "the absence of proper pastoral planning and in not implementing such plans where they exist."

The Archbishop of Kaduna in northern Nigeria made his comments in a homily during the ordination of a new bishop for the diocese of Shendam.

"Many in our generation seem to have been infected with the deadly virus of complacency, lethargy and nonchalance," he said.

"We like to bask in the euphoria of being the original and the well established Roman Catholic Church founded on Peter, but we have no sense of urgency to proclaim the gospel."

Warming to the topic, he said: "Before our very own eyes we see wolves in sheep's clothing poaching and devouring our sheep."

Yet, "we are without any serious concern except to reassure ourselves that when some leave, others will come in on their own because we are one, holy, catholic and apostolic."

The age of the Church waiting for people to come

in on their own, if ever there was such an age, had long gone for good.

"Ours is the era of the shepherd leaving the ninety nine sheep and going out in search of the lost one," he said.

Warned

He warned leaders in the Church at all levels to avoid the temptation of feeling secure in their well established position and feeling satisfied with the huge attendances at Mass.

Rather, they needed to learn some serious lessons from "two earth-shaking events of last year", Brexit and the election of Donald Trump as US president.

These events had sent clear signals of general discontent and displeasure, rightly or wrongly, with the establishment "to which we all know that we belong as a church."

Church leaders needed to learn from "the establishments in London and



• Catholic youth group in Nigeria.

Washington" who did not see what was coming "because of the false sense of security."

Archbishop Ndagoso also cautioned the Catholic faithful to be wary of the activities of people who go about masquerading as "men of God".

No one present, he remarked, needed to be told about these people pretending to be men of God but

"causing confusion all over the place and in some cases wreaking havoc on many innocent souls in the name of Christianity."

But, he added, "unfortunately, many of our people who are genuinely seeking the face of God are led to believe that these are truly 'men of God' only to be fed with a 'concocted' brand of religion which claims to be Christianity."

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SCRAPS

by Tom English COLUMN



Turning a blind eye

WHILE we listen to the heartbreaking stories emerging from Ireland's past, I can't help getting the feeling that history will one day repeat itself.

The next generation (or beyond) will be listening to stories on the radio and TV of how society allowed the horrific practice of abortion. We'll have women telling their stories of how the media and government agencies used everything in their power to make abortion acceptable and easily accessible.

"They kept telling us," women will say, "that my baby was just a clump of cells - and we believed them. They never showed us a scan of the baby at the abortion clinic"and so on.

Some will even blame the Catholic Church for not doing enough to stem the death toll of innocent unborn children.

What is incredible today is that many people are condemning the Church for how they treated children in the past, and from the other side of their mouth, they are screaming for the slaughter of innocent children.



Museum

In London, there is a place called the Imperial War Museum. In it there is an entire section dedicated to the Jewish Holocaust. I've been to that museum on a number of occasions and have sat and reflected on the horror of it all.

What is striking are the amount of shoes on display which belonged to victims of the Holocaust - particularly children's shoes. And to read the stories and see the implements of Nazi torture and experimentation is truly sickening.

Today we can't see the children's shoes but we know that abortion is our modern Holocaust. The death of millions of children is hidden behind non-violent words like 'termination'. Aborted baby parts are experimented on while others are sold on for profit. And governments and media turn a blind eye to it all.

History repeating itself.

A compromised Church

FORMER British Labour Party deputy leader Roy Hattersley was speaking recently on RTE Radio 1's *Sean O'Rourke Show*.

Mr Hattersley wrote a book entitled 'Catholics'. During the interview he revealed that he is an atheist (even though he said 'Thank God' a few times!) but he admired Catholicism because it has "the great fortune of knowing what is right and wrong. That is a very attractive quality".

He went on to say that if the Catholic Church "sticks rigidly to its principles or compromises them, either way it loses support". And he recalled an amusing anecdote when his mother was asked if Roy grew up in a religious home, she replied: "We were not religious at all, we were Church of England".

Decline

A compromised religion is never a good thing. Any church that compromised the teachings of Jesus has seen its numbers decline rapidly. It's one thing being a sinner but quite another being told your continual sinning is grand.

If the Catholic Church falls into this trap, it will follow the same path as other faiths.

Author Michael O'Brien noted: 'We are asked to compromise a little here, a little there, unsuspecting that eventually there will be no strength left to resist the betrayal of everything.'

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS: I see the ad on TV for Birdseye fish fingers has gone all PC. Old chubby Captain Birdseye is now trim and trendy. Even the fishfingers look skinnier! This PC lark is all a cod!

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Leftwing students turn against rational argument

STUDENTS with extreme leftwing views in the US are making it increasingly difficult for college lecturers and professors to give courses in philosophy and ethics, and to examine both sides in any debate.

And the attempt to silence all campus opposition to politically correct ideas is spreading to this side of the Atlantic.

In the UK *Spiked* magazine is waging a campaign to prevent the closing down of debate in universities on controversial issues like "gender", immigration and climate change.

"I've been teaching a course called Contemporary Moral Problems for more than 30 years, ever since the late 1980s," Professor Daniel Bonevac of Texas University told Fox News.

"For years it's gone very, very well. But recently, it's become almost impossible to teach."

He explained that in the past students were eager to debate ideas. They wanted to hear arguments even on the other side, in order to learn.

But recently he has noted a strange phenomenon. "As soon as a controversial topic comes up, one where there's an approved, politically correct opinion, I find that students just turn off," he said.



"They think, 'you're going to tell me what I've already heard many, many times before, I have nothing to learn from this', or, 'you're going to say something politi-

cally incorrect, and that's very dangerous'."

He admitted that the new situation makes him feel uncomfortable. "I could be asked to take a stand and I don't wanna be on the spot," he said.

He noted that a few weeks earlier, students who were not enrolled in his class showed up prepared to disrupt it should he say something upsetting to them.

"When I just proceeded with business as usual, they left, but that small number is ready to try to shut down any open discussion of ideas," he said.

Katie to head UCD students' union



■ In a remarkable turn of events Katie Ascough (left), who writes the Youth Column in *Alive!* each month, has been elected President of UCD's students' union for the 2017-18 academic year.

An openly committed Catholic, Katie is a prominent prolife activist in UCD, and wholeheartedly supports the 8th Amendment, guaranteeing

the right to life of both mother and unborn child.

A 3rd year science student, she was well ahead of the other three candidates on the first count, and held her lead with each count.

Admitting that her Catholic, prolife views are not "the norm" in UCD, she promised to be a president who would "work for the good of all the students".

WHAT

GOD MEANS TO ME!

Looking back over the past few years, I can honestly say that I had no idea of the plans that God had for me. He has led me along in a much unexpected way, to become the Catholic missionary that I am today.

I am from Hilltown, County Down, and am the youngest in my family, with one brother and one sister. I love singing, playing the guitar and anything artsy.

Growing up I had little belief in God. It wasn't something that we ever discussed as a family, and in school it was more about getting the right answer to the question rather than seeking spiritual nourishment.

I'm sure that a lot of people can identify with that. Around the age of 14 I distinctly remember sitting on my bed, looking up to the ceiling and saying, "God, if you're real, help me do well in my exams."

I did very well in those exams, and I gave absolutely no credit to God. If anything I wrote him off completely, thinking it was all done by my own effort. I didn't need the 'God' that I thought I knew.

My overall opinion of God was of someone who wanted to dictate my actions, judge me and, essentially, make me miserable. I didn't want that 'God' and thankfully that is not the person that I have come to know.

A couple of years later I attended a Youth 2000 retreat without the faintest idea of what to expect. It amazed me to see over 1,000 young people there who were passionate about their faith.

I had so many misconceptions about what the Church teaches, and it was as if my eyes were opened to the truth. It was also the first time I had ever experienced, or even heard of, Eucharistic Adoration.

I was intrigued by the idea that this 'piece of bread' could actually be Jesus. It was such a foreign concept to me, even though it was possibly what I was taught in school.

Finally it all sank in when I was sitting before the Lord in adoration.

A young woman was sharing her testimony of what Jesus had done in her life, and I looked up to Jesus and said, "If you could do that in her life, what can you do in mine?"

That one moment changed everything. It was the first time that I truly acknowledged Jesus' presence. I felt like he wanted to show me just what he could do in my life, but only if I was willing.

Looking back at that time, I can see that there was an instantaneous change in my life. I had a new sense of purpose and the desire to live differently.

Suddenly I was surrounded by faithful friends, I was actively learning more about the Faith and I started regularly attending the Sacraments.

As I continued my faith journey, the one consistent thing was Adoration. I was constantly looking to spend time with Jesus. I would spend hours before him in silence.

I would ask him questions, thank him and pray to him. I would even just talk to Him as I would with any other of my friends. It was this that brought me to realise that my faith is a relationship.

Just like any human relationship, it takes time to really get to know a person and not just things about them. Relationships are full of love and sacri-

fice and I found that my faith was no different.

It was definitely not always easy, and it can still be a challenge, but I know that he loves me and that he knows what is best for my life.

After leaving school I attended St. Mary's University in Belfast for one year. But I had a real desire to start sharing my faith with other young people like me.

I wanted them to experience the same love that I had been shown on that Youth 2000 retreat. That desire led me to apply to serve with NET Ministries Ireland.

I have been able to speak to young people throughout Ireland and Scotland about my faith and encourage them to take the same chance that I did. It has also given me solid Catholic formation and new friends.

It has now been three years, and I do not regret the decision. I am sure that it was what God wanted of me. It has been a challenge, but every step has been an amazing journey with the Lord.

The initial act of entrustment brought me on an incredible journey that I never even thought possible. By handing over what little control I had to God, he was able to work through me, doing what I thought was impossible.

He has given me such a passion for my faith and restored confidence in myself. My journey is not over yet, but I have learnt that by trusting in God he can do far greater things through me than I can do by myself.



• Deborah McKay, 22, has been involved with many youth ministries around Ireland and is currently a full-time volunteer with NET Ministries.

THE THINGS THEY SAY...

● Power of beauty

Beauty is subversive in the best sense. It catches the heart by surprise. It sneaks past all our scepticism and fatigue and lifts us out of ourselves.

At its best, it awakens our taste for goodness and truth and ennoble what it means to be human. That's why the devil hates beauty, deforms and poisons it.

And why Dostoyevsky was exactly right when he said: "Beauty is the battlefield where God and Satan contend for the hearts of men."

— Archbishop Charles Chaput

● Not a feminist

It's difficult for me to call myself a feminist, because modern feminism is "anti-male and pro-abortion. I am neither.

— Kellyanne Conway, first woman to head a US presidential campaign

● Steen v Pat Kenny

S.: Pat, I have to take issue with you using that word, 'absolutist', and you used it to a lady in the audience as well... Are there any circumstances in which you think it is permissible, by law, to kill a completely innocent *born* human being?

K.: Of course not. S.: Are you absolutist? K.: I think in that regard, yes. S.: And is that a bad thing? K.: The point we are debating here is whether or not there are circumstances when an unborn child... is, if you like the property of the woman, part of the woman.

S.: The property of the woman? My daughter is not my property. I am a guardian of my child until she reaches adulthood. But she is not my property.

— Maria Steen & Pat Kenny, on TV3's Pat Kenny Tonight



Maria Steen

● Not for food or water

Many countries in the West, including Canada and the Netherlands have come together to raise funds. Not funds for food in Africa. Nor for water in Africa. Not funds that the Africans can use as they want.

Instead, they are gathering to raise millions of dollars that they are dedicating to so-called safe abortion. That these western countries have not even thought of asking the Africans what they want is most disheartening.

ening.

This is the new colonialism. This is cultural imperialism. This is the dictatorship of the wealthy donor. What WE are asking for is your support for safe delivery of African babies!

— Uju Ekeocha, President, Culture of Life Africa

● Addicted to self-help

Are you buying one self-help book after another without really becoming happy? Do you fall for mindfulness one month and positive psychology the next? Are you constantly seeking self-improvement through therapy or life-coaching?

If so you are likely addicted to personal development and in need of anti-self-help. The following seven-step guide can help you stand firm and resist the self-improvement craze of our times:

1. Cut out the navel-gazing... 2. Focus on the negative in your life... 3. Put on your 'No' hat... 4. Suppress your feelings... 5. Sack your coach... 6. Read a novel, not a self-help book... 7. Dwell on the past...

— Svend Brinkmann, author of *Stand Firm*

● Protect the week

From time to time, a majority in a democracy can be put together in favour of doing things to members of a vulnerable minority that those members may not like.

In more serious circumstances, if you are a member of that vulnerable minority, majority rule can feel a lot like tyranny...

We have fundamental rights in our Constitution precisely because, every now and then, the majority may wish to do something to a minority that is, quite

simply, wrong.

Where it breaches a fundamental human right in the Constitution, this allows the vulnerable minority or individual to say: "Stop! Even though you want to do this thing to me, you can't."

This is why the 8th Amendment is part of our Constitution. Its purpose is to protect a vulnerable minority... It also recognises the equal right to life of the mother.

— Maria Steen, Iona Institute, to Citizens' Assembly

● Two-speed EU

We talked of this so-called Europe of different speeds. Some people voiced concern that it might mean different classes of Europeans. I said such a difference of European unity is laid down in the treaties. It is a lived reality now.

— Chancellor Angela Merkel

Teach your children Divine Mercy

Divine Mercy devotion originated in the early 20th century, and is one of the most popular Catholic devotions today. Jesus told Sister Faustina Kowalska: "You will prepare the world for my final coming" (Diary, 429).

In her famous Diary: *Divine Mercy in My Soul*, Sr. Faustina recorded a series of visions of Jesus. He revealed the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and promised that anything can be obtained with this prayer if it is in keeping with his will.

St. John Paul II formally established the Divine Mercy devotion and canonised Faustina in 2000.

There are 4 components in this wonderful devotion.

- The Feast of Divine Mercy (1st Sunday after Easter).

- The Chaplet of Divine Mercy (St. Faustina was given a message to pray the Chaplet on Rosary beads).

EWTN website has a great child-friendly cartoon video that guides children through the chaplet with St. Faustina. I used it with my 5th Class and by the end of the video they were praying along with the prayer.

They were delighted when I ordered a prayer card for each of them. "We can keep them to pray the Chaplet?", exclaimed one of them, surprised and excited.

- The Hour of Mercy (Jesus

Handing On The Faith

Aoife Hogan



asked that at 3pm we do one of the following: Make the Stations of The Cross, visit Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, immerse ourselves in his Passion.

- The Divine Mercy image. Why not, as a family, celebrate the infinite mercy of God and the role of Mary, Mother of Mercy, as we approach the Feast of Divine Mercy?

The image needs to be explained in a way that children (and adults) can grasp.

Source of light

Tell the children how Jesus is the source of light against the image's dark background, just as he is the source of light in a life otherwise tempted to darkness.

To show the importance of light, ask the children what would happen if the lights in a room were turned off.

We could not see anything, or find the way to go and we might end up tripping over ourselves and hurting one another.

However, with the light on we can see clearly and be careful. Jesus in the image is like that – his light guides us, leads us in love.

Ask your children to look at the image and to recall what poured from the heart of Jesus when it was pierced by the soldier's lance.

You might discuss how the pale rays in the image are like the waters of baptism, cleansing the soul of sin. Throughout our lives, the Sacrament of Reconciliation offers this same purifying grace. That's why we should often speak to Jesus in confession.

The red rays are "blood for our souls". They remind us to reflect on the Passion of Jesus, and on his blood that was spilt on the cross to save us.

"Mankind will not have peace until it turns with trust to my Mercy" (Diary no. 300).

JUST FOR PRIESTS

Setting aside 10 Commandments

PART 1:

Last September a 13-year-old girl, we'll call her Fiona, moved to a new school. A few weeks into term it was announced that the children would have an opportunity to receive the sacrament of penance.

This caused some consternation. Many of the children had not been to confession since their Confirmation or even their First Holy Communion and didn't know what to say or do.

A friend told Fiona that she wouldn't know what to say because she had no sins to confess. This surprised Fiona, given the list of sins she herself had to confess.

"Do you ever give cheek to your mammy and daddy?," she asked. "Yes!" "Well, that's a sin," explained Fiona.

"Do you ever fight with your brothers and sisters?" "Yes!" "Well, that's a sin." "Do you go to Mass every Sunday?" "No!" "Well, that's a sin."

By the time Fiona was finished her friend was amazed to discover just how many sins she had. And soon other members of the class were queuing up to have their consciences examined.

For the past fifty years or so the Ten Commandments have



been greatly neglected in Catholic preaching and religious education.

Many factors contributed to this neglect: a desire to emphasise God's love, distorted Catholic teaching on conscience, a focus on "the positive" in the culture, and so on.

But whatever the reasons, it is now clear that neglect of the Commandments has been a disaster for both the Church and society.

Disaster

As time goes on we are seeing more and more just how big a disaster it has been, in so many different ways.

Of course people always disobeyed the Commandments, but they knew they were doing wrong. So there was some possibility of calling them back to goodness, to God and to repentance.

What is different today is that many people no longer

even know what is good or evil, what is in keeping with God's loving plan for our salvation and what is opposed to it.

Many of the ancient pagan religions saw no connection between belief in the gods and how their followers should behave. Indeed the gods often behaved more outrageously than their adherents.

Against this, one of the great insights of the Jewish religion was to see the close connection between faith in God and morality, how we should live in community.

This was expressed in the Commandments, given by God to Moses on Sinai. And it was seen as a great blessing and a cause of pride for the whole people.

As Moses told the people: "The statutes and rules that I have taught you will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples. When they hear all these statutes, they will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'" (Deut 4, 5-8)

Neglect of the Commandments, however, has led to a rupture once again between faith and morality, leading to a "spirituality" that makes no demands on us but is there only for our comfort.

Sacrifice of the Mass

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time: the prayer over the offerings at Mass says "... for whenever the memorial of this sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is accomplished."

The old translation said: "... for when we proclaim the death of the Lord you continue the work of his redemption." Notice that two key words were missing here: "memorial" and "sacrifice".

In fact, in the old translation of the Missal the importance of sacrifice was quite frequently played down.

The notion of sacrifice, however, could not be completely eliminated because from the very beginning of Church history it has been central to the Catholic understanding of the Eucharist.

The old translation of the Missal, made shortly after Vatican Council II, was influenced by a significant trend in the wider theology of the Eucharist at that time.

This trend, to "spiritualise" sacrifice, has lasted until the present day, despite efforts by, for example, Pope John Paul II to counter it (see his great encyclical letter, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*).

The US theologian Matthew Levering has also tried to restore the authentic Catholic teaching on the Eucharist in his book *Sacrifice and Community*.

There he speaks about "the displacement of sacrifice in much contemporary Catholic Eucharistic theology."

He says that "in mainstream contemporary Catholic approaches to the Eucharist,

KNOW YOUR FAITH

believers' sacrificial-sacramental participation in Christ's sacrifice... is effaced" (page 8).

Again, he refers to "the major steps by which Catholic theologians came to reject sacrifice as a superseded Jewish mode of worship."

"Displace", "efface" and "reject" are very strong words. They point to a radical attack on the Catholic notion of the Eucharist as a sacrifice.

Embodied

In Judaism sacrifice was embodied, it was made concrete in the sacrificial slaughter of an animal such as a lamb or a bull. For Christians Christ's sacrifice too was embodied - it was his death on Calvary.

But the recent trend in theology has been to "spiritualise" sacrifice, to treat it as though it were purely a spiritual or interior matter, an attitude of surrender to God.

Levering recalled that the great Irish Dominican expert on the sacraments, Fr. Colman O'Neill, "pointed out that ecumenical concerns often lead Catholic theologians to begin with communion and downplay sacrifice."

O'Neill noted that "bracketing the aspect of sacrifice often leads to distortions, given the significance of sacrifice in Catholic eucharistic theology."

These distortions have seriously damaged Catholic life and spirituality for decades.

Cardinal Connell was holy, caring gentleman

In 2002 I accompanied Cardinal Connell to an event welcoming a new Board of Management in the Mater Hospital. It was during the time of crisis in the Ferns Diocese.

After the ceremony and reception a board member escorted us along the hospital corridors to where the Cardinal's car was parked.

Our progress was interrupted several times as the Cardinal stopped along the way, talking with concern and care to patients and their families, asking how they were, how long they had been in.

One Filipino family in particular were amazed and delighted that he came into the ward to bless their father and pray with them.

Two of the hospital cleaning staff recognised him, dropped their mops and exclaimed with lilting inner city accents: "You look so much nicer than you do on the telly! Can I give ya a kiss?" The Cardinal dutifully obliged.

The board member pulled me to one side by the elbow and whispered with a kind of hushed awe: "I'm seeing a side of this man I never knew existed."

Working in the diocese's Communications Office at the time, I explained that I had seen him like that on many, many occasions. I also reflected: I'm not doing a good job at communicating the Cardinal's immense kindness.

The following evening I was with him again, driving him to the Mass of the Lord's Supper in St. Oliver's Park, Clondalkin, in the tiny chapel of the Travelling People.

He was totally at ease in the packed chapel, reverently washing the feet of members of the community, praying with them and sharing a cup of tea and a chat as a guest of one family in their home afterwards.

No TV cameras were present, a pity. The whole evening was so moving and joyful that it deserved wider attention.



SPEAKER'S CORNER

By Fr. Damian McNeice

The Cardinal often chose to celebrate with the poorest parishes during Holy Week. On his way to a parish on the northside for the Good Friday celebration of the Passion, he decided to leave his carefully prepared homily in the car.

That day, his simple but profound words lasted under two minutes and afterwards he spent the best part of an hour chatting to everyone. Again, I heard the refrain: "He's much, much nicer than you'd think."

World Youth Day 2000

During World Youth Day 2000 conditions in Ostia outside Rome were sweltering.

Archbishop Connell realised that the hundreds of English-speaking young people from all over the globe, red-faced,



The late Cardinal Connell

swigging from water bottles and waiting for his catechesis, needed to be treated gently.

He put his text aside and spoke for much shorter than the time allotted, about the beauty of Christ, in simple language drawn from his vast intellect. He was a big hit.

Young pilgrims came up to thank him and said if they had a vote in the next conclave they would choose him!

Once asked what name he would choose if elected Pope, he first ruled out any possibility of that happening.

Then he replied with a mischievous twinkle in his eye: "I think I would choose the name Sixtus the Sixth. It would be a really tricky one to pronounce!"

The Cardinal stayed at the Irish College in Rome when attending various meetings in the Vatican.

Polish students there were surprised to find a person of such high ecclesial rank engaging them in easy conversation, asking about their studies and interests.

In much of Poland, people's experience of bishops and cardinals was one of distant reserve. This led one Pole to ask quite bluntly: "Why are you so nice to us?" "But you are my brother priests!" he replied.

To their delight, he accepted invitations to attend their ordinations. His brother priests in Dublin too were aware of his pastoral kindness to many, and of his deep integrity, a trait and sensitivity that could be misunderstood and misconstrued.

It was often when people had met Cardinal Connell, the Victorian gentleman, that rehearsed lazy stereotypes of him rightly melted. That gentlemanliness will not be forgotten.

● Fr Damian McNeice worked in the Archdiocese of Dublin Communications Office from 1997 to 2004.

Monthly Meditation

Either Catholic or atheist

In this way I was led on to examine more attentively what I do not doubt was in my thoughts long before, namely, the concatenation [chain] of argument by which the mind ascends from its first to its final religious idea.

And I came to the conclusion that there was no medium, in true philosophy, between Atheism and Catholicity; that a perfectly consistent mind, under the circumstances in which it finds itself here below, must embrace either the one or the other.

And I hold this still: I am a Catholic by virtue of my believing in a God.

And if I am asked why I believe in a God, I answer that it is because I believe in myself, for I feel it impossible to believe in my own existence (and of that fact I am quite sure) without believing also in the existence of Him, who lives as a Personal, All-seeing, All-judging Being in my conscience.

Now, I dare say, I have not expressed myself with philosophical correctness, because I have not given myself to the study of what metaphysicians have said on the subject.

But I think I have a strong true meaning in what I say

— John Henry Newman in his *Apologia*

Jonah regrets God's mercy

The Prophets, Part 28, Jonah

The Book of Jonah, just four chapters or 48 verses, is well worth a read. It tackles themes such as obedience, resentment, repentance, bewilderment and God's providence and care.

Jonah came from Gath Hepher in Galilee, less than an hour's walk from Nazareth. He is mentioned earlier in the Bible, proclaiming God's Word (2 Kings 14:25).

The son of Amittai (Jon 1:1), he was a prophet during the reign of Jeroboam II in the Northern Kingdom (782-753 B.C.). Amos and Hosea were there too, and possibly Joel.

Jonah is told to preach repentance to the great Assyrian city, Nineveh, that its people might be spared.

Raymond Brown says: "If Jonah had been told to pro-



Fr Joseph Briody

nounce doom over Assyria, like Nahum, he would have obeyed immediately. It was not cowardice that sent him in the other direction but bewilderment and disappointment."

Nineveh was Israel's arch-enemy. Jonah's task was unwelcome - conversion of the Gentiles.

The "sign of Jonah" (Mt 12:39) is both Christ's resurrection and the conversion of the Gentiles.

Jonah, like Israel in general, thought that God's Word could only be spoken and discerned in his own land. If he escaped from Israel, he thought, then he could avoid that Word. So he fled to Tarshish, a neutral territory.

The Assyrians were wicked and for Jonah it was unjust

of God to give them an opportunity to repent (4:2).

He didn't want to preach to Nineveh because he knew God was merciful. He didn't want the people to repent and escape retribution.

"That is why I made haste to flee to Tarshish," he told God. "For I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and repenting of evil."

Bare minimum

His call to repentance is the bare minimum (3:4): "In 40 days Nineveh will be overthrown!" He couldn't

have said less. It is "the shortest prophetic proclamation in the Bible" (Peter Burrows).

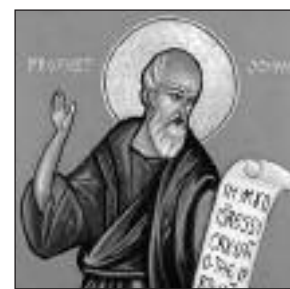
Jesus' own call to repentance is not much longer: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He makes this call after 40 days in the wilderness.

Forty seems to be the duration for change from one condition to another. It is also the time of testing and the span of a generation.

Jonah says that the people believed God, not that they believed Jonah (3:5). The Word spoken by Jonah or any of prophet is God's Word.

It has its own power: "And the people of Nineveh believed God: they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least."

The Word of the prophet is God's Word and it is effective. Repentance leads to dependence on God.





Celebrating the Wonder of Marriage

Great joy: to prepare your children for life

Preparing their children for life and for the future is the great privilege, joy and responsibility of parents. And given the pace of change in society and the conflicting visions of life on offer, it is certainly no small challenge today.

Even parents trying to do their best, and following the latest trends can end up being faulted for not getting it right.

So, when the millennial generation show self-absorbed or "quitter" tendencies, there is someone to blame "failed parenting strategies".

Young people "were told they were special, they could have anything they wanted," said one author. "They got medals for coming last. Then they were thrust into the real world."

Ok, but parents and teachers were only doing what educational psychologists, child counselors and development researchers told them was best.

Anna Tyzack, a features writer for the *Daily Telegraph*, recently spoke to a number of these "experts" about preparing children for their future careers.

But this necessarily included giving children a wider preparation for life, and Tyzack distilled the experience and advice of the experts into 25 tips or rules for parenting.

Many of these pieces of advice were sensible and practical, but there were also some very big gaps that need to be filled. Here is a rough version of a few of the guidelines.

Hard work

1. Teach them that hard work pays

What children are asked to do should be in keeping with their ability, while stretching them. Don't jump in to help with their homework, and reward them only when they have truly worked hard and achieved some success.

It's essential for young people to experience the feelings of satisfaction and achievement that accompany hard graft and achievement.

But in a society that is so set on having "a healthy work-life balance" some young people see no reason why they should go the extra mile. "They leave work on the dot yet wonder why they're not moving up the career ladder," said one employer.

2. Make them wait

Parents may give a child what he or she demands in order to avoid a tantrum, or an argument with a teenager. But children need to learn that they can't have everything they want when they want it.

Teaching them to restrain their desires and to have patience helps them to understand that their wishes are not the centre of the universe.

"Everything happens so quickly in our world of smart phones and online shopping but patience is still an essential skill," said psychologist Jessamy Hibberd.

3. Lead by example

Love between a husband and wife, the willingness to work together, to make sacrifices for each other and their children, is the greatest example they can give their children.

At the concrete level one expert says: "If you've



• Disney child characters, as in *The Little Mermaid*, *Mulan* and *Finding Nemo*, often disobey their parents and are presented as heroes for doing so.

banned your children from having phones in the bedroom, don't have yours by your bed."

Again, how can children appreciate the wonder of making their First Holy Communion if both their parents do not joyfully take part in Mass each Sunday?

The importance of good example was well-known many centuries before today's experts came along, yet many parents still fail to see how the message they give their children is contradicted by their own behaviour.

And often it is the children who are the quickest to point that out.

Because I say so...

4. They are the children

Children may rebel, throw a temper tantrum, argue or sulk. But in the long run, they want to be children and they want their parents to be parents. This is what gives them security and the confidence to try new things.

Happiness in the home and in society requires all of us to be able to accept authority and just laws. It is good to explain, when possible, why a child or teenager must obey a particular rule, but in the end, it must be obeyed.

That means that there is a punishment for disobedience, and it is enforced.

Some family films, especially coming from Disney, show children being disobedient to their parents, getting into great danger, but in the long run proving to be wiser than the adults or benefitting the whole community.

Children may need to be shown the flaws in the subversive, anti-family and anti-child ideology of the film-maker.

If parents insist on their authority from the beginning, and show how it is being exercised out of love, their children will be more likely to trust them in moments of crisis.

5. Be a stickler for first impressions

Encourage your child to be courteous on the phone and when answering letters, emails and texts. This is how they first make an impression on others.

Appropriate dress is also important. Modesty is not only a virtue, it also speaks of quiet self-confidence.

A tailored suit might not be necessary in their line of work but they will still need to look presentable.

Our Marriage in a Minute!

1. Love at first sight?

We were not each other's usual types at all. But we felt there was something really different and refreshing as soon as we met and felt we didn't want to be without each other.

2. Favourite memory of our wedding?

Having our family and friends together to witness our marriage and celebrate with us. We had a small wedding in Rome, and felt relaxed and able to enjoy and cherish the ceremony. The priest who married us gave us some silver coins to take out and polish every year!



Anne and Iulian Iurascu

3. Best holiday ever?

After we bought our house and were eagerly awaiting the arrival of our first baby, Grace, we went on a holiday to Croatia, which was so peaceful and relaxing in contrast to the excitement of what was ahead!

While that was the last time just the two of us were away we are very happy to have shared all our subsequent holidays with our family.

4. Who makes the breakfast?

We have different tastes for breakfast (muesli v eggs) and are much happier preparing our own. At the weekend we have tea/coffee together thanks to Iulian and usually bake "scuffins" (scone and muffin combo!) and stay in bed with our children around us.

5. Who takes out the bins?

Anne takes them out generally because she's at home when it needs to be done. However Iulian understands her "allergy" to the brown bin and makes the contents disappear from sight when it gets full, returning it clean to the kitchen!

6. Song of songs?

We came together with very different ideas about music but have found common ground with Van Morrison, U2 and Pavarotti singing Miss Sarajevo.

7. Saints on speed dial? (favourite saints)

St. Anthony, St. Patrick and St. Charles of Mount Argus. We owe our home to St. Martha!

8. Your greatest joint achievement?

While it hasn't always been easy, getting to where we are now 12 years on, having grown in understanding, acceptance and love for each other. We think we are both better people because of our marriage.

Our children Grace, Eva, James and Anna are undoubtedly the greatest blessings of our marriage.

9. Best advice on marriage?

Be as forgiving and accepting of each other's faults as God is of your own. Admit and accept that neither spouse is perfect. Be ready to say sorry and forgive. In difficult times turn your eyes to Jesus with faith that he is Lord of every situation, however you feel at that moment. Recognise and respect that you have different experiences of family life. Pray for each other and with each other. Never speak ill of your spouse. Don't take each other for granted. Trust wholeheartedly that your "I do" at the altar and the grace of the Sacrament of Marriage is sufficient for unity in every situation and never give up on that.

10. After twelve years, what makes your marriage worthwhile?

Knowing there's someone who puts your happiness and needs first (most of the time!). Being in a relationship of trust and having somebody to share and to accept wherever God will lead us in the future! The blessing of watching our children grow and develop.

Amy: victim of betrayal

■ be3 recently screened *Autopsy: Amy Winehouse*, on the tragic life and death of the UK singer who died in 2011, aged 27. Amy grew up in a happy secure home until the age of 9.

Then her father walked out on his wife and family to be with another woman. The docudrama made it crystal clear that Amy was devastated by her father's betrayal, and her life began to spiral out of control from that point on.

This highlighted the immense damage that is caused in the lives of countless children due to divorce and family breakdown.

How long will our society continue to ignore the lies and deception surrounding the issue of divorce and the dreadful, often life-long, harm it causes to children?

We need a revolutionary change in our attitude to both cohabitation and divorce.

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FATIMA apart for sale. 1 bedroom, large living room, divided by curtain with single bed & toilet

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& wash basin. Small kitchen, bathroom, 2 balconies, furnished, 10 mins from Shrine. Modern building. €55,000 or nearest offer. Tel: Peadar 086 1000618.

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ONE bedroom apartment for sale, Knock, Co. Mayo. Tel: 087 2895985.

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NOVENAS

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WOMAN early 60s, GSOH, likes travel, outdoors, NS, looking for similar gent for friend/relationship. Box 9901.

RETIRED teacher widow, living in North East, late 70s, refined, pleasant, GSOH, loves simple things in life, wltm cultured gent for companionship and outings. Box 9902.

MUNSTER lady late 60s, kind & caring, wishes to meet widower or single gent for friendship with view to marriage. Box 9903.

JOIN singles file. Kildare, Laois, Offaly areas. Text 087 4028593.

SINCERE gent, 60+, 5'9", varied interests, NS, SD, wltm attractive lady with style & panache for friendship with view to relationship. Photo appreciated. Tel: 086 3452255.

PILGRIMAGES

DIVINE Mercy pilgrimage, Krakow, 23 Apr; 4 July & 19 Sept, from £485. Medjugorje, 23 May, from £479. Contact Danny 028 90245547.

MEDJUGORJE departures, 7 nights, on 14 June and 6 Sept. Contact Phyllis Mulligan 042 9336705.

LOURDES. 4-10 Aug, (6 nights) ex Cork airport. Sp. Dir. Fr. Bernard Hughes. Group leader Mrs Breda Fleming (Innishannon, Cork). Contact Premier Travel, Cork Tel: 021 4277700 or Breda Fleming 085 8118089.

MEDJUGORJE pilgrimage Sept 20, 7 nights, ex Cork, to Mostar Airport. JWT Lic. No. TO 052. Contact Joan 087 9688233.

MEDJUGORJE. 6-13 Sept. Departing Shannon. John O'Brien. 086 8586304.

WALSINGHAM. England's National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. 21-25 April (4 nights). All-in cost €450. Day-trip included. Pilgrims make their own travel arrangements on designated Ryanair flights. Private coach from airport. Accom in Pilgrim Hostel. Tel: 086 8554665; 01 2808072. Email mgolden30@gmail.com.

CHRISTMAS pilgrimage to Holyland 2017 for 8 nights. Ex Dublin. Taking in Bethlehem,

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THANKSGIVING

IN honour of St. Anthony and Watt Henry. AT.

IN thanksgiving for favours received and about to be received. Sacred Heart of Jesus I place all my trust in you. Pub promised. TB.

MY sincere thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Sts. Teresa, Clare, Joseph, John the Great, Michael, Jude, Faustina, the Archangel, and the Immaculate Heart of Mary for many favours received. AMCO'D.

GRATEFUL thanks to St. Martha for favours received. LC.

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KIDS' CORNER



Dia dhaoibh, a Pháistí,
This month, on Good Friday, we remember how Jesus gave his life for us on the hill of Calvary. If he died, does that mean that Jesus is now dead? Definitely not.
He was dead and his body was buried in a tomb. But on the 3rd day, on Easter Sunday, the big stone was rolled away from the tomb and Jesus rose from the dead. So he is now alive, and forever.
Some children paint hard-boiled eggs in different colours and roll them down a grassy hill on Easter Sunday, seeing whose egg goes the farthest.
The egg reminds them of the stone being rolled away from the tomb of Jesus. Our chocolate Easter eggs should also remind us of the stone being rolled away from the Lord's tomb.
We also see little yellow furry Easter chicks. Why do we have chicks at this time of year? Again, it's because of Jesus. Just as a chicken comes out of an egg, Jesus comes out of the tomb. Happy Easter.
Slán go fóill,

Aisling

Easter Wordsearch

Can you find the words listed below in the grid?

T	A	N	G	E	K	D	A	W
M	S	U	N	B	N	A	P	S
A	A	R	G	M	P	W	U	R
G	N	R	E	O	I	N	I	E
D	G	E	A	T	D	S	E	I
A	E	T	S	A	E	U	A	D
L	L	S	Y	N	T	P	S	L
E	S	A	P	M	O	B	G	O
N	U	E	S	E	C	I	P	S

DAWN
EASTER
SUNDAY
TOMB
SOLDIERS

ANGEL
RISEN
PETER
MAGDALEN
SPICES

RIDDLES:
Q. What belongs to you but is used more by others? **A. Your name.**
Q. What goes up and doesn't come back down? **A. Your age.**

168 COLOURING PICTURE - WIN €10



Name.....
.....
Address.....
.....
.....
.....
Age.....

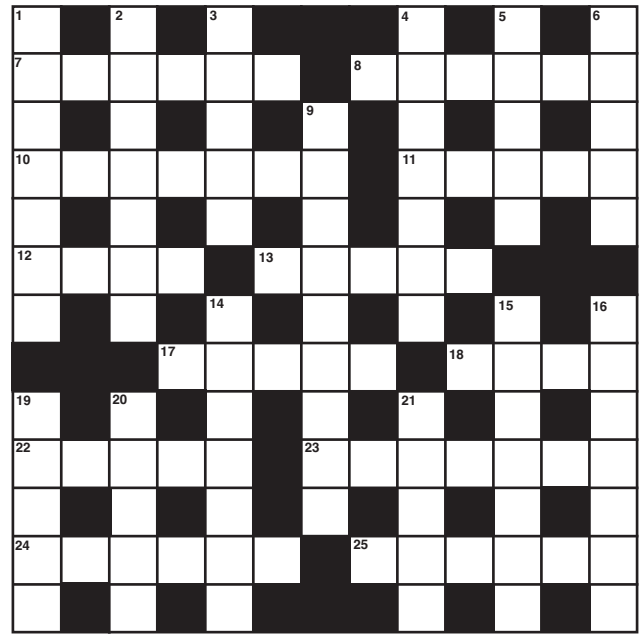
Last Month's Colouring Picture Winner was:
Eimear Doyle, Barrys Cross,
Taghmon, Co. Wexford.
Age 10.

March X-word Winner:
Des Havelin,
Lambay Road, Drumcondra,
Dublin 9.

Solution to March Crossword:
Across: 1. Seaside 5 Robot 8. Three 9. Leisure 10. Repress 11. Inset 12. Toyota 14. Astute 17. Amigo 19. Turkish 22. Thinner 23. Floor 24. Ridge 25. Postman.
Down: 1. Sitar 2. Atrophy 3. Irene 4. Enlist 5. Raisins 6. Blues 7. Theatre 12. Toaster 13. Trounce 15. Uniform 16. Stir up 19. Iliad 20. Riffs 21. Heron.

Prize Crossword...No.211

€25 Cryptic Clues: €25 for the first correct entry out of the bag. Entries before **14th April**. One entry per family. Winner and answers next month.



- ACROSS:**

 - 7. Box to hold the weight of the vehicle? (6)
 - 8. Don't remember if half the gear is found in the castle (6)
 - 10. Awfully rude man with no gun (7)
 - 11. Doctor is one to have this type of aircraft (5)
 - 12. The French missing from team that's level (4)
 - 13. An obtuse way to fish? (5)
 - 17. Writer Mark was a twin perhaps (5)
 - 18. A convict returns to a festive occasion (4)
 - 22. Sliced lemon makes a nice fruit (5)
 - 23. Sounds like an experienced non-professional? (7)
 - 24. A military type of skin art? (6)
 - 25. Al coming in soon to tavern (6)
- DOWN:**

 - 1. Cause D.C. to upset the defendant (7)
 - 2. Wave seen right in the cup! (7)
 - 3. British soldier has this kind of gun? (5)
 - 4. 500 seen in the lagoon capsizing in this boat (7)
 - 5. It takes one chopped log and nothing else to build this house! (5)
 - 6. He let out woman (5)
 - 9. The same IDA client perhaps (9)
 - 14. Unusually, Dons win in this English town (7)
 - 15. There arrived many at King Arthur's palace (7)
 - 16. I eat and run around like a bull! (7)
 - 19. A black worker in metal? (5)
 - 20. A plot to destroy Greek philosopher (5)
 - 21. Food for the boy from South Africa (5)

Name.....
Address.....
.....
.....
Telephone.....

Solution to Alive!, St Mary's Priory, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

Lives of the Saints

Dorothy Day



● Part 5: At college

Dorothy Day was just 16 years old when she won a Hearst scholarship to Illinois University. Without it she would have been unable to go to college because, once again, the paper her father worked for had failed.
She had a happy family life, but was, she wrote, "as happy as a lark leaving home." However, the elation at setting out on an independent life soon evaporated.

After a few months in Urbana, her university campus, she tells how, "when the novelty of my surroundings wore off, I suffered from a terrible homesickness which made me go to bed weeping, wake up weeping, and filled me with a sense of desolation and loneliness.
"I missed my baby brother, who was by that time two years old. He loved me dearly; I had been a mother to him, so that he clung to me and was bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh.
To know that this love was past,

that John would grow up away from me, filled me with a sense of unutterable grief. I had a terrible sense of loss, and yet with it a sense of the inevitability of such losses in our lives.
"It never occurred to me to turn back, to try to hold on to him and to my life with him. It was a desolation to be worked through, and even while I suffered I knew that it would pass."
She threw herself into her books, into jobs she took to supplement her scholarship income and into social activism. But the activism took its toll.
She lost her religious fervour, then abandoned religion altogether, unable to see its connection with the "here and now".
A religion which preached peace, meekness and joy seemed

alien to the world of poverty and destitution all around her. "Youth, I felt, should not be in a state of peace, but of war."
America was not yet involved, but World War I was now raging in Europe. But the war which preoccupied Dorothy was the class war.
Rebelling
She soon found herself not only rejecting religion but rebelling against it, making her own the scorn which the Left was heaping on religion.
"I started to swear, quite consciously began to take God's name in vain, in order to shock my friends who were churchgoers. I shocked myself as I did it, but I felt it was a strong gesture I was making to push religion from me."

Dorothy was in fact being torn apart by the contradictions she saw all around her.
She could not accept an apparent injustice – that she was free to go to college while other girls had to work in stores and factories through their youth and then marry men who "were slaves in those same factories".
She adopted the Marxist slogan, "Workers of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains." This appealed to her much more than any religious motto.
But if she rebelled against religion she still held on to some dim belief in God, influenced by Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, the great Russian authors whom she loved and admired.

Threat to media groupthink in EU

IN two years, to September 2016, Breitbart, the news and opinion media network more than doubled its US audience, from 7.4m users to 15.8m.

And in a CNN interview, Josh Earnest, who was Obama's Press Secretary, admitted that the Breitbart journalist at the daily briefings "asks tough questions and gets answers".

Despite this, and following Kelloggs in America, a number of major German companies, including BMW, have halted advertising on the network.

This was in response to a social media campaign calling for an advertising boycott.

For opponents, the problem with the site is that it supported Trump for president and it doesn't stick with the strangling groupthink of the liberal media.

With key elections looming in a number of EU countries, including Germany and France, Breitbart is launching in Europe. Companies fear it will support a populist rebellion against the traditional big parties on right and left.

Indeed, it openly admits it wants to help rightwing rather than leftwing politicians into power.

The advertising boycott, however, illustrates the power of giant corporations to shape the news and views the public hear.

Yet there is no liberal protest at this intrusion into politics or this monied attempt to control media freedom.

"There's an underserved readership" in Europe, Breitbart's editor-in-chief, Alex Marlow told the *New York Times*.

For this reason the site opened a UK operation in 2014, he explained. "The same readers who had been ignored in Britain had been ignored in the US," said Marlow.

Nathalie Pignard-Cheynel, a professor of journalism in France told the *Guardian* that "the border between media as an information service and media as a tool in the service of an ideology is becoming more and more blurred."

She believed that Breitbart would capitalise on that. "It positions itself as a classic news site, but is completely upfront about its aims, it takes full responsibility for its message," she said. "It worked in the US; it could work here."

'I was not rubbing it off'

■ Westminster MP Carol Monaghan (*right*) caused a stir when she appeared on BBC with a black cross on her forehead.



"When I came into committee," she said, "a member asked me about it. I said 'it's Ash Wednesday' and they said 'but this is going to be broadcast'."

"I think they thought I didn't want to be embarrassed, but I was not going to rub it off."

A science teacher in a non-Catholic school before becoming an MP for Glasgow in 2015, she was used to being asked about the cross. "I'm happy to answer questions," she said. "It is an educational opportunity."

Life dominated by single word

Dear Nettles,

She arrived, exhausted after a long, hard journey. But just to look at her you knew she was the happiest woman in the world.

And if there was any doubt about it, she soon made it clear that happy beyond belief was exactly what she was. In fact, she radiated happiness.

It was catching. To be near her you couldn't help but feel your own outlook on life brighten up, even if you thought you were already immensely happy.

It was definitely linked with her being pregnant, she was still very young and this was her first baby. But there was much more to it than that. And it wasn't just some kind of "high".

She had been startled when the angel appeared to her. And he had left her with plenty to think about. Indeed, if she lived to be a thousand years old she would still have lots to think about.

But it was the angel's first word that she had been thinking about on the journey. "Rejoice!" he said. And she was absolutely stunned.

She knew her Scripture, had meditated on it again and again. And one thing

Dumbag writes...!

Letters from a Master to a Trainee Tempter

she knew from it was that "Rejoice!" was no ordinary greeting. Anything but.

An angel sent from heaven only said "Rejoice!" when he was going to announce something big to rejoice about.

It meant that Him above was stepping into history in some dramatic way to rescue his people from their suffering, to save them.

Salvation

The presence of an angel meant, on every occasion, that the Saviour, salvation was at hand, and the only possible attitude was happiness, joy.

Mary had no idea what the angel was going to say, but she knew already that it had to do with salvation, that God was once again stepping into history.

And if that were happening, then the only possible reaction had to be joy, joy, joy.

This was not an invitation

to rejoice for a few hours or weeks. This one angelic word was designed to shape the rest of her life. She would spend her whole life on earth obeying it, rejoicing.

The angel was giving her good news that no suffering on earth, no disappointment no anguish could ever obscure. She was called to have joy as her most fundamental attitude, whatever circumstances she met.

Having listened to the angel and begun to absorb what he said, Mary replied: "Be it done unto me according to your word."

The experts tell us that this was not as simple as it looks. What it actually meant was: "I am delighted, I rejoice to do as you have said."

Mary, in fact, was saying that the rest of her life would be characterised by joy, built on utter trust in God. Whatever demands and suffering she met she would sing: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."

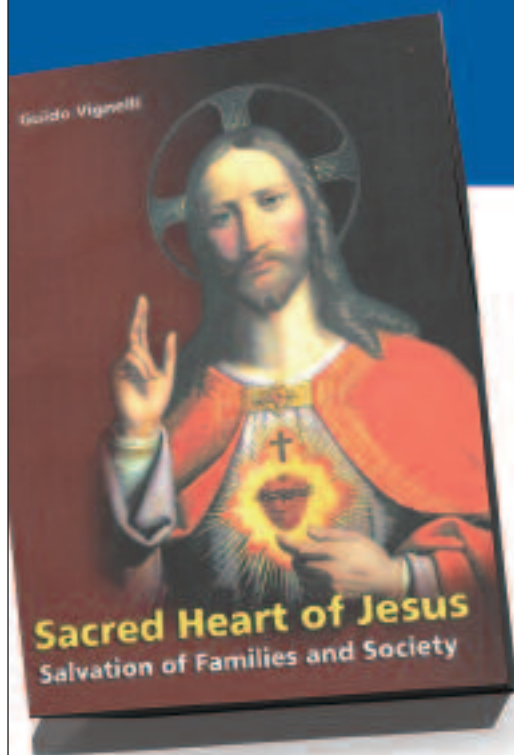
After Calvary she would teach that joy to all her children; in whatever circumstances they found themselves, they would join with her in singing: "My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."

Yours gloomily,

Dumbag

BOOK OFFER: Sacred Heart of Jesus, Salvation of Families and of Society

"Come onto Me, all you who labour and are heavily burdened and I will give you rest" (Mt., 11:28)

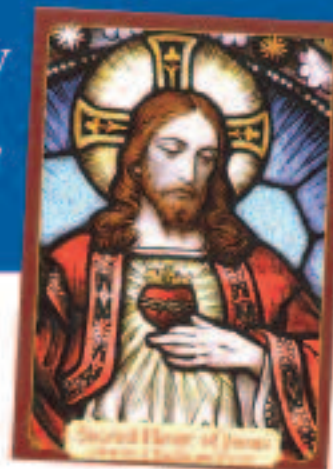


Order the book, *Sacred Heart of Jesus, Salvation of Families and of Society*, with the story of the apparitions (only €6.00 incl. P&P) and you will receive along with it a picture and a badge of The Sacred Heart.

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- ✱ the principal devotions to The Sacred Heart of Jesus – a powerful protection against every adversary; and
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