

# Presentation Studies

A Journal For Members Of The Presentation Family  
2014

## Contents

### Presentation Studies

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## Editorial

*JM Feheny*

The front of the cover of this issue of *Presentation Studies*, designed by John O'Connor, features photographs of three people who played a key role in the history of the Presentation Brothers' monastery and school in Killarney. These were, from left, Brother Paul Townsend, Bishop David Moriarty and Brother Patrick AL Gaynor. The back cover contains a photograph of the eastern side of the original monastery building, designed by AWN Pugin. We also include an article on the 'Mon' National School in Killarney, which recently celebrated its 175th anniversary. This article, by Colm Ó Súilleabháin, is accompanied by that of another old 'Mon' boy, Eamonn Fitzgerald, a respected figure in education in Kerry and a committed member of the Presentation Family.

During the year 2014, we witnessed the formal end of the presence of the Presentation Brothers in Cobh. On the one hand, there was the demolition of the Brothers' vacated residence and, on the other, the erection of a plaque on the Promenade to honour the memory of the Brothers. This symbolic function was followed by a civic reception for the Brothers by the Mayor and Councillors. To put these events in context, we have included an article on the history of the Presentation Brothers in Cobh.

We include two articles on Catholic Education by Rev Michael Drumm, a prominent and distinguished figure in this area in Ireland. The first article is an edited version of his lecture at the annual reunion of CLEO Alumni in June, 2013, while the other article, worth detailed study, outlines a contemporary philosophy of Catholic Education. Frank Steele continues his study of the Presentation Rule

and the editor looks at the historic relationship between Presentation Brothers and the architects they chose to build their monasteries and schools.

We also include an article examining ecclesial communities and the possible appeal a movement along these lines might have for members of the Presentation Family. We thank our contributors and printers and send greetings to our colleagues in the Presentation Brothers and the Presentation Family.

Brother JM Feheney  
Editor

## **Monastery School Killarney: 175 Years of Service**

*Colm Ó Súilleabháin*

### **Introduction**

When Bishop Egan invited the Presentation Brothers to come to Killarney in 1837 to run a boys' school in the town, he could never have foreseen the impact and influence this decision would have on generations of people from the town and beyond. In fact, it was the Superioress of the Presentation Sisters in nearby Milltown, Mother Mary Teresa Kelly, who raised the matter with Dr. Egan and highlighted the great work being done by the recently established Presentation Brothers in Cork.

The first Brothers who came to Killarney were Brothers Paul Townsend and Brother Aloysius Egan. They were given a house known as "The Lodge" at no. 22 College Street and it was there the very first "Mon" school opened on February 1st, 1838. It is impossible to quantify from this remove the influence this single event has played in shaping the cultural and sporting traditions of life in Killarney. So, when the anniversary was approaching, all of us now involved in the school felt obliged to commemorate the event in a significant way, a way that would not only show respect for the school's fabled history, but would also assert our engagement with the present realities and our preparedness for the future.

### **Like Father, Like Son**

Long before I ever imagined I would work as Principal in the Monastery, I read some short stories written by a past pupil of the school, Killarney native, Seamus de Faoite. These I found astonishing

on several levels. One being that I had never encountered a writer from my own locality, writing about that same locality, with such timeless, descriptive, literary ability. Here was our very own Thomas Hardy or Patrick Kavanagh, conferring epic status on otherwise local trivial events. One story in particular jumped out at me and has stayed vivid in my memory ever since. Indeed, it is a story that I enjoy sharing with my classes in the school to highlight the passing of time and the changing world. A story called 'Like Father, Like son' describes how a teacher from the Mon, engages in a full on, bare-knuckle fight, with a father of one of his pupils, in the yard of the school, with all the boys cheering him on and several Brothers futile attempts to come between them.

The teacher in the story, Tom Coffey, is described as "... the stroke oarsman for the Valley crew in regattas on the lakes that made our town world famous. He played good football and cycled eight miles every morning to the monastery from Beaufort, a scattered village with houses and shops hidden in trees on the banks of the Laune. The long-drawn six feet of him had no chance to be anything but fit..."

Being involved in the same Flesk Valley rowing club, and having rowed in the same Killarney Regatta all of my life to the present day, this teacher stayed in my memory quite easily, but thankfully that's where the comparisons stop, as my relations with parents haven't yet deteriorated to the point of fisticuffs!

### **Killarney Identity**

Con Houlihan, when discussing Seamus De Faoite's literary worth once said, "Killarney is a town almost as famous for its lanes as for its lakes. It fosters intimacy; its people do not look outward for its values. A provincial is someone who believes that the capital of the world is elsewhere. For De Faoite, the capital was located somewhere between the Cathedral and the Friary. I have long envied the citizens of that lake-blessed town; when they come to Castleisland to a game of Gaelic football or perhaps rugby, they speak as if they are on an expedition to a foreign country."

This is a very accurate description of the mindset of many Killarney people and I have often said myself, to paraphrase another well-known Killarney man, Robin Hilliard, that a day away from Killarney is a day wasted! I am not sure what it is that gives Killarney people their sense of pride in their own place, but I have to admit to being taken aback by the amount of goodwill that was expressed to me when I took over from Mr. Derry Pyne as Principal in the Monastery.

There is an invisible umbilical cord between the town and the school and one only has to scratch beneath the surface to realize the extent to which it stretches. I always knew the Mon was a 'town' school, but it is only when you stand back, and look at it, that you realize that all of the boys in the town have been educated there, as have their fathers, uncles, brothers, grandfathers and even great-grandfathers, and most still retain great affection for it. If Killarney is indeed famous for its lanes as well as its lakes, then the Monastery can take great credit for it, as it is these same people that make up the school community.

### **Past Pupils**

When one considers the past pupils of the school, it is really hard to know where to start, as many pupils from the school achieved significant recognition and success in many walks of life. The outstanding area of contribution, of course, was on Gaelic football fields, and it was in this aspect of life that Killarney's sports-mad population and the school were perfect bedfellows.

It would take much detailed research to identify all the past pupils who represented Kerry over the decades, but more interesting is the stellar quality of player the school helped to produce. One only has to start with the legendary Dick Fitzgerald or "Dickeen" as he was known (1884-1930). He played Gaelic football with his local club Dr. Crokes and was a member of the Kerry senior inter-county team from 1903 until 1923. He also captained Kerry to back-to-back All-Ireland titles in 1913 and 1914.

## Dick Fitzgerald

Dick Fitzgerald was born in College Street, Killarney in 1884. His introduction to competitive football occurred during his time in the Mon, where his wonderful football technique and ability became apparent. He later became a household name for his famous screw-kicking and ball control.

However, it was not until 1903 that 'Dickeen', came before the public eye, when Kerry played Kildare in the All-Ireland final. These games became part of sporting history when Kerry wrested the All-Ireland championship from the "All Whites" after three encounters. In 1906, at the invitation of the Kerry men of New York, he visited the USA and played for Kerry in the New York Championship, which they won. He also took part in the Croke Memorial, which pitted Kerry against Louth. This game went to a replay with Kerry winning it at Jones Road (now Croke Park). It was the first time a four-figure sum was received for a match and with this money the GAA purchased what became known as Croke Park.

Fitzgerald captained the two winning teams of 1913 and 1914 against Wexford but retired from the game he loved so much after their defeat in 1915 against the same opposition. This did not stop Fitzgerald's fascination with the beautiful game. After the 1916 Easter Rising he was held in detention in South Wales. Here, with the help of other Gaelic-playing prisoners, he organized an All-Ireland Competition himself leading Kerry to a one-point victory in the final over Louth. Overall, he won 5 All-Ireland medals with Kerry and 10 Munster Championship medals as well as winning the first two Railway shields, with Munster beating Leinster.

He later proceeded to write a book on Gaelic football entitled *How to Play Gaelic Football* which was the first of its kind in the organisation. After hanging up his boots, he continued in the administrative side of the organization. He became representative to the Central Council 1917, Kerry Selector 1918, and Delegate to Congress 1919. He served on the Munster Council from 1920 until his death. He was the first chairman of the East Kerry Board and also Chairman of Dr Crokes. In 1929, he was appointed a special

vice-chairman of the Kerry Selection Committee without a vote, in appreciation of his service to the county. Dick was also a member of Killarney UDC from 1917 until his death.

Immediately after Dick's death, the Dr Crokes Club began a campaign to develop a field in his honor. In 1936 Fitzgerald's Stadium opened and stands today as one of Ireland's finest sporting arenas.

## Other Kerry 'Greats'

The list of past pupils reads like a distinguished roll of honour of Kerry Football, and names such as Tadghie Lyne, Johnny Culloty, Connie Murphy, Brian Clarke, are well known sporting icons in Killarney. In fact, on the three occasions that Sam Maguire was brought home to Kerry by a Killarney captain, it was inevitably a Mon boy who had the honour. Dick Fitzgerald, Johnny Culloty and Donie O Sullivan all managed this and when the Dubs snatched it from our grasp in 2011, we felt it even more so as we were all hopeful that our very own Colm Cooper would be visiting the Mon with the famous trophy.

The 2013 All Star Football team had two Mon Boys among its ranks and the present daystars certainly burn the brightest. They were warmly welcomed back to the school to recognize their achievements during our anniversary year. Colm Cooper has long been recognized as one of the greats of any era and James O'Donoghue is looking like he might follow in his footsteps. Both men visited the school and spoke very warmly of their time here and the influence that football and sport in the school had on their sporting development.

Other notable past pupils include Weeshie Fogarty who has also achieved fame as a radio presenter with his famous "Terrace Talk" program and author. Paddy Culligan was a noted basketballer and later went on to become Garda Commissioner.

More recently, Pio Fitzgerald was named Boeing Engineer of the year and, at 34 years of age, is one of the youngest people to receive this honour for his solution to a wing problem in the 747 jumbo jet. This problem with vibrations was threatening the whole Boeing jet program but Pio managed to resolve the issue with a simple solution, which involved no physical change to design and no

added weight. He has been feted in the aeronautical and engineering world on the back of his achievements and is fully deserving of it.

Whenever we discuss past pupils in the school, or whenever we welcome visitors to our school, there is always one person to whom we instantly refer. This person has several names but to us we call him "Our Mon Hero". We have adopted him as our schools hero and a picture is placed in our front hall for all visitors to see and to marvel at his exploits and bravery.

### **Mgr O'Flaherty**

Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty grew up in Deer Park Killarney and went to school in the Mon. He later worked in the Mon as a monitor teacher. The family lived on the golf course where his father worked as a steward. By his late teens, young O'Flaherty had a scratch handicap and had won a scholarship to a teacher training college. However, in 1918 he enrolled at Mungret College, a Jesuit college in County Limerick dedicated to preparing young men for missionary priesthood.

O'Flaherty's sponsor was the Bishop of Cape Town, Cornelius O'Reilly, in whose diocese O'Flaherty would be posted after ordination. He was sent to Rome in 1922 to finish his studies and was ordained on 20 December 1925. He would never join his diocese. Instead, he stayed to work for the Holy See, serving as a Vatican diplomat in Egypt, Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Czechoslovakia. In 1934, he received the title of Monsignor.

### **Work for Refugees & POWs**

In the early years of World War II, O'Flaherty toured prisoner of war (POW) camps in Italy and tried to find out about prisoners, who had been reported missing in action. If he found them alive, he tried to reassure their families through Radio Vatican. When Italy changed sides in 1943, thousands of British POWs were released; however, when Germany imposed an occupation over Italy, they were in danger of recapture. Some of them, remembering visits by O'Flaherty, reached Rome and asked him for help. Others went to the

Irish Embassy to the Holy See, the only English-speaking embassy to remain open in Rome during the war. Delia Murphy, who was the wife of the ambassador and in her day a well-known ballad singer, was one of those who helped O'Flaherty.

O'Flaherty did not wait for permission from his superiors. He recruited the help of others and one of his aides was British Major Sam Derry, a POW escapee. O'Flaherty also kept contact with Sir D'Arcy Osborne, British Ambassador to the Holy See and his butler John May (whom O'Flaherty described as "a genius ... the most magnificent scrounger"). O'Flaherty and his allies concealed 4,000 escapees, mainly Allied soldiers and Jews, in flats, farms and convents. One of the first hideouts was beside the local SS headquarters. O'Flaherty and Derry coordinated all this. When outside the Vatican, O'Flaherty wore various disguises. The German occupiers tried to stop him and eventually they found out that the leader of the network was a priest. SS attempts to assassinate him failed. They learned his identity, but could not arrest him inside the Vatican. When the German ambassador revealed this to O'Flaherty, he began to meet his contacts on the stairs of the St. Peter's Basilica.

Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Kappler, ordered a white line painted on the pavement at the opening of St. Peter's Square (signifying the border between Vatican City and Italy), stating that the priest would be killed if he crossed it. Several others, including priests, nuns and lay people, worked in secret with O'Flaherty, and even hid refugees in their own private homes around Rome. When the Allies arrived in Rome in June 1944, 6,425 of the escapees were still alive. O'Flaherty demanded that German prisoners be treated properly as well.

At the time of the liberation of Rome, O'Flaherty's and Major Sam Derry's organisation was caring for 3,925 escapees and men who had succeeded in evading arrest. Of these 1,695 were British, 896 South African, 429 Russian, 425 Greek and 185 American. The remainder were from 20 different nations. This does not include Jews and sundry other men and women who were in O'Flaherty's strictly personal care.

After the war, Hugh O'Flaherty received a number of awards

including Commander of the Order of the British Empire and the US Medal of Freedom with Silver Palm. He was also honoured by Canada and Australia. He refused to use the lifetime pension that Italy had given him. O'Flaherty regularly visited his old nemesis Colonel Herbert Kappler (the former SS chief in Rome) in prison, month after month, being Kappler's only visitor. In 1959, Kappler converted to Catholicism and was baptised by O'Flaherty.

In 1960, O'Flaherty suffered a serious stroke during Mass and was forced to return to Ireland. Shortly before his first stroke in 1960, he was due to be confirmed as the Papal Nuncio to Tanzania. He moved to Cahersiveen to live with his sister, at whose home he died on 30 October 1963, aged 65. He was buried in the cemetery of the Daniel O'Connell Memorial Church in Cahersiveen.

### **Killarney Honours O'Flaherty**

This year after many years of fundraising by the Hugh o Flaherty memorial committee, a beautiful life-size statue of the monsignor was unveiled and has significantly added to the richly deserved reputation of the man who had been forgotten for so long by his own people. There was an hour long *Nationwide* special broadcast based on his life aired on his anniversary in which the Mon school featured and his entries into the old roll books were displayed. There has been a street in Killarney named after him, a giant mural painted on a building and a grove of trees planted in his honour in Killarney National Park, so no one can be in any doubt the respect the town people have for our past pupil.

O'Flaherty was portrayed by Gregory Peck in the 1983 television film, *The Scarlet and the Black*, which follows the exploits of O'Flaherty from the German occupation of Rome to its liberation by the Allies.

Another Mon boy, actor and playwright Donal Courtney, penned a new one man play entitled *God has no Country*, which he premièred in Killarney as part of the Hugh O Flaherty memorial celebrations in October 2013. Courtney portrays the Monsignor during the War Time years in German occupied Rome and the story is told from the

Monsignor's point of view and is a study of the torment and difficulty in the decisions he undertook in his fight for justice.

O Flaherty's motto, "God has no country" is an inspiration to all of us and a very important reminder of the complex and ever changing society we live in. To celebrate our 175th anniversary year we planned several events to highlight the milestone.

### **Mon School Celebrations**

On the morning of February 1st, we held a prayer service in the school with all pupils, staff, parents, Board of management and Brothers. After this event all staff and pupils dressed up in period costume from 1838 and marched through the town in full regalia to the site of the original school on College Street. The whole school ate there and paraded through the town where many well wishers came out to wave and cheer us on. It was a spectacular event, which gained national media attention and featured in many papers. The cooperation and enthusiasm from everybody involved was fantastic and the school community received a great lift as a result. The importance and significance of the school and its place in the community was evident for all to see.

Later in the year, the Parents Association organized a Pitch and Putt competition in Deer park, the home of Hugh O Flaherty, to mark the anniversary and the response was excellent. Huge numbers turned out to play and the day was a treat due to a combination of weather, great atmosphere and delicious food.

We held a football tournament called the "Colm Cooper Monastery Tournament", where we invited various schools to participate and Colm is on hand to present medals and the trophy. The annual School Football League was once again a fantastic event and we had the Kerry Captain of the day, Eoin Brosnan, on hand to referee the final match, which is always a great occasion. The most symbolic and lasting undertaking was the erection of a new monument in the school grounds to commemorate the anniversary.

Local sculptor, John Crowley was commissioned to design and construct a monument, which would highlight the religious

and educational contribution the Presentation Brothers had made to Killarney since 1838. The result was truly amazing. He worked with Valentia Slate and conceived a tower like structure which combines both shape and form from Beehive Huts and Round Towers. During the construction process, everybody involved with the school had the opportunity to carve their name on a piece of slate and place it on the monument. Needless to say, it has attracted massive attention since its construction and we are extremely proud of it.

We had our formal celebrations later in the year in St Mary's Cathedral with a special Mass concelebrated by Bishop Bill Murphy. This was a fantastic occasion with many past pupils, teachers, Brothers and friends of the school in attendance. This Mass was the first one to be streamed live from the Cathedral and many people tuned in from various places around the world to see and hear the beautiful music and singing from the Mon boys.

Br Andrew Hickey gave the homily and there was a lovely moment after Mass when the oldest living Mon boy, Mr. Paddy MacMonagle, met the youngest pupil from second class. Later, Bishop Bill formally unveiled the monument and a huge crowd gathered in the school for a very social and poignant afternoon.

In January of this year, our anniversary year came to a close with a civic reception being hosted by Killarney Town Council to recognize the contribution the Brothers have made to Killarney. This was a great honour and fully deserved and again Brother Andrew Hickey addressed those who had gathered in the council chambers. Indeed, the majority of the councillors are themselves Mon boys so it made for a great occasion.

The Anniversary year could not have taken place without the help of a great many people. The staff and students of the school embraced the idea whole-heartedly and came forward with many suggestions and ideas.

The Board of Management was a great support as were the Parents Association. I would also like to acknowledge the fantastic support both financial and otherwise we received from Br Andrew and Br Barry and everyone in the Presentation Novitiate in Killarney

for all our celebrations.

### **Mon Spirit Endures**

We strive at every opportunity to emphasize that we still are very much a Presentation School, even if there are no Brothers working in the school anymore. We feel this very strongly in the school and all pupils are made keenly aware of our traditions and our origins.

My first personal encounter with the Mon boys was when I moved from Loreto NS into St Brendan's. Straight away, I noticed that there was something different about them, which set them apart. They all knew each other and were more confident in their new urban surroundings compared to others like us, who had moved into town from far out places! They had an air of nonchalance, which was new to us, but they also seemed to have an awareness of each other, which was beyond their years. They carried themselves like a merry band of brothers and the fact that they had been taught by Brothers with exotic sounding Latin names only added to the intrigue and the sense of brotherhood and camaraderie. Apart from the underlying Crokes/Legion tensions, which lurked permanently under the surface, they seemed boyish; happy go lucky, "Just William" types. The kind of characters you met in comic books with mousetraps, catapults and marbles in their pockets. They had street games like "pitch and toss" and "leg alley", and, needless to say, when it came to the football field, they strutted around like they owned the place!

Not a lot has changed over the years, and the boys in the school today still have the same obsession with football, still play the same games, carry the same carefree air, slag each other and look out for each other in equal measure. The same Crokes/Legion fault lines run deep through the school. The same family names are on the Roll Book. The families still come from both the lakes and the lanes of the town. For most of them, the capital is still located somewhere between the Friary and the Cathedral. The Brothers may be gone, but now the exotic sounding names come from boys who have come here from Bangladesh or Burma or South Africa.

### **Conclusion**

For my part, I am delighted to be involved with the school, delighted to be celebrating 175 years of continuous education in our town of Killarney, delighted to be remembering all the great men who have achieved great things as a result of the Mon, delighted to remember all the dedicated men and women who taught in the school, delighted to be a part of a staff who are looking forward enthusiastically to the future and preparing pupils for that future. We hope the boys can continue to be a merry Band of Brothers for as long as they are part of the school, and, most importantly, hope they bring happy memories as Mon boys with them from their time in “The Mon”.

### **Architects who worked with the Presentation Brothers**

*JM Feheny fpm*

#### **Introduction**

Since the early days of Christianity, architects have looked to religious organisations for opportunities to express their creative gifts. The design and construction of great churches and monasteries have helped to establish the names and reputations of great architects. Some examples immediately spring to mind: St Peter’s basilica Rome is forever associated with the great architects, Michael Angelo, Bramante and Bernini. When we think of St Paul’s Cathedral, London, we usually think of its architect, Sir Christopher Wren. When we see a picture of Killarney Cathedral, we think of Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin and when we pass Christ the King church in Turner’s Cross, Cork, we think of Barry Byne, protégé of Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the great architectural innovators of modern times. Cork, my adopted city, has some striking ecclesiastical buildings. In St Mary’s church, Pope’s Quay, we admire the huge Corinthian columns designed by Kearns Deane (1861), which support the floridly decorated ceiling.

As I look across the city at St Finbarr’s cathedral, I see the sun reflected off the golden angel designed William Burgess (1863), and as I pass St Patrick’s church, Lower Glanmire Road, I admire the Neo-classical lines of one of several churches designed by the Pain brothers, George and James, including Shandon Steeple; Christ Church, on South Main Street and Holy Trinity on Father Mathew Quay. The Pains also designed the old gaol (now part of UCC), the Court House in Washington Street (in association with Sir Thomas Deane) and Blackrock Castle.

### **Presentation Architectural Tradition**

It will be recalled that, following the adoption of the De La Salle Rule by Blessed Edmund Rice, Brother Michael Augustine Riordan, with the encouragement of Bishop John Murphy (1772-1847), founded the Presentation Brothers School and Community in what came to be known as the South Monastery, Douglas Street, Cork. It is also well known (Feheney, 1996; Praxiteles) that Brother Riordan was an experienced architect, who built several churches, schools and religious houses in Munster. Among the buildings credited to him are: North Cathedral, Cork (1808); St Michael's church, Blackrock, Cork (1818); Ballyhea Catholic church (1818); Killavullen (1839); extension to the Ursuline Convent, Blackrock (1825); Kinsale RC church (1838); St Patrick's Pro-Cathedral, Skibbereen (1826); Catholic church, Doneraile (1827); Catholic church, Millstreet (1826); Catholic church, Bantry (1837); Catholic church, Dunmanway (1841); alterations to Presentation Convent, Clonmel; Catholic church, Ovens and Catholic church, Rossmore. (ASM)

Brother Riordan's churches in the dioceses of Cork, Cloyne, Ross and Kerry were constructed in the first half of the nineteenth century, with a significant number being completed in the first quarter of the century. It will be recalled that this was a period, when, following the Catholic Relief Acts (1774-1793), Catholic churches were moving from the back streets of Irish towns and cities to more central locations. Moreover, while the older chapels were often built of mud (clay), reinforced by sticks, and had thatched roofs, the newer churches were built of stone (generally cut stone quoins and rubble masonry walls) and had slated roofs. The popular shapes were rectangular and T-shaped boxes. Most of Brother Riordan's churches were T-shaped, or, as TF McNamara described them, rectangular 'with twin transepts' (McNamara & Feheney, 1982). Many of them also had galleries, designed to accommodate larger congregations. While, in the case of the older thatched chapels, no attempt was made to provide seating, since the congregations either knelt or stood during the service, the new churches were gradually provided with wooden seats.

The third stage in the evolution of Irish churches began after mid-century, by which time Brother Riordan was dead. This third stage ushered in the era of Gothic churches, popularised by A.W.N. Pugin in England and by his followers, JJ McCarthy, Ashlin, the Pain brothers and others in Ireland. Brother Riordan's importance, therefore, lies in the fact that he was one of the principal church architects in the dioceses of Cork, Cloyne, Ross and Kerry in the era following the Catholic Relief Acts. It is generally agreed by modern critics that he was remarkably successful in adapting the classical principals of architecture to the requirements of an awakening Irish Church, though one that, in the absence of aristocratic patronage or Government grants, was sorely strapped for money. In this, the contrast with the established Church of Ireland is striking. To take a few statistics: during the period, 1791-1803, the Church of Ireland Board of First Fruits spent £55,600 in building 88 churches and 116 Glebe Houses for its clergy. Moreover, in the twenty years following the Act of Union in 1800, a total of £807,648 was paid out by the same Board to purchase Glebe lands, to erect 550 Glebe Houses and to build, repair or enlarge 697 churches for the Church of Ireland community (Campbell, 2009).

This latter period was the time when Brother Riordan did most of his work for the Catholic community. It was work completed in the face of daunting adversity. There was the case in Blackrock in 1827, while he was building the chapel block at the Ursuline convent, when the masons went on a lighting strike for higher wages, despite a prior agreement on rates of pay. Riordan's calm approach but firm insistence on the need to abide by a prior mutual agreement brought the masons back to work. Then there was the near disaster after he had completed the church at Castletown-Keneigh, when a freak storm levelled the church walls to the ground, though none of the workmen on the site were injured. (Allen, 113)

Commentators, such as TF McNamara, have noted a characteristic style in the design of the front façade of Riordan's churches. The latter writer notes that 'each (church) has a central entrance doorway, with twin niches on either side, some with statues

and some without' (McNamara & Fehenev, 1982). Another, more recent writer, comments on the interior of the Catholic church in Kinsale, one of Riordan's surviving buildings:

Of real interest is the beautiful classical retable of the altar. Riordan seems to have specialised in a tripartite serliana retable, supported by fluted Corinthian columns, and incorporating (usually) three pictures, the arch surmounted by a cross. Kinsale is fortunate to have this feature still intact and beautifully restored. Clearly, Riordan was more than aware of Sebastiano Serlio's *Architettura* (1537-1575), which promotes the form that may have originated with Bramante. The plaster ceiling is also quite fine and incorporates a wealth of classical details. (Praxiteles)

The same writer, who has made a special study of the work of Riordan, has also added interesting and helpful comments about two of his older churches in the diocese of Cloyne. These are the old church in Charleville (1812), now used as a parish hall, but, regrettably stripped of most of its original architectural features, and Ballyhea (1818), which though extensively renovated, is still in use.

#### **Brother Paul Townsend (1798-1881)**

One of Brother Riordan's early companions, Brother Edmund Paul Townsend, is also believed to have had some training in architecture. He designed and built the Presentation Monastery, Milltown, Co. Kerry (1845-1846), and St Patrick's National School, Greenmount, Cork (1854). The monastery in Milltown, with primary school attached, is a stone building, begun in 1842 and completed in 1845. Paul supervised the quarrying of the stone in a local quarry and got help from the parents of his pupils in transporting it to the site, which was donated by Sir William Godfrey, who was one of his staunch supporters. Unfortunately, with the onset of the Great Famine the Presentation Brothers were forced to leave Milltown and return to Killarney. They did not return to Milltown for two decades. Meantime, an enterprising Kerry priest, who had lent the Brothers

the sum of £100, taking possession of the monastery building as 'collateral', refused to cede possession of the monastery until the £100 was repaid in full. (AK)

The other building for which Brother Paul was architect and builder was St Patrick's National School, Greenmount, Cork, which was completed in 1854. The site, Gallows Green, was a low hill, close to St Finbarr's Cathedral, for which he obtained a 500-year lease from Cork City Corporation at an annual token rent of €1.50. Paul did much to banish the unpleasant memories of former public executions on this site by renaming the area, Greenmount, by which it is still known today. Though the building of the school was uneventful, apart from the struggle to find the money to pay for materials and wages, the campaign to obtain affiliation with the Irish National Board of Education for it was long and frustrating. (Allen, 155)

In 1854, the year that St Patrick's National School in Greenmount was opened, the National Board took a decision not to permit any more 'Monk's Schools' to be affiliated. Though technically, Greenmount School had sought affiliation before the passing of this decision, affiliation was initially refused and was not granted until 1883. The *Annals of the South Monastery (Cork)* record that in the year, 1856, the National Board refused to permit the Greenmount School to be affiliated to the Board because of a stone cross on the western gable of the school. The Brothers refused to remove this cross, which is still on the building more than a century and a half later.

In 1880, Brother Paul again applied for connection with the National Board, but again affiliation was refused because the stone cross was still prominent on the western gable. In fact, in addition to the cross, there was a harp on one side and a shamrock on the other. Affiliation was refused on the grounds that the cross advertised the school as sectarian and that a cross without a crown was an emblem of disloyalty to the British Sovereign. Opposition to the cross was withdrawn when it was pointed out that it was a universal Christian symbol. Affiliation was, nevertheless, withheld because of the

presence of the harp, which, at the time, was the official symbol for Ireland. Affiliation, however, was eventually granted in 1883 when the Brothers placed a temporary painting of the British crown over the cross. When this covering subsequently fell down, it was not replaced and the cross became visible once more. (ASM; Allen, 155; Carter, 2004, 22)

### **An architectural Heritage?**

Within the context, outlined in the previous pages, might it not be reasonable to expect that the men who followed the tradition established by Brothers Riordan and Townsend would have an appreciation of architecture, and, within the limits of their modest means, would ensure good design and sound construction in the buildings they subsequently commissioned? In this reflection, both reader and writer must bear in mind that the Presentation Brothers are a comparatively small religious congregation. Moreover, unlike many convents and mendicant Orders, the Presentation Brothers neither possessed nor cultivated a tradition whereby they were the recipients of legacies or charitable donations. Their educational policy from 1831, when the Irish National Board of Education was established, was to work in collaboration with state agencies, accepting state aid for their schools and state salaries by way of remuneration when possible. Since the Presentation Brothers have never been a wealthy congregation, funds for building monasteries and schools have been limited. Limited means, however, does not necessarily mean limited vision and poor building design. We will, therefore, in the following pages, look at the architects which the Brothers chose to design and build the schools and monasteries in which they worked and lived.

### **Pugin and Killarney Monastery**

Brother EP Townsend, then superior in Killarney, succeeded in obtaining a long lease of more than five acres of land along the Port Road, running westward from Killarney. At the request of the Bishop Egan, he gifted a site for the spectacular cathedral, designed by Augustus WN Pugin. Townsend was, at the time, planning

a monastery for the Presentation Brothers, adjacent to the new cathedral. Among his advisors was the Earl of Ross, who suggested that Pugin be invited to submit a design for the monastery. Because funds were scarce at the time, Townsend hesitated, but finally reluctantly agreed and Pugin accepted the commission. Drawing inspiration from the ruins of the nearby Muckross abbey, Pugin incorporated a cloister within the proposed monastery, the general Gothic style of which complimented the striking cathedral nearby. As with many of his brilliant designs, Pugin did not submit detailed plans for the monastery. In most of his work in Ireland, he relied on Richard Pierce, his Irish clerk of works, who was adept at interpreting Pugin's plans and adapting to local circumstances. Pierce, moreover, was a qualified architect himself and was responsible for designing several notable churches, especially in the Diocese of Ferns. (DIA)

Brother Townsend, who, as noted above, was, at this time, in financially straitened circumstances, now faced a new challenge. Pugin's fee of forty guineas for the sketch was the equivalent of a teacher's annual salary, and the Earl of Ross contrived to deftly side step responsibility for the bill, though it was he who initially suggested, if not insisted, that the great architect be involved in the design. Moreover, with the onset of the Great Famine, the community's funds were depleted and the completion of the building of the Presentation Monastery in Killarney was delayed for several years, in fact for two decades. Meantime, both Pugin and Stephen Pierce passed away, the former in 1852 and the latter in 1854. When the monastery was finally near completion, a new Bishop of Kerry, Most Rev David Moriarty, remarked that the southern aspect of the monastery was too 'plain', bordering on monotonous. Mr John Wallace, son of William Wallace, an architect and builder in Limerick, was invited to submit a plan for this part of the building. Wallace designed a double belfry for the southern side, ensuring that it fitted in with Pugin's general design. Though John Wallace, like his father, was a qualified architect, he was, at the time, employed as a storekeeper by the Mental Asylum in Killarney. (AK; DIA)

### Hansom's Contribution

Joseph Aloysius Hansom (1802-1882), an English architect, makes an unexpected appearance in the annals of the Presentation Brothers, Killarney. Born in Micklegate, York, he was initially in partnership with his younger brother and subsequently with his son, Joseph Stanislaus. Though his work in Ireland was limited to two churches, his name is well-known because of the fact that it he who designed the famous Hansom cabs, much used in English cities, especially in London, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Brother PA Gaynor, Superior of the Presentation Brothers monastery in Killarney, first met Hansom when the latter was working on Holy Cross Church and Convent in Kenmare, Co. Kerry.

It will be recalled that the convent was for the Poor Clare nuns, founded by the famous Nun of Kenmare, Sister Margaret Ann Cusack (1832-1899). Hansom was approached by Brother Gaynor for a financial contribution to help with the completion of the Presentation Brothers' monastery in Killarney. Hansom responded by donating a design for a beautiful Reredos to be placed behind the altar of the new chapel in the monastery. I should add that a Reredos was a wall or screen placed behind an altar and usually highly decorated. It is possible that Hansom had earlier separately designed the Reredos, intending to use it for some other church, but he generously donated his design for the chapel in the monastery, Killarney. Sad to relate, at the time, Gaynor was so short of funds that he had to postpone the construction of Hansom's Reredos design. Moreover, there is no evidence that this design was subsequently used, though I am assured by Rev Jim Mannix MSC, a past student of the Monastery School, Killarney, that there was a reredos behind the altar when he was attending the school. (AK)

Hansom is an important figure in the history of architecture and building in Ireland, because it was he who founded the journal, *The Dublin Builder*, in 1859. This journal was subsequently renamed *The Irish Builder* and its files are still one of the most useful sources to the architectural historian when dating buildings in Ireland. (DIA)

### Atkins & Greenmount Orphanage

In 1855, the Presentation Brothers agreed to undertake responsibility for the administration of a Boys Orphanage, under the management of the Catholic diocese of Cork. The Presentation Brothers provided a site in Greenmount, for which they had a 500-year lease from Cork Corporation, and William Atkins was engaged to design the orphanage building. Atkins (1814-1887) was born in Mallow and was one of the most prominent architects in Cork at the time. He was responsible for the design of several imposing buildings in county Cork, including Our Lady's Mental Hospital, Lee Road, Cork (1847); St Mary's Dominican Priory (1848-1852); St Marie's of the Isle Convent (1850-1851); the Father Mathew Statue, Patrick Street, Cork (1864) and Cork County Gaol, Western Road, Cork (1867), now part of the UCC complex. Incidentally, in the scramble for space, the gaol buildings were demolished but the external front façade was preserved. He was also the designer of several attractive buildings in Munster, including Leamy's School, Limerick (1843-1845), which was the Alma Mater of Frank McCourt, Pulitzer Prize winner for the novel, *Angela's Ashes*; County Courthouse, Ennis, Co. Clare (1845); Great Southern Hotel, Killarney (1852); Aghadoe House, Killarney (1862) and St John's Cathedral, Cashel, Co. Tipperary (1866). (ASM; DIA)

### George Ashlin

George Coppinger Ashlin (1837-1921), a pupil of AWN Pugin, was a popular architect with religious and churchmen during the second half of the nineteenth century. His buildings are still admired and include several churches in county Cork: St Colman's College, Fermoy (1869); Loreto Convent, Fermoy (1869); Good Shepherd Convent and Madgalen Home, Sunday's Well, Cork; SS Peter and Paul's Church (1874-1875); Presentation Convent, Youghal; Christian Brothers School, Doneraile (1869); St Augustine's Church and Priory, Washington Street, Cork; (1872-1876). Arguably, one of his more spectacular buildings, designed in collaboration with his then partner, EW Pugin, son of more famous great AWN Pugin,

was St Colman's Cathedral, Cobh, Co. Cork (1868). However, his work in Cork was only a small fraction of his entire output. He built dozens of churches all over Ireland, especially in his native Dublin, including the parish church and presbytery, Glasthule, Co. Dublin in 1882. (DIA)

The first commission from the Presentation Brothers to GC Ashlin was in 1877, when they requested him to design a new chapel for the South Monastery community, Douglas Street. Ashlin's design was executed by builder Barry McMullen to the east of the existing South Monastery building. We might mention in passing that Barry McMullen had two sons who were practicing architects. These were James Finbarre McMullan (1859-1933), who designed and built the Eye, Ear and Throat Hospital, Western Road, Cork, as well as the Honan Chapel at UCC. The latter building is of special architectural and artistic importance because it is one of the few examples of 'Hiberno Romanesque' style. Moreover, in its nine stained-glass windows is preserved some of the finest examples of the work of Harry Clarke, Ireland's most famous stained glass artist. The other son of Barry McMullan was Michael Joseph (d.1923), who, in addition to other projects, designed and built St Vincent's bridge over the north channel of the river Lee in Cork. The South Monastery chapel is still in use as a community oratory for the Presentation Sisters, who now reside there. The Presentation Brothers had used that chapel for almost a century. (DIA; ASM)

Ashlin's next commission from the Presentation Brothers involved the design and erection of St Joseph's Industrial School, Greenmount, in 1874. The fact that Brother WP Shine, who commissioned the project, had already worked with Ashlin in the design of the South Monastery chapel, was probably a factor in the selection of this architect. Another factor was the fact that Ashlin had also designed the Good Shepherd Magdalen Laundry and Home, Sunday's Well, Cork, and that Shine, who was a methodical and conscientious administrator, had probably inspected and had been impressed by this building. The contract for the construction of the Industrial School was awarded to John Sisk, a well-known Cork

builder, who completed several building projects for the Presentation Brothers. (ASM) Though work on the building went ahead without a hitch, Brother Shine, who was at the time Superintendent of the new Industrial school, felt that Ashlin's design for a separate chapel would cost too much, so, with the approval of Bishop O'Callaghan, he engaged another architect, Dominic J Coakley (d.1914), to produce an alternative design for the chapel, which was not completed until 1887. The rest of Ashlin's building was completed and officially opened on 1 December, 1874. Coakley's new chapel was completed and used for the first time on 25 September, 1887. Coakley, who died in 1914, built several churches in counties Cork and Kerry, including St Joseph's SMA church, Wilton (1895-1897), and the Little Sisters of the Poor Home, Montenotte, Cork (1882). (ASM)

### **Samuel Hynes (1854-1931)**

Samuel Francis Hynes came from a well-known Catholic family in Cork. His uncle, Bishop John Hynes, was a prominent Dominican, who ministered in the British Caribbean and who became Bishop of Demerara, now part of Guyana. Hynes' list of buildings is quite extensive and includes several Catholic churches and convents. While, as yet, we are unsure as to whether or not he designed the first classroom block at Presentation College, Western Road, we are, however, sure that he designed the second block, built in 1900. This later block comprised Physics and Chemistry laboratories, each with a Preparation Room, on the ground floor and classrooms on the first floor. Hynes, however, received a much larger commission in 1892, when he was asked to design a new novitiate and 'Training School' at Mount St Joseph, Blarney Street, Cork. This project, including a spacious chapel, was completed in 1894. (AMSJ)

Shortly afterwards (1900), Hynes was asked to design a new kitchen and boiler house at St Joseph's Industrial School, Greenmount. This was followed by a commission to make extensive alterations to the former Pro-cathedral in Cobh with a view to its use as a monastery for the Presentation Brothers, newly arrived in the town. Another part of the former church was redesigned as Presentation College,

Cobh (1900). Hynes received a large number of commissions from Catholic Bishops and Heads of Religious congregations, including Dominicans, Vincentians, Christian Brothers, Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of the Presentation and Sisters of the Assumption. He even travelled to Australia to do build a convent in Melbourne for Irish Presentation Sisters, who had established schools in that city. (ASJG; AC; DIA)

### **Dominic O'Connor (b.1878)**

Dominic O'Connor was born in 1878 in Cork and educated at Clongowes Wood College and the National University of Ireland Cork. On obtaining membership of the RIAI, he established an office in the South Mall Cork and did much work for religious bodies. His first commission from the Presentation Brothers was in 1928, and involved the design of a new juniorate for aspirants to the Presentation Brothers at Mount St Joseph, Cork. The chosen site was the Chapel field at Mount St Joseph. When the plans were completed and work began on digging the foundations, it was discovered that the site was not suitable for such a large building. It will be remembered that these were the days before piling. Moreover, it would appear that the surface of the northern section of the Chapel field comprised soil, which had been spread there following the excavation of terraces around the original building. Meantime, however, Tramore House, Douglas, Cork, with 22 acres of land, had been put on the market by the owner, William Hoare Reeves.

This house was considered ideal as a boarding school and it was purchased forthwith by the Presentation Brothers. O'Connor's brief was now altered to making appropriate alterations to transform Tramore House into *Coláiste Muire*. This involved converting former stables and tack rooms into classrooms and the erection of a 3-storey block on the western side of the building. This latter building eventually accommodated a large chapel on the ground floor and dormitories on the first and second floors. (AMSJ; ACMD)

In 1938, Dominic O'Connor received another commission from the Presentation Brothers. This was the design of a new primary

school, to be called *Scoil Chríost Rí*, at Turner's Cross, Cork. He also received a commission from the Presentation Sisters to design a corresponding school nearby for girls. Both schools, situated beside Barry Byrne's iconic Christ the King Church, Turner's Cross, were very much in the public eye. Subsequently (1950), O'Connor was engaged by the Presentation Brothers to make alterations to the sacristy and to install a new marble altar in the chapel at Mount St Joseph, Blarney Street. (AMSJ)

### **James R Boyd Barrett (1904-1976)**

James Rupert (JR) Boyd Barrett, son of James Charles Boyd Barrett, an electrical engineer, was born in Loughborough, UK, in 1904. He was an elder brother of Basil Boyd Barrett, also an architect, who was employed by the Board of Works and who specialised in the design and construction of schools. JR Boyd Barrett was educated at CBS North Richmond St, Dublin and Clongowes Wood College, before attending the Dublin School of Art and University College, London. He was then articled to Jones and Kelly, architects. At the age of 24, he set up his own business in South Mall Cork and, almost overnight, shot to fame when he was chosen by Barry Byrne, partner of the famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright, to supervise the construction of Christ the King Church in Turner's Cross, Cork. This iconic building was revolutionary in design and construction. Apart from having no internal pillars, the roof was constructed entirely of reinforced concrete. (DIA)

JR Boyd Barrett went on to design and build numerous churches and convents throughout Ireland, in addition to several important Government buildings. He also built several schools and religious houses for religious congregations. He was employed by the Presentation Brothers to design and build *Coláiste Chríost Rí* at Turner's Cross (1960). This voluntary secondary school was originally built to accommodate 500 pupils, but was subsequently extended to cater for an increased enrolment. The impact of the attractive design of this building is considerably lessened, however, by its location on a narrow street and by the lack of an appropriate

approach. Boyd Barrett was also responsible for alterations to other Presentation Brothers buildings, including the erection of a library and sacristy at Mount St Joseph (1960); alterations at St Joseph's School, Mardyke, Cork (1957); alterations to Coláiste Therése, Greenmount, Cork (1960). James Rupert Boyd Barrett died in Cork on 1 November, 1976, and was interred in St Finbarr's cemetery. (AMSJ)

### **Byrne, William Henry (1844-1917)**

William Henry Byrne was born in Blackrock, Dublin, on 17 May, 1844. He became a pupil of James Joseph McCarthy, one of the foremost exponents of Gothic architecture and nicknamed 'The Irish Pugin'. Byrne was elected a member of the RIAI in August, 1885, and a Fellow in December, 1885. About 1869, he went into partnership with John O'Neill of Belfast and, in 1874, they opened a branch office in Dublin. In 1902, he formed a new partnership with his son, Ralph Henry Byrne. About 1913, he became blind. He died on 28 April, 1917, and was buried in Glasnevin cemetery. William H Byrne was very much associated with Irish church architecture and was architect for the Catholic dioceses of Killala, Ossory, Tuam, Achonry, as well as the Irish Sisters of Charity. WH Byrne, in association with his son, was engaged by the Presentation Brothers in 1902 to design and build the Presentation Monastery and College in Glashule, Co. Dublin. (AG)

The site was a vacant lot in the main street, previously used as a venue for visiting circuses. The location was prominent, directly opposite the Catholic church, built by GC Ashlin and EW Pugin (son of the more famous AWN Pugin) in 1869. The two-storey building was faced with attractive Tudor red brick. (AG)

### **Glashule Extensions**

In 1957, plans were drawn up by architect, P McKenna, for an extension at Presentation College, Glashule. The builder chosen was AJ Jennings and Company. This extension, which included a hand-ball alley, was formally opened and blessed by Most Rev JC

McQuaid, Archbishop of Dublin, on 2 December, 1958. In 1983, another extension was built, comprising a larger assembly Hall downstairs, with a staff room, study room, toilet and Prayer Room upstairs. (AG)

### **Brennan, James (1912-1967)**

James M Brennan was born in Portlaoise in 1912. He was educated at Belvedere College and the UCD School of Architecture. After winning several architectural prizes, he set up his own private practice in Dublin in 1937. In the 1950s, he fell ill and moved to Cork, where he was appointed housing architect for the Cork Corporation. He also taught at the Crawford School of Architecture, Cork, and subsequently became Director of the Department of Architecture there. He was elected a member of the RIAI in 1932 and became a Fellow in 1953. In 1960, he was commissioned by the Presentation Brothers to design and supervise the construction of a new oratory at Mardyke House, Cork. He was assisted in this work by Mr Harry Wallace RIAI. Subsequently, Mr Wallace supervised the redesign of this oratory and the installation of four stained glass windows in the chapel, which is still in use today. These stained-glass windows were first installed in the Brothers' oratory in Enniskillen. When this closed, they were removed and installed in the renovated oratory at Coláiste Muire, Douglas. When this closed in 1990, the windows were again removed and installed in the oratory at Mardyke House. James Brennan died in Cork in February, 1967, and he was interred in St Finbarr's cemetery. (AMH)

### **Patrick Whelan (1935-2005)**

Patrick Whelan was born in Cork in 1935. He studied architecture at Bolton Street School of Architecture, Dublin, where he obtained a Diploma in Architecture, followed by Membership of the Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland (RIAI). He was the founder of the firm Kelly Barry O'Brien Whelan, architects, and was responsible for designing and building several houses and schools for the Presentation Brothers in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. One of his

outstanding achievements was his work as master planner of the University of Limerick, including the 'high-tech' Concert Hall. His portfolio of buildings was extensive in variety and quantity. In the matter of schools, apart from completing several Voluntary Secondary schools, he was also responsible for designing and building 19 Community/ Comprehensive schools, many of them equipped with Sports Halls and some with 25-metre swimming pools. He was the favourite architect of Brother Bartholomew Browne, during whose administration, several new buildings for the Presentation Brothers were completed.

Whelan's buildings for the Presentation Brothers included the Presentation Brothers residence in Maiville, Turner's Cross (1969), a single-storey building, with accommodation for 20 Brothers; Presentation College, Bray (1973); Presentation Brothers residence, Cobh (1977), with accommodation for eight Brothers (demolished in 2013 to provide space for a car park for Coláiste Muire, Cobh); Coláiste Muire, Cobh, with accommodation for 700 students (1977); Brothers' residence, Killarney, a single-storey building with accommodation for ten Brothers (1976); Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh (1962), with accommodation for 650 second level students; a new Coláiste Muire, Douglas (now Douglas Community School), with accommodation for 600 students (1970) and Presentation College, Mardyke (1985), with accommodation for 700 students. (AB; AC; AK; AMSJ)

Presentation College, Bray, built by Whelan in the early 1970s, began to show structural faults in the 1990s and was replaced by a completely new building in 2011. The houses designed by him for communities in Killarney, Cobh and Maiville (Cork) were built on a very tight budget. Moreover, they predated the era of heat preservation and contemporary understanding of insulation. Nor, indeed, was space allocation, especially in bedrooms and corridors, very generous. At this stage, however, it is not possible to judge whether responsibility for these features rested with the architect or with the client who instructed him. Of these three buildings, two, Maiville and Killarney, subsequently underwent major renovations

and adaptations, while the third, Cobh, was demolished in 2013. Pat Whelan died in 2005, but the firm of architects which he founded, Kelly Barry O'Brien Whelan, continues to operate in Cork.

### **Northern Ireland**

In 1963, Mr M Donnelly was commissioned to design a new monastery for the Presentation Brothers in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh. A plot of two acres was acquired from the Sisters of Mercy for the building and the contract was awarded to Tracey Brothers. The building, accommodating ten Brothers, was completed and opened in 1963. The Presentation Brothers withdrew from Enniskillen in 1988 and the former Brothers' residence was sold. (AE)

In 1967, Mr Brian Gregory, of Gregory Architects, Belfast, designed a new dwelling house for the Presentation Brothers in Dungannon. The site, on Killyman Road, was donated by the Sisters of Mercy, and the building contractor was Daniel Donnelly, Dungannon. There was accommodation for ten Brothers.

When the Presentation Brothers withdrew from Dungannon in 2005, the former Brothers' residence was sold. (AD)

### **Conclusion**

This article, while by no means definitive, attempts to draw attention to an element in the history of the Presentation Brothers, which was undoubtedly significant and which, in other circumstances, could have been definitive. It is probably true to say that this element has been overlooked by the Catholic community, and, arguably, neglected by the successors of Michael Augustine Riordan. This element is the original profession of, and one of the most significant material bequests to posterity, of Riordan. There now seems little doubt that he was an important, if not a major, figure in Church architecture in the diocese of Cork during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Only two people, who have shown interest in his work, come to mind. One was Thomas McNamara, former city architect in Cork, who is now deceased. The other person uses the sobriquet 'Praxiteles' and has compiled a valuable list of Riordan's buildings on the website, www.

archiseek.com. Perhaps it is time to take another look at Riordan's buildings before they have been either unrecognisably renovated or permitted to moulder away. Is it too much to hope that one of my readers may have the requisite interest and competence for such a task?

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## A Life in Irish Education: Some Reflections

*Éamonn Fitzgerald*

### Introduction

People have been my focus over 40 years of involvement in various roles in the Irish education sector. Having formally retired from education in 1997, I continue to be pro-active in the sector. These recollections and reflections involve many strands, as I ask myself the central rhetorical question: what has been central to my thoughts and actions during my years of experience in education? After much filtering, it all distils to that one word –people. In the course of this article, I will share what it is about people that energises me, despite the many prevailing winds of negativity in today's world. For the most part, I will concentrate on people I have encountered in the Irish education system.

We travel roads we had not intended in our lives' journeys, proof once more that there is a power greater than us. So it was for me. I worked with a veterinary surgeon during my holidays in post-primary school and wished to follow that profession. I was second in a family of seven children and university was not an option for parents of very limited income. Thus, I chose primary teaching in St Patrick's College of Education in Dublin. I loved it from the start. Teaching came quite easily to me and it remained so throughout my life. Intuition, enthusiasm complemented a strong work ethic, and facilitated the way forward.

The 60s/70s were eras when the style of teaching was very didactic, when the teacher was the purveyor of knowledge, as distinct from wisdom, and rote memory was central to school life. Education,

as in 'educere', drawing out the talents of learners was compromised too often. Early on, I realised that one had to be creative, because, contrary to the Gradgrind system of Charles Dickens' days, pupils are not like empty vessels to be filled with undigested facts. A learning experience, where one fit suits all, cannot succeed. Teaching and learning are related, but must not be equated. Too often, I have seen what may appear to be good teaching in progress, but there may not be too much learning in progress. How often does the teacher assess the learning outcomes for students, as distinct from the teaching outcomes in the teacher's plan? I was fortunate enough to realise early in my teaching career that the student and not the teacher must be at the centre of the experience; then real learning can develop. Constructivism has been the buzz word for this approach to teaching in recent times, but, though I did not have the term for the process then, I somehow instinctively realised it. (Kirshner)

### Relationships

People are individuals, unique creations of God. This is the rationale underpinning airport security checks, which use fingerprints to determine identification. I believe that people learn best and work best in an organisation or classroom where there are good relationships. Be it the teacher and the pupil or the principal teacher and the school staff, good relationships are central to the quality of learning and to staff performance. I believe that extends to the business world as well, but I am confining my thesis mostly to the world I know and love so well, the world of learning and teaching. Respect and dignity for the individual are 'sine qua non' in my thinking, whether I am teaching, leading and managing a school, or engaged in the wider structures of education.

Students may forget much of what you taught them, but they will never forget the way you treated them. In the vast majority of cases the most fruitful and rewarding experiences for me were communicating with and relating to parents and to students. I learned to listen and, more importantly, I learned to hear. Listening and hearing are not synonymous. *Dá mbeadh soineann go Samhain,*

*bheadh breall ar dhuine éigin.* (You can't please all the people all of the time). Nevertheless, you must hear what they say. When you respect them, they trust you, and even when students leave school, you are always interested in their progress in life. You live in the reflected glory of their successes and one of the real joys in retirement is to meet former students and build on that earlier relationship. Dealing with staff is more demanding. I always placed a high value on, not just the teaching staff, but on all staff, such as the secretarial and maintenance personnel.

### Communicating

Over the years, I realised that communication skills should not be equated with just verbal skills. I was mindful of all the other ways we communicate with people. This stood me in good stead in difficult situations dealing with conflict. As such, conflict resolution did not stress me. There are many areas of conflict which a person can encounter, but there are common denominators, one in particular, people. One learned that there are three sides to every story from the perspectives of the protagonist, the victim, and then there is the unsaid. The latter is central to resolution and one must have the antenna tuned in to receive and decode the conflicting messages. I think of disputes involving a teacher, a parent, and their offspring. In some cases, your gut instinct tells you that the teacher has been unprofessional in his/her dealings with the student and the parents are looking for their pound of flesh. My instinctive 'modus operandi' is not just to be a good listener, but to be perceived to be a good listener. The principles of good law, which I learned from William Binchy, 'audi alterem partem' and 'natural justice', underpin so much of my thinking and strategies. (Binchy)

When one is engaged with a trade union official defending the teacher member, one must realise there is much role play and posturing, as the official makes a very strong and forceful case for its member, your staff member. Accept this public posturing and respect all parties, but provide a compromise solution, a way out with little or no apparent loss of face. Everyone appears to escape from a difficult

and embarrassing situation with a winning solution. Then perception becomes the reality.

### Challenges

I found the role of school principal the most difficult of all my assignments and I made many mistakes. Sr Stanislaus Kennedy once said, “we (must) face the fact of our own fragility and incompleteness, and it is by acknowledging that we are incomplete, that we can change”. Change is inevitable and usually painful. Grappling with the intricacies of timetabling for a student population of over 500 students and close on 40 teaching staff challenged me. I had to work hard to understand and manage this area, until I realised that, while these were often very urgent pre-occupations preparing for a new school year, usually there were more important tasks for a principal.

The timetable must reflect the human and educational values of the school ethos, which underpin the allocation of time and teaching resources. This is ultimately the responsibility of principal, as distinct from the mechanical element of timetabling. I depended on others to make up for my lack of expertise in timetabling, but I led the planning process in consultation with others. It took me some time to realise that this delegation was a healthy approach to management. Distinguishing the important from the urgent was a salutary lesson.

### Leadership and vision

Quality leadership is more important than the urgency of timetabling and it supersedes management skills. The greatest leader of all is Jesus Christ. We all must travel our own Calvary roads, but once we know the direction, follow the sign posts and the example of the women of Jerusalem, or Simon of Cyrene on the highway to heaven, we will not be diverted down puzzling slip roads of life. Even if we take the wrong exit, we can get back to the Heavenly road. I presented this image in lectures and workshops I conducted with school principals leading, developing, and managing their staffs. We need a Bus Scoile, a team bus driven by a principal who knows where to go with the right people, in the correct seats and never forgetting

that every bus needs regular evaluation, monitoring and maintenance. If the leader does not have a clear vision, then all roads will lead to an undefined destination.

### The Good School

One of the main findings in my thesis for MEd (Fitzgerald) was that students and their parents wished to enrol in what they perceived to be a ‘good school’, where the focus was on high quality learning and teaching, good discipline and where the student felt safe, respected and well cared for. This focussed my role as principal in leading a school in which students wanted to enrol. Our school needed to meet these criteria. This was our mission and I was never shy in promoting such a school, as distinct from engaging in propaganda. Some schools confuse promotion with propaganda. Promotion is delivering on what you say you are doing, propaganda is making false promises and not delivering. Hence, I was always doing my best to recruit the best teachers and support them in what they do best.

People who feel good about themselves produce incredible results and I found that it is equally true for teachers, learners, and educationalists at different levels of education. We all need affirmation and we all need to be perceptive to these needs and grasp opportunities to praise. Praise in public and review in private. Who can ever forget the treasured gold stars they got from a primary school teacher for homework well done and improvement in attainment? I can still recall buying 100 of these in Dublin and affixing them to students’ work that showed improvement. Can you imagine the swell of pride in the young heart and that of the parent at home that night? It must be akin to winning an Oscar. The Kaizen principle springs to mind. *Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí; cáin í agus titfidh sí.* (Praise youth and it will prosper; blame it and it will fall.) Invariably, I revert to Gaeilge, the language I love so well for the wisdom contained in its sean fhocails and there will be more in this paper. (Maurer)

### Supporting NQTs

Over many years I loved supporting newly qualified teachers (NQTs)

and as principal, I saw the need to formalise and normalise this support. As early as the mid 90's, I created, devised, developed, and delivered programmes for NQT's, and was in the fortunate position to prioritise this mission, when I was appointed as Education Officer for Kerry Education Service and later as CEO of County Clare VEC. There was no structure in place to support NQTs when they pushed out their individual boats on their teaching careers. I set up a formalised induction programme for teachers in their first year in our schools, complemented it with a mentoring system and at the end of year one most teachers were confident to paddle their own canoe forward for the benefit of their students. Thankfully, that programme is now obligatory for teachers in their first year in our Irish schools.

### **Teaching Performance and Quality of Learning**

It did not take me too long to discover that some teachers found teaching difficult. For me it opened up a new world of opportunity to assist teachers who call for collegial support and, even more important, those who will not, or maybe cannot, admit that they are struggling in their classrooms. In the course of my work as principal, Education Officer and CEO, I have found that, out of a staff of about 40 teachers, with a 500 plus student population, there were, on average, no more than four teachers I would rate as brilliant, six exceptionally good, three underperformers and twenty eight good solid professionals, who only rarely set the teaching profession alight, but they all performed at levels I would classify in the range of more than adequate right through to very good. All needed consideration, affirmation and support for their varying needs. I vividly recall a statement during my training made by Michael Jordan, then Professor of Education in St Patrick's Teacher Training College, Drumcondra, Dublin. "The problem with some of our national teachers in Ireland is that they are like the current Russian sputniks; they won't work, and they can't be fired." Experience taught me over 40 years that his statement is true, even if the number of teachers is very small indeed.

So how did I deal with under-performance? I sought the views of managers from the world of business on how they dealt with such

matters. Increased monetary rewards or incentive based perks such as holidays were the accepted way they rewarded staff performances. Promotion was also an incentive. For underperformance, they offered support and followed due process to avoid litigation for unfair suspensions or dismissals. That much done, they moved decisively to dismissal, as so many intimated to me, when I did this research on education management. The reality is that the sacking of a staff member for underperformance is not an option for principals and that is the main difference when one compares the private and the public work sector. When I sought information from the Department of Education in the course of my research on how many teachers had been dismissed in the Irish education sectors for underperformance, the reply was a masterpiece of obfuscation, with no verifiable statistics. Anecdotal evidence suggests to me that it is in single digits. So many people in the public sector advised me to ignore the underperformance. Like many other principals, at first I ignored it, hoping it would go away. It did not, because of the complexities of human relationships within a school community.

I identified three broad classes of underperformance, namely NQTs, teachers in mid life crisis and the long serving teacher with a service of underperformance. I applied myself to this sensitive task. I made so many mistakes ranging from glorious failures to some significant successes. I learned that each situation is certainly unique and relied on my confidence in engaging with people sensitively and putting the emphasis on the underperformance and not heaping blame on an already struggling teacher as a person. Not the easiest thing to do, but well worth the effort. Dealing with the teachers who had done very well for the previous 20 years, but who were currently just treading water was a different type of challenge. The spark and the sparkle had gone out of their hitherto satisfactory work. The symptoms in the classroom may be similar to the underperformance of some NQTs, but a different approach is needed, even if one's people skills are central to the remediating process. I did apply this form of remediation and yet sometimes it did not work satisfactorily. However, one fit does not suit all.

I did spend a lot of time trying to manage underperformance and that was important, but, in hindsight, I feel I should have spent more of my energies with the ‘good teacher’, affirming, praising, encouraging and showcasing their excellent teaching skills for the benefit of other teachers. I also feel that I should have been more proactive in observing teachers in class, not just the NQTs providing feedback to the teachers, accentuating the positives in their teaching and making some suggestions for addressing any challenges they were encountering. This type of strategy, however, was not in vogue during most of my 40 years in education. By and large, classrooms were the private domain of the particular teacher, who did things his/her way and again my experience was that almost invariably teachers did their work very well, but any hint of assessment of their teaching by a principal was unacceptable. The struggling teacher would have first recourse to the trade union and was very suspicious, feeling unsupported, if the principal invited an inspector to the classes and that was as expected.

Thankfully, that is changing with more accountability expected of all people at work and I certainly welcome the new role of the principal in assessing the performance of the teachers. The key point here is to treat all staff in a professional manner, seeking high standards, keeping the focus on their performance and not on them as people. Nothing personal intended, just routine assessment of professional performance. The Amendment to the Teaching Council Act, 2001, means the Teaching Council has a statutory responsibility to establish procedures and criteria for the induction of newly qualified teachers in relation to Fitness to Teach. ‘It will identify the appropriate mechanism for a teacher to address shortcomings identified in their professional practice, conduct, or medical fitness, giving them the opportunity, where appropriate, to improve their performance, and give confidence in their ability to teach effectively. In very serious circumstances, it may prove necessary to remove the teacher from the Register.’ (TTCIA, 2001) This is welcome, even if it is long overdue. I was always a great believer in continuous professional development (CPD) providing and promoting up-

skilling opportunities for teachers and the consequent energising effect of CPD on their own teaching. This supports the vast majority of teachers who are skilled professional performers.

### **Influences**

There have been so many influences for good in my career in education, none more so than my late parents. They were my first teachers and the best of teachers. The lyrics of Phil Coulter’s song, *The Old Man*, seem so appropriate. “He was more than just a father (and mother), a teacher, my best friend. He taught me things unknown to kings...he made me what I am.” I attended good solid educational institutions. I am proud of being ‘a Mon boy’ in the Presentation Brothers Primary School, Killarney, and of my experiences in so many other centres of education. The various roles I played in the Irish education sector also moulded and enriched me.

I love learning and am always open to the concept of lifelong learning. In recent years the challenge of using IT as an educational tool and responding to the different learning styles of young people in today’s digital age keeps me very enthused now that I am retired. My 11-year old grand-daughter Éabha is proving to be an excellent teacher for me on the potential of modern media as an educational tool.

I have great admiration for the work ethic and professionalism of the young under-graduate teachers I meet in my current work as supervisor of teaching practice on their school placements. I too am always looking to learn from them new teaching methods and styles for the modern information age. Isn’t it so hard to see so many excellently qualified NQTs appearing before people such as myself on selection boards, with just one position vacant, and high numbers of applicants for the job which invariably is a short-term contract. How soul destroying that must be for so many fine young professionals who desperately need the teaching experience to obtain probation in the national school system. The vast majority will not get even shortlisted for interview. In contrast, the norm is three applicants for the posts of principal.

Individual teachers who have motivated me include Dr Matthew Feheny, a Presentation Brother, author, former lecturer at University of Hull and a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, who inspired me during my MEd studies. This qualification was obtained through CLEO (under the direction of the Presentation Brothers in Cork), in conjunction with the University of Hull. Despite his advancing years, his zeal for learning and ability to teach me how to craft my writing for academic purposes struck a real chord. This brilliant teacher continues to inspire me. I have already referred to Michael Jordan (RIP), father of Neil Jordan, the renowned film director. During the section of my career in educational management, I owe much to my out of school experiences, particularly the GAA. The skills of team building through effective management and leadership transferred easily. Highly successful football managers such as Mick O Dwyer and Eugene McGee, taught me a lot that I was able to transfer from sport to education management. Authors, such as Covet, Fullan and many others, also influenced me. The communication and people skills, both in English and ‘as Gaeilge’ of media commentator Micheál Ó Muirheartaigh also resonated with me.

### **Mothers of students**

One group of people I encountered in education, whom I greatly admire, hold a special place in my heart and these are the mothers of Ireland, *Mná na hÉireann*. I have encountered some fine fathers, but the mothers I met are very special. They are the most committed of all to the children’s education. It is with them I had most of my dealings as a teacher and principal. They will attend the parent teacher meeting and make most of the arrangements for their children relating to school life. Notwithstanding the many stresses in their own lives as workers outside or inside the home, invariably they were the first point of contact.

Usually and fortunately, it was a good story, but there were also the times when disciplinary issues, poor attendance, truancy, a lack of interest in school, bullying concerns, mental health issues and a myriad of other issues needed to be addressed by school and home.

In most cases the mothers did not shirk their responsibilities. They valued the home school link. The mothers of people I met through the Irish school system are very special. I salute them.

### **Going forward**

I am impressed by the quality of the vast majority of our young teachers in Ireland and hopeful that the minority who will underperform in schools will be assisted in a respectful and meaningful way. I am heartened by the approach of the Department of Education & Skills to fund and develop educational programmes for those people for whom the regular school system does not cater adequately. I refer to special education provision within the regular school system, programmes such as Leaving Certificate Applied, Youthreach, for people who drop out of education prematurely, adult and continuing education pathways to learning and the acceptance of accredited learning outside of the formal school system.

The teaching of Gaeilge is a cause for serious consideration in our schools. The teaching strategies have not been sufficiently successful and the competency of teachers of Gaeilge in their own fluency and accuracy in the language is a real cause for concern. This was highlighted in a 2013 report from the Chief Inspector where 25% of Gaeilge classes were deemed unsatisfactory. That saddens me. *Tír gan teanga, tír gan anam*. (A country without its own language is a country without a soul). Was Ireland the island of saints and scholars, as we were led to believe? Sainthood is well outside my level of competence, but I proffer the opinion that Ireland is still producing some great scholars and is more enlightened in modern times, providing realistic learning opportunities with suitable accreditation for the majority. “The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn”, said Alvin Toffler, author of *Future Shock*. The Financial Times declared him the ‘world’s most famous futurologist’.

### **Focal Scoir**

Education is central to the future of Ireland. The number of students

completing their Leaving Certificate in 2013 was 90.12%. (DES, 2013) In 1997, the retention rate stood at 82.3 %: that is encouraging progress. The numbers of Irish students who enter the job market with at least a Leaving Certificate is above the EU average. I am proud to be a beneficiary of and in some ways a contributor to the Irish system of education. It defines and continues to enthuse me. I will be joining 11 other educationalists from 10 European countries on a Study Visit in Brussels May 4-10, 2014, for a study of 'Quality assurance in teacher training'. I will be making a presentation of the Irish system and also seeking to learn from best practises in other European countries. Lifelong learning continues to shape me. It makes me what I am.

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## Presentation Brothers Cobh: End of an Era

*J Matthew Feheney fpm*

### Introduction

The Presentation Brothers house in Cobh, Co. Cork, closed in 2012, after more than a century in this friendly and picturesque town. As this was a significant event in the life of the congregation, and has more than passing interest for members of the Presentation Family, especially old boys of Cobh, it would seem appropriate that this journal would mark this event with a reflection on the contribution of the Presentation Brothers to Cobh over a period of 110 years.

Originally known as the Cove of Cork, the name of the town was changed to Queenstown in 1850 in honour of the then reigning British Monarch, who visited Cork that year. During the Anglo-French war, it became important as a British naval centre and, during World War I, it increased in importance to the extent that it had its own Admiral, and a fleet of Destroyers coordinating the fight against German submarines. During the Great Irish Famine, Queenstown became the port of departure for millions of Irish immigrants to the United States of America. Altogether, more than a third of the six million Irish immigrants to the USA, between 1848 and 1850, sailed from Queenstown.

The British Government recognised the naval strategic importance of Cobh (so renamed in 1920) and, following the Treaty and their official departure from Ireland in 1922, they made special arrangements to maintain a presence in Cobh until 1938. But even this delayed return of the Cobh Naval facilities to the Irish Free State Government proved precipitate and British naval commanders

continued to rue the loss of this strategic port, as they struggled to control the depredations of German submarines and ensure the safety of transatlantic shipping in the early years of World War II. Nor has the Government of the Irish Republic been slow to recognise Cobh's importance as a naval base: it has continued to locate the Irish naval headquarters at Haulbowline Island, Cobh, to the present day.

### Coming of Brothers

In the light of the prominence of Queenstown in the political, if not the economic life of Cork, the invitation to the Presentation Brothers to set up a house and school there was enthusiastically welcomed by the congregation's leadership. The House Annals of Cobh attribute the invitation of the Brothers to that town to the notable success of Presentation College, Cork, in its early years. It will be recalled that several second level schools/ colleges sprang up in the wake of the establishment of the Irish Intermediate Board of Education in 1878. It would appear that a group of parents, together with some prominent citizens, including Canon Jeremiah Murphy, Mr (later Sir) James Long and Mr Joseph Grogan, petitioned the Bishop of Cloyne, Most Rev Dr Robert Browne (1844-1935), to request the Superior General of the Presentation Brothers to establish a second level school in Cobh. These people wanted a college along the lines of Presentation College, Western Road, Cork. Brother Patrick Shine, First Superior General, agreed to the request and the Bishop placed the former Pro-Cathedral at the disposal of the Brothers. It was clear, however, that major renovations were required on this building to make it suitable for use as a Brothers' residence and a school. With this in mind, an ad hoc committee placed the following advertisement in The Cork Examiner of 30 October, 1888:

To Builders

Tenders are invited for work in Alterations and Repairs to the late Pro-Cathedral, Queenstown, to fit it up as a Monastery and Schools for the Presentation Brothers.

The renovations cost about £1,500 and to cover this cost an appeal for funds was launched. This appeal was evidently successful and in The Cork Examiner of 17 January, 1889, the following statement appeared:

The committee ought feel justly proud of their exertions which have proved so successful, as is clearly shown by the liberal manner in which they have been supported, not only by the people of Queenstown, but also by the merchants and traders in the city of Cork. (AC)

The architect charged with remodelling the Pro-cathedral was Samuel Francis Hynes (1854-1931), who was responsible for several building projects of the Presentation Brothers, including Mount St Joseph and Presentation College, Western Road. One wing of the renovated building was set aside as a residence for the Brothers, while the remainder became the home of Presentation College, Cobh, capable of accommodating up to 250 students. The first community, led by Brother Joseph O'Callaghan, and assisted by Brothers Joseph Shanahan and Bernard Murphy, arrived in August, 1889, and the school opened on 12 August, 1889, with a Mass, celebrated by Rev F McDonnell. Bishop Browne, uncle of Fr Francis Browne SJ, who took the famous last photographs of *The Titanic*, had a great interest in the school and was a regular visitor. Canon Jeremiah Murphy, the Administrator, who claimed to be mainly responsible for bringing the Brothers to Cobh, was also an enthusiastic supporter until his appointment as Parish Priest of Macroom in 1896. During his farewell visit to the school, the Brothers took the opportunity of presenting him with 'an address of congratulation'. (AC)

### National School

In 1892, at the request of Bishop Browne, the Brothers agreed to take over the administration of the National School in Cobh. Brother Joseph O'Callaghan was appointed Principal, assisted by Brothers Dominic Murphy, Stanislaus Leahy and some lay teachers.

The building housing the National school was, however, old and dilapidated, and was considered unsuitable for purpose. Plans were made to build a new school, which was not completed until 1903. The opening of the new school, named St Joseph's National School, was a notable event, attended by the Bishop and clergy, parents and notable citizens. Among the speakers were Sir James Long and Captain Donnellan. The old National School, situated about 200 metres east of the Brothers residence, though vacant for some time, was subsequently sold and became a commercial premises. (AC)

### **Consecration of Cathedral**

Since St Colman's Cathedral, the magnificent Gothic structure overlooking the harbour in Cobh, played an important part in the lives of all residents in Cobh, including the Presentation Brothers, we will say a little about it. Designed by Edward Welby Pugin, son of the great AWN Pugin, and George Ashlin, the contract was awarded to Michael Meade, a Limerick builder, who had settled in Dublin, and the foundation stone was laid in 1868. The architectural style is described as early French Decorated Gothic and it was regarded as one of the most ambitious church building projects in Ireland during the nineteenth century. Though the building was roofed and the first Mass celebrated in it on 15 June, 1879, the work of completion went on for 47 years, not least for the reason that the money to complete it had to be slowly and laboriously collected not only in Ireland, but also abroad, especially in the USA. The spire, with more than 40 carillon bells, the largest weighing 3.6 tons, was completed in 1915. It was not consecrated, however, until 19 August, 1919. This event was celebrated with due pomp and Cardinal Logue, together with the archbishops and many of the bishops in Ireland, attended the ceremony. The town was decorated with flags and bunting, and the Brothers and their pupils played an active role in the celebrations. (AC)

### **On-going Improvements**

With the passing years, modest improvements were made to both

the National and the secondary school, now known as Presentation College, Cobh. In 1922, the back yard of the National school was covered in concrete and the front yard was similarly treated in 1935. A shed for sheltering from rain was also added. In 1936, corresponding improvements were made in the College, the school yard being concreted and a ball court, together with new toilets, being erected. A statue of St Joseph was erected in front of St Joseph's National School and a statue of Our Lady was erected in front of the College. (AC)

In the 1930s, following the establishment of county council scholarships, which covered school fees in secondary schools, some pupils from St Joseph's School won scholarships to secondary school almost every year. The late Brother Mannix Joachim Stack (1920-2010) recalled how he studied hard and, in 1934, won one of these scholarships to Presentation College, Cobh, where he subsequently distinguished himself as a rugby player. From the beginning, there were lay teachers on the teaching staff of both the National School and Presentation College, many of these men being highly respected members of their profession. In the National school, there were always some Brothers who supervised games and fostered the traditional national games of hurling and Gaelic football. (Stack, 1989, 16).

### **College**

While St Joseph's National School aligned itself with the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) and fostered the traditional national games of hurling and Gaelic football, from the beginning, Presentation College, Cobh, followed the example of its namesake in Cork City and adopted rugby as its official game. This pattern continued for many years. Being a much smaller school, with a correspondingly smaller choice of players, Cobh rarely challenged the traditional supremacy of Pres Cork. A notable exception, however, was the Munster Schools Senior Cup competition in 1938, when the two Pres Colleges met in the final in the Mardyke venue, Cork. After a hard-fought, though dour game, Cobh achieved victory, the memory of which, no less than the event itself, was celebrated for years afterwards. However,

this was the only occasion on which Cobh won this highly-prized and always hotly-contested trophy. (AC)

It was not surprising that, with rugby being an essential part of the sporting tradition of Presentation College Cobh, the game also gradually became a sport for adults in the town. No doubt, the fact that Cobh was a British admiralty town up to 1922, and that some young men either played rugby or became familiar with the game while in the British navy, helped to popularise it. In due course, a rugby club, Cobh Pirates, came into being and is still active.

It was within this context that Presentation College, Cobh, introduced a major change in the early 1960s. The Principal at the time decided to terminate the reign of rugby as the official college game and to change over to Gaelic games, especially hurling and football. It would probably be true to say that this change was more significant, even traumatic, perhaps, for some members of staff and past students than it was for the contemporary students or their parents. One highly-esteemed teacher was so dissatisfied with the change that he transferred to another school. Time, however, proved this to be a wise decision, because it was followed by two even more significant changes. These were the introduction of free secondary schooling and the replacement of Presentation College by a new coeducational secondary school. We will now go on to discuss these developments.

Like most similar secondary schools, Presentation College Cobh was a small to medium-sized school up to 1967, at which time the Irish Government introduced free secondary schooling. From that time onward, the enrolment began to rise. In 1976, a decision was taken to amalgamate Presentation College, catering for boys only, with St Mary's Girls Secondary School (under the management of the Sisters of Mercy), catering for girls only. The amalgamated schools became Coláiste Muire, a coeducational secondary school, in 1976. (AC)

In the discussions leading up to the amalgamation of the two single-sex secondary schools to form *Coláiste Muire*, the Government indicated that it was prepared to help finance the building of a new

second-level school. The Brothers decided to give the site of the old monastery for this purpose and approval was given for a new residence for the Brothers. This was begun in 1976 and completed in 1977, the community taking up residence on 29 October, 1977. Some weeks later, the building was blessed by Bishop John Aherne. In 1978, the old monastery was demolished and in January, 1989, work began on the erection of the new *Coláiste Muire*. The architect was Pat Whelan & Co. and the contract for the building was awarded to Creative Stores, Cork. The new building housing *Coláiste Muire* was officially opened on 1 May, 1981, His Lordship Bishop John Aherne performing the blessing. (AC)

### **Sr Anne Principal**

In 1985, Brother Bede Minehane, who, as Principal, had overseen the birth of *Colaiste Muire* and the erection of a new building to house it, was transferred to Cork and appointed Principal of *Coláiste Spioraid Naoimh*, Bishopstown, Cork, and later Provincial of the Anglo Irish Province. Sister Anne Lenihan, a Sister of Mercy, was appointed to replace Br. Bede. This brought to an end a long line of Presentation Brothers who held the post of principal of the secondary school since 1889. The present principal, Mrs. Paula Sweeney, who had been deputy principal since *Colaiste Muire* opened, succeeded Sr. Anne as the first lay principal.

Some Presentation Brothers, however, continued to teach as members of staff. As more Brothers reached retiring age, and fewer entered the congregation to replace them, the number of Brothers on the staff of *Coláiste Muire* grew smaller and smaller. The last Presentation Brother to hold a post on the staff was Brother Walter Hurley, who had to resign his position when appointed Province Leader of the Anglo-Irish province in August, 2005. For some years, however, Brother De Sales Burke continued to offer tuition in Irish to some students on a voluntary basis.(AC)

### **New Monastery**

Before the old monastery was demolished in 1978 to make way for

the new Colaiste Muire, a new house was built for the Brothers on the north side of Bishop Street. The building was designed by Pat Whelan of Kelly Barry O'Brien Whelan Architects and provided accommodation for eight Brothers. There was a garden space in front, on the south side, comprising about half an acre. This project was overseen by the Community Leader, Br. Stephen O Gorman, who was later to become Superior General of the Presentation Brothers (1993-1999), while the present Congregational Leader, Br. Martin Kenneally, was a member of the Community at that time. The building was officially opened and blessed by Most Rev Dr Aherne, Bishop of Cloyne, on 3 December, 1977. (AC)

### Centenary Celebrations

On 27 October, 1989, the centenary of the arrival of the Presentation Brothers in Cobh was marked by special celebrations. Bishop John Magee presided at a special Mass in the Cathedral and there was a Centennial Banquet for 250 guests afterwards in the Commodore Hotel, Cobh. The Past Students, who were very involved in the celebrations, erected a special commemorative plaque to mark the occasion and also sponsored the publication of a *Centenary Booklet*, edited by Pat Farnan.

### Primary School

The last Presentation Brother on the staff of St Joseph's National School, Cobh, was Brother Benildus Fenton, who held the post of principal, until his resignation owing to ill-health on 31 August, 1992. Before his departure from Cobh, he was awarded a civic reception by the Cobh Borough Council on 3 July, 1992. The occasion was also used to express appreciation of the contribution made by the Presentation Brothers to primary and secondary education in Cobh over more than a century. Brother Jerome Kelly, Superior General, who was one of several Presentation Brothers in attendance, replied on behalf of the Brothers. The first lay principal of St Joseph's National School was Michael Farrell, a member of the teaching staff, who was appointed in September, 1992.

### Brothers Depart

During his six years as Province Leader of the Anglo-Irish province, Brother Walter Hurley continued to reside in Cobh with a small community. One of the members was Brother John Athanasius Early, who became closely associated with student games at St Joseph's National School. In his earlier years, he had been rugby coach at Presentation College, Cork, and all through life relished the outdoors. He continued to referee Gaelic games for the boys of St Joseph's school until he reached his mid-80s. He passed away on 18 January, 2012, aged 87 years. Another member of the last community in Cobh, Brother De Sales Burke, also passed away on 24 December, 2013, aged 89 years. The Presentation Brothers closed the house in Cobh in 2012. The building was transferred to the Presentation Brothers Schools Trust (PBST) in 2013, after which it was demolished and the site used as a car park for nearby *Colaiste Muire*.

### Commemorative Plaque and Civic Reception

On 2 May, 2014, the Presentation College Cobh Past Students, in association with Cobh Urban Council, organised a special function at which Cll John Mulvihill Jnr, Mayor of Cobh, unveiled a commemorative plaque to the Presentation Brothers on the promenade, Cobh. The function was attended by His Lordship, Bishop William Crean, civic and ecclesiastical leaders, as well as past students, members of the public and Presentation Brothers. Mr Joe Hawes spoke on behalf of the Past Pupils Union and Brother Andrew Hickey, Province Leader, replied on behalf of the Presentation Brothers. After the function, there was a civic reception for the Brothers, at which the Presentation Brothers were formally thanked for their notable contribution to education in Cobh.

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## Forging a Future for Catholic Education in Ireland

*Rev Michael Drumm*

Note: This article is the edited text of a lecture delivered by Fr Drumm at the Annual Reunion of Alumni of CLEO in June, 2013.

### Introduction

Thank you for the kind invitation to address the annual gathering of the alumni of the Christian Leadership in Education Office (CLEO). CLEO has made an important contribution to the development of Catholic education in Ireland. In my presentation this evening, I will reflect on the future of Catholic education in a pluralist Ireland. In another article in this volume, I will reflect on current debates and, more importantly, I will discuss a contemporary theology of Catholic education.

Change in educational policy needs to be thought through carefully, as the contribution of good schools, colleges and universities to the development of social capital and the common good is inestimable. Those involved in Catholic education should be active participants in planning new approaches to quality in teaching and learning, to greater religious and cultural diversity, and to more economic use of educational infrastructure. In doing so, they should emphasise the principle of subsidiarity. As an organising principle, it suggests that matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralised competent authority. The principle is based upon the autonomy and dignity of the individual, and holds that all other forms of society, from the family to the State and the international order, should be in the service of the human person. Subsidiarity assumes that these human persons are by their nature social beings,

and emphasises the importance of small and intermediate-sized communities or institutions, like the family, schools, the churches, and voluntary associations, as mediating structures, which empower individual action and link the individual to society as a whole. All of this contributes to the common good.

### Centralisation

The Irish State has a history of centralisation of power as evidenced by the weak structures of local government. Our education system does not need greater centralisation of power and decision-making in the Department of Education and Skills. It will be much better served by greater autonomy at all levels. The Minister's plans should aim to develop such autonomy. The language suggests so but the reality might be different. Who, for instance, decided that there is need for "a radically reformed teacher-education programme"? Who will produce the new programme? Who will decide the principles upon which it will be based? Getting the balance right between centralisation and autonomy will have a major impact on supporting greater creativity at all levels of the education system.

The leaders of tomorrow are in the classrooms of today. All pupils are capable of imagining, creating and exploring. Fostering a commitment to critical thinking and creativity is the heartbeat of any living tradition and Catholic schooling is an expression of just such a living tradition. The aim of schooling is far greater than job training or qualification for a particular third-level programme – it seeks to create a human person who is knowledgeable and innovative and so can adapt to many different roles and realities in the future. We need an approach to schooling that keeps curiosity alive, fosters a love of learning, stimulates problem-solving and critical thinking and encourages students to become independent learners.

### Pluralism and Freedom of Religion

One of the first decisions of Ruairí Quinn T.D. as Minister for Education and Skills was to establish a "Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector". The Advisory Group overseeing

the work of the forum issued its final report in April 2012 (Coolahan *et al*, 2012). The report has received a largely negative reaction in the Catholic education community.

The Minister and the Chairman of the Advisory Group have made clear that what they are attempting to achieve is not a complete re-structuring of the primary school sector but greater diversity of school provision. The key word is “pluralism”. The Minister says that his aim is not to impose a secular agenda on schools but to ensure that the system is responsive to parental demand so that school provision actually matches the religious and sociological realities in local communities.

The principle of freedom of religion is part of the bedrock upon which western democracies are constructed. It finds succinct expression and support in article 44 of the Irish Constitution. In its submission (June 2011) to the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council, the Council for Education of the Irish Episcopal Conference stated:

The legally recognised human right referred to as ‘freedom of religion’ can be thought of as comprising two distinct but equally important dimensions or moral rights. It is both a positive freedom for religion, e.g. the freedom to practice, manifest and share one’s religious commitments, and a negative freedom from religious coercion (including anti-religious creeds), e.g. the freedom from coercion by public or private parties to assent to or deny any particular religious or philosophical proposition.....

It is a mistake to reduce the right to religious freedom in education, enjoyed by parents and, in so far as is appropriate for their age and ability, their children, to an absolute but merely negative freedom from coercion. Such an interpretation has no objective grounding in the texts of human rights law which are clearly formulated to include both the positive and negative dimensions of religious freedom. Connected with this approach is a tendency to extend the meaning of ‘coercion’, ‘proselytism’ or ‘indoctrination’ to include any form of uninvited contact with the religious belief or practices of fellow members of one’s school community.

Some scholars speak of a contrast between epistemological and ideological pluralism: epistemological pluralism is the recognition of the right to existence of contradictory truth claims (e.g. Christianity, Islam, atheism) while ideological pluralism is the insistence that the only truth is pluralism. A truly pluralist society must surely learn to live with, and respect, difference while fostering loyalty to the nation and support for democratic structures of government.

The claim that the religious education provided in Catholic schools is indoctrination must be rejected. Some commentators speak of the dangers of proselytism and indoctrination in denominational schools without ever defining these terms. To introduce a child to the faith of parents through the schooling system is not proselytism or indoctrination but education. Catholic parents have the human right to form their children in accord with their philosophical and religious convictions. Religious education has nothing in common with indoctrination, which amounts to a deliberate harming of students by undermining their natural ability to reason. In contrast, Catholic schools are committed to the deepest respect for both faith and reason and as such they contribute significantly to the formation of rational and mature citizens of our democratic society.

There is a temptation in contemporary Irish discourse to dismiss religious belief as inherently irrational, divisive, and anti-intellectual. Some go so far as to say that schools with a Catholic ethos cannot create a sense of civic virtue. This runs completely contrary to the Catholic education tradition, which is built on a respect for faith and reason. Those who dismiss schools with a religious ethos as little more than proselytising and indoctrinating tools of religious authorities show little sense of the long evolution of Catholic schools over many centuries, the rich diversity within the Catholic sector and the principles which underpin such education today.

Catholic schools have a responsibility to uphold the right of parents who wish, on conscientious grounds, for their child to opt out of any subject. It must be noted though that while students can opt out of particular subjects in accordance with the law, they cannot opt out of the culture and characteristic spirit of the school whether it

is non-denominational, multi-denominational or denominational. In all of this it should be noted that the characteristic spirit of a school is not static as it will evolve in response to social and demographic factors.

Denominational schools, if they are to maintain their identity in this evolving social context, will need reasonable legislative provisions concerning enrolment, employment and the curriculum in religious education.

### **Enrolment**

In June 2011, the Department of Education and Skills published a “Discussion Paper on a Regulatory Framework for School Enrolment”. The paper notes that just 20% of schools are oversubscribed and therefore must use their enrolment policy to allocate places to new applicants. Thus the vast majority of schools have the capacity to offer places to all applicants. With regard to religious faith as a possible criterion for use in enrolment policies the paper states:

The existing denominational school system and equality legislation supports the right of denominational schools to give priority to children of a particular faith. It is not proposed to change this (DES, 2011, 32).

Enrolment policies will usually have several criteria which are not related to religion at all, e.g. age, first come first served, siblings of current students, relative of staff/ past pupils, geographic boundaries, feeder schools, language issues. It should be noted that schools are more likely to be oversubscribed in urban areas where alternative under-subscribed schools are often readily available nearby. Having the right to use religious faith as a criterion in enrolment is particularly important for minority faith communities such as the Reformed Churches in the Republic of Ireland. Such enrolment policies are a necessary element in the protection of the human rights of freedom of religion and of parental choice in education in a pluralist society.

### **Employment**

Section 37 of the Employment Equality Act comes in for criticism

especially from teachers’ representatives. Arguably, much of this is caused by a misinterpretation of the intention and reasoning behind the section. The Act is very wide ranging and definitive in its demand on employers not to discriminate on any of the nine defined grounds including religious belief. If there were no section 37, or its equivalent, then a religious body would have no right to use religious belief and affiliation in any of its employments. Thus a Catholic parish, a Church of Ireland diocese, a synagogue or a mosque could not use religious belief as a criterion for selecting their employees.

Most people criticise section 37 on the grounds of respect for sexual orientation. But would it be legitimate for the law to accord greater individual rights in relation to sexual freedom than apply in other areas such as religious freedom? No freedom is ever absolute as it must contend with legitimate expressions of other freedoms. This then is a matter of the balance of rights. With regard to schools, we should note that the employer is the board of management. The Churches are not employers of teachers. There are approximately 3,400 boards of management running schools with a religious ethos. Each one of these boards is a corporate body and it must balance all of the contesting rights legitimately present in a school. Roughly, 27,000 persons serve on these boards and they engage outside educational experts to be part of their interview panels for staff vacancies and promotions. Should these individual boards not be trusted to make reasonable judgments as to what is best for the particular school and to keep a balance with regard to various rights?

### **Religious education**

It became clear at the public sessions of the forum in June 2011 that all existing patrons of primary schools in the Republic of Ireland want to provide some form of programme in religion and ethics. Such a programme could take a phenomenological approach as happens in many secular schools across Europe where children are introduced to religions as one datum among many others. The phenomenological approach is useful but it is very limited from a faith-based perspective. It amounts to education about religions and

beliefs rather than education into and from religious faith.

It is clear from article 42 of *Bunreacht na hÉireann* and in the Education Act (9{d}) that schools must support the moral, spiritual and religious development of the child. This amounts to much more than a general introduction to ethics. In Judaeo-Christian thinking, informed as it is by Greek philosophy and the biblical traditions, the study of morality and ethics is not just about the provision of information. It is deeply committed to character formation and human development. It is an intentional activity, which needs to articulate the skills and goals which it intends to develop and the moral literacy which it seeks to foster.

The final report of the forum makes specific recommendations regarding rule 68 of the *Rules for National Schools*, religious symbols and celebrations, and prayer. It is generally accepted that rule 68 needs to be reformulated but it is surprising that it should be isolated from a general review of the *Rules for National Schools* (DES, 1965). Many of the provisions are now obsolete or irrelevant. The rules need to be reviewed not just from the perspective of human rights conventions. Rule 68 would be part of this overall review. It is not altogether clear what is intended by the recommendations on religious symbols, celebrations and prayer. If it is intended that all schools should heighten their sensitivity to the presence of children of all faiths and none then this is welcome. However, if a more syncretistic approach is being proposed which suggests that all religions are the same or that a school should not give expression to its identity and should reduce it to the lowest common denominator, then this would clearly undermine the characteristic spirit of the school.

### Conclusion

The Minister wants a new emphasis on quality in all educational endeavour. A key part of this will be a greater commitment to self-evaluation as a tool that informs and reforms curriculum and assessment at different levels. Since the ethos / characteristic spirit of a school should inform all aspects of the life of a school it is important to reflect on how ethos might contribute to greater quality. In this regard

the Catholic Schools Partnership has recently launched A process for understanding, supporting and taking ownership of the characteristic spirit in a Catholic school (available at [www.catholicschools.ie](http://www.catholicschools.ie)). This process will facilitate Catholic schools in reflecting on their ethos and how this informs the life of the school. It is intended that this process will enhance the identity of many Catholic schools and will facilitate changes in the patronage of some schools where this is appropriate. In this way it will make an important contribution to the future of Catholic schools in our pluralist and democratic society. There is little doubt but that those schools and colleges that are committed to the highest quality of expression of their ethos / characteristic spirit will also develop quality in all areas of school life.

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## Presentation Brothers and New Ecclesial Communities

*JM Fehenev fpm*

### Introduction

On 1 February, 2014, the Congregational Leader of the Presentation Brothers, Brother Martin Kenneally, and some members of his team, hosted a meeting of the Brothers at Mount St Joseph, Cork. In the course of the meeting, members of the leadership team unveiled its 'CLT Plan' for the coming three years, up to the General Chapter of 2017. In the course of his presentation, Brother Martin made mention, among other things, of *Chemin Neuf* (The New Way), which is one of the New Ecclesial Communities. In this article, I would like to focus on the subject of New Ecclesial Communities and what the Presentation Brothers might possibly learn from this phenomenon in the Catholic Church.

I would, at the outset, like to emphasise that I am not attempting to comment on or analyse the Plan outlined by Brother Martin and his colleagues in the Congregational Leadership team. It would be more accurate to say that Brother Martin's mention of one of the New Ecclesial Communities merely rekindled some thoughts that I have been considering for some time. Moreover, his kind invitation to the Brothers present at the meeting to forward their comments has provided the impetus for me to put my thoughts on the matter on paper. I also feel that, since some of these ideas concern members of the Presentation Family, these people should have access to them. These ideas may, in turn, encourage members of our valued and extended family to articulate their thoughts on a subject of genuine interest and concern to them.

Nothing in this paper is, of course, intended to be critical of current or past leadership of the congregation. Moreover, the context within which these words are shared with the Presentation Family is that enunciated by Brother Martin Kenneally, our Congregational Leader, in the preface to a volume of letters, issued by him in 2008, entitled, 'Love and Speak the Truth'. His words are worth repeating:

In a truly loving community, neither fear, anxiety, nor ego are dominant. In this atmosphere it is possible to love and speak the truth. And the truth shall set you free. (Kenneally, 2008)

### Ecclesial Communities

The fact that New Ecclesial Communities (hereafter, for convenience, sometimes abbreviated to NECs) are a major part of the contemporary life of the Catholic Church was emphasised by a recent international gathering in London. On 16 November, 2013, some 1600 members from 20 ecclesial communities, met in the British capital. Participating communities included Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Chemin Neuf; L'Arche; NeoCatechumenate, Schoenstatt Movement and Sant'Egidio Community. The importance which the English hierarchy attributed to this gathering was evident from the fact that the opening address was delivered by Cardinal Vincent Nichols and the final address was delivered by Cardinal Murphy-O'Connor, the two leading prelates in the United Kingdom.

This type of meeting was not, however, new. The first World Congress of New Ecclesial Communities was held as far back as 1998. In May of that year, representatives of some 50 Ecclesial Communities met in Rome. Pope John Paul II honoured them with a special message of encouragement. On Pentecost Sunday, 31 May, 1998, they participated, with the Holy Father, in prayer vigil, attended by more than a quarter of a million people. One year later, In 1999, the Pope told a group of bishops, 'One of the most important accomplishments of the (new ecclesial) movements is their capacity to awaken in many faithful, men and women, adults and young, that ardent missionary enthusiasm that is essential for the Church on the

threshold of the third millennium'. (John Paul II, 16/6/1999) Pope John Paul II went on to describe ecclesial communities as "a concrete ecclesial reality with predominantly lay membership, a faith journey and Christian witness which bases its own pedagogical method on a precise charism given to the person of the founder in specific circumstances and ways." What unites the various people who are members of an individual ecclesial community are its spirituality, apostolic mission and outreach. The Vatican describes these New Ecclesial Communities as 'Church Public Lay Associations'. Though not identical with the Basic Christian Communities in Latin America and the Far East, especially the Philippines, they are inspired by the same ideals.

### Many Ecclesial Communities

There are many New Ecclesial Communities scattered over the world but I will confine my discussion of them to those of which I have either personal experience, or those about which I have been reading for some years.

#### *Comunita Sant'Egidio*

The *Sant'Egidio* Community was founded in Italy in 1968 by Professor Andrea Riccardi. Its mission is the education to Christian maturity of its members and collaboration with the Church in all aspects of its apostolate. The Community claims 50,000 members in about 70 countries. It takes its name from the church of Sant'Egidio in Trastevere, Rome, which was its first permanent meeting place. The Community's main activities include prayer, centred on reading the Bible; spreading the Good News of the Gospel, especially to people who are seeking a sense of purpose in their lives; service of the poor; commitment to ecumenism; dialogue with members of other religions, as well as with non-believers. In recent years, the Community has been involved in mediating between warring factions in some African countries, including Mozambique. The leadership of the Community is headed by an elected President. (*The Tablet*, 1/2/2014)

### The Catholic Worker Movement

This organisation was founded in 1933, during the Great Depression in the United States, by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. It works for peace and justice and has made a significant contribution to the development of Catholic social teaching. The movement is grounded in the belief in the God-given rights and dignity of every human person. It is committed to non-violence, prayer and hospitality for the homeless, exiled, hungry and forsaken. Members protest against injustice, war, racism and violence of all forms. It has about 225 local communities, most of them located in cities in the USA. In its early days, the organisation published a newspaper, *The Catholic Worker*, which was sold for five cents. The organisation's current publication is called *The Catholic Worker Journal*.

### Communion and Liberation

The founder of Communion and Liberation (generally abbreviated to C&L) was Rev Luigi Guissani, an Italian priest teaching in a High School in Milan. In 1954, he gathered a group of students to help him in his catechetical work. This group grew and gradually developed into a Catholic organisation. In 1969, the organisation was named Communion and Liberation. The degree of membership varies, from those who merely attend a weekly catechesis to those who commit themselves to the organisation by joining the C&L Fraternity. There is also a celibate circle within the organisation. There are about 60,000 adult members spread over about 70 countries. (CLF)

Though for some years, there was a distinctly political tone in the ministry of C&L, it now claims to direct most of its energy to cultural, charitable and educational work. In the 1980s and 1990s, C&L became involved in a bitter dispute with Catholic Action, a more moderate Italian Catholic lay organisation. Cardinal Martini and the Conference of Italian Bishops supported Catholic Action and tried to moderate the militant approach of C&L. The views of the latter organisation were aggressively expressed in its weekly newspaper, *Il Sabato*, and in its international monthly magazine, *30 Giorni Chiesa e nell Mondo* (30 Days in the Church and the World). Eventually,

Rev Guissani intervened and managed to bring about a truce with Catholic Action. C&L's current international monthly magazine is called, *Traces Litterae Communionis*, which, in English, carries the title, *Traces*, and is published in nine different languages.

Though, like other Ecclesial Communities, C&L is a lay organisation, it also accommodates priests. It is an organisation with a great deal of influence in the Church, partly because of the high profile of its members. Several priests, who were formerly members of C&L, are now bishops, archbishops or Cardinals. However, on appointment to the episcopacy, they formally withdrew from membership of C&L, though probably still sharing its ethos and mission. Former C&L members who are now part of the hierarchy include Cardinal Angelo Scola (Milan), Archbishop Javier Martinez (Granada, Spain), Archbishop Paulo Pezzi (Moscow, Russia), and several bishops. C&L also operates Colleges of Higher Education. (CLF)

### ***Foculare***

The *Foculare* Movement, was founded by Chiara Lubich in Italy in 1943. It has a large membership, estimated to be more than two million in 182 countries. The word '*Foculare*' means 'Fireplace' in Italian. Its mission is to foster unity and universal brotherhood in all aspects of life, through its Gospel-based spirituality. It comprises consecrated single men (*focularini*) and women (*focularine*), living together in communities, in addition to married couples living with their families. The members work at their own professions, the married couples being 'associated' with communities of consecrated members, who live in community. The married members meet regularly for prayer in their 'associated' community. There is a strong 'communitarian' ingredient in the life of the members. The Movement is characterised by great commitment allied to great diversity in way of life. (*The Tablet*, 12/6/2004)

### **Chemin Neuf**

*Chemin Neuf* (A New Way) was founded in Lyons, France, in 1974. The founders were a group of people, who were involved in charismatic renewal. The group included Rev Laurent Fabre, then a Jesuit priest, and Jacqueline Coutellier, a novice Carmelite nun. Chemin Neuf consists of celibate men and women who live alongside married couples. The Jesuit contemplative influences continue to be a significant part of the spirituality of the group. *Chemin Neuf* houses have daily Mass, daily Office and Eucharistic Adoration and living in community is integral to the ethos of the group. The organisation welcomes people from different Christian denominations and has an ecumenical emphasis. There is no special dress, though members wear a wooden cross.

The group promotes retreats and organises 'Cana' sessions for married couples. The group also promotes reconciliation and has developed the 'Siloam' programme for this purpose. This programme involves a series of retreats spread over a year. (*The Tablet*, 7/12/2013)

### **L'Arche**

L'Arche, founded in France in 1964 by Canadian, Jean Vanier, has 120 communities in 30 countries. Its mission is to create homes and programmes for people with developmental disabilities. This mission is based on the Beatitudes preached by Jesus during his famous Sermon on the Mount. (Matt 5:2-10). L'Arche seeks to foster an environment which celebrates the unique value of each and every person in these communities and recognises our need for one another. There are several L'Arche communities in Ireland, including one in Cork. The organisation has many part-time volunteers who visit the communities and take the residents on trips and visits. (Vannier, 1990)

### **Neocatechumenate**

The Neocatechumenate Way was founded in Madrid, Spain, in 1964 by Kiko Arguello and Carmen Hernandez. Its mission is to help people and parishes by means of a programme of adult Christian

formation or catechesis. It was approved by the Holy See in 2008. It takes its inspiration from the catechesis which the early Church used to prepare people for baptism. The Neocatechumenate provides post-baptismal catechesis for adult Catholics. Though comprised of lay people, married and single, it usually has a priest as spiritual director. The organisation has about 40,000 members, scattered throughout the world. Members do not live together, but usually meet twice a week, once for catechesis and once for the celebration of the Eucharist.

The organisation has its own procedure for celebrating the Eucharist, based on the tradition in the early Church. Members regard the Eucharist as an Agape or meal and celebrate it in small groups seated around a table. For this reason, members prefer to celebrate their own liturgies, attended by their own members, rather than join in the parish Mass. In 2006, Pope Benedict XVI, however, requested the organisation to make some changes in their celebration of the Eucharist, with a view to bringing it nearer the format used in parish Masses (*The Tablet*, Jan, 2006). In 2012, the Vatican went further, stating that the Neocatechumenate must 'follow the norms of the Church as indicated in the liturgical books, adding, 'to do otherwise must be understood to be a liturgical abuse' (CAN, 21/1/2012). The tendency to cut itself off from the parish liturgy was one of the reasons why some bishops have opposed the Neocatechumenate, calling it a divisive force in a parish. (CAN, 16/12/2010)

The organisation has over 50 seminaries in cities throughout the world, including Rome, and has been credited with producing many priests and religious from among its members. The Neocatechumenate received solid support from Pope John Paul II. (Allen, 2012)

### **Living Water Community**

Living Water Community (LWC) was founded in Trinidad in 1975 by Rhonda Maingot and Rose Jackman. Both these young single women were already involved in the Charismatic Movement and the Living Water Community is described as a Catholic Charismatic Ecclesial Community. With the encouragement of the late Archbishop Anthony Pantin, Living Water Community became well-established

and attracted several priests, who work as spiritual directors with the organisation. They include the present Bishop of Barbados, Most Rev Jason Gordon. Some members live in community, though the majority of the members, both single and married, live in their own homes. There are a couple of hundred members. Living Water Community operates the following ministries:

Trinity Communications Network, which has regular broadcasts via cable television and EWTN channel.

St Maximilian Kolbe Hospice for dying persons, Port of Spain.

Marian House Youth Centre, Port of Spain.

Fountain of Hope, skills training and job creation for young women.

'Our Lady of the Wayside' shelter for abused and abandoned children, Port of Spain.

Caribbean School for Catholic Communications in Arima, Trinidad. (LWC, 2008)

### **Zion Community**

Zion Community is another ecclesial community in Trinidad. It was founded by two lay women, Margaret Mary Woods and Mary Baptiste, and specialises in Prayer, Pastoral Care and Counselling. Some of the members are teachers and counsellors. Members are much in demand to lead youth and parish retreats. Members also conduct courses in adult Christian formation. The membership is less than one hundred. (Baptiste, 2008)

### **The Background**

Karl Rahner described Vatican II as a 'neat break' from a culturally narrow past, from a monolithic Eurocentric Church to a truly pluriform world-Church. For him, 'the Second Vatican Council was the beginning of a tentative approach by the Church to the discovery and realisation of itself as a world-Church'. (Rahner, 1981)

The majority of the New Ecclesial movements emerged in the second half of the twentieth century. They are a considerable charismatic force in the life of the Church. The membership largely consists of lay people, though some groups also have priests and

religious. All are committed to grow in their faith and to work for the renewal of the Church and the World. A particular characteristic of these movements is a very flexible bonding of community. Communities usually have a certain organisation and structure, complemented by varying degrees of participation and commitment.

### **Presentation Brothers and Ecclesial Communities**

As most of my readers know, the congregation of the Presentation Brothers is divided into a number of regions, called provinces. At present there are three of these: the Anglo-Irish province, Our Lady of Americas Province, comprising North America and the Caribbean, and the African province. Some would contend that continuation of the first two provinces is uncertain, might even be in danger and might, for purposes of ministry, cease to exist within the next decade. It has been pointed out that the African province alone is showing signs of growth. It is expected that, once the Constitutions have been revised and approved, the entire congregation will be administered by one central body, some of whose members will have administrative responsibility for specific regions, formerly known as provinces. (A Plan)

Of course, what is happening to the congregation of the Presentation Brothers is being replicated by a similar decline in the membership of several other (if not all) traditional congregations. Many reasons have been put forward for this decline in the membership of these 'active' congregations. One of the reasons is the now generally-accepted fact that the normal life-span of a religious congregation is 250-300 years. Though Raymond Hostie (1983) was one of the first to draw this conclusion from his examination of historical evidence in the 1980s, most specialist commentators on the subject, including, Gerald Arbuckle, Lawrence Cada, Diarmuid O'Morchu, Sandra Schneiders and Joan Chittister, agree with his findings (Arbuckle et al). These writers do point out, however, that the life of a religious congregation can be prolonged by 'refounding'. This has notably happened in the case of the Capuchin Order, which is the result of 'refounding the Franciscans, and the Order of Discalced

Carmelites, which was the result of the refounding work of St John of the Cross and St Teresa of Avila on the Order of Carmel. There has, however, been no acknowledged refounding in the congregation of the Presentation Brothers.

To say that available evidence seems to suggest that provinces of some religious congregations, possibly including the Anglo-Irish province of the Presentation Brothers, are in irreversible decline, is not to say that there will not be occasional vocations to the religious life. As Pope Francis wrote recently, 'Wherever there is life, fervour and a desire to bring Christ to others, genuine vocations will arise'. (Francis, 2013, 107) This does not mean, however, that the Presentation Brothers, or any other congregation, will get sufficient vocations to continue its traditional ministry, or even to ensure its survival. To cater adequately for the formation and training of aspirants, a religious congregation must have the human and material resources for this task. This includes religious communities able and willing to receive young religious after initial formation. However, this is not normally humanly possible, if there is a generation, or two between the ages of the aspirants and other members of the community.

There is one other important point made by Pope Francis, which has sometimes been overlooked in the past. This is the effective screening of aspirants, to ensure that they have the necessary human qualities to ensure a fruitful and satisfying life in ministry. It can happen, and may have happened in the past, that aspirants entered religious life, consciously or unconsciously, to satisfy their own needs rather than to give themselves in ministry to others. What Pope Francis says about an improved selection process for seminarians, also applies to aspirants to religious life:

..today we are increasingly aware of the need for a better process of selecting candidates to the priesthood. Seminaries cannot accept candidates on the basis of any motivation whatsoever, especially if those motivations have to do with affective insecurity or the pursuit of power, human glory or economic well-being. (Francis, 2013, 107)

There have been numerous religious congregations, which flourished in former times, but, which have now become extinct. One of these, the Third Order Regular of the Carmelite Brothers, has connections with the Presentation Brothers. In 1939, the Papal Rescript for this congregation was withdrawn because of its failure to find vocations and the congregation was dissolved. At his own request, the superior of the congregation's house in Dublin, Brother Brendan Edwards, was given ecclesiastical permission to transfer to the Presentation Brothers. He received the Presentation Brother's habit on 3 October, 1939, and made profession of vows on 5 October, 194. Many of my readers knew him personally. He died in London on 29 August, 1981.

Other congregations that have become extinct include the Gilbertines, Canons Regular of St Anthony of Vienna (Antonines); Canons Regular of St John Baptist of Lyons; Sons of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; Missionaries of the Sons of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; Order of Discalced Friars Minor; Order of Friars Minor Recollect; Order of Reformed Friars Minor; Order of the Humiliati; Benedictine Congregation of the Celestines; Society of St Pius X. (GCO)

### **Amalgamation**

Before religious congregations become extinct, they usually take steps to reorganise their administrative structures so that they better serve their actual, rather than historical, needs. One of the usual steps in such reorganisation is the amalgamation of provinces. Thus, a relation of mine was superior General of the congregation of Presentation Sisters in the State of Victoria, Australia, before Vatican II. Hers was a completely independent congregation, founded from Ireland, and sharing the rule, traditions and spirit of Nano Nagle. Some years after her death, however, the Presentation Sisters in Victoria amalgamated with the Presentation Sisters in other Australian States and became a single entity. This movement was replicated in Ireland, where hitherto-independent Presentation Convents reorganised themselves into provinces within one union, under a single Superior General. Catherine McAuley's Sisters of Mercy did likewise. The Presentation Brothers also amalgamated provinces. Thus, the present Anglo-Irish province was formed from the former Irish and English provinces.

The present province of Our Lady of the Americas was formed from the former shrunken Canadian and West-Indian provinces.

In the United Kingdom, in the 1970s, I witnessed the next stage of amalgamation where four separate Dominican female congregations amalgamated to form one new congregation. Of course, not all the members were pleased with this reorganisation and some opted, instead, to return to secular life. A former member of one of these female Dominican congregations now lives and works in Cork as a lay person.

### **Handing on the Charism**

Since the primary objective of an 'active' religious congregation is Christian ministry or helping to realise the kingdom of God on earth, rather than self-perpetuation or self-preservation, the handing on of the charism of the founder is dear to the heart of every member. In other words, seeing people, lay or religious, engaged in the special ministry of Christian education and formation, especially with young people, is the dearest wish of every Presentation Brother. Each Brother inherited this ministry from the founder, Blessed Edmund Rice, who was blessed by God with a special charism, or gift, for this ministry. The Constitutions of the Presentation Brothers express the mission of the members in striking language:

Faithful to the inspiration of the Founder, we hunger and thirst for justice so that all people, especially youth, can achieve the fullness of human growth and development. (FPM, #6)

Since there are few Presentation Brothers able to engage meaningfully in this ministry now, and there will be fewer, if any, in Ireland, in the future, an important question presents itself: who are the people that God has lined up to share the charism and mission of Blessed Edmund in the future? I would venture to suggest that some of these people will come from the ranks of the Presentation Family, which has come into being in recent years. In the Presentation Family we have, though we may not recognise it as such, a loose Ecclesial Community. And

perhaps a pertinent question is, how can we facilitate the formation and support of a tighter and more effective Ecclesial community from volunteers in the Presentation Family?

### **Not the Same as Associates**

An Ecclesial Community formed from members of the Presentation Family would not be another Presentation Associate group, though there are valuable lessons to be learned from our experience with the Associates. In the first instance, an Ecclesial Community would be self-governing. It would not be dependent on the Presentation Brothers, though, of course, the Brothers would help to found, sport and promote it. While the Associates meet once a month, it is likely that members of an Ecclesial Community would meet more often, possibly once a week. The normal format of weekly meetings of existing Ecclesial Communities, includes prayer, study, planning and discussion and a meal (of some kind).

Members would be married or single, young, middle-aged and older, lay or religious. Each member would continue to work at his/her profession/trade, but would be expected to cultivate an apostolic aspect of the work, or, alternately, become involved in some other ministry outside of work hours. The ministry aspect of each member's life would be important, since members would be charism bearers and the charism of Blessed Edmund was ministry towards underprivileged and neglected young people, not prayer alone.

If and when such an Ecclesial Community were established, there would, of course, be the possibility of the group setting up its own house, where other people could be invited to participate in workshops, lectures, liturgies and prayer sessions. It would be important to incorporate flexibility into the organisation, so as to be open and receptive to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

### **Taking a Risk**

Of course, there are risks to be taken in establishing and promoting a new Presentation Ecclesial community. But, since Pope Francis has assumed leadership of the Catholic Church, there is new attitude

towards risk. Francis encourages risk. He had no hesitation in saying that he prefers 'a Church that has accidents a thousand times to a Church that gets sick'. He is calling the Church to get out of itself, to take risks to proclaim the Gospel and defend the poor and vulnerable. (Francis, 2013, 187) As one commentator puts it, 'Accidents are tolerable, self-referential behaviours are not.' (CAN, 21/1/2012)

There is an old Irish saying, 'Bíon gach tosnú lag'. The great Marcus Tullius Cicero said that all great things start from small beginnings. Brother Michael Augustine Riordan began his first school in a renovated corn shed in Catt Lane, off Barrack Street, Cork, in July, 1827. Presentation College, Cork, started in a rented private house in the South Mall in 1878. Brother Jerome Kelly started the SHARE organisation with a group of Fifth Year students in Presentation College, Cork, in 1970. A new Presentation Ecclesial Community can similarly start small. The challenge is to plant the seed. God will decide whether or not it grows. 'The important thing', as Pope Francis wrote recently, 'is not to walk alone'. (Francis. #33)

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## Towards a Contemporary Theology of Catholic Education

Rev Michael Drumm

### Introduction

Students, teachers, schools and colleges have formed a key part of ecclesial life for centuries. Indeed, the whole historical development of education in the western world is inseparable from the Christian search for deeper self-understanding. The word 'education' traces its roots to a Latin verb meaning 'to lead out'. The educator leads people out of their limited worlds to new horizons of knowledge, of imagination, of responsibility, of insight, and of love. When working at or near their best schools and colleges are truly remarkable human achievements. Young children have a safe place to pray and play and learn; adolescents grow into a deeper intellectual, emotional and moral world. And hopefully the story continues into adulthood as the invitation remains to forge an ever-deeper sense of self and others, to grow into a maturity that is truly life-giving.

Fifty years after the Second Vatican Council is a good time to reflect on the theology of Catholic education. In this paper, the theme will be approached under four different headings: (1) Jesus the teacher; (2) interpreting tradition; (3) the blessed 'and'; (4) the Eucharist: school of communion (Drumm, 2013).

### Jesus the teacher

Jesus, the eschatological prophet, inaugurated the reign of God through his words and actions. Christian education should take its inspiration from Jesus the teacher and its most important outcome

is to bear witness to the reign of God in our midst. But the evidence of history, not least the history of discipleship, suggests that this can best be done in communion with others. Fostering a deeper sense of communion remains a fundamental task of an education that is rooted in Jesus the teacher.

Jesus is called 'teacher' on forty-six occasions in the Gospels. It is the title most commonly associated with him by his first disciples. So what did Jesus teach? In the villages, hills and valleys of Galilee he taught the people that the reign of God was dawning in their midst. He spoke of the reign of God as healing for the sick, hearing for the deaf, new sight for the blind, freedom for prisoners, good news for the poor. He revealed a deeper communion with God through ordinary human realities. In Matthew's Gospel alone, he speaks of mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, widows, sons, daughters and children; alms, bankers, burglars, coppers, debts, deposits, employment, merchants, money, gold, silver, purses, taxes, tenants, thieves and wages; birds, cattle, chickens, donkeys, fish, foxes, goats, hens, moths, oxen, pigs, sheep and snakes; corn, fields, figs, flowers, flour, grapes, loaves, logs, plants, reeds, roots, salt, seed, thistles, thorns, trees, vineyards, weeds, wheat and harvest; banquets, weddings, brides, bridegrooms, dancing, pipes, dinners and feasts; and that still leaves boats, clothes, fires, floods, footwear, gales, haversacks, lamps, nests, nets, oil, rain, reapers, shepherds, splinters, sunset, tunics, woodworm and yeast. And, yes, he did speak about the weather!

He called disciples, people who would be followers of the way that he led, who would learn through being disciples, who would enter an ever-deeper communion by conforming their lives to his. The call to discipleship was first issued almost two thousand years ago but it echoes through history in our lives. Christian discipleship is characterised by healing, hearing, new sight, freedom and good news. But to grasp in a deeper way what these liberating possibilities mean we need to become aware of the realities of sickness, deafness, blindness, captivity and poverty. When we look honestly at ourselves and those around us we discover that we are the sick, the deaf, the blind, the captive, the poor and not just in a metaphorical sense but in

the physical, psychological and spiritual realities of our lives.

Only when we immerse ourselves in these human experiences can we discover who Jesus really was, for his ministry was all about lifting burdens. Whether the burdens were created by selfishness or laziness or a scrupulously strict religious sensibility or blind obedience or political corruption or grinding poverty or sickness or lack of self-esteem or pride or prejudice, the result was the same: people were in need of healing. The meaning of the miracle stories in the gospels is not that Jesus was some sort of esoteric magician who could solve all of life's most inscrutable problems, but rather that he was one who brought healing and hope into the most abject human situations.

The call of Christian discipleship demands that we always seek to lift the burden. Whether this means helping people to stand up and walk on their own, or exorcising their fear of the unknown, or expanding their minds through education, or feeding them when they are too weak to feed themselves, or opening their eyes to the reality of life, or challenging them to let go of hurts and prejudice, or liberating those who are unjustly oppressed, or introducing them to ever greater horizons of transcendence and beauty, or unsealing their ears to hear the divine echo in their hearts, or unleashing their hope for the future, or sowing the seeds of eternal life, the healing ministry of Jesus is continued as 'the blind see again, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, the good news is proclaimed to the poor' (Luke 7:22). To teach as Jesus taught means inviting people to live without the crutch or the grudge or the closed mind. Christian education invites people to become Christ-like in their lives so that the reign of God might continue to dawn in our world.

Notice that all of Jesus' teaching takes place through the words that he speaks and the encounters that are at the centre of his ministry. To teach as Jesus taught is surely to speak words of honesty, words of forgiveness, words of compassion and it is to encounter people wherever they are at and invite, cajole, liberate them to move on. Think of the Samaritan woman at the well, little Zacchaeus in

Jericho, Matthew the tax collector in Capernaum, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, Mary from the town of Magdala at the tomb on Easter Sunday morning – all people totally preoccupied with their own worries and concerns but who are challenged to move on through their encounter with Jesus. This teaching is truly education – to lead people out of ignorance, out of hostility, out of self-centredness, out of certainty, out of fear, into somewhere new. Such education is an endless task in all of our lives.

### Interpreting Tradition

Jesus proclaimed the reign of God. The early Christians believed that the decisive breakthrough of God's reign in history occurred in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, the messenger became the message, the preacher became the preached, the proclaimer became the proclaimed. From the beginning, Christians gathered to celebrate this mystery of Christ. They listened to God's word as it was proclaimed to them from the scriptures and they shared in the breaking of the bread. In doing these actions they believed the Lord to be especially present in their midst.

This tradition has been handed down from generation to generation of Christians, from parents to children to children's children right down to us today. And we will hand it on to the generations coming after us. This is what it means to be part of tradition: we receive it rather than create it; we cherish it and we hand it on in trust to those who will follow us. It forms us more than we form it. It gives our lives a story, a texture, a value which is more than the story of our own families, more than the texture of our own experience, more than the values that we could work out for ourselves. Thus, the reality of tradition became central to Christian identity and as such it is inseparable from ecclesial communion. As the texts of tradition grew first from scriptures, rituals and patristic reflection, through conciliar formulations, papal teaching and theological controversies, to liturgical books, popular piety and the lives of the saints, the fabric of ecclesial communion was enriched, but also challenged.

Questions and challenges arose: how to interpret the Letter of St

Paul to the Romans? How to understand the teaching of the Council of Chalcedon on two natures in one person? How to read the sixteen documents of the Second Vatican Council? If we are to nurture ecclesial communion we must address the significant educational issue of how to interpret a living tradition in a living Church.

Hermeneutical thought is concerned with interpretation, with conflicts of interpretation, which are so common today, with the linguistic determination of our world and with how one interprets texts from a different historico-linguistic world than one's own (Kearney, 1986). Pope Benedict XVI has spoken of this issue with reference to the Second Vatican Council. He said:

On the one hand, there is an interpretation that I would call "a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture"; it has frequently availed itself of the sympathies of the mass media, and also one trend of modern theology. On the other, there is the "hermeneutic of reform", of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given to us. She is a subject which increases in time and develops, yet always remaining the same, the one subject of the journeying People of God. (Benedict, 22/12/05)

This question of how to interpret what has been handed on is as old as Christianity itself. Hermeneutical thought can inform our understanding of this key issue.

Contemporary hermeneutics has problematized the relationship of text and experience. In classical hermeneutics, it was believed that the intention of the author was clear. A critical "objective" reader could establish the author's intention. Paul Ricoeur is one of many twentieth century philosophers to question this classical confidence in objective criticism. He situates the text in its relationship to the author, to the world of which it speaks and to the reader (Ricoeur, 1981, 139). These various relationships are characterised by what Ricoeur calls a distanciation which gives the text autonomy (Ricoeur, 1981, 131-144). Neither the author, nor the situation from which the text emerged, nor the reader, can claim privileged access to the

text. Since it is written, the text takes a life of its own and can enter relationship with new worlds completely independent of the author's intention.

Our ecclesial communion has much to learn from these hermeneutical insights. The distance between us and the classic texts of our tradition is both a problem and a blessing (think, for example, of the New Testament texts, the patristic writings, the early conciliar creeds). This distance opens up a space in which we can interpret and re-interpret the world from which these texts emerged, the intention of the author(s), the teaching of the Magisterium, the reception of the texts at different points in history. Furthermore, the distance allows the text to interpret our experience, to challenge our easy claims to privileged access to what the text means. All of this is a demanding task but it is an essential one in our ecclesial communion founded as it is on texts that are handed on in a living tradition, which interprets, and is interpreted by, our experience.

That is why education is so important in fostering ecclesial communion. Education should deepen people's awareness that there is no standing outside the dialogue and dialectic of text/experience. There is no escaping from one's tradition, but there is a radical challenge to appropriate it authentically through a hermeneutic of retrieval and a hermeneutic of suspicion. The former retrieves what is good and true; the latter lays bare how inauthenticity can clothe itself as authenticity. In this process, the teaching authority of the Church, the Magisterium, and the faithful's sense of what is true both play a significant part.

The most important educational contribution to the hermeneutical process is to awaken people to the distancing between text and experience and to appreciate that this distancing is, in fact, the foundation on which the text can be re-appropriated and one's identity and self-understanding reinterpreted. In this way the otherness of the text, because it is other, can promote greater understanding. There is no detached presuppositionless starting point from where one can objectively analyse what has been handed on (Ricoeur, 1976, 74). Indeed, it can be argued that prejudice

can even become a precondition for interpretative understanding (Godamer, 1975, 258ff, 331ff). Since the texts of one's tradition are already constitutive of one's identity one can only ever begin from the middle: what is required is not an easy claim to objectivity but a continuing historically reflective encounter of text/experience that yields a reinterpretation of one's identity. Ricoeur says:

The first task is not to begin, but from the midst of speech, to remember, to remember with a view to beginning. (Ricoeur, 1967, 348-49)

Given the significance of hermeneutics to our ecclesial communion it is useful to try and formulate a hermeneutical principle that is adequate for the educational task that every generation of Christians must undertake. An educational hermeneutic should textualise experience while contextualising texts. To textualise experience is to weave and craft experience in dialogue with texts. And we must contextualise every text, not just in terms of the author and the world in which the text emerged, but most importantly of all it must be recontextualised in the world of the reader. To recontextualise will demand that one decipher texts, not primarily for the purposes of reductive criticism, but with the aim of ciphering experience anew. Let us analyse one example.

The Nicene-Constantinopolitan creed was composed by the Fathers of the first two ecumenical councils, at Nicea in 325AD and Constantinople in 381AD. This is a classic text of the Magisterium. It was formulated at the two councils based on several centuries of reflection on Christian revelation. It stands as a classic Christian text handed down from one generation to the next and has been received by Christian communities as the authoritative statement of orthodox belief and a key foundation for communion between the particular churches. We can contextualise it through historical-critical studies of earlier theology, of the participants in the council, of any records of the debates, of the socio-political realities of the Constantinian era.

We can do our best to reconstruct what it was that the authors

intended by the various affirmations found in the creed. But all of this, while very valuable, is only reductive criticism. We must also allow the text to cipher our experience. As Paul Ricoeur says:

Ultimately, what I appropriate is a proposed world. The latter is not behind the text, as a hidden intention would be, but in front of it, as that which the work unfolds, discovers, reveals. Henceforth, to understand is to understand oneself in front of the text. It is not a question of imposing upon the text our finite capacity of understanding, but of exposing ourselves to the text and receiving from it an enlarged self (Ricoeur, 1981, 143).

Thus through liturgy, through teaching, through prayer, through music, through art, through silence, through theological studies, through Christian praxis, through the lives of the saints, our lives are re-interpreted by the Triune God. We stand in front of the creed and it can disclose, reveal, unfold as the possibility emerges of new worlds of meaning disclosed by the text. From an educational perspective the interpretation of living Christian tradition is always complex. But it rewards the effort made with an ever deeper sense of ecclesial communion.

### **The Blessed ‘and’**

The word ‘and’ is very important in understanding Catholicism: faith and reason, scripture and tradition, grace and nature, religion and culture, belief and science. Contrast this with more fundamentalist readings of religious texts in evangelical Protestantism: faith rejects reason, scripture uproots tradition, grace supplants nature, religion replaces culture, belief disparages science. Contrast this also with reductionist readings of religious texts in contemporary atheism: faith ridiculed by reason, scripture and tradition reduced to myth, grace displaced by nature, religion excluded from the public square of culture, belief annihilated by science. There are few more important tasks facing Catholic education today that to retrieve this blessed ‘and’. If we fail to do so then there is a real danger that our ecclesial

communion might withdraw into an intellectual ghetto.

The whole intellectual history of the Catholic Church involves a critical interaction with human reason. From its encounter with neo-Platonic philosophy in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries to the re-discovery of Aristotle in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the dialogue between faith and reason characterises the high intellectual achievement of the Catholic Church. Today, in an era often dominated by religious fundamentalism on the one hand and atheistic science on the other, this commitment to a dialogue between faith and reason was rarely more relevant.

We live in an era when science and religion might completely diverge from each other as if it was impossible for the same person to be a rigorous scientist and a sincere religious believer. In the English-speaking world this trend is exacerbated by the restriction of the very term ‘science’ to empirical study of the natural world. This goes completely against the history of the term which covers all areas of human knowledge. Thus philosophy and theology are just as surely sciences as physics and biology. Faith and reason can live and thrive in the same person: while one cannot be reduced to the other they both play a dynamic role in forming and educating a mature person. There is no contradiction between being a fully educated person and a committed Christian. There are few more important tasks for Christian educators than to revisit and re-imagine the relationship between faith and reason. Pope Benedict XVI has consistently drawn attention to this fundamental issue. At his meeting with representatives of British society in Westminster Hall he said:

I would suggest that the world of reason and the world of faith – the world of secular rationality and the world of religious belief – need one another and should not be afraid to enter into a profound and ongoing dialogue, for the good of our civilization. (Benedict, 17/9/2010)

He has described the Second Vatican Council as dedicated to finding a new definition of the relationships between the Church and the

modern age, between the Church and the modern state and between Christian faith and other religions (Benedict 22/12/2005). All of these tasks demand the utmost respect for the mutual autonomy and the dynamic interaction of both faith and reason. The reflection on these issues initiated at the Council must be continued and deepened for as St. Peter famously stated we should always be ready to give an account (apo-logia) of the reason (logos) for our hope (1 Peter 3:15).

Christian faith is always lived in particular cultures. The dialogue between faith and culture takes place in the heart and mind of the individual believer, in families, in parish communities and, not least, in schools and colleges. Christian schools and colleges stand as a reminder that the Christian faith is not a private, irrational commitment embraced by individuals but it comprises a philosophically justified act of faith in a transcendent, personal God and is an intelligent and reasonable response to what was revealed in the life of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, these educational institutions give expression to the public dimension of Christian faith in their commitment to social solidarity, to outreach to those in need and to promotion of the common good.

There will always be a certain tension between religious faith and culture: some people reduce culture to religious faith and so withdraw into a fundamentalist ghetto where everything outside is seen as a threat; others empty culture of all religious reference so that religious belief amounts to nothing more than personal whim and traditional superstition. A true dialogue between faith and culture allows one to inform the other and calls individuals, families, communities, and indeed, our schools and colleges, to an ever greater commitment to human maturity.

### **The Eucharist: School of Communion**

Catechists and teachers make an extraordinary contribution to the life of the Church by explaining the Catholic faith to young and old alike. Nowhere is this more evident than in sacramental preparation where dedicated individuals and teams explain the meaning of the various parts of the ceremony to the candidates and to their parents and

sponsors. But, sacraments are not just rituals to be understood but mysteries to be experienced. Indeed, it is in the celebration of these sacred rites that we encounter the Divine and we grow in communion with God and with each other. If an educational hermeneutic is necessary to help us interpret tradition, a liturgical hermeneutic is also needed to awaken us to the Triune God who reveals and communicates life in the ritual actions of the Church, particularly in the celebration of the Eucharist. This is the place where the sick are healed, the deaf hear, the blind see, prisoners are set free and good news is proclaimed to the poor.

Bread and wine are among the most wonderful of human creations. But they are precisely that: human creations. They do not grow on sheaf and vine. From sowing the seeds and tending the vine, to harvesting the wheat and grape, to the sharing of bread and the pouring of wine, human community is created and fostered. Through the work of human hands the fruit of the earth becomes our food and drink. The preparation of bread and wine and the transformation of these two basic realities into the body and blood of Christ are a sign and foretaste of the destiny of all reality. All creation, all human labour and endeavour will be transformed into the new creation. It is the Eucharist that teaches us this great truth.

Christians are called to work with adherents of all faiths and none to build a world of human justice and dignity. In the same way as with our hands we create bread and wine so we must struggle with political ideas and institutions to create a humane world. The Church's sacramental celebration gives shape to a new world and nourishes believers in their efforts to create it. Thus the Eucharist points the way to overcome the dichotomies that emerge between the sacred and the secular.

The Eucharist is primarily about the future. Though it is rooted in events of close to two thousand years ago its true orientation is towards the future. God has laid hold of human history and has begun to transform it from within. The Eucharist is bread broken for a new world; it is a prayer of praise and thanksgiving; it is a foretaste and a promise. The Eucharist orientates us to the future not as threat but

as invitation. In a world that can easily become preoccupied with the present we are invited to open our hearts to the future as God's promise. The Eucharist unites the Church in heaven and on earth in giving praise and thanks to God for the gift of creation, for the even greater gift of redemption and for the pledge of future glory. As the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ so too we await the transformation of all creation in Christ "so that God may be all in all" (1 Cor 15:28). The text of theological and pastoral reflections in preparation for the 50th International Eucharistic Congress states:

In receiving the Eucharist we are called to anticipate a new future through words and actions so that the future can already be grafted onto the present and so that we can already taste what we are to become (The Eucharist, 2011, n.120).

Education provides the key to such a future. Without an enlightened pedagogy we are doomed to revisit the past over and over again. In awakening our sensibilities and disturbing our consciences, education can liberate us from our inherited stereotypes to embrace the future with renewed energy and hope. The Eucharist is a school of communion. It reveals to us the wonderful plan that God has in store for us and it invites us to enter into an ever-deeper communion with the Triune God and with all of creation. As Jesus was the greatest of teachers, so the Eucharist remains our most trusted educator.

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## Origin of the Rule of the Society of the Presentation

*Part IV: The Product of Adaptation – Second Part (Concluded)*

*Frank J Steele*

### Introduction

This is the fourth, and final, article in a series which, it is hoped, will, together, form a preliminary study of the Rule and Constitutions of the aboriginal and undivided Society of the Presentation (here-after, for convenience, the Brothers' Rule, BR). The first article of this series (Steele, 2006) dealt with some aspects of the *process* by which the Brothers' Rule was adapted from the 1793 Rule and Constitutions of the Sisters of the Congregation of the Charitable Instruction, the Presentation Sisters (here-after, again for convenience, the Sisters' Rule, SR). The remaining three articles, this present article included, deal with the *product* of that process. The second (Steele, 2007) dealt with the adaptation of the First Part of the SR by the Brothers. The third (Steele, 2008) dealt with the adaptation by the Brothers of two of the twelve chapters of the Second Part of the SR, i.e., SR, II.10, BR, II.9, "On Devotion to the Passion of Jesus Christ, to the Blessed Eucharist, and to the Sacred Heart", and SR II.11, BR, II.10, "On Devotion to our Blessed Lady and other Saints", two apparently devotional chapters, treating of matters of personal and institutional piety, embedded in what are otherwise administrative chapters, treating of the governance of the Institute and the management of the houses there-of. The present article will deal with treatment in BR of the remaining Chapters of Part II of SR. As in the preceding articles, so in this, all references to SR are to that published by Consedine (1983, pp. 406-426) and all those to BR to that published by Hickey

(1982, 340-367). Both Rules are cited and quoted here by reference to Part (i.e., I or II, to Chapter (i.e., 1, 2, 3 etc.) and to section (i.e., again, 1, 2, 3, etc.).

Once again, the majority of the adaptations of SR by the Brothers is occasioned by considerations of gender. "She" becomes "he", "her", "his", "Sister", "Brother", and "Mother", "Father". In respect of the last, the internal head of each of the Sisters' houses was called "Mother Superior", that of each Brother's house, "Father Superior". Whereas, though, the use of this form of reference and address endured amongst the Sisters, the corresponding designation does not seem to have long survived amongst the Brothers, and there is, for instance, no use at all of the term "Father" in the Rule of the Religious Society of Brothers adopted by Blessed Edmund Rice and the great majority of his confreres in 1821 (see Hickey, 1982, pp. 395-425).

It is, though, interesting in this context that, though changed elsewhere in BR, representation of the Brothers as "Spouses of Christ", occurs a number of times here. Whether this bespeaks a deliberate and conscious adoption of Spousal imagery for members of the Society of the Presentation in their understanding, expression and explication of their relationship with Christ, or whether it bespeaks a purely verbal oversight in the process of adaptation, is difficult to say (see Steele, 2007, pp. 43-44). The inconsistencies in the use of this imagery would seem to favour the latter explanation rather than the former. If this hypothesis holds, it would, in turn, suggest a degree of haste on the part of the Brothers in the work of adaptation and, perhaps, a degree of inattention there-after. If haste there was, it would have been the consequence, not of carelessness of any kind, but of the need to have the Society approved as soon as possible by the ecclesiastical authorities, diocesan and Roman, for the attainment of which objective the drafting of a set of Rules and Constitutions likely to be acceptable was a *sine qua non*.

### Substantive Issues

In view of the constraints, the principal focus in this study must be on the more substantive issues arising in the adaptation of the remaining ten chapters of Part Two of the Rule of the Society of the Presentation. The first of these, Chapter II.1, is headed “Of the Superior and the Visitation of the Convent” in SR, “Of the Visitor and Visitation” in BR. The fundamental significance of this Chapter in both Rules is that it establishes the Sisters of the Charitable Instruction and the Society of the Presentation, respectively, as religious institutes of diocesan – rather than papal – right. SR states: “This Religious Congregation shall be allways [*sic*] subject to the authority, and jurisdiction of the Diocesan Bishop; and the sisters are obliged to play all obedience to him as their first Superior”. BR states: “This religious Congregation shall always be subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the diocesan Bishop; and the Brethren shall respect and obey him as their first Superior after the Holy See”. The reference to the Holy See added to the Brothers’ Rule may simply indicate the canonical reality that the Pope is supreme in authority in the Church, in all its parts and in all its activities, and is, therefore, the Superior of all Superiors, as it were. It may also be, though, that the Brothers wished to suggest, respectfully but clearly, that, notwithstanding his undoubted authority over them, the Bishop would not necessarily be the only, or the final, arbiter of their affairs. In this regard – and, admittedly, one should beware reading too much into too little – it is interesting that, whilst SR includes the word “Superior” in the heading to this Chapter, BR does not.

BR follows SR almost *verbatim* in outlining the governance of the respective Institutes. Under the Pope, the Bishop is the Superior of the Society of the Presentation. As he, however, may have many functions to discharge, he shall – and “shall” rather than “may” is the word used in BR, the equally imperative “will” in SR, both indicating that such appointment would be standard rather than exceptional – appoint a priest to whom he must give the necessary faculties to govern and direct the Congregation on his behalf.

In both Rules, the relevant provisions are clear:

The priest thus appointed shall duly attend to the government and good order of the community in spirituals and in temporals. He shall watch over the exact observance of the Constitutions for the purpose of maintaining good order, peace and charity. He shall also assist the Father Superior [i.e., the Brother elected to this office by the members of the community eligible to vote] with his advice in all weighty matters. Nothing of moment shall be attempted by the Father Superior without consulting him; nor any matter of importance relating to the house and community be undertaken, without the consent of the Bishop (BR, II.1.2 and cp. SR, II.1.2).

No one is to be admitted as a postulant or, once admitted, dismissed, without this priest’s advice and the Bishop’s consent. In the absence of the Bishop, this priest officiates at the reception of the habit and at professions and signs the Act of Profession and the annual accounts, for, presumably, and on behalf of, the Bishop.

In effect, subject to the Pope, the Bishop is the overall Superior of each community of the Brothers of the Society of the Presentation and reserves certain matters – including all serious and final decisions – to himself. Subject to such reservation, the Bishop delegates his functions in respect of each community to a priest whom he authorises and empowers to act on his behalf as need arises.

In broad and general terms, the duties of this priest entail overseeing the community in question – and it must be noted that, as the communities would be independent of each other, a different priest might be appointed to each for the purposes of this provision – and to advising its Father Superior in the latter’s day-to-day management and leadership of the community in question.

### Structure of Governance

The broad structure of governance and management set out here seems clear enough. What is, of course, less clear is how this structure

might have impacted on any given community, its Father Superior and its members. It may be thought that Bishops would differ in their understanding and practice of delegation. Personal disposition and/or ecclesiastical policy might condition, if not determine, how this Bishop or that regarded and exercised delegation of any kind. Some might be delegators by nature, some might not. Some might prefer a “hands-on” approach to all their responsibilities and some might be happy to leave matters to their various Vicars and to priests delegated to deal with religious communities.

The priest appointed under these terms of SR/BR might or might not, therefore, have a more or less free hand. Equally, much would depend, too, on how the priest thus appointed saw and exercised the functions thus delegated to him. He might do what the Rule expected him to do either on a minimalist or a maximalist interpretation of his role. He might, therefore, try to run the community himself or he might be more than happy to do what he had to do “by the book”, being anxious and careful to be the Bishop’s man, as it were, but, at the same time, supporting, rather than supplanting, the community Superior.

Finally, a house Superior’s understanding of his place in the scheme of things would also be crucial. If he saw it as his duty to allow the Bishop and/or the Bishop’s delegate to have their way in everything, then the community would be, not just governed and supervised, but actually micro-managed by either or both. If, however, a Superior considered that her/his first loyalty was to the congregation, its Founder, its houses – and, in the case of the Society of the Presentation, this would seem to have been the predominant attitude and view - and acted protectively, defensively, or, if he considered attack the best form of defence, aggressively, relationships would, almost inevitably, be damaged and even, perhaps, ruptured beyond repair.

In view of the manner in which religious orders and congregations have jealously protected their independence in the face of all challengers, ecclesiastical as well as civil, it may be noted in passing here that, not least in historiographical studies, we should

beware either seeing or presenting matters as black or white, being for or against the Bishop, on the one hand, or the Congregation(s), on the other, one being deemed in the right, the other in the wrong, depending on the point of view, and, indeed, the interests, personal or institutional, of the commentator. A Bishop regarded as autocratic by the religious might have had objectively good reasons for what the latter might deem interference. A community regarded as recalcitrant by a Bishop might have its own valid reasons for insisting on the kind and extent of autonomy, and, indeed, independence, required for the effective attainment of its objectives.

At this point, BR inserts three additional articles (II.4, 5 and 6) not found SR (or, at least, in the copy of SR in focus here). These provide that the priest appointed Bishop’s delegate shall visit the monastery every year in the third week of January; that he may meet the Brothers, from the youngest to the oldest, individually, in private and in confidence, in order to “come at the knowledge of the real state of the monastery”; and that he may, in effect, take whatever steps “as in prudence and discretion he shall judge to reform every abuse and to restore good order, regularity and union in the community”. They also stipulate that this priest shall, on the occasion of this annual visitation, examine the books and establish the financial state of the community. They continue:

If he finds that the expense exceeds the income; for the purpose of clearing the debts, he shall suppress the unnecessary expenses (which however must not relate to such food and raiment, as has been promised to the Religious on embracing the Institute). It were better for the Brethren to submit to a temporary inconvenience than suffer the establishment to fall to ruin, which cannot be avoided where debts are inconsiderately allowed to accumulate (BR, II.1.6).

The funding of religious initiatives and institutes was an abiding concern to all involved in the Catholic Church in 19th century Ireland (see, e.g., Larkin, 2006). Much of the acrimony between and

among religious and the hierarchy in that period related to funding, to gathering it, controlling it and using it (see, e.g., Conlan, 2010). Financing his mission was a like-long concern of Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice. He used his own not inconsiderable personal resources to establish his houses and, throughout his long service to the Congregation(s), he used all his business acumen and experience to keep the communities financially viable. His case for the admission of paying student to his schools, his consideration of availing of the funds on offer from the National Board, occasioned quite serious controversy amongst the Brothers with some of his confreres, not least some in Cork, never quite appreciating the sheer effort the Founder made, almost to the day he died, to increase and manage income for the support of the communities, few of which ever had enough, and some of which were in danger of closure through lack of adequate resources to keep them going (see, e.g., Normoyle, 1976, and Keogh, 2008).

The final sentence of the section just quoted reads more as exhortation than as legislation. We have here a plea from those who drafted the Brothers' Rule for, in effect, some common sense in the management of finances. It is hard not to conclude that we have here, too, an echo, if not the voice, of Edmund Rice, Victualler, sharing with his confreres one of the most basic lessons he had learned in a career in trade.

It is stipulated that the priest "shall render to the Bishop an account of the actual state of the monastery" and that the Bishop himself "will make a visitation every third year, or more frequently, if he deem it expedient". This last provision seems tacked on and would fit better in one of the earlier sections of this Chapter. Its effect would seem to be to concretise and regularise some minimum arrangements for visitation of the houses by the Bishop in his capacity as the overall head of the Brothers in his diocese.

### **Elections**

The Second Chapter of Part II is headed "On the Election of the Mother Superior" in SR, BR merely substituting "Father" for "Mother". As

noted, this use of "Father" did not survive long amongst the Brothers and it may be that, as "Father" was a title more and more associated with priests as the century moved on, it might have been deemed confusing – if not impertinent - if used by, or applied to, the non-ordained.

There are some other changes made at this juncture in the adaptation of the Sisters' Rule for the Brothers. Two provisions in SR, one against members of a convent combining to vote together for their agreed candidate to the exclusion of all others (II.2.5), the other, against voting under the influence of "private affection, human Respect or any other Earthly motives (II.2.7)," are omitted in BR. Whether this shows the Sisters to be more alert to "the crooked timber of humanity" or the Brothers deeming themselves to be above all that – on foot, it might be, of both Sisters and Brothers accepting gender-related notions common at the time - is difficult to say. As it happened, albeit in the next century, Rome appointed an Apostolic Visitor to govern the Christian Brothers, because, in effect, a small group so arranged matters that it remained in authority "to the Exclusion of all others" (see Caomhánach, 1997).

Two other provisions are added to SR by the Brothers. The first is this: "New establishments are excepted [i.e., from the provision that a Superior shall serve for three years in the first instance], in which the first Superior shall continue for six years, if there be no canonical reasons for removing him from his office during this time. The six years of his government being expired, a new Superior shall be appointed (II.2.2)". This added provision seems eminently sensible. Its effect is to give the first Superior of a new community – e.g., Blessed Edmund at Mount Sion or Br. Jeremiah Jerome O'Connor in Cork – additional time in which to commence, organise and establish a new monastery and school on a more or less sound footing.

The second addition to this Chapter in BR reads as follows: "In case of an equality of votes for two (according to a rescript received by the Right Revd. Doctor Moylan from the Sacred Congregation), let there be a second election, and should there be still an equal number of votes for two in that and a third election (scrutinium),

the right of election for that time devolves to the Bishop' (II.2.10)". The word "*scrutinium*" has various meanings in Ecclesiastical Latin, including one denoting an election to ecclesiastical office conducted by means of secret, written ballot. As the context indicates, that sense is meant here. The use here, though, of the Latin word itself may intimate that the mode of election in question is supported, perhaps even required, by the rescript mentioned. There is here, of course, a sense of transparency, accountability but there is a sense, too, of RB being drafted with full awareness that there are people – internal as well external, including Brothers and Bishops – who will attend carefully to such details and, for whatever reason, challenge any reading of a rule or of a Roman document which they consider inaccurate, incorrect or inappropriate.

In point of fact, the provisions in both SR and BR concerning elections are detailed to a degree, governing, for instance, even the folding of the ballot papers to ensure that, other than those appointed to check and count the votes, no-one else will be able to discern who voted for whom. Such attention to the *minutiae* of the electoral process bespeaks a very serious concern amongst religious for free and fair elections, at a time, it must be remembered, when, in the civic world around them, there were still rotten boroughs, public offices of all kinds were bought and sold more or less openly, and landlords did not hesitate to take whatever steps were needed to make tenants vote "the right way". This attention to detail shows too, though, that religious themselves had to be satisfied that, in their respective communities and congregations, the governed would really choose the governors and, if there was any question of anything not being done "by the book", would not hesitate to challenge the outcome.

### **Different 'Constituencies'**

Blessed Edmund and his earliest confreres had to satisfy two constituencies, as it were, one internal, the other external, i.e., the Brothers themselves and the Bishops of the various dioceses in which they had, or hoped to have, monasteries. Either or both could be expected to reject the product where, rightly or wrongly, the

process was deemed faulty. In any event, if a Brother or a Bishop had an axe to grind or an agenda to push, identification of a flaw, or, even, a possible flaw, in an election, whether by what was, or by what wasn't, done, would serve a purpose. The Catholic Church in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was seldom free of controversy and prelates, priests, religious and laity fought between and amongst themselves at least as often as they fought together against anyone else. In these internal controversies, as, for example in those between Archbishops McHale and Murray concerning the National Board of Education (see, e.g., Akenson, 1970, pp. 206-214) or, indeed, in that between some of the Cork Brothers and the Founder concerning the general gathering of the Society of Religious Brothers in 1829 (see, e.g., Normoyle, 1976, pp. 222-235, and Keogh, 2008, pp. 201-210) invocation of canon law, accusations of non-compliance, and appeals to Rome were common and it was, perhaps, against such an eventuality that Sisters and Brothers drafted their respective instruments of governance.

The BR generally follows SR in treating of the Office of Superior. It is worth noting that, in neither convent nor monastery, shall – it is, in fact, again, the imperative which is used by Sisters and Brothers alike - the Superior rule alone. In both, there will be a Council to assist her/him, comprising what the Brothers call the "Brothers elect", the Sisters, "the Discreets". In both instances, these are three, chosen by secret ballot by the members of the community in question, the Assistant to the Superior, the Bursar/Depository and the Master/Mistress of Novices (SR, II.3.7 and BR, II.3.7).

A subsequent Chapter (SR, II.7 and BR, II.7) in both Rules deals in virtually identical terms with the functions of this Council and rights and duties of its members. The Superior appoints one of the members Secretary to the Council but is obliged to consult the Council on "all weighty matters" to determine what is best to be done. It is not only, however, the Superior who sets the agenda, as it were, and the Discreets/Brothers elect are entitled to propose whatever seems to them most expedient for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the community. They must do so, though, with humility and without obstinate attachment to their own point of view. Without

the “express leave” of the Superior, they may not disclose matters discussed, or decisions taken, at any of their meetings, nor may they disclose who proposed or supported any item there considered.

### Collegial Mode of Governance

There is, undoubtedly, provision here for what today we might call a collegial, a collaborative, mode of community governance, a mode far more in keeping than any more monarchical with the evangelical notion of authority as an exercise, not in power, but in service. The convent/monastery is not, of course, a commune, and religious obedience is paramount, but neither, as originally conceived, was any community of Sisters or of Brothers meant to be subject to autocratic, much less to oppressive, rule.

It may be observed in this respect that, as, for instance, his management of the transition from diocesan to papal congregation clearly shows (see Normoyle, 1976, pp. 136-146, and Keogh, 2008, pp. 137-162), Blessed Edmund would seem to have regarded consultation, discussion and collective decision-making as core features of leadership in a religious house or Institute.

The BR adds here a provision not found in SR: “He [i.e., the Superior] shall call a meeting of all the Brethren on the last Wednesday of every month, to inquire into the observance of the Constitutions; and, if any of the Brothers should be found to be remiss in strictly complying with them, as Father Superior it is his duty to rebuke them with charity, exhort them to observe them with exactness in future and, if necessary, impose such penances on them as he may deem expedient (II.3.8)”. Many religious Rules, including the immensely influential Rule of St. Benedict (Chapter 46, “Of those who are at fault in any other matters whatsoever”, 1994, pp. 222-224), made provision for a Chapter of Faults. At these, in public and before the community, a religious would disclose any breach of the Rules and Constitutions or of any house regulations of which s/he may have been guilty and the Superior would take the opportunity to indicate for correction any general irregularities in observance by the community. What BR envisages here seems more like a court

of enquiry than a Chapter of Faults pure and simple. It seems like a communal investigation to which, presumably, if they were so minded, one’s Brothers/Sisters, as well as Superiors, could reveal one’s non-compliance. What form any resulting penance might have taken is not clear. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, amongst the Christian Brothers, penances arising from an Accusation or Chapter of Faults included:

1. To recite some prayer; 2. To read attentively a portion of the Constitutions, or of the Directory, or of the Capitular Acts, which a Brother may have transgressed; 3. To remain kneeling during some exercise of piety or in the Refectory during a meal; 4. To ask pardon of the Community, or of some Brother in particular; 5. To perform some humiliating duty (*Directory and Rules*, 1927, 117).

In the Novitiate of St. Helen’s Province in the Christian Brothers into the 1960s, a common “humiliating duty” was to clean and polish one or more pairs of working boots for one’s fellow novices. Six pairs constituted the usual penance. As the boots were really dirty, and as they had to be brought up to parade-ground standard, as it were, this was not an easy assignment to complete to the satisfaction of the Novice-Master, and it was made all the harder in that it had to be done in isolation and during one of the rare periods of recreation in the day. In the Houses of Formation, “getting one’s knees”, i.e., being required to take, e.g., breakfast on one’s knees by way of public penance for some breach of the Rule was a possibility in those years (see Blake, 2004, p. 55).

It bears emphasis that, in the Chapter of Faults, and, indeed, in the manifestation of one’s interior to the Superior required of religious in some Rules, there was no requirement to reveal matters of conscience or sin of any kind, which were to be dealt with by one’s confessor and, if needs be, in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In treating of, respectively, the Assistant, the Depository/Bursar, and the Master/Mistress of Novices, BR follows SR virtually without change.

The Mistress of Novices is to guide and train her charges “to root out, as much as possible, those pettish and childish humours, which, especially [in] persons of the female sex, weaken the spirit and render it vapid and languid ... (SR, II.6.3)”. The Master of Novices, on the other hand, is required help his charges “root out as much as possible all those unruly passions which men, both from nature and from an unrestrained intercourse with the world, are corrupted with few excepted ... (BR, II.6.3)”. The Brothers mention “unruly passions”, the Sisters, “pettish and childish humours”. It may be thought that, if uncontrolled, “unruly passions” will result in offences against both divine law and human, whereas, if unchecked, “pettish and childish humours” would be more likely to result in little more than a tantrum. The passions are a matter of ethics. The humours seem more a matter of etiquette. In any event, the ascription of these “humours” to women *qua* women cannot but be offensive to people today and serves to remind us that those who drafted, and those who accepted, SR and BR shared the culture of the day, which, in this respect, may only be described as patriarchal.

### Community ‘Chapters’

As well as dealing with meetings involving the Superior and her/his house Council, both Rules deal – again in virtually identical terms – with what each calls “Capitular Assemblies (SR II.8, BR II.8)”. These are gatherings involving, not just the Discreets/Brothers-elect, but all those professed Sisters/Brothers entitled to a vote in community affairs. These meetings, especially those at which the religious assembled to vote, by means of black beans and white, on which of the Postulants shall, and which shall not, be admitted to profession, are serious matters and both Rules provide that they begin with the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* and the collect, *Deus qui corda fidelium*, and end with the *Salve Regina*. It is noteworthy that both Rules provide that, though the capitulants are required to have regard for the reports of the Master/Mistress of Novices, it is not the latter, nor yet the Superior, nor, indeed, the house Council, but the professed religious thus assembled who determine who will, and

who will not, be allowed to proceed to profession.

It must be stressed that the kind of chapter in question here is exclusively a house assembly. In neither Rule is there any provision for anything like the kind of Provincial and General Chapters familiar to most religious today. There is, indeed, no provision in either SR or BR even for any means by which the convents or monasteries following the same rule in the same diocese might meet from time to time to consider matters of mutual interest. It would seem in this regard, that, in his capacity as the overall Superior of each community, the Bishop is the link between them all. Subject to his authority, each house is autonomous, empowered to receive its own postulants, to decide which of those will be allowed to take vows, and, generally, to conduct its own affairs more or less in isolation from any other convent/monastery of the Congregation..

The BR (II.11) follows SR (II. 12) in providing for the keeping of registers. These are to be four in number: one for the Annals of the Society; one for Accounts of Receipts and Expenditure; one for Resolutions passed in Chapter; and one for Acts of Reception and Profession.

### Annals and Registers

The book of Annals and that of Reception and Profession are given specific attention:

In the book of Annals shall be registered an account of the commencement and progress of the Society; the names and qualities of the founders of the establishments; of the Bishop or Ordinary under whom it was made; of those who chiefly contributed to it; the memorable events that passed therein; the different establishments made from it; the religious who commenced the foundation and those who died in the monastery most eminent for virtue and holiness of life; the day, month and year of their decease; and all other matters worthy of being transmitted down to posterity (SR, II.12.2, BR, II.11.2)”.

In the Register of Receptions and Professions, each community was required to enter:

the names of the postulants, novices and professed, and of their parents, with the place of their birth, etc., etc., shall be entered; also their age; the day of the month and the year they took the habit and professed; the Acts of Profession, which shall be signed by the professed, the Bishop or delegate who officiated at the ceremony, by the Father Superior and the Assistant (SR, II.12.3, BR, II.11.3).

The indications are that, amongst the Brothers at least, compliance with these provisions of BR was patchy at best. There are no early records extant for some houses. In the case of houses with such records, the latter are not always complete and, often, what is available is not always reliable (O'Hanlon, 1979, pp. 21-22). It may be hoped *en passant* that present archivists and historians of the Brothers will leave more, and better, documentation for their successors.

### Lodgers/ Pensioners

The final article of BR (II.12.1) copies one which occurs slightly earlier (II.9.1) in SR. Both stipulate that, as the religious in question are given wholly to the instruction of the poor, as they are forbidden to accommodate lodgers or pensioners, as, in effect, therefore, no convent/monastery is likely to be well, or even adequately, endowed or funded, no new establishment shall be undertaken unless the religious involved in any such foundation will have funding adequate to support them, this to be ascertained and approved by the Bishop and the respective house Councils.

The reference to “pensioners” in SR, to “lodgers or pensioners” in BR, adumbrates a practice by which, e.g., a child was placed as a boarder, or an adult as a “*pensionnaire*”, a “pensioner” in the sense of “A person who lives in a boarding house; a boarder; *esp.* a female boarder in a convent or school in France or in French-speaking countries (SOED, s.v., sense 6)”. Though, in such circumstances both

child and adult were required – and, as often as not, were willing – to participate more or less fully in the life of the community, the practice was not always favoured even in those congregations or houses which adopted it. However, as, in effect, it was a facility which could be availed of only by the well-to-do, it was almost always a source of not inconsiderable income to the institutions and communities which allowed it (see Rapley, 2001, pp. 234-256). By eschewing the practice, the Sisters/Brothers were fore-going a source, maybe of trouble, but also of funds, and that at a time and in a place where funds were almost always in short supply.

The SR closes with the following statement:

We declare that it is not our Intention that these Rules and Constitutions Compiled for the Congregation of the Sisters of Charitable Instruction [the Presentation Sisters] should oblige under pain of either mortal or venial Sin, only inasmuch as the transgression of any article wo'd [= “would”] be itself a Sin, Independent of the Rules (II.12.3)”.

There is no corresponding statement in BR. As it happens, the copy of SR which is the focus of the present study is an autograph in the hand of Bishop Francis Moylan and bears his signature: “Cork, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1793: + F. Moylan, Bishop of Cork”. It may be that the “We” here refers, not to any group, but to the Bishop himself, who wishes to obviate and/or correct from the very outset any doubt, confusion or perplexity of conscience in any woman making her religious profession as a Sister of Charitable Instruction, as a Presentation Sister.

### Some Conclusions

The first conclusion to be drawn from this preliminary study of the adaptation of SR to the purposes and needs of the Society of the Presentation, relates particularly to the Venerable Nano Nagle. What, in whatever form, derived from her by way of Rules and Constitutions,

was adapted, not just by and for Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice and the “poor Presentation monks”, but also by and for Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy (see, e.g., Sullivan, 1995, p. 260). It is not unreasonable to contend that Nano, her vision, her purpose, most particularly her practical steps to realise both in a form of religious life acceptable to Rome, is at the very beginning of what would, in the event, prove an exceptionally successful revolution in the provision of Catholic education in Ireland. This is not to argue *post hoc, propter hoc*, that Nano was, uniquely and exclusively, the *fons et origo* of this revolution.

It is not to ignore or devalue either the help and support accorded Nano by Bishop Moylan, or the pioneering work of others, such as Bishop Daniel Delany (1747-1814), who founded the Brigidine Sisters (1807) and the Patrician Brothers (1808) in his Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin (O’Riordan, 1999), and who, if truth be told, is not always given the respect the merits for these initiatives. It is, though, to give honour where honour is due, and to acknowledge that, beginning in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, at a time when there was some relaxation in the Penal Laws but nothing yet like Catholic Emancipation, Nano blazed a trail in the service of youth for the sake of the Gospel in the apostolate of the school, that, challenges internal and external notwithstanding, is followed to this day across the globe, not just by religious, but by a growing body of lay-people, men and women committed to the service of the young, especially of “the least”, in schools that are faith-based and Gospel driven, grounded in and guided by, the respective charisms of their various Founders.

The second large conclusion here must be this: As it did to Nano before him and to Catherine after, it mattered a great deal to Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice that the Congregation he founded would have official recognition from the Church, first, at diocesan and, later, at papal level. Historically, religious houses and institutes of all kinds have jealously guarded their independence. The sources of greatest danger to this independence were, in effect, princes and prelates. Princes wanted wealth, prelates, control. As far as the prelates were concerned, the best protection the religious had against their

encroachments was the Pope and, to the chagrin of diocesan Bishops across Christendom, where there were appeals to the Holy See, the outcome favoured the religious as often as not. Blessed Edmund sought to avail of this protection for his fledgling foundations. In more modern times, especially in these last decades since Vatican II, Rome has become, at least for some religious and religious congregations, part more of the problem than of the solution and, as they see it, the threat to their autonomy comes from the Vatican. This is unfortunate. For our Founders, for Nano and Edmund, loyalty to the Holy Father was an integral part of their mind-set and *weltanschauung*. It was part of their faith, a part for which, in the then UK of Great Britain and Ireland, they endured civic and professional disabilities. Loyalty to the Church, service to the Body of Christ, the People of God, local and universal, is an inextricable part of our “charismatic” inheritance and we must find ways and means on entering into that inheritance in the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

### **Preliminary Study**

As has been insisted from the outset (Steele, 2006), the four articles in question here constitute a *preliminary* study of the evolution of the Rules and Constitutions of the Society of the Presentation. These articles compare one manuscript of BR with one manuscript of SR. Either or both manuscripts may be defective, atypical or idiosyncratic, in one way or another, to one degree or another. A comparative study of more manuscripts and early printed editions of both Rules may well require that observations and interpretations made here be amended or wholly rejected. These articles, therefore, are provisional, even tentative, and, are neither intended nor should they be regarded as in any way authoritative or comprehensive. If, though, they inspire more and better investigation of the origins of the Brothers, Christian and Presentation, they will have served their purpose.

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NB: Errors of fact and/or of interpretation are exclusively the author's own

## Our Contributors

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Michael, a native of Manorhamilton, Co. Leitrim, was ordained in 1986 as a priest of the diocese of Elphin. He was educated at UCC, where he graduated with a 1st Class Honours degree in History and Philosophy. He did post graduate study in theology in Rome, graduating with an STL. He taught sacramental theology at Mater Dei Institute and became Director of the Institute in 2000. He was appointed executive chair of the Catholic Schools Partnership when it was established in 2010. He has written several books, including, *Passage to Pasch*, 1998 (Dublin: Columba Books).

### **Feheny, JM fpm**

Brother Matthew, founder and editor of *Presentation Studies*, is Emeritus Director of the Christian Leadership in Education Office (CLEO), Cork. He is currently engaged in researching a book on the history of Religious Vocations in West Limerick, his native county. His article on fund-raising for the Presentation Monastery, Killarney, in the 1860s, will appear in the next issue of the Journal of the Kerry Archeological and Historical Society.

### **Fitzgerald, Eamonn**

Eamonn was educated at 'The Mon' Presentation Brothers primary school, Killarney, followed by St Brendan's College, Killarney, and St Patrick's Teacher Training College, Dublin. He obtained a Master of Education degree from CLEO/ University of Hull. He spent 28 years with Kerry VEC, 12 of these as Principal of Killarney Community College and 6 years as Education Officer with Kerry VEC. He

was also CEO of the Clare VEC. Throughout his life, he has been active in the GAA, as player, administrator, coach and journalist. He is currently chair of the Board of Management of Presentation Secondary School, Milltown, Co. Kerry.

### **O'Connor, John**

John, a retired second-level teacher, is a long-time friend and collaborator of the Presentation Brothers. A gifted artist, he has more recently become proficient in computer graphics. He is active in the pastoral life of his local parish. He has also designed the cover of this, and of most issues of *Presentation Studies*.

### **Ó Súilleabháin, Colm**

Colm was born and raised in Killarney. He was educated in Loreto NS and St Brendan's College, Killarney. Following this, he received a degree from Trinity College in Modern Irish and Theology. He later went to Mary Immaculate College in Limerick where he studied for a Post Graduate Diploma in Education and qualified as a Primary Teacher. He spent four years teaching in Riverstown, Glanmire, Cork, and a year in CBS Primary School, Tralee. In 2008, he became Principal of Muire na Mainistreach, "The Mon" National School, in Killarney town, where he now works.

### **Steele, Frank**

Frank, a retired second level school Principal, is currently Director of the Christian Leadership in Education office (CLEO). He is founder/ leader of *Lux Edmundi*, a group devoted to the study of Blessed Edmund Rice's life, spirituality and charism. He is author of *Towards a Spirituality for Lay-folk* (Edwin Mellen Press, 1995) and of several scholarly articles.