



leadership education
and formation project

*Leading with Faith
in the Future*

Education for Liberation

Nano Nagle Place

Cork Person of the Month

School Chaplaincy

P.B.S.T.

Alpha

A Priest's Life Today

Rhodes Scholar

CCR – Inspiring Young Minds

Danny Crowley Swim

Photo Meditation

Positives in Lockdown

Faith Matters

Supporting Mission

Living History

Little Way Ministry

Meet the Brothers

A New Vision

High Flyers

Walking the Camino

Feast of Edmund Rice

Zoom Programme in Pakistan

Special Insert:
Vocations Ireland Newsletter

NEWSLETTER

May 2021

Issue No. 5

LIFE AFTER LOCKDOWN

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may have life
and have it
to the full”

(Jn.10:10).



LIFE AFTER LOCKDOWN

Education for Liberation

“I came that they may have life and have it to the full”
(Jn.10:10).

Many people believe it is too early to start speaking about life after lockdown, or more broadly, the challenge of shaping a Post-Covid world. They have a point. The virus is still raging in many places and the threat of new variants is ever present.

Nevertheless, the arrival of several highly effective vaccines is a great sign of hope. Whatever about the quality and pace of the rollout in certain countries, the fact that we have vaccines is a game changer. There is real hope that as more of the populations of countries become vaccinated, that our world will be in a much better position.

There is a lot of thinking and discussion taking place about how to shape our Post-Covid world. The pandemic has shown up so many problems and inequalities. The political slogan for the way ahead is “Come back better”. Let’s hope so!

Pope Francis book ‘Let Us Dream’ is a radical manifesto for a new world order, which places the dignity of the person, and a special concern for the most vulnerable, at the heart of political and economic systems.

As Christians, we are an Easter People. We believe in Resurrection. Out of death comes new life. Love endures and triumphs, even over death itself. There is a challenge for each of us and for our communities to reflect on how we will shape our own Post-Covid reality.

For the L.E.A.F. PROJECT, for the Presentation Family, and for all of us involved in education, in its myriad forms, we face a new moment of opportunity.

Yes – we can say ‘Come back better’, but we must also promote **education for liberation** – education which helps people live life to the full. This is a theme running through this edition of our L.E.A.F. PROJECT Newsletter

As you read the many different articles and contributions in this edition, I think you will be filled with hope, as I was. There are so many committed people doing so much good! May this new life continue to flourish.

Thanks to all our contributors and thanks to all of you for your on-going support of the L.E.A.F. PROJECT and its’ mission.

With kind regards and prayers,

Br. Martin Kenneally.

News from Nano Nagle Place.



Thanks to the extraordinary vision and generosity of the Presentation Sisters, Nano Nagle Place has fast become a spiritual, educational, and cultural hub at the heart of Cork City.

Here Sr. Sheila Kelleher, a director of the Nano Nagle Place Company, writes about how the vision of Nano is given fresh expression in this wonderful new centre.

Vision of 'The Lady of the Lantern' Still Lights Our Way Today.

Nano – Woman of Faith and Courage

The legacy of Nano Nagle, namely her vision and charisma, began from the site now known as Nano Nagle Place and continues to spread throughout the world.

Nano was born to a wealthy family in Ballygriffin County Cork in 1718. Recognising that education was key to a better life, she opened her first school in 1754 in a two room cabin in Cove Lane, to provide education for poor Catholic children who were deprived of same due to the Penal Laws. Later on she opened a number of other schools in Cork City.

Ministering to the poor of Cork at night, she became affectionately known as 'The Lady of the Lantern'. With the financial aid from her uncle, she acquired a site for a convent in Cork City. This became what is now known as South Presentation Convent. She founded the Presentation Congregation, to ensure that her work would continue after her death, on Christmas Eve 1775.

Development of Nano Nagle Place – A New Vision Takes Hold

About 10 years ago the Presentation Sisters set up a Company and put in place plans to redevelop 'South Pres' as a special and sacred place for the people of Cork and beyond and so began the development of Nano Nagle Place.

Today, it is an unexpected oasis in the centre of Cork city, a place that celebrates Nano's vision of empowerment through education, community inclusion and spiritual engagement for a contemporary world. The complex houses a museum, heritage rooms, gardens, restaurant, gift shop and a book shop. Nano's tomb is in the Sister's cemetery and attracts many visitors. In October 2013, Nano was declared venerable which brings her canonisation one step closer.

Ministries at Nano Nagle Place

An important aspect of Nano Nagle Place is the ministry. It houses Cork Migrant Centre and the Lantern Project. Both of these serve the needs of vulnerable people who are warmly welcomed and supported on a daily basis.

Vision and Mission

In all aspects of Nano Nagle Place, God's reign of truth, justice, love and peace is proclaimed.

Nano Nagle Place shares the values proclaimed in the life and mission of Jesus, offering all an opportunity to be informed, inspired, challenged and transformed so that they too might make a difference in the world. Visitors are warmly welcomed from all over the world, to Nano Nagle Place which allows them to explore the incredible spread of the Presentation Order, the

changing lives of the Sisters and the remarkable work they are still engaged in as educationalists and campaigners for social justice.

On-going Work during the Pandemic and Preparing for the Future

Due to the pandemic, Nano Nagle Place is currently closed to visitors but virtual tours are ongoing as indeed is the work of the ministries.

Also the CEO and his staff are engaged in further development of the Centre and are actively engaged in this work through regular zoom meetings in preparation for the reopening.



Nano Nagle and Pupils, John O'Keefe (attributed), 19th century, oil on canvas, Crawford Art Gallery

Nano's legacy

We know that Nano is not just a historical figure, confined to the past. Her vision and charism are as relevant today as they were in her time. In many ways her vision and mission only took hold after her death. She had laid the foundation for what was to become known as the Presentation Congregation whose mission is to follow in her footsteps serving the most vulnerable in society, especially through all aspects of education.

nanonagleplace.ie/



BR. BEN CUSACK IS FEBRUARY CORK PERSON OF THE MONTH

To mark his contribution to education and to celebrate the 40th anniversary of his Youth Club, Br. Ben (pictured above at the Youth Club) receives a Person of the Month Award. His name also goes forward, together with the other Person's of the Month picked this year, for possible selection as Cork Person of the Year at a Gala Awards Lunch at year's end.

The Cork Person of the Month award scheme partners are
The Irish Examiner / The Echo; RTÉ; Southern; Lexus Cork;
AM O'Sullivan PR; Cork Crystal; Tony O'Connell Photography; CAVS;
Cork City Council; Cork County Council; Manus O'Callaghan.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO NOMINATE SOMEONE?

if you would like to nominate someone for Cork Person of the Month email details to our Judges at
nominations@corkpersonofthemonth.ie
follow Cork Person of the Year on Facebook

CORK
Person
OF THE MONTH
AWARD

Irish Examiner

Br. Ben Cusack CFC named as Cork Person of the Month for February 2021.

Br. Ben has made an extraordinary contribution to educational leadership, youth mentoring and formation in Cork, for four decades.

He was Principal of Sullivan's Quay C.B.S. for many years. In 1981, he founded the Edmund Rice Youth Club, which celebrates forty years this year and is still going strong. He is deeply involved in the educational and sporting life of the city. He volunteers support to Coláiste Eamann Rís Deerpark, Greenmount N.S. and St. Joseph's N.S., Mardyke.

THE L.E.A.F. PROJECT was very happy to nominate Ben to the Cork Person of the Year Awards Committee. That nomination was accepted. News was released to local media and Ben was designated Cork Person of the Month for February! A great achievement for a Waterford man!

A very modest person, Ben attributes the success of his endeavours to the team of generous volunteers and support people he has gathered around him.

Since the Christian Brothers community house in Fairhill closed, Ben has stayed with the Presentation Brothers Community, Mardyke House, forging another link between our two Congregations. Comhghairdeas Ben!

We congratulate Ben, and the community of people associated with the Youth Club on this honour. We wish him happiness and health as he continues his great work.

Ben's award was fittingly celebrated by the Mardyke House Community. Letters, cards, texts and emails of congratulations were received from all over the world. Among the first congratulations received by Ben were letters from Br. Edmund Garvey, Province Leader of the European province of the Christian Brothers and Bishop Fintan Gavin of Cork & Ross.

Comhghairdeas Ben!

A Priest's Life Today

My name is Cian O Sullivan. I am living in the vibrant village of Ballincollig. I am originally from Bandon in West Cork! As somebody wise once said to me always be proud of where you are from- no matter how big or small that place is.

I have lived in many places in Cork City. I lived in Mayfield for two years followed by putting down roots in Mahon for another three years. I lived in Farranree for nine years. I spent the summer of 2015 in the coastal parish of Timoleague and Clogagh, as a curate. Eventually in late 2015 I arrived in Ballincollig. I am so fortunate that each place I lived and made my home in were both places of welcome and warmth.



Fr. Cian O'Sullivan, recently appointed Vocations Director for the Diocese of Cork & Ross, writes about his life as a priest:

I spent 14 years working in Education. I was a Public Servant for most of my adult life. I worked in Mayfield Community School part time for two years. I was a full-time staff member of Nagle Community College for three years. I spent nine years as a member of the School Community in Glanmire Community College. I retired of sorts as a Public Servant at 39!!!

Life isn't just about work. I have numerous interests, current affairs, history, sport and since I came to live in Ballincollig I enjoy some gardening as in I remember to water my plants and flowers!!! I am member of Ballincollig GAAClub since 2020. I am involved with one of the Adult Hurling teams in the club. I have a huge passion in developing and encouraging talent in particular- from the age of 18 upwards. In my time I was lucky to be involved with adult teams in Sarsfield's hurling Club in Riverstown. I spent numerous years with many adult teams in Blackrock. I have more clubs than a golfer!!!

I began my working life in Cork in 2001. I was ordained a Deacon for the Diocese of Cork and Ross in April 2000. On the 21 June 2003 I was ordained a Priest in my home town of Bandon. I have been so lucky and fortunate in my life so far to do so much and also be a Priest. In January 2020 Bishop Fintan Gavin appointed me as the Diocesan Director of Vocations to the Priesthood. My new role is to promote and support those interested in becoming a Priest in the Diocese of Cork and Ross.

"The priesthood is a wonderful challenge today. I encourage and accompany men who are discerning God's call in their lives. It's a great privilege to be in this role"

MEET THE BROTHERS



Br. Cletus Carlton Gubil

Hello Everyone!

I'm Cletus Carlton Gubil, a Presentation Brother currently working in the West Africa Province House, Tamale, Ghana.

I entered the Presentation Brothers Congregation immediately after graduation from a College of Education, where I completed my teacher training. I started my initial formation programme in Ghana and eventually completed it in the International Novitiate, then located in Killarney, Ireland. It was my first experience of being away from my homeland and to live in an international community of Brothers, from diverse backgrounds and cultures. This experience has fond memories for me, that I will always cherish and treasure along the journey of life.

After my first profession of vows, I was posted to our community in Yendi. I taught at St. Charles Lwanga Junior High School. Within three years, I was appointed Vocations Director of the Province. As Vocations Director I was responsible for fostering and promoting vocation to the Brotherhood. It was a very challenging and demanding ministry for me. I combined full time teaching ministry with the vocation ministry. Then I pursued further academic studies for a degree in Education, Guidance and Counselling. I am involved in Prison ministry at the Yendi Local Prison. On Fridays I minister to the Prisons Officers and on Sundays to the inmates of the Prison. These experiences have helped me to grow and mature.

At present, I'm working in the Province House as the Province Bursar. I'm responsible for managing the financial and material resources of the Province. These resources require prudent management. I am teaching at St. Charles Lwanga Junior High School, run by the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa (MSOLA). As a teacher, I'm committed to the cause of imparting knowledge to the younger generation and preparing for the future. I love teaching and especially offering guidance and counselling services to young people.

I enjoy reading and watching football during my leisure time.

I have very happy memories of living in Ireland, especially my stay in Killarney in the Kingdom of Kerry!



Many people are aware of their school board of management but may not be as familiar with the vital role of school Trust Bodies. Here, Michael Sexton, C.E.O. of the Presentation Brothers Schools Trust (P.B.S.T.) explains the workings of the Trust:

Michael Sexton is Chief Executive Officer of the Presentation Brothers Schools Trust (PBST). A graduate of UCC (BA, HDE) and CLEO (MEd), he is currently on secondment from his position as Principal at Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh, Bishopstown. He has served on the Boards of Management of a number of schools at primary and second level and is at present on the board at St. Mary's Secondary School, Mallow. He has also been on the board of the Christian Leadership in Education Office and is current treasurer of the Association of Trustees of Catholic Schools. Outside of work, his main interests are in GAA and in genealogy. He is married to Maeve and has four children aged between 16 and 23.

Trust in the Future – the Evolving Work of P.B.S.T.

How a Trust Works

Our trust was founded as a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee in 2009. The trust has responsibility for eight schools, for some 400 staff and for well over 4000 students. The PBST schools are Bunscoil Chríost Rí, Scoil Mhuire na nGrás (Greenmount NS), St Joseph's NS, Coláiste an Spioraid Naoimh, Coláiste Chríost Rí, Coláiste Muire (Cobh), Presentation Brothers College and Presentation College (Bray). The ongoing work of the trust is carried out by a six-strong Board of Directors that meets each month. My role, as CEO is to implement the decisions of the Board.

Administration

My work essentially involves three areas. The first of these is the administration of the company. This entails liaising with and making returns to various Church, statutory and regulatory bodies such as the Irish Episcopal Conference, the Companies Registration Office, the Charities Regulator and Revenue. The trust also plays a role at national level through its involvement in the Association of Patrons and Trustees of Catholic Schools and the PBST CEO serves on its Board.

Working with the Schools

The second area of responsibility pertains to the administration of the eight schools - three primary and five second level. The Trust, as owners of the schools, appoints the Boards of Management (and works in partnership with them on the appointment of senior management personnel), monitors finances, attends to property, insurance, and legal issues, and generally oversees the good governance of the schools.

Catholic and Presentation Ethos

The final, and undoubtedly, most important aspect of the Trust's work is to ensure that the Catholic and Presentation ethos of our schools is maintained and nurtured. To do this, we organise leadership programmes for aspiring school leaders at senior and middle-management level and almost 60 teachers in PBST schools have now completed these programmes. We also provide induction seminars for new teachers (which over 100 teachers have attended), along with seminars for Boards of Management members and regular meetings for Religious Education Co-ordinators. An annual two-day conference for Directors, Principal and Deputy Principals and Board Chairpersons is also organised. Recently, we have also worked in Partnership

with LEAF on a number of very well-received events and look forward to more interaction with LEAF in the months and years ahead. It has, of course, been so disappointing that many of these important gatherings and initiatives have been had to be deferred this year due to the pandemic.

Looking to the Future

We have recently commissioned an independent review which will evaluate the performance of the trust over the last five years and make recommendations for the future. This will be presented at our forthcoming AGM and will be used to inform our thinking and enable us to put a strategic plan in place for the coming five years. Central to this process will be a consideration of how the trust can play an even more effective role in ensuring that Blessed Edmund's vision of education, can be furthered so that the PBST school of the 21st century will remain true to the finest traditions of a Presentation education.

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Email: michaelsexton@pbst.ie
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Directors: Carmel Murphy (Chairperson)
T.J Coakley
Pat Coffey
Pat Hegarty
Anna Herrick
Colm Ó Corcora

Members: Denis Bohane
Seán Ó Caoimh
Tim O'Connell
Dáithí Ó hAodha
Fergal O'Gara
Gene Murphy
Jack O'Sullivan
Paula Sweeney

Secretary: Michael Sexton

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Elaine O'Sullivan, Maria Immaculata Community College, Dunmanway, writes on the busy, challenging, and critical role of a school chaplain.

School Chaplaincy A Privilege and a Passion



Faith Presence in the School

The primary role of the School Chaplain is that of a faith presence in the school context, a person of faith accompanying adolescents on their journey. The Chaplain teaches, works as part of a student support team and looks after the pastoral and spiritual well-being of students, staff and parents in school communities. The role of a School Chaplain in Ireland was traditionally held by a member of the clergy or a religious Sister or Brother but this has changed over the years. Most full-time school chaplains are now lay people. Community and Comprehensive Schools, and some Education Training Board (ETB) schools (Designated Community Colleges), have a full-time, state-salaried Chaplain, and some of the Voluntary Secondary Schools have created a paid position for a Chaplain. Unfortunately, this is not the case in all schools, and this is a need which will have to be addressed.



The Prayer Room at the Heart of the School

The Prayer Room is a place for reflection and quiet contemplation. In my experience, young people embrace opportunities for prayer and meditation. While many may be disconnected from the institutional Church, they have a faith which has been handed down through generations and are prayerful, especially in times of trauma, worry and illness. Although difficult at present, in appropriate ways, the Chaplain organises time for prayer and reflection. The beginning of the school year is usually marked with a Mass or prayer service and in November students prayerfully remember deceased relatives. Christmas is a busy time with Advent carol services, and at the end of the academic year prayer intentions change as students seek assistance with exams and career paths. The Chaplain welcomes, listens, advocates and guides in the spirit of the Gospel. It is so rewarding to watch the students whose tears you helped wipe away in their first year hold their head up high during their graduation in sixth year. We look forward to large prayer gatherings again in the not-too-distant future.

A uniquely rewarding role

While the role is a unique one within the school, the Chaplain works closely with management and with other members of the school's student support (care) team. Regular professional development, collaboration, supervision and self-care are essential for the role of the Chaplain to prevent isolation and fatigue. It is a very rewarding role that truly involves 'faith, hope and love' (1 Cor.13:13) and every day brings new experiences, opportunities for growth and celebration of achievements. A school is more than bricks and mortar, it is a community of relationships, history, faith, culture and heart. Great work is carried out by management and staff in schools across the country every day in creating caring and secure communities, providing the refuge and space for students to flourish.

The Journey to Emmaus

In my office I have a copy of the famous oil painting 'The Journey to Emmaus' by the Swiss artist Robert Zünd. It is his interpretation of Luke's Gospel account of the two apostles on the road to Emmaus after the death of Jesus. I often reflect on this image and what it has to say to me in my role. Life is a journey that we share with others, sometimes we are aware of their presence and support but often we are not. We don't always appreciate the company of others on our journey as we are helped, guided and encouraged. However, our faith and the presence of others helps us along life's adventures. Chaplaincy is about providing support and guidance to those we accompany on the journey but it is also about learning from every experience while allowing space on the path for the Holy Spirit. I hope that the role of Chaplain continues to be part of school communities long into the future, a role I am very proud of and privileged to hold.



Elaine O'Sullivan, School Chaplain, MICC Dunmanway, Co. Cork

Elaine studied Theology, Gaelige, English and Communications in Maynooth University and taught full-time before completing an MA in School Chaplaincy with Mater Dei. This is her eighteenth year working as a school chaplain and she has been a committee member of the School Chaplains' Association for the past 6 years. She loves to spend time with family and friends, walking on the beaches of West Cork and travelling with her husband to places all over the world. She looks forward to being able to travel again soon when it is safe to do so.

The School Chaplains' Association (SCA) of Ireland is a voluntary group which represents and provides support to all those working in the field of school chaplaincy.

Further information available on www.schoolchaplaincy.ie

PRESENTATION FAMILY

Meet Rhodes Scholar and Harvard Doctoral Student, Adam Mastroianni

Adam from Monroeville, Ohio, U.S.A., is the nephew of Br. Francis Schafer (Toronto). Adam studied psychology at Princeton University and was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford. He is at present completing doctoral studies at Harvard University, where he works with world-renowned, Professor Dan Gilbert.

Here he tells us a little about his present areas of research.



I'm a fifth-year PhD student in psychology at Harvard University. I study how people perceive and misperceive their social worlds, from the person sitting across the table to the whole country buzzing around them.

One stream of my work focuses on the misperceptions that arise when people talk face-to-face. For instance, every conversation has to end sometime—do people know when it should? Not really, it seems. Most conversations end when nobody wants them to, both because people want to talk for different amounts of time, and because they have no idea when the other person wants to go. That work has been covered by media outlets including Science, Nature, and Jimmy Kimmel.

Recently, I've been interested in people's theories and misperception of change in the world around them. People think that morality has declined—could they be right, and if not, why do they think that? People think they're pretty different from their grandparents—do they attribute that difference to being different ages or members of different generations? When people pick sides on an issue, they care not only what other people think, but how those opinions are changing—so do they know how opinions have actually changed?

Adam's research is being noted in several recent articles in scholarly journals. We are clearly going to hear a lot more from him in the future. Best wishes in your studies and research, Adam!



Br. Andrew Hickey writes about a programme that is spreading across the world, re-energising parish communities and helping people discover a personal faith. Read on to learn more about the Alpha Course.



Alpha

CAN ALPHA SAVE THE CHURCH?

What is the Challenge?

We are failing to pass on our faith in Jesus Christ to the next generation. As a result:

- We have cultural Catholics rather than intentional Catholics.
- There is the emergence of 'nones'—those who don't identify with any religion.
- Surveys done in USA reveal

> *For everyone who joins the Catholic Church, more than 6 people leave*

> *50% of millennial Catholics have left the church*

The Way Forward:

We need to take seriously the Great Commission (Mt, 28:19-20) given to us by Jesus 'to go make disciples

> *Pope Francis asks all of us to be missionary disciples: to share 'the joy of the Gospel'. Alpha is one way to evangelise; to present the story about Jesus's life death and resurrection to people.*

> *Alpha was developed in the late '80 / early '90s in the Church of England at Holy Trinity, Brompton, in London. It has proved successful in forming intentional disciples and in developing faith communities. It is used now by various Christian denominations, including many Catholic parishes across the world.*

The Aim of the Alpha course

- To have a personal encounter with the risen Christ

Pope Francis writes movingly about a personal relationship with Christ. He wrote about it at the beginning of his first Apostolic Exhortation known as *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG):

'I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them'. EG (3)

I never tire of repeating the words of Benedict XVI which take us to the very heart of the gospel: "Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or lofty ideal but an encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction". EG (7)

- To see our Church transformed.

A look under the hood of Alpha reveals the secret of its success is that it embraces the 'belong-believe-behave' approach to evangelisation. Alpha aims to awaken the faithful, reach the alienated, and make church a better experience for people.

'We have heard of so many Churches that were in decline ... and then they start looking outwards and using Alpha which is this tool for introducing people to Jesus Christ... and then it starts to go the other way'. Gerard Long (Alpha Director in USA)

Alpha in practice

Alpha is a series of interactive sessions, done over ten weeks, that explores the basics of the Christian faith. Alpha is open to everyone though it is designed for people who wouldn't describe themselves as Christian or go to church regularly.

People who do Alpha come to it as guests. They often describe the reassuring experience of meeting ordinary people, like themselves, who value the opportunity to have an honest conversation about life, faith and meaning.

What happens at an Alpha session? The time is divided in segments of roughly 30 minutes between; **(1) a meal (2) the presentation (3) small group discussion.** There is a **retreat style day away** dealing with the Holy Spirit after the sixth Alpha session.

Alpha is being done online during the covid pandemic.

What do people experience on Alpha?

1. People experience Christian community, sometimes for the first time
2. Some people come to faith in Christ and some of them establish a personal relationship with Jesus
3. Some discover or rediscover the Holy Spirit's influence in their lives
4. Some establish a sense of belonging to their Christian community or parish
5. Some people move from being nominal Catholics to being intentional disciples.

Check out the following YouTube clips:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=781wTXKEW5Y

Fr John Ricardo talks about what happened in his parish in Plymouth, Minnesota USA, as a result of doing Alpha. (3 mins)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbZoF0r-VBQ

Fr James Mallon (author of *Divine Revelation*) on his experience of Alpha in his parish in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada (5mins)

I passionately believe, from personal experience, that the Alpha Course can make a real difference to peoples lives and is a way to re-energise faith today. Those interested in further information on Alpha are welcome to contact me:

andrewhickey@presentationbrothers.org

Brother Andrew Hickey is from Cullen, Co Cork. He has worked in education, formation and leadership in Ireland, Trinidad and Ghana. He coordinates Alpha in schools and parishes.



Carmel Murphy, Chairperson of P.B.S.T., writes about what the distinctive ethos of Presentation Schools offers to young people in a changing society.

FAITH SCHOOLS ENRICH EDUCATION IN A DIVERSE AND CHANGING SOCIETY

THE FAITH VISION OF BLESSED EDMUND RICE

In 1802 Edmund Rice set up a makeshift school in Waterford. He believed that education was the key to breaking the cycle of poverty and disadvantage. He also believed that this educational experience could only reach its full potential when the spiritual values of the gospel, values of love, justice, freedom and mutual respect informed the ethos of the school. Two hundred years later in a very different Ireland of diverse cultures, religious beliefs, ethnic groups and a wide range in students' abilities, the same Gospel values underpin a Presentation education. I am mindful of the key messages contained in the PBST charter which sets out a vibrant and challenging vision for a Catholic School in the distinctive tradition of the Presentation Brothers. The core elements are a tangible spirit of respect, caring in a community, and deep commitment to gospel values.

PRESENTATION SPIRIT AND ETHOS

With the student at the heart, our schools recognise different educational needs and strengths, with a clear willingness to engage in new research and best practice when it benefits those with special educational needs. Whilst each Presentation school has its own distinct identity, the overriding message from PBST is to have all our schools develop educational relationships with each student. Everyone must feel welcomed and loved for what he or she is with both their potential and their limitations. The Board of PBST is committed to supporting management and staff in our schools to ensure the continuation of this unique Presentation story and the distinctive Presentation spirit and ethos.

THE SCHOOL AS A PLACE OF FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

We want all our schools to offer an educational experience that enhances a sense of belonging to the Presentation Family, inserted in the local parish, Church and community. We celebrate the many God given talents of each member of the school community. Realising this vision of Catholic education is a challenge, particularly in a very secular society, where sometimes, more value is placed on the race for CAO points in a narrow view of what constitutes a worthwhile education. P.B.S.T sees our schools as consistently striving for excellence in education in the deepest sense. We want our students to attend a school that is a place of faith, hope and love. We desire to develop in young people a spirit of service, and a regard for those most in need in our community.

NÍ NEART GO CUR LE CHÉILE

I am proud of the Presentation Brothers tradition in education in Ireland over the past two hundred years. We in P.B.S.T are mindful of the onus and responsibility that is on the trust to ensure the distinctive ethos of Presentation schools into the future. This is our privilege and our challenge now. As a Presentation Family, we are mindful of the Irish phrase – 'Ní neart go cur le chéile'. Working together, we believe that we can rise to the challenge of these times and make a significant contribution to society. We look forward to writing another chapter in the Presentation story in education.



Coláiste Chríost Rí – Inspiring Young Minds



Maria Walk is Chair of the Board of Management of Coláiste Chríost Rí, Cork. Here she describes some of her work for the school. We take this opportunity to salute and thank all those who give generously of their time and talents, serving voluntarily on school boards of management.

It is a great honour to serve as Chairperson of the Board of Coláiste Chríost Rí. Our school is located in Capwell Road, Turners Cross, at the heart of Cork's southside.

My background is in the electronics industry and I have spent the last ten years working in retail management.

My initial qualifications were in science, with a focus on physics. After working in industry for a time my focus moved to Project Management and Human Resource Management.

I am also a volunteer committee member of Cork City Sports International Athletics. My main role is as international and national Liaison Director for the annual Cork City Sports International Athletics, meet when we host over 160 athletes from 50 countries.

I have been a part of the Chríost Rí community and the Presentation Brothers Family since 2006.

The Spirit of Chríost Rí

Coláiste Chríost Rí is an evolving inclusive Christian community committed to Catholic education in the Presentation Brothers' tradition. We are building on a great tradition and facing the future with confidence.

There is a wonderful atmosphere and sense of community in our school. I started volunteering with the Parent's Association when my son started in first year in Chríost Rí. I was a Parent Nominee on the Board of Management from 2008 to 2012. In 2012, I was invited to be a Trustee Nominee on the Board for the Presentation Brothers Trust (PBST). I was honoured to be invited to be the Chairperson of the Board of Management in 2015.

We have wonderful management and staff. We are blessed with supportive parents and a legion of loyal past pupils. However, we always say our greatest ambassadors are our students who live out the great Chríost Rí spirit today.

The Role of Chairperson

I have found that in volunteering my time and skills to Coláiste Chríost Rí, I have received far more in return than I feel that I have ever given.

The many and varied opportunities I have been given are immense. The friendships I have made, the new skills I have learned along with the people I met along the way have all made my life richer.

The role of Chairperson is wide and varied. It changes with the needs of the school. However, any problem that needs to be solved or any decision we as a Board make, can only be made by always looking to the founding principles of the Presentation Brothers and their ethos.

Some of the things in which I have been involved include the recruitment and selection of teachers, deputy principals and assistant principals.

The development of new policies and updating school policies around inclusion, diversity, and the advancements in Technology are just some of the tasks undertaken by the Board, in conjunction with all the stakeholders in the school community.

A New Chapter in a Great Tradition

A project that in which I have had a particular interest has been the renovation of the school building and the installation of new technology across the entire school.

One of the biggest projects we undertook, as a Board in 2019, was to increase the school profile and numbers applying to attend our school. The whole school community was involved, staff, pupils, school management, with individual Board members all giving of the time and energy with enthusiasm.

The result a new school website and new recruitment material using innovative methods of delivery. These two projects have been of enormous benefit to the school, leading to increased interest in our school and the wonderful educational experience we offer.

Like all schools, in the past year of pandemic, we faced the added challenge of keeping the school connected with the students and the wider community.



Adapting to Covid

Throughout the COVID pandemic we have held our Board meetings on Zoom. Students and staff have achieved immense success through online learning. We have held open nights online. We continued to raise funds for the various charities we support by holding virtual events. Sadly, we also had to say a remote farewell to some of our school community that passed away during the difficult year.

Through the years as both a Board member and Chairperson I have seen a lot of change and faced many challenges. However, as Chairperson, I have never faced them alone. I have the responsibility to take the lead, but I have always found that the advice, skills, and contributions of the other Board members, along with school management and PBST to be of immense support.

I am immensely proud and privileged to be the Chairperson of the Board of Coláiste Chríost Rí, and to be a part of our Presentation Family. Building on our strengths and the great people in our community today, we face the future with hope and confidence.

Chríost Rí abú!



Meet Liam Shorten New Deputy Principal of Coláiste Chríost Rí

Liam Shorten was appointed Deputy Principal of Coláiste Chríost Rí in August 2020.

Liam is from Ballingearry, in the Múscraí Gaeltacht. He graduated from University College Cork with a degree in PE and Gaeilge. Liam also completed post-graduate studies in school leadership at the University of Limerick

He taught for ten years in Gaelcholáiste Mhuire AG, North Monastery.

He has served as Principal and Secretary to the Board of Coláiste na Mumhan in his native Béal Átha'n Ghaorthaidh.

An avid sportsman, Liam was proud to represent Cork in Gaelic Football at U21, Junior and Senior levels from 2008-2014.

“ It is a huge honour to join the staff of this great school” said Liam. “ In my role I hope to continue and develop the positive culture of academic excellence and inclusion that already exists in Coláiste Chríost Rí. We incorporate the four core elements from the Presentation Brothers Schools Trust Charter in our everyday life in the school community. These four elements are the fundamental principles in our school culture. I see them alive in our school community every day. I am delighted to be part of the Chríost Rí community and the Presentation Family. I look forward to working with colleagues, students and parents in adding another great chapter to the Chríost Rí story in the years ahead!”

Fáilte Liam agus beir bua!



Deputy Principal Liam Shorten



Principal, Pádraig Mac An Rí welcomes Mr. Liam Shorten to Chríost Rí as our new Deputy Principal.



**A Meditation Moment
with Fr. James McSweeney**



Open Mind, Open Heart...

Will it ever end?

"It's just going on and on. Will it ever end?" are just some of the words that are used in so many homes during this Covid 19 pandemic. There seems to be no escape from the constant updates, the new twists, the latest drama, and the latest sharing of some negative story. It is no surprise that everyone is tired and weary of it all.

The Butterfly

As believers and Easter people we must always stay hopeful and positive. We have two choices as we move into better days of more vaccines, more freedom, and new beginnings. The choices are to remain closed or to remain open.

I share with you two images of a butterfly. Both pictures were taken within a few short moments of each other. In one the butterfly has its wings closed and in the other it has its wings open. When its wings are closed there is no colour but when they are open, we see great beauty and colour.

Finding Ourselves Again

We too are invited to be open to God's blessings in our life. We are invited to be open to new beginnings, to a fresh start, to renewing friendships, to renewing our faith, to embracing life and to start the journey of finding ourselves again.

Yes, we sometimes need to close our wings like the butterfly for security, for time out and other reasons. But spiritually we are at our best when we are open and not closed. As we all begin to find ourselves again, I hope and pray that you will be open to God's gentle but beautiful presence in your life.



Fr. James McSweeney
Chaplain

Coláiste Pobail Bheanntaí
(Bantry Community College)

www.2u.ie



Pat Kinsella reflects on a life spent in education:

A New Vision for Today

Arising out of three distinct chapters in my life as an RE teacher in primary and post primary schools, as Principal in post primary, and, in the past decade, as Chair of Boards in all sectors I am fully aware of the challenges facing faith education in schools.

An Age of Uncertainty

The changes we faced as teachers 50 years ago were inspired by the hugely energising vision of Vatican 2. Today it is more difficult to discern the vision. We can be so overwhelmed by negativity, sustained pressure on Catholic ethos, rapid societal change, along with the demoralising effect of Church scandals. All of these contribute to the uncertainty we experience as educators.

Faith and Justice

The capacity of most Catholic schools and religious education teachers to continue offering a vision that enables students to make human values and the values of the gospel a lived reality is so impressive. The focus on faith and justice expresses itself in an education that endeavors to change society for the better. The RE teachers I have met in recent years do this and so much more to ensure that their students flourish in a caring supportive environment.

Keeping Faith in Catholic Schools

We need to keep faith in our Catholic schools. Only two countries across Europe do not provide for religious education in state sponsored schools. Governments value religious education throughout Europe. There is a recognition that Christianity underpins society. Why should we lose faith?

Parents value Catholic schools because they are open happy stimulating and mutually respectful communities. They appreciate the social cohesion

that the school brings. They want their school and parish community to support them in the Christian initiation of their children. Schools continue to do this while also welcoming students from all faith traditions and none.

The Education Act (1998) supports schools in continuing to operate in accordance with their Characteristic Spirit. The Patron bodies, trustees, school boards, school leaders continue to support the work of the teachers ensuring that schools are caring communities where developing children is the first priority.

Apathy in relation to the education of our children is not an option, neither is indifference towards the unique values that created our Catholic schools. It is indifference more than hostility that destroys.

Pat Kinsella has been involved in all school sectors over the past fifty years. He considers himself to have been very fortunate to bring his experience to bear on Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig, Cork, in the first twenty-five years of its existence. For the past ten years he has been privileged to support leaders of many schools in Cork and nationally.

Seán Crowley reports on a charity virtual swim (in memory of Danny Crowley) that attracted support from all around the world this year. Among those taking part was Liverpool and Ireland goalkeeper, Caoimhín Kelleher, a classmate of Danny's in P.B.C. Cork:

The Danny Crowley Christmas Swim 2020 Goes Virtual!

This year the Danny Crowley Christmas Swim went virtual due to Covid challenges but still managed to attract hundreds of swimmers take to the water and raise over €31,000, the largest annual sum to date.

All funds raised go towards the Mercy Kids & Teens Appeal which supports the youngest patients at the Mercy Hospital by providing services such as the Paediatric Oncology Outreach Nursing Service (POONS).

Services for Young Cancer Patients during Covid times

These funds could not be going to a better cause. Speaking on the importance of the service, Olga Buckley, Paediatric Oncology/ Haematology CNS at The Mercy said "The Covid-19 pandemic has now made this service absolutely necessary. Our young cancer patients are considered within the critically vulnerable group as their treatment, including chemotherapy, causes immunosuppression. The POONS service will help these patients to stay at home and keep them safe in the months ahead."

How it all began...

The swim has been running now for the last 8 years and is run by Danny's friends and family. The swim was started by his school friends to remember Danny, who passed away after a long battle with leukaemia in 2013. To date the swim has raised over €140,000 for the Mercy Kids & Teens Appeal. Traditionally the swim was always held at Myrtleville beach, but due to COVID restrictions swimmers were asked to swim wherever they safely could and upload videos of their swim online.



Liverpool and Ireland Goalkeeper, Caoimhín Kelleher, lends support!

Not only was it the biggest swim to date, but also had swimmers from all over Ireland and around the world, including swimmers from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States.

Swimmers included many of Danny's friends from the many sports clubs he was involved with in Carrigaline. Swimmers included friends from Gaelscoil Carrig Ui Leighin, his secondary school friends from Presentation Brothers College, Cork. Among these was, none other than Ireland and Liverpool keeper Caoimhin Kelleher, a classmate of Danny's in P.B.C.

Thanks to All our Supporters

We would like to thank everyone who part took in the swim, and everyone who donated. A special mention goes out to Brother Martin Kenneally from the Presentation Community who has been a key supporter, swimmer and fund raiser with the swim. His support and friendship have been greatly appreciated by the Crowley Family. Other great supporters this year include the O'Donoghue Family, the Carrigaline Gael Scoil, the Lonigan family, Donna Riordan, Liam Buckley and so many others who all fundraised massively for the Swim this year. We would like to thank the organising committee led by Katie Crowley and Amy Cohalan on their use of social media to launch and promote the swim. We also thank Calie Cohalan, Debra Lonigan and Jennifer Kelleher for their tireless support. Our gratitude also to PWC Cork, and to Katie's colleagues there for their huge support. Finally, a huge thanks to all of Danny's friends who continue to remember him and swim in his memory. And we send special best wishes to Caoimhín Kelleher in his future career!



Photo: Caoimhín Kelleher



The impact of Danny's Life

Danny's life, though short, had a lasting impact on everyone he met. He was a fun loving, sporty, bright, and wonderful teenager who loved life. This year he would have been 21 years old, and it was so special to see how his friends and supporters honour him via this swim. We look forward to next year!

Dr. Sean Crowley is Danny Crowley's older brother.



Drawing Positives

from a Life in Lockdown



Sarah Ryan-Purcell, from Blackrock, Cork, is a first year student at Mary Immaculate College of Education, University of Limerick. Here she writes about a very different student year.

Ever the Optimist...

We have all been provided with many reasons to complain over the past year. I, for one, am a survivor of the Leaving Cert 2020 and a victim of college online. I remember sitting in the music room of Scoil Mhuire on that fateful day, 12th March 2020. As Leo Varadkar made the announcement, I realised there and then that we, as a people, were being faced with two options: we could sit around and wish away a year of our lives (at the time I thought it was only going to be two weeks! The principle remains the same) or we could view the lockdown as an opportunity for personal development. Ever the optimist, I opted for the latter.

Family Time

I embraced that first lockdown. I began to think more deeply, to act more meaningfully and to appreciate things I had previously overlooked. My whole family was under the one roof for the first time in a long time. We descended on the kitchen for a cuppa ("elevenses"), sharing our woes and successes of the morning's work. We would then disappear into our individual makeshift offices and reconvene at lunch. My mother played a blinder in the kitchen keeping a family of adults fed and happy.

My Education in My Own Hands

For once, I could take my education into my own hands, and I relished it! I focused on the topics that I wanted

to study. I began a Sunday night ritual where I would plan the week ahead – a ritual I have held onto as I navigate my first year at Mary Immaculate College (although I have yet to set foot on Limerick soil as a student!). Our Leaving Cert drama of uncertainty was a roller coaster ride...and then everything stopped.

Suddenly, we went from studying all day to...nothing.

Not quite true. The very next day, I started an internship at STEM-Away - an online networking and recruitment platform - leading a team of researchers in User Experience and Bioinformatics. This was an opportunity that I would have had to skip, had the Leaving Cert proceeded as planned. As I faced setbacks and triumphs, I became a better leader, organiser, listener, and thinker.

Yoga and Music

My mother and I fell into a pattern of workouts in the morning and a yoga session in the afternoon. I spotted a ukulele for sale in Aldi for €12.99, bought it, and began to teach myself. I am a keen musician. Music has brought me great comfort during these times of uncertainty. I sit at the piano, or lodge the ukulele in the crook of my arm and sing and play my heart out. I have no doubt the ukulele will bring joy to the classroom too in years to come.

The Virtual World of College

We could never have anticipated for the pandemic to still be hanging over us more than a year later and yet here we are.

I was due to move off to Limerick in September. My parents were preparing for their final child to flee the nest and instead they're stuck with all three of us in the house! I made a conscious decision to enter the virtual world of College with an open mind. It is with great effort and imagination – joining societies, hosting Zoom calls, creating groupchats – that we, first years, inaugurate ourselves as members of the College community. We have all learned a lot from this academic year but, no doubt, have a whole new dimension of third-level education to discover and explore when we get to campus, meeting classmates and lecturers 'in the flesh'.

**Music
has brought me
great comfort
during these
times of uncertainty**

Bright Minds

I joined nearly every society under the sun and now spend my evenings at virtual Zumba classes, acting workshops and Zoom concerts. My roles as Class Rep. on the Students' Union and as a volunteer presenter on the College radio station, Wired 99.9FM, have helped to make me feel like I belong at Mary Immaculate College (MIC). I present and produce 'Spregadh 's Spraoi' ["motivation and fun"], a bilingual talk show on which we discuss motivation, inspiration and positive thinking. I have had the pleasure of speaking with entrepreneurs, performers, teachers and my own Psychology lecturer at MIC, a different person every Thursday at 11.30am. All of these bright minds have had at least one thing in common: a positive mindset.

You don't always have control over what you spend your days doing but as for HOW you spend them, that's entirely up to you!

Being grateful

In today's world, as we find ourselves showered with R numbers and death tolls, trapped by lockdowns, it is so important to appreciate the goodness of life and be grateful for what we have.

As restrictions begin to ease, savour the serenity of empty events calendars, grasp the opportunity now to look inward and strengthen your mindset so that we may fully embrace - with positivity, joy and love – the days of laughter, hugs and new encounters which are fast approaching.

"May the Lord bless you and keep you.

***The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you,
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace"***

(Numbers 6: 24-26).

Hymn, Cambridge Singers.



L to R: Sisters Mehwish Javed; Riffat Sadiq (Provincial); Saima Fazal; Fouzia Saleem.

L.E.A.F Zoom Programme in Pakistan

Recently, Br. Martin was invited to deliver a programme on human development to young Presentation Sisters in Pakistan. The programme began with an intensive two week module with three Sisters preparing for Final Profession. It continues later this month with a group of eleven Junior Professed Sisters. Here Sisters Saima, Fouzia and Mehwish send a note of thanks.

We congratulate the three Sisters on their Final Profession and wish them every blessing in their future lives. It was a privilege to be part of their journey. The Profession ceremonies were to take place this month. Regrettably, they have been postponed for a few months due to a surge in Covid 19 cases in Pakistan.

Thank You from Islamabad-Rawalpindi!

Greetings from Pakistan!

We are happy to pay our heartfelt gratitude to you for accompanying us during the last two weeks. It was a great privilege for us to have such an enriching experience with you as you shared so much of your own personal experiences with us.

We felt that as Religious we mostly focus on spiritual growth and somehow, we neglect to grow in human emotions. However, 'grace builds on nature'. By attending your classes, it was a reminder for us to focus on human development, as an essential part of the religious journey.

Thank you for guiding us in a very positive and gentle way. We appreciate your efforts to provide us with such rich material and resources. Indeed, your examples and sharing on different topics are going to help us not only now but in our future journey also. You created such an encouraging and open atmosphere. You affirmed us in sharing our own experiences



Sarah Ryan-Purcell is a first-year college student, studying primary school teaching and psychology in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. We know her best for her performances at the Preslink Christmas Concert and for her singing of 'O Holy Night' annually at our Christmas Eve Mass at Mount St. Joseph.

Sarah is seen here with Rua

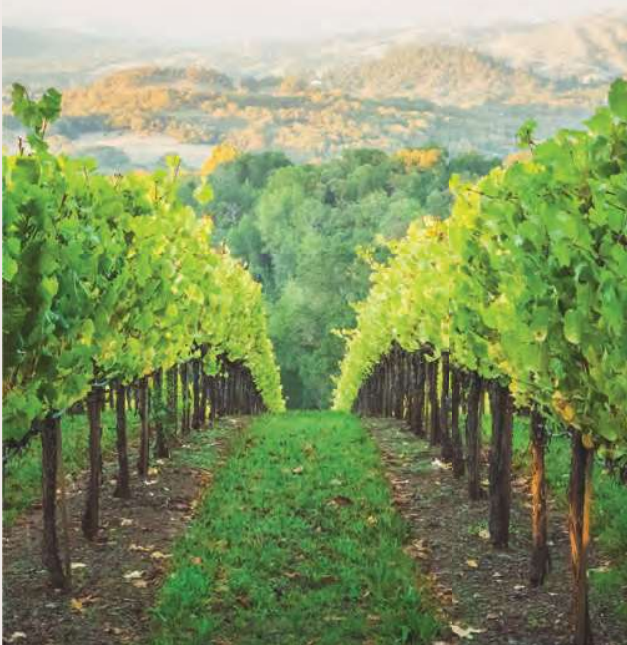


The topic regarding communication and difficult conversation was a great help for us. Yes, it is a complicated process but seeing the bigger picture and walking in others' shoes is the way that can help us to find a way through the tough communications.

And the most interesting topics i.e., POISE NOW and LIFE SAVERS from 'The Miracle Morning' have touched us deeply. These topics and the sharing we had will be a great help to us as Religious women, living the charism and mission of Nano Nagle, here in Pakistan, in the years ahead.

Thank you so much for your availability, your wisdom and your openness. And as we are continuing our retreat be assured of our prayers. May God continue to bless you in all that you do to work in His vineyard.

Srs. Saima, Fouzia and Mehwish



Colaiste Muire students interview Bishop William Crean

Interviewers:

Sean Lynch and Abby Bell
5th Year Students in Colaiste Muire Cobh

Teachers:

Ms J. Buckley and Mrs C. Bilginer

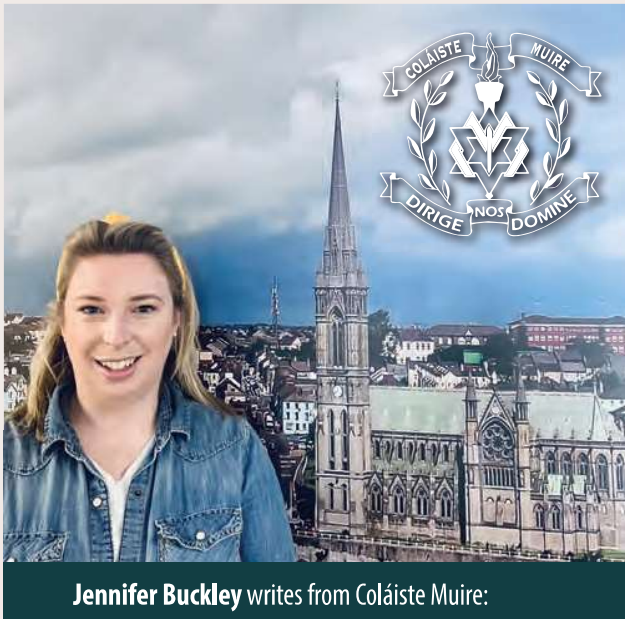
Topics discussed:

The Bishop's interests; his reaction to the pandemic, and its effect on the Church; his views on young people today and the pressures they face.

Full interview will be available in the Diocesan 'Search' Publication soon.



DIOCESE OF CLOYNE



Jennifer Buckley writes from Coláiste Muire:

Faith Matters in Cobh

Coláiste Muire Cobh Celebrates Catholic Schools Week

January 24th-31st saw the celebration Catholic Schools Week this year. To mark the week in the Diocese of Cloyne, Mass was live streamed from the Cathedral Parish website and staff and students from all over the Diocese joined in online.

Bishop William Crean celebrated the Mass, assisted by Fr Tom Mc Dermott and Fr Aquin Casey. The liturgy was organised by the RE Team in Coláiste Muire thanks to Fr Tom, school chaplain for his guidance. The music was led by Dominic Finn. TY students Muireann and Warren and 2nd Year student Faye, represented Coláiste Muire Cobh at the Mass. As we have not been able to join together as a school community this year, it was a lovely opportunity to gather together online.

Interviewing Our Bishop!

On March 1st, 5th Year students Seán and Abby dusted off their uniforms and we went down to the Bishop's House here in Cobh to carry out an interview with Bishop William Crean. We spoke with Bishop Crean about his thoughts on faith today, the pandemic and young people and their faith. Abby and Seán interviewed the Bishop, and they were accompanied by RE Teachers J Buckley and C Bilginer. Their interview will be published in the next issue of Search, the Cloyne Diocesan magazine.

Teaching Religion Today – Enjoying the Challenge

I really enjoy my role as a religion teacher in Coláiste Muire Cobh, Religious Education is an exam subject to Junior Cycle. For 4th, 5th and 6th year students it is a non-exam subject.

At Junior Cycle, we have a course to cover, and like any other exam subject on our Junior Cycle curriculum, there are CBA's to be carried out and an exam to work towards.

At senior cycle, there is a different type of curriculum in the RE classroom. With such an emphasis on well-being in our education system today, the Religion class can provide that space to ask questions about faith, life, and health. It offers a chance to have discussions with students, to help them get involved in community projects, or sometimes just to have a cup of tea and a chat!

This is certainly my favourite elements of teaching Religion, giving students advice, anecdotes, skills and memories that will help them through the rest of their lives.

While we are a Catholic school with a Catholic ethos, we are also aware of and respect people of other faith and of no faith in our school community. Working closely with our school chaplain Fr Tom Mc Dermott and Bishop William Crean, here in Cobh, we try to provide a faith formation suited to the needs of young people today.

Teaching Religious Education as a subject can be challenging. However, I believe making faith relevant to the students' lives is so important.

For example, we recently researched Pope Francis's Papal Trip to Iraq. It was a great topic to teach in our online classroom and the videos from Iraq were a great resource. I got in touch with Colm Flynn, a reporter with EWTN, via Twitter and based several teaching and learning activities around that historic trip,

I am passionate about teaching Religion. It is a real privilege to help young people in their faith journey. Catholic social teaching is a great way to challenge students to service – to be people for others, to get involved in both the school and the local community.

Jennifer Buckley has been teaching in Coláiste Muire, Cobh, since 2015. Jennifer studied Arts in UCC and then went on to complete a PGDE with Hibernia College Dublin. She teaches Religion, SPHE and History. Jennifer is also on Cobh Parish Pastoral Council. She has enjoyed travelling to Lourdes with the Cloyne Diocesan Pilgrimage as a Youth Leader.

The Easter Sunday episode features Riaghan singing an Irish prayer, "This Day God Gives Me"

This day God gives me
Strength of high heaven,
Sun and moon shining,
Flame in my heart,
Flashing of lightning,
Wind in its swiftness,
Deepes of the ocean,
Firmness of earth.

Treise Lenihan formerly worked as Coordinator of Youth Ministry (2013-2015) with the Presentation Brothers in Cork. She and husband, Joseph, now live in Donegal. She has since been kept busy ministering to her four young children!

Light from the North

During Pandemic Year, New Faith Initiative Emerges for Young Children

*As much of life came to a standstill in March 2020, a new ministry was coming to life up in the hills of Donegal. With schools and churches closed up, Treise Lenihan found herself identifying an urgent need for children to be formed in the faith. She was concerned that parents would be left searching in the dark and children left spiritually wanting. The idea then came to reach families virtually in their own homes through releasing weekly Youtube videos and with the blessing of the Bishop of Raphoe, Alan McGuckian, **the Little Way Sunday School was born**. The Holy Spirit gave life to the Church on Pentecost Sunday, and so it was quite fitting that the Sunday School launched with the release of their first video on **Pentecost Sunday, 31 May 2020**.*



Joseph & Treise Lenihan pictured with some of the other members of the Little Way Team; Riaghan, Roisin & Enya O' Callaghan.

Little Way Sunday School

The "Little Way" ministry is very much a family affair! The team comprises of Conal, Riaghan and Enya O' Callaghan, who feature presenting with their sister Treise Lenihan, and her husband, Joseph. Off screen, talented sister, Roisin works tirelessly to edit and animate all of the content. Each video is about 7-10 minutes in length and the content is geared mainly towards primary school children. They begin with a short explanation on church teaching, or on the theme for that given Sunday. This is followed by "Padre's Corner" where a different priest is introduced

and then reads the Gospel for that Sunday (which has animation overlay to engage children) this is followed by a short reflection from the priest. Afterwards, a section called "Mission Time" invites families to put the Gospel into action in their own homes. Most episodes conclude with a short blooper/skit to provide some comic relief and seems to be a highlight for many families. These videos are no replacement for families attending Mass together but are appreciated as a good supplement for families to keep the Lord's Day holy. It is heartening to see that hundreds of families have been tuning in each week.

Conal Lenihan features in an episode with his aunt, Enya for the blooper reel.



Presenter, Conal O' Callaghan uses discipline in sport as an analogy for living a life of virtue.



Now to Young Adults... Little Way Ministry and the L.E.A.F PROJECT – YouTube Series

In recent months, another great need has been identified by Br. Martin Kenneally. This time, the need is with young adults to connect and explore more deeply their Christian faith. Google data has shown that there was a 50% increase in people searching for prayer online. There have been many testimonies shared of atheists coming into their faith by watching YouTube videos which explores and explains the case for Christianity. The Little Way Ministry hopes to work with the L.E.A.F. project in the coming months to produce and release a YouTube series to respond to this great need. We kindly request your prayers for this new venture over the coming months.



Riaghan explains the symbolism in the Gospel reading for Palm Sunday.

Principal,
Tony Kenneally



Scoil Iosaef Naofa



Ár ndícheall i gconai

Scoil Iosaef Naofa Supports Presentation Missions:

Reaching out to help – It's part of who we are

A big 'thank you' to the students, staff, and parents of Scoil Iosaef Naofa, Cobh, for raising over 2000 euros recently for the Presentation Brothers educational mission in Ghana and Nigeria.

We take this opportunity to thank all our donors and supporters for your generosity. Many school communities, groups such as PRESLINK and friends put in a lot of hard work every year to support Presentation schools and projects in Africa. Amazingly, this fundraising has continued, in Covid-compliant forms, right throughout the pandemic! It makes a real difference to the lives of young people in these developing world countries, and it builds a great sense of Presentation Family.

"Scoil Iosaef continues very much to be part of the Presentation and Edmund Rice tradition" said Principal, Tony Kenneally, "It's in our Mission Statement and it's a lived reality in our school community. We want to encourage our students to be generous young people and to reach out to help others. This expresses itself in initiatives in our local community here in Cobh and also in supporting the Presentation Brothers Family in far away places. This is part of who we are, and we are delighted to help".

Thanks again to the school community of Scoil Iosaef and to all our friends for your generous support!



Maurice Moore



Patrick O'Sullivan

Scoil Iosaef Naofa, Cobh, Remembers Past Pupils from the War of Independence

Living History

Scoil Iosaef Naofa, Cobh, will hold an important flag raising ceremony on April 28th, to honour the sacrifice made by past pupils Maurice Moore and Patrick O'Sullivan in the War of Independence.

Maurice Moore (born 1899) and Patrick O'Sullivan (born 1899) were school friends together. Both joined the Irish Volunteers in 1916 and took part in many engagements during the struggle for independence in Cork. Maurice and Patrick were captured at Clonmult on 20th February 1921 and were executed two months later, by Crown Forces at Cork Military Barracks on 28th April 1921.

Proud sons of Cobh, Maurice Moore came from Ticknock and Patrick O'Sullivan from Carrignafof. Patrick was known as a fine hurler, playing for both Cobh G.A.A. Club and Collegians (U.C.C.).

"We look forward to marking the centenary of the sacrifice of these young patriots" said Anthony Kenneally, Principal of Scoil Iosaef Naofa, "It is important for our students to appreciate the sacrifice and generosity of previous generations. Maurice Moore and Patrick O'Sullivan are past pupils of our school. We look forward to marking this important occasion by raising the national flag along with a short ceremony of reflection and prayer".



MEET THE BROTHERS



Br. Joseph Mukasa Donglidgee
Novice Director

Br. Joseph Mukasa Donglidgee is from the Upper West Region of Ghana. He is at present based at Mount St. Joseph Novitiate at Logre, near Bolgatanga, the capital of the Upper East Region.

Br. Joseph is Novice Director and oversees the formation and training of young Brothers from Ghana and Nigeria. Among his novices at present, there is also a young man from the West Indies.

Joseph studied theology and psychology at All Hallows College of Dublin City University. He pursued post-graduate studies at the Religious Formation Ministry Programme (Loreto House). During his studies in Ireland, Joseph was a member of the Glasthule Community and stayed for shorter periods in Presentation Communities in Killarney and Cork.

"I have wonderful memories of Ireland" says Joseph "My studies there prepared me well for my present role. Forming young Brothers is a vital ministry for the future of our Congregation. I feel very privileged to accompany these young men in discerning their vocation as Presentation Brothers in the world today".

At the Presentation Brothers General Chapter (2017), Br. Joseph was elected a member of the Congregation Leadership Team.

We wish him well in his important work.



Henrietta O'Meara

Henrietta is married to D.J. O'Meara and they have one daughter, three sons and four grandchildren. They live in Ballinhassig Parish, about 7 miles west of Cork City. Henrietta has a Diploma in Youth & Comm Work and a B.S.W. Degree from U.C.C. She also holds a Diploma in Parish Planning from St. Patrick's College Carlow. Henrietta worked with Cork and Ross Family Ministry and with the Redemptorist Youth & Misson Teams for many years.

She is currently employed by the H.S.E. as a Mental Health Social Worker, specialising in the care of older people.

Camino Journey: 'You have to experience it yourself to understand it'

Walking the Pilgrim Way

Some years ago, I read a book by Joyce Rupp called "Walk in a Relaxed Manner", in which the spiritual writer describes her experience of walking the Camino from the French Pyrenees to the city of Santiago de Compostela in North West Spain. For centuries, people have gone on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, to the reputed burial place of St. James the Apostle. There are many different Camino routes to Compostela. Most pilgrims walk the Camino path. Some people chose to cycle or follow the route on horseback. Historically, many people made their Camino journey by boat, including pilgrims from Ireland.

In 2011, our parish priest Fr. Kieron O'Driscoll proposed bringing a group of people on pilgrimage to walk the last section of the Northern French Camino, from Sarria to Santiago de Compostela, a walk of 100km over six days. In trying to describe the Camino experience at an Information meeting, Fr. Kieron said; "You have to experience it yourself to understand it". Without hesitation, my husband D.J. and I signed up for our Camino journey, along with twenty other people.

Walk at Your Own Pace

In the months leading up to the Camino, we got into regular walking practice and organised some group walks, which helped to build a sense of community and friendship among the group. One of the key priorities for walking the Camino is to have a comfortable pair of walking shoes that are well broken in, not a spotless pair of new shoes straight out of a box. Comfort, not style, is a priority on the Camino!

My biggest fear before heading off on the Camino was that I would hold the group up, as I am not a fast walker and that I would struggle with the heat. The night before we began our walk, we celebrated Eucharist and prayed for each other on our pilgrim journey. Fr. Kieron encouraged pilgrims to slow down, to walk at our own pace and to take time to notice the beauty of God's Creation around us.

Every morning we had an early breakfast and started walking together. We followed Fr. Kieron's advice and walked at our own pace. People stopped for coffee and lunch whenever they felt like it and every evening we met for dinner and talked about our experiences of the day. It took me two days to wind down and get into the rhythm of the Camino. I had a great sense of stepping back, of getting away from 'watching the clock' and the busyness of life. The wish

for a "Buen Camino" is shared continually by pilgrims on the Camino path. Our focus every day was to walk the path by following the yellow arrows and enjoy our surroundings. We walked by streams, through fields, over hills and at times we had to carefully watch our step as we negotiated rough ground.

Community

People noticed each other and supported and encouraged each other; sharing water, snacks, sun



cream and plasters for blistered feet. Sometimes the greatest need was a word of encouragement and there was never a shortage of those. Walking long distances over several days takes its toll on tired bodies and blistered feet, but we persevered by putting one foot in front of the other. I have never appreciated the gift of an Epsom Salts bath and a good night's sleep as much as I have on the Camino.

The sense of celebration and thanksgiving on completing our Camino journey and at arriving safely at the cathedral in Santiago is difficult to put into words. Hundreds of people gathered at the Pilgrim's Mass and the atmosphere on the streets leading to the Cathedral was of great joy and celebration. Where there was a language barrier, there was a smile or a nod of understanding at having shared a journey together. In the words of Fr. Kieron, "You have to experience it yourself to understand it".

Slowing Down...and Noticing

Our first Camino experience nurtured a desire with some of the group to return to walk other parts of the route and we returned in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2019. We were to complete the last section of the Camino last year, but Covid 19 put our plans on hold for now.

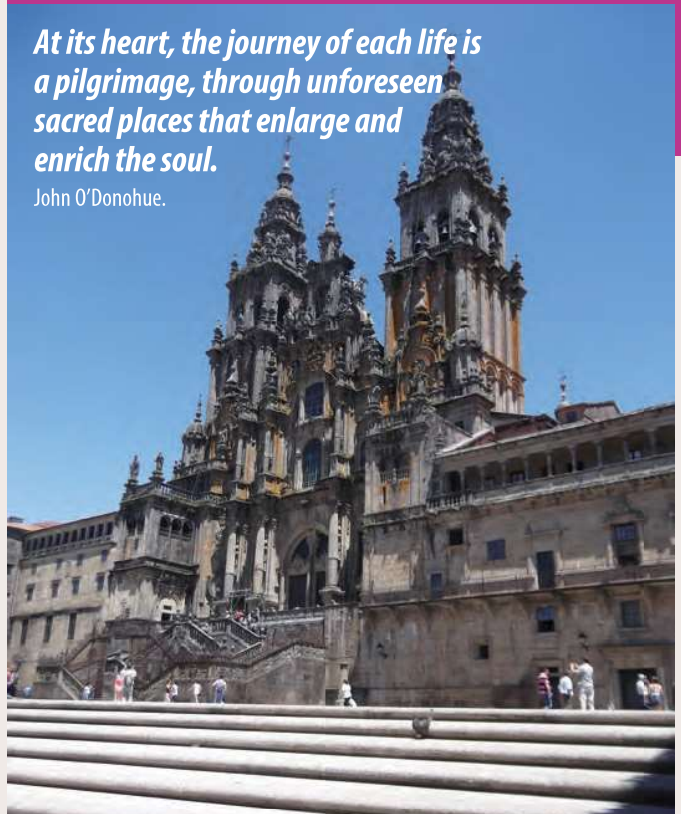
While the Camino is a shared experience, the Camino journey is different for everyone. I have noticed how I have experienced different stages of the Camino over the years, has depended on where I was at myself, and what was going on in my own life. By slowing down, I took notice of and appreciated the beauty of God's creation all around me. Lines from the Psalm "The Lord is my Shepherd" came repeatedly to mind. I came home from the Camino with a deeper appreciation of the beauty of nature and God's creation. There were times on the Camino that I found the going difficult, particularly when walking in intense heat and I had to concentrate on just putting one foot in front of the other. My prayer was simply; "Dear God get me through this" and I got through it. Since then, in times of struggle and difficulty, I go back to that prayer.

Presence of God

As I reflect on my Camino travels, three words summarise my experience: presence, perseverance and gratitude.

At its heart, the journey of each life is a pilgrimage, through unforeseen sacred places that enlarge and enrich the soul.

John O'Donohue.



I experienced the presence of God in the beauty of our surroundings and in the care and kindness of the many encounters with other people. People who walk roads together share a lot of themselves. I experienced God's presence in conversations shared in honesty and trust and in the listening presence of others. Walking the Camino gave me time and space to reflect on the many ways that I experience God's presence in my life.

Perseverance

Some of our Camino days were challenging, particularly when the temperatures were high. I kept repeating to myself; "Just put one foot in front of the other and you will get there". On our own pilgrimage through life, we too meet challenges and difficulties, where it sometimes takes all our efforts and perseverance just to put one foot in front of the other. When I am struggling, I take a few deep breaths and think about the Camino.

Gratitude

The Camino has given me space to reflect on my own life and the many things that I am grateful to God for; my family, my friends and my faith, which has sustained me through the ups and downs of life. I am grateful that D.J. and I have been able to share the Camino experience together and with such a great group of people. When it is safe to travel and with God's help, we will be Perigrinos again on the road to Compostela.



MEET THE BROTHERS



Br. De Paul Hennessy

Br. De Paul Hennessy hails from Roscrea in Co. Tipperary. He entered the Novitate of the Presentation Brothers at Mount St. Joseph, Cork, in 1959, making first profession of vows in 1961 and final profession in 1963.

Br. De Paul trained as a primary school teacher in De La Salle Teacher Training College, Waterford. Always generous in his availability and willing to help, he has the distinction of having served in many of the communities and schools of the Province. These include Killarney, Glathule, Milltown, Maiville, Birr, Mahon, Heatherton, Glasheen and Mardyke House. He served as Community Leader and Bursar in several of these communities

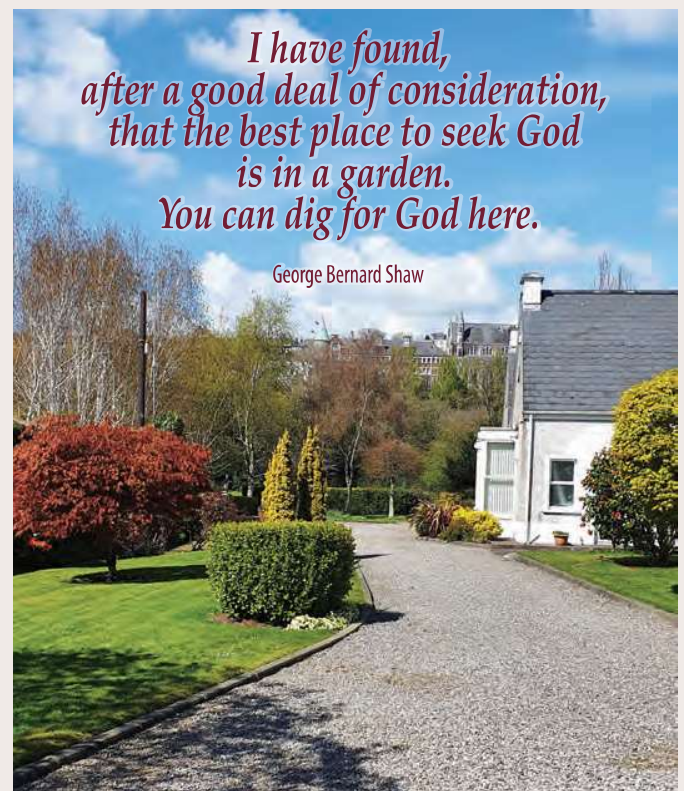
He taught for a period in Scoil Chríost Rí, Cork, where one of his students was a young Kieran O'Reilly, now Archbishop of Cashel! While in Birr (not far from his native Roscrea), Br De Paul was Principal of St. Brendan's National School.

A quiet and gentle man, Br. De Paul is noted for the efficiency and dedication he brings to every task he undertakes. Along with grounds man, Jimmy Hayes, he maintains the gardens and playing field at the Mardyke House in fabulous condition. This work is much appreciated by the Brothers and the Community of St. Joseph's National School. When the pandemic recedes and visitors return to the Mardyke House and the Edmund Rice Centre (now home to the L.E.A.F PROJECT OFFICE), we know you will appreciate this oasis of beauty and peace at the heart of the city.

Br. De Paul has many hobbies – reading, walking, and cycling (“in days of yore”, in the case of cycling, as he says himself!). With classic understatement, he also lists “pottering about the garden and grounds” among his hobbies! He is a fan of many sports and, of course, is a great supporter of Tipperary hurling. Like all of us living in lockdown, he is looking forward to travelling again, and visiting family, as soon as the public health situation allows.

Br. De Paul celebrates the diamond jubilee of his first profession this year (1961 – 2021). We thank him for his great witness to brotherhood and wish him many more years of health and happiness.

Ad multos annos!



*I have found,
after a good deal of consideration,
that the best place to seek God
is in a garden.
You can dig for God here.*

George Bernard Shaw

HIGH FLYERS



Colm Keena and John Higgins are both past pupils of Presentation Brothers College, Cork. Colm was Chairman of S.H.A.R.E. in 2011/2012 and John followed him as Chairman in 2012/2013. They are both now serving officers in the Irish Air Corps.

"Pilots are a rare kind of human. They leave the ordinary surface of the world, to purify their soul in the sky, and they come down to earth, only after receiving the communion of the infinite."

— Jose Maria Velasco Ibarra

Colm Keena will tell you he always had a passion to fly planes. "Yes - I was always fascinated by aviation. To be a pilot was a dream that was there from early on. I think the education I got in Pres empowered me and prepared me for what I am doing now".

John Higgins agrees. "I was a year after Colm in school. I followed him as chairman of S.H.A.R.E. when I was in fifth year. I was also involved in PRES LINK in Transition Year. It was a great education in leadership. It was a fantastic training in organisational skills and facing challenges."



John and Colm as students in P.B.C. Cork



Lt. Colm Keena - Commissioned!

Lieutenant Colm Keena received his Presidential Commission as an officer in the Irish Air Corps in July of 2016. Since then, he has held a number of appointments in the Air Corps. In 2018 he became a Qualified Flight Instructor and served in the Irish Air Corps' Flying Training School. In addition to instruction Colm has been involved in a number of State Ceremonial Flypasts, including the National Day of Commemoration, Easter Rising Commemoration and All Ireland Final Day Flypasts. In March of this year, he was appointed as

the Deputy Flight Safety Officer (DFSFO) in Air Corps Headquarters. As DFSFO Colm is responsible for assisting in safety promotion and management across all aspects of Air Corps Operations. This includes accident/incident investigation, the study of human factors and ongoing reviews of practices and procedures.

Lieutenant John Higgins received his Commission as an Officer just recently, 25th of March 2021. John was a member of the 96th Cadet Class who commenced their Military Training in September of 2019. During the course of his training in the Cadet School, Military College, Curragh Camp, John and his Cadet Class were part of the national response in the fight against Covid 19. The 96th Cadet Class were among the first involved in 'contact tracing' in 2020. His commission is the culmination of



Lt. John Higgins – Commissioned!

seventeen months of intensive military training. John will now commence his Pilots Wings Course in the Air Corps' Flying Training School. This training will involve theoretical training in a range of aviation subjects, followed by flying training with a view to achieving his military pilot's wings.

Br. Martin Kenneally, paid tribute to John and Colm: "Even as young students, they were natural leaders. Whether it was in S.H.A.R.E or PRESLINK or other activities, they brought discipline, organisational ability, and a huge work ethic to everything they did. They also had the people skills to bring their fellow students with them. I wish Colm and John every success in their chosen military careers, at the service of their country. They are fine young men, and they bring Presentation and Edmund Rice values with them into their careers. I know we will be hearing more from them in the future!"

***"...those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles.
They will run and nor grow weary; they will walk and
not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31).***



Plan to fly, fly the Plan!



Lt. John Higgins – Commissioning Ceremony



At work



Landed!



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MAY

2

EDMUND RICE
FAMILY AND
COMMUNITY

MAY

3

EDMUND RICE
WORK AND
MISSION

MAY

4

EDMUND RICE
LEADING WITH
FAITH IN
THE FUTURE

These reflections were originally published last year.
Due to many requests, we have updated them and are making them available again.

A Resource for Communities, Schools and Presentation Family Groups'

EDMUND RICE TRIDUUM
THREE DAYS OF PRAYER
AND REFLECTION IN
PREPARATION FOR
THE FEAST OF BLESSED
EDMUND RICE

5 MAY 2021

INTRODUCTION

Dear Friends,

We celebrate the feast of
Blessed Edmund Rice on 5th May.

I now invite members of the Presentation Family, Presentation School Communities, members of the L.E.A.F. Project Network and friends to join together for **three** days of prayer before the feast (called a Triduum).

You may find the readings and reflections which follow of some help.

We are all conscious of the need for prayer as our world faces the challenge of overcoming the Covid 19 pandemic.

Karl Barth, the greatest Protestant theologian of the twentieth century, wrote: 'To clasp the hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world!'

Never underestimate the power of a prayerful and listening presence. Never underestimate the power of a single act of human kindness. Stay safe and well!

Br. Martin Kenneally

Director
L.E.A.F. Project.





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MAY

2

EDMUND RICE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY



PRESENCE

As I begin this prayer, God is here. Around me, in my sensations, in my thoughts and deep within me. I pause for a moment and become aware of God's life-giving presence.

REFLECTION

We often think of Edmund Rice as a Religious Founder. We neglect his earlier life as a son, brother, husband and father.

To understand Edmund fully, we must appreciate the family and culture which shaped and nurtured him.

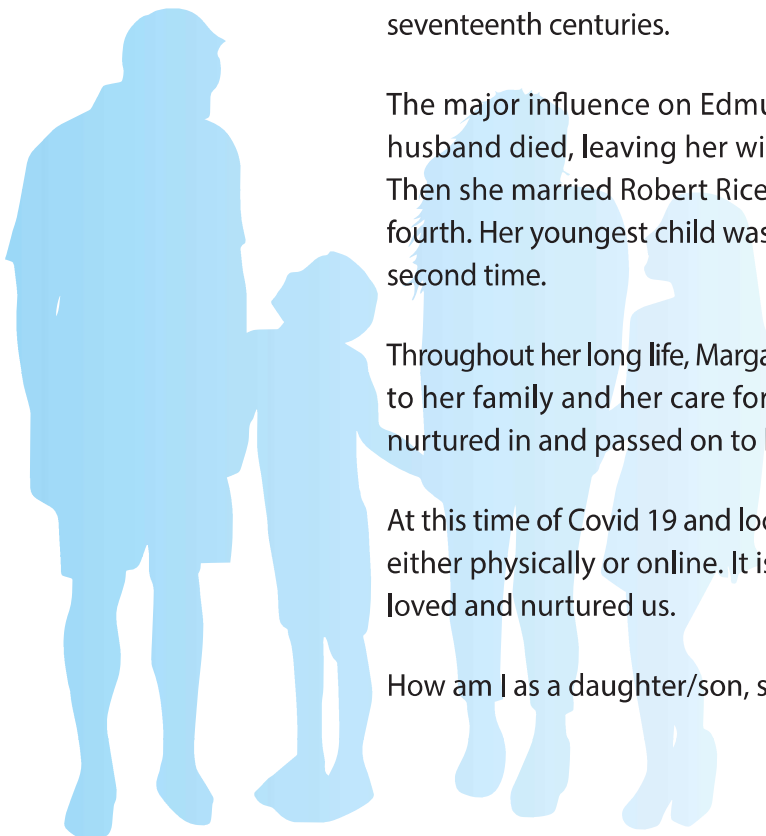
The Irish Catholics of the generation into which Edmund Rice was born were the descendants of martyrs. The earlier generations of Rices and Tierneys (his mother's family) had remained faithful through the persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The major influence on Edmund Rice was his mother, Margaret Rice. Her first husband died, leaving her with two young daughters, Joan and Jane Murphy. Then she married Robert Rice and they had seven children, Edmund being the fourth. Her youngest child was only ten years old when she was widowed for the second time.

Throughout her long life, Margaret Rice was noted for her trust in God, her devotion to her family and her care for the poor and those in need. These qualities she nurtured in and passed on to her son, Edmund.

At this time of Covid 19 and lockdown, families are spending more time together either physically or online. It is a time to give thanks to God for those who have loved and nurtured us.

How am I as a daughter/son, sister/brother, husband/wife?





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EDMUND RICE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

SCRIPTURE

Matt 3: 16 -17

And Jesus was baptised. All at once, as he came up out of the water, suddenly the heavens were opened, and he saw God's spirit coming down like a dove and landing on him.

Then there came a voice from the heavens.

'This is my son, my beloved one', said the voice, 'I am delighted with him!'

Hear God saying these words to you:

'You are my daughter/my son, the beloved one. I am delighted with you.'

OUR FATHER / HAIL MARY / GLORY BE TO THE FATHER

CONCLUSION

Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer

During the Time of Covid 19

Here is an adaptation of our traditional 'Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer' for the time of Covid 19.

*O God, we thank you for the life of Blessed Edmund Rice.
He opened his heart to Christ present and appealing to
him in the poor.*

*He lived through times of revolution, disease, and famine.
May we follow his example of faith and generosity during
this time of the Covid 19 pandemic.*

*Grant us the courage and compassion of Blessed Edmund,
as we seek to support one another, protect the vulnerable
and overcome this virus.*

*Bring those who have died into the fulness of your love in
eternal life. Comfort the bereaved. Grant health to those
who are sick.*

*Bless health care personnel and all essential workers who
bring healing and hope to people at this time.*

We make this prayer through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.





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MAY

3

EDMUND RICE WORK AND MISSION



PRESENCE

As I begin this prayer, God is here. Around me, in my sensations, in my thoughts and deep within me. I pause for a moment and become aware of God's life-giving presence.

REFLECTION

What was it like for the young Edmund Rice to leave his native Callan and travel to Waterford, where he would be apprenticed to his wealthy merchant uncle, Michael Rice? Here he would learn the skills of trade and business. Like most young adults he would have to make his way in the world.

A biographer says the following:

'From the memories which survive of his early years in Waterford, Edmund Rice certainly emerges as a young man who knew how to enjoy life. We learn of his fondness for stylish clothes; his skill as a horseman; his love of boating... his interest in excursions and other outdoor activities, as well as his enjoyment of dancing and the pleasure he took in singing.'

(A.L. O'Toole CFC, Edmund Ignatius Rice – A Spiritual Profile, Vol 1, 29, The Burleigh Press, Bristol, 1984).

By 1787, he was a successful businessman, with his own residence in Ballybricken, outside the walls of the old city of Waterford. He fell in love and married Mary Elliott.

They both looked forward to a bright future ahead.

However, tragedy struck in 1789, when Mary died in childbirth. Edmund was left a young widower with a baby daughter.

This devastating experience for any young man would eventually lead to a spiritual turning point in Edmund's life.





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EDMUND RICE WORK AND MISSION

Reflect on the moments of joy and sorrow in your own life story...on the loves and the losses and the new beginnings. What have you learned in the difficult times?

How can we connect with and support those who are suffering at this time of Covid 19?

SCRIPTURE

John 11: 32 -36 ff – Jesus meets Mary, the sister of Lazarus

*'Master!', she said. 'If only you had been here, my brother wouldn't have died!'
When Jesus saw her crying, and the Judaeans who had come with her crying,
he was deeply stirred in his spirit and very troubled.*

'Where have you laid him?' he asked.

'Master', they said, 'come and see!'

Jesus burst into tears.

'Look', said the Judaeans, 'see how much he loved him!'

OUR FATHER / HAIL MARY / GLORY BE TO THE FATHER

CONCLUSION

Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer During the time of Covid 19.





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MAY

4

EDMUND RICE LEADING WITH FAITH IN THE FUTURE



PRESENCE

As I begin this prayer, God is here. Around me, in my sensations, in my thoughts and deep within me. I pause for a moment and become aware of God's life-giving presence.

REFLECTION

Edmund Rice on the sunny days and during the stormy times had a profound faith in God's providence.

Some of the key sayings that have come down to us from him attest to this:

'Providence is our inheritance.'

'Be intent on prayer and whatever may happen will turn to our good.'

'Have courage, the seed will grow in the children's hearts later on'

'If we were only to know the merit and value of going from one street to another, to serve a neighbour for the love of God, we should prize it more than gold or silver.'

He brought into his first school in New Street, Waterford, the pragmatic approach of the businessman. The relationship between staff and pupils was a mentoring one – like that between the master craftsman and the apprentice. His approach to Christianity was also eminently practical. He would have agreed with the maxim of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism:

Do all the good you can, by all means you can, in all the ways you can, in all places you can, at all times you can, to all people you can, as long as ever you can.

His spirituality was thoroughly Catholic – attending Mass, praying before the Blessed Sacrament, reading the Scriptures and the traditional Irish devotions to Mary and to praying the Rosary.

In these elements of prayers and gospel service, he found the strength to live with faith and confidence in difficult times.

May these elements also inspire us as Presentation Family and Presentation School Communities today.



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EDMUND RICE LEADING WITH FAITH IN THE FUTURE

SCRIPTURE

MARK 4: 37 – 41. Jesus calms a storm

A big windstorm blew up. The waves beat on the boat and It quickly began to fill. Jesus, however, was asleep on a cushion in the stern.

They woke him up.

'Teacher!' they said to him, 'We're going down! Don't you care?'

He got up, scolded the wind, and said to the sea, 'Silence! Shut up!'

The wind did and there was a flat calm.

Then he said to them, 'Why are you scared? Don't you believe yet?'

Great fear stole over them. 'Who is this?' they said to each other.

Even the wind and the sea do what he says!'

Reflect on the storms in your own life.

Who has been there for you at these times?

How do faith and community help?

What lessons does Edmund Rice teach us on faith which can help us through these times?

OUR FATHER / HAIL MARY / GLORY BE TO THE FATHER



CONCLUSION

Blessed Edmund Rice Prayer During the Time of Covid 19.



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**FEAST OF
BLESSED
EDMUND RICE**

Deo gratias!

Moladh go deo le Dia!

Give thanks to God!



*"Tonight before falling asleep
think about when we will return to the street.
When we hug again,
when all the shopping together will seem like a party.
Let's think about when the coffees will return to the bar, the small talk,
the photos close to each other.
We think about when it will be all a memory but normalcy will seem an
unexpected and beautiful gift.
We will love everything that has so far seemed futile to us.
Every second will be precious.
Swims at the sea, the sun until late, sunsets, toasts, laughter.
We will go back to laughing together.
Strength and courage.
See you soon!"*

[#Papafrancesco](#) [#restateacasa](#) [#pope](#) [#popefrancis](#)

Happy Feast of Blessed Edmund Rice!



VOX

Vocational Voice

□ Pope's
Message

□ Centenarian
Sister

□ Samuel
Groups

□ Music
Awards

□ Restless
Heart

□ The call
to more

□ Simon's
Story



Welcome to Vox, our Newsletter for Young People!

Calling Young Adult Seekers

The pandemic has changed all our lives. We are living through very challenging times. Many people have suffered so much. It is a time for all of us to be there for each other and to reach out to those most in need, in whatever way we can.

Facing the future, many young people are now asking deeper questions about life and its meaning.

A young woman asked me recently why did so many Religious men and women go on the missions. Did those missionaries make a difference to people's lives? She was studying to be a doctor. Is there such a thing as a call within a call?

In our post-Covid world, I am inviting such seekers to look afresh at the Religious Life of Sisters, Brothers and Priests. It has so much to offer our world today in terms of combatting the viruses of poverty, injustice, loneliness and lack of meaning. And for those called to it, Religious Life can offer a wonderful life of happiness and fulfilment!

Read on to discover the stories of four women and men who are responding to God's call as Religious today. They are from different cultures, ages and backgrounds. They are engaged in different work and ministries. Yet they are united in their passion to serve people and to make a difference in life.

Could this be your call? We, in Vocations Ireland, are here to help you explore and find out more. Why not give us a call today?

Margaret Cartwright

Director Vocations Ireland
Email info@vocationsireland.com
Mobile 086 782 0149

Ⓥ Vox is a newsletter for young adults, published by Vocations Ireland

Pope Francis speaks to Young People in Message for World Day of Prayer for Vocations

25 April 2021

This is the Year of St. Joseph. In his message for Vocation Sunday, Pope Francis encourages young people to have great dreams and not to be afraid!

Joseph, the Dreamer

Everyone dreams of finding fulfilment in life. We rightly nurture great hopes, lofty aspirations that ephemeral goals – like success, money and entertainment – cannot satisfy. If we were to ask people to express in one word their life's dream, it would not be difficult to imagine the answer: "to be loved". It is love that gives meaning to life, because it reveals life's mystery. Indeed, we only have life if we give it; we truly possess it only if we generously give it away. Saint Joseph has much to tell us in this regard, because, through the dreams that God inspired in him, he made of his life a gift.

Do not be afraid!

The first words that Saint Joseph heard in a dream were an invitation not to be afraid, because God remains ever faithful to his promises: "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid" (Mt 1:20). Do not be afraid: these words the Lord also addresses to you, dear sister, and to you, dear brother, whenever you feel that, even amid uncertainty and hesitation, you can no longer delay your desire to give your life to him. He repeats these words when, perhaps amid trials and misunderstandings, you seek to follow his will every day, wherever you find yourself. They are words you will hear anew, at every step of your vocation, as you return to your first love. They are a refrain accompanying all those who – like Saint Joseph – say yes to God with their lives, through their fidelity each day.

**Blessed are those who dream dreams and are happy
to pay the price to make them come true!**



“Vocation to Religious Life is a gift”

100

1921 - 2021

Great Joy as Sr. John Celebrates 100!



In the Bon Secours Convent Cork, we had a very special celebration on March 4th as Sr John Chrysostom Duggan celebrated her 100th Birthday! Being in remarkably good health, up and about each day, independent and active in all Community activities, she is the first person to celebrate this momentous birthday in our Convent in living memory.

Celebration

Celebrations began on the evening of March 3rd – decorations were hung, special birthday flower arrangements and numerous birthday cards received from far and near were set out. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, we could not receive visitors on the day. Many visitors called to the Convent door leaving greetings and gifts for Sr John.

Connecting on Zoom!

A highlight of the day for Sr John was her zoom call with her two siblings, Sr Isobel, a Dominican Sister living in Galway and Sr Agnes, a Sister of Nevers, living in the UK. The joy and happiness expressed by all three Duggan sisters was great to see and we hope that they can meet in person sometime soon once restrictions are relaxed. After a delicious lunch, Sr John joined a zoom call with Sisters from across Communities in Ireland and Great Britain. Sr Eileen, unable to be physically present on the day, led the good wishes as Sisters shared their memories of Sr John.

Gratitude

Sisters expressed their gratitude and thanks for her wonderful ministry and commitment as a Sister of Bon Secours. Many had been mentored by Sr John in their formation and nurse training. Special guest, Sr Rosie, Congregation Leader, joined the call to greet and congratulate Sr John on her special day.

From Clare to Cork

Sr John was born in the middle of a family of 7 siblings. She thought of entering religious life during her time being educated by the Sisters of Mercy in Clare. She prayed a lot about it and then spoke to her confessor who was a Franciscan priest in Ennis. After some time he referred her to the Sisters of Bon Secours in Cork as she told him she was interested in entering a nursing Congregation. Her wish was to help sick people and the terminally ill.

Sr John enjoyed her day, expressing her gratitude to God, her family and the Bon Secours Sisters, for all the blessings she has received throughout her life, bringing her to this wonderful day. Her advice to anyone interested in religious life today is to remember that a vocation to religious life is a gift. It needs to be nourished with a life of prayer and good works. It needs a person to have qualities such as commitment, availability, stamina, good health. One has to be willing to live simply and enjoy the wonderful gift of life.

The call to more...

by Sr. Orla Treacy

A journey taken

St Ignatius, the founder of the Jesuits has a phrase from his Spiritual Exercises, its known as “the Magis”, literally meaning More. I am not exactly sure what St Ignatius meant by it but it has helped me in my life, at least it has helped me to put a word on the journey that I have taken and the direction I want to continue travelling.

I went to Secondary School with the Loreto Sisters, and was impressed by their spirit, humour, dedication and depth. I saw something more in them and I wanted it. I didn’t know exactly what the more was but I knew I was missing something. I had the desire to follow them, to join their way of life but then again it was a crazy idea, at least that’s what everyone told me. To be a Sister, Nun, Brother, Priest is definitely not a usual life choice but this seemed to be my call to More.

A desire for God

After finishing school, the desire to discover the More increased. I realised this More was actually a desire for God, for prayer and for contemplation. I still didn’t know what to do, I decided to study

Sr. Orla Treacy is an Irish Loreto sister who runs a boarding school in war torn South Sudan. She works for the education and empowerment of young women. Orla was educated in Presentation Convent Tralee, Co. Kerry, then Loreto Convent in Bray completing her Leaving Cert in 1991. She went to Mater Dei Institute of Education, Dublin, and became a teacher. She taught in Presentation Brothers College Cork, Loreto Letterkenny, St Muredach's Ballina and Loreto Crumlin. At the age of 24 Orla decided to join the Loreto Sisters. She was professed in 2005. In 2017 she was awarded The Hugh O’Flaherty International Humanitarian Award by the Mayor of Killarney for her pioneering work in South Sudan. In 2019, Orla was awarded an International Women of Courage Award. Her call to Religious Life has led to a very radical mission and life of service.



theology, learn all I could about God and hopefully that would satisfy my thirst. It didn't! I finished college, travelled, worked, socialised, enjoyed life, but I was still longing for More, for God.

A new way of life

After years of exploration and experimentation I finally decided to test Religious Life. I had no idea if I had a vocation, or what that even meant but I just knew I wasn't settled. I had tried so many other things and nothing satisfied me. Now I was going to try Religious Life. And that is when I came slowly to recognise the desire for More in my life.

Happiness

I have been very happy in this path, I know it's not the usual way, but I feel so content, rested and connected, I can definitely recommend it. My search for More, for more of God, for more of life, continues in my Religious Life. I now work in South Sudan and have experienced new awareness of God and of my need for God. While my outward day is busy and active my inward desire for God continues to grow.

How about you?

St Augustine talks of the restless heart, for me I like to think of it as a growing heart constantly seeking More from life, from God, from prayer....

If you think you are interested in exploring what is the More is in your own life, why not try Religious Life. Yes, you will be considered half- crazy but it's a wonderful journey and I definitely recommend it!

www.loreto.ie

Sr.Marie Carr, Loreto Vocations Director.

Email: mariecarr.ibvm@gmail.com

A journey taken
The call to more...
How about you?
A new way of life
Happiness
A desire for God

Italian born Giacomo Gelardi completed a PhD in organic chemistry and was working in York, England, when he came in contact with the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

ONE MAN'S JOURNEY



A restless heart looking for God

Br Giacomo Gelardi writes about the path that led him to become an MSC missionary.



"My vocation began in my heart - with a hole in my heart."

"I grew up blessed in a blessed family. When I was 16, my parents decided to split up. It was the most painful moment in my life. That hole in my heart grew deeper, and my thirst for love became bigger. I started looking for things and people to fill it. However, no matter how hard I looked, nobody and not a thing in the world was able to fill the void.

One day, when I was 20, sitting on the steps outside San Francesco's Church in Urbino, Italy, with the person I loved most in life, I saw a group of young friars walking down the street. They looked so full of joy that I said, 'I think it would be cool to be a friar'. She looked at me bewildered, asking, 'Are you serious?'

Yes, I was serious. Now, I know it was God trying to tell me something, but I, very proudly, ignored God, and myself too. I kept going my way - religious life was too scary. Pleasure, money, and success were all a lot more appealing. Why on earth would I leave them?

I became a chemist with a satisfying job in research in Verona, Italy, where I lived with my girlfriend. I remember sitting at Mass one day, hearing Christ saying, 'if you feed the hungry, if you welcome

the stranger, if you clothe the naked, if you visit the sick and those in prison, you will do it to me' (cf. Mt 25:31-41). 'Well', I thought, 'I am not doing this.' I felt I had to do something, but I was not ready to let go of my life yet.

A few years later, I lost my dream job and moved to York, England. I did a PhD in organic chemistry, but I knew this was not my path anymore. I knew it was not filling my heart. One day, sitting at Mass, I heard Christ inviting me to action again. The word 'healing' resonated within me. If I followed God's way and served him, I might be healed as well... I could not ignore the Lord anymore. At this time, I had no attachments and no job, so I really was free to choose.

Could I really serve the poor and needy?

I found a job as a support worker for disabled people. It was tough, but I loved it. With time, prayer and reflection I realised that I truly was serving Christ himself. It was then that I started feeling my heart gradually filling up with love, day after day.

The most difficult bit of the discerning process was making the first step. After some searching, I found the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Their joyful way of living the religious life, and their message that God is Love, appealed to me. It seemed the best way to answer that voice - to love God by bringing his love to all, especially the poor and marginalised, and to let him heal me. So, I asked to be one of them and now here I am.

Looking back, starting from a wounded heart, I could only go to the Sacred Heart. Now I know the Sacred Heart is the only place I needed to go to heal my heart and to quench the thirst for love."

www.mscomissions.ie

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Email: vocations@mscomissions.ie

What are YOU looking for?

WONDERING
WHAT IS CALLING
GOD YOU
TO DO WITH
YOUR LIFE?

Samuel is a group for young adults (18-35) open to listen to the Word of God and putting it into action in their lives.

Speak Lord, your servant is listening
(1 Samuel 3:10)

A safe space to explore life options with fellow seekers.
Read on to find out more about Samuel Groups'...



Young people of faith today live in a very secular world. We all need friends and we all need support. The main aim of a 'Samuel Group' is to help the participants listen to God's word and let God's call shape decisions about life choices. Those who take part in a group aim to leave with a clearer view of God's call for their life. They will also grow in their understanding of what it is to make decisions as a Christian.

They will make new friends and have great fun along the way!

The name 'Samuel' comes from the story of the call of Samuel in the Bible. Samuel says to God: "Speak, Lord – your servant is listening".

A famous Italian Bishop, Cardinal Martini of Milan began Samuel Groups in Italy in 1989. Each year for the following decade he brought together about 200 young people in his diocese for monthly meetings on Sunday afternoons. In recent years, several Samuel groups have begun in the UK and Ireland.

'Samuel Groups' are aimed at single young adults 18-35 who want to make concrete decisions about their life. These decisions could be around relationships, career, college, religious life, priesthood, marriage or maybe about spending time as a volunteer or a missionary.

The group meets once a month for 6 – 9 months. Each participant in the group also has an individual monthly meeting with a spiritual companion. This person helps them in their spiritual journey and discusses any questions they may have.

Each Samuel Group meeting starts with Lectio Divina. This is a form of prayer based on scripture and reflection on a passage from the Bible. The group then listens to a talk on an aspect of faith, for example – discernment, spiritual accompaniment, different types of prayer or different life paths and vocations.

Samuel Groups provide an encouraging space of friendship and support for those searching for something deeper in life. If you think this is something that would help you in making life choices, you can find out more on the Vocations Ireland website

<https://vocationsireland.com/programmes/#samuelgroups>



Simon Fernandes made first profession of vows as a Presentation Brother in 2019. He is now a student at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. Simon was born and grew up in Pakistan, a country where Christians are a tiny minority. Here Simon shares his vocation story. Simon is seen here at his First Profession Day at Mount St. Joseph, Cork, with his mother Zehra, brother, Sean and cousin, Fiona.

Simon's Story: A Journey in Faith, an Adventure in Hope

The Faith of My Grandmother

I feel like I have always had a desire to be of service to my fellow human beings and to God. Therefore, I would like to claim that my vocation story began since I was a young boy at the age of 5. I have memories of my Grandma taking me for evening Mass. She would go to Church hours before Mass began. She wanted to pray the Rosary with the other women, while I played with the children. I would come into the Church and sit down on the kneelers during the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, before the Mass. I recall being reverent, even as a young child. At home, we said the Rosary almost daily and some night prayers. To this day, I still remember those prayers by heart.

Inspiring Lives

As I grew older and started hanging out with my friends and extended family I always clung to the Rosary as my basic prayer and said it almost daily. As I grew into my teens, I was part of the Altar Servers and Lectors. I always wanted to help and serve, in any way I could. I was much influenced by the lives of the Brothers and Sisters that I daily met at Mass but never understood this as a calling to join the Religious Life. It was their kindness and the generosity of their lives, along with their good works which inspired me.

Pre-Medical Studies

As I still was unsure what direction to take in life, I pursued my education in the field of pre-medical studies. Then I began to think about Religious Life. However, it took me two years to discern if that was really what I wanted to do with my life. So, during that time I worked as a trainee Dialysis Technician and lived the normal young adult life.

Even though I saw the medical profession as a great way of service, I felt a strong urge to commit myself to something deeper and more spiritual. Then I was introduced to the Presentation Brothers. I sensed, almost from the beginning, that this is the missionary kind of journey I would like to travel.

God at work in my Life

During my initial formation I have really experienced and understood God's love for me in a unique way. This has helped me to respond to God's call and to give my life in the service of my sisters and brothers. I feel that God, has always been at work in my life leading me from one experience to another. I have a special devotion to Mary, and this is a strong feature of the spirituality of the Presentation Brothers. My journey in the Presentation Way of Life has truly been a journey in faith and an adventure in hope. I still have a long way to go in my formation and much to learn. However, I believe God is with me every step of the way.

Consider the Challenge of Religious Life

The happiness of the Brothers I have met has impressed me, their prayer and community life, along with the Presentation charism for forming Christ in the young. I would encourage any young man or woman, who is searching for a deeper meaning and challenge to consider Religious Life! Our suffering world needs the witness of true brothers and sisters.

Calling Young Musicians

Do you have a love for music?
Does music help you to pray?

Do you enjoy sharing your music with others?
If so, take a look at what Vocations Ireland are offering.

Visit the music website

www.vocation-music-award.com

Vocation Music Award



SONG WRITING COMPETITION

Calling all young adults
aged 18-35 to participate
in a songwriting/
composition competition
on the theme of vocation.

KEY DATES:

31st July 2021 Final date for submission of songs

22nd August 2021 Professional judging

11th September 2021 winners announced in a Live Stream



VOCATION
MUSIC AWARD

For further information
Web: www.vocation-music-award.com
Facebook: <https://bit.ly/2Ywe60S>

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SPREADING THE WORD - PRAYER - FINANCIAL AID

Are you up to the Challenge?

Be in with a
chance
to win one
of the
exciting prizes
on offer.

€2,000

€1,000 and

€500

in cash!

*Recording
opportunities!*

*Musical
equipment!*

*Promoting
your own
music!*



Who are Vocations Ireland?

We are an umbrella organisation for all the religious congregations in Ireland.

Our aim is to

- Build a culture of vocation that contributes to a Global vocation to Religious Life
- Promote the calls to specific vocations, including sisters, brothers, missionaries, contemplatives and priests.
- We offer information on other vocations and can direct you to where you can find more information on Diocesan Priesthood, marriage, lay ministry.

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Vox is collated and edited for Vocations Ireland by
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leadership education
and formation project

OUR MISSION

To educate, form and mentor leaders, especially young people, who will serve out of a faith-based and Christian vision.

- **Facilitate leadership** education and mentoring for individuals and groups within our Presentation Family and beyond.
- **Provide faith** formation opportunities, with a particular thrust towards developing lay leaders in Church and society.
- **Support and co-ordinate** the leadership education of young Presentation Brothers, especially in West Africa.



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The L.E.A.F. Project is under the trusteeship of Presentation Brothers Generalate CLG.

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The L.E.A.F. PROJECT would like to thank
Presentation Brothers Generalate CLG and
Presentation Brothers Ireland CLG
for generous support

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share it with friends, colleagues and others who may be
interested in the work of the L.E.A.F. Project.

** Comments, feedback and contributions to
future newsletters are welcome.*



'Leading with Faith in the Future'