

Sharing the Good News

NEWSLETTER OF THE IRISH CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

'It is incumbent on all of us to support engaged and married couples' – Bishop Michael Router

On Saturday 12 February, Bishop Michael Router, vice-president of Accord, prayed with and blessed four engaged couples at the Shrine of Saint Valentine in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church on Whitefriar Street, Dublin,

Bishop Michael said, "The Accord organisation, over the past sixty years, has helped engaged couples preparing for marriage to deepen their understanding of the sacrament and give them some very practical help and advice to navigate the unique and shared journey that is married life."



Bishop Router emphasised the difficulties that many young couples face today. He said, "Unfortunately, life is not always easy for young couples today" and that "In the interest of the common good, it is incumbent on all of us to support engaged and married couples by trying to create a society where wealth and possessions are not considered to be the most important of goals, but rather where the quality of relationships within marriage and family life are seen as the true indicators of success."

See www.accord.ie for information on their marriage preparation courses.



Photos: John McElroy and Katie Crosby

From left to right are engaged couples: Colm Humphries and Laura Fitzpatrick; Josh Ward and Heather Andrews; Daniel Queeney and Aisling McEntee; and, Brendan Mullen and Sinead Lyons.

Bishop Michael Duignan of Clonfert appointed by Pope Francis to serve also as Bishop of Galway

On 11 February Pope Francis appointed Bishop Michael Duignan, Bishop of Clonfert, to minister simultaneously in his own diocese and as Bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Apostolic Administrator of Kilfenora. The two Dioceses concerned (Galway and Clonfert), united *in persona episcopi*, pastorally administered by the one Bishop, will retain their respective rights, obligations and juridical autonomy. Speaking after Mass in the Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven & Saint Nicholas, Galway, Bishop Duignan said, "There is no doubt that today is a historic day for the Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora. It is also a historic day for the Diocese of Clonfert and indeed for the Catholic Church in Ireland. Under the guidance of Saint Peter himself in the person of Pope Francis – we have been nudged together to do something genuinely new. To paraphrase the words of that great poet from the Aran Islands, Máirtín Ó Díreáin, we are being called to bring about a new 'An tEarrach Thiar' – a 'Western Spring'."



See www.catholicbishops.ie to read Bishop Duignan's address in full.

Archbishop Eamon Martin lays foundation stone for Redemptoris Mater Seminary extension in Dundalk

On Saturday 12 February, Archbishop Eamon Martin presided over the ceremony of laying the foundation stone for the extension works of the Redemptoris Mater Seminary in De La Salle Terrace, Dundalk, Co Louth in the Archdiocese of Armagh. The seminary was established in 2012 for the purpose of forming priests who are specifically trained for the challenges of the New

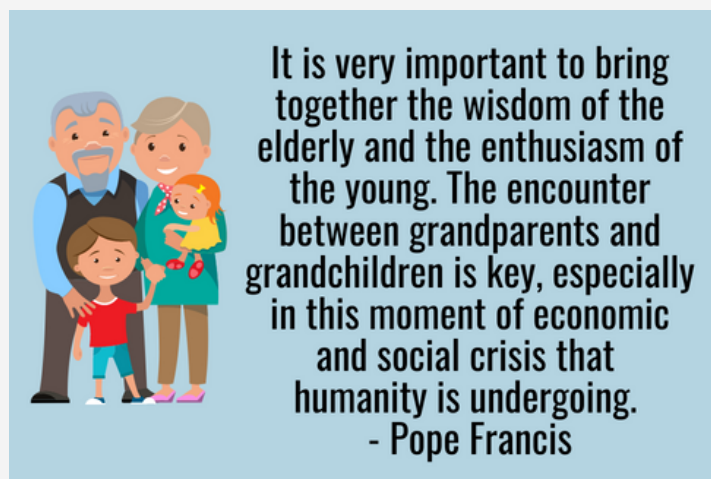
Evangelization. Speaking at the ceremony. Archbishop Eamon said, "By laying this foundation stone today, we are placing the continuation of this work in God's hands. We pray that He may bless all those working on this project and that this seminary may bear much fruit for the formation of future priests and for the spreading of the Gospel." The new 1,400 square metre extension is expected to be completed by the end of 2023. For more see www.catholicbishops.ie.



Photo: John McElroy

Bishop Nulty welcomes theme for World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly 2022

Bishop Denis Nulty, chair of the Bishops' Council for Marriage and the Family, has welcomed the announcement of the theme chosen by Pope Francis for the second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly on Sunday 24 July. The theme, which is taken from Psalms 92:15, is 'In old age they will still bear fruit'. Bishop Denis said, "Throughout his papacy Pope Francis



has reminded us to value the many gifts of grandparents and the elderly. Not only are our young people called to be present in the lives of older people, but so too grandparents and elders have a mission to encourage young people on their faith journey. The Pope himself had a very close relationship to his own Grandmother Rosa and so he understands that the encounter between grandparents and grandchildren is key, especially, as he reminds us, at this moment of economic and social change as we move out of the last two years of the pandemic."

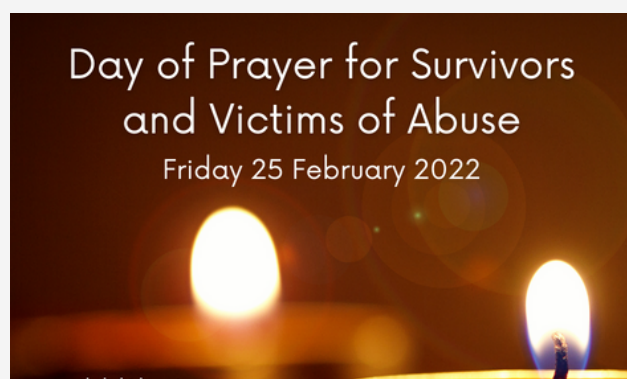
Saint Patrick's College Maynooth offers new eight-week 'Lectio Divina' online course



Saint Patrick's Pontifical University, Maynooth, is offering an introduction to *Lectio Divina* via an online course over the next eight-weeks. This short course will provide a pathway through *lectio divina* while participants journey with the Sunday gospels of Lent. Under the guidance of Rev Professor Séamus O'Connell, the course aims to provide resources and support for the prayerful reading of the Scriptures in a way that will nourish the faith of the individual, and inspire the lives of our parish and diocesan communities. For more information visit aspal.ie

Day of Prayer for Survivors and Victims of Abuse 2022

The Day of Prayer for Survivors and Victims of Abuse will take place in parishes across Ireland on Friday 25 February. Resources, which include prayers and reflections as well as a liturgy, are now available to download from www.catholicbishops.ie.





Members of the Steering Committee and Task Group of the Irish Synodal Pathway meet in person for the first time



Members of the Steering Committee and Task Group of the Irish Synodal Pathway (pictured above) met in person for the first time on 16 February, having met online up to now. It was a fruitful day of dialogue and listening.

You can follow updates on the Synodal Pathway on www.synod.ie as well as on Twitter @synodalpathway and on Facebook: Synodal Pathway - Ireland.

New website and Twitter profile for the Catholic Education Partnership - www.catholiceducation.ie

The Catholic Education Partnership (CEP) has launched its new website at www.catholiceducation.ie. The CEP was established in the Autumn of 2020 and replaced the Catholic Schools Partnership. The website has information about the CEP and the new structures. You will also find a range of helpful resources and guidance materials to support the work of Catholic education. You can also follow them on Twitter at the handle @CatholicEducIRL.



News in Pictures



Photo: Brenda Drumm

Bishop Denis Nulty, President of Accord Catholic Marriage Care CLG with Jennifer Griffin, Accord Dublin; Deirdre O'Rawe, Accord NI and Tony Shanahan, Accord CLG. They are pictured at the Shrine of Saint Valentine in Whitefriar Street Church Dublin following a Mass with renewal of marriage vows for couples on the Feast of Saint Valentine, 14 February 2022.



Photo: John McElroy

Archbishop Dermot Farrell, Archbishop of Dublin, Monsignor Dan O'Connor, Minister Norma Foley TD, Minister Josepha Madigan TD, with Sisters Edel, Maureen and Bernadette at the opening of Our Lady of Hope Special School in Crumlin on 16 February.

Bishop Noel Treanor, Bishop of Down and Connor, is pictured with Jackie Breen, John Downey, Kieran Hunt, Paddy Keown, Mark Lenaghan and Ricky Looney, following their ordination as Permanent Deacons in Saint Peter's Cathedral, Belfast on Saturday 19 February.



Photo: Diocese of Down and Connor

Father Eugene O' Neill welcomed engaged couple, Clare Mc Crudden and Michael Mc Menamy to Saint Patrick's Church, Belfast for a special Saint Valentine's Blessing, in preparation for their upcoming marriage on 9 April.



Photo: Liam McArdle