

1820

Family Links

2020

Glory to God Alone in Jesus Christ, through Mary and Saint Joseph



Fr. Paul and Sr. Eileen 6th from l, with young Asylum Seekers in Newbridge DP

EDITORIAL

Operation Transformation is a TV programme with which most of us will be familiar. Over a period of weeks, a group of obese participants, under strict supervision, submits to a punishing regimen of dieting and exercising to reduce their weight to acceptable levels. It is something that requires great determination and will power. They also need to shed any inhibitions they may have about displaying their bodies to the public.

Usually, all of them stay the course. Their sense of achievement, feelings of well-being and resolve not to go back to their bad habits are heartfelt and palpable indicating they have grown in other significant ways.

This begs the question: what's the difference between dieting and fasting? Most people, influenced by popular spiritual writers, would say the difference is in the motivation. We fast in order to create a space for deeper communion with God, whereas dieting is driven by more superficial, worldly motives. In fasting the focus is on God; in dieting it is on ourselves.

Often when people talk together of giving up sweets, desserts, cake... for Lent, you'll find one or other voicing what others may prefer not to say out loud, that it will help them shed some unwanted pounds. While agreeing that the motives for fasting and dieting are generally quite distinct, can we say this makes them mutually exclusive? Of course not. We don't have to be free of all other motivations in order to participate in fasting. Doesn't God's grace work in us when we come as we are?

So, may this Lent be a blessed *Operation Transformation* for us whatever type of fasting, prayer, outreach or sharing we choose to take on.

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REFLECTION FROM A MEMBER OF THE ICT



As Cliff Richard, a British pop singer, sang many years ago, "Congratulations and Celebrations ... we want the world to know we're Happy as can be!" -

We come together as the Holy Family of Bordeaux for our Bicentenary Celebration year of 2020 and give our Thanks to Pierre Bienvenu Noailles for his vision 200 years ago, having just once again celebrated the Miraculous Benediction on 3rd February 2020!

It's quite an achievement that indeed it was 200 years ago that our Founder Pierre Bienvenu Noailles had the vision to bring not just the Priests and Sisters together but to include All vocations with such a firm vision for us all to work together in the spirit of the Holy Family of Bordeaux.

Five vocations – Apostolic Sisters, Contemplative Sisters, Priest, Consecrated Secular and Lay Members and now we are incorporating Youth – such diversity and hope for the future of the Holy Family Association. We still need to be grateful and thankful, on a daily basis, that we are able to come together, as equals, to share the 'gifts' each of us have.

The 'Magi' brought – Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh for the Christ child and as we have just celebrated 'Candlemas' on 2nd February completing the Christmas season we hold onto the special gifts that we have each been given to be able to bring and share with one another – Our Love, Knowledge, Teachings, Friendship, a Listening ear, Prayer support, Physical support, Sharing our time at various



meetings / social events or Retreats – we All bring something and make a difference in our groups / families / communities and workplaces – **YOU** do make a

difference.

Our numbers may be slowly receding, at this moment in time, due to aging, ill-health, mobility issues but we still have the 'gifts' of prayer, perseverance, hope, firm belief and commitment to the Founder's dream, that prayers will be answered for our continued growth. We can take inspiration from recent events in Australia - as the fires were fading in one part of Australia, a news reporter showed pictures of new life, animal and mineral, evolving through the black bark of a tree stump in a burnt out clearing - proof of God's perseverance and undeniable love for this wonderful

world of ours?

We can also help, in our own way, with this evolution by doing our own little bit because we have all proven our commitment to our Founder and can pass on our 'Gifts' to the next generation.

As the man from Tesco says: "Every little helps!"

However big, or small, the Celebrations you are holding with your Community / Group or Regional Gatherings please do **ENJOY** and where possible, invite someone along to the Holy Family Association to share in this wonderful vision on behalf of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles – I'm sure he'll give a little smile and his Blessings to ALL!



**HAPPY BICENTENARY CELEBRATION
YEAR 2020**

Margaret Ramsey,
Intervocational Team member

SOME HISTORY

CROSSING BORDERS

INTO SCOTLAND

In 1869, the first national border was crossed with a foundation in Leith, Scotland.

A second Scottish foundation was made in Livingstone in 1976, a new town being built in the countryside between Glasgow and Edinburgh. The sisters were asked to serve the pastoral needs of the many young families moving there.

The sisters have left Scotland but a vibrant *Holy Family* presence remains through an active group of Lay Associates.

CROSSING THE IRISH SEA

Another threshold moment came in 1875 when the first Irish foundation was made in Newbridge, Co. Kildare. Four sisters, Mother Mary St. John Day (one of the foundresses of the Leeds community of Oblate Sisters), Sr. Mary Gertrude du Sacre Coeur Farrell, Sr. Mary St. Alban Horan, Sr. M. Joseph Egan, left the Convent of Rock Ferry for Ireland. They travelled by train and boat and were met by Fr. Robert Cooke, now in Ireland.

Their arrival was the result of an initiative of the Parish Priest, Fr. Martin Nowlan, who was looking for a community of nuns for his Parish. Fr. Cooke had suggested to him that he “would make no mistake if he invited the *Holy Family* Sisters to the town”. He acted as negotiator between the Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin and the Mother General of the *Holy Family*.

A furnished convent, known in the locality as St. Conleth’s Abbey, was provided for the sisters. They were to manage a Day School for the young girls of the middle and upper classes and devote themselves to works of zeal and charity on behalf of the poor in Newbridge. Their work prospered and, eventually, a



secondary school was begun. This is now under the patronage of the diocese but retains a strong *Holy Family* ethos. There is an active group of *Holy Family* Youth, directed by *Holy Family* Sr. Kate who is a member of the school chaplaincy.



Holy Family Convent and Secondary School today

MAGHERAFELT in Co. Derry

In 1889, Canon Patrick Donnelly, Parish Priest of Magherafelt, wished to have a community of Sisters to whom he could entrust the education of the Catholic children of the district. He invited the Sisters of the *Holy Family* of Bordeaux to undertake this work. Here, too, the *Holy Family* have relinquished control but their memory lives on in various ways, e.g. he school authorities give their support in fund raising for *Holy Family* missions.



First Convent in Magherafelt

A THIRD BORDER IS CROSSED INTO WALES

In 1879, a request came from the Bishop Brown of the then Shrewsbury Diocese for a foundation in Wrexham, again to provide education for the Catholic children of the parish. For more than 100 years the sisters worked there and established primary and secondary schools.



First Convent in Wrexham

Requests for foundations continued to come from many parts of England so that by the end of the 19th century – from 1853 to 1897 - there were 17 Holy Family communities in Britain and Ireland. (See table below) The number of sisters continued to increase, beyond the 300 mark.

FOUNDATIONS IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND IN THE 19 th CENTURY							
ENGLAND		SCOTLAND		IRELAND		WALES	
LEEDS	1853	LEITH	1870-2003	NEWBRIDGE	1875	WREXHAM	1879
SICKLINGHALL	1868-2012			MAGHERAFELT	1889		
ROCK FERRY	1869						
TOWERHILL	1870-1985						
MACCLESFIELD	1877-1895						
STOKPORT	1877-2008						
KILBURN	1877-1973						
LISCARD	1878-2005						
STALYBRIDGE	1883-2003						
HARROWGATE	1884-1896						
RAMSGATE	1895-1970						
NEW BRIGHTON	1895-1972						
WOODFORD	1897						

INVESTMENT IN FOSSIL FUELS IS BURNING MONEY

Local Government pension funds have a legal responsibility to invest in the best interests of fund members. It is a known fact that West Yorkshire Pension Fund is investing over £933 million of our money in fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas (including shale gas from fracking). Not only is this contributing to climate change, but these investments are now seen as increasingly risky. This public money could instead be invested in our local communities and in renewable energy.

‘It is not an investment if it’s destroying the planet’ says Dr. Vandana Shiva, founder of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology

On 29th January 2020, a peaceful demonstration, organised by Chayley Collis of *Friends of the Earth*, Huddersfield, highlighting the danger of investment in fossil fuels, was held outside Bradford City Hall. This took the form of a “brilliant photo stunt” of burning £20 notes to show their demand to restrain from investment in fossil fuels by West Yorkshire Pension Fund. As the Area Councillors were to be present in the City Hall for a meeting at 1 p.m., this was a golden opportunity to hand in petitions to them against investing in such ventures. Members of the press were also on hand.

A group of about twenty people joined the protest, amongst whom were three members of our local Global Justice group, Heather, Cathy and Sheila. As



Sheila Griffiths demonstrating in Bradford

we gathered in front of the Town Hall, a wad of £20 notes was symbolically set on fire, demonstrating the loss of public money. We then stood at the entrance to the City hall to await the arrival of the Councillors, to hand them our petitions.

Recently on *Thought for the Day*, the speaker reflected on the Chinese Doctor who mentioned the threat of a virus about to spread. His *lone voice* was silenced. His prediction came true and, while working for the patients affected by this deadly virus, he himself became a victim and died in February. Had his voice been heard, the outcome would probably have been different.

Will our “lone voices” make a difference? Let us see the outcome of this demonstration.

Sheila Griffiths
Bradford Community



A SABBATICAL IN THE DESERT



Carmel and Kathleen were very fortunate to spend 10 weeks at the Redemptorist Renewal Centre in the Sonoran Desert, near Tucson, Arizona, USA.

The welcome from the Redemptorists was second to none, and the whole area was conducive to contemplation.

We were 11 in our group - 7 women and 4 men. We were 4 from Ireland, 1 Vietnamese and 1 Philipino priest and the others from the US. We were 5 miles from Tucson with no public transport, so no temptation to shop! We occasionally got a lift into Walmart for essentials!

The Sonoran desert is very different from the Sahara or Arabian deserts. Instead of vast areas of sand, it is mountainous and populated with the Saguaro cactus, prickly pear, Palo Verde trees, Creosote shrubs and Cholla,



as well as rattlesnakes, bobcats, coyote, javelina (wild boar), ghecko, all kinds of creepy crawlies, and wonderful birds, especially the tiny hummingbirds.

The theme of our Sabbatical was Contemplation - "The Desert will lead you to your Heart where I will Speak" (Hosea 2.14). We

had input on 4 mornings each week from various invited speakers - women and men - on different aspects of contemplation such as:

- Desert Spirituality,
- Pathways to Contemplation,

- Life Transitions,
- Compassionate Listening,
- Contemplative Autobiography,
- Wisdom Jesus,
- Creation-centred Spirituality,
- Religion/Theology,

all through the lens of Science, Migrants and Refugees - Church Response.

Each Wednesday was a Desert Day, which we could use as we wished, and each Friday we had sessions on integration of Body, Mind, Spirit. We had ample opportunity to go for a trek in the mountains and desert, taking our hiking sticks for the rough terrain and also, if necessary, to scare off the rattlesnakes. Thankfully it wasn't the main season for them.



Apart from the input sessions we had visits to Kitt Peak Observatory, at the top of a high mountain, where we could watch the sunset, followed by input on the solar system and the opportunity to look through the massive telescopes at various planets - Saturn with its rings, Venus and Jupiter, some galaxies, and the full Moon. What a privilege!



We visited the Native American tribe - the Tohona O'odham, who are the guardians of the Sonoran desert, and learnt something of their history and beliefs, and how their territory has been reduced over the centuries. The latest imposition is Trump's Wall which has divided part of their territory.

We had an all-day visit to Mexico and crossed the border to see the reality of migrants queuing up to try to enter the US. We spent time with the mi-

grants in the queue, and then helped to serve food to over 200 men, women and children in the Jesuit Refugee Centre, which operates in a similar way to UK refugee centres. The migrants are mainly from Haiti, Honduras, El Salvador (among the poorest countries in the world) as well as Mexicans trying to escape violence and the drug cartels.



I spent time with a beautiful Mexican family (the father spoke English) and we had great fun trying to communicate - the children teaching me Spanish,

and I teaching them English phrases. Carmel helped one family at the meal by feeding their baby while they could have their food. It's heartbreaking to think what their future might be, since in the past, if they get to the US, children have been separated from the parents and fostered or put in detention centres. An 8 year old girl died of dehydration in a detention centre while we were in the US.

The WALL is a foreboding sight, and has increasing measures to prevent anyone trying to cross. One young man was shot as he was found trying to climb. As well



as lines of razor wire, a fine steel mesh has been added to the steel pillars to prevent anything being passed through. A Mass had been celebrated at the US side and some migrants put their hands through the steel pillars to receive Communion - hence the mesh!

We organised a weekend away to visit The Grand Canyon, staying in Flagstaff which is about 20 miles away. We were fortunate that one of our group knew the best viewpoints, and what a breathtaking experience - out of this world. On our way home we spent time in Sedona, famous for its red rocks, and visited a small church built into the rocks.

We also visited Biosphere 2 - a recreation of the Earth systems (Biosphere 1) but isolated from the outside world. Eight people had lived there for 2 years



as an experiment to be self-sufficient - growing their own food etc. They succeeded in being self-sufficient apart from the need for extra oxygen to be piped in. The Biosphere is now used to research climate change.



7. Biosphere

A visit to Arizona would not be complete without a visit to Old Tucson, where John Wayne, etc. were filmed in the famous 'westerns'. The set of the films is still there and we were treated to a shoot-out with the baddie falling from a roof! John Wayne lived in a house on a ranch not far from our centre, now owned by a Sri Lankan couple and their family. The parents come to daily Mass and invited us to lunch at the ranch, now used as a wedding venue, and of course we visited John Wayne's house!

Our Sabbatical was a real gift and we are grateful to the ULT and the Province for giving us this opportunity. We will treasure the memories for a long time to come.

With thanks and love, Kathleen and Carmel

CELEBRATING THE 3rd FEBRUARY



Monstrance used on
3 February 1820

"You have seen the Lord..."

*said the priest whom Fr. Noailles asked to give
Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament
to the Holy Family community at Mazarin Street,
Bordeaux, France, on 3 February 1822.*

In this year of our Bicentenary, we had a very prayerful celebration of the Miraculous Benediction.

In true *Holy Family* style, this beautiful celebration was followed by after-noon tea and a time of joyful sharing.



Groups of Lay Associates from Clane, Portlaoise, Moneenroe, Newbridge gathered with the Clane community. Three people from Straffan, who are not Lay Members, also joined us.



We spent time in silent Adoration interspersed with Hymns, and reflections from the life of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles. At the end of the adoration Fr. Jacob blessed each person with the Blessed Sacrament. It was a touching moment which brought tears of joy and communion.



GO FORWARD

NEWS FROM NEWBRIDGE



The news that Newbridge parish was to lose a much loved Parish Priest was announced on 27 January. Fr. Paul Dempsey has been in the parish since 2014.

His episcopal ordination will take place in the Cathedral of the Annunciation and Saint Nathy in Ballaghaderreen, Co Roscommon on Sunday 19 April, Divine Mercy Sunday.



Sr. Eileen Murphy and some Parishioners organised a Tea Party in Eyre Powell Direct Provision Centre giving the residents an opportunity of saying their 'Goodbyes' to Fr Paul before he takes up his appointment as Bishop of Achonry.

This was a very special event as it was the first time the Management team of the Direct Provision Centre, the residents, past and present and the Parish Outreach group came together for a celebration.



The above hashtag on the website of the **Irish Bishops Conference** is an invitation to people to offer suggestions for fasting, prayer and almsgiving – the three pillars of the Lenten season. Launching it, Bishop Eamonn Martin said “The objective of our Lenten digital initiative is to assist our spiritual preparation for the joy and hope of the Easter season.”

News & Views, the quarterly magazine of Newbridge Parish published some responses to the question: How will you be “Living Lent 2020”?

Francis, AMADEUS Youth Group

Every Lent, for as long as I can remember, I have been encouraged to give up or take up of significance to me. When I was younger, I would try to cheat the system by “giving up” something I never did in the first place. Now that my understanding of Easter is deeper, I try to challenge myself with slightly more honest and profound tasks and stick with them.

This year I hope to give up treats of all kinds and limit my social media usage in an effort to strengthen willpower and exercise discipline. I will also donate any money saved throughout Lent to the annual Trócaire collection in the hope of making a positive change in someone’s life.

Julie Kavanagh FDS, Carlow

When Lent comes round each year, I am usually grateful for the push it gives me to consciously think about my faith and how I actively live that faith in the everyday bits and pieces of my life.... This year for fasting, as well as the usual giving up of sweet things, I’m taking my inspiration from the Gospel of the Third Sunday of Lent - Jesus’ encounter with the woman at the well. As I personally dig deeper into the baptismal symbol of water and what it means for me to recognise Jesus as the source of eternal life, I am going to work hard on monitoring my use of water and conserving it as much as I can.

Séan Murphy, AMADEUS Youth Group

This Lent, I plan on replacing every negative thought with a positive thought. When I find myself worrying

about school exams and friendships, I will remind myself about all the positive aspects of these things. Everyday, I plan on seeking out all the things that I have to be grateful for and, hopefully, at the end of Lent I will find myself counting my blessings instead of counting my worries.

Sr Kate Cuskelly

For me, Lent is an opportunity to reflect on How I am living as a follower of Jesus. It’s a time to begin again.... I love the fact that Lent comes at a time of year when nature speaks of new growth, longer days and increased light and warmth the sun. Lent is a call for me to become light for our world and a challenge to spread warmth and hope around me.

Traditionally, Lent is associated with fasting and giving things up. I prefer to put the emphasis on the more positive values of “taking things on” and, to quote Pope Francis, “find new ways forward in our Christian living”.

The word “repent” is used often during Lent especially on Ash Wednesday. For me it means change. Change my heart, my attitudes, my behaviours, trying to let go of anything that is standing in the way of my being a faithful follower of Jesus. This call to repent is ongoing, a lifelong challenge. Once more, this Lent, I will begin again.

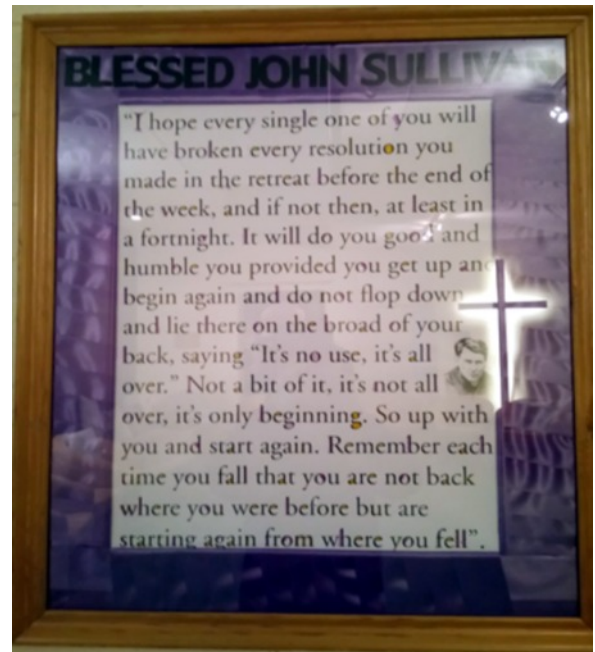


A Thought for Lent - from Fr John Sullivan S.J.

Recently, twenty-four people from the newly formed Centering Prayer Group in Clane had a retreat day in Clongowes College which is the home of 450 students during the academic year. As you may know, Clongowes College is a very prestigious Jesuit one. Blessed John Sullivan was based there for many years and was buried in the local cemetery. His remains were exhumed in 1966 and brought to Gardiner Street. There is tremendous devotion and stories about him locally.

Most of the retreat day took place in the Ignatian Chapel, and on the wall there is a plaque containing some very sound advice from Blessed John Sullivan SJ. Perhaps it may be helpful, especially as we journey through Lent.

Sr. Bernadette Deegan, Clane Community



UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2020						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Saint David Patron of Wales	2	3 World Wildlife Day World Hearing Day	4	5	6 (Women's) World Day of Prayer	7
8 International Women's Day	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Saint Patrick, Patron of Ireland	18	19 St. Joseph	20	21 World Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination World Poetry Day
22 World day for Water	23 Death of Mother Trinity Noailles	24	25 Reception of the first Lay Associates Foundation of the Secular Institute 1824	26	27	28
29	30	31				