

Sharing the Good News

Monthly newsletter for
dioceses and parishes
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Catholic Schools Week 2017
Learning with Pope Francis to Care for
Our Common Home

Bishops' submission to Citizens' Assembly on Eighth Amendment

Two Lives, One Love, is the title of the submission of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference to the Citizens' Assembly on the topic of the Eighth Amendment of the *Constitution of Ireland*. Some key points from the submission include:

- We believe that human life is sacred from conception until natural death and that Article 40.3.3 reflects the appropriate balance of rights.
- There is no such thing as a human life without value.
- The deletion or amendment of Article 40.3.3, would serve no purpose other than to withdraw the right to life from some categories of unborn children. To do so would radically change the principle, for all unborn children and indeed for all of us, that the right to life is a fundamental human right.
- Many thousands of Irish people are alive as a direct result of the enactment of the Eighth Amendment, who might otherwise never have been born.
- We believe that every unborn child, irrespective of his or her medical condition or the circumstances of his or her birth, has the right to be treated equally before the law.
- Where a seriously ill pregnant woman needs medical treatment which may, as a secondary effect, put the life of her baby at risk, such treatments are always ethically permissible provided every effort has been made to save the life of both the mother and her baby. Abortion, by contrast, is the direct and intentional destruction of an unborn baby and is gravely immoral in all circumstances. It is not a medical treatment.



Two Lives, One Love is available in parishes, on catholicbishops.ie, veritas.ie or by calling the Catholic Communications Office on +353 (1) 505 3017.

Bishops' Ad Limina visit to the Holy See takes place this month

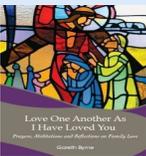
Members of the Bishops' Conference will travel to Rome from 15 to 25 January for their *Ad Limina* visit to the Holy See. The bishops' pilgrimage will include an audience with Pope Francis, meetings with senior members of the Roman Curia and visits to a number of holy sites. The bishops' pilgrimage is historically known as the *Ad limina Apostolorum* visit – or “to the threshold of the Apostles” – a reference to the pilgrimage to the tombs of Saints Peter and Paul that all bishops are required to make, and this normally takes place every five years. The last *Ad Limina* visit by the Irish bishops was in 2006.

New Parish Resource Pack for World Day of Migrants and Refugees

The Council for Immigrants of the Bishops' Conference has produced a helpful parish resource pack for use on the World Day for Migrants and Refugees on Sunday 15 January 2017 and throughout the year. The resource pack includes the text of Pope Francis' message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees on the theme 'Child Migrants, the Vulnerable and the Voiceless'. It can be downloaded from catholicbishops.ie.



News Snippets

- Catholic Schools Week 2017 will take place from 29 January - 4 February on the theme 'Catholic schools: Learning with Pope Francis to care for our common home'. Resources are available from www.catholicschools.ie.
- *Love One Another As I Have Loved You* is a book of prayers, meditations and reflections compiled by Father Gareth Byrne in response to the publication of *Amoris Laetitia*, Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation 'on Love in the Family'. It is published by Veritas and available now. See veritas.ie for details.

- From January Pope Francis will present only one prepared prayer intention per month, rather than the two presented before this year. He plans to add a second prayer intention each month related to current events or urgent needs, like disaster relief. The urgent prayer request will help mobilise prayer and action related to the urgent situation. His general prayer intention for January is Christian Unity.
- The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is observed from 18-25 January, the octave of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. Download this year's resources on the theme 'Crossing Barriers' from catholicbishops.ie.
- 2 February is the World Day for Consecrated Life.
- 11 February is World Day of the Sick 2017.

“May charity and nonviolence govern how we treat each other.” - Pope Francis

