

Sharing the Good News – Issue 58, January 2020

Fr Paul Dempsey appointed Bishop of Achonry Diocese

Pope Francis appointed Father Paul Dempsey, PP of Newbridge Parish in the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin, as Bishop of the Diocese of Achonry on 27 January.

Speaking in the Cathedral of the Annunciation and Saint Nathy, following the announcement, Father Dermot Meehan, Administrator of Achonry Diocese said, “Today, Father Paul Dempsey comes into our assembly as Christ’s messenger, having accepted his appointment by Pope Francis as pastor of the people and priests of Achonry. We warmly welcome his appointment and, on behalf of the priests, religious and people of the diocese, I thank him for accepting it. It is a reason for rejoicing for us in Achonry that a priest of Father Paul’s calibre and extensive experience in pastoral ministry in his native diocese of Kildare and Leighlin comes to us as our new bishop. We assure him of our prayers as he prepares for his new role and we ask God to bless him with joy, contentment and peace in his ministry among us.”

Speaking to the congregation of almost 800, gathered in the cathedral for the announcement, Father Dempsey said, “I’m sure you can understand how daunting it is to take on the role of bishop in a new diocese. I’m conscious of my own unworthiness and sinfulness as I take on this role. I ask you to be patient with me as I endeavour to get to know the priests, people, deacons and religious of the diocese in the coming weeks and months.”

The Episcopal Ordination of the new Bishop of Achonry will take place on 19 April 2020, Divine Mercy Sunday. See www.catholicbishops.ie for more.

Storytelling at the centre of World Communications Day 2020

Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh has welcomed the publication of Pope Francis’ message for World Communications Day which will be celebrated on the Feast of the Ascension on Sunday 24 May.

He said, “I warmly welcome Pope Francis’ message which highlights the value of memory and storytelling for faith and humanity.

“Pope Francis gets straight to the point with the theme of his message ‘So that you can tell your children and grandchildren (Ex 10:2) Life creates history’, as he reminds us that “from childhood we hunger for stories ... stories influence our lives ... [although] not all stories are good stories”. By choosing his theme from a passage in the Book of Exodus, Pope Francis underpins how particularly precious the place memory and storytelling holds in our lives and in our interpersonal communications. I strongly encourage everyone to read this year’s uplifting Communications Day message and to reflect on the power that ‘the story’ has had on our own journey, and on those around us.”

You can read the message in full on www.catholicbishops.ie.

NEWS SNIPPETS

Death of Seamus Mallon RIP

Archbishop Eamon Martin has paid tribute to Seamus Mallon RIP following his death on Friday 24 January. Mr Mallon, the former Northern Ireland deputy First Minister and former leader of the SDLP, passed away at his home in Co Armagh. He was 83.

Archbishop Eamon said, “With the death of Seamus Mallon the people of Armagh and Ireland have lost one of our most respected sons and bravest leaders. A person of global stature, Seamus was a county Armagh man through and through, and he gave his gifts unselfishly and tirelessly to serve the betterment of the whole community on this island, north and south.” See catholicbishops.ie.

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Sunday of the Word of God

Writing in a Pastoral Letter published to mark ‘Sunday of the Word of God’ on 26 January, Bishop Dermot Farrell of Ossory said “Scripture is at the centre of everything the Church does. The Scriptures nourish and shape our prayer and our worship. They help us understand our world. They shape our world view. They teach us how to live and relate to each other. They continually call and challenge us to permit the Word of God to take flesh in our lives.”

Sunday of the Word of God was marked in the Universal Church at the request of Pope Francis as a day devoted to the celebration, study, and spreading of the Word of God.

Read the pastoral in full on www.catholicbishops.ie.

Social justice issues must be addressed by Election 2020

Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ, chairman of the Bishops’ Council for Justice and Peace, has published a statement ahead of the General Election 2020 which will take place on 8 February. His statement focuses on issues facing our society at this time which all politicians seeking election should aim to address.

Read his statement in summary and in full on www.catholicbishops.ie.

Bishop Nulty leads delegation to Vatican conference on elderly

The Irish Bishops’ Conference is being represented at a three-day conference on the pastoral care of the elderly by Bishop Denis Nulty, Chair of the Bishops’ Council for Marriage and the Family and two lay members of that Council, Maire Printer and Gerry Mangan. ‘The Richness of Many Years of Life’ conference is taking place from 29 to 31 January in Rome. Organised by the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, the conference is focusing on the role of older people within the family and their particular vocation within the Church. Pope Francis will meet conference participants at a special Papal Audience on Friday 31 January.

Commenting on the conference Bishop Nulty said, “I see this conference as an endorsement of the key role the elderly play in our Church and in society today. Pope Francis loves the elderly and, from the beginning of his pontificate, on numerous occasions, he has emphasised their indispensable role in dialogue with young people in the transmission of the faith and in the youth’s rediscovery of their own roots.”

For more see www.laityfamilylife.va.



Bishop Donal McKeown of Derry is pictured after Mass on 25 January to celebrate Catholic Schools Week in the Diocese of Derry. The theme for CSW2020 is 'Living in Harmony with God's Creation'.



Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ of Raphoe and Bishop Noel Treanor of Down and Connor are pictured after Mass in the Holy Family Latin Parish in Gaza which took place on 12 January during the annual Holy Land Coordination Group visit.



Archbishop Eamon Martin visited Irish mission and outreach projects in Ecuador, Peru and Nicaragua this month. He is pictured here in Quito, where thanks to Irish missionaries, Saint Patrick is known along the equator, more than 5,500 miles away from Ireland.



Father Richard Gibbons, Rector of Knock Shrine is pictured with Archbishop Michael Neary of Tuam in Saint Peter's Basilica in front of the Processional Stature of Our Lady of Knock. Archbishop Neary led a large pilgrimage from Ireland to be part of the first ever celebration of Sunday of the Word of God in Rome on 26 January.