



Rumblings from the Bunker

POPE BASHING!

What a strange title? Indeed what a strange title for a column written by a Parish Priest in a Parish Newsletter. I agree it is a bit unusual as far as titles go and yet here in the Bunker I hope we can address topics that are of interest and relevance to us as pilgrims on the journey. That said, it is with some sadness that I believe there is a growing need to discuss our relationship with the Pope.

I am sure for many of you the term itself, Pope Bashing, may be new to you, and it probably needs a little explanation. Believe it or not I grew up with the term as did many of us who grew up north of the border. I often heard the term 'No Pope here!' 'Say no to Rome!' and 'pray for an end to Popery!' I am of course referring to a very divided sectarian society. Sadly there was much animosity, and at times worse, between us Catholics and our Protestant neighbors in the Belfast that I grew up in. It remains a source of sadness that we built a wall in Belfast to keep Catholics and Protestants apart. All these years later to think that we called it The Peace Wall. Of course it certainly did not bring peace. Do walls ever bring peace? One of my favorite lines in history was uttered by President Ronald Reagan in Berlin when he addressed the Soviet leader with the words 'Tear down this wall Mr. Gorbachev!'

In some ways though we should not be surprised that the Pope or at least the notion of the Pope was so divisive in a war torn Belfast. However in 2019 here in Ireland it is still somewhat remarkable to hear Catholics, and I mean, fairly committed Catholics, weigh in against the Pope. I still find it hard to understand people wanting to align themselves with Pope Benedict as opposed to Pope Francis. Not that I have any problem with people having their preferences. For example, I loved John Paul II and he was a huge influence on me. However my favorite Pope, as you all know was Old Roncalli, John XXIII, and yet with all that, there is only one Pope whom I had the privilege to meet. Namely the present one.

What intrigues me is the prevailing notion, and indeed it seems to be growing, of conspiracy within the realms of the Church. You'll get this in relation to our present Pope, Pope Francis. There's always someone who has the 'scoop on the Conclave'. Of course the truth is there's no such scoop. Having said that I can understand the attraction and at times fixation with what went on during the election of a Pope. What I smile at, is the idea that manipulation, or ambition or lobbying are new things. These things have always been there. 'I am for Peter, I am for Paul'. We should never be surprised at naked ambition nor indeed at the sinfulness of Man in general. Sometimes of course it's just that we don't like what the Pope said or indeed how he said it. In our annoyance then we seek to dilute what he said, or indeed to discredit the man himself.

I actually believe this is a dangerous area. I believe that loyalty to the Pope is important. Do we seriously think for a minute all the ambition, all the conniving or plotting in the world is going to outfox the Holy Spirit? Of course not.

I was recently privileged to be in the same room as the Holy Father. As he walked away from us, leaving the room, I had a profound sense that I been in the presence of one who knows Jesus. One who is steeped in Jesus. I do not have the slightest doubt that at the end of February 2013, Jorge Mario Bergoglio SJ was the choice of the Holy Spirit as Successor of Peter. I am absolutely convinced that Pope Francis is *the* Pope for our times. I respectfully challenge Catholics who do not believe this to take a good prayerful look at themselves.

MASS INTENTIONS

Maura Cummins	Joe Dunne	Liam Dunne
Bridget Higgins	James Higgins	Elizabeth Keating
Kevin Keating	Keating Family	Laura McDonnell
Martin Naughton	Naughton Family	Christy Nugent
Lil Nugent	Paddy Nugent	Sean Sinclair
Esther Whelan	Kitty Whelan	Patrick Whelan

Recent Funerals

Richard O'Neill John Farrell

NOVENA OF GRACE

Our Annual Novena of Grace is not far away, March 4th-12th. We are very excited about our speaker this year. Fr Eamonn Mulcahy - Moya Doyle's brother - is a Spiritan or Holy Ghost Father Missionary originally from Manchester. A priest since 1980, he has had extensive involvement with people, especially the poor, all over the world, primarily in Africa. Apart from his life as a missionary, Eamonn is steeped in theology, is a gifted communicator whose passion for the Gospel is infectious. Our novena is always a time of God's grace, this year, with Fr Eamonn leading us, it will be particularly special.

A SPECIAL INVITATION

TO ALL WHO WORSHIP IN ST. MATTHEW'S

I would like you to consider joining me and a group of pilgrims in Lourdes this summer. It is a very special time. As we journey along, we chat, have fun, enjoy each other's company, and yes we pray. We pray for people we know and love especially those who are sick. Yes we also pray for ourselves. We do all this in the company of Bernadette and of course Our Lady who always brings us closer to Jesus. So my friends it will be a very special week

Tuesday 20th August - Tuesday 27th August.

4 Star Hotel Solitude. 7 nights Full Board. €800, single room supplement €252 (subject to availability).

PLEASE NOTE IT IS POSSIBLE TO PAY THE COST BY INSTALLMENTS

For more information:
contact **Eddie Teeling 0868063625**

RONCALLI REFORM

The Roncalli Reform, founded last October by Fr Joe, is a group dedicated to the ongoing reform of the Church. The key elements are: Contemplative Prayer, Discussion, Fellowship and Prophetic Action. It's next meeting takes place on Monday 18 February 7 - 9pm in St. Matthews. All welcome.

MASS TIMES

St. Matthew's	Weekdays:
Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.30	Mon, Thur, Fri: 10.00
Sunday: 09.00,10.30,12.00	Wed 7.00pm
Tuesday: 10.00 Prayer Service	

**Table Quiz in Aid of St. Matthew's
in the West County Hotel, Chapelizod
Tuesday 19th Feb @ 8.00pm
Table of 4 — €25
Raffle on the night**

Collection for Accord
the Catholic Marriage Care Service, will be made at all Masses **this Sunday**. It will replace the usual Share Collection.

Proclaim

Our Lady of the Assumption Ballyfermot
Saturday 2nd March — 9.30am—1.30pm
A workshop for ministers of the Word
led by Patricia Carroll
Coordinator for Evangelisation and Ecumenism

Church Collections

	27 Jan	3 Feb
1st Collection	875	945
2nd Collection	635	680
Family Offering	785	530

ARCHBISHOP MARTIN'S REQUEST OF YOU.

The Archbishop, Diarmuid Martin, has requested that as many as possible of us complete an on line survey into how we celebrate the Sacraments in the diocese. He encourages all parishioners, as do I, to take part in this and assist us in planning for the future of the diocese. This is the on-line survey for parents/guardians:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdARtIKwys-B64K8bCxpWAjCUdWF5MEAPn5YPO0AqdErl8yQ/viewform>

This is the on line survey for Parishes and Schools:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScpdCY3zkqI-mvP39HWE6hQF7TUfhL2ci1n8D8Jq_WIRA8n4Q/viewform

It's not often we are asked for our opinions so please let's avail of this opportunity to have some input into the celebration of the sacraments.

GOSPEL READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon	18/02	Mk 8: 11-13	'Why does this generation demand a sign?'
Tue	19/02	Mk 8: 14-21	'Are you still without perception?'
Wed	20/02	Mk 8: 22-26	'Can you see anything?'
Thu	21/02	Mk 8: 27-33	'Who do people say I am?'
Fri	22/02	Mt. 16: 13-19	THE CHAIR OF ST. PETER, APOSTLE 'You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church'.
Sat	23/02	Mk 9: 2-13	'There in their presence he was transfigured: his clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them'