



Society of Saint Pius X



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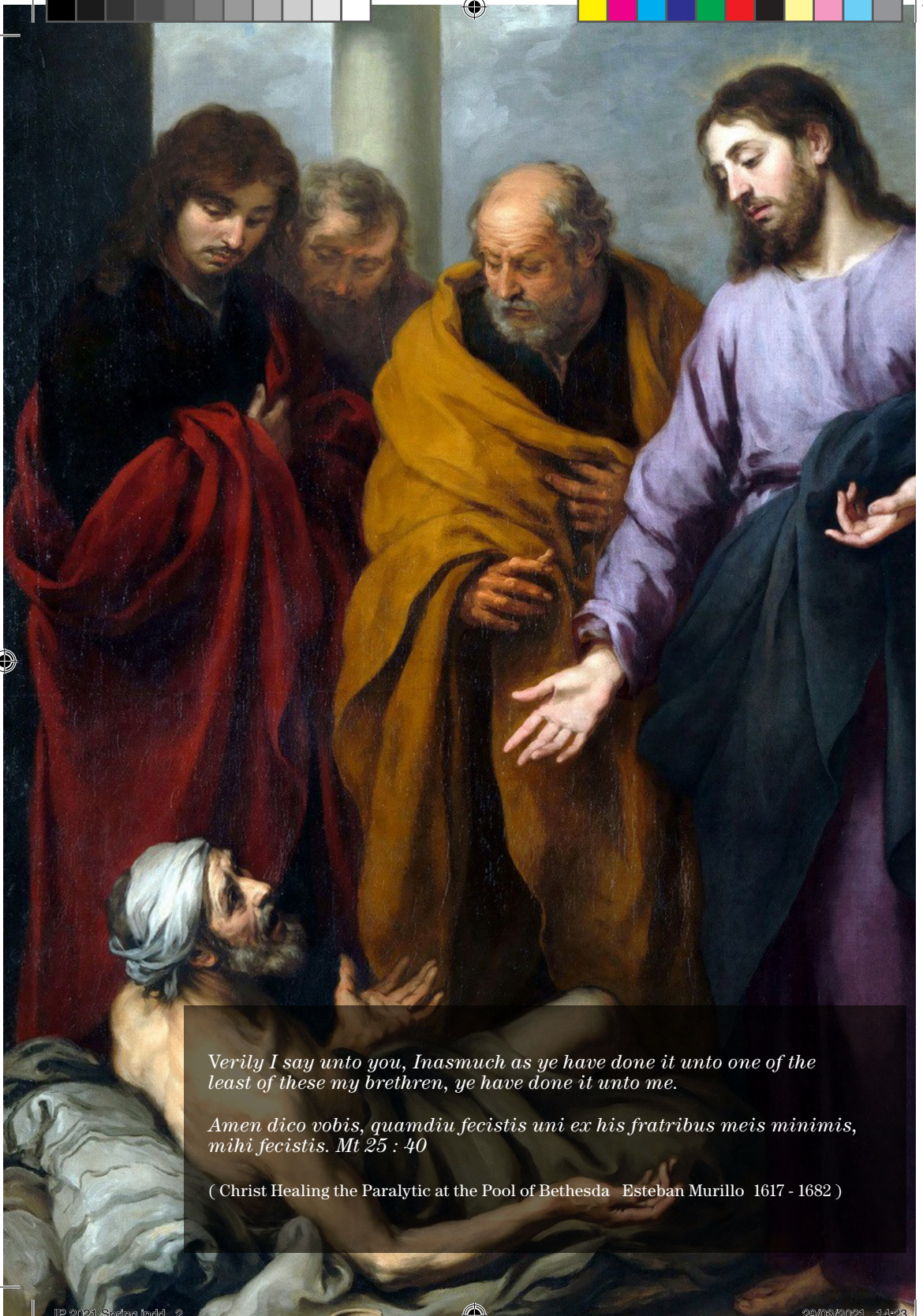
In Principio

Caritas

Spring no.14

Newsletter of the SSPX in Ireland





Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Amen dico vobis, quamdiu fecistis uni ex his fratribus meis minimis, mihi fecistis. Mt 25 : 40

(Christ Healing the Paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda Esteban Murillo 1617 - 1682)







In Principio
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Priestly Society of Saint Pius X in Ireland

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Gina Connolly

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Editorial



The Snakes are Back

Rev. Fr. Robert Brucciani, District Superior

My dear brethren,

Metaphorical snakes return

Sixteen hundred years ago, God, in His mercy, raised up the great St Patrick to banish the snakes – real and metaphorical – that slithered in the shadows bringing terror to Ireland's beleaguered inhabitants. Ireland remained free of serpents for one and a half millennia, then the metaphorical snakes returned.

Sixteen hundred years ago, the Holy Catholic Church brought the reign of grace to this isle, but since the rise of liberalism and its signal victory at the Second Vatican Council, the floodgates of grace have

been slowly closing and the snakes of crassness, chaos, cowardice and concupiscence (vices against the four cardinal virtues) slither abroad once more.



Father Willie Doyle





Although the successors of St Patrick have the supernatural power of their patron to expel them again, held spellbound by the world and bereft of faith in the power of their office, they have sought to accommodate the serpents rather than crush their heads after the manner of their heavenly mother.

Moral disorder within, political persecution without, dry of sound doctrine and shrivelled in the drought of sanctifying grace, these successors now burn their incense before the profane altar of man. Their priests are aged and many have abandoned their flock to the culture of death. They have closed their churches and forbidden the sacraments to please their new, unhappy pagan lords.

How to banish them again

What is to be done? How might the lover of Irish souls rally to the cause of their great patron? The answer is simple and in three steps: (i) personal sanctity, (ii) participating in the divine mission of the Church and (iii) the restoration of the Reign of Christ the King over all society. In short, we must restore all things in Christ: by Him, with Him and for Him.



Pope St. Pius X

The answer is always simple in exposition, but not so in execution! The illustrious Fr Willie Doyle said of personal sanctity, 'It's all about the three 'p's: prayer, penance and perseverance!'

Pope St Pius X said of Catholic Action (which is both the layman's participation in the missionary activity of the Church and the layman's work for the Social Reign of Christ the King in the state):

The field of Catholic Action is extremely vast. In itself it does not exclude anything, in any





Editorial



manner, direct or indirect, which pertains to the divine mission of the Church. Accordingly, one can plainly see how necessary it is for everyone to cooperate in such an important work, not only for the sanctification of his own soul, but also for the extension and increase of the Kingdom of God in individuals, families, and society: each one working according to his energy for the good of his neighbour by the propagation of revealed truth, by the exercise of Christian virtues, by the exercise of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy
(*Il Fermo Proposito* 1905).

The first and the easiest place to start is on our knees to offer an ardent prayer, perhaps to St Patrick, and perhaps a prayer which may go something like this:

O Saint Patrick, hear again the voices of Voclut Wood calling, calling thee near the western sea,

*Visit us again in the guise of faithful priests;
few though they may be, remember, there was but one of thee!
Inflame them with the same spirit of prayer and zeal for penance through the long day,
Beg for them the faith to teach, the prudence to govern, and divine charity to sanctify,
Mould them into instruments of Thy Master,
to raise up new saints,
to shine in the emerald isle of thy love.
And we pray that this prayer, borne by Victoricus of thy dream, occasion those voices which call thee again.*

I wish every grace on the feast of St Patrick, during Passiontide and in the joyful time of Easter. May God bless you all, and may He grant that I can visit you again soon.

In Jesu et Maria,
Rev. Robert Brucciani



Slieve Donard, County Antrim, where St Patrick spent time as a shepherd slave (Albert Bridge, licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0)





The Catholic Clergy in the time of Cholera

Mary Redmond

A Nineteenth Century Pandemic hits Sligo

Cholera is ravaging Sligo to a frightful extent ... The disease is more virulent there than elsewhere in the Kingdom ... A pit was dug at the rear of the Fever Hospital, where sixteen corpses were dropped in together, without coffins or shrouds. The Town is quite deserted ... It's thought there may be up to forty deaths a day ... The cry of the widows and orphans in the streets is truly awful.
(*Ballyshannon Herald*, 18 Aug. 1832)

It was 11 August 1832, a Saturday, and a fair and market day in the town of Sligo. That morning, an unusually fierce thunderstorm

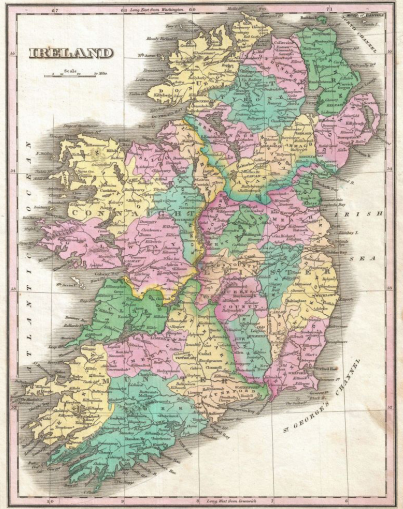
had struck the town; even then it seemed a fearful portent of what was to come. As the day rolled on, the unfortunate inhabitants learned that cholera was very suddenly and devastatingly in their midst. This new and terrible plague had recently made steady progress through Western Europe, leaving death and destruction in its wake. In just a few days a provincial town in the west of Ireland would become a true 'City of the Dead'.

From the *Daily Report of Cholera*, published by the Central Board for Health in Dublin Castle, we see that on average fifty persons a day died during what was left of the month of August. There was great fear and panic amongst the people. Where cholera struck, it struck swiftly;





Catholic History



1827 Finley Map of Ireland showing Sligo in the North West

many of those infected were dead within hours. The death rate was so high that carpenters ran out of wood for making simple coffins and the dead had to be wrapped in pitched sheets and rolled into mass graves. It is believed that some people may have been buried alive in the haste to dispose of the corpses of the deceased. In Sligo the disease raged with a peculiar violence. Even when on the decline elsewhere, the *Daily Report*, in cataloguing the number and frequency of fatalities, was often forced to insert the dread phrase: 'with the exception of Sligo'.

At the height of this terrible contagion, it was the Catholic clergy who distinguished themselves by

their fearless attention to the plight of their faithful. The Right Reverend Patrick Burke, then Bishop of Elphin, remained at his house in Finisklin, 'that he might be always at hand to sustain and cheer both priests and people'. He visited, both in their private homes and in hospital, those infected with the pestilence and rode through the streets 'to inspire the timid with courage by his example'. Both the priests of Sligo and of the neighbouring Ballysadare (also severely hit by infection), were invited to make frequent visits to Finisklin, where he 'blessed them for their heroic labours and urged them to continued exertions in the God-like cause in which they were engaged'. Very touching is the testimony regarding their meetings with the bishop of Elphin, given by two Catholic clergymen of the period and recorded in O'Rorke's *History of Sligo*:

... they derived the greatest comfort and strength from these meetings, and were moved by the words of the genial bishop, much in the same way as the disciples of our Lord felt 'the heart burning within them,' while He spoke to them on the road to Emmaus.

Most edifying is the story of a certain Fr Gilleran. He had been a curate in the Sligo village of Soeey





when the cholera broke out in Sligo town. Having presented himself to the bishop as a volunteer for Sligo,

... he flew to the post of duty and danger and all through the crisis, turned up always wherever and whenever he was wanted, as regularly as if he had the faculty of being in several places at the same time and as intrepidly as if he had had a revelation from Heaven that the cholera could do him no hurt.

The county infirmary in the town of Sligo had been turned into a fever hospital. It could not meet the needs of the hundreds of sick and dying. Dead nurses were replaced with ‘women of the worst

description’ and Charlotte Blake Thornley tells us in her first-hand account of ‘scenes ... as would make the flesh creep to hear of’. So great was the demand for beds that when a new cohort of patients arrived, those nearest death were often unceremoniously removed to make room for the great number of newcomers. Fr Gilleran, zealous as always in the cause of charity, remained there, night and day, often ‘with a horsewhip to prevent those wretches dragging the patients down the steps by the legs with their heads dashing on the stone steps before they were dead’. The same Fr Gilleran spent most of his time in the hospital, performing the duties of both nurse and priest. He remained completely untouched by the disease. In fact, not one of the Catholic clergy of the area fell sick, despite their frequent contact with the sick and the dying

The virtue of fraternal charity is not love of the creature in himself and for himself, but it is love of the creature ‘*propter Deum*’, that is, for God’s sake. God commands us to love Him not only in Himself, but also in His rational creatures whom He has been pleased to create in His image and likeness. Thus we have a duty to attend to our neighbour’s corporal needs, but even more so to attend to what affects



Victims of cholera in Paris





Catholic History



his soul and his eternal salvation. True charity, or love of neighbour must be founded in and arise from love of God, and must tend toward God. It is this important truth which is being obscured today where bodily health has become a true idol, on the altar of which the good of the soul and even the temporal good of man can be sacrificed. The cholera epidemic of 1832 gives us pause for thought. With a true understanding of the nature of charity, the Catholic clergy of the time worked in the harshest of conditions. Encouraged by their courageous bishop to perseverance in the 'God-like' cause on which all of their labours were centred, they showed true and untiring concern

for both the material and spiritual needs of their people. May their example of boldness and courage strengthen our resolve and zeal in our own times when timidity and disorientation reign supreme.

Notes:

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Charity in Action: The Conversion of Bentley Place

Mary-Jacinta Murphy

‘An arm-chair outlook will never save souls that are in real stress.’ (Frank Duff)

The history of the Legion of Mary’s search for souls in dangerous territory is one of the most striking, and yet comparatively little-known, stories in the annals of Ireland. ‘I have never in my life heard anything more strange and touching than the story you have told’, commented William Cosgrave (Housing Minister at that time and later to be Taoiseach of Ireland). That story is narrated in the volume *Miracles on Tap*, authored by Frank Duff, founder of the Legion of Mary and agent in the conversion of the most notorious red-light district in Europe.

The historical backdrop is the Irish War of Independence and subsequent Civil War. The Free State is,

as yet, in its infancy. Despite the cruel effects of war, among them the painful partition of the north and south of Ireland, Dublin is ‘a city in grace’. Thousands upon thousands flock to daily Mass. On every street the pealing of church bells proclaims with pride that Ireland’s Faith has not faltered. Here, at least, the Incarnation of the Son of God is celebrated with pomp and splendour. Here, above all, the faithful muster forth in triumph, bearing their sacramental Lord through scrubbed and flower-decked slums. It is another Bethlehem.

And yet – strange to say – there lurked in the city a diseased spot, so diseased that the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* noted with laconic surprise that, ‘Ireland furnishes an exception to the usual practice in the United Kingdom’. But which





Front cover of 'Mary Shall Reign' by Frank Duff, publisher John S. Burns, 2 ed. 1961

exception is referenced here? The allowance of 'open houses', as the encyclopaedia euphemistically terms the brothels, in only one street, but operating 'more publicly' than elsewhere in Europe! Usury, robbery, drunkenness: this unholy triad was also thrown into the mix. There were even rumours of murder. 'Bentley Place' is the pseudonym given to this location in order to preserve, at the time of writing, the reputation of its occupants, but we know it to be the district

affectionately called 'Monto' on the northside of the city. Truly this was a blot on the landscape! No wonder that the Legion of Mary decided to step in.

It is notable, though, that not even the Legion of Mary had actually planned an assault, however spiritual, on this evil district. 'Heaven forbid!' would have been echoed on the lips of even the holier inhabitants. Some unsuccessful attempts had been made years before. The failure merely confirmed the general fatalism. The city-wide consensus was that toleration of the evil was the only practicable solution in order to avoid worsening the problem. Only the Immaculate Heart of Mary could realistically gauge the situation, and her steadfast hope and calm was transmitted to her little army.

Every great movement, whether for good or for ill, requires a trigger. The small stone which unleashed the avalanche of graces was a retreat *en masse* of no fewer than thirty-one street girls, all of whom packed their bags, left their houses of ill repute and were admitted to an enclosed retreat in a Convent of the Sisters of Charity in Baldoyle. This was accomplished through the zeal of the parish priest of Francis Street, Fr Creedon, the well-known





Passionist, Fr Ignatius, and the patient friendship of the legionaries of Mary. There was plenty of opposition from the holy, among them owners of retreat houses: 'the idea of thirty girls from the street being launched in a body on a retreat!'

The girls' identities were concealed under the fine-sounding name of the Sacred Heart Sodality, but the Mother Superior of the convent was, of course, apprised of the reality. Her face was white with fright as she opened the door to the thirty-one girls. She clearly feared the good Sisters would be murdered in their beds. That gory martyrdom never transpired, but Mother Angela's name is immortalised by the episode.

It was this retreat that elicited the 'strange and touching' comment from William Cosgrave when the legionaries repaired to his offices to ask for urgent housing for the little regenerate flock. The good minister arranged for a house to be made over, rent-free for three months, to the Legion of Mary, and thus was born the first Sancta Maria hostel. This hostel provided an essential link between the street girls and their often-grieving families on the one hand, and other organisations such as the Good Shepherd convents on the other hand. Recidivism

among the residents of Sancta Maria was very rare. Of all the ladies who passed through the house – and the civil servant Frank Duff took meticulous care to confidentially record the history of each one – only one fish escaped the net to drown in the bitter waters of sin.

Matters did not always go smoothly, but in the Legion setbacks were seen as an invitation: 'Friend, go up higher' and confront a yet more desperate situation! On a subsequent retreat it is found that two retreatants have reneged, and not only have they returned to a regular low-down house of ill-fame but to that impenetrable Bentley Place to which, as yet, the legionaries have not turned their steps. Indeed, they have not so much as thought of it. Why should they? The place is in the tenacious grasp of evil. While a prominent Catholic gentleman of virtue approaches the Legion, offering his assistance and warm encouragement in their efforts to enter Bentley Place, he declares that his knees would go from under him at the very thought! The mere entry into such a place would render one liable to blackmail. In fact, it was the hitherto unanswerable argument of prudence that no decent gentleman should be seen in such a place. If he escaped the 'bullies' – the low-down bouncers who





policed the place and dealt out savage beatings – he would not emerge with his good name intact!

Fortunately, there were ladies galore in the Legion of Mary – originally, in fact, and for a short time the organisation was entirely a female one – working alongside the (then) male members of the St Vincent de Paul Society. Accompanied by Frank Duff, who held at that time honorary advisory membership in the nascent Legion, a gallant pair of ladies stepped forth on the journey. This journey they thought to be a shortcut to the martyr's palm and crown. Perhaps the most beautiful episode in the entire story occurs just here, and it is well to give it in Frank Duff's own words:

Leaning limply up against a wall was one of those filthy, drink-sodden, degraded specimens of humanity that somehow one seems only to encounter in furtive places ... to my amazement, he called on me by name. Then I remembered meeting him once or twice before, when picketing the proselytising dens. I tendered him my hand, but what he did was to seize it and cover it with kisses. Thus our reception to that dreadful place was love and homage, and not some act of savagery as we had feared.

Thus welcomed, the legionaries proceeded on their visit to a young lady of whom they had no knowledge but the name and the house number: 'Mary Lyne of number nine'. They found her at the point of death. The legionaries arranged for her to be brought to hospital, where she received medical treatment as well as the Sacraments. She, who would not have lived another hour without treatment, died two months later, with the Rosary on her lips.

By early 1925, after some two years of patient, twice-weekly visitation, the trickling of conversions had become a steady stream. Only about forty of the original 200 ladies remained in Bentley Place. The time was ripe for a strike at the black, pulsing heart of the evil. The entire faithful of the parish, and presumably of the adjoining parishes, were marshalled. No fewer than 20,000 Holy Communions were received during the Mission, and the faithful were exhorted to pray for the extirpation of the brothels. Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the Jesuit priests assigned to the mission, Fr Devane, Fr Mackey and Fr Roche, were holding councils of war with the brothel owners and customers. The former, confronted with their scandalous profiteering from sin, revealed some bitter pangs of con-





science. One of the brothel-keepers had even made a recent Novena for the courage to give up her 'livelihood'. The social and religious climate of the time meant that grace had a ready foundation on which to build, a cheering factor which in no way removed the strain for those involved. The priests were dealing with souls hardened in crime. Of one of them, Fr Mackey, SJ, opined that she would save her soul only because of her 'incredibly warped mind!'

Meanwhile, during these discussions, the Legion was busy quietly collecting money with the object of rescuing the repentant from their debts. It was also gathering destitute families to be rehoused in Bentley Place immediately after the brothels were closed. Only by a decent and respectable occupation could the brothels be kept firmly closed. As this quasi-military campaign drew to an end, the 'Madams' gave every evidence of good will and a firm promise to close down their premises.

On the fateful Tuesday of Lent marked D-day, it was found, however, that two of the brothel owners had reneged on their promises and disappeared. Their refusal of the Legion's offer to pay their debts (a card until then retained in the

sleeve of the Legion, which desperately wanted to rescue the repentant, but which needed to avoid accusations of bribery) showed their bad faith. The Legion, spurned in its offer of mercy, revealed its tough principled side: having refused mercy, the recalcitrants would face justice! Only thus could the forces of good triumph and the long-lasting conversion of the district ensue.

A phone call to the Gardai – the Irish police force – initiated a surprise mopping-up operation on the following Thursday. Any girls who were left – a mere fraction of the original group present on the Legion's arrival – were rounded up and jailed, only to be released without incident once the cleansing of Bentley Place was complete. The forces of justice had no appetite for prosecuting these unhappy women or their pathetic hangers-on, many of them more sinned against than sinning. Released from their unhappy surroundings and the chains of debt, many of them happily entered the Sancta Maria hostel and were duly rehabilitated. The full rigour of the law was applied only in the case of the brothel owners who had refused to amend their ways. One received a relatively short prison sentence and emerged an edifying character. The other was released on a technicality.





Catholic Action



Fittingly, at the close of the parish Mission, it was Frank Duff who nailed into the wall of Bentley Place the crucifix as a sign of the reclamation and rededication of Bentley Place to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Later, a statue of the Sacred Heart would be erected, and sadly, this statue was taken down, not without sensation and reportedly ominous signs, but that belongs to another chapter of history.

Of the many lessons which this edifying history supplies, we could select three. The first: although wonderful social work was in hand by many heroic organisations, the annihilation of evil was only

possible when these Catholics completely realised, in a practical way, their true relation to their heavenly Mother. Once her relation to these apostolic souls was properly understood, Our Lady was able to use them in a manner hitherto undreamt.

The second striking note is the necessity for charitable zeal to be channelled by some type of supporting organisation. What would have happened had the legionaries been impatient, had they tired of the hours of contact with these souls, sickened of the mire of sin, and quailed before the prospect of tea which must, out of politeness,



Georgian-era buildings in The Monto (Sean Bonner CC BY 2.0)





be taken from an indifferently washed cup, or worse? What if they had shaken the grim dust of Bentley Place from their feet, reassuring themselves that it was someone else's duty? If the souls had attempted such a task alone and unsupported, would its abandonment not have been the inevitable sequel? Thankfully, the legionaries, attuned to the monotonous duty of a weekly work which must on no account be neglected, set their faces, and persevered to the end. And what a reward was theirs! A full measure, 'pressed down and shaken together and running over!'

And the third lesson is best given by Frank Duff himself:

You have glimpsed the fathomless love of [Our Lady's] Immaculate Heart reaching out, yearning for all souls to be saved; and you have noted how she needs and employs all who offer themselves to her service. She needs you, too, to help her extend her Spiritual Motherhood to all mankind.

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- Ibid., p. 19.
- Ibid., p. 69.
- Luke 14:10.
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- Ibid., p. 147.
- Ibid., p. 136.
- Luke 6:38, quoted by Duff, *Miracles on Tap*, p. 84.
- Duff, *Miracles on Tap*, p. 279.





A Poor Man amongst the Poor: The Life of Father John Sullivan SJ

Gerard Brady

‘Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’ (Matthew 5:3)

Fr John Sullivan, SJ, certainly was not born into poverty. He was born into the privileged society of his day and brought up in a household of comfort and plenty. He chose to become poor for Christ’s sake and in this personal identification with his true Lord and saviour he attained that blessedness described in the Gospel of Matthew. He practised a perfect detachment from the things of this world and centred his activities on loving God and neighbour. One boy he taught who later became, like his mentor, a Jesuit priest stated, ‘Father John was our Spiritual Father. His life and interests revolved round the boys’ spiritual needs. He took no part and



Fr. John Sullivan SJ

had no interest in our games – never appeared at matches, debates, concerts or plays. Free time meant time for prayer or the sick’.

John Sullivan was born on 8 May 1861 in Eccles Street in Dublin city. His father, Edward, was a lawyer who was appointed to the post of Law Advisor to the Lord Lieutenant





of Ireland in the year of John's birth and would ultimately become Irish Lord Chancellor two years before his own death in 1885. Edward was the grandson of James Sullivan, a native of Mallow, Co. Cork, who had become a Protestant upon his marriage in 1782. In consequence John was baptised in the local Church of Ireland parish church in St George's, Temple Street, in Dublin. His only sister was brought up in the Catholic faith of her mother, as was the custom of the time.

In 1872 John was sent to Enniskillen to attend Portora Royal School, a private Protestant institution which he attended until he was accepted into Trinity College to study classics and then law. He won the gold medal in classics in 1885. After the sudden death of his father in April of that year, when he was just twenty-four, he went to London to continue his law studies and was called to the bar in 1888 though he never practised law in England. The inheritance he received after the death of his father ensured that he was comfortably off and this enabled him to travel widely. He travelled as far as Greece in the 1890s and stayed with the monks on Mount Athos, the famous monastic republic. After his father's death, John, always somewhat quiet and intro-

spective, began a period of soul searching. He discovered the *Confessions* of St Augustine and this book had a marked effect on him. John, no doubt influenced by the example of his mother and sister, began to investigate the teachings of the Catholic faith and as a result he was received into the Church at Farm Street, London, in 1896, two years before the death of his mother, Lady Elizabeth Sullivan.

For the next four years John visited a number of hospitals and convents where he endeavoured to help the nuns in practical ways. Once, while visiting Cork, he helped the nuns in a particular convent set up for a forty-hour adoration. It was late by the time all was prepared, and he was dirty and tired from the day's work. The nuns found him in the chapel in the morning still bedraggled.

After the Mass [the] next morning, the bishop and Fr Peter Finlay, professor of theology at the Jesuit theologate, Milltown Park, Dublin, who narrated this incident, were standing on the steps outside the chapel when John Sullivan emerged. When he saw the bishop, he came up to kiss his ring and then slipped away. The bishop turned to Fr Finlay and remarked that he thought it very imprudent of the Reverend Mother to allow





Catholic Lives



ragged fellows like that to be about the premises. 'My Lord', said Fr Finlay in a dryly humorous tone, 'that is the Lord Chancellor's son.' It was Peter Finlay's more famous brother, Tom, Professor of Economics at University College Dublin and co-founder of the Irish Cooperative Movement, who had previously described John as 'the best-dressed young man in Dublin'.

In 1900 John entered the Society of Jesus novitiate in Tullabeg, Co. Offaly and in September of 1902 took his first vows as a Jesuit.

On such occasions, to mark the event each new 'scholastic' (as the Jesuit student was now termed) was given a special crucifix. John had brought his mother's crucifix with him to the novitiate. He obtained permission from Fr Browne to take it as his vow crucifix. This brass crucifix, some 9 inches high, he carried with him all through his life and blessed countless people with it.

This crucifix is now kept at the Jesuit church in Gardiner Street, Dublin, where Fr John Sullivan's body reposes.

After two years studying philosophy in Stonyhurst, Lancashire, John then went to study theology in Milltown Park. He was ordained in 1907 and was then appointed to the

staff of Clongowes Wood College, Co. Kildare. It was here that he was to spend the greater part of his ministry as a priest.

What does it mean, then, for such a priest as Fr Sullivan to be a poor man amongst the poor? Ultimately it means treating everyone with the same supernatural charity. In this regard, Fr Fergal McGrath recounted the following story:

I often noticed all the friends Father Sullivan had, and how he made as much of them if they were poor as if they were rich. There was a poor old man named Michael Brien who had no home and used to live in barns. He had a long beard, and the people used to call him Marwood because he was like the English hangman who had that name. He died suddenly in a field near Rathcoffey. He had no one belonging to him, so Father Sullivan got the guards to ring up the Union at Celbridge and ask them to bury him. They sent a coffin and three paupers (this was in the days of the workhouse system) to bury him. I needn't tell you that they were in no hurry to bury poor old Marwood, and poor Father Sullivan was waiting in the graveyard at Mainham until near eight o'clock. We were living in the cottage near





the graveyard then, and I had to bring a lantern for Fr Sullivan to read the burial service. The scene reminded me of the poem we learned in school, The Burial of Sir John Moore: They brought the coffin up in an ass cart. I thought it strange – there was nobody there to bury poor Marwood but three paupers, and there was Fr Sullivan paying him as much respect as if he was the greatest landlord in the land ... When the funeral was finished, I noticed that Father Sullivan, though he was generally very strong against drink, put his hand in his pocket and gave the three poor grave-diggers some money 'to get some refreshment'.

As one old man later remarked to Fr Sullivan, 'Ah Father, you never saw a jolly party round a pump'.

Throughout his life as a religious Fr Sullivan had a particular devotion to the sick. Even before he had left Milltown Park, he was succouring the afflicted:

He went to visit the Royal Hospital for Incurables, as it was then called, at Donnybrook. It seems to have been shortly after his ordination, for it is recalled that he gave many patients his blessing. He was asked to visit a female patient, who was suffering from lupus in the head, which had begun to af-



St Francis Xavier Church, Gardiner Street, Dublin. Final resting place of

fect her mind, and preparations were being made to remove her to a mental hospital. He remained with the patient for a long time praying over her. The next day her mind was completely restored, and remained so until her death; and she was able to restore friendships which she had disrupted as a result of her mental stress.

Another example of Fr Sullivan's charity was his discreet distribution of alms to those in need. He had permission from his superiors to keep some funds for distribution to the poor and had arrangements with various shops to provide tea, sugar and other groceries for which he distributed docketts to the very poor. Chief among these poor people were





travellers, as recalled by Fr McGrath in the following passage:

As long as I knew Father Sullivan, he showed great kindness and priestly charity towards the gipsies or tinkers who used encamp in the neighbourhood of Clongowes. My impression is that many of these itinerants used come to this neighbourhood because of Father Sullivan's goodness to them. I know from personal knowledge that he used visit the gipsies in their camps – he told me so, as did also the gipsies. On the occasions of these visits he used advise the gipsies to go to confession, and he would make an appointment with them for this purpose at Clongowes Wood College. Next morning the gipsies would be at Mass and Holy Communion in Clongowes, and Father Sullivan would ensure that they got a good breakfast. Father Sullivan was very patient with these gipsies, and they all had great respect for him. I heard many gipsies say in our house that Father Sullivan was 'the holy priest'. They used enquire for him, and he used enquire their whereabouts in our house. Also I have a note (one of hundreds) which Father Sullivan wrote to my mother who had a shop. It runs as follows: 'Clongowes Wood College, June 1932. Please give bearer 1/4lb. Tea and 1lb sugar and oblige Father Sullivan'. I know

from personal knowledge that the bearer was a tinker. The servant of God never owed a bill higher than four shillings. He always paid up promptly, and remarked 'we are quits now'.

In February of 1933 Fr Sullivan became ill and on the 17th he was anointed and taken to St Vincent's Nursing Home in Dublin suffering from abdominal pain. He was operated on for intestinal gangrene. Two days later his condition worsened: *From that point to his death the same evening the murmur of intercession about his bedside was almost unceasing. In the hour before midnight he died. Almost his last conscious act was a prayer to God to bless and protect the boys of the school he had made his own. In words so simple he might have used them himself, his Rector and very old friend who was present summed up the last act: 'He died well'.*

Fr Sullivan was without doubt a man of God but his sanctity, though well acknowledged by all those who came across him during his life, was of a very discreet and hidden kind. To say that he left very little for his biographers to go on would be an understatement. His life was a Nazareth life in many ways, taken up with caring for those fortu-





nate enough to come into contact with him or directly placed in his charge. Above all, as Fr McGrath recalled, he was not showy:

I have heard an unobservant person say that Father Sullivan dressed like a tramp – this was far from the fact. His clothes were green from age, the elbows of his coat and knees of his trousers darned obviously by himself; his boots shapeless from age and patched, but carefully blackened; his clothes as carefully brushed – in short a significant picture of a gentleman in old clothes.

Fr Sullivan, although his character was of a sober mien, was not without humour, though it was of a dry and somewhat ironic cast. The only period he spent in a position apart from his time at Clongowes was from 1919 to 1924 when he was made Rector of Rathfarnham Castle. This was a house for Jesuit students attending university. During one conversation with a student, while discussing the student's studies, he enquired, *'Are there any ladies in your class?'* *The student replied that there were two. 'What are they like?'* *'Rather plain', replied the student in all honesty. A gleam of amusement came into Father John's eyes as he exclaimed 'In God's name, there, I didn't mean that. What are they*

like in Latin?'

In 1960 Fr Sullivan's body was exhumed from the cemetery in Clongowes and taken to Gardiner Street Church in Dublin where it is venerated by the faithful. He was beatified on 13 May 2017. I count Fr Sullivan as one of my patrons as the year of my birth was the 100th anniversary of his birth, and I was given the second name John as a result of my mother's devotion to him. Perhaps I have been the unwitting beneficiary of his prayerful largesse, that aside I have always admired his humility and ascetic spirit. Of him it can truly be said – he was a poor man amongst the poor.

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The Beuron Painting Project

Grattan Keating

The Proposal

Last summer, I returned to West Cork to set up studio for a series of portrait and landscape paintings; however, no sooner had I arrived home from Oxfordshire, I was offered the most intriguing proposal as a commission. I was approached by Fr Patrick Kimball, based in Cork city, and commissioned to paint two Cork saints for the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary: St Fachtna and St Finbarr.

What was unique about the whole proposal was, firstly, no one had ever produced a 'painted' portrait of St Fachtna. The only renditions, to date, are a one-off, rough representation in sculpture (that is unrecognisable as anyone of note) and a single stained-glass depiction that could be anybody.

With regard to St Finbarr, one would expect a bit more in the way of source material, especially considering how important he is as the patron saint of Cork. Alas, my research revealed images of this



Grattan working on St Fachtna using the Beuron method





saint, too, were very thin on the ground. The only painting of substance, from an art-historical point of view, is a crude rendition of the saint in a pseudo-Byzantine icon style which, incidentally, seems out of place for an Irish saint. The main highlight of any pictorial rendition of St Finbarr is the beautiful stained-glass window in St Finbarr's Oratory in Gougane Barra.

The second interesting point of this proposal was in relation to how these paintings were to be actually produced, in this case, the utilisation of a style that had not been used for many decades: the Beuron style.

To recap, there were several exciting aspects to this project: the first being, that no one had, to my knowledge, painted St Fachtna; secondly, that St Finbarr had not been rendered as an icon that reflected his background as an Irish saint or his critical relationship to Cork; and thirdly, I would be reinvigorating a style that was long dead. The latter had its own set of unique challenges.

At first glance, I thought it would be a straightforward commission, as the Beuron appeared to me, stylistically, rather simple in its construction with its flat surfaces



St Finbarr

and combination of primary colours and muted tones. That opinion quickly changed. What I had initially failed to appreciate was the amount of geometric, precision drawing involved in even getting started on a Beuron painting.

As a consequence, I decided to think about the project from three distinct angles. Firstly, the art-historical: what was the Beuron, who started it, and for what or for whom was it made? Secondly, the artistic: how was a genuine Beuron painting made, are there variations within the style or are there subgroups, what paint was to be used, and





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The finished paintings hanging above the altar in Our Lady of the Rosary

what were the rules to constructing a picture? Thirdly, the saints: I had to explore their backgrounds and find out a bit more about them so I could utilise the information within the paintings.

The Beuron

The Beuron art-form was developed by two men: Peter Lenz and his colleague, Jakob Wüger, both of whom were German artists. The pre-eminent member of the duo was Lenz, who started his career as a sculptor and would later become a Benedictine monk, taking the name Desiderius.

Lenz was born in 1832; his father operated a sculpture and cabinet-making workshop that specialised in Neo-Gothic church and cathedral furnishings. From childhood Lenz was surrounded by ecclesiastical art. This early exposure to religious imagery seems to have had a profound impact on Lenz, and he appears to have been compelled to search out the ideal form of Christian art.

The established artistic practice of art colleges in the nineteenth century was to imitate nature or the world of antiquity; Lenz began to feel strongly that, by pursuing these practices, artists were somehow disabling themselves. He theorised that if he analysed very carefully the artworks of the Greeks, and specifically, the art of the Minoan, Archaic and Geometric periods, that he would discover an ideal form hidden within the representations.

Lenz began an in-depth analysis of ancient art, cross-referencing it with his theological studies. He was convinced that he could find the original human image and measure – the measure bestowed upon Adam and Eve in the Garden before the Fall. He postulated that if we are created in God's image, then it stands to reason, that there must be





an ideal measure, number, weight and geometrical form to the human body. He believed that the Fall, and therefore Original Sin, had corrupted this 'norm' and was obscured until the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, as Jesus Christ is God personified, then He was the ideal male figure; the Virgin Mary was likewise the ideal 'norm' for the female figure, as she was born without Original Sin, not a corrupted being, but perfect in every way – the new Adam and the new Eve. It was in this moment that Lenz discovered Egyptian art. It came as a revelation: the rigorous profile placement of figures in exact symmetrical harmony that did not distract the viewer from the message or narrative of the artwork itself. This, for Lenz, was an aesthetic that might work for his proposed idea of a new Christian art style.

With the Beuron style established, Lenz began to write a series of instructional texts, which have collectively become known as *Zur Ästhetik der Beuroner Schule* (*On the Aesthetic of the Beuron School*). These writings also map out the genesis of the project, which serve as a partial autobiography of the artist. Lenz's writings were translated and published,

initially into French, by the Nabi artist, Paul Sérusier; Lenz's aesthetic theories had a profound effect on the artwork produced by Sérusier and other Nabi artists.

Perhaps surprisingly for Lenz, he eventually appears to have become frustrated by his own carefully thought-out philosophy. Over time he developed a more pragmatic, rather than rigid, approach to his style, adhering to the strict geometric rules for the most part whilst allowing some flexibility. Lenz's early sketches and watercolours feature elements of the rigid Beuron rules, but it was eased in the larger works as he seems to conclude that you cannot reduce the human form to a series of lines and still expect to arrive at a satisfying rendition of the human body and face. Interestingly, this is something I had discovered myself when I began painting St Fachtna using the Beuron method. After following Lenz's instructions very carefully, the geometric form failed to mould itself fully into a portrait. Instead, it was more akin to an architectural structure, more robotic than human and certainly not ideal. Therefore, I found I had to 'round off' my curves and ovals with the freeform of a traditional portraitist to arrive at a successful conclusion. This, in essence, meant a departure from pure Beuronese aesthetics.





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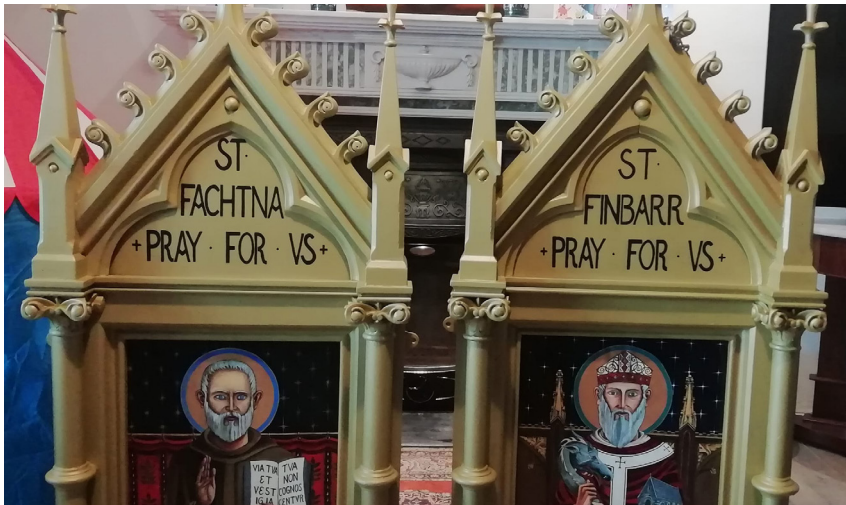


Despite the challenges of the geometric process, the legacy of the Beuron is incredible. It has had a considerable impact on the history of art. Besides the Nabi artists, the Austrian artist Gustav Klimt (1862–1918), was considerably influenced by the Beuronese technique. It is believed by some art historians that Klimt's style and methods, particularly with his mural work and golden paintings, find their origins in Lenz's aesthetic. As another point of interest, I was very surprised to discover that the St Benedict Medal was designed by Lenz for the 1,400th anniversary of the birth of St Benedict. Unknowingly, I had been carrying around a piece of Beuron art for decades!

The Commission

Now that I had researched the rules of the Beuron style, I needed to explore what was unique to each saint: why were they saints, what are they known for and what I would have to do to ensure that anyone who viewed these paintings would recognise who they were? In the end, I settled on a few key attributes for each saint.

For St Fachtna, I decided to portray him as simply-dressed, holding his Bible and set against a red curtain. The red in the curtain symbolises the colour of Cork; it also contains, in its tapestry, elements of the legend of St Fachtna's Bible. The story goes that, having accidentally left



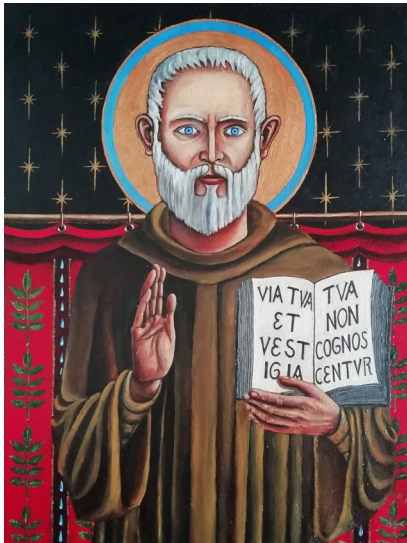
The finished paintings in the refurbished frames containing the Beuron script





his Bible outside all night in the middle of a rainstorm, he found it the following morning completely dry. The rainstorm is reduced to raindrops that are featured as a repeat pattern alongside the representation of ash tree leaves in the curtain. The ash tree, as a symbol, represents West Cork. The inscription in his Bible was chosen by Fr Kimball: *'Via tua et vestigia tua non Cognoscentur'* ('Thy way and thy footsteps shall not be known'). The inscription was rendered using the Beuron script, a special font developed and utilised by Lenz in all his works.

For St Finbarr, I decided to depict



St Fachtna

him more ornately, partially because he is Cork's patron saint, but also as the senior bishop. St Finbarr also features red in his vestments to represent Cork, and has the dragon/demon, Lua, firmly grasped in his hand, indicating his position as an exorcist. He also has a model of the oratory on his left hand, representing his monastery in Gougane Barra. St Finbarr also wears the bishop's mitre, which, again, distinguishes him from St Fachtna. St Finbarr is represented standing before a choir panel – this panel can be found in St Finbarr's Cathedral in Cork city – and also represents the heavenly choir.

The size of the paintings was dictated by the size of the ornate frames that were already installed inside the church; this brought its own unique set of challenges, as they had to be made to measure, while adjusting the measurements required by the Beuron style – no easy feat. Furthermore, the frames became a distinct project, in their own right, as they needed to be repaired, repainted and have the saints' names displayed on them in the Beuron script. This added to the overall completion time of the project as it certainly became an all-encompassing divergence, requiring much patience and re-





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acquaintance with long-neglected woodwork skills!

The overall project took five months to complete – a lot more than the original prediction I made of several weeks. This was due mostly to the fact that it was a deceptively more difficult project than I had expected with all the unforeseen elements of learning a new, rigidly technical style, along with the restoration aspects. I certainly gained a greater respect for intricacy of icon paintings and the skill of their painters! Fortunately, the finished pieces were warmly received by Fr Kimball and the congregation at the church. The two works now hang in Our

Lady of the Rosary Church, located on Shanakiel Road, Sunday's Well, Cork city, where they can be viewed above the altar. To date, they remain the only paintings of their kind of the two saints, and the very first painting of St Fachtna.

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Grattan stretching canvas in his studio





Spring 2021 Events

April	4	Easter
	17-18	Youth Outing
May	8	Young Adult Day Outing
	22-23	Chartres Pilgrimage (we could do a pilgrimage to Glendalough instead)
July	10	Croagh Patrick Pilgrimage
	11	First Mass of Fr. Dominic O'Hart (Dublin)
	18	First Mass of Fr. Dominic O'Hart (Athlone)
	18-24	Girls' Camp
	25-30	Boys' Camp
Aug	15	Newry Mass Rock Pilgrimage
	20-22	St Declan's way



FSSPX Northern Ireland



FSSPX Republic of Ireland





Priestly Society of Saint Pius X in Ireland

DUBLIN St John the Evangelist Church

1 Upper Mounttown Road Dún Laoghaire,
Co. Dublin A96 P793
T: (01) 284 2206

Mass Times
- Sunday 9am and 11am
- Monday - Friday 11am and 6:30pm most days
- Saturday & Wednesday 11am only

Saint Pius X House

12 Tivoli Terrace S, Dún Laoghaire
Co. Dublin A96 KV65
T: (01) 284 2206

Resident:

Rev. Fr Patrick Abbet (Prior)
Rev. Fr Leo Boyle
Rev. Fr Patrick Kimball
Rev. Fr Jules Doutrebente

ATHLONE Corpus Christi Church

Connaught Gardens, Athlone
Co. Westmeath N37 E671
T: (01) 284 2206

Mass Times
- Sunday 10am (check website, can be 4pm)
- Monday & Saturday 10am
- Friday 6:30pm

BELFAST Saint Pius V Chapel

78 Andersonstown Road
Belfast, Co. Antrim
BT11 9AN
T: (028) 9445 3654

Mass Times
- Sunday 12pm

CORK Our Lady of the Rosary Church

Shanakiel Road Sunday's Well,
Co. Cork T23 T389
T: (01) 284 2206

Mass Times
- Sunday 11am (check website, can be 4pm)
- Saturday 11am

NEWRY Our Lady of Knock Chapel

Unit 5 Richbrook Business Park,
Mill Road, Bessbrook,
Newry, Co. Down BT35 7DT
T: (048) 30 825730

Mass Times
- Sunday 8:30am





Car Park Mass at Newry





Society of Saint Pius X



S S P X

The Society of St. Pius X is an international priestly society of common life without vows, whose purpose is the priesthood and that which pertains to it.

Since its foundation by Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre in 1970, the Society has formed priests according to the immemorial teachings of the Catholic Church. By offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the traditional Latin rite and administering the sacraments according to the traditional rites in vigour in 1962 (before the Second Vatican Council 1962-5), the Society's priests perpetuate what the Church has taught and done throughout its history. By the exercise of the teaching office of its priests, the Society fights against the errors that presently afflict the Church.

