

**SHRULE & GLENCORRIB PARISH NEWSLETTER - SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup> MAY 2023**Parish email: [parishofshrule3@gmail.com](mailto:parishofshrule3@gmail.com) Parish Web: [www.shruleglencorrib.com](http://www.shruleglencorrib.com)Fr. Vivian Loughrey PP, Parochial House, Ramolin, Shrule, Co. Mayo H91 V2FK (☎ 093 31262)  
Newsletter (Vol. 27 - 43) # 1,447 - Newsletter submissions: [newsletter@shruleglencorrib.com](mailto:newsletter@shruleglencorrib.com)  
Extended Newsletter Available at [www.shruleglencorrib.com](http://www.shruleglencorrib.com) & [www.mayo.ie](http://www.mayo.ie)All Masses available on: **Radio**: 101.4 FM - **Facebook**: Shrule Parish - **Web**: churchtv.ie**PARISH OFFICE****Shrule** - Parochial House, Tuesdays 10.30am to 12-noon**OPENING HOURS****Glencorrib** - Curates House (Sunny Days), Wednesdays 10.30am to 12-noon**ASCENSION OF THE LORD - (YEAR A) MASS DATES, TIMES & INTENTIONS****ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH, SHRULE - Dedicated 1832**

Sat	20th May	8.00 pm	<b>Henry &amp; Nora Pendergrast, Shrule</b>
Sun	21st May	11.00 am	<b>Parish Community</b>
Tue	23rd May	9.30 am	<b>Michael &amp; Delia Kelly &amp; DM Kelly, Moylough</b>
Wed	24th May	9.30 am	<b>Special Intention</b>
Thu	25th May	9.30 am	<b>Delia McWalter</b>
Fri	26th May	7.00 pm	<b>Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - 7pm to 7.55pm</b>
		8:00 pm	<b>NO MASS</b>
Sat	27th May	8.00 pm	<b>Patrick Sheridan, parents Paddy &amp; Margaret Sheridan &amp; DM Sheridan Family, Dalgan</b>
Sun	28th May	11.00 am	<b>Edward &amp; Ellen Ryan</b>

**CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, GLENCORRIB - Dedicated 1876**

Sat	20th May	6:30 pm	<b>James Daly Month's Mind</b>
Sun	21st May	9.30 am	<b>Irene Dougan, Scotland Eileen Howard &amp; DM Howard Family</b>
		3.00 pm	<b>Sunday Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - 3pm to 4pm</b>
Wed	24th May	10:10 am	<b>Special Intention</b>
Fri	26th May	6:00 pm	<b>Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament - 6pm to 6.55pm</b>
		7:00 pm	<b>Noel Meyler Tim Melette &amp; DM Melette Family</b>
Sat	27th May	6:30 pm	<b>Michael &amp; Bridget Heuan, daughter Anne Rice &amp; brother-in-law Francis Rice</b>
Sun	28th May	9.30 am	<b>Martin &amp; Carmel Fitzgerald</b>

**CHURCH ROTAS FOR MAY****LAY READERS** - Vigil Mass**SHRULE**

Sean Frehan

**GLENCORRIB**

TBC

**LAY READERS** - Morning Mass

Breege Walsh

Roy Cecil

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS** - Vigil Mass

Rita Davin

Mary Myler

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS** - Morning

Mary Bohan Keane

Sharon McGaugh

**ALTAR SOCIETY**

Shrule/Churchfields

Moyne/Toorard



*I came from the Father and entered the world;  
now I am leaving the world and going back to  
the Father.*

John 16:28

**Annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Knock**The diocese of Galway,  
Kilmacduagh & Kilfernora.**This Sunday 21st May**, gathering  
at the shrine of Our Lady for **2pm**.**Schedule of Ceremonies:**

2:00pm: Rosary

2:30pm: Anointing of the sick at Knock Basilica

3:00pm: Concelebrated Mass at Knock Basilica

followed by Benediction &amp; Rosary Procession

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO RETURN YOUR TRÓCAIRE BOXES**



### Prayer for Reflection

Speak gently in my silence. When the loud outer noise of my surroundings and my fears keep pulling me away from you, help me to trust that you are still there even when I am unable to hear you. Give me ears to listen to your small soft voice saying, 'Come to me, you who are overburdened, and I will give you rest... for I am gentle and humble of heart'. Let that loving voice be my guide.

*'Following Jesus' Henri Nouwen*

### Message of Pope Francis for Day of Prayer for Vocations: Vocation: Grace & Mission

*(Full letter available in online Newsletter; printed here in 4 parts over 4 weeks – Part 3 of 4)*

**This missionary activity does not arise simply from our own abilities, plans and projects, nor from our sheer willpower or our efforts to practice the virtues; it is the result of a profound experience in the company of Jesus.** Only then can we testify to a Person, a Life, and thus become "apostles". Only then can we regard ourselves as "sealed, even branded, by this mission of bringing light, blessing, enlivening, raising, healing and freeing" (*Evangeliij Gaudium*, 273).

The Gospel icon of this experience is that of the two disciples journeying to Emmaus. After their encounter with the risen Jesus, they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the Scriptures to us?" (*Lk* 24:32). In those disciples, we can see what it means to have "hearts on fire, feet on the move". [3] This is also my fervent hope for the coming World Youth Day in Lisbon, to which I joyfully look forward, with its motto: "Mary arose and went with haste" (*Lk* 1:39). May every man and woman feel called to arise and go in haste, with hearts on fire.

#### **Called together and convened.**

**The evangelist Mark relates the moment when Jesus called to himself twelve disciples, each by name. He appointed them to be with him and to be sent out to proclaim the message,** to heal infirmities and to cast out demons (cf. *Mk* 3:13-15). **The Lord thus laid the foundations of his new community.** The Twelve were people from different social classes and trades; none of them was a person of influence. The Gospels speak too of other callings, like that of the 72 disciples whom Jesus sent out two by two (cf. *Lk* 10:1).

**The Church is an *Ecclesia*, the Greek word for an assembly of persons called and convened, in order to form the community of missionary disciples of Jesus Christ committed to sharing love among themselves (cf. *Jn* 13:34; 15:12) and spreading that love to all others, so that God's kingdom may come.**



**Social Coffee Break:** Are you working from home and/or self-employed? Or looking for a social outlet? If so, you are welcome to a lunchtime tea/coffee break in Shrule Community Centre on **Friday 26th May, between 12.30-1.30pm.** An informal social lunchtime event for a tea and a chat, to finish the working week. **Voluntary €2 donation.** Open to all!

**Sunny Days** are delighted to announce our **Family Fete day** will take place on **Bank Holiday Monday June 5th** in Glencorrib/ KiIlroe Community sports field. **Gates open 12.30pm.** Come and join us for a great family day out.



### **This weekend marks the 57<sup>th</sup> World Day of Communications.**

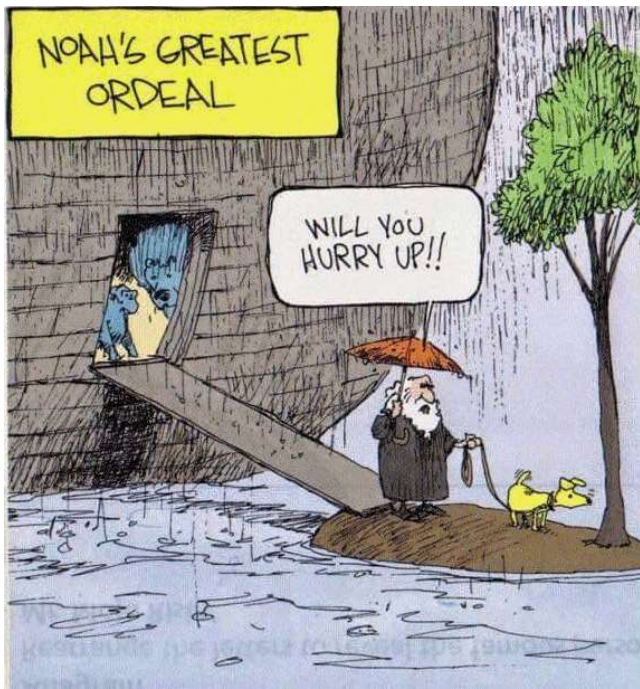
World Communications Day was established by Pope Paul VI in 1967 as an annual celebration that encourages us to reflect on the opportunities and challenges that the modern means of social communication (the press, motions pictures, radio, television and the internet) afford the Church to communicate the gospel message.

This year the theme is ***Speaking with the heart "The truth in love" (Eph 4:15).***

Pope Francis, in his message for **World communications day** this year, is challenging us to always speak the truth with love.

He invites us to consider looking into our hearts and asking ourselves, what's going on in there? He reminds us of a phrase from one of the psalms which says, "*guard your tongue from evil*". If we could all do that this week, the world would be a more loving, caring charitable and peaceful place.

**PLEASE SUBMIT ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER BY 8PM THURSDAY**



**Riddle me this:**

I have lakes with no water, mountains with no stone and cities with no buildings. What am I?

*(Last week's answer: 1, 2 and 3)*

**Cong Moytura Heritage Society Spring Talk:**

'Aleen Cust, the first female vet, her life and times' to be given by Donal Connolly MRCVS and Brendan Gardiner MRCVS of the Aleen Cust Memorial Society on **Thursday 25 May at 8pm** in the Crossroads Community Centre. All welcome.

**Galway Diocesan Rosary Group** meets every evening at **7:30pm** to recite the rosary via **Zoom**. The Rosary Group is administered by Fr Martin Whelan, Diocesan Secretary and CC in Oranmore. If you would like to join the Rosary Group, just email [galwaydiocesanrosary@gmail.com](mailto:galwaydiocesanrosary@gmail.com).

**The Galway Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes** will take place on **June 27th to July 3rd**. The fare is €850 for 6 nights which includes transportation to and from Galway/Shannon. Insurance is optional at €39 or pilgrims may have their own travel insurance. Further information can be got from Fr. Martin Moran, Killannin, Rosscahill, - 087/2508959. Bookings – Reservations – Enquiries to: Joe Walsh Tours, 89 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2; email: [info@joewalstours.ie](mailto:info@joewalstours.ie)

**Prayer for Vocations:**

Lord Jesus Christ, gentle shepherd, you know each of us by name. Through Baptism you reach into our hearts and call us to do something special for you with our lives. We pray for vocations. Give people the courage to answer your call to follow you and serve the people of God. A vocation is a service to bring God's joy and love into a world that longs for it. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Family Support Drop-in Clinic**

Are you dealing with a difficult issue at home? Do you need a friendly ear to voice your concerns? Solas Family Resource Centre in conjunction with Tusla and Foroige are offering a **Family Support Community Drop-In Clinic on the first Wednesday of every month. No appointment needed** just call in for a cup of tea and a chat. We will provide a safe and confidential space to discuss your issues and concerns, we can support or link you with other services, provide information and guidance. For more information please contact John on 093-36446 or Eamonn on 086-1713384.

**THREE-DAY PILGRIMAGE IN LOUGH DERG**

**Friday 23 to Sunday 25 June 2023.** Bus departing Renmore church at 7.15am on Friday (pick-up points can be arranged if required). Cost €130 including bus. For more information and bookings please contact Anne on 086 838 1633 or Patrizia at 086 407 3192.

**HOLY LAND CHRISTMAS PILGRIMAGE**

Independent pilgrimage organiser James Treacy is arranging a Galway/Mayo pilgrimage to the Holy Land for Christmas 2023, taking in Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Nazareth, the Dead Sea, Sea of Galilee, Last Supper Room, Garden of Gethsemane, and the Mount of Olives. Full day in Bethlehem on Christmas Day.

Please contact James Treacy at 061 921470 or Email [jamestreacyphotography@gmail.com](mailto:jamestreacyphotography@gmail.com) for further information.



**Please take home your mass leaflet to reflect on the readings and prayers from today's service. It's an opportunity to deepen your spiritual journey and strengthen your relationship with God.**



**PLEASE REMEMBER WITH A PRAYER THOSE WHO DIED ON THIS WEEK IN FORMER YEARS**

<b>Surname</b>	<b>Christian</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Date Died</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Cemetery</b>
<b>Connelly</b>	Mrs.	Ballycurrin	20/05/1916		Kilmaine
<b>Dooley</b>	Mary	Cahernabruick	20/05/1924	46	Shrule
<b>Davin</b>	James	St.Mary's Road	20/05/1986	63	Shrule
<b>Walsh</b>	Dinny	Brodella	20/05/1999	83	Shrule
<b>Monahan</b>	John	Toorard	21/05/1937	31	Moyne
<b>Clabby</b>	John	St. Mary's Road	21/05/1955	84	Shrule
<b>Burke</b>	Joe	Cahernabruick	21/05/2003	62	Shrule
<b>Joyce</b>	John	Brodella	22/05/1951	95	Tourmakeady
<b>Sweeney</b>	Laurence	Brodella	22/05/2008	98	Shrule
<b>Fitzgerald</b>	Michael	Gortatubber	23/05/1973	55	Shrule
<b>Burke</b>	Redmond	Brackloon	23/05/1999	76	Shrule
<b>McDonagh</b>	Jimmy	Laragan/New York	23/05/2010	42	Leitirmóir
<b>Hickey</b>	Aidan	Laragan / Athy	23/05/2018		Killursa
<b>Dooley</b>	Catherine	Cloonbanane	24/05/1932	72	Shrule
<b>Sweeney</b>	Helen	Gortatubber	24/05/1939	73	Killursa
<b>Davin</b>	John	Carheens, Dalgan	24/05/1951	81	Shrule
<b>Hughes</b>	John	Bullaun	24/05/2013	74	Shrule
<b>Murphy</b>	Eileen	Dalgan	24/05/2018		Shrule
<b>Muldoon</b>	John	Shrule	25/05/1927	86	Shrule
<b>Hyland</b>	Pat	Brodella	25/05/1940	72	Shrule
<b>Cradock</b>	Brigid	Shrule	25/05/1952	67	Shrule
<b>Hogan</b>	Pat	Rosdaff	25/05/1954	90	Moyne
<b>Crowe</b>	John	Moyne	25/05/1977	53	Shrule
<b>Frehan</b>	Pat	Shrule	25/05/1979	85	Shrule
<b>Fitzgerald</b>	Margaret	Renmore	25/05/2015	84	Shrule
<b>Dooley</b>	Stephen	Badgerfort	26/05/1951	33	Shrule
<b>Walsh</b>	John	Brodella	26/05/1973	1 day	Shrule
<b>Mellet</b>	Thomas	Mochorra	26/05/1982	84	Shrule
<b>Muldoon</b>	Jim	Shrule	26/05/1993	82	Shrule
<b>Owarzany</b>	Tadeusz(Teddy)	Woodpark	26/05/2007	92	Shrule
<b>Sheridan</b>	Catherine	Mohology	27/05/1927	84	Shrule
<b>Hyland</b>	Patrick	Ballisnahina	27/05/1941	86	Moyne
<b>Crampton</b>	Mary	Shrule	27/05/1949	90	Shrule
<b>Hogan</b>	Helena	Rosdaff	27/05/1952	57	Moyne
<b>Meenaghan</b>	Kate	Gurteen	27/05/1955	60	Shrule
<b>McGaugh</b>	Eamon	Glassvalley	27/05/2006	68	Kilursa
<b>Corbett</b>	Richard	Anlacca	28/05/1917	77	Shrule
<b>Higgins</b>	Patrick	Dalgan	28/05/1933	91	Shrule
<b>Corbett</b>	Patrick	Anlacca	28/05/1936	64	Shrule
<b>Davin</b>	Delia	Dalgan	28/05/1979	74	Shrule
<b>Lydon</b>	Martin	Dalgan Park	28/05/1994	74	Shrule
<b>Canavan</b>	Mary	Ballycurrin	28/05/2008	84	Killursa

**PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER WITH A PRAYER THE RECENTLY DECEASED**

**Martin (Mattie) Moran**  
 Cloonascragh,  
 Caherlistrane, Galway.  
 Funeral Mass for Mattie  
 took place at Corner Chapel  
 on Monday last 13<sup>th</sup> May  
 2023. RIP.



**Moytura Hurling Club Church Gate Collection**

in Shrule Parish on weekend of 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May.  
 Moytura had a very successful year in 2022 with both the  
 underage and adult teams winning  
 County and National titles and we hope  
 to continue the growth of hurling in  
 South Mayo. Anyone interested in  
 joining the club please contact  
 Sean McGahon on 086 0328006



**Novena for Life:** The *Pray for Life* Novena is an invitation to join thousands of people across Ireland to pray for the protection of human life, from Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May to the Feast of the Visitation on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> May. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life in Ireland. Visit [www.prayforlife.ie](http://www.prayforlife.ie) for the daily novena prayers which will also be posted on [facebook.com/PrayforLifeNovena](https://www.facebook.com/PrayforLifeNovena) and @ChooseLifeIRL on Twitter. This is an initiative of the Council for Life of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference.

# **MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 57th WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

## **Speaking with the heart "The truth in love" (Eph 4:15)**

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

After having reflected in past years on the verbs "to go and see" and "to listen" as conditions for good communication, with this Message for the LVII World Day of Social Communications, I would like to focus on "speaking with the heart". It is the heart that spurred us to go, to see and to listen, and it is the heart that moves us towards an open and welcoming way of communicating. Once we have practised listening, which demands waiting and patience, as well as foregoing the assertion of our point of view in a prejudicial way, we can enter into the dynamic of dialogue and sharing, which is precisely that of *communicating in a cordial way*. After listening to the other with a pure heart, we will also be able to speak *following the truth in love* (cf. Eph 4:15). We should not be afraid of proclaiming the truth, even if it is at times uncomfortable, but of doing so without charity, without heart. Because "the Christian's programme" — as Benedict XVI wrote — "is 'a heart which sees'". [1] A heart that reveals the truth of our being with its beat and that, for this reason, should be listened to. This leads those who listen to attune themselves to the same wave length, to the point of being able to hear within their heart also the heartbeat of the other. Then the miracle of encounter can take place, which makes us look at one another with compassion, welcoming our mutual frailties with respect rather than judging by hearsay and sowing discord and division.

Jesus warns us that every tree is known by its fruit (cf. Lk 6:44): "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil man out of his evil treasure produces evil; for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks" (v. 45). This is why, in order to communicate *truth with charity*, it is necessary to purify one's heart. Only by listening and speaking with a pure heart can we see beyond appearances and overcome the vague din which, also in the field of information, does not help us discern in the complicated world in which we live. The call to speak with the heart radically challenges the times in which we are living, which are so inclined towards indifference and indignation, at times even on the basis of disinformation which falsifies and exploits the truth.

### **Communicating cordially**

Communicating in a cordial manner means that those who read or listen to us are led to welcome our participation in the joys, fears, hopes and suffering of the women and men of our time. Those who speak in this way love the other because they care and protect their freedom without violating it. We can see this style in the mysterious wayfarer who dialogues with the disciples headed to Emmaus, after the tragedy that took place at Golgotha. The Risen Jesus speaks to them with the heart, accompanying the journey of their suffering with respect, proposing himself and not imposing himself, lovingly opening their minds to understand the profound meaning of what had happened. Indeed, they can joyfully exclaim that their hearts burned within them as he spoke to them on the road and explained the Scriptures to them (cf. Lk 24:32).

In a historical period marked by polarizations and contrasts — to which unfortunately not even the ecclesial community is immune — the commitment to communicating "with open heart and arms" does not pertain exclusively to those in the field of communications; it is everyone's responsibility. We are all called to seek and to speak the truth and to do so with charity. We Christians in particular are continually urged to keep our tongue from evil (cf. Ps 34:13), because as Scripture teaches us, with the same tongue we can bless the Lord and curse men and women who were made in the likeness of God (cf. Jas 3:9). No evil word should come from our mouths, but rather "only such as is good for edifying, as fits the occasion, that it may impart grace to those who hear" (Eph 4:29).

Sometimes friendly conversations can open a breach even in the most hardened of hearts. We also have evidence of this in literature. I am thinking of that memorable page in Chapter XXI of *The Betrothed* in which Lucia speaks with the heart to the *Innominato* [the Unnamed] until he, disarmed and afflicted by a healthy inner crisis, gives in to the gentle strength of love. We experience this in society, where kindness is not only a question of "etiquette" but a genuine antidote to cruelty, which unfortunately can poison hearts and make relationships toxic. We need it in the field of media, so that communication does not foment acrimony that

exasperates, creates rage and leads to clashes, but helps people peacefully reflect and interpret with a critical yet always respectful spirit, the reality in which they live.

### ***Communicating heart to heart: "In order to speak well, it is enough to love well"***

One of the brightest and still fascinating examples of "speaking with the heart" is offered by Saint Francis de Sales, a Doctor of the Church, whom I wrote about in the Apostolic Letter, *Totum Amoris Est*, 400 years after his death. In addition to this important anniversary, I would like to mention another anniversary that takes place in 2023: the centenary of his proclamation as patron of Catholic journalists by Pius XI with the Encyclical, *Rerum Omnium Perturbationem*. A brilliant intellectual, fruitful writer and profound theologian, Francis de Sales was Bishop of Geneva at the beginning of the XVII century during difficult years marked by heated disputes with Calvinists. His meek attitude, humanity and willingness to dialogue patiently with everyone, especially with those who disagreed with him, made him an extraordinary witness of God's merciful love. One could say about him: "A pleasant voice multiplies friends, and a gracious tongue multiplies courtesies" ( *Sir* 6:5). After all, one of his most famous statements, "heart speaks to heart", inspired generations of faithful, among them Saint John Henry Newman, who chose it as his motto, *Cor ad cor loquitur*. One of his convictions was, "In order to speak well, it is enough to love well". It shows that for him communication should never be reduced to something artificial, to a marketing strategy, as we might say nowadays, but is rather a reflection of the soul, the visible surface of a nucleus of love that is invisible to the eye. For Saint Francis de Sales, precisely "in the heart and through the heart, there comes about a subtle, intense and unifying process in which we come to know God". [2] By "loving well", Saint Francis succeeded in communicating with Martin, the deaf-mute, becoming his friend. This is why he is also known as the protector of people with impairments in communicating.

It is from this "criterion of love" that, through his writings and witness of life, the saintly Bishop of Geneva reminds us that "we are what we communicate". This goes against the grain today, at a time when — as we experience especially on social media — communication is often exploited so that the world may see us as we would like to be and not as we are. Saint Francis de Sales disseminated many copies of his writings among the Geneva community. This "journalistic" intuition earned him a reputation that quickly went beyond the confines of his diocese and still endures to this day. His writings, Saint Paul VI observed, provide for a "highly enjoyable, instructive and moving" reading. [3] If we look today at the field of communications, are these not precisely the characteristics that an article, a report, a television or radio programme or a social media post should include? May people who work in communications feel inspired by this saint of tenderness, seeking and telling the truth with courage and freedom and rejecting the temptation to use sensational and combative expressions.

### ***Speaking with the heart in the synodal process***

As I have emphasised, "In the Church, too, there is a great need to listen to and to hear one another. It is the most precious and life-giving gift we can offer each other". [4] Listening without prejudice, attentively and openly, gives rise to speaking according to God's style, nurtured by closeness, compassion and tenderness. We have a pressing need in the Church for communication that kindles hearts, that is balm on wounds and that shines light on the journey of our brothers and sisters. I dream of an ecclesial communication that knows how to let itself be guided by the Holy Spirit, gentle and at the same time, prophetic, that knows how to find new ways and means for the wonderful proclamation it is called to deliver in the third millennium. A communication which puts the relationship with God and one's neighbour, especially the neediest, at the centre and which knows how to light the fire of faith rather than preserve the ashes of a self-referential identity. A form of communication founded on humility in listening and *parrhesia* in speaking, which never separates truth from charity.

### ***Disarming souls by promoting a language of peace***

"A soft tongue will break a bone", says the book of Proverbs (25:15). Today more than ever, speaking with the heart is essential to foster a culture of peace in places where there is war; to open paths that allow for dialogue and reconciliation in places where hatred and enmity rage. In the dramatic context of the global conflict we are experiencing, it is urgent to maintain a form of communication that is not hostile. It is necessary to overcome the tendency to "discredit and insult opponents from the outset [rather] than to open a respectful dialogue". [5] We need communicators who are open to dialogue, engaged in promoting integral disarmament and committed to undoing the belligerent psychosis that nests in our hearts, as Saint John XXIII prophetically

urged in the Encyclical *Pacem In Terris*: "True peace can only be built in mutual trust" (No. 113). A trust which has no need of sheltered or closed communicators but bold and creative ones who are ready to take risks to find common ground on which to meet. As was the case sixty years ago, we are now also living in a dark hour in which humanity fears an escalation of war that must be stopped as soon as possible, also at the level of communication. It is terrifying to hear how easily words calling for the destruction of people and territories are spoken. Words, unfortunately, that often turn into warlike actions of heinous violence. This is why all belligerent rhetoric must be rejected, as well as every form of propaganda that manipulates the truth, disfiguring it for ideological ends. Instead, what must be promoted is a form of communication that helps create the conditions to resolve controversies between peoples.

As Christians, we know that the destiny of peace is decided by conversion of hearts, since the virus of war comes from within the human heart. [6] From the heart come the right words to dispel the shadows of a closed and divided world and to build a civilization which is better than the one we have received. Each of us is asked to engage in this effort, but it is one that especially appeals to the sense of responsibility of those working in the field of communications so that they may carry out their profession as a mission.

May the Lord Jesus, the pure Word poured out from the heart of the Father, help us to make our communication clear, open and heartfelt.

May the Lord Jesus, the Word made flesh, help us listen to the beating of hearts, to rediscover ourselves as brothers and sisters, and to disarm the hostility that divides.

May the Lord Jesus, the Word of truth and love, help us speak the truth in charity, so that we may feel like protectors of one another.

*Rome, Saint John Lateran, 24 January 2023, Memorial of Saint Francis de Sales.*

FRANCISCUS



# Pray for Life Novena 2023

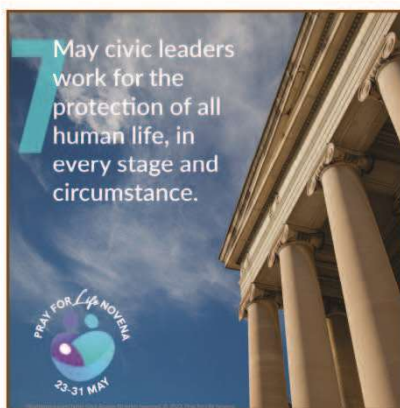
Join thousands of people across Ireland to Pray for Life!



The Pray for Life Novena ([prayforlife.ie](http://prayforlife.ie)) is an invitation to people across Ireland, and indeed across the world, to pray for the protection of human life. The novena, an initiative of the Council for Life of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, begins on 23 May 2023 and ends on 31 May, the wonderful feast of the Visitation of Our Lady to her cousin Elizabeth.

Participants who sign up on the [prayforlife.ie](http://prayforlife.ie) website are sent the novena prayer each day to their email in-box; the daily prayer includes the intention of the day, a short intercession, a reflection, and a suggested action to help build a culture for life. A downloadable copy of the novena for printing is also available on the website.

This feast day of the Visitation sums up beautifully what the Pray for Life novena is about: a celebration of joy in new life, even in what can seem like difficult and challenging circumstances. Mary was moved by grace to an act of faith and allowed God the Father to guide her. She is the first evangeliser: she carries Jesus in her womb, and John in Elizabeth's womb recognises him and leaps for joy. What transpires for their lives is remarkable. The consequence of Mary saying 'yes' and her simple act of faith is transformative and redemptive for humanity. When each of us respond with joy and courage to the prompt of the Holy Spirit, as Mary did, we can transform not only our own lives but the whole of society. We can return again to a society which values and protects all life, especially at the earliest and most vulnerable stages. We can build again a



society that understands a fundamental truth: that every life is a good and perfect gift, deserving protection, that we each have a Father who wants us to 'have life and have it more abundantly' (John 10:10) What a powerful reality, that as members of the Body of Christ we can help those in their darkest moments, we can spiritually and practically connect with those feeling isolated, alone and undervalued: we can make a difference!

Last year was the first year of the Pray for Life novena, and the response was heart-warming and extremely encouraging: thousands of people of good will across Ireland and beyond joined in praying for life. The daily intentions included prayers for expectant mothers and fathers, for unborn children, for those who defend life, and for an end to abortion. We heard from parishes, prayer groups and families around Ireland who arranged to pray the novena together as a community, and who in turn shared it with others. This year again, the

Council for Life encourages parishes or other groups to pray the novena together in their church, prayer group or family.

If you are praying the novena as a group, please get in touch via the website [www.prayforlife.ie](http://www.prayforlife.ie) to let us know, so that together we can build a sense of a community of life, and of praying together, inviting and encouraging others to join us.

The aim of this Novena is to help nurture a culture that respects all human life and to promote the protection of life in its entirety from the moment of conception to its natural end. We invite you to unite in prayer with thousands of people all over the country. We know that if we continue to pray and act and never give up, all human life will once again be valued and protected in our country.

*'Bow down then before the power of God now, and he will raise you up on the appointed day; unload all your worries on him, since he is looking after you'*

1 Pt 5:7 FROM EVENING PRAYER  
FOR THE FEAST OF THE  
VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Martha Duffy



# **MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 2023 WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS**

## ***Vocation: Grace and Mission***

Dear brothers and sisters, dear young people!

This is now the sixtieth time that we are celebrating the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, established by Saint Paul VI in 1964, during the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. This providential initiative seeks to assist the members of the People of God, as individuals and as communities, to respond to the call and mission that the Lord entrusts to each of us in today's world, amid its afflictions and its hopes, its challenges and its achievements.

This year I would ask you, in your reflection and prayer, to take as your guide the theme "Vocation: Grace and Mission". This Day is a precious opportunity for recalling with wonder that the Lord's call is grace, complete gift, and at the same time a commitment to bring the Gospel to others. We are called to a faith that bears witness, one that closely connects the life of grace, as experienced in the sacraments and ecclesial communion, to our apostolate in the world. Led by the Spirit, Christians are challenged to respond to existential peripheries and human dramas, ever conscious that the mission is God's work; it is not carried out by us alone, but always in ecclesial communion, together with our brothers and sisters, and under the guidance of the Church's pastors. For this has always been God's dream: that we should live with him in a communion of love.

### ***"Chosen before the creation of the world"***

The apostle Paul opens before us a remarkable horizon: in Christ, God the Father **"chose us before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Eph 1:4-5).** These words allow us to glimpse life at its fullest: God has "conceived" us in his image and likeness and desires us to be his sons and daughters. We were created by love, for love and with love, and we are made for love.

In the course of our lives, this call, which is part of the fibre of our being and the secret of our happiness, comes to us by the work of the Holy Spirit in ever new ways. It enlightens our minds, strengthens our wills, fills us with amazement and sets our hearts afire. At times, the Spirit comes to us in completely unexpected ways. So it was for me when, on 21 September 1953, as I was on my way to an annual school celebration, I was led to stop by a church and go to confession. That day changed my life and left a mark that has endured to the present day. **God's call to the gift of self tends to make itself known gradually: in our encounter with situations of poverty, in moments of prayer, when we see a clear witness to the Gospel, or read something that opens our minds.** When we hear God's word and sense that it is spoken directly to us, in the advice given by a fellow brother or sister, in moments of sickness or sorrow... In all the ways he calls us, God shows infinite creativity.

The Lord's initiative and his gracious gift call for a response on our part. **Vocation is "the interplay between divine choice and human freedom",** [1] a dynamic and exciting relationship between God and the human heart. The gift of vocation is like a divine seed that springs up in the soil of our existence, opens our hearts to God and to others, so that we can share with them the treasure we ourselves have found. This is the fundamental structure of what we mean by vocation: God calls us in love and we, in gratitude, respond to him in love. **We realize that we are beloved sons and daughters of the one Father, and we come to see ourselves as brothers and sisters of one another.** Saint Therese of the Child Jesus, when at last she "saw" this clearly, exclaimed, "At last I have found my calling: my call is love. Indeed, I have found my proper place in the Church... In the heart of the Church, my Mother, I will be love". [2]

### ***"I am a mission on this earth"***

God's call, we said, includes a "sending". There is no vocation without mission. There is no happiness and full self-realization unless we offer others the new life that we have found. **God's call to love is an experience that does not allow us to remain silent. Saint Paul says, "Woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!" (1 Cor 9:16).** And the First Letter of John begins with the words, "What we have heard and seen, looked at and touched – the Word made flesh – we declare also to you, so that our joy may be complete" (cf. 1:1-4).

Five years ago, in the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, I spoke to every baptized person, saying, **"You need to see the entirety of your life as a mission" (No. 23). Yes, because each and every one of us is able to say: "I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 273).**

**Our shared mission as Christians is to bear joyful witness wherever we find ourselves, through our actions and words,** to the experience of being with Jesus and members of his community, which is the Church. **That mission finds expression in works of material and spiritual mercy, in a welcoming and gentle way of life that reflects closeness, compassion and tenderness, in contrast to the culture of waste and indifference.** By being a neighbour, like the Good Samaritan (cf. *Lk* 10:25-37), we come to understand the heart of our Christian vocation: to imitate Jesus Christ, who came to serve, not to be served (cf. *Mk* 10:45).

**This missionary activity does not arise simply from our own abilities, plans and projects, nor from our sheer willpower or our efforts to practice the virtues; it is the result of a profound experience in the company of Jesus.** Only then can we testify to a Person, a Life, and thus become "apostles". Only then can we regard ourselves as "sealed, even branded, by this mission of bringing light, blessing, enlivening, raising, healing and freeing" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 273). The Gospel icon of this experience is that of the two disciples journeying to Emmaus. After their encounter with the risen Jesus, they said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the Scriptures to us?" (*Lk* 24:32). In those disciples, we can see what it means to have "hearts on fire, feet on the move". [3] This is also my fervent hope for the coming World Youth Day in Lisbon, to which I joyfully look forward, with its motto: "Mary arose and went with haste" (*Lk* 1:39). May every man and woman feel called to arise and go in haste, with hearts on fire.

#### ***Called together and convened.***

**The evangelist Mark relates the moment when Jesus called to himself twelve disciples, each by name. He appointed them to be with him and to be sent out to proclaim the message,** to heal infirmities and to cast out demons (cf. *Mk* 3:13-15). **The Lord thus laid the foundations of his new community.** The Twelve were people from different social classes and trades; none of them was a person of influence. The Gospels speak too of other callings, like that of the 72 disciples whom Jesus sent out two by two (cf. *Lk* 10:1).

**The Church is an *Ecclesia*,** the Greek word for *an assembly of persons called and convened, in order to form the community of missionary disciples of Jesus Christ committed to sharing love among themselves (cf. *Jn* 13:34; 15:12) and spreading that love to all others, so that God's kingdom may come.*

**Within the Church, all of us are servants, in accordance with the variety of our vocations, charisms and ministries.** Our common vocation to give ourselves in love develops and finds concrete expression in the life of lay men and women, devoted to raising a family as a small *domestic church* and working as a leaven of the Gospel to renew the different sectors of society; in the testimony of consecrated women and men who are completely committed to God for the sake of their brothers and sisters as a prophetic sign of the kingdom of God; in ordained ministers – deacons, priests and bishops – placed at the service of preaching, prayer and fostering the communion of the holy People of God. **Only in relation with all the others, does any particular vocation in the Church fully disclose its true nature and richness.** Viewed in this light, the Church is a vocational "**symphony**", with **every vocation united yet distinct, in harmony and joined together in "going forth"** to radiate throughout the world the new life of the kingdom of God.

#### ***Grace and mission: a gift and a task***

Dear brothers and sisters, **vocation is a gift and a task, a source of new life and true joy.** May the initiatives of prayer and of activity associated with this Day strengthen an awareness of vocation within our families, our parish communities, our communities of consecrated life, and our ecclesial associations and movements. The Spirit of the risen Lord dispels our apathy and grants us the gifts of sympathy and empathy. In this way, he enables us to live each day born anew as children of the God who is love (cf. *1 Jn* 4:16) and in turn to offer that love to others. To bring life everywhere, especially in places of exclusion and exploitation, poverty and death, in order to enlarge the spaces of love, [4] so that God may reign ever more fully in this world.

May the prayer that Saint Paul VI composed for the first World Day of Vocations, 11 April 1964, accompany us on our journey:

*"O Jesus, divine Shepherd of souls, you called the apostles and made them fishers of men. Continue to draw to yourself ardent and generous souls from among the young, in order to make them your followers and your ministers. Give them a share in your thirst for the redemption of all... Open before them the horizons of the entire world... By responding to your call, may they prolong your mission here on earth, build up your Mystical Body which is the Church, and be 'the salt of the earth' and 'the light of the world' (Mt 5:13)".*

May the Virgin Mary watch over you and protect you. With my blessing.

*Rome, Saint John Lateran, 30 April 2023, Fourth Sunday of Easter.*

FRANCIS