



Hats off to international graduates

L-R Rev. Yanbo Chen, Fr. Zhao Ming Zhe and Fr. Wanhui Hao.
See back page to learn more about the St. Patrick's Day Scholarships' Fund.

Paying Heed to the Prophets of Climate Change

The President of St. Patrick's College, Rev. Professor Michael Mullaney has challenged people of faith to pay heed to the modern-day prophets of climate change such as David Attenborough, who has warned that the collapse of our civilizations and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon.

In a strongly worded sermon, delivered to six hundred guests, including President Michael D. Higgins, Prof. Mullaney said that unless our society underwent what Pope Francis has described as an "ecological conversion" - much of the earth will be uninhabitable for humans in 100 years' time.

"If every family in the world consumed the same as an average Irish family consumes today, we would need 3.3 planets to supply our needs and this is simply unsustainable. We must not continue to live as if the world's resources were infinite," warned Fr. Mullaney.

Yet, despite the dire signals, for many people the effect their lifestyle

was having on the planet was not a priority, he said.

Fr. Mullaney suggested that while science, technology and politics all played important roles in tackling the complex ecological and climate crisis the world is currently facing - there is a closer truth. "We know that when our human choices are not good, neither is the future of creation. We all have to do our part," he said.

Fr. Mullaney contended that an equally important question to ask was what kind of world we wanted our children to inherit?

"The quality of life, our world, the planet, the tomorrow of our children is shaped by what we do today. This planet is on loan to every generation, a precious gift we must hand on," Prof. Mullaney concluded.

Professor Mullaney's reflections on climate change are available at:
<https://maynoothcollege.ie/news-events/2018/christmas-and-climate-change>

Cameras, Lights, Action for the Easter Vigil



The National Seminary is delighted to have been invited by RTE to host this year's Good Friday and Easter Vigil religious ceremonies. The services will be broadcast from St. Patrick's College Chapel, which is recognised as one of the most beautiful liturgical settings in the country.

"Television and radio audiences throughout Ireland and overseas will be able to join in a solemn, uplifting and life-giving celebration of scripture, music and symbolism," says Fr. Tom Surlis, Rector of the National Seminary.

The whole community in Maynooth; seminarians, lay students, teaching faculty, other staff, local parishioners, families and friends will be involved in these special Easter broadcasts.

"Our aim is to share the rich treasury of St Patrick's College with audiences globally. People will see for themselves just how positive we are for the future and the confidence we have in our college's dual-mission of education at the Pontifical University and priestly formation at the National Seminary," concludes Fr. Surlis.

The services will be broadcast on RTE television and radio:
The Lord's Passion - Good Friday 19 April - 3pm
The Easter Vigil - Holy Saturday 20 April - 11pm
Everyone is welcome to attend the Easter ceremonies
Please call 01-708 3964 or email specialevents@spcm.ie to reserve seats.



**Fr. Tom Surlis –
Rector of the
National Seminary**

Six months into my new job ...

Recently I had the privilege of meeting Vocations Directors from 21 of Ireland's 26 dioceses. I was greatly struck by the optimism, confidence and palpable sense of purpose that permeated our gathering. This echoes the experiences I've had during my first six months as Rector of the National Seminary.

There's a vibrant and healthy community life within both the seminary and the wider College. Coupled with the enthusiasm, commitment to prayer, study and pastoral outreach that is evident among our seminarians, I can confidently affirm that St Patrick's College, Maynooth has a bright future.

To that end, an exciting initiative is underway. A committee has been given the task of developing a new programme for the formation of priests in Ireland – here it's called the *Ratio Nationalis*.

A process of consultation has begun with Parish and Diocesan Pastoral Councils; Bishops, Priests and Religious; Third-Level Chaplains; Youth Ministers and Groups and of course Seminarians themselves.

All of these groups are being asked to describe and define the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral qualities they consider desirable and necessary for those who would embark on the great voyage of discovery that is initial formation for the diocesan priesthood.

Our goal in the National Seminary is to provide a welcoming milieu where well-rounded, highly-educated men of prayer and pastoral zeal prepare for a life of priestly service in Ireland and further afield. A new *Ratio Nationalis* will be of great assistance in this regard.

New opportunities for faith and evangelisation

Shane Costello from Claremorris, Co. Mayo trained to be a primary school teacher and taught for a year before entering the National Seminary in 2014. Now in his fifth year of formation, Shane reflects on his calling to the priesthood and what lies ahead once he is ordained.

Q. How did you know you had a calling to be a priest?

I remember serving mass as a child and being sure that becoming a priest was what I wanted to do. As I moved through secondary school, becoming a priest was very much on my mind – but I resisted it and tried to put the idea out of my head. Eventually, after teacher training college I decided to contact my diocese and was accepted as a seminarian.

Q. What is it like being a seminarian at Maynooth?

Overall being a seminarian in Maynooth has been a very positive experience. The formation programme involves four key areas: academic study, human development, spiritual growth and pastoral experience. These "pillars" of formation are aimed at helping the seminarian best respond to his vocation in a wholesome and holistic manner. Personally, the formation I have received has enhanced and strengthened my feeling of being called by God.

Q. Once ordained, what will be the challenges and rewards of your future life as a priest?

I think it's a wonderful time to be a priest in Ireland. The Church here is obviously facing many challenges, such as an increasingly secularised society and falling clergy numbers - however this presents new opportunities for faith and evangelisation. I believe the greatest challenge for a priest nowadays is how to positively present the Gospel to a generation who perhaps do not see any value in it or are indifferent.

As a priest you accompany people during many of the most significant events of their lives, such as baptisms, weddings or funerals. This is a very special and yet humbling aspect of priestly ministry.

Q. What do you think is special about Maynooth College?

As the only Pontifical University in Ireland, St. Patrick's College, has a special role to play in the mission of the Church here. I know that in these changing times Maynooth is continuing to respond to the needs of the Church through enabling others, both lay and ordained, to bring the message of the Gospel to the Ireland of today.



**Seminarian
Shane Costello:**

**"Formation has
strengthened my
feeling of being
called by God."**

Pope Francis' Synodal Vision of the Church

As well as teaching lay and clerical students and supervising postgraduate dissertations, the Theology Faculty also aims to serve the Church and interact with wider society.

At a recent meeting of the Irish bishops in Knock, Co. Mayo, faculty members were invited to engage on a theme close to Pope Francis, namely, synodality.

'Synod' means 'walking together.' Synods are gatherings or assemblies of all the people of God whether at a local, national or universal level.

Pope Francis is inviting the Church as a whole to travel on this 'synodal path.' It reflects his desire for a less clerical, less centralised Church preoccupied with rules. For Francis, a synodal Church is one which

listens, and which realises that listening is 'more than simply hearing.'

In 2016, the Diocese of Limerick held its first synod in over half a century. Out of a process of listening, discernment and prayer, emerged a Pastoral Plan that will chart the Limerick Diocese' mission for the coming years.

At the meeting between faculty members and bishops in Knock, we reflected on how Pope Francis' call to a synodal Church might play out in the Irish context. Should there be more diocesan assemblies and synods? Should planning begin for a National Synod?

Church leaders in many countries are facing a crisis of credibility against the backdrop of clerical sexual abuse.

Nevertheless, the openness, welcome and receptivity that our faculty members experienced at Knock, augurs well for the ongoing dialogue between bishops, theologians and all of the faithful.



Rev. Professor Declan Marmion – Dean of the Faculty of Theology



Ordained a Permanent Deacon in 2014 - Philip Carder's family with Archbishop Eamon Martin.

An opportunity to serve others

Philip Carder spent more than forty years managing in footwear, clothing and textile companies. While still working in industry he studied for a theology degree. As retirement approached, he trained to be a hospital chaplain and later became a deacon.

Q. When did you begin Diaconate training and what does it involve?

I began formal diaconate training in 2010, but in a way my training had begun at that first Theology lecture on Sacred Scripture which awakened me to the power of the Word of God. Through chaplaincy training I discovered the pastoral experience of meeting Christ in the wards of the hospital. Diaconate training covers Theology; Canon Law; Sacred Scripture; Liturgy and Homiletics.

Q. What does your work as deacon now comprise?

The work of a deacon is very varied. The parish of Lower Killeavy in the diocese of Armagh is where I proclaim the Gospel and preach most weekends. I have performed the sacrament of marriage several times and participate in funeral services. I am involved in catechesis, and also the care of the sick in our parish. Outside of the parish, I serve as a chaplain in both hospital and hospice. Other deacons are involved in schools, prison chaplaincy and recently one of our deacons was appointed as a Diocesan Secretary.

Q. Have you benefitted from becoming a deacon?

The Diaconate is a joyful ministry because it encompasses two great characteristics of Jesus Christ, in that we have the privilege of proclaiming the Good News and the opportunity to serve others. After my marriage and the gift of my children, I did not expect the blessings that becoming a deacon have given me.

Q. What does your family think of your new role?

My children found it strange at first, one of my sons was uncomfortable with the act of prostration at the ordination, but now they are very supportive because of the joy that it gives me. For my wife, I think she should have been ordained along with me. Her incredible support allows me to serve as a deacon. Also some of my homilies would have been too theological or wordy without her gentle criticism!

Sweet music to your ears

Since the turn of the year, musical directors and choir leaders have been attending seminars in Cork, Thurles and Longford to gain insights into the new liturgical music series '**Feasts and Seasons - Volume 2**', recently launched by the National Seminary.

Led by Maynooth's Director of Sacred Music, Dr. John O'Keeffe, the special workshops are designed to introduce 17 new pieces of church music and specifically to describe the liturgical context in which the music can be used.

This second volume of '**Feasts & Seasons**' contains many new compositions, nine of which are original pieces by John O'Keeffe himself. There's also a new setting of the Hail Mary by Peadar O'Riada, which was performed at the end of last year's Papal Mass in the Phoenix Park.

"The pieces are easy to learn, accessible and widely usable - whatever a parish's musical resources are. The music is also recognisably Irish in character," explains Dr. O'Keeffe.

If choirs or musical directors around the country would like Dr. O'Keeffe to give a workshop in their own diocese, they should contact him directly at:

john.okeeffe@spcm.ie



Musicians from Bothar na Naomh and Templetuohy churches with Dr. John O'Keeffe in Thurles.

Happy St Patrick's Day from Maynooth's Global Village

At St. Patrick's College, we believe students shouldn't be excluded from strengthening their Catholic faith because of a lack of resources.

Since launching the **St Patrick's Day Scholarship Fund** for graduates from the developing world, you have generously provided more than €45,000 which to date has funded the theological formation of 11 students.

The College continually receives requests from seminaries and dioceses in Africa, Asia, Ukraine and South America. Many of these institutions lack the financial resources to send their post-graduate theology students to Maynooth.

As you will see from the testimonials below, your financial input is having a profound effect, enabling us to welcome priests and nuns from China, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana and Cameroon. They in turn enrich our college community by sharing experiences from their diverse cultures and traditions.

The scholarships you fund have a transformative effect on the lives of their recipients who return to their home countries ready to inspire and deepen the faith of the communities they serve,

I am very grateful for your commitment to Maynooth and consideration of our annual St Patrick's Day Scholarship Fund appeal.

Rev. Prof. Michael Mullaney
President, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth



2019 St. Patrick's Day Scholarships recipients:
L-R: Fr. Anthony Omodunbi, Fr. Roland Ntambang, College President – Fr. Michael Mullaney, Sr. Johanna Yan Ming Jiao, Fr. Joseph Ali, Fr Peter Johnson and Fr. Wanhui Hao.

Scholars express thanks to donors

"Undertaking post-graduate studies in theology with a specialty in liturgical music has given me a wealth of experience which I will bring home to my diocese. There is one thing - over and above many others - that will keep Maynooth forever green in my memory and that's the culture of fraternity that exists between lecturers and students."

Fr. Roland Ntambang, Nigeria



"I regard the grant I have received as a lifesaver. Once I complete my studies, I will return to China where I'll be teaching in seminaries and supporting the Religious Sisters Ongoing Formation Project. I will also be involved in a training centre for the lay faithful, devoting myself to carry forward the ecological awareness and Christian responsibilities in protecting our common home."

Sr. Johanna Jiao Yan Ming, China



"My journey in Ireland has been the most rewarding and extraordinary experience and will remain influential for the rest of my life. The scholarship was granted at a very critical stage of my studies - when financial difficulties almost seemed insurmountable. Go raibh mile maith agat. May God bless you all and the good and generous people of Ireland."

Rev. Gobezayehu Yilma, Ethiopia

Calendar of Events

January 2019

Maynooth Campus was awarded the **Green Flag** in 2018 by **An Taisce** and the international **Foundation for Environmental Education**.



March 2019

Renowned moral theologian, Professor David Hollenbach SJ, from Georgetown University, will deliver the annual Devlin Lecture; **"Human Rights in Catholic Social Thought – Some Urgent Challenges Today."**



March 2019

Annual Trócaire Lecture: **"At the Service of Justice and Peace"** followed by an honorary doctorate ceremony for Mr. Eamonn Meehan and Fr Brendan McConvery CSSR.



April 2019

Undergraduate Open Days
6 April & 29 June 10.30am – 3pm.



May 2019

Book launch of **Acedia and the Transformation of Spiritual Malaise: Essays in Honour of Martin McA Linden**.



June 2019

Summer school and conference: **"The child in our midst - scripture, liturgy & the spirituality of the child."**



St. Patrick's College welcomes your support.

For more information:

✓ <http://maynoothcollege.ie/giving>

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