



Using a shamrock Saint Patrick teaches the mystery of the Trinity to the High King of Ireland

## Symposium to reclaim the real St. Patrick from sham-rockery

An academic symposium to honour Ireland's national saint will take place in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth on Patron's Day, 12 March. The inaugural symposium, part of the Maynooth 225 anniversary celebrations, will provide a platform for reflection and discussion so as to retrieve and restore the real Patrick.

"St. Patrick's Day celebrations both at home and abroad have increasingly become a parody of Ireland's patron saint," says Rev. Professor Michael Mullaney, President of SPCM. "Nowadays, Patrick has been lost among the 'sham-rockery' of festivals and floats and relegated to being a mascot for parades."

Fr. Mullaney believes that little space is being given to any serious reflection or engagement with Ireland's national Apostle. While few of St. Patrick's writings survive, those that do, remain relevant today. "They speak about becoming missionary to the Irish again; the value of prayer and perseverance; the issue of human trafficking as well as the impact and contribution an outsider like Patrick can make on a country and its culture," says Fr. Mullaney.

Thomas O'Loughlin, Professor of Historical Theology at the University of Nottingham, who is an expert in Celtic Christianity, will deliver the keynote address: "An embarrassing situation – Did 9th century theologians seek to sanitise Patrick's Confessio?"

"SPCM's mission is to prepare priests and lay pastoral leaders to keep the fire of faith, lit by Patrick on the Hill of Slane still burning brightly. In this sense the College is the custodian of the mission of Patrick, a gift and responsibility it treasures and wishes to share," Fr. Mullaney concludes.



## Cardinal Tagle to deliver Trócaire's Lenten Lecture

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle will deliver a keynote address entitled "Cry of the Poor, Cry of the Earth" for Trócaire's Annual Lecture in the Aula Maxima, St. Patrick's College on 10 March.

The Filipino cardinal was appointed by Pope Francis to a key position in the Vatican Curia last December. As Prefect of the **Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples**, Cardinal Tagle oversees the transmission and dissemination of the faith throughout the whole world, with particular focus on the dioceses of Africa, Asia and Oceania.

In 2015, Cardinal Tagle became president of **Caritas Internationalis**, a confederation of 165 Catholic relief, development and social service organisations, including **Trócaire**, which operate in more than 200 countries worldwide.



Cardinal Tagle is known to be very close to Pope Francis and shares his synodal vision for a missionary church.

# Politics is a noble profession and a lofty calling

**Members of the Seminary Community visited Leinster House shortly before the recent General Election to attend a seminar on *Politics and Christian Culture* organised by Senator Rónán Mullen.**

The seminar included fascinating inputs from former Taoiseach, John Bruton; Secretary General and Clerk of the Dáil, Peter Finnegan and Assistant Secretary and Parliamentary Legal Advisor, Mellissa English.

When he visited Ireland in August 2018, Pope Francis prayed that, *"Ireland, in listening to the polyphony of contemporary political and social discussion, will not be forgetful of the powerful strains of the Christian message that have sustained it in the past, and can continue to do so in the future."*

Politics and politicians play an important role in serving the common good, by endeavouring to develop a society and a state in which each citizen, visitor and guest is not only welcomed but is allowed to flourish and to make a contribution, to the harmonious and integrated development of the community according to each person's unique gifts and mission in life.

The work that politicians of faith do becomes immensely valuable when their minds are open to the enlightenment given by God's Spirit of Love through the lived example of Jesus Christ which has been imitated by many other politicians and civil leaders across the ages.

Politics therefore is a noble profession and a lofty calling and the work that politicians of faith do cannot be underestimated; nor should it be undervalued.

**Fr. Tomás Surlis**  
**Rector of the National Seminary**



Senator Rónán Mullen (front row at right) welcomed the Seminary Community to Leinster House on 30 January 2020



Pope Francis and Rev. Shane Costello venerate the new pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Knock on the Papal Altar in St. Peter's Basilica. The statue was commissioned to celebrate the 140th anniversary of the apparition at Knock in 1879.

**Maynooth deacon joins Irish pilgrims for celebration with Pope Francis in St. Peter's Basilica**  
Maynooth seminarian Rev. Shane Costello of the Archdiocese of Tuam served as a deacon at the first ever *Sunday of the Word of God Mass in St Peter's Basilica on 26 January*. Many other Irish pilgrims also assisted as **Ministers of the Word, as gift bearers and choir members during the ceremony.**

Ireland's National Marian Shrine at Knock was invited to participate in the Mass and a large group of Irish pilgrims travelled to Rome for the occasion, presided over by Pope Francis.

*"To be present at a Mass said by the Holy Father was a joyous experience and it has deepened my sense of belonging to a Universal Church. The splendour of St Peter's Basilica and the participation of thousands of the faithful added a real sense of reverence and solemnity to the Sunday of the Word of God celebration,"* said Shane.

**Ordination of Thomas Small to the Diaconate**



Rev. Thomas Small (left) of the Diocese of Kilmore was ordained to the diaconate by Most Rev. Michael Router, Auxiliary Bishop of Armagh on 9 February. Thomas's family and friends, as well as priests of Kilmore diocese were present in St Mary's Oratory, to bear witness on this special occasion. We wish Thomas every blessing as he prepares for his ordination to the priesthood later this year.

# Saints to go on your holidays with

**In Christianity, a “saint”, by definition, is someone who is believed to have attained eternal life. I like to think that every one of us has known quite a few saints personally in our lifetime. So who were they?**

They were the people who did the “ordinary things extraordinarily well”: the carers; those who loved deeply and with a prodigal heart. Theirs was the kind word, the thoughtful gesture; their lives poured out in the service of others.

They were people who relished life; radiated joy; made us laugh, and laughed themselves till their sides hurt. People who preferred to build up rather than tear down; aware of their own weaknesses, they accompanied us in our joys and our sorrows. And when we spoke, they listened. *Really listened*. We were comfortable with them because they were “real” with us.

They were people who loved life and loved the world; who could enjoy a sun-holiday in Mallorca as much as a pilgrimage to Lourdes. Both locations spoke to them of God and the goodness of his creation.

It’s often these individuals who have had a greater impact on our faith lives than the more well-known “official” saints. And we thought: if the God in whom these people professed belief is anything like the people themselves, then he’s certainly someone worth getting to know. These saints were our parents; grandparents; neighbours; colleagues; friends; acquaintances.

Sainthood doesn’t require a personality change. These people were simply the best version of themselves that they could possibly be. Sanctity is not for the few but for the many.



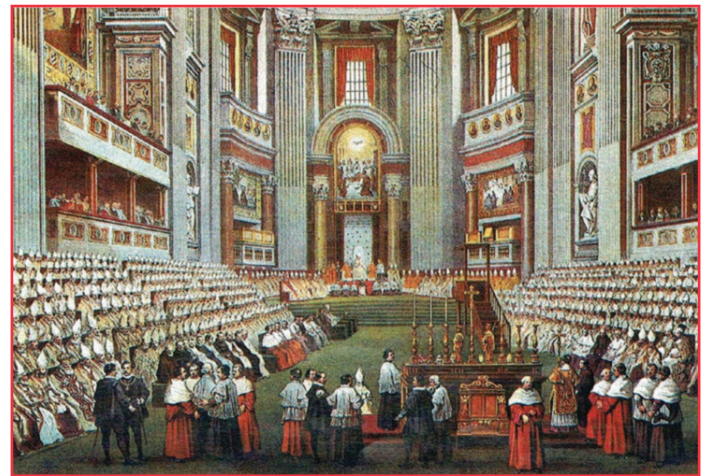
**Dr Salvador Ryan**  
*Professor of Ecclesiastical History*

## 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Vatican I - Dei Filius

**According to historical consensus, the Second Vatican Council was the most significant religious event of the 20th century. But before Vatican II, there was Vatican I (1869–1870), a largely forgotten council for most Catholics, but nevertheless significant.**

Famous for its definition of papal infallibility, Vatican I also addressed the rising secular rationalism of the day – a situation not unlike our own – by summarizing the principles of the Catholic faith in a document called *Dei Filius*.

What is reason and revelation? And how are faith and reason compatible? These and other questions will be pursued at St. Patrick’s College on 27-28 April 2020, in a two-day symposium dedicated to the teaching of *Dei Filius*.



Register free of charge: <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/150-years-after-vatican-1870-2020-dei-filius-and-theology-today-tickets-91635276579>

## Open invitation to attend the Maynooth Union Summer School Disciples in a Post-Christian World

To mark the 225 anniversary of the foundation of St. Patrick’s College, the Maynooth Union is extending an open invitation to priests from all colleges and seminaries, both at home and abroad, to attend its 2020 event on 8-9 June.

A summer school format is being adopted for this year’s Maynooth Union gathering.

“*Being a Disciple in a Post-Christian World*” is the over-arching theme for the speakers who include **Stijn Van den Bossche; Austen Ivereich; Michael Conway** and **Lorna Gold**.

They will present learnings from the experience of the Church globally, in Europe, nationally and also from an environmental viewpoint.

For more information or to register for the Maynooth Union 2020 Summer School 8 - 9 June:

<http://seminary.maynoothcollege.ie/maynooth-union-3-2/>

Call the Maynooth Union Office: 01 708 3958

Email: [union@spcm.ie](mailto:union@spcm.ie)

# Musical key to Maynooth 225 anniversary celebrations

On Sunday 16 February, the organist Professor Gerard Gillen, presented a special concert to mark the college's long and distinguished musical history. Under the direction of the College's Director of Sacred Music, Dr. John O'Keeffe, the Seminary Choir, Schola Gregoriana and the Maynooth College Chapel Choir sang music from the Christian liturgical canon. The programme ranged from plainchant of the Office of St. Patrick, to a recently commissioned setting of the Good Friday Reproaches, by Maynooth composer Martin O'Leary.

Sunday 8 March will see a sparkling anniversary performance of Haydn's *The Creation*, performed by Maynooth University's Choral Society, with an orchestra and distinguished soloists directed by Dr John O'Keeffe, SPCM's Director of Sacred Music.

A particularly exciting 225 anniversary development is the inauguration of the College's first ever *Maynooth Choral Festival*, on 24-26 April. This event which will feature competitions, recitals and exhibitions, has already attracted huge interest from the choral community throughout Ireland and is the brainchild of the College's Music and Cultural Events Co-Ordinator, Mr James Murphy.



## SUMMER GATHERING FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

All SPCM alumni are invited to return to the College on 13 June 2020 for a Maynooth College inaugural gathering.

The evening will allow graduates to savour Maynooth's warm atmosphere and tradition whilst evoking happy memories through meeting old friends.

SPCM wishes to strengthen connections with its alumni by letting them 'share their story', and with over 20,000 graduates worldwide, engaged in many different areas of education, business, religion, media and sports, there are many stories to tell.

Our memories echo the past while our aspirations contribute to society's future. With this in mind we look forward to the many successes Maynooth College graduates will achieve.

Please visit <https://maynoothcollege.ie/alumni> to update your details and we'll keep you posted about the 13 June gathering.

## Calendar of Events

### March 2020

1st **Bellarmino University Chorale and Maynooth University Chamber Choir**  
College Chapel at 7:00pm All welcome



3rd - 31st **An tAthair Peadar Ó Laoighaire Exhibition**  
John Paul II Library



8th **Haydn's "The Creation"** performed by Maynooth University Choral Society, with orchestra and distinguished soloists. College Chapel 4:00pm, tickets available from the Maynooth University Music Department.



10th **Postgraduate Open Evening**  
4:00pm, John Paul II Library



10th **Annual Trócaire Lecture** "Cry of the Poor, Cry of the Earth" Keynote speaker **Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle**

11th **Annual Corish Lecture** Duke University's **Professor David Morgan** 7:30pm, Renshan Hall.  
All welcome, please indicate your attendance to [specialerevents@spcm.ie](mailto:specialerevents@spcm.ie)



12th **Inaugural St Patrick Symposium** All welcome, please visit [www.maynoothcollege.ie/news-events/2020/inaugural-st-patrick-symposium](http://www.maynoothcollege.ie/news-events/2020/inaugural-st-patrick-symposium) for more information



29th **Launch of, 'Ceol na gCairde' with Cór Naomh Mhicil Dún Laoghaire**, 4:00pm, St Joseph's Oratory, please register interest via [specialerevents@spcm.ie](mailto:specialerevents@spcm.ie)



### April 2020

**Holy Week Ceremonies in the College Chapel**  
All Welcome



9th **Holy Thursday** 7:30pm

10th **The Lord's Passion, Good Friday** 3:00pm

11th **The Easter Vigil, Holy Saturday** 9:00pm

24th - 26th **Inaugural Maynooth Choral Festival** Please visit [www.maynoothcollege.ie](http://www.maynoothcollege.ie) for more information



25th **Spring Open Day** All Welcome

27th - 28th **Dei Filius and Theology Today - 150 Anniversary of Vatican I Symposium** All welcome, please register at [eventbrite.ie](http://eventbrite.ie)



### June 2020

8th - 9th **Maynooth Union Summer School**  
"Being a Disciple in a post-Christian world"



13th **Maynooth College inaugural gathering for Alumni and Friends** 6:00pm

Please email [alumni@spcm.ie](mailto:alumni@spcm.ie) for more information



**St. Patrick's College welcomes your support.**

For more information:

<http://maynoothcollege.ie/giving>

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