

IRISH AUGUSTINIAN NEWS

“HOLLY BOUGH” EDITION - 2010

Dear Brothers and Friends in Augustine,
When we were children we were grateful to those who filled our stockings at Christmas time. Why are we not grateful to God for filling our stockings with legs? Gilbert K. Chesterton.

As we pause once again to give praise and thanks to the One who has filled our stockings with legs, I pray that your Christmas and New Year, whether at home or abroad, will be filled with great peace and joy.

Praise and thanks be to God for the many blessings received during 2010, among which I would include:

- The work of the On-going Formation Commission which continued the Horse & Jockey initiative. *Be advised that places still remain on the Holy Land pilgrimage which concludes the project.* Also most welcome is the recommended Book of the Month which has been running in conjunction with the IAN. Please contact Flor O’Callaghan or Kieran O’Mahony with on-going formation suggestions for the future.
- The efforts of the Province Profile group who, along with the On-going Formation commission, are helping to realise important aspects of the 2009 Provincial Chapter policy.
- The contribution made by the Irish to the AYE in London. Though few in number, their impact was substantial and greatly appreciated by the hosts.
- The celebration of Golden, Silver and various other jubilees during the year.
- The programmes and services being offered at local community level, through which our friars and layfolk continue to live and preach the Gospel with great fidelity from day to day.

The year to which we are bidding farewell wasn’t without its difficulties. The economy is still struggling, confidence in Church and State as institutions has continued to ebb, many people are finding it difficult to meet the bills and we are once again in the grip of an icy winter as we approach the festive season. A great sadness of 2010 was the untimely passing of Denis Mason R.I.P. We remember Denis and all who have gone before us with particular gratitude at Christmas time. We also pray earnestly for those among us who are unwell at this time.

The year ahead holds a number of specific challenges with which we will be grappling as a province. The recent round of Local Community-Provincial Council meetings raised some burning questions: Are we prepared to give *serious* consideration to the issue of Vocations in 2011? To what precisely are we inviting those who might show an interest

in joining us? Is there a definite project around which we might gather as a province? Might the occasion of the Eucharistic Congress afford the opportunity to engage in reflection and catechesis both within and beyond our local communities?

On behalf of the Provincial Council, I wish to thank most sincerely all who have ministered on behalf of the Province during the past 12 months, friars and lay folk alike. I also want to thank the members of the Council for their service throughout the year.

Perhaps we might take time over the holiday season to reflect on the following words of Augustine:
And when we say he was born of a virgin, it’s a great thing, you’re astonished. He’s God, don’t be astonished; let astonishment give way to thanksgiving and praise. Let faith be present; believe that it happened..... He agreed to become man; what more do you want? Hasn’t God humbled himself enough for you? The one who was God has become man. The inn was crowded and cramped, so he was wrapped in rags, laid in a manger; you heard it when the gospel was read. Who wouldn’t be astonished? The one who filled the universe could find no room in a lodging-house; laid in a feeding trough, he became our food.

St. Augustine,

Sermon 189.

With fraternal greetings for Christmas and the New Year.

Gerry Horan, o.s.a.



Christmas Wonder

We sing of a Cave in a hill,
a place where cattle stand,
from rain and wind in winter,
from sun in a scorched land.

We sing of a man who pondered,
of a Lady who bowed her head,
of God the size of a Child,
till all and nothing is said.

Nor shepherds could ever fathom
how God should come so small,
nor Angels cease to wonder
at the wonder of it all.

We sing of Mary who mothered,
of Joseph who bowed his head,
of God the size of a Child,
till nothing and all is said.

John O’Connor OSA

AUTUMN IN ORLAGH



John Byrne OSA and Bernadette Toal

Apart from our usual events there were some new initiatives here this autumn. In Orlagh, twenty eight people attended a day on the spirituality of St. Augustine at the end of September. Forty people attended introductory sessions on Centering Prayer. Three evenings on "What is a Gospel?" drew an average attendance of twelve.

We also accepted an invitation from the Clondalkin cluster of parishes to conduct a course of six weekly sessions on "Creating the Parish of the Future". This was held in the Clondalkin parish centre. Four members of the team were involved and the average attendance was 38. It was a pleasure and a privilege to work with a group of such enthusiastic and committed people. They give hope for the future. It was also affirming to hear that they wanted more of the same in the future.

Our next venture is a series of three Word on Web programmes in Advent linked to the forthcoming International Eucharistic Congress in 2010. These centre on the introductory rite of the Mass. This series will be followed by another three presentations in Spring 2011 on the Liturgy of the Word. Three presentations on the Liturgy of the Eucharist are scheduled for Autumn 2011, and three on Mission for Spring 2012. A flier on the Advent programme has been circulated.

We welcome the decision of the Provincial and Council in relation to the work of the Orlagh Team. We look forward to working with all interested parties to prepare programmes for the next couple of years, and to find the resources to deliver these.



Orlagh in the Snow 2010

SOME READERS' COMMENTS:

Good evening Pat, Thanks for the latest issue of IAN: an animated and lively edition. Possibly the best edition to date. So much that is celebratory and fraternally rewarding and encouraging is encapsulated in this issue. Will nominate you as my Editor of 2010: reward will be a Cork jersey. Kind regards. Pat Doyle Cork.

Dear Fr Moran, I have just finished reading the latest edition of the Irish Augustinian News. As always, I enjoyed every word and every picture. Sr Helena, South Pres. Cork.

The above message came on a thank you card with the following message: "Those lines around my eyes were caused by laughing, not frowning, and for that I thank you."

- Fiona Looney.

This thank you card is part of a series that includes messages from Daniel O'Donnell, Christy Moore, Maeve Binchy, Cecelia Aherne and others for the Irish Hospice Foundation. – Ed.

Many thanks Pat for your continuing to send me IAN every month. It is much appreciated. John Moore, Dublin.

Pat, Just thought I'd send greetings to you for the Season and the New Year with all thanks for the monthly joy of the IAN. I send on copies of it to such people as Luis de Sande who worked with us in Nigeria. Greet the team there with you, the 2 Michaels and Sean especially. Happy Christmas Dick (The Brennan Ipse)



Timmy Walsh OSA with Liam McCarthy Cup and Eoin Kelly Tipperary Captain 2010



Declan Brennan and Ted McCarthy OSA

DROGHEDA 150 YEARS



Full Church in Drogheda

The earliest reference we have to an Augustinian presence in Drogheda dates from 1295. So we have been Boyneside for more than 700 years and in our present location for 150.

When a religious order celebrates an anniversary of being in a particular place (such as we do in Drogheda) this year, members find themselves invited to think thoughts which are both joyful and sombre. The joy centres mainly in the sheer existence of a tradition, a consciousness of belonging to a way of life which has been handed on from one generation to the next over a long period. A religious order - any religious order - is an attempt to co-operate in the bringing about of God's kingdom in a particular time and place by responding to the needs of that time and place.

When the Augustinians came to Drogheda in the 13th century, they were responding to the pastoral needs of that time. They then represented the very latest in pastoral initiative - they met needs which would otherwise not have been met. **But where do we stand today?**

That has become a more difficult question now that we are at the beginning of the third millennium than possibly at any period in our history. The challenge is the same in every age, namely, to proclaim the message of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. The task is the same, but the circumstances in which we have to carry it out are always changing. No religious institution can live off its spiritual and pastoral capital. There is a constant danger of hardening of the arteries and neglecting new challenges or facing new problems. Mere repetition of the traditional is never enough. A religious order has constantly to ask what people's needs are at any given time, and be prepared to adapt to them. The church I joined in the post Vatican II era was one of vibrancy and hope. Expectations were high. The period since then has shone in brilliance and yet has been shattered in disappointment. We seem to be mid-way between an age, which is dying, and another, which is waiting to be born. What is God's Spirit saying to us about the future? Dwindling numbers, "mired in scandals" one could go on.

The Christian church of the future has to be one in which the different traditions are united in the shared service of the living Christ, and in which we are enriched and not threatened by our differences. Iggy O'Donovan OSA.

GOOD COUNSEL COLLEGE



Past pupil Richard Hayden who paid a visit during the week.

We received a visit during the week from past pupil Richard Hayden who received world wide recognition for his expertise in sports surface technology especially during the world cup in South Africa where he had responsibility for the playing pitches and for which he earned many plaudits. He has also been the chief consultant on the Aviva Stadium playing surface and on other major projects such as the Ascot racecourse, the London Olympic games showjumping arena and Shaktar Donetsk's soccer pitch. He has many fascinating tales to tell about his experiences in his work.

We were delighted to be informed during the week that Billy Conran is to receive an award later this month for the Best Leaving Cert, Higher Level, Design and Communications Graphics, 2010. The State Examinations Commission data reveals that 6,128 students sat DCG nationwide in the 'Leaving' 2010, so to achieve the highest grade in the country is a magnificent achievement and one Billy and his family can be proud of as all in Good Counsel College are. Well done to him and also to his subject teacher, Mr Kehoe.

In the past 2 years now Good Counsel College students have claimed first place in Ireland in separate subjects at Leaving Cert higher level as Daniel Wall was awarded best Technology Higher Leaving Cert in 2009.



A bleak campus on Monday afternoon. Good Counsel College, along with all other schools in New Ross, was forced to remain closed on Monday due to the very severe weather conditions. The college will also remain closed on Tuesday with the situation being reviewed on a daily basis with regard to the rest of the week. Parents will continue to be kept informed by text message and through local radio. (School Newsletter 26.11.2010)



Michael O'Regan D'echo boy and Michael O'Regan OSA

Half a century ago, a ten-year old boy landed a job selling the Cork Evening Echo at the corner of Princess Street outside Cavendish Furniture shop. The furniture shop may be long gone – replaced by the very 21st century Game Stop – but the Echo boy is still there. His name is Michael O'Regan and he has become an icon in Cork City. This year, Michael is celebrating his 50th anniversary as an Echo street vendor.

Our own Fr Michael O'Regan OSA, St Augustine's Church, Washington Street, Cork is a great friend of his namesake, and has penned this poem below:

THE ECHO BOY OF CORK

As you stroll down Patrick Street
Above the loud roar of the traffic you'll hear
A voice with a lilt so sweet
Calling Echo, Echo, the voice of the Lee.

It's been 50 years since he first stood there
Selling "the paper" to all in the street
A true Corkonian, an icon for all
who buy his paper as a daily treat.

His face lights up with a beaming smile
He has a pleasant word for all who come near
He's part of Cork like the Shandon bells
The Opera House or even the Lee.

He'll go down like others before
Men like Klondyke, the Rancher, and Andy himself
Familiar figures who live in the minds
Of all who knew them as legends of their time.

The years go by and many come and go
But few remain legends of Cork
Michael, Cork's own Echo Boy, has earned his place
Among all who know him as "one of our own."

May he spend many more years crying out "Echo!"
As passers by smile at the man
who spent his life spreading news about Cork
Through the paper we simply call D'Echo.

P.S. Congratulations to Michael O'Regan OSA who himself celebrates the 50th anniversary of his Ordination on 17 December 2010, together with Jimmy Maguire OSA. Ad multos annos.

ST AUGUSTINE'S COLLEGE DUNGARVAN Waterford High-school Music Festival

What a performance from the 5th Year students who appeared on the stage of the historic Theatre Royal in Waterford on Monday November 8th 2010. Around fifty students, all members of last year's TY class, performed a 30 minute extract of the musical "Godspell" which they had previously performed in its entirety in February this year. The singing, dancing, colour and energy was simply fantastic. Well done to Mr. Pat Knightly, Miss Alice Power and Mr. Pat Grant for all the effort they put in to prepare the students for this wonderful competition. St. Augustine's College was one of six schools, (including Good Counsel College, New Ross) who were invited to present their musical in this the first year of the event. We look forward to seeing the High-school element of the Festival grow in the coming years due to the hugely successful inaugural competition.

ALL IRELAND TITLE FOR KATE VEALE

Kate has known a lot of success on the track in race-walking, but this was her first national cross-country title which took place in Derry recently.



Bro Paddy Lennon OSA coach and Kate Veale

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Greetings from Cork. On behalf of staff, David Moran, Peter Galus, John O'Connor, Francis Aherne and myself, a big thanks for the many contributions I received over the last few days. (inc. some nice poetry and greetings). At this busy time of year all your efforts are deeply appreciated and made this edition possible. I had a tremendous response, and I am sorry I could not accommodate all your contributions, but I do hope to use them in the January edition. Thanks to Gerry Horan, John Byrne, and Paul O'Connor for photographs. Please find attachment with E-mail addresses Xmas 2010. If you find any omissions or mistakes, let me know soon!

Wishing you all an abundance of peace and joy.

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