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Sharing the Good News



Blessing of engaged couple at the Shrine of Saint Valentine

Bishop Denis Nulty, President of Accord Catholic Marriage Care Service CLG, blessed engaged couple Michelle Connolly and Jonathan Hanley at the Shrine of Saint Valentine in Whitefriar Street Church, Dublin on 11 February.

Michelle is from Dublin and Jonathan is from Co Roscommon. Michelle works as a primary school teacher and Jonathan is a primary principal. The couple met in 2012 while they were both studying a Postgraduate Certificate of Education in Saint Mary's University, a Catholic institution of higher education in Twickenham, London.

To coincide with the blessing ceremony, the 2019 figures for Accord's three companies in its two key services across Ireland, Sacramental Marriage preparation, and, marriage and relationship counselling, were also released. The figures show that 14,894 individuals attended Accord Sacramental Marriage preparation courses and that 24,006 counselling sessions were provided by Accord counsellors to individuals and couples in 2019.

Speaking at the blessing, Bishop Nulty said, "Accord's marriage preparation programme offers every couple time and space. And when things may not go so well, Accord is also here to accompany a couple in counselling and to do so non-judgementally and always gently. This annual blessing ceremony allows us in Accord to reflect on the valuable contribution marriage and the family offer the wider Irish society." For more see www.accord.ie.

Archbishop Eamon Martin welcomes Pope Francis' inspiring and poetic Apostolic Exhortation *Querida Amazonia*

Archbishop Eamon Martin has welcomed *Querida Amazonia (Beloved Amazon)*, the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis published on Wednesday 12 February and reflecting the four key dimensions – cultural, ecological, social and pastoral – which were discussed at the Amazonian Synod in Rome last October.

Archbishop Eamon said, "The document addresses once again those areas of urgent concern which Pope Francis reflected on in his Encyclical *Laudato Si* five years ago. As then, the Holy Father today presents a clear-sighted analysis of the grave threats to the peoples and ecosystems of the Amazon, and by extension to the earth, our common home.

"Pope Francis, as always, is anxious that the people of the world are not 'robbed of hope'. In calling for an ecological conversion, he invites us all to move from awareness to active response, and to see, especially in our young people, the signs of hope for the future and the spur to action in the present. There is much in this inspiring and at times poetic document for all of us to reflect upon. I strongly encourage all who care about creation and our future generations to read *Querida Amazonia* and also the final document of the Amazonian Synod. These documents can help, as Pope Francis put it, to give the Church an Amazonian face!"

Querida Amazon is available to read on www.catholicbishops.ie and can be purchased in book format in Veritas shops nationwide and on www.veritas.ie.

News in Pictures



Pope Francis appointed the Rev Monsignor Michael F Crotty, a priest of the Diocese of Cloyne, as the Apostolic Nuncio to Burkina Faso, elevating him to the dignity of Archbishop, and appointing him to the titular See of Lindisfarne. Monsignor Crotty has been serving in the diplomatic service of the Holy See since 2001.



Archbishop Michael Neary of Tuam recently launched a new book by Bishop Martin Drennan, the retired Bishop of Galway. *'Turning Wounds into Wisdom'* is a comprehensive collection of reflections on the three-year Sunday Mass cycle of Scripture readings which were originally published weekly on the Galway Diocesan website. The book is available on www.galwaydiocese.ie.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin is pictured at the Dublin Diocesan celebration of World Day of the Sick 2020 in the Church of the Guardian Angels, Newtownpark Avenue, Dublin 9 which was marked on Saturday 9 February.



FRIDAY PENANCE



Living Lent 2020

The Bishops' #LivingLent social media initiative will go live for Lent 2020 on Ash Wednesday, which this year falls on Wednesday 26 February.

Each day during Lent on the Bishops' Conference social media accounts will offer suggestions on how people can observe the three pillars of the Lenten season: Prayer, Fasting (including Friday Penance) and Almsgiving.

Follow the #LivingLent journey on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. See www.catholicbishops.ie for the social media links.



Available now from www.veritas.ie

BELOVED AMAZON
Querida Amazonia

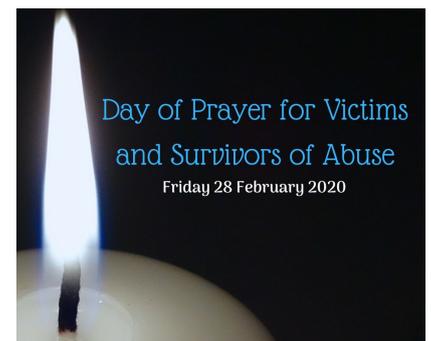
Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father, Francis to the people of God and to all persons of good will

IEC2020 in Budapest

Bookings are now open for the official Irish pilgrimage to the 52nd International Eucharistic Congress which will take place in Budapest, Hungary, from 13 – 20 September 2020. The pilgrimage will be led by Bishop Kevin Doran, the Irish bishops' delegate for International Eucharistic Congresses. He said, "I look forward to meeting with hundreds of Irish pilgrims on the banks of the Danube next September." See www.catholicbishops.ie for booking information and travel itinerary. The cost of the pilgrimage is from €1,050 per person sharing.

Day of Prayer for Victims and Survivors of Abuse

The annual Day of Prayer for Survivors and Victims of Sexual Abuse will take place on Friday 28 February 2020, the first Friday of Lent. Bishops have blessed and dedicated candles of atonement for use in their Cathedrals and parishes throughout the country on 28 February and thereafter during the celebration of Mass and other liturgies. Commenting ahead of the day of prayer, Archbishop Eamon Martin said, "In lighting these candles we will bring to mind our brothers and sisters, and their families, who have been left with a lifelong suffering as a result of abuse, whose trust was so deeply betrayed and whose faith has been so cruelly tested within the sanctity of the Church by perpetrators of abuse."



Resources for the Day of Prayer can be downloaded from www.catholicbishops.ie.