



# The Sheaf



ST. JOSEPH'S YOUNG PRIESTS SOCIETY

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SUMMER 2009

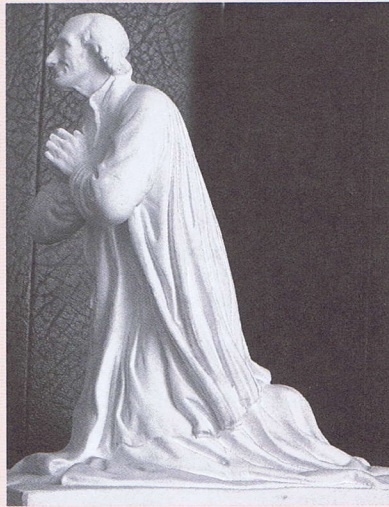
## A YEAR FOR PRIESTS

WE ARE VERY PLEASED that Pope Benedict XVI has decreed that the year that started on 19 June 2009 is dedicated especially to prayer for priests. We also welcome his decision to make St John Marie-Baptiste Vianney, the holy Curé d'Ars, patron saint not just of Parish Priests as heretofore, but of all priests. Our priests could not have a better role model.

It is only too easy to take our good priests for granted even though they have sacrificed so much to bring us Mass, Holy Communion and Absolution. We have many priests who have generously given us years of service, and the very best way to repay them is to be equally generous with our prayers for them. Thank God we now also have younger priests who are devout, well informed and tireless in their apostolic work. Holy priests are a precious gift, and we should thank God for them while we pray for them as the Pope has asked us to do especially during this 'Year of the Priesthood'.

All of us, priests and people, have been diminished in recent times by the disgraceful actions of some people in the Church who have abused those about whom we have been hearing in the media. Our hearts go out especially to those who were minors when they were abused. And it is important that victims have been and are being helped psychologically, spiritually and financially. At the same time, some priests worry greatly about absolutely false or grossly exaggerated accusations, of which there have been some. It is a process which continues, and that we have to live through, with the help of God's grace. Perhaps however, this 'Year of the Priesthood' will be the occasion to discover again what Catholic Priesthood really is, and to support the overwhelming majority of faithful priests throughout the country.

The 'Year for Priests' has been warmly received throughout the world. The positive effects of the Year will make themselves felt very quickly. Let us decide to participate in the Year with every effort and creativity; personally, through our families, through our parishes and through our branches of our Society.



The statue of the Curé of Ars in the Society's House, 23 Merrion Square Dublin.

Pope Benedict concluded a letter as follows when he wrote to priests on 18 June as he inaugurated this jubilee year for priests during Vespers in St Peter's Basilica:

"To the Most Holy Virgin I entrust this Year for Priests. I ask her to awaken in the heart of every priest a generous and renewed commitment to the ideal of complete self-oblation to Christ and the Church, which inspired the thoughts and actions of the saintly Curé of Ars. It was his fervent prayer life and his impassioned love of Christ Crucified that enabled John Marie Vianney to grow daily in his total self-oblation to God and the Church. May his example lead all priests to offer that witness of unity with their bishop, with one another and with the lay faithful, which today, as ever, is so necessary. Despite all the evil present in our world, the words which Christ spoke to his Apostles in the Upper Room continue to inspire us: 'In the world you have tribulation; but take courage, I have overcome the world'. Our faith in the Divine Master gives us the strength to look to the future with confidence. Dear priests, Christ is counting on you. In the footsteps of the Curé of Ars, let yourselves be enthralled by Him. In this way you too will be, for the world in our time, heralds of hope, reconciliation and peace!"

### Prayer to Our Lady for Priests

Immaculate Virgin Mary,  
Mother of Priests,  
at the Annunciation  
your faith in God's message welcomed  
Jesus on earth.  
Inspired by your example,  
may our priests *grow in faith*  
and so lead many souls to God.

At Cana your trust in Jesus not only saved the newly-weds from embarrassment, but marked the start of an unending stream of miracles. May priests learn from you to *deepen their trust* in God and so call down a stream of graces on the world.

On Calvary you stood without flinching beneath the Cross of Jesus who entrusted his followers to your motherly care. Through that care and your earnest intercession, may priests *imitate your fidelity* and not become discouraged in times of difficulty.

Before Pentecost, you joined the disciples in prayer as you awaited the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Ask your Son that priests *may become men of prayer*, and thus help to bring about the new Pentecost so much needed in our time.

Amen.

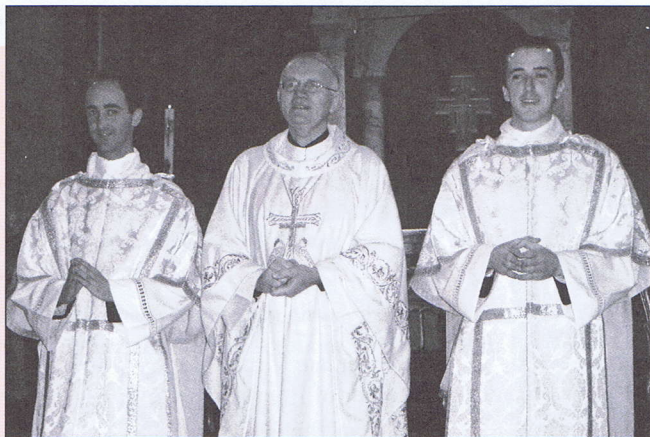
Tralee, Co Kerry

Our Lady and St Brendan's branch of the Society wish to publicly acknowledge with thanks, the donation of €500 by members of the Students Union of the Tralee Institute of Technology. Mass has been offered for their intentions.

Nuala Griffin (Branch Sec)  
25 May 2009



The May meeting of the Central Council at St Patrick's College, Maynooth commenced with Mass in St Mary's Oratory.



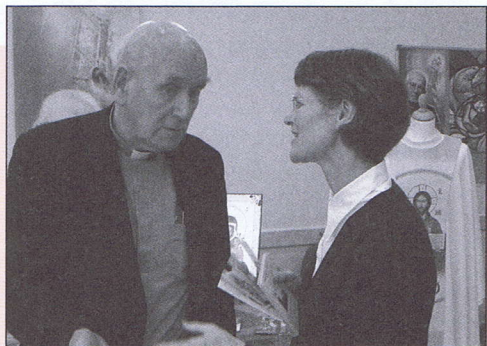
On the fortieth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood in the chapel of the Irish College

Rome on 13 April 1969, Bishop Eamonn Walsh, Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin, ordained to the diaconate Stephen Kelly from the diocese of Meath and Patrick O'Donohue from the diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora.

The ordinations took place at the church of Sant'Agata de'Goti, home of the Irish College from 1836 to 1926, and where the heart of Daniel O'Connell was first buried, to fulfil his wish that his heart rest in Rome, his body in Ireland and his soul with God.



At Our Lady Crowned church in Cork, at the launch of the book 'Meeting the Challenge with Faith' the story of the Mayfield branch of the Society, (L to R) Eileen Buckley president of the branch, Kathleen O'Connell secretary, Joe Mullane who compiled the book, Marie Hogan president of the Society and Anna Foley treasurer of Mayfield branch.



Sr Kathryn Williams, Delegate Superior of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master in conversation with Fr Ciarán Holahan PP Foxrock at the 2009 Parish Vocations Exhibition on Vocations Sunday 4 May.



Members of the Society at the Raphoe Diocesan Retreat at Stranorlar, with Fr Rory Brady, Letterkenny.

# The Chalice



*Fr Donal V O'Sullivan who died in the Battle of the Somme in 1916.*

This delightful chalice, formerly owned by Fr Capt Donal V O'Sullivan, has been presented to the Society by his nephew Dr Ivo O'Sullivan and is currently in use throughout the Dublin diocese in the cause of imploring the Lord for an increasing response to vocations to priesthood.

Since 1916, the chalice, which is in pristine condition, has been in the custody of the O'Sullivan family in the hope that one day it could be presented to a member of the family on the occasion of his ordination to the priesthood. As this is now unlikely to happen, the family have decided to make the presentation to an organisation that would ensure its use for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, possibly on the missions where vocations are plentiful but money scarce. For the 'Year of the Priest' however, the chalice will remain in the Dublin diocese, where vocations are scarce.

Dr Ivo O'Sullivan who presented the chalice writes: The Bishop of Kerry asked for volunteer priests and medical doctors to serve the many Irish soldiers who were in the forces in France during the First World War. My uncle Father Donal, and my uncle Dr Ivo O'Sullivan (after whom I was named) volunteered in February 1916. Dr Ivo served with the Medical Corps of the Connacht Rangers and survived the war, but Fr Donal did not. Father O'Sullivan was an intelligent gifted and popular priest. He had a great love of the language and traditions of his country. He was appointed by the bishop as a

professor to teach in St Brendan's minor seminary in Killarney. This was only two years after his ordination in Maynooth in 1914. He taught there for a year before going to the battlefield in France to serve as Chaplain to the 7th Battalion, including the Royal Munster Fusiliers

One of the soldiers there asked Father O'Sullivan, if he would hear his confession because the following morning (5th July 1916) they were going over the top of the trench to attack the German lines. Fr O'Sullivan asked him to collect as many of the Catholic soldiers as he could from the Brigade and he would meet them in the chapel in the nearby village of Bouzincourt near the front. There he prepared them for general confession, gave them general absolution and offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for them.

They went to battle, the battle of the Somme, with greater courage and lighter hearts. Half of the communicants were fated not to return, including Fr Donal O'Sullivan. He was killed by a shell, which exploded beside cavalry where he was giving the Last Rights to a wounded soldier. The shrapnel killed him. He was aged only 26. He was buried in the cemetery at Bouzincourt in the Valley of the Somme.

Rev Fr C T McGuinness of the 76th Field Ambulance Brigade wrote that Father O'Sullivan was quite fearless and would face any danger to give the Last Rites to the wounded and dying. "He was a fine character, cheerful and energetic and one of the most zealous chaplains I met".

Fr O'Sullivan kept a cryptic diary, spanning a little over four months between his departure from Killarney on 28 February 1916 and his death on 5 July that same year. The diary is a vivid document. It lists the stages of his voyage to France (Killarney, Dublin, London, Folkestone, Boulogne...) and refers to snow falling, visits to 'Lady Gifford's convalescent home', getting around on horseback, notably a three-hour horse ride. He gives out general absolution (and sweets from home) to the troops. He sets up a field altar and visits the sick and the wounded. The high points in the diary are 'St Patrick's Day, shamrock for all' and 'Howe departs and leaves me his bicycle!' Donal cycles everywhere, even as far as Le Touquet on the coast. He visits



*The legend on the chalice bowl reads: Calicem salutaris accipiam et nomen Domini invocabo (The cup of salvation I will accept and I will call on the name of the Lord).*

Amiens Cathedral. A passing reference is made to the Easter 1916 rebellion in Dublin. Life at the front gets increasingly grim: there are gas attacks, he visits the trenches, spends a night in a dugout on Bethune Road, gets hit by shrapnel. He loses friends: 'Poor Howard dead'. 'Poor Taylor died'. From Donal's second last entry on 4 July, the day before he died: 'Ulster Division Rifles under heavy fire. Heavy casualties. Wounded, wounded, wounded! Busy day for chaplains!'

Apart from his grave in Bouzincourt, Father Donal is remembered by a photo and plaque (in Irish) by the chapel in St Brendan's, Killarney, where he taught before volunteering.

**THE CHALICE PROGRAMME** is one of two current vocations initiatives initiated by Fr Eamonn P Bourke for the Dublin diocese. For a period of a year Father Bourke has the use of the stunning Continental Chalice, unused since 1916, that was presented to the Society by Ivo O'Sullivan PhD of Maretimo Gardens East in Blackrock Co Dublin on 28 May.

The Chalice is currently circulating around the 200 parishes of the Dublin diocese. To obtain the chalice for one week a parish must complete a request form and return it to the Vocations Office at Archbishop's House, Dublin 9. It is given on the condition that one public Mass (hopefully more) is offered for vocations to priesthood during that week. Documentation comes with the chalice.

**THE PRAYER FRIEND PROGRAMME** is also up and running. This is geared to lay persons in particular, especially those who are prepared to remember in their prayers a priest by name during this Year for Priests, which runs until 19 June 2010 in honour of Saint John Marie-Baptiste Vianney, the Curé of Ars, the patron of priests.

If you are prepared to pray for a priest, you are invited to make personal contact with Father Bourke at Archbishop's House [vocations@dublindiocese.ie](mailto:vocations@dublindiocese.ie) He will provide the Christian name of a priest for the support of your prayers. It is not necessary that you be a resident of the diocese, as Fr Bourke can be contacted by anyone anywhere regarding the matter at [www.priest.ie](http://www.priest.ie)



*On Sunday 7 June at the Church of the Holy Child, Larkhill/Whitehall, Archbishop Dáirmuid Martin celebrated Mass for the members of the Society in the Fingal District of his Diocese. At the Offertory Gifts of the bread and wine, Dr Ivo O'Sullivan brought forward the chalice he had presented to the Society.*

# Vocations Vigil

AT ST NESSAN'S CHURCH, RAHEEN

Drawing the Year of Vocation to a close, a three-hour vigil of prayer, which commenced with Mass celebrated by Dr Donal Murray, Bishop of Limerick, took place at St Nessan's church, Raheen, Limerick on 30 April. The local branch of the Society with Fr Michael Noonan PP arranged it.

In his homily, Bishop Murray said that St Joseph the patron of St Joseph's Young Priests Society was the one who offered Mary the support and encouragement that she needed in making her generous response - a response that she had to make and remake continually.

If we are to have a renewal of vocations in Ireland we need to have a renewal of our own response - not just the response of those whom God calls, but the response of the whole community and each member of the community. And we need to have a community that recognises that its role is to encourage and to pray for those who are called, and to believe that God is indeed calling today as in the past.

"Our first duty, therefore, is to keep alive in families and in parishes... and in all the sectors of diocesan life, this appeal to the divine initiative with unceasing prayer. We must pray that the whole Christian people grows in its trust in God, convinced that 'the Lord of the harvest' does not cease to ask some to place their entire existence freely at his service so as to work with him more closely in the mission of salvation"

Father Paul Finnerty led meditations on the rosary and Fr Noel Kirwan, diocesan director of vocations, directed a Holy Hour and shared a little of what his priesthood means to him. He reflected also the many local events and on some special initiatives that took place in the diocese during the Year of Vocation, such as:

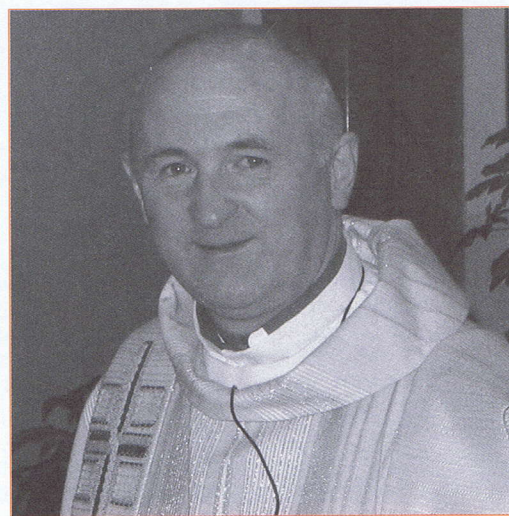
- At the start of the Year, a specially commissioned candle was lit for each of the diocese's thirteen clusters, where in turn, the candles were welcomed by each parish, and lit whenever Mass was celebrated.
- There was a 'Vocations Story Sunday', when Priests or Sisters or Religious Brothers told their story in every parish in the diocese, "We came very close to meeting our target through the cooperation and generosity of so many, and I am sure the Lord will bless this work" Fr Kirwan said.

- A stand was taken at a Careers Day at Limerick Racecourse. The young people there, were generally pleasantly surprised, and had some interesting questions to ask. Several stimulating conversations took place throughout the day.
- A special Mass at Mount St Alphonsus in celebration of religious and consecrated life was well attended and proved to be very uplifting.

"The spirit of the Year of Vocation had brought members of the Society, the Religious Congregations and priests of the diocese together under one banner to work and pray for vocations" Fr Kirwan said. Bishop Murray said: "I pray that this year when so many freely gave themselves to this blessed work will have been a great source of encouragement for the future. Our coming together uplifted our spirits and brought joy to our lives".

Una Nunan.

(Limerick Diocesan President, SJYPS)



Fr Noel Kirwan PP (Tel: 061 400133) is vocations director for Limerick Diocese.

## Recently Deceased

### VOCATIONAL BRANCHES

**Civil Service** Julia Bobbet, Maeve Ward, John Carr  
**Insurance Branch** Larry Humphreys, Sheila Condon  
**Licensed Trade** Michael Gill, Brendan Larrigy

### LOCAL BRANCHES

**Ardee Branch** Ollie Reilly, Séamie Magennis, Mary Sweeney, Majella O'Connor, Margaret O'Malley, Michael O'Neill, Una O'Brien  
**Ardfield / Rathbarry** Andrew Twohig, Willie Doolan, Fachtna O'Regan, Bridget O'Regan, Kitty McCarthy  
**Ardlea** Peggy Gargan  
**Ballaghaderreen** John Cunniffe  
**Ballinascreen** Marie Trolan, Jim Donnelly, Margaret Donnelly, Margaret Trainor, Bridget Donnelly, John Loughran, Mary Bradley, Bridget Craig, Rose Bradley, Eileen Duffy, Mary Jones  
**Ballinlough** Alice Hennessy, Mary Loftus  
**Ballyfermot** Eithne O'Doherty  
**Ballymagroarty** Kathleen McCullagh, Rosemary Durnien, Charlotte McLaughlin  
**Ballyphehane** Tess Doolan, Mary Loughhead, Rita Twomey, Fearghal Ó Draighneáin, Rita Cullinane

**Bandon** Robbie Wilmot, Seán O'Connell  
**Beaumont** Rita Lynch  
**Beechwood Avenue** V Rev Anthony Canon Kelly PE  
**Blarney** Mary Cleary, Nellie O'Connell, Christopher Pardo, John Hogan, Eddie O'Brien, Con Fley, Finbar Dalton, Mary Dwyer  
**Boyle** Tess Flaherty  
**Callan** Sr Teresa Landy  
**Carlou** Jenny Fitzpatrick, Kitty White  
**Carrigaline** Fergus Slyne, Michael Heffernan  
**Christ the King, Turner's Cross** Mary Roche, Richard Buckley, Fr Pat McSeeny, Rev Gerard Collins, Breda Quinn, Sr Philip Collins, Liam Lynch  
**Claregalway** Nora Flaherty  
**Cooley** Joseph Savage, Johnny Marks, Stephen Malone  
**Curraheen Road** Richard Buckley  
**Derrygonnelly/Botha** Mary Ann Kelly, Eileen Hoy, Kathleen Maguire, Tommy Bannon, Agnes Watters, Moria Scallon, Annie Higgins  
**Drogheda** Betty Tiernan, Dermot Gordon  
**Drumragh - Omagh** Maureen McCauley, Kathleen Ferguson  
**Dundalk** P J Begley, Gena Burns, Shiela Scully, Lily Daly, Joe Halpeny  
**Dundrum** Mary Crowley  
**Eskra** Maureen Long, Dan McGinn

**Ennis** Rosaleen Barrett, Theresa Nugent  
**Goleen** Ellen O'Callaghan, Margaret Courcey, Annie O'Sullivan, Hannah McAuliffe, Annie Cahalane, Margaret Daly, George Bardet, Kitty Hegarty  
**Graignamanagh** Nancy O'Carroll  
**Granard** Canon Frank Kelly  
**Harolds Cross** Nuala Keely  
**Killeentiernan** William Brosnan, Patrick Brosnan, Kathleen Fleming  
**Killorglin** Mary Sheehan, Mary Griffin, Eileen Hannon  
**Killoughter** Margaret Little, Maisie Cusack, Gerard Cusack, Mick Smith, Maggie Reilly, Sheila More, Peter Reilly, Peter Heaney, Merg Thatcher, Annie McArdle  
**Kinawley** Michael Breen, John Doonan, James Martin, Lena Fee, T Owens, J Smith  
**Limavady & Ballykelly** Sheila Mullan, Tommy O'Brien  
**Longford** Paddy Hogan  
**Loughrea** Helen Glynn, Phyllis Burke, Gretta Cunnane  
**Lurgan** Noel Maginn  
**Mahera** Cissie Kielt, Peter Hughes, Christopher McErlean, Patrick McKenna, Grace McKenna.  
**Marino** Nora Fuller, Nora Looney  
**Naas** Celia Whyte  
**Portadown** Edel Fox, Jim Speers,

Jimmy Loughran, Joe Bennett, Annie Monaghan, Addis McNally, Joe McCormack, Tommy Marley, Frank McPartland, Gerard Breen, Patrick Megarity  
**Rahan** Mary Daly, Sr Patrick Deegan  
**Raheen** Kay Shanahan  
**Rathgar** Bridie Corway, John Maloney  
**Rochfordbridge** Alo McNamee, Mrs Coleman  
**St Joseph's, Dundalk.** Frank Sharkey  
**St Joseph's, Limerick.** Vincent McQuaid, Séamus Page  
**St Kevin's, Harrington St** Bridie Nyland, Maura Colfer, Michael Smith, Tony Malone  
**St Mary's, Limerick** Breda Fitzgerald  
**St Patrick's, Limerick** Susie Mulcahy  
**Swanlinbar** Francis O'Reilly  
**Templemore** Nellie Fitzpatrick, Sollie Canbie  
**Terenure** Elizabeth Coughlan, Michael O'Hea  
**Tournafulla** Catherine O'Sullivan  
**Tuam** Peggy Stockwell

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Anonymous Donations  
 €20, €25, €50, €100, €25  
 Rome photo, courtesy Catholic Voice