



# Capuchin Connection

welcomes  
Pope Francis



WELCOME to the Summer 2018 issue of Capuchin Connection. As with the rest of the Church in Ireland, we are delighted to offer a **céad míle fáilte** to Pope Francis who visits us as part of the World Meeting of Families in August. On top of this we are thrilled that the Capuchin Day Centre for Homeless People has been chosen by Pope Francis as the place where he will meet the homeless of Dublin. This is a strong acknowledgment of the hard work of the staff and volunteers of the Day Centre.

The Capuchin Day Centre was founded by Brother Kevin Crowley in 1969 and today remains a place of welcome for some of the most vulnerable in our society. The centre embraces and embodies the message of Saint Francis of Assisi by providing a safe place for the poor and homeless to get a hot and nourishing meal. But in many ways, it's more than that and for almost 50 years the Capuchin Day Centre has been a place of rest and refreshment for those who visit it.



Pope Francis will visit the Day Centre on Saturday 25th of August 2018. The purpose of his visit is to meet, in private, with homeless families and to listen to their stories. Over the last number of years, the plight of homeless families in Ireland has become all too apparent. The numbers are both staggering and appalling. The TV images of children housed in 'hotel' accommodation with little space to play or do homework are rife.

The Pope's visit to the Capuchin Day Centre and his encounter with families who are experiencing homelessness will be testament to how important this issue is. As always Pope Francis' mission is a mission of mercy. He comes to bring to us at this time the Gospel message of Jesus Christ. That message clearly states that even if society has turned its back on you and pushed you to the side-lines, you are still a valuable and valued part of God's creation. We welcome Pope Francis and we welcome his expression of solidarity with those in need.

In this issue of *Capuchin Connection*, we are delighted to introduce you to two Capuchin Friars who will be speaking at the World Meeting of Families in the RDS; Brother Sean Donohoe and Brother Richard Hendrick. We will also pay a figurative visit to the Capuchin Archives in the company of our Archivist Dr Brian Kirby. We hope you enjoy this issue of *Capuchin Connection*. If you have any comments or suggestions please feel free to email them to [ofmcapcoms@gmail.com](mailto:ofmcapcoms@gmail.com).

**The Capuchin Connection Team**



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# Church Archives and Family Records

Since the destruction of the Irish Public Record Office at the Four Courts in Dublin in 1922 (at the outset of the Civil War), historians and researchers have focused on alternative archival sources in Ireland. One very important source is the ecclesiastical archives of the Irish Catholic Church. Their importance derives from the fact that the Catholic Church has been interwoven into the fabric of Irish life and many key aspects of modern Irish society in particular are amply documented in these records.

The Irish landscape was transformed by the building of monasteries, friaries, convents, seminaries, schools, hospitals, orphanages and asylums founded by the Church. Religious Orders also played a significant role in many key areas of Irish life such as education, the care of the sick, political and cultural life. Original material found in church archives comprises foundation records, annals, records of missions, retreats, social work and evangelisation, account books, school registers, hospital and orphanage records, lay religious society records, diaries, photographs, film, liturgical books and wills, bequests and charitable records.

**Fig. 1**

A photograph of a temperance confraternity procession in Cork in 1902. The procession is accompanied by two Capuchin Friars, Fr. Aloysius Travers OFM Cap. (front) and Fr. Angelus Healy OFM Cap. (rear). The women were probably part of a local temperance association in Cork. (*Irish Capuchin Archives*).



While these remarks apply to the totality of the Church's archival patrimony, they have a particular resonance for family history. For example, sacramental registers document the key moments of Christian life, baptism, confirmation, and marriage. They also make note of the deceased, revealing the

history of the sanctification of the Christian people. Many records in religious archives have both an evidential and symbolic value as family records.

The records of lay confraternities and associations of the devout can be used as an illustrative example. They attest to the names, dates of birth, and places of residence of people in a parish or a locality. They also attest to the general popularity of the practices and social functions associated with lay societies, sodalities and religious fraternities for families at a particular time. Finally, they document the faithfulness and devotion of the people to a particular charism of a society and confraternity. These documents are repositories that chronicle the human experience of the people of God, bearing witness to the succession of generations and families, written and recorded in faith. As such, it is appropriate to allow the faithful to discover their own archives where the testimony of various families and the lives of communities are preserved.

**Fig. 2**

A large group of pilgrims from the Third Order of St. Francis Sodality at the Sanctuary of St. Patrick on Lough Derg, County Donegal, in 1915. The group is accompanied by two Capuchin Friars, Fr. Aloysius Travers OFM Cap. (standing, third row, sixth from the left), and Fr. Angelus Healy OFM Cap. (standing, third row, second from the right). (*Irish Capuchin Archives*).



Religious archives should be seen as a resource not only for the Church itself but also for the wider community which sustains it. There is a growing consciousness that religious archives are a resource which can be used both within and without the Church, as evidenced by the growing interest in family history research but archives also serve as an important point of contact with the memory and tradition of the Christian family. Preserving family records not only highlights the social responsibility of archives to the wider community but it also emphasises why it is important for the Church to protect not only its own historical memory but also to sustain the memory of God's people.

(Dr Brian Kirby PhD. Archivist for the Irish Capuchin Franciscan Friars)

Sincere thanks to Dr Brian Kirby for this enlightening article. You can explore more material from the Capuchin Archives on the *Capuchin Archives Ireland* Facebook page. Also on our website ([www.capuchinfranciscans.ie](http://www.capuchinfranciscans.ie)) you can access digital copies of the *Capuchin Annual*. We hope to introduce a new From the Archives feature to future issues of the *Capuchin Connection*.



## Visit our Vocations Stand at World Meeting of Families 2018

We will have a strong presence at the World Meeting of Families in the RDS and would love to welcome you to our stand in Hall 1 stand 17. Come along to say hello or to receive a blessing with the relics of Padre Pio or St Leopold Mandic.

For more information on the Capuchin way of life visit our the vocations section of our website ([www.capuchinfranciscans.ie](http://www.capuchinfranciscans.ie)) or our vocations blog ([www.capfrans.blogspot.ie](http://www.capfrans.blogspot.ie))

You can also contact Br Martin (Vocation Promoter) by email at [capuchinvocation@gmail.com](mailto:capuchinvocation@gmail.com)

## Capuchin Mission Office: Supporting Our Capuchin Family Overseas

The Capuchin Mission Office in Dublin supports the work of the missions established by the Irish Capuchin Friars in Zambia, South Africa, New Zealand and South Korea. Over the decades the Irish missions have built numerous schools, hospitals and clinics around the world and Irish Capuchin Friars have worked alongside local people and organisations to help some the world's poorest people build a life for themselves. If you would like to help the work of the Capuchin Mission Office contact [capuchinmissions@gmail.com](mailto:capuchinmissions@gmail.com)

## Our Capuchin Brothers speaking at the World Meeting of Families 2018



**Brother Sean Donohoe OFM Cap.** Co-Director of the Capuchin Day Centre for Homeless People

**Topic:** No room in the Inn... A Christian response

I am fascinated by the topic that I have been asked to speak about at the World Meeting of Families. We know from the Gospel story that there was no room anywhere for Mary and Joseph when they arrived in Bethlehem. They found themselves to be without a place to stay. The Inn Keeper they asked for help gave them access to what he had: the stable. In doing so Christ came to be born among them. In our own time there is no room for many people. This is a problem for the State and for all of society.

Like the Inn Keeper, it is not up to the church to solve the problem but rather to live up to our calling, as Church, and respond where and how we can. We can use the resources we have to respond. Like the Inn-Keeper, we can give to those in need from what we have and as in Bethlehem

Christ can be born among us. Within civil society there may be no room but as Church, as a Christian community, we are called and invited to respond, like the innkeeper did, and to share from what we have.

The generosity of people to us at the Capuchin Day Centre speaks loudly of this kind of response. It is because of your continued generosity and support that we can provide food and care to those in great need. We aim at all times to do this from a place that values and respects the dignity of every individual who comes to our Centre. Together we provide a Christian response.

**Brother Richard Hendrick OFM Cap.** Guardian of Ard Mhuire Friary, Donegal.



**Topic:** Being a praying family in a technological age

Today there are many pressures on any family that seeks to establish a place and time for regular prayer. Today, also, our lives are busier than ever, and time seems to be an ever shrinking resource. Added to this, there are the new challenges presented by our increasing reliance upon technology, as well as the clamouring voices of social media that often distract us from our presence to each other, to family and even to the Lord. This distraction from what is present and what is true, often leads

to a reactive experience of life. In turn this reactive experience may alienate us from each other and, over time, limit our ability to integrate our experiences and to live from a faith filled and wisdom centred place.

Addressing these issues Brother Richard's talk will, therefore, centre on the ancient disciplines of stillness, silence and meditation. Drawing from our Christian contemplative tradition, Brother Richard will explore how the gentle space these practices create within and around us enables us to listen to each other and to the Lord with compassion, gentleness and joy. As we begin to learn to rest in the inner sanctuary of the heart and, once there, encounter the presence of the Lord and His Kingdom within us, we begin to live from a reflective stance. This inner space in turn changes the way we will moderate our lives whether online or with each other in our homes. As a result we can begin to cultivate a sacred space for prayer, reflection and stillness that in turn will deepen our experience of family as a place of prayer, peace and upbuilding of the Kingdom.



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