

Loreto Missionary, Sr. Orla Treacy to receive the 2017 Hugh O'Flaherty International Humanitarian Award



The 2017 Hugh O'Flaherty International Humanitarian Award will be given to Sr. Orla Treacy, a Loreto sister working in South Sudan. Sr. Orla, from Bray, Co. Wicklow, will be presented with the award by Cllr Niall Kelleher, Mayor of Killarney Municipal Authority on Saturday, 4 November at an award ceremony in the Killarney Avenue Hotel, Killarney.

This year marks the tenth year of the memorial commemoration of the Monsignor which is organised to raise awareness of the humanitarian work carried out during World War II. Together with his colleagues in the Rome Escape Line, he saved over 6,500 people from the clutches of the Nazis who had occupied Rome at the time. In October 2013 - the 50th anniversary of the Monsignor's death - a permanent memorial to him was unveiled in Killarney town centre. The memorial is a life-size sculpture of him by Valentia based artist, Alan Ryan Hall. In May 2016, a plaque commemorating him was unveiled at the German College, Vatican City, Rome where he lived from 1938 until 1960 and from where he organised the Rome Escape Line.

Over the past few months nominations have been invited for people or organisations, which have displayed the same humanitarian ideals and principals as the Monsignor and who would be deserving of this award. A shortlist of five nominees was considered by an independent adjudication panel and it was agreed that Sr. Orla would receive the award for 2017.

Sr. Orla's studied at the Mater Dei Institute, and subsequently taught in Presentation College

Cork, Loreto Letterkenny, St. Muredach's College, Ballina and Loreto Crumlin.

Having spent a summer in India with the Loreto sisters, at the age of 24 she decided to join the congregation. Based at the Loreto convent in Rathfarnham, she was professed as a Loreto nun in September 2005. A year later she headed to Sudan with four other Loreto nuns to establish a mission in a diocese the size of Italy with just two secondary schools.

She has spent the last 11 years in Sudan, experiencing the trauma of South Sudan becoming an autonomous independent state in 2011 which was followed by civil war in 2013. Today, South Sudan is widely considered one of the most fragile states in the world with continuing conflict and unrest. The violence has resulted in the displacement of thousands of people and has stunted the progress of this young country. Lakes State has become home to many displaced people.

Sr. Orla is the Principal of Loreto Secondary School in Rumbek in Lakes State which has 200 girl students who are boarders because it is too dangerous for them to travel long distances to and from the school. Adopting the missionary holistic approach, Sr. Orla and her team give

responsibility to the girls, for example, tasks like looking after their class, equipment, the farm or animals, or looking after the young students in the primary school, or measuring the food or organising the dining room. The adjacent Loreto Primary School has 500 pupils but could have 1,000 if they had the accommodation.

Chairperson of the Hugh O’Flaherty Memorial Committee, Jerry O’Grady said: “Sr. Orla possesses and displays the bravery and humanitarian commitment we have come to associate with the recipients of this award. At a young age and with a bright future ahead of her in Ireland, she decided instead to dedicate her life to those in need in what was already then a virtual war zone”

When told that she had been selected for the Hugh O’Flaherty Humanitarian Award, Sr Orla said, “The work of Msgr. Hugh O’Flaherty has inspired so many in their fight against injustice and for the protection of vulnerable populations. I am genuinely very humbled to receive this award. On behalf of Loreto Sisters, our supporters, and all our staff at Loreto Rumbek South Sudan, I graciously accept this honour. The girls and young people we work with fill us with hope for a better future for this country”.

In 2016, the award recipient was Fr Shay Cullen – a Columban missionary who established the PREDA Foundation in Olongapo City in the Philippines in 1974 to promote human rights, justice and peace. His mission for justice and peace is ecumenical and open to people of all faiths. It is based on taking a stand for human rights and protecting the dignity of every person, in particular exploited women and children. Fr. Shay has just published a novel to highlight human rights violations in the Philippines.

The Hugh O’Flaherty Memorial Society

In 2008, the Hugh O’Flaherty Memorial Society was formed in his home town of Killarney. It was decided we should honour his memory by acknowledging his humanitarian works during the 1930’s in Haiti & San Domingo and the early 1940’s during WW2 in Rome. He was posthumously awarded the inaugural Killarney International Humanitarian Award. It was presented to members of his extended family at a special ceremony in Killarney on 15 November 2008. At this ceremony, it was announced that from then on, the Award would be known as the Hugh O’Flaherty International Humanitarian

Award and would be presented annually to worthy recipients.

The Hugh O’Flaherty Memorial Weekend will take place in Killarney from 3 – 5 November.

Charlie Chaplin recalled in ecumenical service at Kerry film festival

On the last Sunday in August, the town of Waterville, Co. Kerry, held its annual Charlie Chaplin Film Festival, which ended with a special ecumenical service in St Michael’s Church led jointly by Priest-in-Charge, the Revd Michael Cavanagh, and Parish Priest, Fr. Gerard Finucane, accompanied by the man himself!

Charlie Chaplin spent many holidays in the town, which holds him in high regard, not just for his ability to amuse and delight. (During the First World War, his films were shown in field hospitals to ‘cheer the boys in their recovery’, and sometimes cardboard cutouts of ‘the little tramp’ were waved high above the trenches to great amusement on both sides!)

In the context of the service, it was pointed out that Chaplin was also a man who held fast to his beliefs, using his fame to promote a message of peace and humanity. The final speech of the Jewish barber in 'The Great Dictator' rings as true today as it did in the darkest days of Nazi ascendancy:

'I'm sorry, but I don't want to be an emperor. That's not my business. I don't want to rule or conquer anyone. I should like to help everyone – if possible – Jew, Gentile – black man – white. We all want to help one another. Human beings are like that. We want to live by each other's happiness – not by each other's misery. We don't want to hate and despise one another. In this world there is room for everyone. And the good earth is rich and can provide for everyone. The way of life can be free and beautiful, but we have lost the way... Let us fight to free the world – to do away with national barriers – to do away with greed, with hate and intolerance.'

New organ recital series at Armagh

Dr Stephen Timpany will lead by giving the first recital in the new organ recital series on Sunday 10 September 2017 at 4.15pm in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh.

As Director of Music at Armagh Cathedral, Stephen has invited organists to take part in the new recital series. Some will make welcome return visits while others will give recitals for the first time on the Cathedral organ.

Speaking about his own programme, Stephen said, “My recital will consist entirely of French composers, from the majestic pieces by Vierne and Renaud to more meditative works by Massenet and Journeau, written between the late 1600s and 1993. I very much enjoy French music of all periods and wanted to present a recital, my first occasion to do so, which does not feature music by the great Romantic composer, Franck. The programme should also demonstrate the full range of sounds of the cathedral organ.”

The Dean of Armagh, the Very Revd Gregory Dunstan, said, “Those of us who hear Stephen playing on Sunday mornings will recognize how well he knows the organ, and the enjoyment that he gives in playing it. This is an opportunity for a wider audience to appreciate the skill and care that he brings to all that he does at the Cathedral.”

Admission to the recital is free with a retiring collection most welcome towards the further

endowment of the Cathedral choir through the Archbishop's Choir Fund.

The next two recitals will be given by Revd Dr Peter Thompson on Sunday 22nd October 2017, and by Mr NykkÓ-Mickaël Grégoire on Sunday 26 November 2017.

Limavady summer camp the envy of every parish in Ireland, says Archbishop Eamon Martin

A hugely over-subscribed summer camp in Limavady made the town the envy of every parish in Ireland after it was attended by over 300 young people recently, The Derry Journal reports.

Archbishop of Armagh, Eamon Martin, the leader of the Catholic Church in Ireland, hailed HOPE 2018 as a shining example for congregations and communities throughout the country.

Archbishop Martin said Limavady was “the envy of every parish in Ireland”, and that HOPE was “the talk of every parish across the land”.



“How can a small parish attract so many people from the Limavady area each year? The project is so big it can only take people from Limavady Parish who are aged over 10. The answer is simple Faith – Fun – Friendship,” said the organisers.

A spokesperson said the three words in the hashtag Faith – Fun – Friendship, which was used to promote the camp, perfectly encapsulated its ethos.

“HOPE Summer Camp Limavady 2018 was another phenomenal success. The 300 places in the camp were filled online in a couple of hours and over 100 local people volunteered their

expertise during the course of the week,” the organisers stated.

The festival was attended by Bishop of Derry, Donal McKeown, who said Mass for over 40, while ex-Manchester United star Fr. Philip Mulryne also spoke about his incredible journey from the Premiership to the Priesthood.

A wide range of activities were on offer, including, soccer, street dance, Irish dancing, team-building games, hair and beauty treatment, art, golf, pokeball hunt, drama games, zumba, slip and slide, rugby, hurling, hockey, dance, kayaking, surfing, hovercrafting, climbing, swimming, baseball, basketball, volleyball, American football, baking, fishing, orienteering, football and crafting. And the largest camp of its kind in Ireland took place despite a backdrop of straitened budgets.

Said the organisers: “Due to the current political situation grants were either drastically cut or removed. The ‘Friends Of HOPE’ campaign enlisted the support and generosity of local businesses. One very large private donation helped clear any financial worries for the hard working HOPE committee. Sponsorship from Rob Wheeldon (Coastal Core), Colly Hartin (Cohesion) and Sean Case Research For Good

helped pay for the beautiful sports tops provided by O'Neills Sportwear. O'Neills have signed a three year deal with HOPE to supply all their leisure wear.”



The Fellowship of
Contemplative Prayer

Fellowship of Contemplative Prayer reflection morning at Drumbo

The Fellowship of Contemplative Prayer will hold 'Stepping Aside, a reflection morning at Drumbo Parish Church, BT8 8LA, on Saturday September 23.

Witness is Nuala Dudley

The programme timetable is as follows:

- 9.30am – tea/coffee in Parish Centre
- 10am – Contemplation
- 11.15am – Contemplation
- 12.30am – Communion

Contemplations focus on a saying of God or Jesus

Everyone is welcome. Please bring lunch, tea/ coffee provided. A donation of £10 will be collected at lunch

For further information contact Canon Raymond Fox on 0751 1752160 or email canonfox@btinternet.com

Finaghy choir sings in Westminster Abbey again

The choir of St Polycarp's, Finaghy, Belfast, have been back to sing Choral Evensong in Westminster Abbey, London, for the third time in five years.

The choir sang in the Abbey on Monday August 7 and Tuesday August 8. They also sang Choral Evensong here in August 2013 and 2014 and were invited back by the Dean and chapter to sing again this year.

Last year, the choir sang in Chester Cathedral and in 2015 in the chapels of three Cambridge Colleges.

This year, choir members were supported by spouses and by friends and relatives living in London who travelled to the Abbey for the occasion. One former St Polycarp's chorister,



who last sang in the choir more than 30 years ago, came from his home in Grimsby especially to support the choir and to meet up again with former colleagues.

Conducted by St Polycarp's Director of Music, Simon Neill, the choir sang Stanford's settings of *Magnificat* and *Nunc Dimittis* in C on the Monday and settings by Tertius Noble in B minor on the Tuesday.

The choir also sang two anthems: on the Monday, Charles Wood's setting of Henry Bramley's *O Thou, the Central Orb* and on the Tuesday, John Ireland's *Greater love hath no man*.

A hymn was also included in Monday's service – *'Tis good, Lord, to be here* – to mark the Feast of the Transfiguration of our Lord.

The organist over the two days was Matthew Jorysz, Assistant Organist of Westminster Abbey and former Organ Scholar of Clare College, Cambridge.

More than 600 people attended the service each evening. The Monday congregation was increased by a large number of special guests from the Singapore High Commission in London, including the Singapore High Commissioner, who read the second lesson, staff of the Commission and members of the Singapore UK Association. They attended ahead of Singapore's National Day which fell later in the month.

Christian Aid responds to help those suffering in South Asia floods

Christian Aid is bringing emergency relief to families in India, Nepal and Bangladesh as more than a thousand people have been killed and 40 million more affected by floods.

The charity has deployed £45,000 of emergency funds and is also using a further £200,000 from Irish Aid and the DFID-backed START fund to

provide 4000 households with hygiene kits, tarpaulin, shelter materials and community water filters to provide safe drinking water. Elsewhere 20,000 families are being taught about good hygiene practices to protect themselves from diseases.

Christian Aid's Head of Humanitarian Programmes for Asia & Middle East, Madara Hettiarachchi, said she hoped people wouldn't forget people in South Asia whilst floods in Texas were dominating the news agenda.

"These are some of the worst floods we've seen in South Asia in decades and the impact is likely only going to get worse," she said. "Farms and livestock have been washed away so food security is going to be a huge problem in the coming days and we will likely see the death toll rise.

"The good news is we are reaching people and bringing them the vital help they need to stay alive and begin to rebuild their lives.

"We've all seen the terrible impact floodwater is having in Texas and that is in a country with 'first-world' infrastructure. The people in South Asia are much less equipped to cope with such

a deluge of floodwater which is why they are in such a precarious position.”

She added that scientists are increasingly confident of the links between such events and climate change. She said: “Research by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology suggests that the most extreme rain events in most regions of the world will increase in intensity by 3-15 per cent, and some places - such as parts of the Asian monsoon region - would experience greater increases.

“It is a reminder that we must respond to the immediate humanitarian needs in South Asia while at the same time decarbonising the global economy in order to reduce the likelihood of such events from happening again. Until we start to address the underlying causes of climate breakdown we will continue to see more human suffering on a massive scale.”

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