

Loreto Missionary from Coleraine receives National Recognition Award in Peru



Sr. Patricia McLaughlin – a native of Loughgeil, Co. Antrim and a Loreto missionary nun ministering in Peru since 2000 – has been presented with the 2017 Palmas Magisteriales Award which is the highest honour granted by the Peruvian State to teachers whose work has



contributed significantly to the development of education.

Sr. Patricia said she was both honoured and humbled to receive the award on behalf of the Fy

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y Alegria School where she is the founding principal. "Children everywhere deserve a good education. God has no favourites. If our work can make a difference to the life of one child, then, it is worthwhile" she said.

In 2013, the school which is located in the shantytown of Jicamarca on the outskirts of the capitol, Lima, won La Bueno Escuela - the Best School Award - and was hailed as a model in education. The best school award was given by the Ministry of Education, businesses and the national television channel. It was a nationwide search for a good school at a time when the education authorities and business people were very worried about the low standard of education. Sr. Patricia says: "I think we got that award because we had shown that poor children can achieve as much as any others if they are given the chance".

Sr. Patricia attended Loreto College, Coleraine, and joined the Loreto sisters in 1976. She did her teacher training in St. Mary's University College, Belfast and taught in St. Brigid's Secondary School in Omagh from 1984 - 1987. She went to Gibraltar and taught for two years in Westside Girls' Comprehensive, then in Loreto primary school for 3 years, and was head teacher there for 8 years.

In 2000, she volunteered to work with children who were in greater need and after learning Spanish she went to Peru where two Loreto sisters were working in a shanty town in Jicamarca not far from Lima. The people there were looking for a school, and had approached the Jesuits who run a group of schools known as Fy y Alegria schools (Faith and Joy). Their aim is “inclusive education” making sure that the poorest and most vulnerable people have an excellent education. To begin such a school in Jicamarca, the people had to give land for the school within their community and find a religious community to run it. The Loreto Sisters were asked if they would be willing to take this on and Sr. Patricia accepted the challenge.

There was no water, electricity or sewage but the school was started in April 2002 with three very basic classrooms without doors or windows for 120 children. From the outset, Sr. Patricia was determined to give the children the best education possible. “These children need the best” she says. “We now have a beautiful school with a good library, and computers. They’re learning how to cook. They need music and dance for a well rounded education – we have a choir ... and a football team. It’s not just mathematics and English and language. I try to give at least 500 children a good meal every day

– the only nutritious meal they get. I can't afford to feed them all, but I give it to the children who need it most. Many of the mothers are single parents who go out to work to provide for their children”.

By 2011 the children were taking first place among the thousands of schools in Lima in the national exams for 7 year olds in maths and language. Today, the school has expanded with 1,000 pupils, and is considered to have one with the best reading levels in the country with pupils reading more than 300 books in the year. It has obtained many awards among them first place in the Evaluation Censal 2011 and winning The Best School Award in 2013. It is a haven of colour, fun and learning, a contrast to the surrounding grey dusty landscape and impoverished environment. Many visitors come to see how the school is operated and achieving such good results.

Sr. Patricia's vision for the school has been simple from the beginning. “We need to believe one hundred percent in education as a means of transformation. It is the only thing that will give these children a fighting chance to extricate themselves out of the cycle of poverty” she says. “I talk to them about the need to change here, to be agents of change. They need to transform

this place. Because if not these children, who? And education gives them such a different way of looking at things – an opportunity their parents did not enjoy. They leave here with self esteem and dignity”

A whole person or holistic approach is the development model practised by missionaries whose work in poor communities is driven by their faith values. Sr. Patricia is the third member of the Loreto congregation whose outstanding work has been recognised publicly with awards over the past few months.

Bible Society's new president

The Bible Society has a new President, His Grace Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the UK.

Bishop Angaelos began his ministry in the UK in 1995 as a parish priest and became General Bishop of the Coptic Church in the UK in 1999. He works extensively with many different communities to build bridges, promote dialogue, and foster unity between churches, faiths and communities.

Bishop Angaelos replaces Dr Richard Chartres, former Bishop of London, who is retiring after



six years as our President. Bishop Richard has been an enthusiastic and generous supporter of our mission, both in the UK and globally, not least in China where he has travelled with Bible Society.

The Society's Chief Executive, Paul Williams, said: 'We are profoundly grateful to Richard Chartres for his outstanding service over the past six years.'

He continued, 'Bishop Angaelos, and the Coptic Orthodox Church which he represents in the UK, models a deep, prayerful spirituality that is characterised by its attentiveness to Scripture... 'With his passion for the work of the church here, particularly amongst young people and the marginalised, and his connection with an ancient Christian community that has suffered throughout its history for its loyalty to Jesus

Christ, Bishop Angaelos is perfectly placed to share and promote the vision of Bible Society as it moves into the new work God has for the organisation both at home and abroad.'

Former President of Ireland to be lay canon of Dublin

On Sunday October 1, for the first time, Christ Church Cathedral will admit honorary Lay and Ecumenical Canons to its Chapter. Former President of Ireland Dr Mary McAleese and Professor Jim Lucey, Medical Director of St Patrick's Mental Health Services and Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Trinity College Dublin will be installed as Lay Canons. The Revd Lorraine Kennedy-Ritchie, of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and Dr David Tuohy SJ will be installed as Ecumenical Canons.

The installations take place during a Service of Choral Evensong in Christ Church Cathedral on Sunday October 1 at 3.30 pm. During the service, Dublin & Glendalough's new Youth Ministry Coordinator, Susie Keegan, will be commissioned. All are welcome to attend.

A Bill allowing for the appointment of the honorary Canons was passed at the General

Synod of the Church of Ireland in May. The move reflected the desire to honour lay people who had given particular and distinguished service to cathedral or public life. The appointment of the Ecumenical Canons reflects the cathedral's mission and ministry in the city amid a changing ecumenical culture. Each will serve for five years.

Looking forward to the installation the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, said: "The opportunity afforded to Christ Church Cathedral by the decision of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland is one we value and appreciate. In a small yet significant way I hope that the cathedral will be able to recognise, in the year of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, the distinct and unique contributions of a wide range of people associated with public and religious life in Ireland from a wide variety of perspectives."

The Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, the Very Revd Dermot Dunne, explained the importance of the appointment of Lay Canons. "The role and position of the cathedral in the city acknowledges that the cathedral is much more than just being the 'mother church' of the dioceses. It is also the cathedral church of the city of Dublin. The cathedral has a strong outreach to the community of Dublin reflected in

its cultural and liturgical life. In creating Lay Canonries the Chapter seeks to recognise the contribution gifted lay people have made to the life of the cathedral and the life of the community,” he said.

Regarding the appointment of Ecumenical Canons, he said: “Given the position of Christ Church in the heart of Dublin, the cathedral provides a tangible and visible ecumenical expression where all traditions of the Christian faith can come together in a space that is neither threatening nor exclusive. This is already happening in the cathedral where ecumenism is expressed in many of our liturgies and gatherings. Having Ecumenical Canons on the Chapter of Christ Church will broaden the ecumenical landscape of both the cathedral and the dioceses.”

Business networking lunches in Belfast Cathedral nave

Belfast Cathedral is offering businesses a great opportunity to network over lunch in the grand surroundings of the Nave of St Anne’s.

Lunch? Let’s Connect! is a new initiative of the Cathedral’s business development team. It will

take place on the first Thursday of every month, and the aim is to bring together 100 business professionals with a desire to meet, network and be inspired by a speaker.

Networking will be done over a sandwich, desert and coffee. Booking is easy, invite a guest, take a look at what is on offer for lunch, at a set price of £14.60 for two, at <http://bit.ly/LunchOct2017>, pay online and email your choice of food to holly@belfastcathedral.org

Lunch? Let's Connect! will be launched in the Cathedral on Thursday October 5 at 1pm. Guest speaker is Trevor Ringland, a solicitor and former Rugby Union winger who won 34 caps for Ireland between 1981 and 1988. Trevor is active with Peace Players' International, an organisation devoted to promoting unity between the communities in Belfast through sport.

Ministry resources site launched in Limerick

A new set of resources for clergy, readers, schools and all in ministry has gone online in the Dioceses of Limerick, Killaloe and Ardfert.

The new website, CME Limerick & Killaloe, was launched at a diocesan council meeting in Adare, Co Limerick, by the Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe, the Right Revd Kenneth Kearon.

The new website, in a blog format, is being produced by Canon Patrick Comerford of the Rathkeale and Kilnaughtin Group of Parishes, who is also Director for Education and Training in the dioceses. The new site is at <https://cmelimerick.blogspot.ie>

The first posting to go on line has a list of Harvest-themed resources for clergy and parishes. The page includes readings for Harvest, suggested hymns linked to the Harvest theme and the readings, and links to Harvest resources available from the Children's Ministry Network, USPG and Christian Aid, as well as Harvest photographs that parishes and schools can use.

Seminars will share the Better Story of God's model for relationships

Love for Life is running a series of seminars aimed at helping people to understand,

appreciate and share the better story of God's model for relationships.

A Better Story will run over four Wednesday nights in Belfast Bible College during October and November. Read on to find out more:

When did you last hear some good news?

Maybe you regularly hear encouraging updates or have reason to celebrate, but all too often, it seems that we are listening to, and sharing negative news and hard stories. When it comes to our relationships, our attitudes toward marriage, sex and parenting, we can be quick to become despondent, disheartened and discouraged.

Is there a better story?

Culture today is presenting us with many so many mixed messages. It can be confusing. Sex and relationships have become something we consume ... if it feels good...if no one is getting hurt...why not?

Is there a better story?

I wonder if we have lost our confidence? It seems that the church might have gone quiet or

might even have lost her voice on these important issues.

As Christians surely we have something to say, something hopeful to share?

Is there a better story?

Love for Life is an independent Christian organisation with a vision to help young people value themselves, relationships and sex. We work with over 40 000 young people annually in schools and youth settings and tirelessly pursue our vision of young people understanding the value and worth and making choices in relationships which reflect those.

At Love for Life, we believe that God's ways are best. We believe that God's model for our relationships and sexuality is the best. It is our heart to equip Christians to dig deep into scripture and have the opportunity to share in learning from gifted people who are passionate about this particular area of discipleship.

Imagine if the church rediscovered its confidence in the scriptures and was courageous in sharing the better story that we have to offer as an alternative to the often confusing and sad news that culture presents regarding relationships and sexuality.

We would love you to join us as we learn together, share together and stand together to understand, appreciate and share the better story of God's model for our relationships.

Gathering over four nights in Belfast Bible College, starting at 7.30 each evening, we will take time to hear from the contributors, there will be an opportunity to discuss the input and ask questions of the speakers too. Why not gather a friends and come along to this exciting series?

Wednesday 11 October

A Better Story: God, sex and human flourishing with Glynn Harrison

Wednesday 25th October

A Better Story for Marriage with Dr Olwyn Mark

Wednesday 8th November

A Better Story for Mother and Baby with Both lives matter

Wednesday 22nd November

A Better Story for Church

Leadership, society and our young people with
Rt. Rev Ken Good, Peter Lynas and Wilson
Beare

There has never been a more timely need for the church to understand, celebrate and share Gods model for relationships.

To book your place for these seminars, visit:
www.abetterstory.eventbrite.co.uk

In service training for clergy and readers in Limerick

Details of the first in a series of training days for clergy and readers in the diocese have been announced.

The Diocesan Communications Officer, the Revd Michael Cavanagh, Priest-in-Charge of the Kenmare and Dromod Union of Parishes, the Editor of Newslink, Joc Sanders, and Canon Comerford, a former journalist, are facilitating a training day in Killarney on parish communications on Monday 23 October.

The topics for discussion include working with local radio stations, newspapers and the diocesan magazine, how to use social media, including Facebook, Twitter, blogs and websites,
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in your parish, and producing parish newsletters and hand-outs.

The day begins at 11, is open to all clergy and diocesan and readers in the united diocese, and ends at 3 p.m.

The planned dates and topics for further training days are:

20 November, Preparing for Advent and Christmas (Saint Mary's Rectory, Askeaton).

22 January, Preparing for Lent and Easter.

12 February, Relating to other faiths (meeting Jews and Muslims in Limerick).

12 March, A life of prayer: personal prayer and leading intercessions.

For more information, Canon Patrick Comerford can be contacted at: cme@limerick.anglican.org

Figures expose Wales church closures

New figures reveal more than ten Anglican churches are closing in Wales each year, equating to 115 over a ten-year period.

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The Church in Wales says the loss of congregations is a "significant issue" and, while the rate of churches being put up for sale has been steady, it is unlikely to slowdown.



According to the National Churches Trust, the rate of church closures in Wales is relatively higher than in England which differences in population size are taken into consideration. It is believed 20 Anglican churches are closing in England annually.

In a recent survey, it concluded attracting new worshippers amid falling attendance was the biggest issue facing Welsh churches. The Trust said offering new facilities was crucial in helping reverse the trend.

Head of communications, Eddie Tulasiewicz told the BBC: "The thing is to think about what can be done with these buildings over and above their religious purpose. They can hold meetings; concerts can take place.

"The other thing is history and tourism. A lot of churches and chapels are exceedingly beautiful and people do want to visit them."

Eight per cent shut their doors for good during the decade covered, the Church in Wales statistics show. The decline leaves 1,319 Anglican churches in Wales still open.

The Church said one way of tackling the long-term decline has been to encourage congregations to work more closely together.

Head of property, Alex Glanville was quoted by the BBC as saying: "We're grouping a lot more parishes and congregations together, about

ten-15 churches in an area, and thinking which ones can we sustain."

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