



S S P X



# In Principio

Superior's Letter

St. Tola's High Cross

Abortion—A Doctor's Perspective

A Great Appeal for the Unborn

Aubrey de Vere

The Rally in Pictures



St. Tola's High Cross at Dysert O'Dea in Co. Clare (p. 18)



St. Patrick's Day Party in Athlone

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# In Principio

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# Letter from the Superior

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Rev. Fr. Vicente A. Griego, SSPX Superior of Ireland

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Dear Friends and Benefactors,

**IN THE BEGINNING GOD** *created heaven and earth. And the earth was void and empty...* (Genesis 1:1-2). The material world is but the stage for God's great work of sharing His Life and happiness with men, who must freely choose to cooperate with and accept God's gift of sharing His Life: *God blessed them, saying: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth...* (Genesis 1:28).

Human life does not consist simply in the multiplication of human life on earth, but that the multitude of human lives be filled with divine life, which makes man's life more than merely human. Transformed to this 'divine state' men are said to be holy. This is God's plan, to increase men's lives by filling them with His life, to sanctify men on earth, and to bring them to eternal life with God in

heaven. Hence, God commands that the earth be filled with men living in conformity to God's Will, which brings men to perfect happiness.

However, by sin, men cast the Divine out of their lives and stunt their lives, making their lives earthly, void, and empty. Rejecting the Creator, and yet taking advantage of His creation, sinful men steal their earthly lives from God and use this life and its goods contrary to God's Will, which leaves them unsatisfied and empty. It is impossible to find true happiness without God.

Given that some strive to honour God and follow His Will while others dishonour and reject Him, a sea of conflict arises in which men will struggle to make their way to God. Men are born, nurtured and perfected under the influence of three distinct societies: famil-



ial, civil, and ecclesiastical. Each society will impress its ideals and practices upon individuals. A society ordered to God will assist the individual to achieve greater union with God; whereas a society that rejects God, will hinder or misdirect those under its influence.

Obviously, every society must give honour to the true God and submit to His sovereignty. However, many families, states, and even Churchmen have conspicuously revolted from the divine order and are bringing ruin to vast numbers of souls and other societies. True happiness, fullness of life, can be realised *only* in God. Happiness is impossible without God.

Nonetheless, men and societies attempt to live without God; the result has historically been the same: after some period of prideful revelling in the pretended liberty from God, ruin and misery befalls the unrealistic ambition. Today, we live at a time when such a farcical life is widely being attempted.

Denying God rightful recognition as sovereign Lord and

refusing submission to His supreme authority, modern society is fast plunging men deeper into moral decadence and unnatural perversion. Perhaps one of the most graphic manifestations of this is the horrific battle presently staged in Ireland – the proposed referendum to repeal the Eighth Amendment of the Constitution of Ireland. Although the Eighth Amendment has not entirely kept abortion out of Ireland, it greatly hinders the abortionist agenda to liberalise access to abortion and further degrade the citizenry.

The attempt of the pseudo-legalisation of contraception, divorce, homosexuality, and now abortion, greatly undermines familial society, weakening the individuals of society, who are made more prone to manipulation by the architects of a new social order devoid of God and His grace. The anti-God ideologues are determined to force their agenda of godlessness upon the people to remould society and men to a life without God and His Law. Such a life will only be unhappy because it is counter to nature, human and divine. In

reality, God the Creator made man to be happy with Him.

The maddening pursuit of happiness without God drives men to a frenzied state of brutality. The promised joys of unfettered liberty engender vicious lives, grossly evidenced by the crime of abortion and the many other evils that prevail today.

Because God's authority and wisdom are rejected by men and societies, the vain and foolish attempt to live without Life, is pursued. The result is that modern and liberal society: pretends that homosexuality is natural; purports to be highly civilised in killing the most helpless and dependent human beings; deceptively victimise women under the claim of health and progress; spuriously vote whether God be permitted to exist... such fabrications of insolent pride and vanity are the result of denying the first principle – God is.

The reality of God cannot be side-lined in the fight against evil, because it is the essential truth. Morals will be known in relation to this truth – good morals if in accord with truth,

bad morals if contrary to truth. To act contrary to truth is to destroy; that is, to act contrary to the good of ourselves and our society. We must live and act in accord with the reality of God, not in the lie of godlessness.

Only when every aspect of life is put in its proper place and God is re-established as the ultimate and essential goal of all men, will the 'problem of abortion' be resolved. Family life will be about the service of God by fidelity to one's spouse and by undertaking daily sacrifices for the good of the family. Civil society will endeavour to establish justice and order to facilitate man's pursuit of the life of grace. Finally, the Church will be unfettered by false ideologies and will clearly uphold, teach, and proclaim Christ's teaching, condemn the errors that mislead souls, and administer the life-giving Sacraments, which transform men to the likeness of Christ.

This Christian order will necessarily abolish the social perversity that clamours for abortion. When men love God, what is contrary to God will be uprooted by men fully living by the grace of God's life. Christ





Massacre of the Holy Innocents by Fra Angelico

merited the grace to destroy sin by His Death upon the Cross – He died that we may live! Should not we embrace the sufferings of this life, fight the evils that destroy souls, by sharing in Christ’s life and sufferings, so that we may live in likeness to Christ – now and forever?!

This, my dear friends, is why it is essential in the fight against abortion, and all evils, to be spiritual and virtuous men. The children of God cannot overcome the enemies of God with only the weapons of this world – supernatural virtue will overcome evil.

We need not fear that the

disorder and vice, which abound, will somehow make it too difficult to face the challenge of living a saintly life – for God is Almighty. We have first to simply believe God and to trust His Providence that ever looks after our well-being. Consequently, we must study to better know God and to confidently strive to live the faith well.

May we each profit from the Season of Lent to well celebrate the joy of Christ’s Resurrection, which is our hope to live Christ in the course of our lives so as to enter eternally in the unending bliss of eternal life in the Resurrection.

On behalf of the Society of Saint Pius X, I wish to thank you, our friends and benefactors, for your generous support of our apostolate in Ireland, upon which we are dependent for our material needs. Your prayers and sacrifices are also most necessary and efficacious in spiritually supporting the crusade to restore all things in Christ. Your spiritual support greatly assists the Society in its humble role in this work of the Church.

May the life of Christ fill your lives with God's abundant blessings so that we each may live the life of grace to realise our likeness to Christ all the

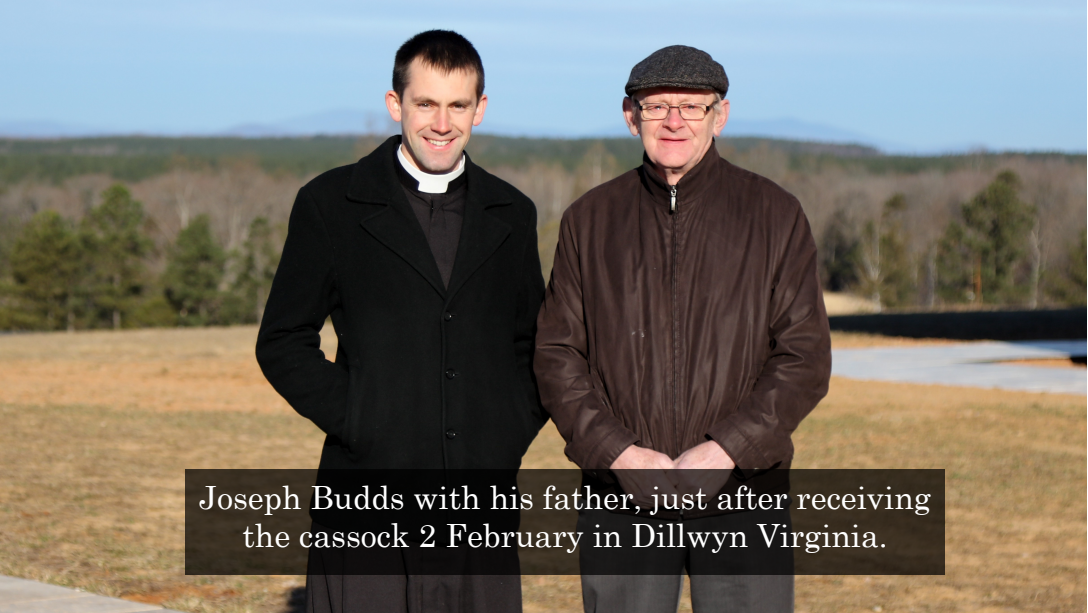
days of our lives, until we come before Our Lord at the end of this life of combat. May we then be welcomed home as victorious veterans of the Christian Crusade! May God bless you and Our Lady Immaculate watch over you and your loved ones, our country, and Holy Mother Church.

In Christ the King,



Rev. Fr. Vicente A. Griego

*Superior, Autonomous  
House of Ireland*



Joseph Budds with his father, just after receiving the cassock 2 February in Dillwyn Virginia.

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# Abortion

## A Gynaecologist's Perspective

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By Dr. John Monaghan

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*Ginmhileadh* is the Irish word for abortion which more aptly communicates the truth about this act. It means the destruction of the child, or rather the destruction of an entire generation, suggesting the far-reaching effects of this act. This Irish word, in fact, is absent from dictionaries prior to 1936, and given that Ireland escaped Roman occupation, it seems likely that abortion never existed in Ireland in any historical period dating back to the beginning of the world.

This makes the proposed referendum to remove the rights of the unborn child a momentous decision. Abortion has become legal in most so-called developed countries over the past fifty years, but rarely ever by popular vote. In Ireland the people will make that decision.

It is projected that roughly 100,000 Irish citizens alive today would have been aborted if Britain's law on abortion was in force in Ireland. The proposals coming from the government for an abortion law suggest that Ireland hopes to follow in Britain's footsteps.

The proposals have been clearly set down by the Parliamentary committee.

- a) Abortion for any reason **up to 12 weeks** of pregnancy.
- b) Abortion to protect the mother's health, **at any stage** in pregnancy.
- c) No distinction with regard to **physical or mental health**.
- d) Abortion at any stage in pregnancy for so-called '**fatal fetal abnormalities**'.

Of the almost 200,000 abortions happening annually in the UK, 97% of them are performed on 'health' grounds; and 99.8% of these abortions

happen not for physical, but *mental health* reasons. The particular medical term associated with this mental diagnosis is classified as ‘mental disorder not otherwise specified’. Whatever this disorder is, it does not apply after twenty-four weeks of pregnancy. So far no such restriction has been announced in Ireland; the Oireachtas Committee noted that ‘many countries did not have a restriction on gestation of age for *mental* or physical health’. So the proposed law is even more permissive than that in Britain and raises the appalling prospect of abortion for unspecified mental reasons, even up to the very end of pregnancy. It is worth noting that in the UK, after twenty-two weeks of pregnancy, more than 95% of these children are killed before birth by lethal injection, and not simply by early delivery.

It is very clear what will happen if this amendment is removed, and no political party is prepared to prevent this from happening. There seems to be a deficit of courage among our political class. ‘A decline in courage,’ says Solzhenitsyn, ‘is the most striking feature which

an outside observer notices in the West of our days...should one point out that from ancient times decline in courage has been considered the beginning of the end?’ He concludes: ‘The press has become the greatest power within the Western countries, more powerful than the legislature, the executive and the judiciary.’<sup>1</sup>

In 1983, the vast majority of obstetricians and gynaecologists, including Professors and Masters, supported constitutional protection, thus paving the way for the introduction of the Eighth Amendment. Thirty-five years later, the thinking appears to be reversed. Throughout this time, the human character of the developing baby has become ever more obvious, particularly through ultrasound scans. This appears all the more puzzling as to why abortion has become acceptable to a significant number of gynaecologists.

One reason is that developmental abnormalities are increasingly being detected on scans in the middle stage of pregnancy. Those who have been most vocal in advocating for the removal of the amend-

ment are those who were involved in this type of scanning. They see a need to terminate pregnancies where they have diagnosed an untreatable fetal condition. Training in other countries has taught them that this is an easy answer; it solves the problem for them if the pregnancy is terminated.

While there is no talk among doctors about extending the abortion law to early pregnancy or for the 'health' reasons, various statements suggesting easy access to abortion pills or a *need to travel* seem to point to the fact that abortion should be legalised for more than simply fetal conditions.

It is clear that a doctor

who agrees to terminate a pregnancy due to a chromosomal abnormality, has an entirely different conception of human life from the one commonly held in 1983. The decision to terminate a pregnancy is based on relativistic assumptions; that there is no point in the life of the abnormal child, or that this is the choice of the woman and her doctor, or simply that she would be prevented from travelling. All of these reasons avoid facing the question at hand; neither do they avoid it altogether, nor are they content in completely ignoring the rights of the child. But with such provisions, there is no question of the unborn having any rights whatsoever.



In addition, all of the speeches made by political leaders in favour of abortion have been of a highly emotional tone, sympathising with the plight of women who have travelled to end their pregnancy. There is never any mention of the rights of the child.

It has been suggested that, if abortion is legalised, a conscientious objection clause would be included in the legislation. Evidence suggests that such a provision would be insignificant. Firstly, a doctor would be obliged to refer a woman requesting an abortion to another practitioner who would in turn perform the deed. This would make the first doctor complicit in the act, which is clearly not an option for a Catholic.

Secondly, conscientious objection has been under consistent attack in the medical field for the past ten years. It is already prohibited in Sweden, Denmark and Iceland. Those who are conscientious objectors to abortion will eventually be forbidden to practice as obstetricians, General Practitioners or midwives. Nevertheless, there is increasing evidence that conscientious objection is

on the rise among healthcare professionals. Unfortunately, there is no legislation protecting these objectors, who it seems will be left to the mercy of elected politicians.

There are many witnesses to the prohibition on abortion for Christians even back to the earliest times. But even before this, the Hippocratic oath from 500 BC had a specific prohibition on abortion, and this is certainly why today almost no medical school requires this oath to be taken.

But the question remains with regard to the doctors. How can these highly capable professionals, who are in no way malicious, have such a selective blindness about the life of the unborn child?

Although a certain amount of ideology may have been absorbed during training overseas, it seems to come rather from a lack of knowledge which has its origins in the educational system. Most of these doctors would have grown up in the 1980s and 1990s. They clearly were not influenced or educated in the traditional Catholic understanding



of the human person.

This blindness must be the fruit of forty years of defective religious education. These professionals did not lose the faith; they never received it.

A great English Catholic writer, Daphne McLeod, gave a very good description of the catastrophic religious education in the Catholic Church since the end of Vatican Council II. She does not blame the Council itself – but rather the post-conciliar commission on education established in 1966 which implemented the decisions made by the Council Fathers. It is very clear that they did not implement, but rather created a radical new relativistic program which effectively de-

stroyed the faith of the generation growing up in the mid-1970s onwards. Its fruits are now visible in many aspects of society, apart from the abortion issue.

It is very clear that the common practice of parents relying on their schools to give a proper catechesis to their children, is now part of history. It is the task of parents to teach the children themselves, or to find a competent teacher within their church who will now take the place of what was once a foregone conclusion.

There are of course other factors encouraging doctors to accept abortion: the ideas of genetics, eugenics, hedonistic beliefs in the right of a

woman to choose (although this choice is never stated in words), a concerted campaign to soften public opinion, and the worldwide highlighting of the death of Mrs. Savita Halappanavar.

It is clear that the politicians and abortion advocates are relying heavily on medical testimony to support their case. Yet despite Ireland's 'retrogressive' laws, they have a lower maternal mortality rate than the UK, and the rate of suicide among women is almost half in Ireland compared to the UK. Also, ever since the abortion act of 1967 in Britain, there has been a shortage of obstetricians and gynaecologists.

As stated above it is now clear what sort of an abortion regime will be introduced if this amendment is removed. And if removed, it would be extraordinarily difficult to reverse it in the future.

Many people are not aware of the proposed provisions. If they were, it is very probable that they would vote

to retain the Eighth Amendment. It is incumbent on every Christian to act in whatever way they can to encourage people to vote to retain the constitutional rights of the unborn child by canvassing, using the public media, contacting politicians or simply talking with friends and relatives.

The decision in the end will not be made by a small coterie of pro-choice doctors or politicians, but by the people as a whole. It is an advantage that Ireland has on other countries – the people will decide it. It is our obligation and our privilege to make the case for the unborn child with the next three months. Let us pray that God allows the continued protection of the unborn on this island.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Solzhenitsyn, Alexander, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 1978
2. McLeod, Daphne, "Will Grandchildren Be Catholic?" Christian Order, London 2006



# A GREAT APPEAL

FOR THE UNBORN IN IRELAND

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## **SPEAKERS**

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**REV. LEO BOYLE,**  
FSSPX

**DR. TONI BRANDI,**  
President & Founder  
of ProVita Onlus Italy

**GIANNA JESSEN,**  
Abortion Survivor &  
ProLife Activist



Gianna Jessen  
abortion survivor

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# St. Tola's High Cross

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**Anonymous**

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A fine high cross stands in a field overlooking the early medieval ecclesiastical site of Dysert O'Dea, in the townland of Mollaneen, near Corofin, Co. Clare. This church site is reputed to have been founded by Saint Tola around the eighth century. Although information regarding this saint is scarce, his death is recorded in the *Annals of the Four Masters* in 733 AD and his feast day was celebrated annually at Dysert O'Dea on 30<sup>th</sup> March by undertaking penitential rounds or devotions to the patron (which is a practice known as a 'pattern'). This church site was originally called '*Dísert Tola*' named after Saint Tola, while also using the Irish word '*dísert*' which is derived from the Latin '*desertum*' meaning 'deserted place'. While Saint Tola probably sought asceticism at this place, the physical remains at Dysert O'Dea indi-

cate that it later developed into a significant sacred centre which attracted pilgrims from far and wide. The ruins here are among the most impressive in Co. Clare from this period, and they include a large nave and chancel church (with Romanesque elements surviving), a round tower and a nearby holy well dedicated to the founding saint, as well as the high cross which forms the focus of this article.

Standing at over 3.2m in height, this impressive cross at Dysert O'Dea proudly surmounts a low mound. A product of the Romanesque period, it dates to the twelfth century. Its decoration is dominated by geometric patterns and animal and foliage interlacings, but there are also some remarkable figurative carvings. The east face of the cross head depicts a large-scale image in high relief of



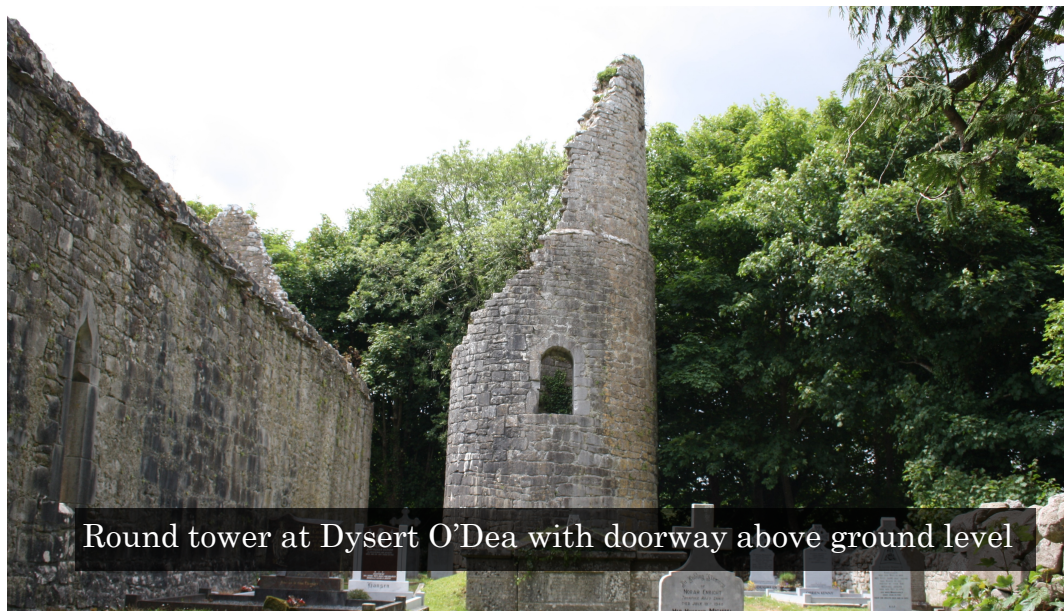
Christ crucified. He has outstretched arms straight and level, and is clothed in a wide-sleeved, belted robe reaching below the knees, flared and pleated from the waist and with his feet positioned frontally resting on a horizontal projection. Some scholars have suggested, however, that this carving cannot be confidently interpreted as a Crucifixion scene and may instead represent Christ risen or his triumphant return as the final judge. Interestingly, the head was carved on a separate stone which was removable up until the late 1800s when it was cemented into the cross head.

There was a tradition that those suffering from a toothache would hold their face to this carving of Christ's head in search of a cure.

Below this image, on the tapering shaft of the cross, is a large-scale figure of an ecclesiastic with elongated head and down-turned mouth. His clothes portray him as a bishop: he wears a conical mitre and a long garment, and in his left hand he is holding a crosier with a spiral crook. The prominent position of this figure, who takes second place in the composition only to Christ, indicates it is likely a representation of Saint Tola. The image

of the founding saint, depicted as a bishop, highlights the enhanced status of episcopal leadership in Ireland as a result of the twelfth-century Church reform movement. The illustration of the crosier is noteworthy as an eleventh/twelfth-century bronze crosier, which enshrines an earlier wooden staff, has survived from the site. But it is of the typical old Irish drop-head variety, very different to the spiral-headed (volute) crosier shown on this cross. Volute crosiers were a symbol of pastoral care and a Continental tradition associated with episcopal office. The careful render-

ing of the saint in the manner of a Continental bishop was a public statement on the contemporary restructuring of the Church hierarchy. The saint's right arm, which was in all probability once raised in benediction, is missing and there is now a square socket where it was previously positioned. Scholars have theorised that this missing arm could have been made from precious metal, would have been removable and functioned as a reliquary (perhaps containing relics of Saint Tola). In this manner, it may have resembled the twelfth-century arm shrine of



Round tower at Dysert O'Dea with doorway above ground level

Saint Lachtín. In such venerable objects, the saints were fully present and were carried on pilgrimages and into battles, used for healing, swearing oaths, and bestowing blessings.

The west face of the splayed base – the side closest to the church – has a much-damaged carving of the temptation of Adam and Eve represented between the fanned-out branches of an apple tree. Another interesting Biblical scene occurs on the south face of the base and depicts a man between two interlaced beasts. This may represent Daniel in the lions' den. The north face of the base is decorated with a scene of four men all clad in tunics. Two are holding a tall tau-shaped staff between them while a third holds a shorter crooked crosier. In the Eastern Church, the tau was often regarded as a symbol of jurisdiction, and this scene is believed to represent the 'founding' of the church by Saint Tola, with the tau staff being used to mark out and define the sacred

boundary of the ecclesiastical site. A similar foundation ceremony scene occurs on the east face of the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly. Such scenes echo the image of Moses and Aaron holding the pole with the brazen serpent. Highly stylised animal ornamentation also plays an important role on the cross at Dysert O'Dea with serpents being regularly depicted. Such creatures are seen on the west window of the nearby church as well.

The cross and its decoration would have served a number of functions. Earlier high crosses in the midlands are characterised by a series of separated panels with intricate carvings of Biblical episodes. As the period progressed, we see a departure from this trend and so this cross at Dysert O'Dea is unusual in being the only example in northwest Clare portraying a number of scriptural scenes. At a time when only the clergy could read, these carvings, then brightly painted,

would have served as essential teaching aids for the illiterate. The size of the cross is a visible sign of the glory of God and it became an object of devotion which encouraged prayer and humble prostration. Above it was noted that a 'pattern' was held annually at Dysert O'Dea on the saint's feast day, and during such events the cross most likely operated as a penitential station. At other early Irish church sites, documentary evidence informs us that during these rituals, crosses were 'rounded' in a clockwise direction a specified number of times (usually three, seven, nine or fifteen), sometimes on bended knee, while reciting sets of specific prayers, most frequently Our Fathers, Hail Marys, Creeds and Glorias. Being located on the edge of Dysert O'Dea church site and in a time before signposts, this cross would have signalled to travellers that they were entering a holy place. It also served to demarcate the boundary of the sacred space and the area of sanctuary (the *termonn*).

With its dominant figurative imagery on the east side facing outwards, it operated as a sign of power and protection which excluded the wilderness beyond.

The cross has a splayed base which in turn rests on a square base 0.71m high which was not originally designed for the cross. Scholars have debated that it once formed part of the chancel of the nearby church but more likely it operated as a stone altar. It probably dates to the second half of the twelfth century and its survival is remarkable as there are few extant early altars in Ireland. It comprises seven blocks of limestone, although the altar stone itself is missing. Its corners terminate at the base in beasts' heads with elaborate hair and moustaches. The altar was constructed in such a way that it had a large cavity within it perhaps for the purpose of accommodating relics, and much of the cruciform decoration on its sides resembles ornamentation on early

portable metal reliquaries, such as St. Patrick's bell shrine. The altar would have been consecrated and so when no longer in use could not be discarded, and thus its incorporation into this cross monument would have been considered an appropriate re-use of a holy structure.

The cross has fallen at least twice, once in the seventeenth century when it was apparently knocked by Cromwellian forces. An inscription on the east face of the original base informs us that it was repaired and re-erected in 1683 by Michael O'Dea; then on the south face an inscription states that it was re-erected again in 1871 by Francis Hutcheson Synge. The cross and associated church site have been afforded statutory protection as National Monuments, and it is hoped that their preservation

and veneration will continue into the future.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. Some church sites in Ireland with the 'desert' placename may have been founded by the *Céili Dé*, a group of reclusive religious who followed a strict rule, were active in the eighth and ninth centuries and chose remote locations and marginal lands for their church foundations, though in terms of location Dysert O'Dea seems to have been well connected. The *Céili Dé* reform movement rigorously sought to counteract a propensity towards laxity in observance and discipline at earlier churches.

2. A mitre was a type of hat worn by bishops, a Continental tradition adopted in Ireland particularly in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

3. The Greek letter *tau* is T-shaped. The tau crosier seems to have been introduced to Ireland in the twelfth century and there are a number of early depictions of tau crosiers in north Clare, for instance on the Doorty Cross, in Kilfenora, on a grave-slab at Killinaboy and in the form of a free-standing sculpture at Roughan Hill, near Killinaboy. The Kilkenny Archaeological Society Crosier, a twelfth-century relic possibly of Connacht provenance, is the only surviving tau crosier in Ireland.



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# Aubrey de Vere

## An Introduction to His Life & Work

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By Liam Foley

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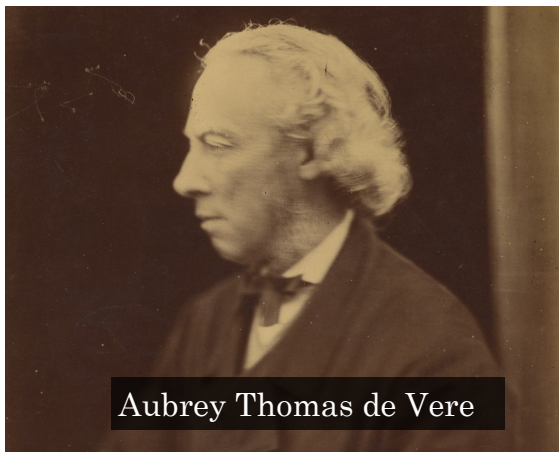
The funeral cortege of Aubrey de Vere was something of an endurance test. Seven and a half kilometres is a long walk at the best of times, but in the face of a snowstorm at the end of January 1902, the mourners must have felt like Captain Scott crossing the Antarctic. De Vere wasn't to be buried in the local Catholic cemetery of Stonehall, Co. Limerick, but rather with his ancestors in the shadow of a tower constructed by the Medieval Knights Templar besides the Protestant churchyard at Askeaton.

Descended from Cromwellian settlers in the 1650s, his conversion to Catholicism did not surprise those who knew him well. His brother Stephen, the baronet, became Catholic four years previous in the middle of the Great Famine. He wrote a first-hand account of the conditions aboard the so-called 'coffin ships'

which took so many people to Canada and the United States; this incidentally led to the reform of the conditions under which 'steerage' passengers crossed the Atlantic. Stephen would later go on to represent Co. Limerick as MP, and serve as High Sheriff for the County.

Aubrey was received into the Church by the recently ordained Fr. Henry Manning, when they both traveled to Rome in late 1851. De Vere was known in Anglo-Catholic circles, and had been acquainted with Newman since the 1830s. In his memoirs, he wrote that it was the Gorham Decision that finally made him, like Manning, submit to Rome. This decision was a decree by an English court that Rev. George Gorham was able to hold a view on baptism at variance with tradition and remain a clergyman in good standing.





Aubrey Thomas de Vere

*... the Gorham decision on baptism was a repudiation of an article in the Nicene Creed, that it disowned the early Church, and that it left the Church of England without any 'teaching authority' (Recollections of Aubrey de Vere 1897).*

De Vere became a Catholic in the Archbishop's Avignon chapel on November 15, 1851. Later that day he wrote a very passionate letter about why he chose to become Catholic to his close friend, Sara Coleridge, daughter of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and a well-known author in her own right:

*I was this morning received into what I believe to be the One, Catholic and Apostolic Church confessed in the Creed,*

*and commissioned from on high by God Himself. For some time my convictions had been far clearer than those we require for action in matters of secular concern ... Such convictions if they be true, come to us also, by Grace and through God's Providence; and his gifts, if not used, will be withdrawn. In this belief I have acted. May He accept the act as one of obedience to Him, and may He bestow on me those spiritual gifts of which obedience is the Gate, especially humility, contrition and love. ... Reason, in itself, is a light that shineth in the darkness and the darkness comprehended it not.' But Reason incarnate is come into the World; and this Wisdom I believe, speaks to us through the Spirit and the Church. To contemplate Reason is this personal way and allow*

*Him to speak to us as little children, seems to me the highest act of reason.*

Unlike his brother Stephen, who became Catholic out of a deep love of his Catholic tenantry and admiration for their faith and devotion, Aubrey became Catholic mostly through his study of the history of the Church and his understanding of reason. Once he understood the Catholic Church to be the true Church he felt obliged to submit to it. His was a deeply intellectual conversion for which he gave special credit to the writings of St Thomas Aquinas.

As rector of the Catholic University of Ireland, Newman appointed de Vere as Professor of Political and Social Science. This was an honorary position, but nevertheless de Vere did give a series of lectures which survive today. These give us an insight into his thought on literature, which was firmly in the mid-19th Century Romanticist Movement, a reaction against the scientific rationalism of the age.

Possibly his greatest work of prose is *English Mis-*

rule and *Irish Misdeeds* (1848), a series of letters addressed to members of parliament, which details the attempts English Protestant rule made to destroy the Church and the faith of the people in Ireland. He pointedly outlined the double standard of the Protestant understanding of conscience when he says:

*The reign of the Puritans was not favourable to the Irish. Passionate advocates for private judgment, they conceded to the Roman Catholics no particle of that which they themselves so vehemently used or abused ; even Milton, no feeble champion of toleration, excepting them alone from its benefits on religious grounds, as Locke did at a later period on political. Lord Clarendon says that the sufferings of the Irish from the Puritans had never been surpassed but by those of the Jews in their destruction by Titus. (English Misrule and Irish Misdeeds Letter II.)*

De Vere was best known to generations of Irish students through his poetry especially *The Ballad of Athlone* a heroic account of the 1691 siege.

*Does any man dream that a  
Gael can fear?  
Of a thousand deeds let him  
learn but one!  
The Shannon swept onwards  
broad and clear,  
Between the leaguers and broad  
Athlone.*

Nevertheless, de Vere is best known for his historical poems, most of which deal with religious subjects and are Romantic in nature. A good example is *The Baptism of St. Patrick*.

*In that pure wave from Adam's  
sin  
The blind priest cleansed the  
Babe with awe;  
Then, reverently, he washed  
therein  
His old, unseeing face, and saw!  
He saw the earth; he saw the  
skies,*

*And that all-wondrous Child  
decreed  
A pagan nation to baptise,  
To give the Gentiles light in-  
deed.*

Yeats treated of de Vere's poetry, in, it seems, a rather backhanded way: 'One needs, perhaps, to perfectly enjoy him, a Dominican habit, a cloister, and a breviary.' This is an odd description of a man considered Ireland's greatest Romantic poet but in light of the letter he wrote Sarah Coleridge on reason and his conversion, it is much easier to understand why St. Thomas' Summa played such a prominent part in de Vere's life and why he should be remembered by all Irishmen, literary and Catholic.



Avignon, where de Vere was baptised.



Faces from the Rally for Life in Dublin 10th March.



# Calendar of Events

**April 7** Young Adult Group Study Session—Dun Laoghaire

**April 14** Archconfraternity of St. Stephen's Guild Mtg.—Dun Laoghaire

**April 21** Young Adult Group Study Session—Dun Laoghaire

**April 28** Eucharistic Crusader Outing—Athlone

**May 4-6** Young Adult Outing—Dublin

**May 5** A Great Appeal for the Unborn—Alex Hotel Fenian St Dublin

**June 14** Croagh Patrick Pilgrimage

**June 22** Priestly Ordination of Rev. Mr. Thomas O'Hart in Virginia

**July 22-29** Girls' Eucharistic Crusade Camp

**July 29-Aug. 4** Boys' Eucharistic Crusade Camp



February Youth Outing in Cork

# The Priestly Society of Saint Pius X in Ireland

Rev. Vicente A. Griego, Superior

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## Mass Centres

### **Saint John the Evangelist Church**

1 Upper Mounttown Road  
Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin  
A96 P793  
(01) 284 2206

### **Corpus Christi Church**

Connaught Gardens  
Athlone, Co. Westmeath  
N37 E671  
(090) 643 3703

### **Saint Pius V Chapel**

78 Andersonstown Road  
Belfast, Co. Antrim BT11 9AN  
Mr. McKeown (028) 9445 3654

### **Our Lady of the Rosary**

Shanakiel Road  
Sunday's Well, Co. Cork  
T23 T389  
(090) 643 3703

### **Our Lady of Knock Chapel**

Unit 5 Richbrook Business  
Park, Mill Road, Bessbrook,  
Newry, Co. Down BT35 7DT

## Residences

### **Saint Pius X House**

12 Tivoli Terrace South  
Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin  
A96 KV65  
(01) 284 2206

Fr. Vicente Griego  
Fr. Pierpaolo Petrucci  
Fr. Francis Gallagher  
Fr. Marcel Ockerse

### **Saint Joseph's House**

Court Devenish House  
Court Devenish Lane  
Athlone, Co. Westmeath  
N37 NF77  
(090) 643 3703

Fr. Leo Boyle  
Fr. Patrick Kimball

*Visit [fsspx.ie](http://fsspx.ie) for complete schedules, weekly bulletins, and more information.*

Society of Saint Pius X



S S P X

The Priestly Society of Saint Pius X is an international society of common life without vows, whose purpose is the Priesthood and that which pertains to it.

The main goal of the Society is to preserve the Catholic faith in its fullness and purity, to teach its truths, and to diffuse its virtues. Authentic spiritual life, the sacraments, and the traditional liturgy are its primary means of bringing this life of grace to souls.