

# Some of Pope Francis's Inspired Words Dublin - Aug 2018



## **Clerical Sexual Abuse: Imploring God's Mercy - Seeking Forgiveness:**

Yesterday I met with 8 persons, who are survivors of the abuse of power, the abuse of conscience and sexual abuse. In reflecting on what they told me, I wish to implore the Lord's mercy for these crimes and ask forgiveness for them

- We ask forgiveness for the cases of abuse in Ireland, the abuse of power, **the abuse of conscience** and sexual abuse on the part of representatives of the Church. In a special way, we ask forgiveness for all those abuses that took place in different kinds of institutions directed by men and women religious and other members of the Church. We also ask forgiveness for cases in which many minors were exploited for their labour.
- We ask forgiveness for all those times when, as a Church, we did not offer to the survivors of any type of abuse compassion and the pursuit of justice and truth by concrete actions. We ask forgiveness.
- We ask forgiveness for some members of the hierarchy who took no responsibility for these painful situations and kept silent. We ask forgiveness.
- We ask forgiveness those children who were taken away from their mothers and for all those times when so many single mothers who tried to find their children that had been taken away, or those children who tried to find their mothers, were told that this was a mortal sin. It is not a mortal sin; it is the fourth commandment! We ask forgiveness.

May the Lord preserve and increase this sense of shame and repentance, and grant us the strength to ensure that it never happens again and that justice is done. Amen. (Phoenix Park, Dublin Celebration of Eucharist 26-8-18)

## **Clerical Abuse: We have been saved by Jesus and this gives us courage:**

A recurrent theme of my visit, of course, has been the Church's need to acknowledge and remedy, with evangelical honesty and courage, past failures – grave sins – with regard to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. ....In these years, all of us have had our eyes opened – painfully – to the gravity and

extent of sexual abuse and the abuse of power and conscience in various social settings. In Ireland, as elsewhere, the honesty and integrity with which the Church chooses to confront this painful chapter of her history can offer an example and a warning to society as a whole. Continue on this path. Humiliation is painful, but we have been saved by the humiliation of the Son of God and this gives us courage. The wounds of Christ give us courage. I ask you, please, to be close – this is the word, “closeness” – to the Lord and to God's people. Closeness. Do not repeat the attitudes of aloofness and clericalism that at times in your history have given the real image of an authoritarian, harsh and autocratic Church (Meeting with Irish RC Bishops – 26-9-18)

## **The Power of Forgiveness in Marriage and Relationships:**

To “forgive” means to “give” something of yourself. Jesus always forgives us. By the power of his forgiveness, we too can forgive others, if we really want to. Isn't that what we pray for, when we say the *Our Father*? Children learn to forgive when they see their parents forgiving one another. If we understand this, we can appreciate the grandeur of Jesus' teaching about fidelity in marriage. Far from a cold legal obligation, it is above all a powerful promise of God's own fidelity to his word and his unflinching grace. Christ died for us so that we, in turn, might forgive and be reconciled with one another. In this way, as individuals and as families, we can know the truth of Saint Paul's words that, when all else passes away, “love never ends”” (*1 Cor 13:8*) (With 350 Couples in Pro Cathedral – 25/8)

## **Irish Celtic Christianity: Impacted Europe and Beyond**

“The threads of that history reach back to over a millennium and a half ago, when the Christian message, preached by Palladius and Patrick, found a home in Ireland and became an integral part of Irish life and culture. Many “saints and scholars” were inspired to leave these shores and bring their newfound faith to other lands.

To this day, the names of Columba, Columbanus, Brigid, Gall, Killian, Brendan and so many others are still revered throughout Europe and beyond. On this island monasticism, as a source of civilization and artistic creativity, wrote a splendid page in Irish and universal history.”

(Meeting with Civil Authorities in Dublin Castle -25/08/18)

## **New ways of Doing Mission: Be courageous and Creative**

The upheavals of recent years have tested the traditionally strong faith of the Irish people. Yet they have also offered the opportunity for an interior renewal of the

Church in this country and pointed to new ways of envisioning its life and mission. “God is eternal newness” and he impels us “constantly to set out anew, to pass beyond what is familiar, to the fringes and beyond” (*Gaudete et Exsultate*, 135). With humility and trust in his grace, may you discern and set out on new paths for these new times. Be courageous and creative. Surely, the strong missionary sense rooted in the soul of your people will inspire creative ways of bearing witness to the truth of the Gospel and building up the community of believers in the love of Christ and zeal for the growth of his kingdom (Meeting with Bishops – 26-9-18)

### **Reconciliation – along with Leaders of other Christian Communities – and Fervent Prayer:**

Continue to foster unity and fraternity among yourselves – this is very important – and, together with the leaders of other Christian communities, to work and pray fervently for reconciliation and peace among all the members of the Irish family..... There is another thing that I always say, but it bears repeating. What is the first duty of the bishop? I say it to everyone: it is prayer. When the Greek-speaking Christians complained that their widows were being neglected (*Acts* 6:1), Peter and the apostles created deacons. Then when Peter explained the matter, he concluded by saying: “We [apostles] will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word”. So I throw out a question and each of you can answer it at home: how many hours a day does each of you devote to prayer? (Meeting with Irish RC Bishops – 26-9-18)

### **We need a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit:**

“The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (*Jn* 6:63):. These words, with their promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, are teeming with life for us who accept them in faith. They point to the ultimate source of all the good that we have experienced and celebrated here in these past few days: the Spirit of God, who constantly breathes new life into our world, into our hearts, into our families, into our homes and parishes. Each ...new generation, brings the promise of a new Pentecost... a fresh outpouring of the Spirit, the *Paraclete*, whom Jesus sends as our Advocate, our Consoler and indeed our *Encourager* (Phoenix Park, Dublin Celebration of Eucharist 26-8-18)

### **The Love we have come to know in Christ Jesus:**

Living in love, even as Christ loved us (cf. *Eph* 5:2), entails... dying to ourselves in order to be reborn to a greater and more enduring love. The love that alone can

save our world from its bondage to sin, selfishness, greed and indifference to the needs of the less fortunate. That is the love we have come to know in Christ Jesus. ...The task of bearing witness to this Good News is not easy. Yet the challenges that Christians face today are, in their own way, no less difficult than those faced by the earliest Irish missionaries. I think of Saint Columbanus, who with his small band of companions brought the light of the Gospel to the lands of Europe in an age of darkness and cultural dissolution. Their extraordinary missionary success was not based on tactical methods or strategic plans, no, but **on a humble and liberating docility to the promptings of the Holy Spirit**. It was their daily witness of fidelity to Christ and to each other that won hearts yearning for a word of grace and helped give birth to the culture of Europe. That witness remains a perennial source of spiritual and missionary renewal for God’s holy and faithful people. (Phoenix Park, Dublin Celebration of Eucharist 26-8-18)

### **Teachings of Jesus Hard: Need the strength of His Holy Spirit:**

But let us also humbly acknowledge that, if we are honest with ourselves, we too can find the teachings of Jesus hard. How difficult it is always to forgive those who hurt us; how challenging always to welcome the migrant and the stranger; how painful joyfully to bear disappointment, rejection, betrayal; how inconvenient to protect the rights of the most vulnerable, the unborn or the elderly, who seem to impinge upon our own sense of freedom. Yet it is precisely at those times that the Lord asks us: “What about you, do you want to go away too?” (*Jn* 6:67). With the strength of the Spirit to “encourage” us and with the Lord always at our side, we can answer: “We believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God” (v.69). With the people of Israel, we can repeat: “We too will serve the Lord, for he is our God” (*Jos* 24:18). (Phoenix Park, Dublin Celebration of Eucharist 26-8-18)

### **Called to be Missionary Disciples:**

Each Christian is sent forth to be a missionary, “a missionary disciple” (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 120). The Church as a whole is called to “go forth” to bring the words of eternal life to all the peripheries of our world. ...As we now prepare to go our separate ways, let us renew our fidelity to the Lord and to the vocation he has given to each of us. Taking up the prayer of Saint Patrick, let each of us repeat with joy: “Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me” [repeated in Irish]. With the joy and strength given by the Holy Spirit, let us say to him with confidence: “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (*Jn* 6:68). (Phoenix Park, Dublin Celebration of Eucharist 26-8-18)