

St Patrick's College Maynooth

Summer 2021 Issue no. 11



"Being appointed has really brought home to me the privilege and responsibility of opening up space for others, just as women who struggled to have their voices heard and gifts recognised, have paved a way for me."

Historic appointment of first lay woman as Dean of Theology

The appointment of Dr Jessie Rogers, as the first woman and lay Dean of the Faculty of Theology in the 226 year history of the Pontifical University at Maynooth has been widely welcomed by colleagues, friends and other stakeholders across Ireland, Europe and the US.

More than 5,000 people have shared congratulatory messages relating to Jessie's new position, via social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter.

The reaction of Tamra Hull Fromm, an Associate Lecturer At Maryvale Institute In Michigan, USA was commonplace: *"Excellent news! Delighted to see that Maynooth recognizes and values the 'feminine genius' in academia."*

Closer to home, Hannah Evans, a Special Education Teacher in Mullingar, County Westmeath said: "Here's hoping that this is the first of many female appointments into managerial roles within the Irish church and the formation of future clergy and lay vocations."

Dr Rogers, originally from South Africa, undertook her graduate studies at the University of Stellenbosch and came to Ireland in 2007 to teach in Mary Immaculate College before joining the Faculty of Theology at Saint Patrick's College in 2014.

College President, Rev Prof Michael Mullaney said that while Dr Rogers appointment is significant, it should not be considered surprising. "In order for the Church to be itself, it cannot do so without the specific contributions of laity, women and men, who by vocation are an integral part of it. The appointment of Dr Rogers is a reflection of her contribution to scholarly leadership in scripture studies and faith formation in Ireland and beyond. Her's was a natural and welcome appointment," he concluded.



What a beautiful place to study

"I remember vividly walking through St. Joseph's Square at St. Patrick's College for the first time - with its long walkway, beautiful trees, and majestic buildings - I could hardly imagine a more scenic place to study in. I knew that I wanted to study Theology because of my Catholic faith and desire to learn more about God. After hearing from friends who studied Theology in St. Patrick's College, I knew that this was the place where I wanted to do my degree.

When lectures began last September, my decision was reaffirmed as I attended in-person classes and met lecturers and staff who were passionate about theology, zealous for teaching, and full of care for us students.

Then tighter restrictions were introduced in the middle of my first semester, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the learning dynamic changed radically as all my classes moved online. However, the support from staff and faculty during this time never lessened. Knowing that I am surrounded virtually by the support of the faculty, staff and other students, constantly reaffirms my decision to study here.

I'm looking forward to returning to Maynooth in September - when I can roam about the College campus, mingle again with other students and staff in St. Joseph's Square, confident in the knowledge that St. Patrick's College is the place for me."

Grace Masterson
1st Year BATH

Unexpected fruits of COVID hibernation

Each year, the seasons follow one another. Winter, a time of no observable change is followed by the burst of new life in Spring. When a seed germinates beneath the surface, there is a lengthy period with nothing to show. This past year of lockdowns has felt like one long hibernation.

At St Patrick's College, our community of students - from all parts of Ireland and four other continents - has continued to gather online for courses and seminars. There have been many obstacles - ranging from somewhat stilted communication through screens and microphones, to the lack of impromptu discussions that normally happen in the corridors of Pugin, where so many ideas originate and develop.

Yet despite these and other obstacles, academic life has flourished. This is due in part to the excellent online services of the College, but also a result of the slower pace of life - with no commutes and reduced social activity - which has allowed study and research for many, to become more reflective and meditative.

Despite the pervasive presence of technology, human wisdom is finding its voice and creatively shaping minds and thought. Many seeds have germinated during successive lockdowns, and a bountiful harvest may be expected.

It will be great to meet each other again, to experience anew the varied and lively non-verbal communication that makes working and learning together so enjoyable. There will be much for staff and students to share and the multiple voices will form new melodies, contrastive harmonies and perhaps even symphonies?

Dr Luke Macnamara OSB
Lecturer in Theology & Sacred Scripture



Sunny weather means exams are getting close

The first smell of freshly cut grass always signifies that the Leaving Cert exams are not too far away. And for this year's LC students, it's been a rollercoaster ride - their two-year senior cycle has been beset by months out of school, on-off-on again exams, predicted grades and finally a combination of both.

So it's totally understandable if some frustrated students haven't submitted their university applications, but

there's still time to finalise CAO choices up until 1 July.

For those students considering an Arts degree, St. Patrick's College, Maynooth has developed a bespoke **Information Hub** for our BATH Joint Arts degree with MU.

If you know any Leaving Cert students that might benefit from small classes and individual attention, who would like to study in our friendly, historic campus, why not point them towards: <https://maynoothcollege.ie/bath-cao-info-hub>. All the info is online so students can access it 24/7.

“The unexamined life is not worth living”- Socrates

On 29 April, a team of renowned international philosophers from institutions as diverse as Notre Dame, Rome and Minnesota, gave presentations on the topic: **The Future of Christian Metaphysics**, at a virtual conference organised by SPCM's Faculty of Philosophy. What ensued was an afternoon of intense philosophical debate and discussion attended by over 130 scholars from around the globe. Together the participants considered the many dimensions that metaphysics – as practiced within the Christian tradition – may take.



The gathering served as a prelude to an on-campus conference entitled **The Future of Christian Thinking**, which is planned for 27-30 April 2022. With a roster of significant keynote speakers, the forthcoming conference will not only be considering metaphysics, but also ethics, political philosophy, and other important subjects.

The hosting of these conferences and practicing philosophy within the sapiential tradition, ensures that St Patrick's College stands out internationally, as a centre for serious and ongoing philosophical engagement.

Dr Gaven Kerr
Lecturer in Philosophy



Supporting a diversity of callings and giftedness

One of the seeds that has germinated in the Pontifical University during the COVID-19 lockdowns is the **Maynooth Centre for Mission and Ministries**. The name has been carefully chosen. Through the Centre, the Faculty of Theology will very intentionally pursue our goal of supporting the participation of the Irish Church in the *Missio Dei* for the 21st Century.

The Centre will seek to support and develop a wide diversity of callings and giftedness among the people of God. The work of the Centre is a three-legged stool: practical theology, integrated formation and interdisciplinary research. This encompasses some of our existing programmes and partnerships alongside new initiatives: Catholic education, pastoral theology, healthcare chaplaincy, pastoral liturgy, couples counselling, diaconate studies, safeguarding, spirituality, and youth work.

We are aiming for an ethos that is transformative, co-responsible, contextual, responsive and inclusive.

In other words, we will listen carefully before we act. Indeed, one of the Centre's first research projects is designed to map the current ecclesial landscape in Ireland through in-depth conversations with stakeholders. We want to know what is happening that can be celebrated and from which others can learn, as well as finding out more about what needs to be supported and developed in the parishes throughout the country.

The information gathered and perspectives gained will enable the Centre for Mission and Ministries to effectively resource dioceses as they meet the needs of their respective communities in the years ahead.

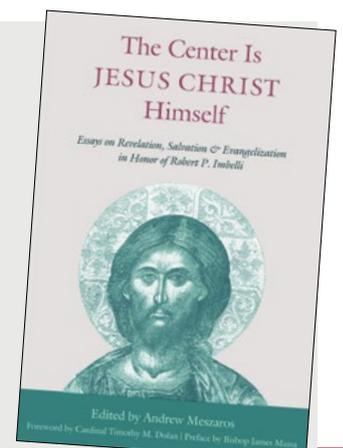
Dr Jessie Rogers
Dean of the
Faculty of
Theology



Dr Andrew Meszaros edits new book

The Center is Jesus Christ Himself is a collection of essays which anchor theological reflection in Jesus Christ. These diverse essays share a unified focal point, but engage with a variety of the theological subdisciplines, areas and periods. Given the different combinations of sub-disciplines, areas, and periods, theology is susceptible to fragmentation when it is not held together by some principle of unity. A theology in which the person of Jesus Christ serves as that principle of unity is a Christocentric theology. Together, the essays illustrate not only what Christocentric theology looks like, but also what the consequences are when Christ is dislodged from the center, whether by a conspicuous silence on, or by a relativization of, his unique salvific mission.

The Center is Jesus Christ Himself: Essays on Revelation, Salvation, and Evangelization in Honor of Robert P. Imbelli is available from <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/0813234107>





Pictured left to right are Michael Collins, Noreen Shankey, Tomas Surlis & Sean Farrell.

Our mission of priestly formation continues to thrive

As the seminary community approaches the end of another academic year, we give thanks for the grace of solidarity and communion we have experienced together in the midst of the challenges posed by the current pandemic. We are also bidding farewell to three members of the formation team: Vocational Growth Counsellor, Sr Noreen Shankey SSL; Spiritual Director, Fr Sean Farrell and Director of Formation, Fr Michael Collins.

Each has brought their particular gifts to bear on the work of priestly formation in the National Seminary. We are extremely grateful to them for their generosity, dedication, wisdom, sense of humour and love for the important work in which they have shared.

A number of seminarians have also reached the end of this stage of formation for priestly ministry and are returning to their dioceses in the North, South and West of our island, as well as further afield, in

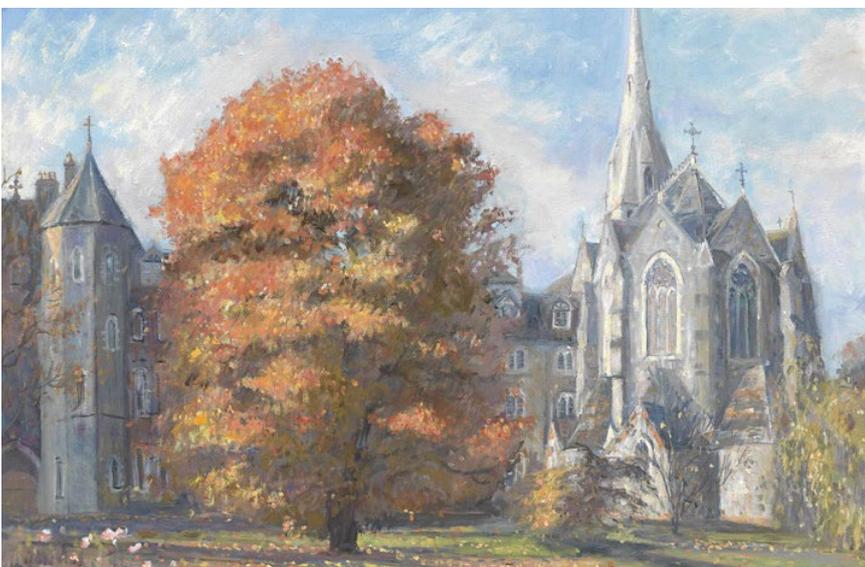
preparation for ordination to the diaconate and the priesthood.

As they have been accompanied throughout their time in formation in St Patrick's College, so now they go to accompany, to walk with, to share the lives of the people to whom they will minister, and from whom they will learn in a very real and immediate sense, what it means to be a shepherd, a healer, a listener, a dispenser of the sacred mysteries, and a companion along the way.

It is my prayer that the seminarians who move into the next stage of their journey this summer will experience the joy in ministry and that they might know wholeness and holiness in the labour of love that is the life of the priest.

Fr Tomás Surlis
Rector of the National Seminary

Papal biographer to speak at Maynooth Union



The **2021 Maynooth Union Annual Conference** is - for the first time - open to all priests, not only those who previously studied at St Patrick's College. Due to COVID-19 constraints, this year's event will be virtual. The Zoom conference will hear from a number of high profile speakers, including **Austin Ivereigh**, who will speak on the subject of *Pope Francis's vision for the Church in the post-Covid world*. The topic of **Gerry O'Hanlon SJ** address will be: *Mapping a way forward for the Catholic Church in Ireland*.

Open invitation to all priests

While the conference is free to attend, registration is required. For more information, please log on to maynoothcollege.ie/maynooth-union

Future holds abundant possibilities for renewal

"Having spent six years in initial formation here at St Patrick's College, I'm excited to return to serve the people of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora. I look to the future with optimism and hope. While COVID-19 has presented the Church with many challenges, I believe that the future holds abundant possibilities and prospects for renewal and reinvigoration for preaching the Gospel in today's context."

Rev John Gerard Acton will be ordained to the priesthood this summer.



Maynooth's gift to overseas ministry



Pictured left to right are Clement Kwabena Narcher SVD, Liwei Huang SVD and Joseph Mensah SVD.

Joseph Mensah, Liwei Huang and Clement Narcher of the Divine Word Missionaries are preparing to depart the National Seminary after four years of formation/study. Here they reflect on what they will carry with them from St Patrick's College into their future lives as priests.

"The Eucharistic Adoration I've practiced in Maynooth has strengthened my personal relationship and friendship with God. Also, I bring with me the values of community life and insights into how a priest can offer himself out in service of others." **Joseph Mensah SVD**

"The journey of formation at St Patrick's College has broadened my horizons and enriched my vocational life. One of the most valuable lessons I take with me is to accept myself as I am and to develop my potential and gifts. Accepting myself cultivates within me the ability to accept others as they are, which it is vital and necessary for pastoral work." **Liwei Huang SVD**

"I have learned the importance of prayer life, the Sacraments, teamwork, planning, spiritual guidance and received a deeper understanding of my Catholic faith. Acquiring these practical skills and a deeper understanding of ethics provides a solid foundation that will guide me in my pastoral ministry." **Clement Narcher SVD**

"What souvenir will I take from my year-long experience in Maynooth as an Erasmus student from Prague?"

A bottle of real Irish whiskey, a mandolin or a t-shirt with Irish shamrock? Perhaps, but definitely something much more. A very important experience of discomfort, which is a way to new horizons. On the day of arrival, when I didn't understand more than two words, I didn't feel the best. But it was this journey outside of my comfort zone that gave me the opportunity not only to improve my English, but also to experience the freshness of the Gospel. I wish you can breathe in the kind of 'fresh air' too!"

Matěj Jirsa - Erasmus+ - Seminarian for the Archdiocese of Prague



In Memoriam

Rev Prof Enda McDonagh

More than 8,000 people have attended - albeit virtually - the dignified and intimate Requiem Mass for Prof Enda McDonagh concelebrated in the College Chapel on 27 February. That so many people have viewed his funeral Mass online is a tribute to how many lives he touched and enriched with his friendship, writings and ministry.

Enda McDonagh was a pioneering theologian. He courageously and not without personal cost, ventured out to marginalised people and issues long before they became mainstream. To borrow a metaphor, as a young and dynamic lecturer, Enda opened up the windows of Loftus Halls. He taught generations of students to breathe

the fresh air of creative, critical and above all compassionate thinking. Enda helped idealistic, maybe even naïve young minds to mature to be more discerning, reflective, understanding, and above all more human as priests, disciples, Christians with the complexities of living the Gospel and making moral choices in a contemporary age.

In his ministry and theology, Enda was courageously inclusive and outreaching to *all* God's people: women, Travellers, gays, African countries and western communities ravaged by AIDS. He dialogued with non-Catholic, non-Christian and non-believer.

Enda McDonagh wrote: *"The Word takes flesh not at the centres of power but at the fragile and frayed edges and is there reborn."* Enda could fearlessly go to these places



because he had the *intellect* and *integrity* to do so.

Enda wore his genius lightly - he was self-effacing, gracious, refined and good humoured. He loved good company and conversation. He exemplified respect to those who did not share his views or vision. He will always be remembered in Maynooth.

Rev Prof Michael Mullaney

John Elliot

The untimely and sudden death on 12 March of John Elliot, a long-standing friend of St Patrick's College, was a huge loss to his beloved family, friends and colleagues. John's life was rich with accomplishment, achievement and accolades.

After graduating from Georgetown University with distinction, John practiced for a short while as an attorney before founding his own law firm. Known as a fierce litigator who appeared successfully in complex

commercial cases in trial and appellate courts throughout Pennsylvania and around the US, John successfully represented a variety of major corporate and municipal clients including Fortune 500 companies.

Among his many legal victories, in 1979, he won a posthumous pardon from Pennsylvania Governor Shapp for Jack Kehoe,



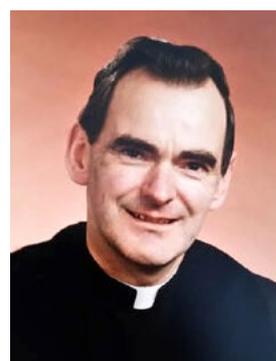
who was hanged in 1878 as one of the so-called 'Molly Maguires'. John's dedication to Jack Kehoe's cause reflected his enduring belief in the rights of workers and his desire to vindicate the name of the great-grandfather of his grade school classmate.

In recognition of John Elliot's contributions to the College, Cardinal Cahal B. Daly dedicated the Salamanca Archives at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Ireland, in his honour.

Rev Prof Michael Mullaney

Rev Prof Patrick McGoldrick

On 16 December last there went from us ar slí na fírinne Fr Patrick McGoldrick who for over thirty years was Professor of Liturgy at the Pontifical University. Previously, he had taught Classics in St Columb's College, Derry. Since his retirement he continued to serve as a priest of his native diocese. A member of a Levitical family which has given a bishop and four priests in successive generations to the diocese of Derry, it is not surprising that his academic career embodied those inherited values of devotion, duty and competence to a high degree.



These qualities shone through his scholarship and his teaching, but above all through his profoundly-held inner conviction. Equable in temperament, manifestly impartial and

sensible in judgement, he made an effective Dean and diplomat during the post-Conciliar turbulence in the Faculty of Theology and the heated debates of the Maynooth Union Summer Schools.

Prof Patrick McGoldrick was a man of the Church whose conception of priesthood was clearly based on a deeply held and thoroughly-examined sense of tradition. He was truly in the words of St Paul: *vita abscondita cum Christo in Deo* (Col 3:3).

Rev Prof Brendan Devlin

Calendar

June 2021

14th **Virtual Maynooth Union Day**
Keynote speakers:
Gerry O'Hanlon SJ & Austin Ivereigh



26th **Undergrad Summer Open Day**



July 2021

1st **CAO Change of Mind** – see [website](#) for closing dates for direct entry courses.



September 2021

Start of new academic year



November 2021

Pontifical University Graduation



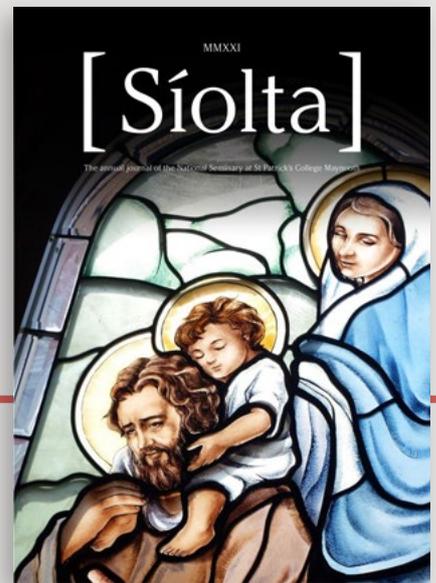
December 2021

Christmas Carol Service



Due to Government & HSE COVID-19 Guidelines, the exact dates of future events may be changed. Please check [maynoothcollege.ie](#) for the latest information.

St. Patrick's College welcomes your support. For more information please visit [maynoothcollege.ie/giving](#) or call Caroline Tennyson on +353 (0)1 708 3964



Síolta 2021 now available

The latest edition of the National Seminary's annual journal, **Síolta**, is now available for purchase. The overarching theme for this year's publication, is the **Year of St Joseph**, which runs until 8 December 2021. The magazine is written and edited by seminarians themselves, as well as a host of guest writers, including the recently appointed **Archbishop of Dublin Dermot Farrell**. This stylishly produced 64 page journal offers glimpses into the daily life of the seminary community as well as addressing serious pastoral issues facing the Church in Ireland today.

To order your copy of Síolta 2021 please contact: rector@spcm.ie.

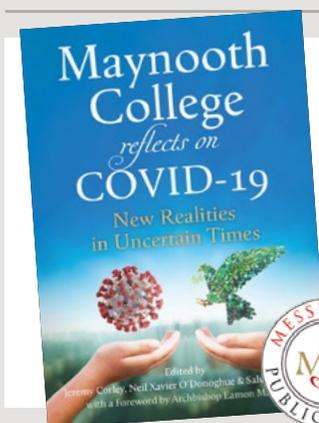
Cost €5 (including postage)



Maynooth College Alumni Our Pride, Our Joy

Keep up to date with Maynooth College News & Events: [maynoothcollege.ie/alumni](#)

For more information please contact: alumni@spcm.ie



Maynooth College Reflects on COVID-19

This volume offers a variety of reflections from the perspectives of theology, scripture, philosophy, ethics, liturgy, pastoral, and canon law. It aims to assist those searching for spirituality during these difficult times.

Maynooth College Reflects on COVID-19 is published by Messenger Press and can be purchased at <https://www.messenger.ie/product/maynooth-college-reflects-on-covid-19-new-realities-in-uncertain-times/>



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