

Into the Deep



May 2026

Issue 02



Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord (May 17th)

Welcome to the second issue of Into the Deep. This month of May is always a spiritually rich time of the year. Many families are rejoicing as their children receive First Holy Communion. Devotion to the Blessed Mother is highlighted in many faith communities and the solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord is celebrated on the 17th May which is also designated as a day for reflection on the means of Social Communications and their impact on faith and evangelization. The day of Social Communications was established by Pope Saint Paul VI in 1967 to reflect on the opportunities and challenges of social communication, including press, radio, television, and the internet. The message for this day is traditionally released on January 24, the Feast of St. Francis de Sales, the patron saint of journalists.

The recently canonised millennial Saint Carlo Acutis reminded us that all people are born as originals but many die as photocopies. The saint, known as God's influencer, was aware that social media could be a good servant but a poor master. Stephen Covey, author of the best seller, *7 habits of Highly Effective People*, maintains that the biggest communication problem is that we do not listen to understand. We listen to reply. In many ways the social media world in which we live is all about immediacy and can steal from us the ability to reflect and pray effectively. As we stand on the threshold of summer and school holiday time it might be good to review and challenge our dependence on devices.

editorial
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May – Mary's Month

The Catholic Church dedicates the entire month of May to the Blessed Virgin Mary, mother of God and spiritual mother of all. Mary knew and loved Jesus like no one else on earth — and she loves each of her children, human beings, with similar affection and tenderness. The Church, in its wisdom, asks her children to be especially devoted to Mother Mary during the month of May and to be particularly grateful for all of her care. Mary, the most humble of all women, is a model for everyone, today, in the here and now. Pope Francis called Mary "the first disciple of Jesus" and reminded us that "Mary is there, praying for us, praying for those who do not pray. Why? Because she is our mother. She shows us that heaven is within reach, if we too do not give in to sin, we praise God with humility, and we serve others with generosity" (Pope Francis, Angelus address on the solemnity of the Assumption, Aug. 15, 2022)



The Ministry of Church Notice Boards

When was the last time you took a good look at the notice board in the porch of your local church? Truth be told, it is probably often only strangers and visitors who take the time to peruse it closely. The Church notice board is one way that visitors or passers-by learn a little about the kind of Christian Community we are. Visitors can learn something of the things that are important to us and the efforts we make to create a vibrant faith community.



The Church notice board can be an effective tool of evangelization, acting as an invitation to someone seeking a deeper relationship with God and searching for a meaningful way to be part of the Body of Christ.

Could the care of our Church Notice Boards be a meaningful ministry in our parishes? Keeping them tidy, attractive and informative can also be a means of building the Kingdom of God.

Ordination of Ian Cunningham OFM

Ordination to Priesthood
of
Brother Ian Cunningham, OFM
on Sunday, 31 May 2026
At 15:00
Franciscan Friary Church, Ennis, Co. Clare
V95A4N2

Message of Pope Leo for World Day of Social Communications

In his message for the 60th World Day of Social Communications, which takes place on 17 May 2026, Pope Leo XIV highlights the importance of ensuring that technological innovation, particularly artificial intelligence, serves the human person rather than replacing or diminishing human dignity. Human beings, the Pope recalls, are created in the image and likeness of God and called into relationship through the Word. Preserving human faces and voices, therefore, means preserving the divine imprint present in each person and upholding the irreplaceable vocation of every human life.



The Pope warns that digital technologies, especially artificial intelligence systems capable of simulating voices, faces, and emotions, risk altering essential dimensions of human communication. Pope Leo underlines the importance of education in media, information,

and artificial intelligence literacy, fostering critical awareness, protecting personal identity, and supporting a responsible culture of communication. You can read the Pope's full message here:

<https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/messages/communications/documents/20260124-messaggio-comunicazioni-sociali.html>

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First Holy Communion



Best wishes to the parishes and families celebrating First Holy Communion these days. The first communion is an important milestone in the life of every believer, particularly a Catholic. A child baptized when they were an infant into the family of the Lord, goes on to take a place at His table.

It is always a significant event for the child, their family, and the parish community. As it is a big event, there are new clothes and maybe a party with gifts, friends, and food. Any child would get excited by this and so it's easy to lose focus of the true reason for celebrating in the first place. Remind them that the eucharist is why all the wonderful things they see are happening. Model a reverence for the eucharist for them to see. Daily prayer is a great way to get your child focused on Jesus. What makes the first communion really special isn't just the atmosphere of joy or the new clothes. For us as Christians, there is nothing greater than to receive Jesus, present in the Eucharist at mass. It is how we remind ourselves of our salvation, of Jesus' sacrifice, and of God's presence in our lives. Sincere gratitude to our Teachers, school staff, parish catechists and all who have worked so hard to bring our children and their families to this special day.

Pope Leo's over 400 appeals for peace during first year of pontificate



Pope Leo XIV has made over 400 appeals for peace during the first year of his pontificate, consistently calling for a reconciliation that is "unarmed and disarming." From his first public address to recent international gatherings, he has urged world leaders and "the lords of war" to turn away from violence and embrace dialogue, justice, and human dignity.

He has repeatedly highlighted the human cost of war, the rise in global military spending, and the suffering caused by conflict, while promoting education, sport, culture, and nonviolence as paths to reconciliation. The Pope's message continues to call the world toward a deeper, more lasting peace rooted in compassion and solidarity.

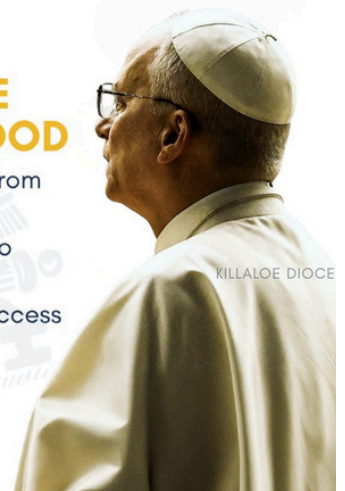
Pope Leo's Monthly Intention- May 2026



POPE LEO'S MONTHLY INTENTION MAY 2026

THAT EVERYONE MIGHT HAVE FOOD

Let us pray that everyone, from large producers to small consumers, be committed to avoid wasting food, and to ensure that everyone has access to quality food.



A Prayer for our First Communion Children



A Prayer for our First Communion Children

Dear Lord, we thank You and praise You for the most precious gift of the Holy Eucharist. We ask You to bless all those who are preparing to receive Your Body and Blood for the first time. Give them a for this sacred food so that they turn to You for comfort, guidance, and wisdom as they grow into full discipleship. Thank you for their innocence and goodness. May their eagerness to receive Your Body and Blood inspire all of us to cherish this Sacred Sacrament. Amen.





Pastoral Area News



In Ennis, the Month of May is being celebrated in honour of Our Blessed Mother Mary, with an invitation to families and schools to set up a May Altar and to pray the Rosary each day, even just one decade. The Rosary will also be prayed each evening at various grottos across the town, fostering prayer, devotion, and community spirit throughout May.



The Rice College school community gathered on 7th May 2026 to show their heartfelt support for Fr. Joy. Students expressed their appreciation through beautiful greeting cards, a handcrafted plaque, and delicious baked treats. Fr. Joy reminded everyone of the importance of forgiveness and compassion — values at the heart of the school ethos. Fr. Tom Ryan, Parish Priest of Ennis, was also present, adding his support to the occasion.



The Abbey Pastoral Area have organised a blessing for the Gift of New Life for all expectant parents in St. Mary's Church, Quin on Tuesday 12th May at 8.30pm.



Students of Nenagh CBS Primary School pictured with Fr. Rexon on their First Holy Communion Day at Nenagh Church — a joyful and blessed occasion for the children, families, and school community.



Blessings to the students of St Tola's National School who received the Sacrament of Confirmation today at Shannon Parish, celebrated by Bishop Fintan Monahan, together with parish priest Fr. Tom Whelan. A joyful and grace-filled occasion as the students were confirmed in the Holy Spirit.



The Toomevara Parish celebrated St. Joseph's Day with faith, joy, and strong community spirit. Bishop Fintan Monahan was the main celebrant for the special Mass, together with parish priest Fr. Francis Xavier, making it a memorable and grace-filled day for the parish community.



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