

St. Charles DCG Meeting

The St. Charles Divorced Group has scheduled a "Love Workshop" at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, June 21, in the St. Charles School library, 3003 Dewey Ave.

John Wagner will lead the workshop which will include discussion on such questions as What is love? Is it a feeling or a decision and commitment?

The Divorced Catholic Group maintains a hotline number, 225-9102, for information on all area groups.

Business in Diocese



FREDERICK WEBER

Frederick H. Weber has joined Paris-Budlong-Esse as a commercial insurance account executive. With more than 25 years experience, Weber will be responsible for sales and account management in the firm's commercial insurance department.

A native of Albany, Weber attended Siena College. For the past two years he has been manager of the Rochester office of Robert J. Hanafin, Inc.

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy



On the Right Side

Irish Politics, Knock

Most of the people I listened to in South Ireland want the British out. But these same people seem convinced that if the British do leave Northern Ireland now, there will be a terrible civil war in the North, and some would spill over to the South. When Pope John Paul II was going to Ireland last year he wanted to go to North Ireland and plead for peace, but he was prevented by the passions of bigotry. When Pope John Paul sent his Irish secretary to plead with Bobby Sands during his hunger strike, his offices were rejected. The whole thing is so wound up in a maze of history, bigotry, oppression, hatred, violence, economics, religion, that I found no one who has a reasonable solution.

A dialogue at an Altar and Rosary Society evening of recollection which I recently conducted at Notre Dame Retreat House seems to sum up the dilemma. At the end of the evening of prayer, singing and spiritual considerations, we had a question and answer period which I have always found instructive.

A dialogue between two women went like this.

Mrs X (with feeling): "How do you explain the fact that Bobby Sands, the Irish hunger striker, had a Catholic funeral Mass, and was buried in a Catholic cemetery in consecrated ground? And he was a suicide!"

Mrs. Y (with strong Irish genes, with feeling and a hint of disdain): "He was not a suicide. He died for a cause!"

Mrs. X (with heat): "He starved to death. He was a suicide!"

Mrs. Y (with equal heat): "He was not. He died for a cause!"

Mrs. X (with finality): "Baloney!"

So I decided to end the discussion with the invocation of the Blessed Trinity, and a broad smile. That's about the direction of most discussions about Ireland's politics.

Shrine at Knock: In 1879 a strange apparition appeared in the evening on the outside gable of the small village church at Knock, County Mayo. The apparition was of Our Blessed Mother, St. John the Evangelist, St. Joseph, and an altar on which rested the Lamb of God and a missal.

Witnesses said they looked like statues. The apparition was witnessed by 15 village people and continued for several hours during a constant rain; yet the ground beneath the apparition remained perfectly dry. None of the saints spoke a word.

No explanation has been given, excepting this:

In 1879, and for 50 years afterward, Ireland was a land of deep faith and abject poverty, so Our Lady wishes to show her love for the poverty stricken people, and appeared at one of the most

insignificant hamlets in the whole of Ireland. A couple of years ago, our Irish guide, Paddy Somers, who has a son studying with the Redemptorists for the priesthood, told me this.

"Our little daughter had a disease which the hospital could not identify and which they said was incurable. They told us to take the child home and let her die in peace. Our family doctor said to me, 'Paddy, I want you to do two things. Each night bring the child out for air, and bring her to Knock.'

"When I drove my family to Knock it was teeming rain. The custom of pilgrims is to walk around the outside of the church, reciting 15 decades of the rosary. I said to my wife, 'It's so wet, let's say the rosary inside the church.' She said, 'No Paddy. We will say it outside, walking around the church.' So we did. When we not back to Dublin, a hundred miles away, not one of us caught cold.

"Our daughter quickly recovered her health. We brought her to the hospital so the doctors and nurses could see her. They could hardly believe it and said, 'We thought she had died by this time.'"

Knock was one place where our Irish tour scheduled Mass. So on the second day in Ireland, we drove from Limerick to Galway Great Southern Hotel. Then on at once some 40 miles into County Mayo to Knock. It was raining when Our Lady appeared in 1879 and I think it has been raining ever since. We gathered into the glass chapel of the shrine where I celebrated Mass for our people and for a greater number of Irish pilgrims. Afterward we formed a procession and recited the rosary walking around the the outside of the little church, as is the pilgrim's custom, despite a slight drizzle. It seems always to rain at Knock.

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