

# SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

**Monthly newsletter for dioceses and parishes. Issue 16 - February 2015**  
**Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference**  
**Columba Centre, Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co Kildare**

## **Pope Francis' Message for Lent 2015 : Make Your Hearts Firm**

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday 18 February. Pope Francis' message for Lent has been published on the theme 'Make Your Hearts Firm'. In his message Pope Francis addresses the issue of the globalisation of indifference in our world saying: "Indifference to our neighbour and to God represents a real temptation for us Christians. God is not indifferent to our world; he so loves it that he gave his Son for our salvation."

Pope Francis goes on to say: "Lent is a time of renewal for the whole Church, for each community and every believer. Above all it is a "time of grace" (2:2). Today, this selfish attitude of indifference has taken on global proportions, to the extent that we can speak of a globalisation of indifference. It is a problem which we, as Christians, need to confront."

Read the full message please on [catholicbishops.ie](http://catholicbishops.ie).

## **Marriage is a unique relationship different from all others**

"As Catholics, it is not sufficient for us to talk about the importance of family. We also have a responsibility to do all that we can do to offer practical support for marriage and family in our parish communities, in our liturgies and our pastoral action and as individual members of society, through our social and political actions." - excerpt from the bishops' pastoral statement *The Meaning of Marriage*. The full text is available in your church and can also be downloaded from [catholicbishops.ie](http://catholicbishops.ie).

## **Lent begins on 18 February**

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday which this year falls on 18 February. Ash Wednesday is a day of fast and abstinence. Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. These three strands of Lenten observance are as old as Christianity itself. Find resources for your Lenten journey on a new Facebook page called 'Lent' and on [catholicbishops.ie](http://catholicbishops.ie)

## **Trócaire's school resources for Lent 2015**

Trócaire's Lent 2015 educational resources focus on climate change and climate justice. Find out why climate change is not just an environmental issue - it is a justice issue. Primary and post primary resources are available on a dedicated website - [www.trocaire.org/education/lent2015](http://www.trocaire.org/education/lent2015).

## NEWS SNIPPETS

- 2 February is the Day of Consecrated Life 2015. See our feature for the Year of Consecrated Life on [www.catholicbishops.ie](http://www.catholicbishops.ie).
- 8 February will mark the first 'International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking'.
- The 23rd World Day of the Sick will be celebrated on 11 February, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Read the Pope's message and access a new prayer book *I Am With You* on [catholicbishops.ie](http://catholicbishops.ie) and by scanning the QR code above.



- Read a pastoral letter from Bishop Noel Treanor, Bishop of Down and Connor, on themes of slavery and human trafficking on [www.catholicbishops.ie](http://www.catholicbishops.ie).
- Click on this QR code to listen to suggestions on how parishes might use the *Irish Catholic Catechism for Adults*.



**Pope Francis Tweet of the Month:** “The family is the greatest treasure of any country. Let us all work to protect and strengthen this, the cornerstone of society.” Follow Pope Francis on Twitter @Pontifex.

Produced by the Catholic Communications Office. See [www.catholicbishops.ie](http://www.catholicbishops.ie) for more information.

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