

The Sheaf

Vocations Society of St Joseph
(formerly St. Joseph's Young Priests Society)

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The Servant of God
ALPHONSUS LAMBE

Alphonsus Lambe, known as **Alfie**, (24 June 1932 – 21 January 1959) was an Irish-born lay-missionary.

Born in Tullamore, Co Offaly, to a farming family, as a youth he considered a vocation with the Christian Brothers but had to leave early due to chronic poor health. He was devastated but was soon introduced to the Legion of Mary by his brother. Alfie later found work in Dublin and spent time volunteering in the Morning Star Hostel.

Frank Duff chose Alfie to become the Legion's envoy to South America. He left Ireland on 16 July 1953, accompanied by Seamus Grace, for Bogotá. He went to serve in Colombia,

The Servant of God, Alphonsus Lambe

Legion of Mary Envoy to South America 1953-1959

Ecuador, Uruguay, Brazil, as well as Argentina. During this time, he set up many branches and trained a multitude in its apostolate.

He died in Buenos Aires at age 26 from stomach cancer. He is interred in the vault of the Irish Christian Brothers, in Buenos Aires's Recoleta Cemetery. It is said that his missionary work for the Legion of Mary was greatly helped by his ability to learn languages as he quickly became fluent in both Spanish and Portuguese. He was kidnapped, briefly, but his captors granted him a phone call to prove who he was, so he called the Irish Ambassador to vouch for him, this resulted in his release. While in Argentina he also learned Russian with the intention of visiting the Soviet Union but he died before that intention could be realised. On each anniversary of his death there are celebrations throughout South America in his honour by the members of the Legion of Mary. The Cause for his Beatification was introduced by the Archdiocese of Buenos Aires in 1978.

Prayers attributed to his intercession should kindly be reported to:

*Concilium, Legion of Mary,
Brunswick Street, Dublin 7.
www.legionofmary.ie*

Prayer for the Beatification of Servant of God Alfie Lambe

O God, who by your infinite mercy inflamed the heart of your servant, Alphonsus Lambe with an ardent love for you and for Mary, our Mother; a love which revealed itself in a life of intense labour, prayer and sacrifice for the salvation of souls, grant, if it be your will, that we may obtain, by his intercession, what we cannot obtain by our own merits. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.



Each year, over 1,000 people participate in training, education and formation opportunities in the Archdiocese of Dublin. The Office of Mission and Ministry currently offer the following training:

Diocese Certificate in Catechesis

This comprises seven modules over seven Saturdays in the course of a year.

Students also gather in small groups to share and reflect.

Pathways

This is a two year course for adults who wish to grow in understanding their faith. In the first year they explore the basics of theology with the focus on Welcome, Worship, Word, What is Church and the Sacraments.

In the second year the focus is on Witness, Prayer Skills and Leading Liturgy, Faith Sharing and Lectio, Pastoral Planning and Discernment and growing in leadership. This is ideally suited to persons on Pastoral Councils and those who feel called to lead prayer and reflection.

Pastoral Council Training

Developing pastoral leadership, vision and prayerful decision making for the parish community.

Training for Holy Communion Ministers

Understanding the importance of ministry and Eucharist to enable best practice.

Training for Ministers of the Word

Embracing what it means to effectively proclaim God's Word through a deeper understanding of ministry.

Funeral Prayer Leaders Training

Four modules are offered on how to lead prayer moments well, exploring the Order of Christian Funerals. Lay people will learn how to lead prayers along with their priest.

'Called by God' Baptism Team Training

This programme connects with everyday family life and the role of parents in passing on faith.

Youth Ministry Leadership

This exciting programme aims to build local capacity in parishes and partnerships to support young people as they grow in faith. It comprises six modules enabling youth leaders to grow in confidence and competency.

Confirmation Connect

This training aims at helping parish Confirmation Teams to engage fully with the process of leading families towards the celebration of Confirmation.

It aims to connect parent and child, family and parish.

Laudato Si' Awards

Training is available for parishes who want to engage young people in the important work of caring for God's creation.

For further information, please visit: www.missionministry.ie or contact:
Patricia Carroll, Tel: (01) 808 7535 or Email: patricia.carroll@dublindiocese.ie

New Status for St. Mary's Cathedral

*St Mary's Cathedral (formerly The Pro Cathedral),
Marlborough Street, Dublin 1.*

Last November Pope Leo XIV designated St Mary's Pro Cathedral in Dublin as the city's official Catholic Cathedral, becoming the first in the capital for 500 years.

Located on Marlborough Street, the cathedral was built 200 years ago in 1825 as a temporary arrangement, with plans to replace it with a dedicated cathedral later. For various reasons, this did not happen. There seems to be a mystery around who, actually designed the building. It could have been John Sweetman or Louis Hippolyte Le Bas. St. Mary's Cathedral took 10 years to build.

The 'Pro' stands for Pro Tempore - or temporary, and as part of the designation this will be dropped and the cathedral will be known simply as St Mary's Cathedral, Dublin.

The cathedral has "major plans" for restoration having recently received planning permission from Dublin City Council.



St Mary's crypt contains the final resting place of nearly 1,000 people, including former archbishops, prominent Catholics and local people.

Pope Francis visited the cathedral during the 9th World Meeting of Families in August 2018.

Dublin now has an official, permanent Catholic Cathedral.

Journey to the Permanent Diaconate

By Rev. Fintan Fanning

Retiring from An Garda Síochána might have seemed like the conclusion to a life of public service. Yet, for me, it became a great opportunity to know and love God even more. It was simply the turning of a page toward a new vocation rooted in the earliest days of the Church: "Select from among you... men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task" (Acts 6:3).

This path is not walked alone. My wife Eleanor, my daughters Elaine and Jessica, and my son Brian are the bedrock of my vocation. I am also deeply indebted to the priests of the Diocese of Ferns, particularly Fr. Billy Flynn PP, and the people of St. Michael's Parish, Gorey. While I live in Ashford, it is in Gorey that I have found a spiritual home.

Amidst a busy life of GAA administration and family duties, the Divine Office has become my anchor. Praying the Liturgy of the Hours provides a divine punctuation mark in a hectic schedule.

There is a phrase I use constantly: "Even at my stage in life, every day is a school day." This was confirmed when Bishop Ger appointed me Chaplain to a distinguished



Rev Fintan Fanning & Bishop Ger Nash

college. Planning for St. Blaise's Day and Lent with these students has been a highlight; I found them to be a group of young men who are confident, enquiring, and open.

The Permanent Diaconate is often described as the "bridge" between the altar and the people. It is an invitation to model one's life on Jesus Christ the Servant. This calling was nurtured by the prayerful support of the Vocations Society of St. Joseph, whose encouragement helped shift my focus from the law to the Lord. Whether I am bringing the Blessed Sacrament to the housebound, chairing the board of Christian Media Trust in Ferns, or simply chatting in the parish, the mission is the same: to bring the presence of Christ into the ordinary moments of life.

The journey continues, and indeed, the learning never stops.



Members of Magheradroll Vocations Society of St Joseph present Fr Anthony Moffett with a gift on the occasion of his ordination to the priesthood in St Colmans church Dromore, Co. Down, on Sunday 11 January.

Pope Leo's Monthly Intention March

For Disarmament and Peace

Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.

Upcoming Retreats at Knock, Co Mayo.



photo courtesy of Sinéad Mallee

'Whisper of God'

Saturday, 28 March 2026

One Day Silent Retreat in Knock Prayer Centre - 10am to 5pm

Take sacred time to step away from the noise of daily life and reconnect with God in the peaceful, prayerful atmosphere that is unique to Knock Shrine.

The one-day retreat offers a serene space for quiet prayer, reflection, and spiritual direction. Participants will be

guided through moments of scripture-based prayer, group sharing and personal spiritual guidance.

Price: €70 including refreshments and lunch.

A Directed Retreat At Home (via Zoom)

Saturday, 12 April –
Sunday, 18 April 2026

This directed Retreat at Home, offers gentle guidance, daily moments of prayer and the companionship of a listening guide. You are invited to make space for God within the ordinary flow of your days.

Rooted in the spirit of pilgrimage and the prayerful heart of Knock, this retreat is an opportunity to come away inwardly — to rest, to be accompanied and to rediscover the sacred moving quietly within your own life. Cost: €100.

For More Information contact:
prayerguidance@knockshrine.ie or 086 010 8623

participants into a calm, prayerful rhythm that helps you slow down, listen more deeply and rest in Christ's renewing love.

This is not a demanding retreat, but a nourishing one; a space to pause and to rediscover the sacredness of your own life. Cost: €200.

It includes overnight accommodation in a private en-suite cabin in Knock Retreat Village, with all meals provided.

For more information or to reserve your place, contact: John Farrelly

Prayer Guides Coordinator at Knock Shrine, Tel: 086 010 8623

Email: prayerguidance@knockshrine.ie
www.knockshrine.ie

Vocations

Please keep our seminarians and those discerning a Vocation to the priesthood in your prayers.

If you know of anyone interested in finding out more about becoming a priest, please ask them to contact the Vocations Team, Fr Seamus or Fr Bill at vocations@dublindiocese.ie or bill.oshaughnessy@dublindiocese.ie

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

Should you wish to include the Society in your legacy bequests, it is advisable to consult your solicitor when making or amending your Will.

RECENTLY DECEASED & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

VOCATIONAL BRANCHES

Parish Branches

Abbeyfeale Ann Hennessy, Pauline Ryan.

Ballymena - All Saints Martina Fyfe.

Blackpool Eileen Jones.

Bohermeen Kathleen Fox, Maura Holmes McCabe, Cathal Mulvany, Carmel O'Callaghan, Pat Duffy, Sheila and Noel Finegan, Mrs. Mary Lynagh, Kit O'Brien.

Caherdavin Sr. Joan O'Regan F.M.A., William Ryan, Ken Croucher, Kitty Quinlivan, Maureen Boland.

Cashel Stephen Murphy.

Drogheda Phyllis Rooney.

Ennis Bernie Loftus.

Farranree Eileen Mulcahy – former Cork & Ross Diocesan President.

Irvinestown Malachy McCaffrey, Oliver Courtney, Hughie Baird, Elizabeth McGarrity, Enda Allen, Jane McGrade, James McCaffrey, Margaret McKenna, Paddy McKenna, Paddy Hannigan, Peggy Deazley, Ryan McManus, Keith Beckett, Marie McGoldrick, Angela Carney, Barney Carney, Charlie Donnelly, Carmel Scallon, Sally McMulkin, Leslie Brock, Mary Donnelly, Margaret Coulthard, Maureen Johnson, Kiera McNamee, Ewen Campbell, Joseph Donaghy, Majella Gilbertson, Jonathon Burke, Kate Fivey.

Knocknacarra Mary Duggan.

Maghera Deirdre McErlean, Connor Carmichael, Sean McAlary, Kate O'Kane, Charlie Murphy, Sandra Doherty, Seamus Crilly, Henry Duggan, Patricia McGrath, Kathleen Doherty, Monica Glass, Frances McPeake, Breda Collins, Willie Dorrity, Gertie Conway.

Murroe Eilish Cooney, Fr. Tom Ryan.

St. John Vianney, Ardlea Anna Redmond.

St. Sylvester's - Malahide Jo Morris.

Thomastown Ray McEntee.

If you would like a few copies of The Sheaf for your friends please telephone the Office +353 (1) 676 2593 or email theoffice@vsosj.ie.
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