

St. Nicholas News

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1st Sunday Lent 26 February 2023

BISHOP DAVID O'CONNELL WORKED WITH THE UNDERPRIVILEGED



The fatal shooting of Cork-born Bishop David O'Connell in Los Angeles is being treated as a homicide and a murder investigation is under way, police have said. Bishop O'Connell (69), who grew up in Glanmire but has lived in California since 1979, was found dead in his house in the east of the city on Saturday afternoon. Tributes were paid to the Irish bishop who was known as a peacemaker and advocate for the poor. "He was a prayerful man. He could be caught praying

when he thought nobody was looking," Pablo Kay, editor in chief of the Catholic news outlet Angeles News, said. "He was very attentive to people, to their needs, with his dry Irish wit. He spoke very good Spanish. He worked with some of the most recently arrived immigrants from Central America, from Mexico. He was also very loved by the black community in south central Los Angeles," Mr Kay told RTÉ Radio's Morning Ireland. "I'm still a parishioner at a parish that my great grandparents were married in - they were Irish immigrants. It eventually became a black, poorer neighbourhood. Since then a lot of Latinos have moved in and so this was Bishop O'Connell's territory. This was his mission. "You saw him much more comfortable with these kinds of people, working class folks, immigrant families, victims of gang violence. This was his habitat and I think he wanted to stay in south central LA for all these years. He had four or five different parish assignments - which are like six or seven years each, one after another. He stayed there until the end, until Pope Francis noticed him and made him a bishop." According to the LA County Sheriff's Department, the shooting was reported at 12.57pm on Saturday at Janlu Avenue in Hacienda Heights. "Deputies responded to the location regarding a medical emergency call. When they arrived, they discovered a male adult suffering from a gunshot wound. Paramedics arrived and pronounced him dead at the scene," police said. Archbishop José H Gomez of Los Angeles expressed his sorrow at the news and urged people to pray for Bishop O'Connell's family in Ireland. "We are deeply disturbed and saddened by this news," he said. Bishop of Cork and Ross Dr Fintan Gavin said the news of Bishop O'Connell's death had sent shock waves across his native diocese, particularly in the parish of Glanmire. "Since his ordination in 1979, Bishop David has served as a priest in Los Angeles but has always maintained his connection with family and friends here in Cork where has been a regular visitor. We pray that the Lord will console Bishop David's many friends in Cork and throughout Ireland."

It is understood that Bishop O'Connell was predeceased by his parents, David and Joan O'Connell and he has one surviving brother and several nieces and nephews still living in the Cork area. He studied at All Hallows in Dublin and following his ordination by fellow Cork man, Bishop John Scanlan of Honolulu, he went to Los Angeles where he began ministering to the disadvantaged in some of the city's poorest neighbourhoods. According to fellow Cork priest, Fr Tom Hayes, Bishop O'Connell was known as a peacemaker, working among the underprivileged. "He specifically asked for that ministry - he would have done a lot of work in communities afflicted by gangland culture and he was known as a peacemaker. "It was in recognition of that work in these communities that he was ordained an Auxiliary Bishop by Pope Francis in 2015 but he again asked to remain in the community there so as to continue working with the underprivileged and disadvantaged and that's sadly where he lost his life." According to the Catholic News Agency, Bishop O'Connell gained his reputation as an intermediary after the 1992 riots following the acquittal of the police officers who savagely beat Rodney King when he was instrumental in trying to rebuild trust between officers and communities in South LA. "Right away, we said that our churches were open for people, if they had taken stuff, to bring it back. People brought things back and we tried to give them to the stores which they had come from," he said at the time.

*Courtesy Barry Roche, Martin Wall, Vivienne Clarke
Irish Times*

Remembered in Prayer

Saturday 6pm Mass

Eddie Walsh (1st A)
Jim Byrne (1st A) & birthday remembrance
Rosanna & John Halpin
Patrick O'Reilly (birthday remembrance)
Mary Murphy
Phyllis Kearns
Jerry Deane

Sunday 11.30am Mass

Paddy & Chloe O'Donnell
Thomas, Mary & Kiara Carroll
Margaret, Seamus, & James Maguire
Fr. John O'Connell (1st A)

Collection for Turkey & Syria

Archbishop Farrell has given approval for a diocesan collection to be taken up in support of the people of Turkey and Syria affected by the devastating earthquakes on Monday 5th February. The Turkey/Syria Collection will be taken this weekend 25/26 February, at 1st Sunday of Lent. In our church it will be the first collection to be taken up.

The collection will be channelled through Trócaire, who are working with partners in the affected area. They have the capability to ensure that any funds raised in Ireland will be managed appropriately to meet the needs of those most badly affected.

When the Post Boxes Turned Green

Talk by Cathy Scuffil.
6.30pm, Tues 28th Feb at St James's Church, James Street. (Bring a cushion!)

1ST SUNDAY LENT

Penitential Rite

As we enter into the mystery of God's enlightenment and love let us remember God's immense goodness to us.

You lead us to your light and life. Lord have mercy

You open our minds to your truth and our hearts to your love. Christ have mercy

You make us driftwood on the stream of your love. Lord have mercy

May our tender and ever merciful God forgive us our sin and draw us gently to life everlasting. Amen.

Genesis 2:7-9 3:1-7

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being. The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden. The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death".' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

Romans 3:5:12, 17-19

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. If it is certain that through one man's fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory! Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory!

Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be

tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves'. But he replied, 'Scripture says: 'Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'. The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God' he said 'throw yourself down; for scripture says: 'He will put you in his angels' charge, and they will support you on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone'. Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says: 'You must not put the Lord your God to the test'. Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these' he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says: 'You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.' Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

Prayer of the Faithful

God our Father and Mother, may this season of Lent lead us to appreciate your great compassion and love for us. Lord hear us

With God's help we will end violence everywhere but especially in Northern Ireland and Ukraine. Lord hear us

We pray for all who have been injured through violence and in particular Detective Chief Inspector John Caldwell. Lord hear us

In a spirit of thanksgiving we remember all who have died and we look to the day when we will be united again in God's love. Lord hear us

For all who are still suffering the consequences of the earthquakes in Turkey & Syria, that we will continue to help and support them. Lord hear us

In silence we put aside our own needs, no matter how important and remember all who need our prayer and support.....Lord hear us

Reflection

Sin isn't drinking too much. Sin isn't eating too much. Sin isn't smoking too much.

Sin is about getting lost. Lost in my own importance. Lost in my own desires.

Sin is losing my compass. Sin is losing my perspective, so that nothing, and no one, is more important than me and what I want.

Sin is the ultimate human isolation, where even the most inhumane thinking and actions become possible: violence, war, genocide, the destruction of our planet.

Above all it is when we stop being human, when feeling and compassion disappear into the darkness.