

Sunday 31st May 2020

The important events in our life are wrapped around our relationships

Michael Commane

Last week I wrote about 'Normal People', both the book and its dramatisation, which is currently being screened on RTÉ and BBC.

Sally Rooney has an uncanny ability in putting down in words, incidences, moods, feelings, the fraught moments experienced by people. She writes about the banal, the run-of-the-mill.

I had less than 80 of the 266 pages to read when I learned of the death of a fellow Dominican. Christy O'Flaherty died in Galway on Sunday, May 17.

Thinking about Christy since his death, I have been reminded of 'Normal People'. It's important to catch the moment. To make the best of times, to be kind. I'm wondering did I tell Christy how he was appreciated.

Christy was an extraordinarily talented man.

He started framing pictures in St Mary's Priory in Tallaght in the late 1970s. People came from far and wide for him to do framing for them.

Later he effortlessly turned his hand to cooking and gardening. He could turn a patch of unloved ground into a place of beauty.

Some weeks ago when a woman realised I was a Dominican and asked me if I knew Christy her face lit up when I told her I did. She went on to tell me the friendship she and her family had with him.

He supported and listened to people. He never judged and always put himself at the back of the queue. He disliked headlines and fanfares.

And he had a smile that told a thousand stories.

I remember having a discussion with him over Irish politics. It must have been in the mid-1970s. On that particular evening we were strongly disagreeing with each other. I've no idea what the issue was but I can still remember his parting smile.

When I visited him earlier this year in Dublin's Beaumont Hospital as soon as he heard my voice I saw that very same smile again. I'm back thinking of Sally Rooney and how she can describe the tiniest of details, the incidental moments.

Aren't they the magical moments in our lives?

I'm hoping that Christy knew that he was cherished.

The important events in our lives are wrapped around our relationships with other people. And often the tiniest of things are what count.

'Normal People' is a love story between two young people but it's also a great piece of writing about the ordinary, the run-of-the-mill, as Rooney puts it. There's a lesson in it for all of us.

Spiritual Communion

Prayer of St Teresa of Avila when she could not take part in Mass because of her travels.

My Jesus, really present in the
most Holy Sacrament of the Altar,
since I cannot now receive you under the Sacramental veil,
I ask You, with a heart full of love and longing,
to come spiritually into my soul
and abide with me forever.
Amen.

New Parish Webcam

As the Government and health authorities have mandated a 'stay at home' policy, Mass will be celebrated in Three Patrons via our new webcam on the website:

rathgarparish.ie.

The following is the schedule:

Sunday 12 noon

Monday 11am

Wednesday 11am

Friday 11am

Saturday 11am

Mass on the **Beechwood Avenue webcam** is as follows:

Sunday 10.00am

Tuesday 10.00am

Thursday 10.00am

Our church will remain open on a daily basis for prayer and visitation, but, as the Archbishop has strongly advised, it will remain closed during Mass, and we also encourage everyone who visits the church to practice social distancing in order to protect each other's health.

Trocaire Boxes

As you know, donations made through the annual Trócaire Lenten Campaign, especially the Trócaire box, help to fund lifesaving programmes around the world. Due to COVID-19, thousands of Trócaire boxes are sitting in homes across Ireland, so this year, you can make your Lenten donation in several ways:

- Online at: www.trocaire.org
- By post to: Trócaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
- By phone: 1850 408 408
- By placing your Trocaire box in an envelope or bag, and putting it into the safe at the back of the church beside the Pieta shrine. ***Thank you***

Irish Centering Prayer Group

meets at 6 pm every evening online. If you would like to participate, you can register with *MeditationChapel.org*. You will then receive a link to the various chapels. Click on the link to the Wisdom Chapel a minute or two before the scheduled start time to enter.

ACCORD Dublin Helpline Notice

If you need professional help with relationship issues at this difficult time, you can talk in confidence to an ACCORD Dublin counsellor. Phone support helpline 01 905 9555 or visit www.accorddublin.ie

An Appeal from Rathgar Society of St Vincent de Paul

During the current crisis, we are making every effort to continue to support those who need our assistance. There are envelopes at the back of the church, and you can leave your donation in the safe beside the Pieta shrine. ***Thank You***