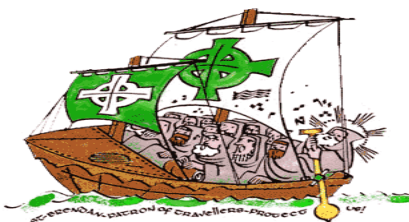


# St. Brendan Division #1 - AOH, Berks County, PA

## Celebrating 40 years of community service February 19, 2019



**Serving the Irish American Community for over a century**  
 INCORPORATED NOVEMBER 7, 1860 ---- RE-ORGANIZED FEBRUARY 16, 1979  
 Visit our Website [www.berkscoaoh.com](http://www.berkscoaoh.com)

Volume XXX---Tóirt Fiche a Tríocha -- Issue #3/Eagrán a Trí-----Eanáir/Feabhra/Márta - January/February/March 2019

### OFFICERS

#### CHAPLAIN

Open

#### PRESIDENT

Kerry Williard

#### VICE PRESIDENT

Leonard J. Weckel

#### RECORDING SECRETARY

Joseph P. George

#### FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Joseph G. McCarthy

#### TREASURER

John J. Dore, JR

#### STANDING COMMITTEE

Henry J. Mullen

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Christopher Costello

#### SENTINEL

Rob Katzenmoyer

#### ORGANIZER

John C. Mackey

#### TRUSTEES

James Caherly

James Scott

Len Weckel

#### PAST PRESIDENT

Leonard J. Weckel

#### NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Joseph G. McCarthy



### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My Fellow Hibernians,

As the 2019 year comes to a close, we reflect on the many blessings bestowed upon us and on our families over this past year. I extend my sincere wishes for a blessed Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

As we move into the new year of 2020, our first meeting in January will begin with the induction of our elected officers. The slate of officers was presented in previous communications from our financial secretary-Joseph McCarthy. This event will occur on **January 8<sup>th</sup>** and members are encouraged to attend this meeting for the induction ceremony. Our newly elected officers represent a group of members dedicated to the leadership and operational functions of the division, and the advancement of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in Berks County. ***Please note: our meetings have been changed from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month. The meeting day change was to inspire more attendance at our meetings with a mid-week day instead of the week-end.***

A thank you goes out to William Carroll for coordinating our December 15<sup>th</sup> Christmas party at Ganley's Restaurant. The Christmas dinner and gift exchange were enjoyed by all in attendance. There were 33 members and guests in attendance at this year's Christmas party. Also, we collected Christmas toys for children, that were distributed to St. Margret's Church after-school children and The St Vincent de Paul Society. Awesome Christmas community charity event! appeal. Please contact Joseph or I for your donation or see him at the January AOH meeting.

So, I would like to extend my congratulations and recognition to **William Carroll** as our "Hibernian of the Year." This award represents a great honor among our Hibernian brothers. William was taken by surprise to be recognized for this award at the Christmas party, but he is truly deserving for his past years' service to our division. William was instrumental in organizing our 40<sup>th</sup> year celebration and design of the 40<sup>th</sup> year pin.

Currently, Joseph McCarthy is collecting for the Freedom Fund for Ireland. Each member is asked to donate at least ten dollars (\$10.00) for this annual charity.

I would like to thank every member who contributed and volunteered to our community charity projects and division functions. The milestone this year was the celebration of our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Our existence over the past 40 years, only was attained by dedicated membership focused on doing great things for our division and community! Great things will continue to come from our Division next year and the years to come!

Lastly, we had three members pass away this year. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families. They will be long remembered for their contributions and deeds to our Division.

The beginning of a New Year always includes New Year's resolutions. It is hopeful that one of them is to attend a few more AOH meetings in 2020. It's always great to see a member who hasn't been to a meeting in a while! Also, we are in great need of new members to keep our Division going. ***So consider recruiting a friend to our fine organization this year!***

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,  
Kerry Williard, President

#### **SCHOLARSHIP AWARD**

All members are reminded that applications for college scholarship awards will be accepted for our annual Daniel J. Flannery Scholarship award for 2020. Applications can be requested in writing from our Division President Kerry Williard. Please mail requests to:

Ancient Order of Hibernians  
P.O. Box 14961  
Reading, PA 19612-4961

The Scholarship is open to all children and/or grandchildren of members in good standing for students who will enter their freshmen year of college in August/September 2020. To be eligible, candidates must be enrolled in a College or University whose curriculum is not in conflict with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and the A.O.H. in America.

Applications will be accepted through St. Patrick's Day 3/17/20 and must include a brief essay on "What it means to be an Irish Catholic in today's society!"

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

All members are reminded that membership fees for 2019 are now being accepted. Dues remain at \$25.00 per year. You can forward dues to:

St. Brendan's Division #1  
P.O. Box 14961  
Reading, Pa. 19612-4961

Please make all checks payable to Berks Div. 1, AOH. For information on dues payments call Joe McCarthy at 610-927-5224. All inquiries will be held in strictest confidence.

The National Secretary has begun a new format this year in which I, as Financial Secretary, are required to keep an active spread sheet listing all pertinent information about our membership. This saves an annual rush every October to locate and submit changes. So please, check your membership card and notify me a.s.a.p. if changes are needed in address, phone numbers and email addresses.

#### **REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS**

Prayers are requested for following person who have requested to be listed in our prayer list. Included in the list are members, family of members and members of the LAOH. They are: Craig Wolfe, James Caherly, Deacon John Murphy, Henry and Eleanor Trexler, Michael & Joseph Riley, Henry & Rita Mullen, Patricia Garrigan, Kathleen Fink, Julie Miller, Mary Walsh, Mary Collins, John Mackey, Mary DeMarco, Michael Riley, Charles Fritz, Kathleen Creed, Dennis Mulligan, Doug Carlson, Carey Carlson, Terry Morrison, Betsy Paolini and all family members and members in need of prayers.

Special prayers are asked for the following deceased members and their families: Kathleen Creed, Lee Garrigan, Joseph M. McGee, Jack McGuire, Alfred Recke, Clare Flannery and all the deceased members of the AOH-LAOH of Berks County.

#### **COMING EVENTS**

01/01/20	Happy New Year - Athbhliain faoi mhaise dhuit!
01/08/20	General Membership Meeting - Reading Sokol's - 7:30pm
01/24/20	Right to Life March in Wash. D.C.
02/02/20	Annual St. Brigid's Mass Alvernia University 4pm
02/12/20	General Membership Meeting - Reading Sokol's - 7:30pm
02/26/20	Ash Wednesday - Lent Begins
03/11/20	General Membership Meeting - Reading Sokol's - 7:30pm
03/15/20	Berks Catholic Layman's Breakfast - St. Ignatius Church- Mass at 9am- breakfast 11am
03/17/20	St. Patrick's Day
03/17/20	NYC St. Patrick's Day Parade-see article
03/22/20	Girardville St. Patrick's Day Parade
04/05/20	Palm Sunday
04/10/20	General Membership meeting - Reading Sokol's - 7:30pm
04/12/20	Easter Sunday

## NEW OFFICERS FOR 2020



(l-r) 1st row: Joseph P. George Secretary; John J. Dore Treasurer; Kerry Williard - President; Len Weckel Vice President;  
(l-r) 2nd row: Bob McHale Trustee; John Mackey, Organizer; Rob Katzenmoyer Sentinel; Henry Mullen, Catholic Action Chairman; Christopher Costello, Marshal; Joseph McCarthy Financial Secretary

The following officers were elected during November's meeting and will serve during the coming year:

**Chaplain - OPEN**

**President - Kerry Williard**

**Vice-President - Leonard J. Weckel**

**Recording Secretary - Joseph P. George**

**Financial Secretary - Joseph G. McCarthy**

**Treasurer - John J. Dore, JR**

**Marshal - Christopher Costello**

**Sentinel - Rob Katzenmoyer**

**Standing Committee Chair - Henry J. Mullen**

**Organizer - John C. Mackey**

**FFAI - Kerry Williard**

**Missions & Charities - John P. George**

**Catholic Action/Pro Life - Henry J. Mullen**

**Trustees - 3yrs. Len Weckel**

**Trustee - 2 years. James Scott**

**Trustee - 1 yr. James Caherly**

## NEWSLETTER

Once again, we remind our members and friends that all members should forward name, address or e-mail changes to the Financial Secretary as changes occur. It is imperative that all information listed for each member is accurate to insure all can be contacted as needed and receive our newsletter and the National Hibernian Digest mailed bi-monthly. Please, if you have moved or changed email providers let us know a.s.a.p.

After this edition, we will not mail hard copies of our newsletter to anyone who does not furnish a valid email address or support this newsletter by being a sponsor. Anyone who supports this newsletter as listed below as a sponsor will continue to receive hard copies, all others will receive the newsletter by email or by viewing it on our division website [www.berkscoah.com](http://www.berkscoah.com)

We direct you to the list of supporters on the last page of our newsletter. Thanks to their support our newsletter is made possible. If you would like to join our list of supporters for the first time, our rates remain the same \$12 for patron ads, and \$50 for business card ads.

## BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

The names of members who are celebrating birthdays during the next two months are listed below. We have acquired the information from our membership applications, so if there are any corrections or errors please advise.

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
1 <sup>st</sup> Joseph Fleming	15 <sup>th</sup> Dennis Mulligan	4 <sup>th</sup> John D. Purcell
3 <sup>rd</sup> Joseph P. Riley	27 <sup>th</sup> Michael McHale	7 <sup>th</sup> Fr. Joseph Whalen
7 <sup>th</sup> John C. Mackey		8 <sup>th</sup> Michael B. Riley
8 <sup>th</sup> Fr. John Gibbons		10 <sup>th</sup> Christopher Costello
8 <sup>th</sup> Timothy Brennan		14 <sup>th</sup> Kevin McHale
8 <sup>th</sup> Kevin Wunder		23 <sup>rd</sup> Dennis O'Brien
14 <sup>th</sup> Patrick Moss		25 <sup>th</sup> Brian McHale
17 <sup>th</sup> Thomas Franey, JR		26 <sup>th</sup> William Carroll
17 <sup>th</sup> Craig Wolf		
24 <sup>th</sup> John G. Shuff		
28 <sup>th</sup> Michael Moore		

## HIBERNIAN OF THE YEAR - 2019-2020



) Pres. Kerry Williard-Hibernian of the Year-William C. Carroll-Fr. Christmas Bob Houlihan

This year's "Hibernian of the Year" is well known to the membership of St. Brendan's Division #1. A Berks County native he was born and raised in the area and went on to earn several degrees in History and Government. He also attended Dickinson Law School and received a paralegal degree from Penn State.

His career reads like a "Who's Who" in several Corporations where he held management titles, of Director & Sales Marketing in photo and food industry. He also worked as a Consultant for Industrial Design and the Seafood Industry.

However, the Auto Industry, namely Ford Motor Co. and American Motors highlighted his career where he worked as

Zone Manager, Light Truck Mgr. New Vehicle Manager, Operations Manager, Western Regional Manager and Vice President of Marketing.

As President of American Motors Canada, he created the first 0% financing program in the auto industry.

His interests in automobiles has always been his passion. He raced different vehicles in a variety of Hill Climbs, road races and even ice-races. Among the many races he was interested in, he served a Pit Steward for FIA and SCCA at the 12 hours of Sebring race. He also was senior judge in the antique Automobile Club of America.

He joined the ranks of St. Brendan's Division #1, AOH on February 13, 2009 and completed his Shamrock and Round Tower Degrees that same year. In the ensuing year's he was an active and supportive member participating in activities, parades, and other division activities. He played an integral part in the planning activities associated with our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in March of this year.

In addition to the AOH, he was a former Trustee of the Knights of Columbus Council #8726, a fourth-degree member of Pius 1X 930 Assembly, assisted in the Special Olympics and other activities.

He volunteered at Berks Encore counseling Seniors on Medicare open enrollment and Medicare programs, coached Youth Hockey and while living in New York served as state youth snowmobile instructor.

He and his wife Patricia, have three children, Kelly, Bill and Katie and two grandsons Logan and Connor.

As President of St. Brendan's Division #1 it gives me great pleasure to present our "Hibernian of the Year" for the coming year;

**William C Carroll**

**MEETING NIGHT** Just a reminder that St. Brendan's Div.#1 has changed our meeting to the second Wednesday of each month. For the past 40 years we had been meeting on the second Friday, however due to a drop in membership attending meetings we decided that perhaps changing to Wednesday would be more acceptable and increase member participation.

In the near future, we will be looking at alternative meeting sites as well. All meetings will begin at 7:30pm and end within 90 minutes, or less depending on business to be transacted.

#### **IRISH HISTORY**

BY Mike McCormick, AOH Historian and Archivist

Rory O'Connor was born in Dublin in 1883. He was educated at St. Mary's College and Clongowes Wood College, Dublin

with his close friend, Kevin O'Higgins. After College, he worked as a railway engineer in Ireland, then moved to Canada in 1911 to work as a railway engineer. He became active in the Fenian Brotherhood and returned to Ireland in 1915 at Joseph Plunkett's request. He joined the Ancient Order of Hibernians and served in the GPO in the Easter Rising as an intelligence officer. He was wounded during reconnaissance at the College of Surgeons and was interned after the surrender. After internment, he threw his support to Sinn Fein and during the War of Independence (1919-1921) became IRA Director of Engineering and a close associate of Michael Collins.

He disagreed with the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 that established a 26-county Irish Free State, because it denied the 32-county Republic which he had sworn to achieve. On 26 March 1922, he and other anti-treaty IRA officers held a convention in Dublin, in which they rejected the Treaty and repudiated the authority of Dáil Eireann - the new Irish Parliament. O'Connor became Chairman of the Military Council of the dissident IRA, known as the Irregulars. On 13 April 1922, O'Connor, with 200 Irregulars under his command, took over the Four Courts building in Dublin in defiance of the new Irish government. They hoped to provoke British troops, who were still in the country, into attacking them. They felt that such an act would re-start the war with Britain and reunite the pro- and anti-Treaty IRA against their common enemy. O'Connor and his men remained in Four Courts under truce conditions with the Free State while Michael Collins tried desperately, but unsuccessfully, to persuade O'Connor to leave the building.

On 22 June Sir Henry Wilson was assassinated in London by two IRA men and Lloyd George wrote an angry letter to Collins to get the IRA men out of the Four Courts or he would. Collins knew that surrendering military authority back to the British would destroy the new Irish Free State in its infancy and put Ireland under the Crown again. Then on 26 June, the Four Courts garrison kidnapped Ginger O'Connell in reprisal for the arrest of an anti-treaty officer. Ginger O'Connell, who had returned from America after serving in the Fighting 69th Regiment, was a general in the Free State Army. The British moved artillery into place and told Collins to use it or they would. Collins had no choice but to shell the Four Courts with the British artillery. O'Connor surrendered after two days, but not before much of seven centuries of Ireland's historical and genealogical records, stored in an archive known as the Public Record Office, were destroyed much to the horror of future historians. O'Connor was arrested and sent to Mountjoy Prison. That shelling sparked a Civil War as fighting broke out around the country between pro- and anti- treaty factions, dividing old friends and families alike.

One family divided was Sean Hales and his brother Tom. Both were members of the IRA during the War of Independence



and both were against the treaty. Sean, however, was persuaded by Michael Collins to join the pro-Treaty side and voted for the Treaty while his brother voted against it. In June 1922, Sean was elected to the new Dáil as a pro-Treaty Sinn Féin delegate while his brother Tom organized the ambush that killed Michael Collins two months later 22 August. Collins' death threw both sides into a senseless frenzy of tit-for-tat revenge killings. After Collins' death, the Free State government declared that IRA Irregulars were conducting an unlawful rebellion against the legitimate Irish government and enacted Martial Law to end the violence. On 27 September, the Free State set up military courts allowing for the execution of men captured bearing arms against the state.

On 17 November, five Irregulars who had been captured with arms in Co. Wicklow were shot by firing squad in Dublin. Two days later, three more Irregulars were executed. On 24 November, Robert Erskine Childers, acclaimed author and secretary to the Anglo-Irish Treaty negotiations that created the Free State, was executed. He had been captured on 10 November in possession of a pistol - a pistol which, ironically, had been given to him by Michael Collins before the split in the movement. This should have at last demonstrated the senselessness of the hostilities. However, in response to the executions, on 30 November, Liam Lynch, Chief of Staff of the Irregular IRA, ordered that members of the Dáil be shot on sight. On 6 December 1922, Sean Hales was shot and killed by Irregulars as he left the Dáil and another Delegate, Pádraic O'Máille, was badly wounded. Hales' killing was a reprisal for the Free State's execution of anti-treaty prisoners. Then, in revenge for Hales' killing, four dissident republican leaders, who were held in custody, were to be executed. On 8 December 1922, Rory O'Connor, with Liam Mellows, Richard Barrett and Joe McKelvey, captured in the Four Courts, were executed by firing squad. The execution order was given by Kevin O'Higgins, who less than a year earlier had Rory O'Connor as Best Man in his wedding! The men in the accompanying photo are (l to r) DeValera, O'Higgins and O'Connor. When O'Connor was buried, he had a treasured souvenir which was sewn into the hem of his pants, buried with him. It was a gold engraved coin given to him by Kevin O'Higgins for being his Best Man! Such was the insanity and bitterness of the division caused by the Treaty that England had forced on the Irish and which partitioned Ireland. Brother Hibernian Rory O'Connor and the other executed Republicans were subsequently seen as martyrs by the Republican movement.

Today, from the distance of all the years since, it is still difficult to comprehend the differences held by the belligerents who walked their own roads toward the common goal of a free and united Ireland. And, in December 1922, several Irish patriots -bitter rivals, though former comrades - met once more in Tir na n'Og.

O'Higgins Wedding



#### **BERKS CATHOLIC LAYMAN'S COMMUNION BREAKFAST**

St. Brendan's Division #1 has been invited to join with our fellow Catholic Organizations, The Holy Name Society of Berks County and the Knights of Columbus to join forces to participate in Berks Catholic Layman's Communion Breakfast to be held March 12, 2019 at the new Doubletree Hotel in Reading. We invite participation from our members and urge all to join with us for this event. A Mass will be held at the hotel, beginning at 8:15am celebrated by a Jesuit from the Novitiate in Wernersville followed by the Communion Breakfast and a short program later.

In addition, since St. Brendan's Division #1 will observe the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our re-organization on February 19, 2019, the Communion breakfast would be a fitting tribute for the occasion. Tickets are available now for \$15p.p. For now, please let us know if you are interested in participating. During the brief program, we are hoping for a large turnout from our membership for this momentous occasion. Please call Joe McCarthy at 610-927-5224 for reservations. This will be a family-oriented event.

#### **VOLUNTEERISM**

As he does annually, we have signed up to volunteer at Kennedy House Soup Kitchen to prepare and serve hot meals to the less fortunate in our society in keeping with our remembrance of the Great Hunger in Ireland "An Gortá Mór." The dates of this years assigned service has been chosen for October 31<sup>st</sup> and November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. We will need help fulfilling our weekend assignment. Please mark your calendars and contact Len Weckel if you can help, and which day you are able volunteer.

## THOUGHT YOU MIGHT ENJOY THIS

By Mike McCormack, AOH National Historian



Queen Elizabeth I had outlawed the Catholic Church and it was an act of treason to shelter a priest. Sir John Bourke of Brittas, Co. Limerick was a secret member of the Rosary Confraternity of the hidden Dominicans of the City. He promoted the Rosary in his family and locality risking the enmity of the Crown by his open avowal of the Catholic Faith and protection of hunted clergy. When Elizabeth died and James, son of Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, came to the throne

in 1603, there was a pause in the persecution as James I had promised that he would not persecute *"any that will be quiet and give but an outward obedience to the law."* Bourke now openly attended St. Mary's Cathedral which had been restored to the Catholics and was received with his family into the Dominican Confraternity of the Holy Rosary. However, English Catholics, disillusioned with their new king, led a failed assassination attempt against him in 1605 that triggered a new wave of anti-Catholicism and harsher legislation. On the renewal of persecution, Sir John was summoned to answer a charge of refusing to attend Church of England services and thereby committing a statutory offense. He was imprisoned, but his friend, Sir George Thornton, obtained his release; yet he continued to harbor hunted priests and protect Catholics. Each year he invited priests to secretly celebrate Mass in Brittas Castle. During one secret celebration on the feast of the Holy Rosary — the first Sunday of October — in 1606 or 1607, he was betrayed by his kinsmen, Theobald Bourke of Castle Connell and Sir Edmond Walsh of Abington. A detachment of soldiers arrived to arrest the priests and Sir John stalled until Mass was over and Fathers Clancy and Haligan escaped through a secret passage. On his refusal to co-operate, Brittas Castle was besieged. Sir John *"with his helmet on his head, his shield on his left arm and his sword in his right hand, burst out and made good his escape."* He made it to Waterford on

his way to Spain, but was there betrayed, arrested and sent back to Limerick for trial. He refused to renounce the Catholic Faith or conform to the new state religion, stating *"he could acknowledge no king or queen against the King of Heaven and Queen of Heaven... whoever would act otherwise was not a servant of God but a slave of the devil."* He was tried by Judge Sir Dominic Sarsfield, and sentenced to be hanged, beheaded, and quartered. He was executed on Gallows Green three months later 20 December and his body, returned to relatives, was buried in St. John's Churchyard, where no trace of it remains.

In 1625, Charles II took the throne on the death of James I and limited Catholic tolerance returned. Sir Dominic Sarsfield had renounced the Faith for political gain, but his brother kept it and passed it to his son Patrick. In 1640, Patrick Sarsfield (not the Earl of Lucan) the nephew of Sir Dominic, wanted to atone for the terrible deed of his uncle and he and his wife, Eleanor, had a statue of the Blessed Virgin carved from oak in Belgium. It was almost life-size at four and a half feet tall. It has Mary wearing a white robe and a blue cloak decorated with stars, and her brown hair is coiled over her right shoulder. She holds the infant Jesus in her left arm and through her right hand she threads a silver rosary coming from the hand of Jesus. At her feet are the carved faces of winged cherubs and on her head a jeweled golden crown. He also commissioned a silver chalice, which was placed in a hollowed-out section of the statue's back. Patrick and Eleanor donated the Statue and the Sarsfield Chalice, dated 1640, to the Dominicans of St Mary's parish in Limerick and he inscribed it with his wife's and his name in reparation for the sin of his Uncle. They were presented to Fr. Terence Albert O'Brien who would later become Bishop of Emly.

However, the religious policies of Charles II and his marriage to a Roman Catholic, generated the mistrust of English Puritans who thought his views were too Catholic. In 1642 an English Civil War resulted in his overthrow and his execution in 1649 after which the anti-Catholic Puritan army of Oliver Cromwell turned its attention to Ireland. In September 1651, a messenger arrived at Limerick with the news that Cromwell's army was on its way. Panicked residents began to prepare for an assault. Sacred books and vessels were taken from churches and hidden. The statue of Our Lady of Limerick, as it was now known, presented a problem because of its size, but it had to be protected from the infidel at all cost. It was decided to bury it in a coffin and that they did. On the last day of June, the Puritan army surrounded the city, terms of surrender were rejected, and a siege began. Through a long hot summer with food supplies gone people were reduced to eating anything they could catch, even rats. Inevitably, plague broke out and hundreds died. Limerick finally capitulated and articles of surrender were signed. On 30 October 1651, all the city leaders were executed

including Bishop Terence Albert O'Brien who had received the gift of the statue, but never revealed its secret location.

A century passed and no one had seen the statue for a hundred years, though they knew of its existence and its legendary beauty. People prayed to Our Lady of Limerick as a means of keeping the memory of the statue alive. Finally, the Papists Act of 1778 became the first Act of Parliament for limited Roman Catholic relief. It was now safe to exhume the statue and its location was revealed. In 1780, the Dominicans built a small chapel in Fish Lane to replace an earlier church destroyed by anti-Catholic forces. The statue was recovered from its earthly grave where it was found lying face down, in perfect condition; no erosion, no insect damage and no rot had affected her. Inside the statue, the magnificent Sarsfield Chalice was found, as perfect as the day Patrick and Eleanor Sarsfield had donated it a century before. The statue was given a place of honor in the new Dominican chapel on Fish Lane where it remained until 1818 or 1820 when it was carried in procession and enthroned on its own altar surrounded by images of saints in the Church of St. Savior in Glenworth Street. In 1954 the Virgin was crowned with a tiara of gold, pearls and diamonds all donated by the women of Limerick with the result that rich and poor alike had some share in the graces that flow from Our Lady of Limerick. On the Virgin's arm rests the Infant Jesus while the long silver rosary, with an ancient tubular cross, still stretches from her right hand. Our Lady of Limerick, a gift in reparation for the sins of man, watches over her beloved city and its people to this very day - a remarkable relic created to atone for deeds against the Irish, protected by the Irish and, after surviving the centuries, returned to a position of veneration by the Irish.

As is the case with many account's that took place in the penal times, secrecy was paramount and historical documentation is difficult to find. In this story, we found records that define Sir John Bourke's arrest and execution as 1606 and 1607, yet the accounts are identical. There is also a question of whether the clergy were Dominican or Franciscan although the statue is now in the care of the Dominican sisters. In the absence of those minor details of historical data, we rely on the facts in hand and tradition and in this case the tradition has proven to be 99% accurate.

Thousands of miles away, in Glenn's Ferry, Idaho, stands Our Lady of Limerick Catholic Church, a historic church built in 1915 obviously by parishioners with a connection to Limerick. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on November 17, 1982

#### **SOCIAL MEDIA**

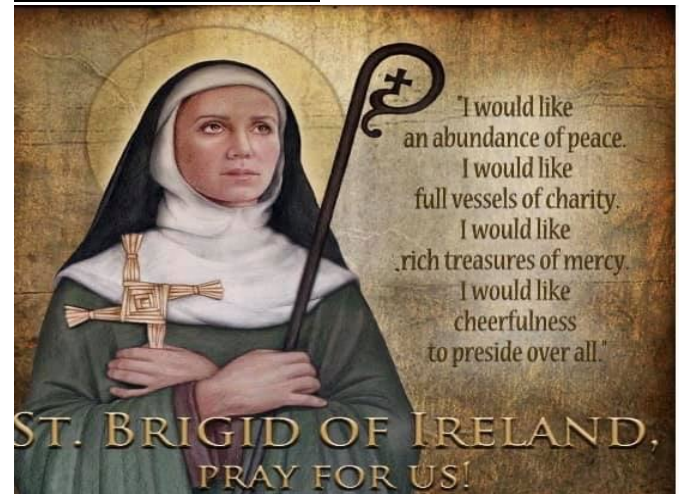
Are you aware that St. Brendan's Division #1 is available on several social media platforms? Listed are the addresses where we can be found:

[www.facebook.com/AohStBrendan's](https://www.facebook.com/AohStBrendan's)

Website - [www.berkscoah.com](http://www.berkscoah.com)

National AOH Website - [www.aoh.com](http://www.aoh.com)

#### **LAOH ST. BRIGID MASS**



This year's Mass celebrated by Fr. Bowman will once again be held at the Chapel at Alvernia College on Saturday February 1, 2020 at 4pm Mass.

For further details or directions for Alvernia University Chapel or information about the Berks LAOH please contact President Maryanne Welch.

#### **CATHOLIC CALENDAR - JANUARY 2020**



To All Hibernians:  
In the early part of January, we are still within the Christmas season. The Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God (Jan. 1) is a holy day of obligation. At the Baptism of the Lord (January 12),

we pass from the Christmas season to a segment of Ordinary Time prior to the Lenten season, from the liturgical color white to green. In the month of January, two American Saints are commemorated, Elizabeth Ann Seton (January 4) and John Neumann (January 5), which is also the Epiphany of the Lord. January 1<sup>st</sup> is the Baptism of the Lord In the United States, January 24 is a day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children, in recognition of the Roe v. Wade decision of 1973.

#### **ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADES**

For those who may be interested, we have been advised that there is a bus traveling to NYC for the St. Patrick's Day parade on Tuesday March 17th from the Hamburg area. The trip originates in Schuylkill County. Cost of the trip is \$38



per person. For further information re. times and pickup points please contact President Kerry Williard.

The Girardville St. Patrick's Day parade is set for March 22, 2020

#### **COMMUNION BREAKFAST**

We will once again join with the Berks County Holy Name Societies and the Knights of Columbus in the Berks Catholic Laymen's Communion Breakfast scheduled for Sunday March 15, 2020 at St. Ignatius Church.

Mass will be held at 9am followed immediately by a short program and scholarships awards in the School Hall. Brunch will follow afterward in the school hall. The breakfast/Brunch will be prepared by the Knights of Columbus.

In the past this affair was held at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Reading, but due to scheduling & other difficulties, was moved as listed above. The cost has also been reduced accordingly. Tickets are available by contacting Joe McCarthy at 610-927-5224 or email [jgmccjr@comcast.net](mailto:jgmccjr@comcast.net)

Ticket prices are \$10 per person and reservations are requested.

#### **40<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY**

As all are aware, our division held it annual Christmas Party at Ganley's Pub in State Hill on Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup> from 3-6pm. We were pleased to have 33 members and family members in attendance. In the past we held a gift exchange for all members who wanted to participate, however this year we added a new idea, that is to bring and unwrapped Toy for either boy or girl which would be donated to a needy cause.

As all are also aware, each Christmas and Easter our division donates food gift cards, \$500 each holiday, to honor the memory of our ancestors who had to flee Ireland in the mid 1800's due to the Famine in Ireland; "An Gortá Mór." Each holiday we donate \$250 to St. Peter's Parish and \$250 to St. Margaret's Parish which is well appreciated by both pastors. With the addition of toy's to be donated proved to be a truly special addition. The following note from President Kerry Williard detail just how special this year's donations were received: "The food gift cards were distributed today to St Peter's and St Margaret's Church. All were appreciative for the charity gift cards.

Also, the toys were distributed to needy causes. While at St Margaret's, I asked whether, or not they needed toys. Immediately, I was referred to their day care center

for Pre-Schoolers up to age 8. Several toys were needed for those children. You had to experience the appreciation we received. At the rectory, a Women needed a truck for her 3-yr son. The surprise in her face, when I told her to hold on and came back with a truck for her.

Tonight, I contacted a person at St Vincent de Paul at St Ignatius about toys. You could feel her tears over the phone. Apparently, they spent their money on necessary essentials for families this year, and their needs are great. One family has 9 children being supported by this organization. The call to her, was timely, and to her an answer of prayer from God. They took the remainder of the toys. Children will have a toy under their Christmas Trees due to the AOH-LAOH donations!"

My sense of pride being in this division is abounding, and the knowledge that we helped some desperate families during this holiday season is the true sense of the Christmas season.

Thank you to everyone for your donations and gift giving. The families receiving our donations will benefit with a blessed and joyous Merry Christmas!

#### **PRO-LIFE MARCH WASHINGTON D.C.**

This year's theme is "Life empowered:  
Pro-Life is Pro Woman"

This year's march will be held on Friday January 24<sup>th</sup>. The march which is held on or near the anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision of 1973 re. Roe v. Wade which legalized abortions on demand. So far, the only parishes currently listed as running a bus to Washington is Immaculate Conception BVM, Douglassville & St. Ignatius Loyola in Sinking Spring. There will be a Mass at Immaculate Conception at 7am with a bus pickup at 8am/ Mass will be held at St. Ignatius at 8am with bus pickup at 8:30am and departs for Washington at that time.

The bus will depart Union Station at 5pm with arrival in St. Ignatius Parish at 8:30 pm and ICC at pm.

Cost of trip will be Adults \$32, and youth \$16. Contact Angela Peterson at 610-582-6993 or email [icc\\_march4life@windstream.net](mailto:icc_march4life@windstream.net)

St. Columbkil in Boyertown is also running a Bus Trip departing at 7:15am, returning approximately 10PM. Cost is \$50 for adults and \$25 for students. Also includes morning refreshments and dinner. All are advised to wear comfortable walking shoes and bring a bag lunch. For Boyertown contact Candee Holtzman at 484-431-2085 or [www.stcolumbkil.org](http://www.stcolumbkil.org), or call the church at 610-367-2371.



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