



# SHARING THE GOOD NEWS

Monthly newsletter for dioceses & parishes. Issue 24 - December 2015  
Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference  
Columba Centre, Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, Co Kildare

## NEWS SNIPPETS

### Opening of Holy Doors for the Jubilee of Mercy 2015 - 2016



Holy Door of Mercy at Knock Shrine

Pope Francis has said that every diocese in the world may designate a holy door to be opened for a year, so that even those who can't go to Rome can participate in the Church's Jubilee Year of Mercy by walking through the doors. Holy doors symbolically represent Jesus, who said, "I am the door." (John 10:7)

Irish dioceses have now opened Holy Doors of Mercy locally so the faithful may participate in the ritual of the holy door for the Jubilee Year of Mercy. For details of the holy door or doors opened in your diocese please check your local diocesan and parish website or the Year of Mercy link on [www.catholicbishops.ie](http://www.catholicbishops.ie).

- Our Advent Calendar is available on [www.catholicbishops.ie](http://www.catholicbishops.ie) and includes prayers, resources and an audio Thought for the Day.
- For a selection of Christmas books and gifts please see [www.veritas.ie](http://www.veritas.ie) and if you are in Dublin check out their Nativity display in their windows on Lower Abbey Street.
- Trócaire's range of ethical gifts are available for Christmas on [trocaire.org](http://trocaire.org), from Veritas stores and Eason's nationwide. Starting at €5 they are gifts with a difference to help families in developing countries to build a better future.

### President Higgins addresses 30th anniversary conference of ICPO

On 3 December President Michael D Higgins addressed the 30th anniversary conference of the Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas in Dublin. He said: "The attention you bring to the serious issues facing Irish citizens in prisons both in the UK and in countries around the world is vital work that is appreciated by the Irish men and women themselves who are prisoners, by their families left behind and by all of us here in Ireland who value the good and important work you are doing."



A new research report *A Step At A Time* was published analysing the re-settlement needs of Irish people returning from prison overseas. The report, the President's address and other conference presentations, including those from ICPO chair Bishop John Kirby and Mr Charlie Flanagan TD, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, are available to download from [www.icpo.ie](http://www.icpo.ie).



- Wishing all our readers a Happy and Holy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

Produced by the Catholic Communications Office.  
See [catholicbishops.ie](http://catholicbishops.ie).  
Also on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram and Audioboom.

### Bishops' Council for Education on autonomy of schools

The Bishops' Council for Education issued a statement supporting the autonomy of schools saying: "Faith schools exist because many parents wish to have their children educated in accordance with their religious convictions. If the ethos of faith schools is undermined then the rights of such parents are compromised." The full statement and a related one from the CPSMA are available to read on [catholicbishops.ie/education](http://catholicbishops.ie/education).

### Fundamental right to housing not being adequately protected

In a statement issued to mark International Human Rights Day on 10 December bishops expressed concern that the fundamental human right to housing is not being adequately protected. Bishops said that, "Urgent intervention is required to prevent more families becoming homeless this winter." Read the statement on [catholicbishops.ie](http://catholicbishops.ie)



### Pope Francis Tweet of the Month: "May the Jubilee of Mercy bring us all closer to God's goodness and love!"

Follow Pope Francis on Twitter @Pontifex and @news\_va.