



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
IRISH • CATHOLIC • AMERICAN

Ohio State Board Newsletter

December 2025

Volume 7 Issue 12

President's Message



Brothers,

Welcome to December. I wish you and your families a Merry Christmas. As Catholics, we are blessed to be a member of the faith founded by Jesus. As Hibernians, we are blessed to be part of an organization that unabashedly celebrates that faith. During this busy holiday season, please take some time and reflect on the meaning of Christmas.

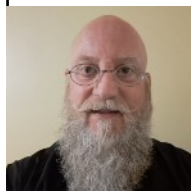
At the end of the month, rosters will be closed for the end of the year. The number of members on your roster December 31st is the total per capita that will be due on February 15, 2026. The National Board has put in place a system for the suspension of members for non-payment of dues. Please see the article in this newsletter entitled "AOH National Board proper suspension procedure." (See page 13 - 14)

You should have received your Hibernian mailing labels in the mail. This is the only fundraiser that the AOH does that is direct to members. Please consider making a donation to Hibernian Charities. You can direct what program you want your money to go towards and NO AMOUNT IS TOO SMALL.

The FFAI Christmas Appeal is in full swing. If your Division has not given, please consider giving a donation to this worthy cause.

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Chaplain's Comments



This month, we celebrate Christmas; Christ coming into the world. This event is one of the pivotal events in Salvation history. That is one of the events that are part of God's plan of salvation for the world. Christ came into the world to defeat sin and death, and gain for all God's creations, the gift of eternal life!

After his death and resurrection, Christ's presence continued on earth in His disciples, and He continues to come into the world today, through His living body; the Church. Christ is present in us. Each and every day, we have the opportunity to let other witness Christ coming into their world. We are called to be the face of Christ to others. We do this by living our faith, and glorifying God by our lives.

One of my favorite sayings goes like this, "If ands or buts were candies and nuts; every day would be Christmas". It means that we will always make excuses for why things aren't good. I like it, because every day is good and we just need to set aside our personal outlook on life and see things through the eyes of Christ. Every day is Christmas. Every day is a day to thank God for the gift of life and the promise of eternal life. Thank God for Christ coming into the world, not just during the holiday season, but every day. If we did this, my brothers, think of how this attitude would make us feel during the day. It would change the atmosphere of the world around us. How would we act at work? How would we act at home? How

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President's Message, cont.

Brothers, 2025 has gone by quickly. We had a well-attended State Convention this year, several Exemplifications of the Major Degrees of the Order in Ohio, we've donated time and money to help the needy, promoted Irish culture and we've lived the

Hibernian motto of Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity. Thank you for all that you do for the Order and for a successful 2025.

God Bless,
Denny

Chaplain's Comments, cont.

would we speak to others? How would we treat others? We would bring Christ into the world and allow others to experience Christ in their lives.

Conversely, if we live every day as Christmas day, we will allow others to recognize Christ in the world. If the atmosphere around us changes because we are looking at things differently, then we will have the opportunity to see Christ coming to us through the words and actions of others. We will be on the receiving end. Christ will come into our lives every day as we see His presence around us. Many times, we don't recognize Christ's presence because we are focused on other things. We need only to look out the window and see a tree, feel the wind on our cheek, feel the sun on our skin, watch a bird fly, or see someone giving a hand to another in need.

Christ comes into our world all the time. This Christmas season, reflect on His presence in your life. Recognize the opportunity to bring Christ into the world so others may see Christ coming into their lives. Take the time to look around and see how

others are bringing Christ into your lives. Let us not wait for Christmas to come around only once a year. Let us live Christmas each and every day of the year, and see how wonderful each and every day will become.

Have a blessed Christmas, and may God bless you and your families, now and always.

God Bless. Deacon Bruce



2025 - 2027 Officers

Chaplain	Deacon Bruce Dobbins brunomusarra@yahoo.com
President	Dennis Parks dparks121@yahoo.com
Vice President	Bruce McPherson hilliardmcperson@gmail.com
Secretary	Pete Chrystal pvchrystal59@gmail.com
Treasurer	Greg Brown Gbrownsamrock@yahoo.com
Director	Dale Norris danorris64@gmail.com
Director	Chris Schulte crpschulte@gmail.com
Past President	Bob Harper harper.bg.pg.com
National President	Sean Pender paddyspeed@yahoo.com
National Oversight Committee Chairman	Dennis Parks dparks121@yahoo.com

Appointed Officers

Catholic Action	Patrick Lally	lally8404@hotmail.com
Pro Life	Jacob Durda	jacob.durda@gmail.com
FFAI	Patrick Williams	karimcwilly@gmail.com
PEC	Mike Cosgrove	irish.mick213@gmail.com
Project St. Patrick	Nick Jacobs	njacobs@clashmore.com
Missions & Charities	Chris Konik	chriskonik@mindspring.com
Organizer	Joe Casey	qualityjoecasey@yahoo.com
Historian		
Veterans Affairs	Joe McCormick	macman23.jm@gmail.com
Hibernian Hunger	Dave McLaughlin	dmclaug106@sbcglobal.net
Immigration		

Jim Casey's New Email Address

jjcasey973@icloud.com

OHIO DIVISIONS

County/Division Presidents

Clermont	Douglas Gerrard dpgerrard@aol.com
Cuyahoga Board	Tom Ginley tgbigbass@gmail.com
Cuyahoga #2	Jim Kilbane jjk5755@hotmail.com
Cuyahoga #3	Robert Mullin bobbymulls@yahoo.co
Franklin #1	Gerard Tracy Gbtracyjr@sbcglobal.net
Hamilton #1	Tim Oliver toliver33@live.com
Lucas	Robert McMahon aohjohnpkellydivision@gmail.com
Mahoning #6	Joe McCormick macman23.jm@gmail.com
Medina	Jacob Durda jacob.durda@gmail.com
Montgomery	Art Gannon artgannon@aol.com
Stark #1	Tom Wolf tomwolfcpa@msn.com
Summit Board	Jim Meszaros meszi01@neo.rr.com
Summit #2	Ed Morrison edwardcmorrison@outlook.com
Summit #3	Michael Namsick mpnamsick@gmail.com
Trumbull	Marty McQuaide emcqu@aol.com
Washington	Patrick Kelly pkelly03@sprynet.com

Newsletter News

Just a reminder. If you have information for our monthly newsletter, please send it as an attachment to an e-mail to Editor, Jim Casey at

jjcasey973@icloud.com

The **deadline** for articles is the **24th of the month.**

State Organizer Report

We continue to receive applications on the old system and I thank those affected for responding in a timely manner.

I had the pleasure of meeting with two members the other evening in Mansfield; Joshua McElhatten, a member of the Patrick Pearse Division in Columbus, who lives in Crawford County and Sean Conway, an At-Large member who lives in Richland County. We spoke at length on the steps needed to start a division in that area. They are excited to explore that possibility. If anyone has any relatives or friends who are Irish and lives in any of the surrounding counties, please send me their contact information and I will get it to them. Good luck, brothers on getting the division started.

Here's wishing all of you a blessed and Merry Christmas spent with family and loved ones.

Joe Casey

Ohio State Organizer

Pro Life Report

Happy Advent brothers! As we enter into the Christmas season, let us remember how Jesus came into the world, as an infant born in a manger. The Ohio House of Representatives recently passed 2 pro life laws, House Bill 324 and House Bill 485. House Bill 324 is the Patient Protection Act which would prohibit the mail order sale of dangerous drugs that cause severe side effects in more than 5 percent of patients. The abortion drug mifepristone would be classified as a dangerous drug, which means a woman would be informed of the dangerous side effects before taking the pill. House Bill 485 is known as the Baby Olivia Act, would require public schools to provide human growth and development instruction in health education. This would be done with a 3 minute animation showing the growth of the baby from fertilization to birth. Please contact your senators to support this legislation. More good news is that the Franklinton Planned Parenthood in Columbus has recently closed with 17 positions being cut and the North Dakota Supreme Court has revived the state's abortion ban, making it a felony for doctors to perform abortions in most cases. Have a Merry Christmas!

Jacob Durda <jacob.durda@gmail.com>

Rest in Peace Pat Chrystal

Brothers,

Sorry to report the passing of Ohio State Secretary Pete Chrystal's brother Pat. Pat was a long-time member of Mahoning County Division #6. Please pray for the Chrystal family at this time.

Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord and let the perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace.

In Motto,

Denny

Patrick M. Chrystal

December 24, 1952 — November 19, 2025

Patrick M. Chrystal, a beloved member of the Youngstown community, passed away on November 19, 2025, at his residence, surrounded by his family. Born on December 24, 1952, in Youngstown, Pat lived a life filled with passion and dedication, marked by his enduring love for his family and friends.

A graduate of Woodrow Wilson High School in 1971, Pat went on to carve a successful career for himself and retired from TimeKap. Pat loved cooking. He created Paddy McPepper and Pete's - A - Place food concession trailers. Along with his brother Pete, he served his Hungarian Stuffed Hot Peppers sandwiches (his son Patrick's recipe) and wood fired specialty pizzas at Shakerwoods and Christmas In The Woods as well as at various Irish festivals. No one loved being around people more than Pat.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Patrick was a true jack of all trades who found immense joy in creating things. Among his notable projects was the creation of an Irish pub in the basement of his home, affectionately known as "Chrystal's". This space became a cherished gathering spot, reflecting his love for community and comradery. He also built tables using various mediums.

Pat's interests extended into horticulture, where he earned recognition as a Master Gardener a Volunteer. He was honored with the Youngstown City Scape Award for his remarkable gardening achievements. He was also a licensed Charter Captain and received Brewer's Certificates, underlining his diverse talents and pursuits. In 2010, he was proudly named Irishman of the Year, a testament to his strong ties to his heritage and community.

He was actively involved with the Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) and the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, further demonstrating his commitment to service and community involvement. His warm personality and love for life endeared him to many, as he embraced every opportunity to connect with people.

Patrick is survived by his beloved wife of 52 years, Sandy (McGarry) Chrystal; his daughter, Shawn M. Chrystal and her husband Mark Griffith; his grandson, Keighan Griffith; his granddaughter, Mackenzie Chrystal Grant; and his sisters, Elizabeth and Susan Chrystal. He is also survived by his brothers, J. Robert (Barbara) Chrystal, and Pete and Jeff (Nora) Chrystal, sisters-in-law Donna Depp, Patty Crago (Kenny) and brother-in-law Bill McGarry (Joy) along with numerous nieces, nephews, and great-nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents J. Robert and Ann (Hyland) Chrystal, his son, Patrick Chrystal; his granddaughter, Ryleigh Griffith; his sister, Peggy Chrystal; and his brothers, Martin and William Chrystal.

A Mass of Christian was held Tuesday, November 25th at 11:00 AM at St. Patrick Church located at 1420 Oak Hill Ave, Youngstown, OH 44507. Pat will be remembered for his vibrant spirit, unwavering love for family, and his contributions to the community. It has been said "no one loved life more than Pat!" His legacy will live on in the hearts of all who had the privilege of knowing him.

Memorial contributions may be to St. Jude's Children Research Hospital 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105 in memory of Pat.

FFAI Report

Patrick Williams karimcwilly@gmail.com

The following is what I received this month from Martin Galvin.

A chairde

In the AOH statement responding to the Joint British-Irish Legacy Framework we expressed concern about special protections for former British Army troopers. and warned that special protections could become a thinly disguised amnesty for troopers who committed murder, or an excuse to block legacy investigations,

The BBC article below shows that what we had warned about is a real possibility.

We are organizing a webinar on Saturday December 6th which will highlight this issue and lining up victims'

(Special thanks to those on this list who made yesterday's Bronx AOH Dinner a spectacular success)

Martin

Labour's Troubles Bill faces battle as veterans issue resurfaces

Julian O'Neill

Crime and justice correspondent, BBC News NI

The Special Air Service (SAS) ambush at Loughgall, County Armagh, in 1987 was ruthless – 600 bullets were fired, resulting in the deaths of eight IRA men blamed for multiple killings. Twenty-four soldiers from the elite British Army unit had been lying in wait, as a gun and bomb attack was mounted on a police station. An innocent passer-by also died in the soldiers' fire.

One aspect of the government's Northern Ireland Troubles Bill will see an inquest held four decades later, examining the SAS's use of lethal force.

The inquest had [previously been curtailed](#).

Veterans may have cause for concern, after a coroner's ruling in February that the SAS was unjustified in shooting dead four IRA men at Clonoe, County Tyrone, in 1992. They believe the bill exposes them to investigations and potential prosecutions, as may happen over Clonoe, and question the protections the government have said will apply.

The Northern Ireland Troubles Bill was debated in Parliament last Tuesday. Its centrepiece is reforming the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR) into a new Legacy Commission with strengthened powers.

'Protection' for veterans

That the bill passed its second reading with ease, 320 votes to 105, is not the main story.

Hansard reveals that during the debate, the word veteran was used almost twice as much as victim. It is a sign of the battle which may lie ahead at Westminster in replacing the current Legacy Act, which was passed while the Conservatives were in power in 2023. The act's fatal flaw was a conditional immunity clause - later ruled unlawful - which could have been used by ex-soldiers, or former paramilitaries.

It was conceived in recognition of the veterans' issue, which has re-surfaced on the green benches as the new bill begins its passage.

The Labour government's response is six "robust" protections, or safeguards, for former soldiers.

These were omitted from the wording of the [legacy agreement struck by the British and Irish governments](#) in September, but announced separately by London.

They include being able to give evidence remotely and not being re-investigated unless there are "compelling" reasons.

Dublin has said it believes any measure would apply across the board to everyone.

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FFAI Report, cont.

Scan the 100-page bill, as presently drafted, and you find nothing specifically for ex-military personnel. Veterans are not mentioned.

This is fueling opposition to the bill among Conservatives and unionists. Traditional Unionist Voice (TUV) MP Jim Allister labelled the protections "a joke".

In a headline-grabbing move, the SAS Regimental Association is threatening legal action "if the bill is enacted in anything like its current state". It cites "interference" with private life rights under article eight of the European Convention on Human Rights.

In a letter to Northern Ireland Secretary Hilary Benn, it stated the bill is "manifestly deficient" and contains "almost no protections beyond those which already exist".

Talks between the government and veterans' organisations will take place as the bill progresses, but Sir Keir Starmer has said he is "confident" the bill will not lead to vexatious prosecutions of former soldiers.

The prime minister told reporters travelling with him to the G20 summit in South Africa that the legislation strikes the right balance.

He said: "I'm absolutely confident that there will be no vexatious prosecutions, and that is because the legislation carefully sets out the balance that must be struck, and particular protections for veterans who served, in terms of the approach, the process and the protections we have put in place for them.

"So I am absolutely clear that we have got the right balance in the legislation, and there will not be vexatious prosecutions." Sinn Féin MP John Finucane has stated there can be no protections for "British combatants suspected of criminal acts"

Amendments have already been tabled by MPs and more are certain as the proposed legislation undergoes closer scrutiny in the weeks and months ahead.

Labour has a big House of Commons majority, but this is not simply a numbers game.

Benn's task is navigating a course, particularly in Northern Ireland, which does not risk his bill becoming as controversial as the last.

History Bulletin, cont.

designed to cloud the issue, "Northern Ireland" was an entirely artificial construct, with no historical antecedent, taken from the long-established Irish province of Ulster.

When Michael Collins and Arthur Griffith signed the Anglo-Irish Treaty on December 6, 1921, they of course knew that the British had already divided Ireland into "Southern Ireland" and "Northern Ireland" in the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. They also certainly knew that, although the treaty did not require it, the new "Northern Ireland," gerrymandered as it was to create a Unionist majority, would opt out of the Home Rule or Dominion status provided in the treaty.

In 1921, however, the Irish side expected that the border established at that time would be significantly altered after the Boundary Commission provided for in Article 12 of the treaty issued its report. Specifically: "...a Commission consisting of three persons, one to be appointed by the Government of the Irish Free State, one to be appointed by the Government of Northern Ireland, and one who shall be Chairman to be appointed by the British Government shall determine in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants, so far as may be compatible with economic and geographic conditions, the boundaries between Northern Ireland and the rest of Ireland, and for the purposes of the Government of Ireland Act, 1920, and of this instrument, the boundary of Northern Ireland shall be such as may be determined by such Commission." (Emphasis added).

The Boundary Commission certainly sounded promising, from the Irish perspective. The border as drawn was considered to be temporary, as any remotely fair and comprehensive review, conducted in good faith, would surely result in substantial parts of the artificial new statelet being transferred to the Irish Free State, given the demographic and political situation on the ground in Tyrone, Fermanagh, South Armagh, Derry City and other areas of Catholic/Nationalist concentration.

The Chairman of the Commission, appointed by the British, was Richard Feetham, a British lawyer and Oxford man, serving as a judge in South Africa. The Free State was represented by Eoin McNeill, founder of the Gaelic League and former Chief of Staff of the Irish Volunteers. Unionists, happy with the border as it was, were in no particular hurry to participate in any sort of Commission with the Free State, going so far as to officially refuse, on May 10, 1924, the formal request of the British Government that they name their commissioner. This Unionist gamesmanship prompted an appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, which upon deep consideration issued a report finding, in pertinent part, that there was no manner under then-existing law to force the appointment of a Northern Ireland representative to the Commission. Further delay

followed as the British and the Free State were required to execute an amendment to the Anglo-Irish Treaty which, in conjunction with corresponding legislative action, then allowed the British government to appoint the Northern Irish Commissioner, which they did on October 28, 1924, naming Joseph Fisher, a Unionist newspaperman and lawyer, to represent "Northern Ireland". Once thus constituted, the Commission began work in late 1924, prompting James Craig, the Prime Minister of "Northern Ireland," to issue the following statement: "I want to make it quite clear that this government adheres to its policy of refusing to acknowledge the powers of any commission to alter the boundary as defined by the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. Consequently, it does not propose to tender any evidence, appear by counsel or submit documents. To do so would prejudice its claim to repudiate any finding that may be reached."

Craig need not have worried about the Commission's activities, as the two British-appointed members were doing the Unionists' work for them, interpreting the Commission's charge quite narrowly. The Commission was given no power to act, in terms of ascertaining "the wishes of the inhabitants" by way of a plebiscite or referendum, and the "economic or geographical conditions" that might prove incompatible with "wishes of the inhabitants" were not defined. While Nationalist people trapped behind the partition line in Derry and Fermanagh, most of Tyrone, South Armagh, South Down and other Catholic enclaves, were suffering under virulent Unionist discrimination in the early post-treaty years, hopefully looking to the day that their communities would be transferred to the Free State, the Commission was tinkering around the edges.

The leaked publication in the *Morning Post* on November 7, 1925, of the Commission's report, with its very minor recommended adjustments to the border, set off a political crisis in Dublin. Eoin McNeill resigned from the Commission and the Free State government desperately sought an accommodation with the British. The deal that was ultimately struck, on December 3, 1925, 100 years ago this week, buried the report of the Boundary Commission, which was not released until 1969, with the Free State agreeing to keep the partition line where it was, in exchange for the modification of Article 5 of the Anglo-Irish Treaty, which had required the Free State to share in certain British public debt.

Irish Nationalists in the six counties must perhaps be excused for feeling that they had been sold out, for rank political purposes, by a Free State government that James Craig aptly noted, with obvious satisfaction, had been "living in a fool's paradise" when it came to the Boundary Commission.

Catholic Action

All of December is taken up with Advent and the Christmas season. Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of the Savior. The liturgical color, representative of repentance and humility, is violet, except on the Third Sunday of Advent, traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday, when the color rose represents the joy of approaching the Christmas season. December 8 is The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the patronal feast of the United States and a holy day of obligation. The Christmas season begins with the vigil Mass of Christmas. The liturgical color is white.

MAJOR SAINTS AND FEAST DAYS OF DECEMBER

December 3	Francis Xavier, Priest	Memorial
December 4	John Damascene, Priest and Doctor	
December 6	Nicholas, Bishop	
December 8	The Immaculate Conception	Solemnity
December 12	Our Lady of Guadalupe	Feast
December 13	Lucy, Virgin and Martyr	Memorial
December 14	John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor	Memorial
December 25	Christmas	Solemnity
December 26	Stephen, Martyr	Feast
December 27	John, Apostle and Evangelist	Feast
December 28	Holy Family	Feast
December 29	Thomas Becket	

IRISH SAINTS OF DECEMBER

Finnian of Clonard (c.470-c.549)

December 12

One of at least three saintly Finnians, this Irish saint may have been born at Myshall, Carlow, Ireland. He may have spent some years in Welsh monasteries. Later he founded several monasteries in Ireland, including Clonard, in Meath, which for many centuries was renowned for Biblical scholarship. Though often referred to as a bishop, there is no solid evidence of his consecration, but certainly Finnian served as a mentor and teacher to many who in turn spread the faith throughout Ireland and beyond.

Flannan (7th century)

December 18

Son of an Irish chieftain, he received a monastic education. On a pilgrimage to Rome, he was consecrated bishop by Pope John IV. Upon returning, he settled at Killaloe and is considered its first bishop.

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Catholic Action, cont.**Ursicinus (d.c. 625)**

December 20

Probably an Irishman, he was a disciple of St. Columban on the Continent, founded a monastery at St. Ursanne in present-day Switzerland, and evangelized the local people.

Aileran the Wise (d. 664)

December 29

Nothing is known of Aileran's early life. We know that St. Finian induced him to enter the monastery at Clonard, where Aileran became known as one of the most erudite scholars of this erudite group of monks. He knew Greek as well as Latin, and studied the Eastern and Western Fathers. Aileran's works include lives of Sts. Patrick and Brigid and a commentary on the genealogy of Jesus which was popular in the Middle Ages.

NEWS AND ISSUES

Notre Dame fans may enjoy a recent book by Holy Cross Father Nate Wills, *Pray Like A Champion Today: Sacred Stories from the Sidelines of Notre Dame Football*. Father Wills has served as Notre Dame's athletic chaplain since 2018.

Two pro-life bills have recently passed the State House of Representatives and await Senate action. HB 234, The Patient Protection Act, prohibits the mail order sale and remote prescribing of drugs which cause serious side effects in greater than 5% of patients. It is aimed at the dispensing of the abortion drug mifepristone without adequate warnings of the possible serious side effects and without the personal care of a physician. HB 485 requires Ohio's public schools to provide human growth and development instruction as part of health education, including a video presentation illustrating the growth and development of a child from fertilization to birth. It is heartening to see that we have pro-life legislators who have not thrown in the towel, despite the disastrous vote to amend the Constitution two years ago.

Do you have local news? Please send it along for inclusion in this report. A Merry Christmas to all.

Faternally,

Pat Lally

lally8404@hotmail.com

330-792-7135

An tUachtarán na hÉirann:

Catherine Connolly Elected The Tenth President of Ireland

Judge Michael C. Mentel*

In a landslide victory, Catherine Connolly was elected the tenth President of Ireland winning 63 per cent of the Irish vote. The President-elect is the third woman in the history of Ireland to be elected Uachtarán na hÉireann (Ookh-turrawn nuh Hayrun), the President of Ireland. The two women who held the office previously were Mary Robinson (1990 to 1997) and Mary McAleese (1997 to 2001). President-elect Connolly succeeds the current an tUachtarán, Michael D. Higgins, whose term expired on November eleventh. Presidential terms are seven years in length with a limit of two terms in office. An tUachtarán Higgins had served two terms and was therefore stepping away as required by the Irish Constitution.

A Hard Fought Race

The race for Áras an Uachtarán was, by Irish standards, a hard fought race. Three candidates were approved under the Constitutional processes to enter the Presidential race; Jim Gavin, on behalf of the Fianna Fáil party, Heather Humphreys, on behalf of the Fine Gael party, and Catherine Connolly as an independent candidate. During the initial three-way campaigns, Jim Gavin was effectively forced to withdraw from the race because of a financial scandal involving his failure to refund a tenant €3,500.00 who rented one of his properties ten years ago. The withdraw was a blow to the Fianna Fáil party and to Taoiseach Micheál Martin, president of the party, who championed Gavin's run from the start. Members of the Fianna Fáil party have recently called into question Martin's decision to back Gavin and whether he should remain in leadership. A Party investigation is underway looking into Gavin's nomination.

Heather Humphreys, Fine Gael's candidate, stepped in to the race following Mairead McGuinness's withdraw due to medical reasons. The two remaining candidates clashed on policy issues particularly in the areas of social justice, Irish neutrality involving conflicts that may arise in the

European Union, and Irish unification and planning. Connolly took a more progressive stance on these issues compared to Humphreys more conservative positions. Nearing the end of the campaigns, AI generated fake news reports were released on social media with an AI generated Catherine Connolly declaring she was withdrawing from the race. That media post was subsequently pulled down. Other misleading AI generated posts portrayed Connolly as an extremist and mischaracterized her stances on several issues. The Humphreys campaign denied involvement with the posts and categorically denounced them. In the end, Connolly was elected Uachtarán na hÉireann.

Following her victory, then President-elect Connolly stated that "[t]his win is not for me, but for us. We were told clearly and loudly [that] a new republic is needed, that considers everyone... I am a symbol for the new movement." In reflecting on the race itself, Connolly stated that the statements made about her and some media coverage of these statements was "poisonous". "I took it in a philosophical way really and everything they threw at me, I looked at it and said there is no basis to that and I will continue" adding that, "[t]he greatest strength I have is, I believe, in the things I speak about, and that gives me strength and I'm not going to change and will ignore what they say about me."

An tUachtarán Goals in Office

President Connolly has made clear her goals and objectives as the new Uachtarán na hÉireann. The first is to fulfill her obligations under the Irish Constitution. In contrasting her role as a TD in the Dáil Éirann, President Connolly has said that "[t]he president's role is different of course, but I will be able to deal with that challenge in a positive way, but at the same time use my voice... you can do both things as I will be required under the Constitution to stand up for the common good."

Continued on Page 12

An tUachtarán na hÉirann:**Catherine Connolly Elected The Tenth President of Ireland, cont.**

Among her goals is a commitment to the Irish language and growth in its use. President Connolly has stated that she has been “surprised” by the efforts that people have made to speak Gaeilge and to use it in texting. She has said that the use of Gaeilge is not something that will happen overnight however, Gaeilge will be spoken and used in Áras an Uachtarán (the House of the President).

Another goal of the President is to emphasize the need for planning in anticipation of Irish unification. President Connolly has stressed that any process which is developed in order to plan for unification must be, in all cases, inclusive of all traditions, the voices of the old, young, men, women, all religions, all diverse citizens, and everyone on the island, to construct and build a new Ireland that is franchised to everyone. This is to be achieved under the terms and conditions of the Good Friday Agreement.

The President has described the partition of the north as detrimental as “cutting off a limb” of one’s body. She is very clear that Northern Ireland citizens must be given a “political voice” by being

allowed to vote in presidential elections, participation in planning, and other means of inclusiveness.

A New Era in the Áras

An tUachtarán Higgins has served admirably during his two terms as Uachtarán na hÉireann. His service has benefited Ireland and the world. Now, we usher in the era of An tUachtarán Connolly. The new President is a voice that resonates compassion for Ireland’s people and a commitment to developing a new Ireland that is inclusive and welcoming to all on the island. All the best to President Connolly as she takes on her role as an Uachtarán na hÉireann.

Lastly, Nollaig shona dhuit agus athbhlain faoi mhaise dhuit (happy Christmas and a happy new year) to you and your families!

**Judge Michael C. Mentel is an appellate court judge on the Ohio Court of Appeals for the Tenth District. He is a member of The Ancient Order of Hibernians, Patrick Pearse Division 1, Franklin County, Ohio, The Shamrock Club of Columbus, Ohio, The Irish American Club East Side, Euclid/Cleveland, Ohio, The Irish National Caucus, and The Brehon Law Society of New York.*

Mark Your Calendars

March for Life

January 23, 2026

Washington D.C.

2026 National Convention

July 16 - 19

Omaha NE

2027 State Convention

June 24 - 27

Cherry Valley Hotel in Newark OH



AOH NATIONAL BOARD PROPER SUSPENSION PROCEDURE.

From National Secretary Ray Lynch.



Section 13. MEMBERS: The Division President may suspend a member of any Division who fails to pay his dues, fines, or assessments for a period of three months, and he shall be duly notified by the Financial Secretary of his indebtedness in writing and asked to appear at the next regular meeting to pay the same. In the event of his failure to appear, the President of the Division shall appoint a committee of at least two members to personally contact the member to try to reclaim him, if possible. After these two steps have been taken, suspension will be made if carried by a 30 motion at a regular meeting. A member suspended under this section who fails to apply for reinstatement within the prescribed time shall not be admitted to membership in any other division until he pays the amount due to the Division from which he was suspended. When a member is in arrears for nine (9) months, he is dropped automatically from the Division at the close of the meeting on which the ninth month expires.

Layman's explanation: Brothers, we are dropping members at an alarming rate. It seems many wait until the end of the year to "cull" their roster, only to purge those who haven't paid. I understand that's the time we start looking for per capita reasons, but if you read the excerpt from the Constitution, we should be doing our due diligence throughout the year at our monthly meetings.

Each Division should set a "Dues date" within the first 5 months of the year. If, after that date and within three months of that date, you have not collected the dues, and you have exhausted all measures to get in touch with the member, then you can go through the process laid out in the Constitution.

My office and the other National Board Officers are here to provide guidance and assistance, but the responsibility falls on the Division to follow the procedures for suspensions laid out in the Constitution.

One thing I ask BEFORE you request a member be suspended for nonpayment of dues is to make a copy of your roster so you have their information. As soon as a suspension request is approved, you lose their information and cannot do your due diligence to reclaim them.



National AOH

Member Suspension Form



The Division President may suspend a member of any Division who fails to pay his dues, fines or assessments for a period of three months. In order to do so, the following steps must be followed.

Division's Full Name: _____

Div.

President: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Div. Fin. Secretary: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

.....

Member's Name: _____ **Membership #:** _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

.....

Suspension Steps That Must Be Followed

(Check off each step as it is taken)

1. Member notified by Financial Secretary of his indebtedness by phone and/or email.
2. Member notified by Financial Secretary of his indebtedness in writing and asked to appear at the next regular meeting to pay the same.
3. After all above steps have failed, a motion for suspension must be presented at a regular meeting and carried by the membership present.
4. If the motion for suspension fails, the member may be automatically dropped from the Division after being in arrears nine (9) months at the close of the meeting on which the ninth month expires.

*** Email all suspension request forms to Ray Lynch at irishyankeenut@gmail.com prior to removing their name from your roster**

Division News

Boland/Berry Div. # 2, Cuyahoga Co.

Division Lifetime Membership

Division Lifetime Membership has been awarded to Alphonsus "Al" O'Leary, Patrick Reynolds and Jerry Rooney of the Boland/Berry Division in Cleveland, Ohio.

Al O'Leary, a 99-year-old Hibernian since 1967, has long promoted his family's Irish heritage through storytelling, accordion, and harmonica playing. Al is a WWII vet, and can be heard on Thursday evenings during the Irish Music Sessions at The Plank Road Tavern in Lakewood, Ohio.

Pat Reynolds has been a Hibernian since 1967, when his mother suggested he join the local Cleveland division at age 16. A Vietnam era veteran and retired Cleveland Police Detective Sergeant. He volunteers and is a past President of the Cleveland Police Historical Museum. Pat has held various AOH division offices as a hands-on Hibernian.

Jerry Rooney whose mother was a Berry, joined the AOH Boland/Berry Division in Cleveland as a teenager. Jerry retired as an agent for the United States Secret Service.



First Picture: left to right: Pat Reynolds being presented his Division Lifetime plaque by Boland/Berry President Jim Kilbane.

Second picture: left to right: Boland/Berry's Secretary Tom Ginley; Treasurer, Ray McGann; Financial Secretary, Kevin Reynolds; Honoree Al O'Leary; Sergeant at arms, Pat Reynolds; and Vice President, Dave Gaffney.

Irish Brigade Div. #1, Medina Co.

On Sunday, November 9th, we celebrated a Mass with Fr. Tim at St. Colette's. Sunday December 7th we will be at the 10:30 AM Mass at St. Martin of Tours 1800 Station Rd, Valley City, OH,

We have been trying to schedule Masses at each Medina County parish to promote our Division and hopefully generate interest and new members.

Continued on Page 16

Division News, cont.

Bluestone Div. #3, Cuyahoga Co.

Upcoming Events:

Hibernian Mass - Sunday, January 18, 2026 St Aloysius Church 10am Mass

10932 St Clair Ave Cleveland 44108. Breakfast to follow at a restaurant to be named later.

11th Annual Scholarship Reverse Raffle - Sunday, February 1, 2026

Irish American Club-East Side, 22770 Lakeshore Blvd, Euclid Ohio 44123

Open 2:00pm Cocktails, 3:00pm Dinner and 4:00pm Raffle \$2.500 Main Board

\$80 per Main Board ticket includes open bar and dinner, \$20 extra for MB ticket

\$60 ticket Dinner and Drinks only Side and Banger Boards 50/50 Raffle during event

Contact Tim Neary for tickets Cell 440-382-0669 Email nearytim@gmail.com

St Malachi Run – St Malachi Church 2459 Washington Ave: Benefits St Malachi Ministries

Saturday, March 14, 2026 2 Mile and 5 Mile Run Volunteers needed

Contact website, click on volunteer to register. Additional sponsors are also needed. churchrun.com

Pro Life Report

Happy Advent brothers! As we enter into the Christmas season, let us remember how Jesus came into the world, as an infant born in a manger. The Ohio House of Representatives recently passed 2 pro life laws, House Bill 324 and House Bill 485. House Bill 324 is the Patient Protection Act which would prohibit the mail order sale of dangerous drugs that cause severe side effects in more than 5 percent of patients. The abortion drug mifepristone would be classified as a dangerous drug, which means a woman would be informed of the dangerous side effects before taking the pill. House Bill 485 is known as the Baby Olivia Act, would require public schools to provide human growth and development instruction in health education. This would be done with a 3 minute animation showing the growth of the baby from fertilization to birth. Please contact your senators to support this legislation. More good news is that the Franklinton Planned Parenthood in Columbus has recently closed with 17 positions being cut and the North Dakota Supreme Court has revived the state's abortion ban, making it a felony for doctors to perform abortions in most cases. Have a Merry Christmas!

Jacob Durda <jacob.durda@gmail.com>

Summit Co. Board

Trying to get the word out. Thanks much!

Jim Meszaros, President, AOH Summit County Board

Who wants to go to Ireland?

Ireland Vacation - Wild Atlantic Way

3rd May 2026 to 11th May 2026



Inclusions & Costing

Included in the land only cost:

2 nights in the Abbeyglan Castle, Galway
2 nights in Scotts Hotel, Killarney
1 night in The Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny
2 nights in The Iveagh Garden Hotel, Dublin
Full Irish Breakfast each morning
Welcome dinner in the Castle
2 Dinners in Abbeyglan Castle
1 Dinner in Killarney
1 Dinner in Kilkenny
Farewell Dinner in Dublin
Driver/guide for the full duration & his expenses
Deluxe touring coach to suit the size of the group
Porterage of one suitcase per person
Government Taxes



For additional information and to book
your reservation, contact:

Owen Flynn

Celtic Journeys

USA: 651 291 8003

www.celtic-journeys.com

Entrance Fees:

Kylemore Abbey, Killarney Sheep Farm, Cliffs of Moher, Ferry
Crossing of the Shannon
Kerry Cliffs, Midelton Distillery, Rock of Cashel, Walking Tour of
Kilkenny, Guinness Storehouse.

Not Included:

Flights, Items of a personal nature, Meals other than those listed,
Drivers' gratuity.

Cost based on a minimum of 10 people traveling \$3,290 per
person sharing
Cost based on a minimum of 15 people traveling \$2,875 per
person sharing
Single Supplement \$800 per single room

****\$500 per person deposit required to reserve spot
(applied toward total cost)**

