



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
IRISH • CATHOLIC • AMERICAN

Ohio State Board

Newsletter

November 2025

Volume 7 Issue 11

President's Message



Brothers,

Welcome to November. Let me first start off by thanking our Veterans ahead of Veteran's Day. We are blessed to have so many AOH brothers who have proudly served our country. I thank you for your service. God Bless.

Thank you to all who attended our Fall State Board meeting in Columbus on October 25th. Congratulations are in order to Past State Presidents Joe Casey and Ron Hagan. Both were awarded AOH National Life Membership recently and were presented with their National Life Member Medallions at our meeting. It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to the Order to obtain Life Membership. Well done to both of you and thank you for paving the way for us.

During our State Board meeting, a lot of good information was exchanged. One of the takeaways from the meeting that I would like to discuss is the dissemination of information. There seems to be a disconnect from the State Board level down to the Division member. One example of this is the State Newsletter. Our newsletter editor Jim Casey goes through a lot of work to assemble the newsletter each month. Division Presidents, please share the newsletter with your members. We have over 1000 members in Ohio who are not getting this information. We want all of our members to be informed about what is going on around the

Continued on Page 2

Chaplain's Comments



November 1st is All Saints Day. It is a Holy day of obligation as it is the feast day that the Church has dedicated to all saints. The saints are those the Church believes have been granted the Kingdom of Heaven. One of the reasons the Church teaches this is because of the way the saints lived their lives in the life of Christ. Now they didn't always live this way. Some of the saints were great sinners, others didn't start out even believing in God, and many were ordinary people living ordinary lives, but every one of them had a change of heart that led them to live a different life; an extra-ordinary life directed towards God.

The lives of the saints are detailed in many books and movies so we can know how they lived and possibly provide direction for us to live our lives. We can look to the saints and see how their lives were not so much different than ours. Many of them did not perform great deeds or miracles, but did ordinary things in extra-ordinary ways. What made them extra-ordinary was the way they dedicated their lives to God. Everything they did was to please God. Their daily life was dedicated to giving God praise and glory. Their entire life was a prayer to God.

This brothers, is how we need to direct our lives. Everything we do in our daily life should be pleasing to God. This way, we can offer our life as a perfect prayer to God. The saints have provided examples of how it can be done. They each lived

Continued on Page 2

President's Message, cont.

State. Another takeaway was the need for Division Presidents to appoint committee chairs. I know we have discussed this in the past. Currently, our State committee chairman meet quarterly with the National committee chairman. I would like for the State chairman to be able to share the information that they have received down to the Division chairman. Division Presidents, please try to fill all of your constitutional appointments.

The end of the year is coming fast. As you know, assessments due on February 15, 2026, are based upon our roster on December 31, 2025. Please make every and all attempt to contact any member who has not paid their assessment. We fight so hard to recruit members that we sometimes forget to retain the ones we have.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your families.

In Motto,

Denny

Chaplain's Comments, cont.

different lives, because they were all different people, living in different places and during different time periods, but, they all lived *saintly* lives.

This gives us great hope, brothers, as we are ordinary people living ordinary lives, but we are all called to be saints. We are all baptized into the life of Christ; therefore, we are called to live our life in Christ. This is exactly what the saints did. Eventually, each of them figured out how they could best do this in their own way with the gifts and talents that God blessed them with. This is what we need to figure out. We need to look at our own lives and see how we can best live our own life in Christ.

We all chose a saint's name when we were Confirmed. We can start there and see how the saint that we chose may be a model for us in our lives. We may have another saint that means something to us through a shared life experience, a shared profession, or maybe a shared name. Whatever the connection, we have a wonderful way to connect to life in Christ through the lives of the saints.

As we start this month celebrating the Feast of All Saints, let's continue throughout the rest of the month to contemplate daily the lives of the saints, how their lives serve as examples for us to follow, and how best we can live our lives in a similar way; always giving praise and glory to God by the way in which we live our lives.

God Bless. Deacon Bruce

Major Degrees

St. Patrick's Division to host the Sons of Milesius degree team for all divisions in Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana or beyond.

Date: Saturday, November 8th

Location: Irish Heritage Center, 3905 Eastern Avenue Cincinnati, OH 45226

Registration will open at noon, with degrees to begin at 1pm. Pub Room will be open all day with college football on the tv's and live Irish music More details to come.

Contact Director Chris Schulte for more information crpschulte@gmail.com

2025 - 2027 Officers

Chaplain	Deacon Bruce Dobbins brunomusarra@yahoo.com
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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

OHIO DIVISIONS

County/Division Presidents

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Cuyahoga #3	Robert Mullin bobbymulls@yahoo.co
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Summit #3	Michael Namsick mpnamsick@gmail.com
Trumbull	Marty McQuaide emcqu@aol.com
Washington	Patrick Kelly pkelly03@sprynet.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

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**.

AOH National Life Membership

Congratulations are in order to Past State Presidents Joe Casey and Ron Hagan. Both were awarded AOH National Life Membership recently and were presented with their National Life Member Medallions at our State Board meeting. It takes a lot of hard work and dedication to the Order to obtain Life Membership. Well done to both of you and thank you for paving the way for us.



President Testimonial Dinner



Ohio State President Dennis Parks and Past National and Ohio State President Danny O'Connell present National President Sean Pender with an Irish walking stick at his testimonial dinner in New Jersey . Thank you for your leadership Worthy President.

Ohio AOH Missions & Charities

Chris Konik, Ohio AOH Missions & Charities Chair

Expanding The Charitable Net

National is committed to adding more charities this year and beyond. Let your division President know of any charities that could be considered for inclusion at this level. They can reach me directly so a list can be compiled and sent to our National Officers.

Catholic Mens Conference in February

St. Brigid of Kildare parish is hosting the 2026 Catholic Mens Conference in Columbus on Saturday, February 28th. This conference is regarded as one of the ***Largest and Best Gatherings of men of Faith in the Nation!*** The one-day event draws 3,000 men from across Ohio. Join Patrick Pearse Division 1, as well as statewide Knights of Columbus and Hibernians, for a grand day of inspiration and faith. Check this website often for updates:

<https://stbrigidofkildare.org/columbus-catholic-mens-conference/>

Annual Christmas Appeal for Hibernian Charity

Expect the annual mailer in early November for the AOH Christmas Appeal.

The Hibernian Charity Appeal is the primary National AOH vehicle for individual members to contribute to charity programs. These programs include– **Saint Patrick Centre Young Ambassador Program; Project Saint Patrick; Project Saint Patrick Ireland; Hibernian Hunger Projects; Hibernian Disaster Relief; and Study Abroad scholarships.**

Please make all checks payable to “Hibernian Charity” or visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/hibcha> to make a secure online donation today. If you wish, gifts more than \$50 may be directed to a specific charity program of your choosing.

Hibernian Charity, C/O Tim Quinn, 2000 Lancashire Avenue #202, Louisville KY 40205

Divisions Without Missions & Charities Chairs

Any divisions without a Missions & Charities Chair should contact me directly at chriskonik@mindspring.com to assist with filling this important role.

Getting the Word Out About Project St Patrick

As always, make sure you fill out the form that goes to your Bishop’s Office, establishing a division PSP representative. The often overlooked form is the Vocational Grant Application, link listed below.

All divisions and counties, please continue your annual \$500 donations to Project St. Patrick

Donation Form

[2025 Project St. Patrick Donation Form.pdf](#)

Division Diocese Form

[2025 Division Diocese Form.pdf](#)

Vocational Grant Application Form

[2025 PSP Application](#)

Report Your Division and County Great Work

Remember to fill out the Annual Division and County forms, so National knows what we are doing locally. The current form can record hours spent and/or monies raised for charity work. This also helps our leadership know the scope of our statewide efforts.

Event Form

<https://aoh.com/gobansaer/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Charities-Single-Event-form-1.pdf>

Annual Form

<https://aoh.com/gobansaer/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Charities-Annual-Event-form-1.pdf>

Executive Board News

The Executive Board has met several times to discuss the upcoming term. Recently, the Executive Board met with our two Ohio State Directors Chris Schulte and Dale Norris. One of the things that we discussed was getting our Directors more involved with the Divisions around the State. I spoke about doing this last term but failed to do so. That being said, I would like to try again to do this. What it would entail is dividing all the divisions in Ohio between the two Directors. The Directors would be more or less a liaison to the State Board for the Divisions. Now, I know Ohio is not that big of a State Division wise but, we need to get our Directors more involved in the operations of the State Board. This does not mean that the Executive Board is not here to help you or is out of reach. On the contrary, we feel that in addition to the Executive Board, you will have a Director to reach out to as well. Both Directors are Past Division Presidents, so they know how a Division operates. The Divisions will be split as follows:

Dale Norris

Cuyahoga County #2
Cuyahoga County #3
Mahoning County
Medina County
Stark County
Summit County #2
Summit County #3
Trumbull County

Chris Schulte

Clermont County
Franklin County
Hamilton County
Lucas County
Montgomery County
Washington County

The Director assigned to you will be reaching out to you in the near future. Please give them the courtesy of a return email or phone call. We need the Directors to be more involved as they are the future leaders of the Ohio State Board.

Please find attached the updated roster for the 2025-2027 Ohio State Board. We have two additions to the appointed officers. Joe McCormick of Mahoning County is our new Veteran's Affairs chair and Nick Jacobs of Summit County is our new Project St. Patrick chair. Thank you, brothers, for taking a leadership role. A big thanks to Doug Gerrard and Chris Schulte who served us in those capacities last term. I am working on filling out the remaining positions. Please keep our recently deceased Historian Mike Finn's family in your prayers.

In the Motto,

Denny Parks

State Organizer Report

As of this time, all of our older open applications are considered closed. The new application program is undergoing a Beta test now on some divisions, but no timetable has been set to roll it out nationally. I ask the divisions to continue to recruit and use the new applications that are located on the National website. Make sure to update your Form 9s so your list of officers is current.

We received an application from a gentleman in Mansfield this summer and I referred him to the At-Large program. He said he might have enough to start a division in Richland County in the future so I will continue to stay in touch with him. He has been added to our State Newsletter distribution so he knows what is happening around the state.

I have been working with the Trumbull County Division with their recruitment. I've attended a couple of their organizational meetings and they have already received four applications for membership. I will continue to work with them.

As I continue to state, if anyone is aware of a location where a new division might be able to be formed, please get with our president Denny Parks or myself.

Joe Casey, Ohio State Organizer

Catholic Action

In November, we conclude a period of Ordinary time and the liturgical year with the Feast of Christ the King on Sunday, November 23. November 30 is the First Sunday of Advent. The Solemnity of All Saints, November 1, is a holy day of obligation. All Souls Day, November 2, falls on a Sunday this year. Thanksgiving Day falls on November 27.

November is a month to remember and pray for our departed ones, and not simply on All Souls' Day. There are many opportunities to pray for our departed relatives and friends. Many parishes offer All Souls Day novenas. Another avenue may be the opportunity which the Church offers us to earn a plenary indulgence for the faithful departed in Purgatory from Nov. 1 to Nov. 8, by visiting a cemetery to pray for the dead. The usual conditions for a plenary indulgence apply: receive the Eucharist that day, pray for the Pope's intention that day, go to Confession during that week, and remain free of attachment to sin. A plenary indulgence is also granted to those who visit a church or oratory on All Souls' Day and recite an Our Father and the Creed.

NOTABLE SAINTS, SOLEMNITIES, AND FEAST DAYS

November 1	All Saints	Solemnity
November 2	All Souls Day	Solemnity
November 4	Charles Borromeo, Bishop	Memorial
November 9	Dedication of the Lateran Basilica	Solemnity
November 10	Pope Leo the Great	Memorial
November 11	Martin of Tours, Bishop	Memorial
November 13	Frances Xavier Cabrini	Memorial
November 17	Elizabeth of Hungary	Memorial
November 18	Rose Philippine Duchesne	
November 21	Presentation of the Blessed Virgin	Memorial
November 22	Cecelia, Virgin and Martyr	Memorial
November 23	Christ the King	Solemnity

ROSE PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE

This month, we celebrate the feast days of two remarkable female American saints. Mother Cabrini is fairly well known, but Rose Philippine Duchesne certainly deserves to be better known than she is. Born in France in 1769, Rose entered the convent of the Visitation of Mary just as the turbulent years of the French Revolution broke upon the Church in France. Her convent was shuttered, but Rose nevertheless set to work nursing prisoners, teaching and feeding poor children, opening a school for homeless girls, and at the risk of her life aiding underground priests. Rose founded the Society of the Sacred Heart (1804), rising quickly to be its superior and supervisor of its novitiate and school. But her dream was to travel to New France and minister to the American Indians. In 1803, by the Louisiana Purchase, much of old New France became a part of the United States. In 1818, at the invitation of the bishop of New Orleans, Rose and some of her fellow sisters went to New Orleans, a place which the bishop characterized as a "sewer of vice." The sisters were sent on to St. Charles, Missouri, where Rose founded the first free school for girls west of the Mississippi. Eventually the sisters established six such schools in Missouri and Louisiana. Rose also founded a novitiate in the frontier territory. She finally got her greatest wish granted when, at age 72, she was dispatched to Sugar Creek, Kansas, where she opened a school for Potawatomie children. Her Indian charges named her "Woman-Who-Prays-Always." She died at age 83, in 1852. Rose was canonized in 1988.

Continued on Page 8

Catholic Action, cont.**IRISH SAINTS OF NOVEMBER****Malachy, Archbishop of Armagh (1095-1148)**

November 3

Malachy was born and raised in Armagh, the son of a learned man. After his parents' death, he became the disciple of Eimar, a hermit, and was ordained at age 25. He studied under St. Malchus at Lismore and was appointed abbot of Bangor Abbey, which was in a sad state at the time. In fact, much of the Church in Ireland was in bad shape due to the ravages of the Vikings, and much of Malachy's effort throughout his life was dedicated to restoration. A few years after his appointment as abbot, he was chosen bishop of Connor, based at Bangor. His leadership of a local revival of the faith ended abruptly when he and his monks were forced to flee to Lismore to escape Viking raiders. Appointed metropolitan of Armagh in 1129, he was unable to occupy the see peacefully for many years, due to a rival claimant--the see had become hereditary in a family of clerics. Malachy eventually prevailed, in the process recovering from his rival a book (probably the Book of Armagh) and a crozier reputedly belonging to St. Patrick. Later, Malachy resigned the see and returned to Connor (1137). He divided the diocese into two, Connor and Down, became bishop of the latter, and refounded the ruined abbey at Bangor. On a trip through Europe to Rome, he met St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and the two became life-long friends. So impressed was Malachy by Bernard and the Cistercians, that he attempted to resign his see and join the order. The Pope refused his request and instead named him papal legate in Ireland. Malachy left four companions behind him at Clairvaux; in 1142, they returned to Ireland and founded the Cistercian abbey of Mellifont. In 1148, while journeying to Rome on official business, Malachy stopped at Clairvaux to visit his friend, and died there rather suddenly. Bernard proclaimed him a saint, and his action was confirmed by Pope Clement III, in 1190, making him the first Irish saint officially canonized by a pope.

Malachy was a truly great saint of Ireland. He helped instill in the Irish church the spirit of reform that was sweeping the church on the Continent, and was a man of great virtue himself. He is familiar to many today because of the so-called Prophecies of Malachy, which are almost certainly not written by him and are most likely forgeries of the 16th century.

Lawrence O'Toole (1128-80), Archbishop of Dublin

November 14

Son of Murtagh, chief of the Murrays, he was born in Kildare, and as a youth was carried off and held as a hostage for two years by King Dermot McMurrough of Leinster. Lawrence's father finally compelled Dermot to surrender the boy to the bishop of Glendalough. He became a monk of Glendalough, and later was abbot (1153), known for his strict reign. His prudence and virtue were demonstrated when famine struck the area, and Lawrence was able to supply the local people with grain from monastic stores. Although resisting earlier efforts to elevate him to the episcopate, Lawrence accepted election to the archbishopric of Dublin in 1161. The new archbishop embarked on a reform of his clergy, forming a community of strict canons regular at the cathedral. Lawrence became embroiled in the dynastic struggle which resulted in the intervention of England's Henry II and which is too complicated to outline here. In 1172, a synod convened by Lawrence at Cashel confirmed a bull of Pope Adrian IV imposing English liturgical forms upon Ireland, and Lawrence supported Pope Alexander III's confirmation of these measures. In 1175, while in England

Continued on Page 9

Catholic Action, cont.

trying to arrange a peace between Henry II and Rory O'Connor, a probably-deranged man tried to murder him at Becket's shrine. He attended the Lateran Council of 1179 and after explaining the state of the Irish Church to the pope found himself appointed papal legate in Ireland. His efforts there began to worry Henry II, who may have suspected another Becket in the making, and when Lawrence travelled to England in 1180 in the course of negotiations on behalf of Rory O'Connor, Henry prevented him from returning to Ireland. Lawrence did eventually receive permission to return, but died in Normandy before he could.

Columban, Abbot (c.540-615)

November 23

Columban was born in West Leinster and well educated as a youth. In the advice of a holy hermitess to flee the local environs to avoid sin, Columban saw a call to the religious life. Despite his mother's opposition, he departed for an island in Lough Erne, where he was under the tutelage of a monk named Sinell. He later became a monk of Bangor. In 585, with the blessing of St. Comgall, he went as a missionary to Gaul with 12 other monks. He himself built several monasteries--Annegray, Luxeuil, and Fontaine--and his followers built others throughout France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. Columban's institutions followed his very strict monastic rule. He aroused opposition among the Frankish bishops due to his advocacy of Celtic usages and his refusal to acknowledge their authority. In 610, King Theodoric II of Burgundy, angered by Columban's denunciations of his marital irregularities, banished all Irish monks from his kingdom. After being shipwrecked attempting to return to Ireland, Columban was offered refuge by King Theodebert II of Neustria and embarked on a mission journey which ultimately led him to the Alemanni around Lake Constance. However, when the hostile Burgundians overran Neustria, Columban fled to Italy and was welcomed by King Agilulf of the Lombards, although the king was an Arian heretic. Columban strove against the Arian heresy. He also became embroiled in the controversy over the Three Chapters then roiling the Church, an issue on which he was ill-informed; his words during this controversy led him to later write apologetically to the pope. Columban founded the monastery at Bobbio on land given to him by Agilulf; it was to have a distinguished history. It is at Bobbio that the saint died. Besides sermons and poems, Columban wrote his monastic rule and treatises against Arianism.

ISSUES AND EVENTS

I joined our State Pro-Life Chairman, Jacob Durda, in the Ohio March for Life in Columbus October 3. We had hoped for more Hibernian participation, but besides Jacob and me, Bruce McPherson and his wife (a member of the LAOH), and Ed Moss and his wife Anne (late of Youngstown, now of Columbus) were with us. We also encountered Hibernian Father Ryan Furlong with a contingent from Walsh University, where he is now the chaplain.

It is crucial that we Catholics vote this November with a well-informed Catholic conscience. Our bishops are still emphasizing that abortion remains the most critical issue.

Do you have local news? Please send for inclusion in this report.

Fraternally,

Pat Lally

lally8404@hotmail.com

Tory Leader Vows to Take UK out of European Convention on Human Rights Violating the Good Friday Agreement

Judge Michael C. Mentel*

At the Tory Conservative Conference held in early October, party leader Kemi Badenoch announced that if the Tories take control of Parliament in the next election, they will leave the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Badenoch made the announcement on the eve of the opening of the Convention. The ECHR has become the epicenter of the Tories attack on the immigration influx in the United Kingdom.

Tories blame the treaty for thwarting UK laws to control immigration. If the UK leaves the ECHR it will breach the Good Friday Agreement (GFA). Such a breach will create instability in the north, impact Anglo-Irish relations, and jeopardize the peace that has existed for twenty-seven years.

The ECHR

The ECHR is an international treaty that compels the signatory countries to protect certain fundamental rights of the individuals living in their countries. These rights include prohibiting governments from carrying out torture and inhumane treatment, unjustified killings, conducting fair trials and presumption of innocence for defendants charged with crimes, and prohibiting discrimination among several other enumerated rights.

If a signatory government's courts do not adhere to the tenants of the Treaty an enforcement action may be brought before the European Court of Human Rights. Such actions may be brought by the individual claiming the government violated his or her rights under the Treaty or it may be brought by another signatory country referred to as an "inter-state case". A recent example of such an action was one brought by the Republic of Ireland against the United Kingdom in January, 2024, challenging the UK's enactment of Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023, called the "Legacy Act" for violation of the fair trial,

unjustified killings, and discrimination provisions. The case is currently pending before the European Court of Human Rights.

Breaching the GFA

The GFA was agreed to on April 10, 1998, bringing an end to the Troubles and ushering in an era of peace to the north. Among many other provisions, the GFA obligated the Republic and the UK to commit to "incorporating" the ECHR into each country's respective laws to ensure the protection of fundamental rights north and south of the border. For the north, it binds the UK to "complete incorporation into Northern Ireland law of the [ECHR], with direct access to the courts, and remedies for breach of the [ECHR's provisions]."

The announcement by Kemi Badenoch to withdraw from the ECHR left some leaders concerned about the impact it would have on the GFA if implemented. The concerns were specifically from members of her own party. Dominic Grieve, former Prime Minister David Cameron's attorney general and Tory party member, stated "[i]t is plainly in breach of the Belfast/ Good Friday agreement [,] an international treaty that underpins the Northern Ireland peace process". He further stated that, "[a]ll this is for very little benefit. The advice is honest enough to point out that leaving does not solve all the problems of deporting criminals and remaining failed asylum seekers. The reality is however, starker. It is largely peripheral to these issues. By leaving we [the UK] will damage ourselves and our international standing and the electorate will see almost no impact on dealing with illegal immigration."

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Hilary Benn, called out the Tories as advancing a policy that would undercut the GFA. Benn called the tory stance on leaving the ECHR as being "utterly irresponsible".

Continued on Page 11

Tory Leader Vows to Take UK out of European Convention on Human Rights Violating the Good Friday Agreement, cont.

“When the Northern Ireland Bill to implement the Good Friday Agreement was debated in the House of Commons on July 20, 1998, the then Conservative opposition gave it full support,” Benn said. “The GFA has resulted in 27 years of peace after the trauma of the Troubles. And yet the Conservative Party [the Tory party] has now joined [the Reform Party led by conservative extremist Nigel Farage] in advocating a policy that could undermine the Good Friday Agreement – namely to withdraw the UK from the [ECHR]...[o]r that they would seek to put the UK in the same group as Belarus and Russia [whom are not signatories to the ECHR]”.

Sinn Féin President and TD opposition leader in the Dáil Éireann, Mary Lou McDonald, has said that Badenoch’s announcement is “very worrying”. McDonald further added that the ECHR is an “essential building block” of the GFA. “Whoever is in government [in the UK] cannot walk away from the commitments that have been solemnly undertaken with Ireland in respect to the six counties.”

Impact of Breaching the GFA

The UK leaving the ECHR may result in notable effects. The first would be the destabilization of the north and the threat to the peace that now exists. During the ratification vote on the GFA in 1998, both the north and the south voted overwhelmingly in favor of the GFA. The vote was not only a ratification of the terms of the GFA. It was a directive made by the people on the island of Ireland that resolution of differences shall be through peace and diplomacy, not guerrilla warfare. A UK withdraw from the ECHR would vesicate the GFA and leave the north in a state of likely unrest.

The second consequence would be that the Republic would no longer be able to oversee UK compliance with the ECHR. The purpose of the ECHR’s insertion

into the GFA is to protect fundamental rights of individuals. Under the ECHR, the Republic has the ability to bring inter-state actions against the UK for violations of the ECHR in the north. Should that legal avenue be removed, the Republic is left with only sanctions or condemnations that will not have the force and effect that an inter-state action in the European Court of Human Rights would have.

Should the consequences of the first and second actions become real, the resulting third consequence would likely cause potential irreparable harm to Anglo-Irish relations. A required component of the GFA is the establishment of the North-South Ministerial Council. The Ministerial council is composed of elected leadership from the Northern Ireland Assembly and Dáil Éireann. These leaders meet to address issues that mutually impact each jurisdiction. Absent the GFA the Ministerial Council would likely cease to exist. Additionally, other avenues of communication between the UK and the Republic could become strained.

The proposal announced by Tory leader Kemi Badenoch to leave the ECHR is ill conceived and dangerous. Badenoch’s address on the eve of her party’s conference is, at best, a petulant reaction to a populist outcry. The immigration issue is one that demands thoughtful legislative solutions, not reckless demagoguery. A UK withdraw from the ECHR is not the answer to the UK’s immigration problems nor is it the cause of the UK’s immigration situation. The UK’s withdrawal from the ECHR would simply eliminate a fundamental element of peace in the north—the Good Friday Agreement. A peace that has been in place for twenty-seven years.

**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.*

FFAI Report

Bloody Sunday Trooper Acquittal

A chairde,

A judge today held that there was insufficient evidence to convict the only British Trooper charged with Bloody Sunday murders.

Fourteen civil reights marchers were murdered in front of thousands of eye-witnesses but no one will be convicted.

Martin Galvin

Sunday 30 January 1972 was one of the most deadly – and consequential – days during three decades of conflict in Northern Ireland.

In the streets where it happened – the images of Bloody Sunday are painted on the walls and seared in people's minds.

A civil rights march was held on a wintry, sunny afternoon in Londonderry.

The demonstration was a protest against the policy of internment – imprisoning people without trial – which had been put in place following three years of violence.

Soldiers from the Parachute Regiment shot dead 13 people in the Bogside area – which was, and still is, a strongly Irish nationalist community.

One image became particularly prominent.

Pictures showed a Catholic priest, Fr Edward Daly, waving a blood-stained white handkerchief as he tried to protect a group carrying a teenager, Jackie Duddy, who had been fatally wounded.

News camera operators captured much footage on the day. The BBC archive features Fr Daly telling a reporter that soldiers "just seemed to fire in all directions" and he was "absolutely certain" that there was no provocation. That version of what happened wasn't accepted by the initial investigation. The Widgery Tribunal found the Army had been shot at first.

During the peace process, Tony Blair's government set up another inquiry, after campaigning by

bereaved relatives, who said Widgery had been a whitewash.

In 2010, the report by Lord Saville said that on balance, the paratroopers had fired first and that none of the victims had posed any threat.

The then Prime Minister, David Cameron, apologised in the House of Commons – saying killings were "unjustified and unjustifiable".

The police began to investigate. One former paratrooper, known as Soldier F, was prosecuted for murder. He was charged over the killings of James Wray, 22, and 26-year-old William McKinney. Soldier F was also accused of attempting to murder Patrick O'Donnell, Joseph Friel, Joe Mahon, Michael Quinn, and an unknown person.

There is a legal order preserving the veteran's anonymity, which his lawyers have argued is necessary because he is at risk of attack. He told the Saville Inquiry that he had only fired at people who were armed. That claim was rejected in the final report.

Material from the inquiry could not be used directly as evidence in the criminal process. In the dock, the veteran was screened from view behind a blue curtain. He spoke for the first time in court at a hearing in December 2024, to reply "not guilty" when the charges were put to him.

Relatives of those who were killed on Bloody Sunday travelled from Derry to Belfast Crown Court each day of the trial. John Kelly, whose brother Michael was killed, said they always knew that listening to the proceedings would be painful.

"I can see everything in my mind's eye," John said, as we walked around the main locations mentioned in the trial – from Rossville Street, where Michael was shot dead, to the adjoining Glenfada Park, where James Wray and William McKinney were killed. "It even takes me back to where I was that day. "I helped to carry Michael and place him in the ambulance."I relived every moment during the evidence. "But even with having to go through all

Continued on Page 13

FFAI Report, cont.

that – it's still worthwhile for me.”

Bereaved families had to fight a separate court case to make the trial go ahead.

In 2022, they won a legal challenge against a move by crown lawyers to drop the prosecution of Soldier F.

Prosecutors had been concerned that key evidence would not be usable in court. On the first day of the trial, the Northern Ireland veterans' commissioner suggested that prosecutions of military personnel indicated an imbalanced approach to investigations into killings from the years known as the Troubles.

Outside the court gates, David Johnstone told the media: "There are many families of soldiers across Northern Ireland and Great Britain who have never had the truth regarding the loss of their loved one, or the opportunity of justice."

He pointed out that more than 1,000 members of the security forces had been killed during the conflict, adding: "The vast majority of the 300,000 armed forces who served in Northern Ireland did so with restraint, dignity and professionalism."

The trial was held in front of a judge only, as is standard practice in Northern Ireland for cases from the Troubles.

Joe Mahon, Joseph Friel and Michael Quinn were among the witnesses who gave evidence in person.

The accounts of other civilians were given through statements, which prosecution barristers read to the court. A number of witnesses told how they tried to escape from intense shooting on Rossville Street by going into Glenfada Park, which is a courtyard.

But they came under fire there too, with several describing how they were shot when running away, and tried to protect themselves by lying still on the ground and pretending to be dead.

However, the only evidence which specifically said that Soldier F fired his rifle in Glenfada Park came in

the form of statements from two other paratroopers, known as Soldiers G and H.

The statements were made in 1972 to the initial investigation by the Royal Military Police, and then to the Widgery Inquiry. They said they fired shots along with Soldier F.

Soldier G has died, while Soldier H indicated he would not testify in the trial, and would use his legal protection against self-incrimination.

Defence lawyers argued that the key prosecution evidence was "fundamentally inconsistent" and was not backed up by the civilians' accounts. On that basis, they applied to have the case dismissed.

The judge did not grant that application – but the defence continued to present the issues around the soldiers' statements as a major reason why the judge should acquit Soldier F.

The veteran himself did not testify. His lawyer read into the record a statement which the accused gave to police – in which Soldier F said he was "sure" that he "discharged his duties", but he would not be answering questions because he no longer had "any reliable recollection" of events.

Glenfada Park is now the site of the Museum of Free Derry. On its exterior wall, there is a patch of perspex, which preserves the circular bullet marks from Bloody Sunday. Inside, James Wray's jacket is on display, its shoulder torn by the shots which killed him. On a shelf in the same cabinet is a camera which William McKinney was carrying when he was shot dead.

Many historians say the killings inflamed the unrest in Northern Ireland.

After 53 years of grief, controversy and campaigning, the criminal process has ended with no conviction.

Patrick Williams, State FFAI chairman

karimcwilly@gmail.com

AOH Response to Not Guilty Verdict

Martin Galvin, the National Freedom for All Ireland Chair of the AOH, released the following statement on Friday in reaction to the verdict:

"The Ancient Order of Hibernians is saddened but not surprised at yesterday's acquittal of British Trooper F, which means that no one will be found guilty for the murders of 14 civil rights marchers committed in front of thousands of eyewitnesses and many cameramen on January 30th, 1972.

The Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH), the oldest and largest Irish Catholic group in the US, has responded to this week's [verdict for Soldier F](#), the former British paratrooper accused of two murders and an additional five attempted murders in Derry on Bloody Sunday in 1972.

On Thursday, Soldier F was found not guilty of murdering James Wray and William McKinney, as well as not guilty of the attempted murder of five other people - Joseph Friel, Joseph Mahon, Michael Quinn, Patrick O'Donnell, and another unknown person.

Believed to be in his mid-70s, Soldier F had pleaded not guilty and did not testify during the non-jury trial that began in Belfast in September.

In his [verdict](#) on Thursday, Judge Patrick Lynch said: "The evidence presented by the Crown falls well short of this standard and signally fails to reach the high standard of proof required in a criminal case; that of proof beyond a reasonable doubt."

Judge Lynch, however, did say that Soldier F, as well as Soldiers G, H, and E, "had totally lost all sense of military discipline" on Bloody Sunday.

He added: "Those responsible should hang their heads in shame."

"The verdict was the inevitable result of high-level planning by British officials and military commanders, who always intended to ensure impunity for those they sent out to teach Derry a lesson by gunning down civil rights marchers.

"Indeed, British officials merely followed the same tactics they had used to get away with the murder of a Catholic priest, a grandmother, and eight others, in the [Ballymurphy Massacre](#) of August 9-11, 1971.

"Judge Patrick Lynch was scathing in his verdict, holding the Bloody Sunday troopers were clearly guilty of 'Shooting in the back unarmed civilians fleeing from them... Those responsible should hang their heads in shame.

"It was noteworthy that former British troopers outside the courtroom, instead of shame, displayed annoyance that Soldier F or any British trooper should ever face prosecution merely for murdering Irish civil rights marchers.

"The judge felt constrained to acquit only because there was no reliable evidence identifying Trooper F as the shooter who murdered two men and attempted to murder five others. The only identification evidence introduced came from out-of-court statements by two other Troopers, who themselves had been part of the murder spree.

"The whitewash of Bloody Sunday started even before the blood in the streets was dry. Troopers were questioned only to make up excuses justifying each murder. Cover stories about nail bombs and shots fired by the victims were concocted. No inculpatory forensic evidence was taken.

"The Widgery Tribunal was held to rubber-stamp the murders. Commander Derek Wilford was honored with an Order of the British Empire.

"None of this was enough to stop the heroic family and friends of the Bloody Sunday victims. They marched, lobbied, and campaigned for justice, supported by the AOH among many others. It took decades, but they got vindication at the Saville Inquiry and an apology from British Prime Minister David Cameron.

Continued on Page 15

AOH Response to Not Guilty Verdict, cont.

"Ultimately, they got one of the troopers into the dock, charged with murder, although the 53-year cover-up blocked sufficient identification evidence for a conviction.

"The AOH has had a longstanding relationship with the Bloody Sunday families. We congratulate them for having endured all British efforts to deny them

justice and delay until they had given up their quest for the truth. These families never gave up. They have overcome every obstacle.

"As we have for decades, the AOH will support the Bloody Sunday families as they take the next steps in their fight for justice, and we will stand with all victims' relatives as they continue their fight for legacy truth."

Pro Life

Greetings brothers,

As Election Day is almost here, it is important that we do our civic duty and vote. Please keep the importance of the right to life as a priority when you cast your vote. One item of importance in **Ohio is the Apple Act Senate Bill 309.**

Bill 309 would make sure women receive information about the risks of abortion pills before being prescribed. Over half of abortions are done by the abortion pill, which gives a lot of women severe health complications, including some deaths. It directs the department of health to develop a consent form that women must review and sign before receiving the abortion pills. It also gives the attorney general the authority to enforce and impose penalties on providers not following requirements. It is important that this bill passes so that women will see the dangers of the abortion pill and ultimately choose life.

Jacob

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**

Summit Co. Board

Brother Casey:

Please include the attachment in the upcoming November State newsletter please? 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, Killary 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)**

