



# Catholic Families for Life NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4 SEPTEMBER 2024



## Welcome Message from Bishop John Keenan

President of National Commission for Marriage, Family and Life

In his Message for this year's World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, Pope Francis draws attention to the increasingly precarious situation of the elderly in our society. In modern Scotland our elderly increasingly fear the scourge of loneliness and abandonment. The Pope exposes a contemporary conspiracy around the lives of the elderly in which their marginalisation is not by chance or inevitable but is due to the decisions we take as a society which now refuses to acknowledge the infinite dignity of each person, beyond every circumstance, state or situation. In this Newsletter you will hear about the Assisted Dying Bill before the Scottish Parliament that we know presents an unprecedented threat to the elderly since almost half of those who opt for assisted suicide in other countries are



the elderly who said they feel a burden on their families or public resources. I appeal to you to learn about the stark dangers in this Bill for many vulnerable people behind its false compassion for a few celebrity hard cases so that it is defeated when it comes to a vote in a few months. The Holy Father appeals to our society to replace our self-centred attitudes that force our elderly into loneliness with open hearts and joyful faces that say 'We will not abandon you'.

With every assurance of my prayers. GOD bless, +John

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## Assisted Suicide: Bishops' Conference of Scotland submits evidence to committee

The Bishops' Conference of Scotland has submitted evidence to the Scottish Parliament Health, Social Care and Sport Committee on a proposal to legalise assisted suicide in Scotland. Responding to the call for views on the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill, the bishops said that "assisted suicide attacks human dignity and results in human life being increasingly valued on the basis of its efficiency and utility", adding that, implicit in legal assisted suicide is the idea that "an individual can lose their value and worth."

Read the full submission here: [Assisted Suicide: Bishops' Conference of Scotland submits evidence to committee – Catholic Parliamentary Office \(rcpolitics.org\)](https://rcpolitics.org)

## World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly 2024

On Sunday 28th July 2024, the National Commission for Marriage, Family and Life held a Mass to celebrate the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly in St. Francis Xavier's Church in Carfin. Bishop John Keenan, our president, presided and preached, and we were delighted to also welcome Bishop Joseph Toal who concelebrated.

Although the Mass was indoors, we were blessed with a gorgeous sunny day and over 250 people of all ages attended. The theme for the day was "Do not cast me off in my old age" (cf Ps 71:9). The gospel of the day was about the miracle of the "loaves and fishes" and Bishop John pointed out that society sometimes reacts to a lack of resources by failing to meet the needs of certain groups of people, reminding us of the dangers of the current consultation on MSP Liam McArthur's Assisted Dying Bill. In countries which have already legislated for assisted dying/suicide, some people have felt that they are a burden and opt for ending their life in this way. We all have a duty to ensure that no one feels that they are a burden.



for next year's celebration – Sunday 27th July 2025



*"The words of grandparents have special value for the young."*

### Reflection from Pope Francis on Grandparents

"Grandfathers and grandmothers form the enduring "chorus" of a great spiritual sanctuary, where prayers of supplication and songs of praise sustain the community which toils and struggles in the field of life."

"Praise and supplication to God prevents the heart from becoming hardened by resentment and selfishness. How awful is the cynicism of an elderly person who has lost the meaning of his testimony, who scorns the young and does not communicate the wisdom of life! How beautiful, however, is the encouragement an elderly person manages to pass onto a young person who is seeking the meaning of faith and of life! It is truly the mission of grandparents, the vocation of the elderly. The words of grandparents have special value for the young. And the young know it."

### Are you a Grandparent?

The National Commission for Marriage, Family and Life wants to set up a Scottish Group of the Catholic Grandparents Association (CGA) - [Catholic Grandparents Association – Keeping Prayer at the Heart of Family Life.](#)

An integral part of the CGA is establishing and working with grandparents' ministries at diocesan and parish level. These act as prayer and support groups for grandparents. Grandparents have a unique vocation that must be fostered and cherished in the spirit of St. Joachim and St. Anne, the grandparents of Jesus and parents of Mary.

If you would like to be involved, please email [info@marriagefamilyandlife.org.uk](mailto:info@marriagefamilyandlife.org.uk) for more details.





## Life on the Line in Scotland

The Scottish Parliament has introduced the Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill, allowing those aged 16 or older to choose assisted suicide.

The term “assisted dying” is misleading. Genuine assisted dying already exists through our excellent hospices and palliative care nurses and doctors, who ease pain and improve quality of life. What this Bill actually proposes is assisted suicide - a law that allows doctors to give patients lethal drugs to kill themselves.

Worryingly, the Bill defines “terminal illness” as an advanced and progressive condition that cannot be cured and is expected to cause premature death. This very broad definition is not what people usually consider “terminal illness” and could include people with chronic illnesses, disabilities, or even conditions like anorexia, potentially pressuring them to choose to end their lives early.

In the USA, the Netherlands, and elsewhere, there are worrying reports of people dying so that they are not considered a burden. In Canada, Christine Gauthier, a Veteran and Paralympic athlete, was offered assisted suicide when what she wanted was a new wheelchair lift!

Please contact your MSPs to share your concerns: <https://www.writetothem.com/>



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Fundamental Human Rights

“The Church ardently urges that respect for the dignity of the human person beyond all circumstances be placed at the centre of the commitment to the common good and at the centre of every legal system. Indeed, respect for the dignity of each person is the indispensable basis for the existence of any society that claims to be founded on just law and not on the force of power. Acknowledging human dignity forms the basis for upholding fundamental human rights, which precede and ground all civic coexistence.”

*(Dignitas infinita, 64)*

*“Respect for  
the dignity  
of the human  
person”*

## Report from the Diocese of Dunkeld

Canon Kevin Golden offered Mass for the work of the newly formed Diocesan Office for the Scottish Bishop’s Marriage, Family and Life Commission on Saturday 8th June in St Andrew’s Cathedral. The Commission’s aims include developing resources to celebrate the domestic church, and supporting marriage through preparation, enrichment and counselling. A key aim is to promote the dignity of life from conception to natural death. The Dunkeld Office hopes to pursue these aims by re-introducing a monthly pro-life Mass and letter-writing drop-ins to support those wishing to contact MPs, MSPs and the media regarding pro-life issues. It was fitting that the first Mass was on the Memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary so this work could be placed in Our Lady’s care. For more information or to get involved please contact [prolife@dunkelddiocese.org.uk](mailto:prolife@dunkelddiocese.org.uk).

*From left to right: Ann and Jim Leary (MF&L diocesan reps),  
Canon Golden, Clare McGraw (pro-life rep).*



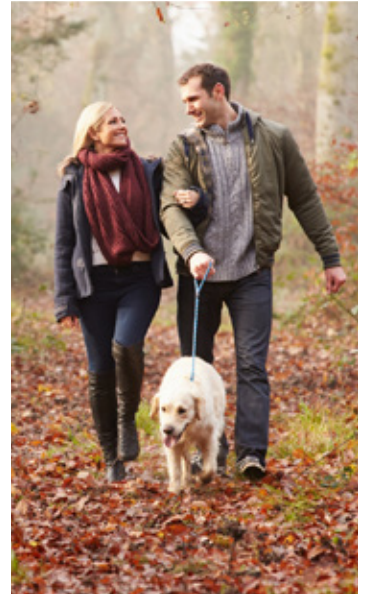


## Celebration of Marriage - Part of the Nuptial Blessing for Married Couples

Look now with favour on these your servants, joined together in Marriage, who ask to be strengthened by your blessing. Send down on them the grace of the Holy Spirit and pour your love into their hearts, that they may remain faithful in the Marriage covenant.

May the grace of love and peace abide in your daughter and let her always follow the example of those holy women whose praises are sung in the Scriptures. May her husband entrust his heart to her, so that, acknowledging her as his equal and his joint heir to the life of grace, he may show her due honour and cherish her always with the love that Christ has for his Church.

And now, Lord, we implore you: may these your servants hold fast to the faith and keep your commandments; made one in the flesh, may they be blameless in all they do; and with the strength that comes from the Gospel, may they bear true witness to Christ before all. And grant that, reaching at last together the fullness of years for which they hope, they may come to the life of the blessed in the Kingdom of Heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



### • Upcoming Events •



**ABORTION ISN'T HEALTHCARE**

**March for Life UK**  
LONDON

**7th September**

Paisley Diocese are running a bus from Glasgow

Abortion is #NotHealthcare

For further info visit: <https://rcdop.org.uk/marchforlife2024>



**KNIGHTS OF ST COLUMBA**  
CHARITY | UNITY | FRATERNITY

**Pro-Life Mass**  
**Saturday 12th October**

Join us for a mass at **12 noon** to celebrate the value of human life from conception to natural death and to pray for an end to abortion.

**ALL WELCOME**

St. Margaret's Church, East Port, Dunfermline KY12 7JB



**Society for the Protection of Unborn Children**

Join us in Glasgow at our  
**ONE-DAY CONFERENCE**  
**Saturday 5th October**

Are you ready to make a real impact and be part of an unstoppable movement that stands for life

**Register Today:** <https://www.spuc.org.uk/conference-2024>

**SPUC Torchlight Procession**

**Thursday 24th October**  
George Square, Glasgow  
At 6pm




**Society for the Protection of Unborn Children**

**Monthly Pro-life Masses in Archdiocese of Glasgow**

**Wednesday 18th September • Wednesday 16th October • Wednesday 20th November**

Holy Cross RC Parish, 113 Dixon Avenue, Govanhill, Glasgow G42 8ER. Tel: 0141 433 2680 for further info.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 6.15pm, Rosary at 6.55pm, Holy Mass at 7.30pm. **ALL WELCOME!**




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