



Picture Diary

Fifth year students from Toghher Girls' and Boys' schools at UCC this week after graduating from 'Engineering in a Box', a programme funded by Cork City Council as part of Engineering Week 2018 aimed at fostering the next generation of scientists, technologists, engineers, artists and mathematicians

Picture: Daragh Mc Sweeney/Provision

There has to be a choice for Irish woman

I HAVE noted that when it comes to many of the pro-choice vs anti-choice discussions on abortion, that it usually comes down to an atheistic versus religious movement. The views of each being extremely different.

When the same sex marriage referendum was being debated, the 'pro-choicers' saw this as a step forward, to be catering more for different people, giving the public the choice to marry either male or female partners.

The opposition saw this as a step backwards, thinking the general population was straying further from their religious views. They believed they had to protect this by oppressing someone else's beliefs and that this would force them closer to theirs.

An acceptance would have been a kinder and more genuine approach, instead of damnation and threats. How many people were alienated by this and left the church because of this non-acceptance?

Equally, 'anti-choicers' believe forcing a group of people to stay oppressed will better this country, and refraining from the option of choice is the way to move forward.

There is a certain opinion and viewpoint that is taken on without thought, without being critically analysed or discussed, as it is just easier to listen and accept. Even after the numerous times the Church has

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been proven to be inherently evil and destructive.

It also seems so banal and silly to justify why an abortion can be a necessary option for some women, as it so easily implies that other women are doing it for the wrong reasons.

If each individual woman has made up her mind and acquires what will hopefully soon be a legal and safe abortion, then that should be the right reason. A Dáil should not continue to enforce such a fundamental law, where once again, Ireland is trailing behind all major European countries in basic options for their people.

But we will move forward to a brighter future.

Jannik Pietzsch, Cork City, via Cape Town, South Africa

Animals SOS

WHEN the Pope visits Ireland, I think

a few words from him on the subject of animal cruelty would be apt. He did, after all, take his name from St Francis, patron saint of animals and the environment, who called the lesser creatures his "brothers and sisters" and abhorred ill treatment of those sentient beings.

The pontiff might or might not be heeded if he spoke out here on that theme, but some advice or words of wisdom wouldn't go astray and might even be taken on board by some people. Because our treatment of animals is atrocious and shameful.

We have legal hare coursing and fox hunting, fur farming in which mink are cramped into small cages for their short miserable lives prior to being gassed; emaciated half-starved or dead horses turning up on the outskirts of towns and villages on a weekly basis; greyhounds whose running days are over being dumped after having their ears with ID tags hacked off.

If the pope addresses politicians, I hope he'll ask them to consider updating our animal welfare laws. The spirit of St Francis was absent from

our national parliament in June, 2016, when it voted by 114 to 20 not to ban hare coursing.

The saint who exemplified kindness to animals wouldn't be a fan of fox dig-outs, where the petrified animals are retrieved from underground refuges with the aid of spades and rammers and tossed to the waiting pack.

Nor, I suspect, if he were here on earth among us, would you have found him at the National Coursing Meeting a fortnight ago, marking a betting card as his "brothers and sisters" ran in terror from salivating dogs.

Speaking out on animal cruelty on his Irish visit might not be deemed politically correct by the Vatican top brass or the Pope's bevy of ecclesiastical advisers. Nor would it go down well with our own politicians. But St Francis, I suspect, would approve.

John Fitzgerald, Lower Coyne Street, Callan, Co. Kilkenny.

Provoking Mankind

Mankind provoked in modern word. Where genesis and ethnic cleansing rule the day,

*Man no wiser from bygone days,
When God made footprints for mankind*

*to walk the path of righteousness,
Strayed from the road and glory sought*

*The human content never thought,
All brush off like November leaves left to rot in a barren field.*

*A child's smile, a Mother's love
the foundation of society destroyed before maturity*

*Life's pure dream a gift to cherish
all cradles in a grave of doom history,
hardship teach us little power and
bomb will answer nothing tanks and
guns keep rolling on*

*That great divide between rich and
poor the power and
mighty cheat the cards the ace of
hearts is all alone Kings*

*Queens they stack the gold the jokers
keep on playing the
tricks of misery, death piles high a
land not justifiable for*

*mankind beyond the grave an answer
lies.*

Maurice Canning, Rathcormac, Co. Cork

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