



Ancient Order of
HIBERNIANS
 Irish • Catholic • American



GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

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Know the Past and Shape the Future

Praying the Father Augustus Tolton canonization prayer for a miracle ... an update

“Hi Bill

Hope all is well with you. I wanted to give you an update on Nolan. He completed his completed his radiation following surgery to remove his abdominal tumor (which had shrunk to the size of a golf ball). He is continuing on his chemotherapy regimen but his latest scan from two weeks ago shows no signs of cancer (praise God). We are cautiously optimistic however as he is at high risk for recurrence due to the metastasis. He continues with chemotherapy until around Thanksgiving. Then he will get scans done every 6 weeks or so. We continue to ask for your prayers from all the Brothers that he stays in remission. If he can get through 3-5 years with clean negative scans, then we should be in the clear. Nolan is doing great and thinking about his wish he gets from the Make a Wish foundation. The prayers do indeed help so thank you again.

In Our Motto
 Jeff”

Nolan Banks was born October 25, 2014; Jeff was Division Financial Secretary



President's Corner:

Brothers:

Later this month, Pope Francis will visit Ireland. This is significant because it is the first visit of a Pontiff to Ireland since 1979 When St. Pope John Paul II visited. What has happened to Ireland since then? In 1979, 93% of the population identified as Catholic. In the 2016 census, that number dropped to 78% and continues to decline. Same-sex marriage, divorce, contraception and abortion are now the norm and Ireland has its' first openly gay Taoiseach. How this happened is a difficult question to answer. An even harder question to answer is what we, as Hibernians, may do about the situation. How do we reconcile the third tenant of our Preamble, "To aid and advance by all legitimate means the aspirations and endeavors of the Irish people for complete and absolute independence, promoting peace and unity for all Ireland;" when the trend in Ireland is away from the teachings of the Catholic Church? The answer, of course, is prayer. Pray for the people of Ireland. Pray for the political leaders of Ireland. Pray for the Religious leaders of Ireland and for the Church Leaders in Rome.

I am looking forward to the Halfway to St. Patrick's Day Party and I hope you are too! Please be a table captain and make the event a great success! Remember, we will be holding the drawing for the trip to Ireland.

Speaking of the Trip to Ireland, we have ticket sales opportunities coming up at St. Matthews on August 25th and 26th and at St Jude's on September 1st and 2nd. Please consider helping out after one or more of these masses!

Thank you, Brothers, for all that you do and may God continue to bless you and keep you.

In Our Motto,

Shawn Lenahan



Six Ways to Recruit New Brothers

1. Educate yourself on the AOH mission and priorities
2. Be expert on the past & present support to our charities, our scholastic awards

3. Recruit at Irish pubs, Catholic Churches, AOH events
4. Ensure the website is current, vibrant, relevant, easy to navigate. Use social media (Facebook, etc.)
5. Keep the division in the public domain with news articles, etc.
6. Wear your AOH name badge to Mass every Sunday

Five Ways to Retain Brothers

1. Honor Shamrock Degree ceremony decorum to emphasize its importance
2. Recognize the importance of energized/informative meetings
3. Send a welcoming letter to the new brothers' home addresses
4. Learn about a new brother's areas of interest and expertise; get him engaged in committee work
5. Mentor new brothers on AOH, Irish history, culture, traditions, etc.



The 99th AOH Biennial National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky



Dennis Corrigan, Shawn Lenahan, Hugh O'Brien, Brian Kiernan, Jay McCarthy, Vince Eikmeier, Bill Halpin, Bob Fay, Dave McLaughlin and Bill Howard

The Virginia delegation was one of the best in many years with 27 delegates (of a possible 29) present and voting for the National Board, the National Directors and five important resolutions.

Several convention decisions will be applied at the division level:

- ✓ Division Treasurers will be responsible for submitting the applicable and annual form to the Internal Revenue Service (Form 99N)
- ✓ Confirmation (accessible on line) that the 990 was submitted will be submitted with the Form 11
- ✓ Late submission of annual Per Capita payments will incur a \$4.00 National AOH penalty. On-time payments are submitted on/before 15 February.
- ✓ Fillable Forms 9 and 11 are available of the National website. Use the fillable on-line forms
- ✓ Form 9 must be submitted annually regardless of two year terms in office or reelection of incumbents.
- ✓ National AOH asks for one annual check that includes the total National Per Capita Tax, Initiations, and Reinstatements accompany the Form 11
- ✓ Transfer Cards are essential when a brother transfers divisions. The losing division initiates the card

Of the five Resolutions passed, one Resolution focuses on a Virginia issue. Here's the background and the reason why every Virginia Hibernian should get engaged:

The AOH resolved to condemn the decision of the Alexandria city council to strip the name of Irish American patriot Colonel John Fitzgerald from Fitzgerald Square and rename the park "King Street at the Waterfront", a name that recalls British oppression of the Irish, Alexandria, and the American Colonies. The resolution included facts about Fitzgerald's life: hero of the War of Independence, aide-de-camp to George Washington, the eighth mayor of Alexandria, a tireless promoter of religious freedom and founder of the first Catholic Church in Virginia, and leading developer of Alexandria's commercial success. The AOH was established to protect Irish Americans from bigoted attacks on their religion and heritage. The Alexandria city council decision affirms that the AOH mission is as relevant today as it was in 1836.





On Being Catholic in mid-19th Century America

Beginning in the 1830's, a massive influx of immigrants from Ireland and other parts of Western Europe radically transformed the United States, setting both on a course toward cultural and religious diversity. For many Catholicism was part of their ethnic identity. But they were entering Puritan territory. Many Protestants felt threatened by the presence of their new Catholic neighbors. Ray Allen Billington writes: "In religion Catholics were priest-ridden, intolerant, proscriptive, and against free rational inquiry. Catholicism was also against the spirit of the age, the great foe of progress, and clung to outdated religious forms. It was the religion of a dead tradition, having little interior religious life and little respect for the Bible."

This was the *Second Great Awakening* that reignited Protestantism. Historian Page Smith writing in *Religion and Reform: The Second Great Awakening* describes the how Irish Catholics were perceived in early 19th century America:

"The Irish Catholics constituted a very particular kind of case. They were, in distinction to most immigrants, curiously unassimilable; you might say indigestible. They would not go down the great American gut and be turned into nourishment for the body politic. They lodged in the upper stomach under the standard of the Democratic Party and gave "native" Americans a vast collective bellyache. As their numbers grew, year by year, they came to constitute a kind of nation within a nation, stubbornly defiant of all the Protestant ethnics/ethics around them. Nothing tested the American system of constitutional government quite as severely as the immigrant Irish in the decades prior to the civil war."

Violence against Irish Catholics was not infrequent. Catholic churches, orphanages, and parochial schools were often attacked with rocks or bottles and set on fire. The epithet "Dogs and Irish need not apply" was often attached to many notices about employment.



“The Celt would forfeit his title to the respect of the civilized world, did he not fight with all his heart and all his soul and all his cunning against the empire which has despoiled him and murdered his kin, now with arms, now with artificial famine. There can be no peace between the two people until either Ireland is a desert or is free. It is war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt. There can be neither truce nor compromise.”

Optimism from Ireland

Ten Reasons why a United Ireland is on the way

By Kevin Meagher @IrishCentral, August 11, 2018 (Edited for *Dispatches*)

Demographic change is unstoppable: Northern Ireland was designed to lock-in Protestant-Unionist ascendancy. This is why it only includes (only) six counties of ancient Ulster: The other three had Catholic majorities. Even so, the [last census in 2011](#) showed that Protestant-Unionists now account for less than half (48%) the population of Northern Ireland.

Brexit changes everything: 56% of people in Northern Ireland voted to stay in the European Union (with Catholic-Nationalists voting by as much as 88%).

The Good Friday Agreement is the blueprint: The process for a united Ireland was confirmed with the signing of the GFA. It allows for a referendum on Irish unity if “at any time” it appears likely to the British Secretary of State “that a majority of those voting would express a wish that Northern Ireland should cease to be part of the United Kingdom and form part of a united Ireland.”

Scotland may leave the UK first: In 2014, the Scots voted to stay in the UK by just 55-45%. This was before Brexit, where 63% of Scots chose to stay in the EU. (Today) nationalists complain about being forced out of the EU against their wishes.

Britain just doesn’t want the place: British people have little affinity with Northern Ireland. There’s also resentment at the Democratic Unionists, who prop up Theresa May’s government in return for £1 billion in extra funding, while poorer English regions are angry at the special treatment given to unionists.

Irish unity sees Northern Ireland automatically rejoin the EU: Northern Ireland's economy will be devastated by Brexit, while joining the Republic guarantees lower taxes and immediate access to the single EU market. For many Northern Irish business leaders and farmers, this makes Irish unity the obvious solution.

Northern Ireland's economy is broken: Northern Ireland is just 1.5% of the UK's economy and it relies on the £10 billion annual grant from the British Government.

Republic of Ireland will benefit: This is unfinished business for most Irish people (as) reunification is a deeply and sincerely held belief. It will increase the Irish population to nearly seven million, making the Republic a bigger (economic) player in the EU.

The arc of history bends towards Irish unity: Northern Ireland wasn't built to last. Its creation was a political compromise from a British government that couldn't defeat the IRA in the War of Independence. Historically anything created as a compromise is not destined to last. As Northern Ireland crawls to its centenary in 1921, many are asking, will it survive much longer?

Not Good News from Ireland

Fallout from the repeal of constitutional protection for the unborn in Ireland's constitution was not long in coming: Taoiseach Leo Varadkar announced his intention to include in implementing legislation a provision compelling Catholic hospitals to perform abortions.



The History of Lughnasa (Harvest Festival)

From a WildGeese post by John Anthony Brennan on August 1, 2017

The "Ould Lammas Fair" is one of the oldest fairs in Ireland and has been held without interruption for more than three centuries. Its roots can be traced back to the early inhabitants who migrated to Ireland after the end of the last ice age, 11,000 years ago. The name Lammas is derived from the word Lughnasagh [Lughnasa].

The story starts with Lugh, the son of Cian of the Tuatha Dé Danann, and his mother, Ethniu, daughter of Balor, the leader of a race called the Fomorians. Their union was a dynastic marriage, following an alliance between the Tuatha and the Fomorians. His father gave Lugh to Tailtiu, queen of the Fir Bolg, in fosterage, a common practice of the times that ensured peaceful relations. Later in life, Lugh

had a son, which he named Setanta, later changed by the Druid Cathbadh to Cúchulainn, on the steep slopes of Slieve Gullion in South Armagh.

Tailtus' people, the Fir Bolgs, meaning the men of bags or breeches wearers, are said to have come to Ireland from Greece, where they had been put into servitude and forced to carry soil from the fertile plains up to the higher ground in an effort to expand the arable areas. To do this, they fashioned leather bags which they wore around their waists and which they later used to build boats and escape from their enslavement. After many years of land and sea voyages, they eventually arrived in Ireland.

The Firbolg lived in Ireland and ruled until they were conquered by a new race called the Tuatha de Danann, the people of the Goddess Dana. According to legend, the Tuatha forced Tailtiu and her people, the Fir Bolgs, to clear large areas of woodland for the planting of crops. This land clearing required a huge amount of effort and eventually, Tailtu died from exhaustion. She was buried under a great mound, which was called the 'Hill of Tailtiu.' Lugh decreed that each year a festival should be held to commemorate his foster mother's death and that there should be games and feasting with the first fruits of the harvest.

The funeral games in her honor were held at Tailtin in what is now County Meath. The games were similar to the Ancient Olympic Games and included ritual athletic and sporting contests. The event also involved trading, including animals, the drawing-up of contracts, and matchmaking. Trial marriages were conducted, whereby young couples joined hands through a hole in a wooden door, a form of hand fasting. The trial marriage lasted a year and a day, at which time the marriage could be made permanent or broken without consequences.

Another solemn ritual performed was the cutting of the first of the year's corn. After the cutting, some of it would be brought up to a high place and buried. A meal of fresh corn and bilberries would then be made and everyone would partake -- a sacrifice of a sacred bull, a feast of its flesh, with some ceremony involving its hide, and its replacement by a young bull; a ritual dance-play perhaps telling of a struggle for a goddess and a ritual fight. An actor, impersonating Lugh would preside over the proceedings.

Many of Ireland's prominent mountains and hills were climbed at Lughnasagh up to the modern era. Over time, this custom was Christianized and some of the treks

were recast as Christian pilgrimages. The most well-known is Reek Sunday—the yearly pilgrimage to the top of Croagh Patrick in County Mayo in late July. As with the other Gaelic seasonal festivals, feasting was part of the celebrations. Bilberries were gathered on the hills and mountains and were eaten on the spot or saved to make pies and wine. The Catholic Church in Ireland established the custom of blessing fields at Lughnasadh. The Puck Fair, held each year in early August in the town of Killorglin, County Kerry, is believed to be a survival of a Lughnasadh festival.

Throughout ancient Irish history, we find references to the ‘Tailthiu Games’ and the ‘Games of Lugh.’ However, with the arrival of Christianity, the old pagan festival was modified and adapted to suit the teachings of the Church. In the northern part of Ireland, the name was changed to Lammass, which means ‘loaf mass,’ and this was reflected in the custom of placing loaves of bread baked from the first harvest grains on the church altar.



Jack Grey, Committee of the Sick Chairman. Prayer requests should be sent to Jack not later than the Wednesday prior to the business meeting (RHGrey@cox.net//540-373-4496).

Pray for the repose of the souls of all deceased Hibernian Brothers.

Keep in your prayers our family members and friends:

- **Nolan Banks**, 3 year old son of our former FS Jeff Banks. Nolan has soft tissue sarcoma (RMS). Essentially, Nolan needs a miracle. **Pray for the intercession of Father Augustus Tolton**, a candidate for future canonization (for the actual prayer visit: <http://www.toltoncanonization.org/prayer/canonizationprayer.html>)
- **John Tracy**, COPD
- **Jim O'Donnell**, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever
- **Donna Maffeo**, Joe Monaghan's sister-in-law, and his father Joseph Sr. care giver for his mother and uncle (dementia/Alzheimer);
- **John O'Brien** Hugh O'Brien's brother (recovering from stroke);
- **Patricia Stephen**, mother of Rusty O'Brien's friend Ann-Marie Sharratt, diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia
- **Amy Whittaker** (cancer)


Upcoming Events
Mark Your Calendars!

Bingo! Every Thursday and Saturday evening 6:30PM at St Michael the Archangel High School, 6301 Campus Drive, Fredericksburg. Bring the family!

***The Division Summer Family Picnic* Cancelled**

Date is TBD for the FFAI field trip to the Guinness Brewery and Irish Railroad Museum in Baltimore

August 21: Division meeting

September 15: Halfway to St Patrick Day Celebration, Lake of the Woods 6PM to 10:30PM: Enjoy pay as you go cocktails, an Irish dinner, Irish dancers and live music by DragonFyre, plus door prizes and the Trip for Two to Ireland drawing

September 22: VAAOH Quarterly State Meeting hosted by Father Corby Division - St. Mary of Sorrows (Farrell Hall), 5222 Sideburn Road, Fairfax VA. Major Degrees will follow the meeting (details forthcoming).

September 23: Celebrate your Irish Heritage at the Halfway to St Patrick's Day **baseball game at National's Park**. The Washington Nationals will take on the New York Mets. The pre-game **Irish festival kicks off at 11:30AM; Ambassador Mulhall will throw the first pitch at 1:35pm**. Find more information and tickets [here](#).



General Meagher Division Attire

In a perfect world every brother would have these articles of clothing:

- For **semi-formal/formal occasions**, the AOH “uniform” is green sport coat, tri-color sash, white shirt, Irish theme tie, black trousers and optional ball cap. These occasions include AOH State and National conventions, Masses, funerals, AOH dinners, parades, and other public events.

- At **informal events** (i.e. Division outings (ball games, picnics, meetings, etc.) the division logo polo or sweatshirts (optional ball cap) are appropriate.

Division Logo Items: The Point of Contact for Division logo polo shirts, sweatshirts and ball caps is Shawn Lenahan (s_lenahan@verizon.net)

Green Jacket: Brothers procure their own green jackets. One source: http://blazerdepot.com/pages/mens_blazer/augustagreenblazer.html. Visit the website; call the 800 number; tell them you're with AOH and the \$5.00 small order fee can be waived. Kelly green is the color.

AOH Sash: Brothers procure their own sashes. The AOH tri-color sash represents the national colors of Ireland and should be worn over the right shoulder (green closest to neck/collar) crossing to the left hip. Measure from right shoulder to left hip in inches; keep in mind the sash will normally be worn over a jacket, possibly a raincoat/overcoat (and maybe a growing waist line).

Tri-color AOH sashes are available from:

- LAOH Sister Patricia Ankrom. Email Patricia at traceysbydesign@aol.com. She produces 7.5ft long sashes costing \$ 40.00 and guarantees satisfaction: if you're not satisfied send it back for a full refund.
- Gettysburg Flag offers tri-color sashes and offers "special prices" for larger orders. <https://www.gettysburgflag.com/custom/irish-parade-sash>

This newsletter is an unofficial publication providing information to members of the Gen Thomas F Meagher Division and others who may have interest in division activities. It is published by Bill Halpin and unless shown otherwise, he is the author of the contents.