



Ancient Order of  
**HIBERNIANS**  
Irish • Catholic • American



## GENERAL MEAGHER'S DISPATCHES

May-June 2025

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**President:** Dennis O'Reilly; **Chaplain:** Deacon Aaron Zaccagnino; **Vice President:** Jack McGovern; **Recording Secretary:** Bill Halpin; **Financial Secretary:** Jeff Everett; **Treasurer:** Dave McLaughlin; **Standing Committee:** Bill Hallahan; **Marshal:** Tim Lynch; **Sentinel:** Neil Hornung; **Webmaster:** Bob Fitzgerald; **Organizer:** Tim Lynch; **Newsletter Editor:** Bill Halpin ([billhalpin@irishcultureva.org](mailto:billhalpin@irishcultureva.org))

**Pray to Mary Immaculate Patroness of the United States** for the strength of mind and heart to defend our religious freedoms, for national moral guidance, and that our country will always be "one nation under God." This is critically important in this time of contrary moral agendas and the threats from patently evil elements.



### Catholic Church Under Attack (again):

1. **Washington State Gov.** Bob Ferguson signed a bill that explicitly eliminates legal protections for the sacred seal of Catholic confession in abuse-related cases. Bill 5375 passed the Senate 64-31 and the House 28-20. The law takes effect July 27.

This is the first law with direct legislative intent to remove legal protections for clergy-penitent confidentiality. Breaking the seal of confession is considered a grave offense, punishable by automatic excommunication.

On May 2, Bishop Thomas Daly of Spokane wrote: “I want to assure you that your shepherds, bishop and priests, are committed to keeping the seal of confession – even to the point of going to jail. The Sacrament of Penance is sacred and will remain that way in the Diocese of Spokane.” He added “For those legislators who question our commitment to the safety of your children, simply speak with any mom who volunteers with a parish youth group, any Catholic school teacher, any dad who coaches a parochial school basketball team or any priest, deacon or seminarian, and you will learn first-hand about our solid protocols and procedures.” Source: *Washington State Standard*.

2. **FBI files show targeting of Catholic groups**; by Kerry Picket - *The Washington Times* - Tuesday, June 3, 2025 (*edited here for space*)

Newly revealed bureau documents show the FBI concealed the extent of its anti-Catholic operation, which then-FBI Director Christopher A. Wray told Congress was limited to a single 2023 memo,

FBI files obtained by Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles E. Grassley show the FBI engaged in a bureau-wide investigation of “Radical Traditionalist Catholics.” The new documents show the Richmond memo dated Jan. 23, 2023 was distributed to more than 1,000 FBI employees nationwide. The memo was an alert that “Radical Traditionalist Catholics” adhere to an “anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBTQ and white supremacist ideology” and said these Catholics are prone to “extremist ideological beliefs and violent rhetoric.” Two Catholic groups included in the memo were sourced to the Southern Poverty Law Center as “hate groups”.

The newly revealed documents show that the Richmond field office worked with the FBI office in Louisville, Ky to gather information about Catholic traditionalist groups there. FBI analysts in Richmond also consulted with the Portland, Oregon, and Milwaukee field offices as they prepared the memo. At least 13 additional FBI documents and five FBI attachments used the terminology “radical traditionalist Catholic”.

In testimony on March 8, 2023, before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Mr. Wray said he was “aghast” when he first learned about the memo and that the bureau “took steps immediately to withdraw it and remove it from FBI systems.” Mr. Wray did not reveal the existence of a second draft product on the same topic intended for external distribution to the entire FBI. According to the new documents, that draft product was intended for distribution as a Strategic Perspective Executive Analytic Report (SPEAR). “It was clearly a separate product ... and for ... different distribution to the whole Bureau” and with chain of review, through the Counterterrorism Division. Mr. Grassley said. “Nevertheless, this draft external memo repeated the unfounded link between traditional Catholicism and violent extremism”.

**2025 Scholastic Awards**

President O'Reilly attended the St. Patrick and Holy Cross Academy graduation ceremonies and presented the 2025 scholastic awards. As our budget and charities committee charter dictate, the division awards \$1500 to graduating students from each school. Awardees are selected by school

faculty/administrators. This year St. Patrick divided the award among three students (\$500 each) and Holy Cross between two students (\$750 each)

#### St. Patrick Elementary



Sophie Donlon, Juliana Pineda-Benitez, Joseph Turro  
Sophie and Joseph Will attend St. John Paul the Great  
Juliana will attend St. Michael the Archangel.

#### Holy Cross Academy



Victoria Barton and Addison Leonen  
will attend St. John Paul the Great



**U.S. Army Birthday June 14:** [Bing Videos](#)

[Bing Videos](#)

The journal of the Continental Congress recorded this for June 14<sup>th</sup> 1775:

"Resolved,

That six companies of expert riflemen, be immediately raised in Pennsylvania, two in Maryland, and two in Virginia; that each company consist of a captain, three lieutenants, four sergeants, four corporals, a drummer or trumpeter, and sixty-eight privates.



That each company, as soon as completed, shall march and join the army near Boston, to be there employed as light infantry, under the command of the chief Officer in that army."

The Continental Congress prescribed the oath for enlisting Continental troops: "I have, this day, voluntarily enlisted myself, as a soldier, in the American continental army, for one year, unless sooner discharged: And I do bind myself to conform, in all instances, to such rules and regulations, as are, or shall be, established for the government of the said Army."

The National Museum of the U.S. Army at Fort Belvoir has a special exhibit to mark the 250th.

On 14 June a military parade in Washington D.C. commemorated the Army's 250th birthday. The parade included reenactors and equipment from major U.S. battles from the Revolutionary War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Gulf War/Desert Storm and the War on Terror. Active-duty service members and cadets at U.S. military academies participated.



#### **Decoration Day, May 30<sup>th</sup>:**



Brothers of the Gen. Meagher Division and members of the Irish Brigade Camp #4, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War convened at the Fredericksburg National Cemetery planning to decorate the graves of known Irish Brigade soldiers buried there. Rain altered the plan and they reconvened at the Colonial Tavern – Home to the Irish Brigade for a meal. Our Division was represented by President O'Reilly and Lisa O'Reilly, Brothers Bill Daly and Bill Temple. The Irish Brigade Camp was represented by Ross Schwalm, Jim and Mrs. Standard.



Meagher Division Vice President and Fredericksburg Fire Department Battalion Chief, Jack McGovern at work. In this undated photo, Jack demonstrates how to save an infant from choking using CPR. The division is proud of Jack's dedicated community service and his work within our division.



*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. There can be neither truce nor compromise.*

### Terminology Matters

The Government of Ireland does not officially recognize the term "British Isles" as a political unit. "Britain and Ireland" should be used, or as an alternative description we can use "**North Atlantic Archipelago**" which is becoming popular in academia. In official documents created jointly by Ireland and the United Kingdom, such as the Good Friday Agreement, the term "these islands" is used.

### Ireland Reunification

June 2025, Belfast: Research conducted annually by Queen's University and Ulster University show of the 18-24 year-olds questioned, 48% back unification, compared to 30% who are opposed to constitutional change and 12% who don't know. The research also indicates a majority of people – some 61% – are convinced Ireland will be united within 20 years, with just 16% believing the region's constitutional status won't change.

## The Gift



Brendan O'Neill's *The Gift* sculpture was unveiled at the Choctaw Cultural Center and the National Famine Museum, Strokestown Park. Members of the Choctaw Nation reflect on the enduring bonds that they have formed with the Irish and legacy of their ancestors' generosity.

Also released was an educational video entitled *Sharing Lands: Choctaw Irish Friendship*, filmed at the

“We are celebrating the unique and very important bond that the Choctaw and the Irish share,” said Sandy Vigil, Director of Education at the Choctaw Cultural Center. “We had just finished coming over on the Trail of Tears ourselves. We had suffered many of the same things that the Irish had suffered: including colonization, being pushed out of our homelands, and even though we were still suffering and still recovering from this trauma, a group of Choctaws came together and they donated \$170 to our Irish friends.”



### UPCOMING EVENTS



## No Division Business Meeting In July

**June 17:** Division Meeting – **Guest Speaker** Rich Delaney-The Summit Academy Rugby

**July 20:** Division **luncheon**, location TBD

**July 29:** Division function at **FredNats game** (see Pres O'Reilly for tickets)

**Aug 19:** Division meeting – **Shamrock Degree**

**Aug 24:** Division function at **FredNats game** (see Pres O'Reilly for tickets)

**Sep 20:** **Halfway to St. Patrick Day** @ Colonial Tavern and T4T drawing



**Sep 25:** Division **luncheon**, location TBD

**Oct 21:** Division meeting – **Officer nominees** for 2026-2027 term announced

**Nov 18:** Division meeting: **Officer elections**

**Dec 14:** **Wreath presentation** at Irish Bde memorial, city dock in FXBG (10AM)



***Our Division Prayers***



***Keep our brothers, family members and friends in your prayers.***

- Deacon Aaron: Recovering from complications from thyroid cancer surgery.
- Bruce Denault – Past Meagher Division president, current president at Father Judge Division. Broken vertebrae after a fall. Slow, painful recovery; cannot drive resulting in unemployment.
- Bob Fitzgerald, PDP: – detached retina.
- Joe Daley - COPD and hemoptysis is improving.
- Lynne Mulhern, Brother Dan's wife, recovering from back surgery.
- Russell McLaughlin: Brother Dave's brother - frontotemporal dementia
- Hill Hornung: Brother Neil's brother - dementia.
- Margaret Casey: Brother Tim Lynch's aunt - dementia.
- Mary Lou and Keith Bowers: St Jude parishioners/friends of Deacon Aaron

***Pray for the repose of the souls of deceased Brothers and family members.***

- Robert Eugene Tinnell, Bob Fitzgerald's Uncle, died June 11, 2025
- Repose of the soul of our Brother Jack Grey, died February 4, 2025
- Repose of the soul of PSP and National Director J.J. Kelly
- Repose of the soul of PSP and Parliamentarian Rich Aleksy, April 15, 2025
- Ruth Pettinger: Shawn Lenahan's aunt (Vietnam Vet) died on 19 March 2024

- Linda Mulhern Smith, Dan Mulhern's sister, died on 28 April 2024
- Jack Salvo, Jack McGovern's father-in-law, died in April 2024.

Send requests for inclusion in our newsletter to [billhalpin@irishcultureva.org](mailto:billhalpin@irishcultureva.org)



**Hibernian Attire**

*Every brother should have these articles of clothing.*

**Green Jacket:** Brothers procure their own green jackets -- Kelly green is the color.

- One source: [http://blazerdepot.com/pages/mens\\_blazer/augustagreenblazer.html](http://blazerdepot.com/pages/mens_blazer/augustagreenblazer.html). Visit the website; call the 800 number; tell them you are with AOH, and the \$5.00 small order fee can be waived. Kelly green is the color.
- Second source used by Major James Dooley Division:  
<https://www.uniformsinstock.com/collections/blazers/products/executive-apparel-winston-mens-kelly-green-blazer>
- Third option: <https://www.readygolf.com/trophy-club-green-blazer-jacket-by-readygolf/>

**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 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, a raincoat/overcoat (and a growing waistline). Sashes are available from:

- D. & E. Morrissey (954-426-3514/ <http://www.hibernians-shamrock.com>). The National Hibernian usually has an ad for D & E Morrissey.
- Gettysburg Flag offers tri-color sashes and "special prices" for larger orders.  
<https://www.gettysburgflag.com/custom/irish-parade-sash>

**Meagher Division shirts:** Order from Minuteman Press [4122 Lafayette Blvd, Fredericksburg, VA 22408](https://www.minutemanpress.com/locations/4122-Lafayette-Blvd-Fredericksburg-VA-22408) (540-898-7888)

**General AOH Logo Items:** <https://aohapparel.com>



## The AOH “uniform”

- *Semi-formal/formal occasions* are green sport coat, tri-color sash, white shirt, Irish theme tie, black trousers, and optional ball cap. These occasions include AOH Masses, funerals, dinners, parades, State and National conventions, and other public events.
- *For Informal events* i.e., Division outings (ball games, picnics, meetings, etc.) the division logo polo/sweatshirt and optional ball cap are appropriate.

**This newsletter is an unofficial publication for members of the Gen. Thomas F. Meagher Division (44SP01) and others who may have an interest in division activities. It is published by Bill Halpin and unless shown otherwise, he is responsible for its content.**