

Parish of Bangor, Member of Ards Pastoral Community

Parish Priest: Very Rev Joseph Gunn St Comgall's Presbytery, 27 Brunswick Road, Bangor, Co Down, BT20 3DS
T: (028) 9146-5522 E: bangor@downandconnor.org W: www.bangorparish.com Office Hours: Mon-Fri 9.30pm to 1pm.

23rd Sunday of the Year – 4 September 2022 –

Your prayers are requested for

Recently Deceased: Diana Sunny Thayil
Month's Mind: Maureen Anderson

Anniversaries:

Loretta Brennan, Gerry MacNamara, Patrick O'Kane, Rosaleen Gibson, Agnes Rafferty, Mary Ellen McGeough, Emmanuel Shiels, Patrick Coyle, Winnie Breslin, Harry Shiels, Joseph Breslin, Pauline Rogan, Patricia McGrenaghan, Dominic Hamilton.

Page 4, list of Anvs prayed for during July & Aug.

For more details on the different notices please go on to the parish website:

www.bangorparish.com

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Mass is Live Streamed and can be accessed via the Parish Website

www.bangorparish.com

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Holy Hour in St Comgall's Donaghadee – every 2nd Sunday in the month @ 2.45pm

BAPTISM REGISTRATION

Please register online SIDE BAR under '**Sacramental Preparation**'



BANGOR PARISH PODCAST

You can listen to the Parish Podcasts Praying with the Icons by

clicking on the audio files on the website or by searching for "Parish of Bangor Podcast"

in the apple or google podcast Apps.

Then subscribe to our channel so that you will receive all the latest podcasts straight to your device.

Bethany Bereavement Support Group

we are here to support and listen. Confidential. **075 1085 2157**

St Vincent de Paul Helpline

077 0367 9384

This is a **8** Page Bulletin so please scroll down!

SUNDAY MASS TIMES THIS WEEKEND

ST COMGALL'S CHURCH, DONAGHADEE

Sunday 4th September @ 9.00am

ST COMGALL'S CHURCH BRUNSWICK ROAD

Saturday vigil 3rd September @ 6.30pm

Sunday 4th September @ 10am & 12noon

Please note that the Covid sanitising regulations have not changed and will continue to be strictly observed.

DAILY MASS NEXT WEEK – 5th – 9th September

Morning Mass: Monday to Friday at 9.30am

A number of Masses including funerals are recorded.

These can be accessed by clicking on the link below:

www.churchservices.tv/bangor

Solemn Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament takes place every Monday. Adoration will last from after Morning Mass until **4.00pm** with the intention of prolonging it later until 9.00pm as heretofore subject to there being sufficient adorers on the rota. Please let us know if you are interested in being part of the evening rota.

The Installation of the **NEW CANONS** into the Cathedral Chapter will take place at a concelebrated Mass at 3.00pm in St Peter's Cathedral, Belfast on **Sunday 18th September**. Very Rev Canon Joseph Gunn PP & Very Rev Canon Daniel Whyte (Bangor Parish).

All parishioners are welcome.

To view online link - click below:

<https://www.churchservices.tv/stpeterscathedral>

PRAYING WITH THE ICONS

under **The Four Saints** found in 'Parish Today'

<https://www.bangorparish.com/the-parish-today/the-columban-sisters/>

LINK FOR: 

Sr Maura's PRAYING TOWARDS... SUNDAY REFLECTIONS on the HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Full Copy of The Sunday Missalette Can Be Found On The Parish Website Under "News"

PARISH CENTRE – PARISH GROUPS RESTARTING – SEPTEMBER 2022

MONDAYS	TUESDAYS	WEDNESDAYS	THURSDAYS	FRIDAYS
BRIDGE CLUB Starting 5 th September at 7.30pm	FRIENDSHIP CLUB Starting 6 th September at 10.00am	MENCAP Every fortnight Starting 7 th September at 6.00pm	IRISH CLASS & CEILI DANCING Starting 8 th September at 7.00pm	
	IRISH DANCING CLASSES Starting 6 th September at 6.00pm			

BOOKING OF PARISH CENTRE:

Contact Thomas on T: 07305 746 263 or Email: mcmullanthomas481@gmail.com

If you have a parish group and wish to advertise the times of starting or day in the Parish Newsletter please contact the parish office by email on:

bangor@downandconnor.org

AT A GLANCE – NEWS ITEMS IN THE PARISH AND AROUND THE DIOCESE

To see the fuller details please go to the parish website 'Parish Bulletin'

Book launch to be held on **Thursday 15th September** at **6pm** in **Holy Family Parish, Belfast**. The book entitled "*Beauty through broken windows: Empowering Edmund Rice Vision*" was edited by Aidan Donaldson and Denis Gleeson and explores how the charism of Edmund Rice could be lived in the world today.

Beginning Experience is offering a programme of bereavement support in St Bride's Hall, Derryvolgie Ave., Belfast on three Saturdays (**September 24**, October 29 and November 26.)

One Day Retreats at Lough Derg

One Day Retreats have resumed on Lough Derg, and continue on selected dates until the end of September:

August 28 & 29 | September 3, 7, 10, 13, 17, 18, 24 & 25

Booking is essential. Admission fee of €45pp includes all refreshments, lunch, return boat service, full retreat programme, free car & coach parking.

Knock Shrine - Daily Masses continue to be broadcast at 12 Noon and 7.30pm, with Rosary at 7pm. For further details, please see www.knockshrine.ie

Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre

Saturday, 24 September (9.30am - 4.30pm) **WHEN IT IS DARKEST**
Understanding suicide

Friday, 4 November (5pm) - Sunday, 6 November (2pm)
CHURCH ABUSE: A UNIQUE BETRAYAL - A call to listen, a call to action, a call to change.

AID TO THE CHURCH

<https://www.acnireland.org/n-donate>

Bishop discusses situation of the Syriac Catholic Church in Lebanon

Bishop Jules Boutros is a Lebanese Bishop of the Syriac Catholic Church and the youngest catholic bishop in the world. He recently visited ACN's headquarters in Germany and spoke with Filipe D'Avillez about the syriac catholic church and the situation in lebanon. By ACN Staff

PARISH NOTICES

The Society of St Vincent de Paul offers practical and confidential help to those in need throughout the North Down Area. We know it can be hard to ask for help but please, if you need help call us on our.

Helpline: 077 0367 9384.

Pastoral Community Music Workshop – Saturday 3rd Sept in St Comgall's Parish Centre. The music at the 6.30pm vigil Mass will be provided by members of all the choirs of this Pastoral Community who will have participated in an all-day music workshop. We welcome and thank them for their participation.

A group of Italians lead by Don Attilio Parish Priest of San Colombano al Lambro will arrive in Bangor for the 9.30am Mass on **Monday 5th September** before going to Stricklands Glen - the departure point for Saint Columbanus and then visiting Bangor Abbey before meeting the Major in Bangor Castle. The details of this visit have been elaborated by the Friends of Columbanus, Fr Joe Rooney and our own Parish of Bangor. We wish them a fruitful and enjoyable pilgrimage in the steps of Saint Columbanus their Patron.

STOREHOUSE NORTH DOWN

Storehouse continues to help **St Vincent De Paul** provide non-perishable food for those in need. **Non perishable foodstuff donations, for Storehouse, have recommenced. Donations can be left in the receptacle in the Bishops Porch at the rear of the Church** or Storehouse welcomes donations of foodstuff at their premises, 12 Balloo Avenue, Bangor on Mondays and Thursdays between 10.00am to 3.00 pm. Cash donations are also very acceptable.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul offers practical and confidential help to those in need throughout the North Down Area. We know it can be hard to ask for help but please, if you need help call us on **our Helpline: 077 0367 9384.**

To help us to help others you can make direct payments to Conferences Bank Account.
St Comgall's, Allied Irish Bank. Sort Code 93-82-03. A/C No is 25302098.
Most Holy Redeemer Ballyholme, Allied Irish Bank. Sort Code 93-82-03. A/C No. 06885061.

Donations can also be made to SVP Giving Page at www.svp-ni.co.uk. If you are a UK income tax-payer please consider Gift Aiding your donation, which will enhance your donation by 25% at no extra cost to you. Gift Aid forms are available on the Parish website, or on request, via SVP Helpline number, as above.

The Society is always on the lookout for new Members, and if you are interested and can spare a few hours per week please speak to a Conference Member, or leave your name and contact number on the Helpline and we will return to you promptly. You will be warmly welcomed and full training will be given.

We can now accept donations of Good quality furniture – please call our Helpline or speak to a member of the Society.



23rd Sunday of the Year – 4 September 2022

Lord Jesus, you have said, 'Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.' I come to you in faith and trust, in love and hope. Let me know your closeness to me and your care for me and for all who are dear to me.

My intention: Hear my prayer (*mention intention*); grant what I ask, and may I always trust that in all that happens in life, you will be close to me as my friend, guide and saviour. And so, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I place all my trust in you.

Penitential Act: I confess to the almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

PRAYERS AT HOLY COMMUNION

Spiritual Holy Communion Prayer

My Jesus, I believe that you are present
in the most Blessed Sacrament.
I love you above all things and
I desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace you as if you have already come,
and unite myself wholly to you.
Never permit me to be separated from you.
Amen.
composed by Saint Alphonsus Liguori

ANIMA CHRISTI

Prayer to the Most Holy Redeemer

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, embolden me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.
Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within your wounds hide me.
Never permit me to be separated from you.
From the evil enemy defend me.
At the hour of my death call me
and bid me to come to you,
that with your Saints I may praise you
for age upon age. Amen

One Day Retreats at Lough Derg

One Day Retreats have resumed on Lough Derg, and continue on selected dates until the end of September:
August 28 & 29 | September 3, 7, 10, 13, 17, 18, 24 & 25

Booking is essential. Admission fee of €45pp includes all refreshments, lunch, return boat service, full retreat programme, free car & coach parking. Boats available from 9.15am on the day; retreat begins at 10.30am until 4.30pm For booking and further information: by phone +353 (0)71 9861518 online: www.loughderg.org
email: info@loughderg.org

ANNIVERSARIES PRAYED FOR DURING THE SUNDAY WEEKEND MASSES – August & July 2022

22nd Sunday in Year C – 28 August 2022

Recently Deceased: Helen Briollait (France)

Anniversaries: David Anderson, Ann McCausland, Sean O’Kane, Fenton Lyons, John McAlinden, Bernie Denvir, William L James, Loretta Brennan, Frank Rafferty, Elizabeth O’Brien, Thomas Leonard, Kathleen Griffen, Austin Kernan, Paddy McIlroy, Philip Gunn (snr), John McCloskey.

21st Sunday in Year C – 21 August 2022

Recently Deceased: Kieran Murray, Maureen Dempsey (Co.Meath)

Anniversaries: Eilish Grummy, Patricia McManus, Frank Cullen, Geraldine McBrearty, Michael Conway, Thomas Telford, Pauline McCausland, Bridget Rafferty, Joe Carville, Fr Harry Donaghy, David Anderson, Lucy McDaniel, Elizabeth Devlin, Joe McDaniel, Daniel McCart, Paddy Walsh, Elizabeth McKearney, Alex Turnbull, Sr Elizabeth Grey, John Rea, Kathleen McDonagh, Frank Callihane, Shamus McKearney.

20th Sunday in Year C – 14 August 2022

Recently Deceased: Margaret (Maureen) Anderson, Jim Gillespie (Houston, USA)

Anniversaries: Joyce Bacon, Rene Hughes, Letty O’Reilly, Paddy Healy, Fr Tom Gartin, Anthony Donaghy, Sr Elizabeth McKeown, Mary Hudson, Patrick & Mary Larkin, Dorothy McTrusty, Jimmy McTrusty, Doreen Beale, Kathleen Rafferty, Brendan Hehir, Margaret Craig, Sadie Campbell, Kath Kelly, Rory O’Connor, Patrick Campbell, Elizabeth McDowell, Joe McHugh, Anne McHugh, VP Augustine, Archie Walls, Jacqueline Callihane.

19th Sunday in Year C – 7 August 2022

Recently Deceased: Francis Joseph McVeigh

Anniversaries: Elizabeth Donohue, Thomas McDade, Ciarán Burke, Tom Bowler, Rosemary Farley, Mary Keenan, Nadine Stilges, John Quinn, Jim Quinn, Duncan McLean, Paddy Healy, Angela Murdock, Victor Fusco, Michael McDowell, Stephen Delaney, Edward Walsh.

18th Sunday in Year C – 31 July

Anniversaries: Brian McCullough, Vera McCarney, Joseph Waugh, Molly Keenan, CC Jose, Kathleen McDonagh, Maureen McGrattan, James Curran, Thomas McDade, Seamus Curran, Vera Coburn, Tom Bowler, Patrick John Hinds, Julia Hollywood, Catherine Forte, Charles Martin, Jack & Madge Murray, Patrick Carney, Patrick McKinley, Molly Fay, John Walsh.

17th Sunday in Year C – 24 July

Recently Deceased: Very Rev Jim Madden (Belfast)

Anniversaries:

Josephine O’Loan, Peter O’Brien, Peter Magill, Terence Coan, Agnes Smith, Gerard Gannon, Edward Walsh, Ronnie Jeacle, Mollie Donegan, Margaret Quinn.

16th Sunday in Year C – 17 July

Recently Deceased: Rosaleen Neeson (Holywood)

Anniversaries:

John Braniff, Christine Kane, Michael O’Mahony, Teddy Emmett, Bridget McQuillan, Betty Dornan, John Quinn, Daniel Williams, William Curran, Ted Edge, James Curran, Lizzie O’Brien, John O’Keefe.

15th Sunday in Year C – 10 July

Recently Deceased: Catherine Burns

Month’s Mind: Máire McDonnell

Anniversaries: Jenny Waterworth, Alan Nelson, Frank McGreevy, Frankie McGreevy, Frank McAnulty, Henry McAnulty, Kathleen Hughes, Daniel Williams, John Dawson, Tom Martin, Michael Browne, Anna Kutty, Frances Ging, John Donaghy.

14th Sunday in Year C – 3 July

Recently Deceased: Ruby McDevitt

Months Mind: Veronica Bintley, Johnny McAlorum

Anniversaries:

Neil McKeown, Margaret Beck, Patrick McGreevy, Mary Brannigan, Patricia McKeivitt, Josephine McAlinden, Jack Rice, James McGrattan.

GREETINGS FROM DROMANTINE RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTRE NEW WORKSHOPS 2022 - BOOKINGS NOW OPEN - Please contact Jacinta or Louisa to reserve your place: TEL: 028 (048 from ROI) 3082 1964 EMAIL: admin@dromantineconference.com

WHEN IT IS DARKEST

Understanding suicide

Saturday, 24 September (9.30am - 4.30pm)

CHURCH ABUSE: A UNIQUE BETRAYAL - *A call to*

listen, a call to action, a call to change

Friday, 4 November (5pm) - Sunday, 6 November (2pm)

Please find below the link to the **Safeguarding Office 2022 E-Bulletin**. Newsletter - available to view on our website <https://downandconnorsafeguarding.com/newsletters/>

SUPPORTING CATHOLIC PARENTS

On **Tuesday 6th September**, there will be a conference on Zoom hosted by 'The Hook of Faith'. The topic of the conference will be: 'Supporting Catholic Parents: Sharing the Catholic Vision of Love and Human Sexuality with Our Children'. The speaker will be Fr Chris Hayden, author of the recently published book: 'A Better Vision: Understanding and Living the Catholic Vision of Human Sexuality'. The conference will begin at 8pm and conclude at 9pm. All are welcome. All you need to do to take part is send an email to: thehookoffaith@gmail.com This conference is designed to help Catholic parents be the best educators of their children in the areas of faith and morality in our modern culture.

CALENDAR OF SAINTS DAYS

SEPTEMBER 2022

Thursday 8 September

The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Wednesday 14 September

The Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Friday 9 September

Saint Ciaran, Abbot

Thursday 15 September

Our Lady of Sorrows

Saturday 10 September

Saint Peter Claver, Priest

Friday 16 September

Saint Cornelius, Pope & Saint Cyprian, Bishop

Sunday 11 September

24th Sunday of the Year C

Saturday 17 September

Saint Robert Bellarmine, Bishop & Doctor

Monday 12 September

The Most Holy Name of Mary, Saint Ailbe, Bishop Martyrs

Sunday 19 September

25th Sunday of the Year C

Tuesday 13 September

Saint John Chrysostom, Bishop & Doctor of the Church

Monday 20 September

Saint Januarius, Bishop & Martyr

Prayer Online: Come and join us at... www.soulparesmission.com Who are we? We are a new interactive prayer website created by Jacinta Crockford DipTH, Spiritual Director living in Down and Connor. What's on offer? A variety of PDF meditations on Scripture, Mother Teresa, Ignatius Spirituality to name but a few. Lots of content to Dive into! There you will find - Podcasts on Faith, Friendship & Knowledge; Rosaries, Prayers and Marian Consecration. Come and join us and be part of the prayer movement online!

Bangor group of Alcoholics Anonymous has restarted our Open Meetings. Open Meetings are, as the name suggests, open to everyone and anyone who wishes to know more about alcoholism, how it effects the individual and how they can recover. Bangor AA Open Meetings, The last Friday of the month, every month. Doors open at 8pm for an 8.30pm start. **Bangor Community HUB**, Hamilton Road, Bangor. BT20 4LF.

South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust Carer Support Service
Are you an unpaid carer who cares for a family member or friend?

You are invited to come along to the Carer Support Service Carer Hub in Bangor.

When: 1st Wednesday of every month

Where: North Down Community Wellbeing Hub, Main Street

Time: 10.30 – 1pm

No need to book, just call in at any time during the morning for carer information advice and guidance. Join us for tea/coffee and scones, we would love to meet you.



Knock Shrine - Daily Masses continue to be broadcast on the Knock Shrine website and Facebook page at 12 Noon and 7.30pm, with Rosary at 7pm. Sunday Mass is broadcast at 12 noon, Rosary at 2.30pm and Mass at 3pm. For further details, please see www.knockshrine.ie

ENCOUNTER SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

Are you hungry for more? Do you want to go deeper in your faith? Do you want to live from your identity as a child of God? Then, this course is for you. The Encounter School of Ministry is a dynamic training program designed to teach, equip, and activate you in the full supernatural lifestyle of Jesus so that you can walk with God in intimacy and demonstrate his love and power to the world around you! Drawing from the richness of our Catholic heritage we are offering an online training program for Ireland, designed to take you to the next level in your ministry. Enrolment is for one year, so you can discern your continuation as a Year 2 student. Our curriculum and content is rooted in Catholic Tradition and faithful to Catholic teaching. **Classes are held on Thursdays at 7:30pm from mid-September** through May. For more information visit <https://encounterschool.org/online-campus-ireland/> Be sure to select the Online – English Campus and you will then be able to choose the 7:30 IST / 2:30pm ET time slot for your zoom session! Places are limited!

TROCAIRE thank you for your help. You can donate in the following ways:

- Online at www.trocaire.org.
T: 0800 912 1200 (NI)
- By post:
Trócaire, 50 King Street, Belfast, BT1 6AD (NI).

Free draw: Win a trip to Medjugorje with the Irish Centre

Win one week's all included package trip to Medjugorje for one person. This includes 7 nights B&B, return airport transfer and flight (up to €300 flight & luggage value). To be in with a chance to win go to our website www.med-irishcentre.com For more details tel. 00353 1443 4510 or email reservations@med-irishcentre.com

The loss of a partner through death, separation or divorce is devastating. **Beginning Experience** is offering a programme of bereavement support in St Bride's Hall, Derryvolgie Ave., Belfast on three Saturdays (**September 24**, October 29 and November 26.) Booking essential. To find out more, contact Phil: 02890 207645 or Marie 07896119669 or email belfastbe@yahoo.com

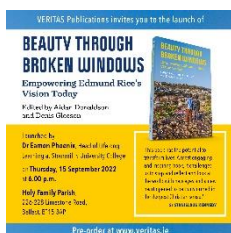


Follow these links for more information about ACCORD NICMCS:

<http://www.4ni.co.uk/c/1763/accord-ni-catholic-marriage-care-service-belfast>

<http://www.4ni.co.uk/c/40788/accord-ni-catholic-marriage-care-service-crossgar>

<http://www.facebook.com/accordmarriagecare>



Book launch to be held on **Thursday 15th September at 6pm in Holy Family Parish, Belfast**. The book entitled "*Beauty through broken windows: Empowering Edmund Rice Vision*" was edited by Aidan Donaldson and Denis Gleeson and explores how the charism of Edmund Rice could be lived in the world today. I have attached information about the book launch to this email. All are welcome to attend the book launch.



AUTUMN TERM

Registration Now Open

In-Person Modules and Online Modules

To register online visit
www.lumenop.ie

Email: info@lumenop.ie Call: 01-288 2075

Lumen Dominican Centre, Sion Hill Campus,
Blackrock, Co. Dublin, A94 A3C7.



TUTORING

4 - 18 YEARS

Info: TUTORING & DRAMA

4 - 18 YEARS 07792969276

ADULT DRAMA 07711759832

Web Theatre 49 North St
Newtownards

AID TO THE CHURCH

<https://www.acnireland.org/n-donate>

SUBSCRIBE TO THE MIRROR

Bishop discusses situation of the Syriac Catholic Church in Lebanon

BISHOP JULES BOUTROS IS A LEBANESE BISHOP OF THE SYRIAC CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE YOUNGEST CATHOLIC BISHOP IN THE WORLD. HE RECENTLY VISITED ACN'S HEADQUARTERS IN GERMANY AND SPOKE WITH FILIPE D'AVILLEZ ABOUT THE SYRIAC CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE SITUATION IN LEBANON.

By ACN Staff

Bishop Jules Boutros began the interview by explaining the history of the Syriac Catholic Church in Lebanon. **Syriac Catholics have been present in Lebanon since 1782, but the majority of Syriac Catholics in Lebanon today are descendants of refugees from what is now Turkey who fled the Ottomans during the genocide in 1915.** Syriac Catholics are a small minority amongst Lebanon's Christian population. With around 16,000 Syriac Catholics living in Lebanon, **they represent less than 1% of Lebanon's Christian population.**

Bishop Isaac Jules Peter Georges Boutros of the Syriac Catholic Church. (Credit: Aid to the Church in Need)



The bishop explained that the Syriac Catholic population **feels excluded from the Lebanese political system** and is not properly represented in the parliament or cabinet of ministers. The bishop elaborated further by explaining that when Syriac Catholic refugees arrived in Lebanon, **they were encouraged by their patriarchs to get involved in commerce and business rather than politics.** There are signs of progress. For example, a young Syriac Catholic was elected to parliament in Lebanon's recent elections.

Despite this progress, the bishop has little confidence in Lebanese politics. This is particularly true following the Beirut port explosion in August 2020. The bishop explained that the blast hit him particularly hard:

*"I am from that part of Beirut, and for me it was terrible to hear what I heard and see what I saw: **to see your capital, your country, your city, totally destroyed.** None of my close friends remain in Lebanon, they all left after the blast."*

The bishop still has hope in the Lebanese people. For this reason, **the Syriac Catholic Church has been encouraging its members to be involved in Lebanese society** and active in the political system, despite its flaws, to build a better Lebanon.

The bishop also discussed the wider situation for the Syriac Catholic Church in the Middle East. **The Syriac Catholic Church has around 140,000 members** and is one of the smaller Eastern Catholic Churches traditionally present in the Middle East. **Most of the Church's membership is not based in Lebanon but Syria and Iraq.** The bishop explained that it has been a tough time for the Syriac Catholic Church in both Syria and Iraq:

A Catholic procession in Lebanon. (Credit: Aid to the Church in Need)

"Most of our young people are trying to get out of Iraq and Syria. They find it difficult to stay in Iraq, because they have lost confidence in their government, they have faced so much persecution. **More than 60,000 Syrians were forced to leave the Nineveh Plain in one night. In total, more than 120,000 Christians were obliged to flee to Kurdistan, and from there they have been going to the west.** A good number returned home, and that is a good sign, because we have a mission in this part of the Middle East. But many families are still trying to get out.



Things are worse in Syria, because the war is still going on. Military service is the biggest issue for our young men, because you have to serve for 9 or 10 years. After that time, if you return alive, you need to start from zero. This is in all of Syria.

The bishop said further that **the situation is particularly difficult for Christians in Kurdish-controlled parts of Syria**, as the young men are forced into military service in both the Kurdish forces and the Syrian military. This means that most young men go abroad for five or so years, and then come back when they are no longer eligible for mandatory military service.

The bishop finished the interview by **passing on his thanks to ACN's benefactors** for supporting the Church in the Middle East:

*"First of all, thank you! **Thank you for helping us. We are all one family, One Body of Christ.** I would also say that maybe we can give something back to the churches that are better off, by sharing with you the wealth that we have, the treasures that are found in our culture, our spiritual heritage and legacy."*