

LOUGH DERG

2023 Pilgrimage Season



Three Day Pilgrimage

Thursday 1st June until Monday 15th August

(last day to begin Saturday 13th)

Admission: €80

Booking Advised | Concessions available for students, seniors & groups

One Day Retreat

May

Mon 1st | Sun 7th | Tue 9th
Sun 14th | Sat 20th | Sat 27th | Mon 29th

August

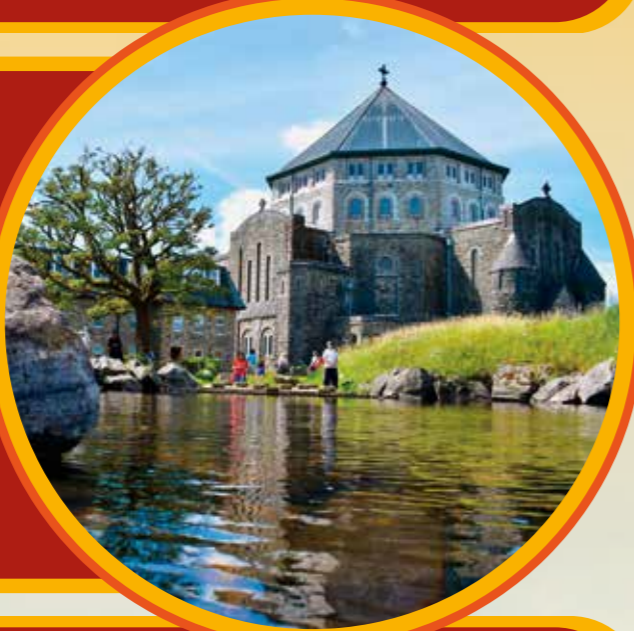
Sat 19th | Tue 22nd | Sun 27th

September

Sat 2nd | Wed 6th | Sat 9th
Tue 12th | Sat 16th | Sun 17th
Sat 23rd | Sun 24th

Admission: €45

Booking Essential | Concessions available for groups



Residential Retreat

Sun 11th - Thur 15th June

August dates sold out!

€400 per person single room

€325 per person sharing

Full Board | Booking Essential



Lakeshore Pilgrimage

along the Pilgrim Path

Sunday 21st May &
Saturday 30th September

Admission: €25

Booking Essential

Quiet Day

Friday 12th May & Friday 15th September

Admission: €35 | Booking Essential



Sanctuary of Saint Patrick, Pettigo, County Donegal

www.loughderg.org | info@loughderg.org | +353 (0)71 98 61518

NEARLY A CENTURY OF SAINT PATRICK'S BASILICA... AND TIME HAS TAKEN ITS TOLL!

If any of us are lucky enough to make it into our nineties, we would most likely need (at least!) some care, attention and maybe some cosmetic work. Well, it's no different for Saint Patrick's Basilica on Station Island.

In 2025, we will mark one hundred years since the commencement of the building of Saint Patrick's Church (the title of Basilica was bestowed by Pope Pius XI on June 16th 1931). Pilgrims familiar with Lough Derg weather even in the summer months will not be surprised that the elements have left their mark on the fabric of the Basilica.

Many past pilgrims may remember that the copper roof was replaced in 2002, during Msgr Mohan's time. During his final year as Prior he commissioned a survey of the Basilica by architects specialising in heritage buildings.

Water ingress is the major issue. When Saint Patrick's was being built, the stonework was pointed using sand and cement. But when weathering causes cracks to develop, this material actually traps water that has seeped into the stonework. Lime mortar, the more traditional material, allows such moisture to 'breathe out' again.

An unexpected opportunity arose during the Covid-19 shutdown of 2020 and 2021. Over that period the Lough Derg maintenance team was able to undertake significant work on the stonework just below the basilica roof, which needed some structural repair and was completely repointed using lime mortar.

Doohamlet Construction of Co Monaghan have been contracted to complete the repointing on the rest of the Basilica, under the expert guidance



of Mr Teddy Duffy. Work is now in hand at lower levels, beginning with the two circular towers at the main door that house the stairs to the back gallery.

This work is labour intensive and costly. At the end of last year, an unexpected and generous legacy made it possible to take on this phase of the work. Subject to funds being available, we plan to complete the repointing of the external stonework before moving to the Basilica's interior where the effects of the years of water damage can be addressed.

It would be a fitting tribute to the original construction workers, and to the thousands of barefoot pilgrims who

have made this iconic building holy by their prayers, if we can complete all the work before the centenary of the consecration of the Basilica that took place on 17th May 1931. We acknowledge the current cost of living crisis, but we also know very well the generosity of the Lough Derg pilgrims and benefactors. If you can contribute any amount, small or large, to the restoration of this iconic Basilica, perhaps as a memorial to family members who have gone before you, together we can hand it on in good shape to future generations.



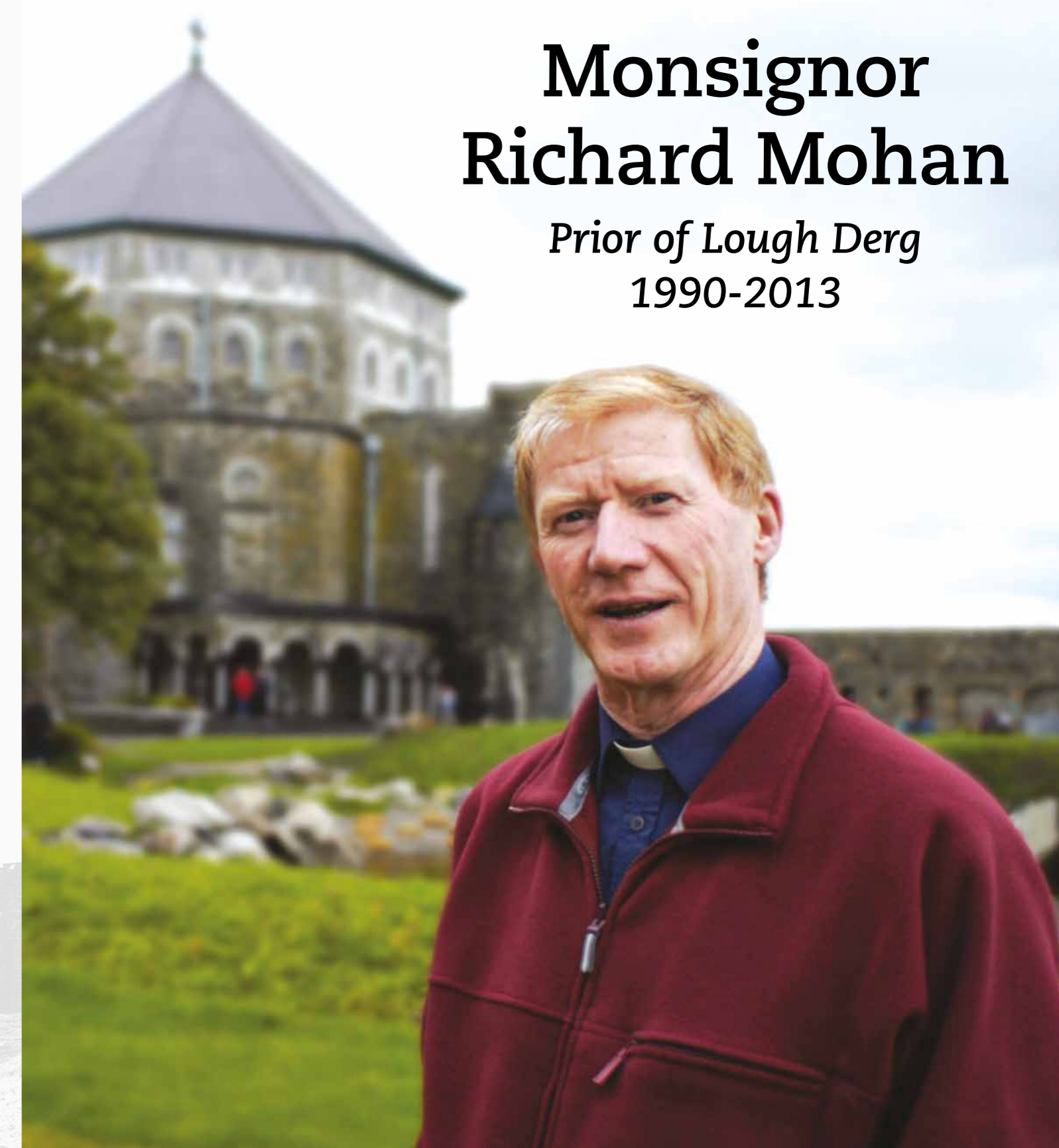
FRIENDS OF LOUGH DERG NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2023



The PILGRIM'S FRIEND

Monsignor Richard Mohan

Prior of Lough Derg
1990-2013



PRIOR'S POST

Dear friend,

Welcome to Spring 2023 and to another edition of The Pilgrim's Friend, your Lough Derg newsletter.

On the title page overleaf you will have seen the smiling face of Monsignor Mohan, with the Basilica in the background. It is a face that, sadly, we will not see again except in photographs or in memory – what we sometimes refer to as 'the mind's eye.'

Although I still occasionally meet someone who has not yet heard that Fr Dick died very unexpectedly on New Year's Day, you will probably already have learned this news, that spread quickly through the Lough Derg family network.

The Team here join me in appreciation of the many warm expressions of sympathy and prayer that supported us through the early days and weeks as we tried to come to terms with the shock of his death – a process that is still on-going for us, as it surely must be for his dear family, his close friends and his parishioners in Clones Parish whom he served so faithfully since moving there in September 2013.

We have taken the opportunity of this edition of The Pilgrim's Friend to offer our tribute to Fr Mohan and to acknowledge the sterling contribution that he made to Lough Derg over just short of four decades from 1974, his first season as a member of the priest staff. Mary's text does no more than simply to sketch the principal outlines of some of the key features of the service he gave and to evoke something of the commitment and the warmth with which he gave it. We have included, too, some of his own words that capture his vision for the sanctuary that is Lough Derg.



Pat Byrne ©

I hope the photographs succeed in evoking memories for you from the various phases of his time at Lough Derg when you might have known him, especially over his 23 years as Prior. Perhaps they may offer the even greater gift of bringing to mind personal recollections that you have of meeting him or engaging with him.

On our pilgrimage in this world, none of us escapes the risk of getting it wrong at one time or another. Morning after morning as he encouraged pilgrims to come with confidence to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Fr Dick held out the hope that we might leave behind whatever we did not need to carry with us. I know for sure that he would appreciate above all your charity in letting go of any memory you may have of when, if ever, he himself got it wrong in your experience.

Leaba i measc na naoimh go raibh aige.

Beir beannacht.

Fr La

MONSIGNOR RICHARD MOHAN – THE GIFT THAT HE WAS TO LOUGH DERG

This shorter version of a piece by Mary McDaid originally published in the Irish Catholic shortly after Monsignor Mohan's death encompasses just a little of the huge mark and influence that his time of ministry at Lough Derg had and will continue to have on the Island and its Pilgrim Family for many years to come.

It was with a very deep sense of sadness and loss that the staff and pilgrims of Lough Derg, the people of Clones Parish and a wide circle of his friends learned of the death of Monsignor Richard Mohan. On Sunday 1st January 2023 Lough Derg lost a great friend: a great leader who was a man of vision, a man of compassion but most of all, a man of faith.

Fr Dick was a member of the team at Lough Derg from 1974 right through until 2013, and served as Prior for the last 23 of those 40 years. For all of that time his name was synonymous with Lough Derg: when you thought of the place, you thought of the man.



With his parents at Maynooth on Graduation Day 1966.

He was known and loved in every county in Ireland. Many pilgrims from abroad maintained contact with him for years. His love of Lough Derg was evident in the way he spoke of the island and in the commitment and dedication he gave to it.

I think his legacy is twofold: Most obvious is the building and renovation work he oversaw both as Prior and earlier, working alongside Msgr McSorley in the building of a new ladies hostel in the 1980s. The refurbishment of the men's hostel, staff house and lakeshore followed in the 1990s, and a new Gift Shop, the redevelopment of St Mary's Chapel and Davog House Retreat Centre in 2000s. He was never idle!

In 1992, in response to the changing demographic of pilgrims, he had the innovative idea of introducing Day Retreats on the Island. These offered



“On the face of it Lough Derg might be expected to be a gloomy place. But it's not. Never! It's a heart-warming place, it's a place of great optimism. There is great camaraderie. Life is a joy not a burden. You always meet someone who is worse off than you and they give you a sense that you are not so bad after all!”



Seeing pilgrims off on the pier, early 1990s.



In the Basilica at the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

“Lough Derg as a place of pilgrimage and as a living being needs to continue to be bold, stepping forward in order to not only survive, but flourish. To become known and prosper as a sustainable organisation synonymous with accomplishment and appeal – becoming famous ‘for being with you on life's journey and bringing the gift of hope’.”

those unable to do the rigorous three day pilgrimage an opportunity to pray in the very sacred place that is Lough Derg. By introducing school retreats, enabling young people at both primary and second level to visit the island for days of faith combined with fun during the months of March, April and September, Fr Dick was playing another part in ensuring the future of Lough Derg.

Less obvious but much more important than the physical development, the real legacy of Fr Dick Mohan will be the memory of his pastoral support of



Ordained by Bishop Mulligan, Carrickmacross, 21 June 1970.



At the foundation stone of Davog House, 2004 with Jamsie Monaghan, Deborah Maxwell & Junior Kelly.



Brian Keenan unveiling the statue of Patrick the Pilgrim, with sculptor Ken Thompson, 2002.



With the Healing Stone from the 2012 Eucharistic Congress.

pilgrims and staff, his deep compassion and his great welcome for all who came to Lough Derg. Without a doubt, his greatest ministry was in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He literally embraced the penitent and their story; he gave them a profound assurance of God's love and mercy; he listened with the ear of the heart.

There will be many stories of Fr Dick Mohan recounted in the coming season, all in fidelity to the great gift that he was to Lough Derg. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.



Day of Prayer and Friendship, Ash Wednesday 2008, with Deborah Maxwell, Bishop Joseph Duffy and Rev Ruth Patterson.

“Since the Sanctuary of Saint Patrick caters for a few hundred pilgrims only each day (not thousands) and because pilgrims spend an extended period on the Island, without distraction, the experience is much more intense, very much more personal and ultimately more challenging for everyone. Commitment to being there and taking part – not being a spectator.”



Lough Derg Staff mark Fr Mohan's retirement as Prior, 2013. Trina Britton, Christopher Burminiski, Lorraine McGrath, Nuala Stevens, Jennifer McGrath, Gerry Kemp, Mary McDaid, Maureen Boyle.



With fellow Staff priests John Chester, John Flanagan, Paddy McGinn and La Flynna. Launch of the invitation to celebrate the Year of Faith at Lough Derg 2013.



Representing Lough Derg at the European Pilgrimage Congress in Lourdes 2007.



Bidding the Pilgrims farewell on board the M.V. St Davog.

“One of our biggest challenges at Lough Derg is the dilemma of being dynamic and meeting the needs of today's society, while respecting the tradition of the past. In order to renew our ‘shrine’, we have embraced modern marketing mediums and utilised technology, not for the sake of it, but recognising that it is the way forward - we must meet people where they are - and maybe that's another strong message for all of us.”



With his four nieces as Island staff 1999: Mairead, Eilish, Grainne & Marie.

ANNUAL DRAW 2023

Friends of Lough Derg



OVER €20,000 IN CASH PRIZES TOP PRIZE €10,000

Single tickets €10 or a book of 6 tickets €50

Tickets are available from info@loughderg.org or phone 00353 (0) 71 9861518