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Welcome to the latest edition of the IACI e-news.

Founded in 1962, the IACI is the leading Irish American cultural organization. The IACI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national organization devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America.

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New Beginnings, Renewed Commitments

By

Raymond D. Aumack

Father Paul Moran walked a young couple to the door after a Pre-Cana session. It was a rare Saturday evening appointment, but it was the only time they could fit in the meeting. He really felt tired after late afternoon confessions, followed immediately by a 5:30 Mass anticipating the Sunday Masses, and the long wedding preparation conference. He was preaching at all the Masses the next day to tell the sad tale of the latest child sex abuse scandal. The media had been screaming about the situation for the past three days. While he was tempted to let the media have their day, in the interest of transparency, he chose to address the unexplainable. There are no explanations. There is only shock and revulsion which he shared. He readily understood most sins, but this was something he couldn't relate to.

He made himself a sandwich for a late supper and went up to his room for a shower and an early night to prepare for tomorrow. After the five Masses, he had promised his former college roommate, Pat Malone, that he would have brunch with him, his sister, and some of her friends. He knew them well from the parish. Maeve Garvey always had one suggestion or another for him, but she never volunteered to work on any committee. Her work was crisis management and she could never commit to anything that required a scheduled presence.

Pat was just appointed professor of English and Irish Literature at St. Joseph's University, a Jesuit Institution. Fr. Paul and Pat graduated together from Notre Dame and Pat did his graduate studies at Loyola in Chicago where he taught for seven years. He also moonlighted as an adjunct at the University of Chicago.

A refreshed Paul rose the next morning, early, to pray a bit before the first Mass. His associate and a retired adjunct priest celebrated the other Masses.

Paul's sermon told of the horrors of child sex-abuse by priests. Since most of the data available on this crime was not to be trusted, he did trust the data provided by insurance companies. He told his fellow parishioners that we are living in a culture of sex abuse. The data shows that one in five girls will be abused before they reach the age of twelve and one in seven boys. The data shows that the incidence of abuse begins to tail off as children reach adolescence. Sexual perpetrators are equally homosexual and straight. About 90% of sexual abuse is from someone the victim knows, usually a family member. He pointed out that the data certainly doesn't excuse the sexual abuse of young people by priests or anyone else. He pointed out that the data shows that abuse by priests is from 3% to 5% of the total number of priests. He emphasized that even one incidence of abuse is an outrage and shouldn't be, will no longer be tolerated. He pointed out that it was not just a Catholic problem. Sexual abuse has occurred in all religions and in every denomination of Christianity, as well as in our school systems, secular institutions such as the Boy Scouts of America, and summer camps. The evil is pervasive everywhere.

The Church sins doubly by attempting to cover up the abuse. Canon Law commands bishops to avoid scandal in their diocese. Priests who abused were sent away for psychological and spiritual reorientation. They then returned to the diocese and were assigned to another parish. Obviously, that did not work.

He finished his sermon by asking prayers for the victims of sexual abuse. He then said, if we are truly followers of Christ, we have to pray for the abusers as well. He looked into the congregation before he left the pulpit. Every eye was on him, but no one stormed out of the church.

The research he had dug up to prepare for his sermon was frightening him and, certainly frightening to his congregation. However, he had documented the sources of his data and he was willing to share it with anyone who asked. There was much conversation after Mass but nothing hostile.

About a half hour later Pat came by to pick him up for the short drive to the New Jersey restaurant. Paul didn't wear clericals but was neatly dressed in matching slacks and a golf shirt. They briefly talked about the sermon. Pat was supportive having observed adult sex abuse on the campuses where he taught.

Theresa and her friends had arrived earlier and selected a table for six. Pat took the empty chair next to Maeve, since that was his reason for being there in the first place. They sat across from June Gilliam, a social worker who worked in

Philadelphia's inner city, and Sandra Costo, a Spanish teacher in one of the city's high schools. Paul and Theresa were at the end of the table across from each other. Everyone was introduced to Pat. The rest of the table were parishioners of Paul and he knew them well. Sandra noted that everyone knew Pat because for the years they have been gathering, Theresa was always talking about "my brother, the doctor." Everyone laughed, and both Theresa and Pat blushed. Maeve relieved his discomfort by noting that she was a doctor and her diploma said so. Theresa teased back that Maeve was a lawyer and not practicing. Maeve replied that she was indeed practicing by using her skills as a lawyer every day as she solved the problems of incompetent executives, and their lawyers as well.

Drinks were delivered and orders from the special brunch menu were taken. There was no lull in the conversation because everyone wanted to know about Maeve's experience in Ireland.

Maeve replied that she would tell her story, but first they should hear Pat's story, since this was his first time in their company. Meanwhile, at the end of the table, Paul and Theresa were chatting away as if there was no one else at the table.

Once he got everyone's attention, he spoke about how ordinary and ordered his life had been. That is until he went to Notre Dame and started rooming with Paul. He grew up in a small town in north Jersey, North Arlington. He went to the parish high school, Queen of Peace, and had great success as a high school athlete. He had three siblings. One in Canada and the other in Ireland. His brother, John in Canada was an environmental engineer working for a gold mining company. His other brother, Kevin, was an artificial intelligence expert working for Google in Ireland. Tough as nails, Theresa, gravitated toward Philadelphia with the Jesuit inner city programs. She continues to work with them.

"And someday she'll work with me doing the same work among the wealthy who think of themselves as important because of their wealth. I like tough," interjected Maeve.

Sandra, expecting a story with romance, encouraged Maeve to tell them about her Irish vacation.

Maeve laughed and coined the word, "workation." She told the story of her cousin and his girlfriend's pregnancy dilemma and the uptight attitudes of the parents. "The girl's father wanted to put her into one of those institutions during the course of her pregnancy and take the baby away for adoption." She spoke well of her cousin, whom she knew very well and his fiancé. "They are terrific, grounded, intelligent people with a vision of their future that is very realistic."

She spoke of the archaic attitudes of the parents and with a nod to Fr. Paul when she spoke of how terrific the priest had been, with movie star good looks.

"Ah Ha" said Sandra. "I knew there would be some excitement to this story."

"No excitement," said Maeve. "I think you get executed by firing squad if you seduce a priest in Ireland, especially in the mountains of Donegal."

Brunch was fun, and the conversation was humorous, interesting, and stimulating. No one noticed the sparks flying between Paul and Theresa. Both he and Pat fit seamlessly into their group. Each went home to prepare for the rest of the week and made plans to meet again next Sunday.

Fr. Paul

Paul was stunned by Theresa. His thoughts turned to her frequently during the usual dull routine of the average Monday. "Why am I constantly thinking of her," thought Paul. "After all, all women are attractive. I have to get out more and immunize myself to attractive women. "

Paul was to celebrate the noon Mass that he started in the parish, to serve the Cherry Hill business district. He usually spends a little time meditating on the Gospel to prepare for Mass. In his meditation he focused on Jesus' relationship with his disciples and reflected on how much he must have enjoyed their companionship. When he preached his very short homily those warm thoughts of friendship and community came straight from the depths of his heart. As he walked from the pulpit back to the altar he thought, "Wow, where did that come from."

The rest of the day, he thought frequently of Theresa, and liked the way he felt when he thought about her.

Theresa

“My God, what is happening to me!” It was more of a prayer than an exclamation. Theresa was floating about two feet above the ground and she felt that, when Paul appeared in her thoughts, her heart beat faster. She was floating through the activity of her day, with work that required her to be grounded. The people who came into the Jesuit Center were facing major life crises and she had to be grounded to help them. What she felt when she listened to their stories was a profound sense of compassion.

At the center, one of the priests celebrated Mass each day at noon. During Mass she felt an openness to God that she never experienced before. When she thought of Paul, it seemed as if the sun came out over her head and warmed her whole body. It was a good feeling.

Maeve

Pat is very nice. If I was looking for August Magic, it may have found me. I hope Theresa doesn't mind. I really like her brother. He looked like a movie star in full makeup. His black curly hair was perfectly coiffed. Susan was already at the office. What struck me were his light blue eyes and the way he looked at me when I spoke with him. When I talked about my Irish experience he seemed to listen with riveted attention. I know when someone is listening to me. That is my job. It is also my job to get their attention when they are not listening. I also admired the ease with which he embraced our company at brunch. Theresa and Paul knew him well, but he was a stranger to the rest of us. I almost don't remember Theresa at lunch. She was at the far end of the table. She was really deeply engaged with Paul. Hmmm. Next Monday is Labor Day. I think I'll ask Pat if I can give him a tour of the historical sites in Philadelphia. It will just be an overview. I'll save each one for a specific date. Am I talking, even to myself, about dates?

Pat

She is everything I thought she was. It is only my second time in her company and I am astounded with her wit and what almost approaches wisdom. She must be a heck of a problem solver for her corporate clients. She also has some spiritual depth. She is one of the few people in my age group that still goes to church. I'll bet her faith is really strong. She has a strong Irish connection. I'll have to tell her about my Irish colleague Katie O'Bierne. I wonder if she is seeing anyone. I'll have to get a rundown from Paul. I wonder why a girl that smart and that pretty isn't already married. Why am I taking to myself about marriage? I just met the girl. I wonder how I can keep up the connection? I'll see her next Sunday. That is a start. We exchanged business cards. Maybe I'll give her a call during the week just to say what a good time I had and what a pleasure it was to meet Theresa's friends. That is what I'll do. Maybe I can get her to go to dinner at Bookbinders that I have heard so much about.

Susan, Maeve's assistant was already at the office even though Maeve thought she was early.

“Well I said I was going to ask you about the sermon”

“I think it was about sex,” responded Maeve.

“Gee, we never get any interesting sermons in my church.”

“It was nothing that either of us would be interested in,” said Maeve. “It was about the latest clergy sex abuse fiasco. Fr. Paul was smart to get out in front of it and so strongly, as well”

“Eeeew,” breathed Susan. “We have had more than enough of that.”

“How was Ireland?”

“It wasn't a vacation really, but I did get to be a maid of honor.” Maeve went on to tell the story while the coffee percolated.

“Super girl arrives just in a nick of time, laughed Susan.

“What is going on in our little kingdom?” asked Maeve.

“Well, here is the folder on the new client. Jim did a good job with Dave breathing down his neck. Actually, Dave was quite gentle and showed great mentoring skills himself.”

“Ok! I'll study it after I go through the mail.”

“You left out the whole story of the Greek God with the piercing blue eyes.”

“Yes, I did, didn’t I. Well, we just met for the second time, in a group. I like him. I’ll keep you apprised as things move along. By the way, his name is Pat and he is my friend, Theresa Malone’s brother. He just moved here from Chicago and is teaching at St. Joseph’s University.”

“Well, then, the future sounds interesting. Keep me tuned in and I want details.”

Maeve laughed. “I’ll tell you what we had for dinner, if we ever have dinner. But the details end there.”

The week was going well, and it felt good to get back into the office routine after four weeks on the road and across the sea. Jim had done a good job researching the company. It was an auto parts manufacturing company. The problem was not unusual. People from the first and third shifts were meeting each other during the second shift while their spouses were also working the second shift. As the activity leaks out, and it always does, it creates tension in the workplace and trauma within families, leading to violence, divorce, and traumatized children. One of them is a supervisor. That complicates it even more. The company already knows who is involved. They want to do what is best for the company as well as the employees.

Alright, our team will meet on Wednesday at 2:00 to brainstorm solutions, and I’ll fly to Pittsburgh with Jim on Friday. I want Jim to see how we work. Meanwhile, I’ll call our contact at the plant, introduce myself and see if I can’t get any more relevant information like maybe an attorney sanctioned policy agreement about employee behavioral expectations.

“Our contact is the owner,” Jim interjected. “He just took over the company after his father’s retirement.”

“I wonder if his father had a blind eye for the behavior of his employees. When I call I’ll find out if they have a policy. If not, we’ll draft one for him and include it in the billing for our services. Jim, gather some sample employee policies for manufacturing companies.”

Maeve called Morgan Ippolito and quickly determined that he didn’t have a clue about running the company. He wasn’t sure that they had an employee behavior policy. If they did have one, he wasn’t sure that employees ever saw it. Also, he couldn’t meet on Friday, but he could meet them next Wednesday.

She called Jim into her office. “Jim, I am pleased with your work researching this company. I’m going to want you to have a more significant role in our service delivery. This will be an apprenticeship for you. Dave and I will be in your face all the time, so bear with us. I want you to gather as much information on Ippolito as you can, and his father, as well. It seems as if the apple is rolling away from the tree. I want to know where he went to school, his major, impressions of teachers, clubs, and extracurricular activities. Did he work for his father and in what capacity? The more we know about him the better we’ll be able to deal with his current issue and service his company. Start with internet information and keep asking yourself about what we need to know to really know this guy.”

Jim responded, “Thanks for your confidence, Maeve. I hope I don’t make any mistakes.”

“Never let anyone know that you don’t have confidence in yourself. We all make mistakes. I had to learn to do what I am asking you to do, and there was no one to teach me. Don’t worry, Dave and I will protect you.

“I’d better get busy then. Thanks again, Maeve.”

She then asked Dave to come in.

“Dave, I’m going to have to be more of a rainmaker. We will need another service provider before long. I am asking you to mentor Jim. Susan told me you were great at that. Be gentle with him. He has a lot to learn.”

“You know me, Maeve. I’m the wily veteran who will never know as much as you do.”

“Come on, Dave. You and I are the only ones that know that I learned safety by flying without a net. And I still have a lot more to learn.”

“You are already way ahead of me, Babe.”

"I don't think so, Dave, and I'm not being falsely humble. My bucket list is full of faults and my life quest to remove them, one by one. I take a great deal of pride in knowing my weaknesses, but it seems that every day, I discover new ones."

"Susan asked me to ask you about the sermon yesterday."

"She's a little snitch, laughed Maeve. I may have found a boyfriend that interests me. We'll see how it goes. You know how these things work. Life has changed since high school and college."

Dave Laughed as he walked out the door. "Proceed with caution, but by all means, proceed."

As Dave left, her phone buzzed. "It's the Angel Gabriel, smirked Susan."

Ignoring the smirk, she put on her best professional voice, "Good afternoon, this is Maeve Garvey."

"Wow! What a greeting! This is Doctor Patrick Malone, Professor of Irish Literature. Sorry to call you at work but your business card only had a work number."

"Well there is a reason for that, but I am very pleased to receive your call."

"I just want to call and tell you how much I enjoyed being with you and Theresa's friends."

"Well thanks. We would have to rent a stadium to meet all of Theresa's friends. She is Philadelphia's Padre Pio."

"So I hear. The Jesuits have a rich history in Philadelphia. Today, I met a nun who taught me in North Arlington. She is retired now and living at their Motherhouse at Chestnut Hill."

"Oh wow! They picked a nice neighborhood to live in."

"Do you know of a restaurant called Bookbinders?"

"I do, everyone does."

"Will you be my guest for dinner at Bookbinders on Wednesday evening?"

"I think I would like that. Let me make the reservations. I know some people. Can we aim for 6:30 PM? Thursday is a work day. I'll meet you there. The table will be in your name. Call Uber."

"Sounds great. I'll see you then."

Theresa Malone was chewing her nails, racked with anxiety over what to do. She couldn't bring herself to call Paul. Everything she carefully rehearsed sounded so fake, she couldn't bring herself to do it. She walked around her simple downtown apartment until her legs ached. She was just going to plop down in bed for another sleepless night when the telephone shattered her reverie.

"Hi Theresa, this is Paul."

"Oh, what a relief. I couldn't imagine who would be calling so late. The first thing I thought of was that something happened in my family. I never get late calls."

"I'm so sorry. We work kind of late over here. You have been on my mind since Sunday and I thought if I called just to chat a bit, I could sleep better. But if this is an intrusion, I can call another time."

"No! No!" said Therese. "Talking with you will help me sleep better as well."

"Though I have known you for years and admired your work with the Jesuits, I felt a real connection on Sunday, a connection that one seldom experiences with another person or at least a connection that I seldom experience."

"I felt the same connection," Paul. "It was as if lightning struck in the room, or the Spirit came in tongues of fire and scotch and sat over my head until I was ready to scream with joy."

Paul, laughed and said that was a good line and a good description. He said he was living with the same experience.

“Paul, where are we headed.”

“I don’t know,” said Paul. “I think we should relax and enjoy the experience. We are blessed to have it. It is late and we both have to work tomorrow. If you don’t mind, I’ll call you again tomorrow,”

“Please do. I’ll look forward to it.”

Theresa fell back into her bed and in seconds fell into a deep sleep.

Paul never rose from his lounge chair and fell asleep with the telephone in his lap.

Both into a deep sleep of peace known only to lovers.

The work week was going smoothly at Garvey Associates. The two-hour brainstorming session revealed a lot of holes in the draft plan and this was expected. There were issues still to be investigated. They agreed to meet again on Friday, a little too soon, but they had to factor in the holiday. Tuesday would be a day to clean up as many details as possible. Maeve and Jim would fly out to Pittsburgh early Tuesday evening.

Meanwhile, a Philadelphia bank called in with a problem. Dave would visit the bank on Wednesday. This would also be a new client.

Maeve called Uber to arrange for a 6:00 PM pickup to Bookbinders. She had called her friend, Desmond Dowd, to arrange for the best table. Desmond asked if she was charming a potential client. Maeve laughed and told him that she was interviewing a potential boyfriend. “How romantic.” said Desmond.

Maeve smiled at his attempt as sarcasm. “Romance remains to be seen.”

Pat arrived at the dot of 6:30. Without even asking him, Desmond led him to Maeve’s table. “Desmond Dowd, I’d like you to meet Dr. Malone, alias Patrick. He is a newly arrived professor of Irish Literature at St. Joseph’s”

“Pleased to meet you Doctor, I have read them all. We should talk sometime.”

“I’d like that. I love to hear and discuss different perspectives. Here is my card with my number.”

Desmond walked away thinking that if this is a boyfriend interview, he passed the first test.

The meal went well. They enjoyed drinks. Pat ordered veal and Maeve had scallops. Maeve made a recommendation for dessert. The conversation flowed easily throughout the meal. Maeve was genuinely enjoying his company. He told stories of Loyola and his Chicago University experience. Maeve filled in some of the details of her Irish experience. Pat mused that it is unique to have a country that is booming in every aspect of life that still has places that can take you back a century. Maeve talked about her impressions of the local parish priest. And how human and sensitive he was to the plight of her cousins. He was so different from her Aunt Mary’s fire and brimstone picture of the priest. She reflected that part of his formation and his personal journey was in Chicago.

“That is the way it used to be,” remarked Paul. “In most places the clergy has not caught up with Vatican II. The clergy felt that it would disturb the people. The truth is that it disturbed the clergy and was a threat to the absolute hold they had on the people. They were a powerful force and they lost it in the end. Absolute power corrupts, said a wise man.”

“Paul is your pastor, how is he doing?”

“He is doing well, and everyone loves him. I think he works too hard.”

“That is a terrific review and a good picture of the guy I roomed with for two years. He did have a streak of daring about him, but he always remained grounded somehow. He was a better student than he ever admitted to. I always felt that I was his intellectual inferior, but that was my perception, not his.”

“I hope he keeps coming to our Sunday gatherings.”

The evening came to a natural conclusion and Pat called for the check. Maeve said that she wanted to pay for half. Rather than argue, she said that she would pay for him and he could pay for her. Pat reluctantly agreed.

Pat paid for Uber because he had previously made arrangements with them on his phone. Maeve accepted that as long she could pay the next time, silently hoping that there would be a next time.

When they arrived at Maeve's condo, Pat quickly opened the door for her. When he walked her to the door, she was planning on a handshake but decided that a hug would be more appropriate. When she went to hug him, Pat kissed her. She parted her lips and kissed him back tightening her grip on his neck and shoulder.

"Wow, we'll have to do this again, said Pat."

"And, since Monday is a holiday, I would like to invite you to a tour of the historical sites of Philadelphia."

Pat was elated and said that he would like that very much.

Maeve said that she would pick up him around 10:00 AM., have a light local lunch, superficially tour the monuments, and have dinner at her parents annual Labor Day barbecue. Meanwhile, they would see each other at Church on Sunday followed by their weekly brunch.

They kissed again, and Pat watched her until she was inside the building.

Early next morning Paul kept a regular appointment with his spiritual director. Because he was both disturbed and elated at the same time over his feelings about Theresa, he was looking forward to discussing it with Fr. Jim DeLuca, an older priest, now retired and known for his common sense and support of younger priests.

"Jim, I've developed a big problem. I have developed intense affection for a woman I've known for years. She is the sister of one of my closest friends and a parishioner as well. I went out for brunch after Mass, with a group of friends, including her brother. I knew her reasonably well and we chatted amiably. Then boom, it was like the Holy Spirit came on us with tons of fire. Suddenly, the other four people didn't exist. I spoke with her since on the phone and she feels the same way. By the way, her name is Theresa and she works with the Jesuits in their urban ministry program and we spent about three hours just talking. This is a remarkable experience and I love the way I feel about it."

"How do you feel about it?"

"Every sense in my body has awakened. It is almost as if I see a different aspect of the world. I seem to have a different insight into human nature. My sense of compassion for penitents, my sermons, and daily homilies are amazing even to me. As I meditate and pray, I seem to fall into a different realm of reality, a heavenly realm. On the other hand, I know that this a threat to everything I believed in and everything that I have worked for all these years. I am deeply committed to the priesthood and to the Church. How can anything this good be so wrong?"

"First of all, Maybe, the denied hormones you have suppressed for the last 20 years are protesting. On the other hand, maybe the Holy Spirit has awakened you. Obviously, both are functioning. You are not ready to give her up, are you?"

"No!"

"Then it is important to be honest with her about your feelings. Those feelings may be shared. The important thing to discern is selfishness in the relationship. Love is all about giving. Yes, joy in love is the benefit you feel now. Relationships ebb and flow and sometimes that joy is hard to find. Even mystics, deeply in love with God, experience the dark night of the soul. Take it slow. If this is a grace, you will know it. Keep your commitments in mind, but it is much to early to think about changing them. "

"By the way, I heard about your sermon last Sunday. I appreciate your support of priests. Also, you are not alone with this apparent dilemma. The very best of priests fall in love and that is because they are the very best. I have faith in you. Have faith in yourself."

On Sunday, the entire brunch group plus a couple of others was at the noon Mass and all occupied the same pew. Paul was the celebrant. The Gospel for the day was Mark's version of the Sermon on the Mount. Paul's homily was amazing. Without being in any way judgmental, he encouraged the congregation to embrace the highest of human values and he did so in a most eloquent manner.

An hour later, they were back at their Cherry Hill restaurant. The afternoon went very well. It was getting obvious that Maeve and Pat were an item, although neither admitted to anything. So gentle ribbing in the flow of raucous conversation was in play. At 5:00, everyone went their separate ways. Maeve was to pick up Pat at 10:00 the next day for their heritage tour of Philadelphia with plans to meet her family at their annual barbeque. It would be a long but pleasant day. Pat was the first boyfriend that Maeve brought home since high school.

Maeve arrived at Pat's apartment just before 10:00. Pat greeted her with a kiss and offered her coffee. The apartment was provided by the school for the faculty at a very low rent. What was intended to be a dining room became a work room and the walls were lined with filled bookcases. The bedroom was very simple, a bed, a dresser, and a closet. Maeve couldn't avoid mentally comparing it with her luxury condo in Cherry Hill.

They toured some of the historical sites that morning, leaving some until after lunch. Maeve seemed to know every inch of Philadelphia and an amazing number of people, for a big city, seemed to know her.

Maeve took him to a favorite little restaurant for lunch for authentic Philadelphia cheese steaks. Maeve insisted that since she invited him, it was her honor to pay.

Pat sheepishly offered a humble, "thank you."

"Pat, I have a successful and growing business. I am good at what I do and charge outrageous sums of money for my services. Companies are happy to pay me because I save them millions. I employ four people plus me and I'll be looking for another very soon. I have three brothers whom you will meet today. My father is the founder and senior partner of one of Philadelphia's top law firms and my mother is one of his legal assistants."

"We are all of Irish heritage and my mom was born in the mountains of Donegal. She came here almost penniless and lucked out with a job in the cafeteria at Chestnut Hill College. The pay was low, but it included tuition. My mom was the first in our family with a college education. My parents and my brothers are my best friends. You can expect my brothers, all of whom are single lawyers, to bust your chops today."

"My father was a student at the law school at Villanova, and they met at some inter-college social. He started practicing Law in the city and then joined with three classmates to found what is now a 150- attorney law firm. Believe me, I can afford a cheese steak."

In the afternoon, they stopped and toured the Rodin Museum. Maeve is a big fan of Rodin and was able to explain to Pat some of intricacies of Rodin's sculpture.

It was getting later in the afternoon and Maeve aimed her car toward Cherry Hill. Maeve loved the water and that suggested her choice for an apartment.

His parents on the other hand loved golf and owned a large home on the edge of a country club that her father had invested in.

There was a large crowd of friends at the barbeque. Pat had pictured Maeve's dad as the hot dog cook, but that wasn't case. Everything was in the hands of professionals.

Maeve introduced her parents Brigid and Doug. Both insisted that he should address them by their first name. I am "Mr." all week long and if you're a friend of Maeve, I consider you family. Brigid laughed and added, "especially since you are the first young man she brought home since high school. She must consider you pretty important."

"I hope so," said a blushing Pat.

Maeve knew everyone present and moved Pat along to introduce him as her friend. Later, in the early evening, Doug and the brothers cornered him for the job interview as boyfriend. After a cheeseburger, two beers, and having met everyone in a backyard that opened out into the fifteenth fairway, Pat was feeling very confident.

What do you do for a living, where did your parents come from, do you have brothers and sisters, why did you choose being a teacher of literature, where did you go to school and why did you go there, have you even been married. What are your intentions regarding our sister? Brian, the next oldest after Maeve, stated that they are very protective of Maeve, who would beat the daylight out of them if they weren't. Brian, John, and Michael welcomed him and wished him good luck with Maeve. You will certainly need it. Doug smiled and shook his hand. "I know this was a pop quiz, but you passed with flying colors. Of course, this isn't a comparison test, because she never brought anyone else around." Maeve looked over at the grilling and smiled knowing the Pat passed muster.

Later in the evening Maeve drove Pat back to St. Josephs. Parked in front of Pat's building they were necking like teenagers. Pat confessed that he loved her, and Maeve responded that she was falling for him as well.

"That makes us officially a couple," said Maeve. "But we both have to work in the morning."

Maeve was delighted as she drove to Cherry Hill. She smiled all the way home. She was struck with August Magic and she liked the way it felt.

In another part of the city, on the same Labor Day, in mid-afternoon, Paul and Theresa drove to Atlantic City. The city was filled with Miss America fans, so they avoided the big hotel restaurants. Theresa knew of a nice Italian family restaurant a couple of blocks from the boardwalk that was every bit as good and relaxing as she promised. They chatted amiably about every-day things and especially about Theresa's work with the Jesuit Urban Mission. After dinner they walked hand in hand back toward the boardwalk.

"Let's walk on the beach for a while," Paul suggested. Hand in hand they walked and noted that a full moon was coming up over the horizon. Sitting on the beach they watched the moon slowly rise.

"Theresa, I am deeply in love with you."

"And Paul, I am deeply in love with you."

Paul swept her up in his arms and kissed her. They fell back in the soft sand and continued to kiss until they had to come up for air.

"You've awakened every cell in my body," said Paul. "I have never felt like this and I like it."

"Me too," said Theresa. "I feel as if there is a fire in my soul. I love the warmth that comes with it"

"I'm sorry the circumstances are so awkward. At this moment, I want to spend the rest of my life with you, raise a family with you, and have you to love for the rest of my life."

"Paul, here on this beach, in the light of a bright and beautiful full moon, that looks like a fantastic life."

"I'm really committed to the priesthood. I can't imagine my life without that."

Theresa put her finger to his lips. "Let's just enjoy what we have while we have it."

"Where did you get all this wisdom?"

"I'm not about to wrestle with God over you. Let's just enjoy this moment for as long as this moment lasts. We'll both be better for it. We'll love each other chastely and, at the very least, we'll be friends for the rest of our lives."

A heavy burden was lifted from Paul's chest. All the anguish that had been crushing him suddenly evaporated.

"What did I ever do to merit a gift like you!"

"You are my gift too," said Theresa. "Let's handle our gifts with care."

IRISH TRIVIA

Which Father was the subject of a sitcom with Ardal O'Hanlon?	Ted
What character did Ardal O'Hanlon play in it?	Fr. Dougal
Which Patrick introduced Camelot's National Lottery with Anthea?	Kielty
What makes the Purple Mountains in Kerry purple?	Heather
Which breed of terrier does Kerry give it's name to?	Kerry Blue
Which K is the start of the Kerry way?	Killarney
Which group produced the mega selling album <i>Rumours</i> ?	Fleetwood Mac
What is a traditional flute made from?	Tin
What is a bodhran?	A drum
What are harp strings now made of?	Gut or nylon
Uilleann pipes are what type of pipes?	Bagpipes
Which Christy was a major player in Planxty?	Moore
The Curragh race course is in which Irish County?	Kildare
Is people's Park in Waterford or Dublin?	Waterford
What can you sample at the Old Middleton Distillery?	Jameson's Whiskey
In what year did Guinness formally adopt the harp as its symbol?	1962
Which dairy animal does Kerry give it's name to?	Cattle
What do the letters REPS stand for in relation to Irish farming?	Rural Enviroment Protection scheme
What is An Gárda Siochana?	The Irish National Police Service
Boxty is what?	An Irish potato cake
What is a currach?	A traditional fishing boat of the Irish western seaboard
What is a coracle?	A basket-like skin-covered boat, which was more traditional on inland waters
'Black Spot' posted at the roadside in Ireland usually indicates what?	Site of a fatal crash

ON THIS DAY IN IRISH HISTORY - OCTOBER

1st 1812 - English balloonist James Sadler attempts to cross the Irish Sea in a balloon. He fails and almost drowns.

2nd 1957 - The Voluntary Health Insurance Board is launched.

3rd

1938 - Britain's last remaining forts in the twenty-six counties are handed back to Ireland.

1940 - The German government announced it was willing to compensate Ireland for bombs dropped on Dublin.

1970 - US President Nixon arrives in Ireland.

1975 - Businessman Tiede Herrema is kidnapped by the IRA.

5th 1968 - Police in Derry baton-charge a civil rights march.

6th

1891 - Death of Charles Stewart Parnell.

1980 - Mella Carroll becomes Ireland's first female high court judge.

7th 1843 - Daniel O'Connell succumbs to government pressure and bans a Monster Meeting at Clontarf.

9th 1932 - Shots fired at a Cumann na nGaedhael meeting in Limerick.

10th

1918 - RMS Leinster is sunk by a German submarine with the loss of around 500 lives.

1957 - Fire at Windscale Nuclear Power Station in England, believed to have caused birth defects in Ireland.

1969 - The Hunt Committee report recommends an unarmed police force in Northern Ireland.

1977 - Mairéad Corrigan and Betty Williams win the Nobel Prize for Peace.

12th

1940 - The Kerry Head ship is bombed with the loss of twelve lives, months after surviving another attack.

1975 - Oliver Plunkett is canonised.

1984 - The IRA kill five people on an attack on a Brighton hotel during the Conservative Party Conference.

13th 1994 - Loyalist paramilitary groups announce a ceasefire.

18th

1880 - Ballycastle railway opens between Ballymoney and Ballycastle.

1881 - "No Rent" manifesto issued by Irish National Land League.

19th

1881 - Irish National Land League proclaimed illegal.

1989 - Three of the Guildford Four are released.

21st 1879 - Irish National Land League founded at Dublin.

22nd

1884 - Alice Walkington becomes the first woman to be awarded a degree in Ireland.

1976 - President Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh resigns over a furore about the Emergency Powers Bill, which led to the Minister for Defence describing him as a 'thundering disgrace'.

23rd

1911 - 70,000 Unionists march against Home Rule.

1970 - Charles Haughey, James Kelly, Albert Luykx and John Kelly are acquitted of conspiracy to import arms.

24th 1990 - The IRA forces three men to act as suicide bombers, resulting in seven deaths.

25th

1917 - De Valera becomes the President of Sinn Féin.

1920 - Lord Mayor of Cork Thomas MacSwiney dies on hunger strike in Brixton Prison.

1968 - The New University of Ulster is opened.

27th

1913 - James Larkin of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union sent to prison for seditious language.

30th

1939 - More than two dozen air-raid sirens are tested across Dublin.

31st

1909 - The Royal University of Ireland is dissolved.

1973 - Three IRA prisoners escape from Mountjoy Prison in a hijacked helicopter.

1990 - Brian Lenihan is sacked from government over dishonesty allegations.

1996 - First Irish language TV station, Teilifís na Gaeilge (TnaG), is launched.