



Fr Pat

Born in Dublin 1942, the doctor who delivered me was singing, 'Galway bay', according to my mother. When my father saw me, his first words were, "he is like Joe Louis". My fists were closed and up to protect my face. I was the second son and the second arrival into the family. My older brother decided to come into the world on the same date, but two years earlier. My parents were just great. My Da was surely my best friend. Sadly I never told him. My mother, God rest her, gave her life for her family.

The Irish language was the immediate instrument for my education and made a lasting impression on the educational formation I may have received. There arrived two younger sisters to keep the gender balance. With my father we had two places of worship, the local Vincentian Church and Croke Park. I longed to be good at sport, but was totally useless. I was the youngest of my class in primary and secondary school, and academically, like as in sport, useless. For the last four years of my secondary schooling I was sent to boarding school. Maybe I was not studying and a little difficult to control. Two Franciscan friars had the good fortune to teach me and I thought by their gentle temperament, they were Gods gift to humanity. If a person could be like that, maybe their life could be worthwhile. It is a life worth living. So I gave the friars life a try. To this day I am still trying.

I was a novice in Killarney. Then to the, 'City of Tribes', to attend University College Galway. For the last years in formation I pursued theological studies in Leuven.

Life has guided me into Chaplaincy in the School of Tribes, Dublin. For 6 years I was the Parish Priest in a very culturally rich but economically poor parish in Inner City Dublin. Knowledge of the price of stolen copper, broken windows and their repairs and seeing used syringes became the order of the day. I returned to Leuven to rediscover theology and nourish the faith dimension of my life. This brought about my first encounter with the flock at St Anthony's in Kraainem. Next a reluctant acceptance of an appointment as Full-time Chaplain to a Community second Level school in North Wicklow went from 1 year to 22years. Now I am appointed to St Anthony's.

I don't know any famous or important people but I do know drug addicts, teenage parents, parents whose children have died violently and people with broken hearts. Best of all I know thousands of happy people. Living for me is about what I become before God, not what I achieve. What you see is, I hope, what you get.

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