

Helping Us to Live Life Without Regrets?



By Dermot Layden

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ISBN: 978-1-921606-53-5

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Published in Ireland by Lettertec.



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Introduction / Overview

– the Essence of this Book

While this book will hopefully appeal to all age groups, it ought to be particularly helpful to those in their teenage and subsequent formative years, and to their parents. This book endeavours to endow young people (and those not so young) with the wisdom gained from life's experiences into old age, and thus hopefully open the door to them to living their lives without regrets. So effectively we are putting 'old shoulders' on 'young shoulders' and thereby providing the benefits of hindsight. And we want to do all of this without stifling the energies and initiatives of youth, but rather channel them in positive directions for the good of all. As author of this book who am I to attempt to achieve the ambitions, as just set out? That is a fair question, and my reply is briefly as follows:

I am in my early 80s and have been fortunate to have had very varied work and other life experiences (please see blurb on outside back cover of book). I have certainly made mistakes in life and have regrets, but I have learned from these mistakes and so can pass on the benefits of same to others. I have authored several other books, which included quite a lot about living fulfilled lives – I provide outline details of these books later. I have viewed other peoples' lives and their experiences and probably their regrets. I have given great attention to what I call 'famous quotations' of well-known people, which I deem as representing significant life's experiences, all rolled up into a few gem words, which I suggest we ignore at our peril! [It will be my privilege to provide a sample of these famous quotations later.] So since I have studied and wrote about a lot of aspects of life, in addition to my own life's experiences, I humbly submit that I am reasonably equipped to write this book.

Now I proceed with this **Introduction / Overview** by offering friendly advice under various categories, which I passionately believe will be helpful (in living life to the full and without regrets) to all of us, including myself, but particularly to young people setting out in life.

Thus here we go:

- Be humble always and never let pride dictate your attitude or actions. Proud people, I suggest, are often insecure, and like some other personal negative traits we will see later, pride can be poison to one's 'soul and being' and hold us back from being acceptable and effective human beings in society. Humility does not mean that we downgrade and underestimate our worth, rather it recognises that we are all human and capable of making mistakes, and furthermore it makes us aware of the maxim 'there go I but for the grace of God'. And yes, we are all children of God, dependent on him for every breath we breathe. And here is a pertinent extract from an Old Testament Scripture reading from Ecclesiasticus: "The greater you are, the more you should behave humbly, and then you will find favour with the Lord; for great though the power of the Lord is, he accepts the homage of the humble. There is no cure for the proud man's malady, since an evil growth has taken root in him." (Eccl.3:18-20/28)
- Show respect to other people, such as to parents, siblings, neighbours and work colleagues, and be particularly considerate to those who may not have your talents, resources and privileges in life. Thank God for your good fortune and try to help those who are not as fortunate as you are. And certainly, don't just confine your respect for people who have status in society (by our human standards), for everyone of us has the supreme status of being a child of God – and yes we are all equal.

- Develop the virtue of patience and don't ever lose your temper. Angry people are not nice people, and anger can lead one to making very bad and unwise decisions, which almost certainly will be a cause for regret later. And making amends later for actions / decisions made in anger is very often not possible, as the harm has been done!
- Don't be envious of other people because of advantages or benefits they may have, which you don't have. Envy can poison your soul and spirit and hold you back in living a fruitful life. Rather wish such fortunate people good luck.
- Have a forgiving attitude and abide by the maxim 'forget and let live'. Lack of forgiveness is another poison to the soul and spirit, which can certainly stunt one's ability to grow in life, and contribute to society.
- Very importantly, have a positive attitude to life. A negative and / or a cynical attitude will certainly hold one back from achieving one's potential. We must see the glass as being half full rather than half empty, while at the same time being realistic. And let us be bright and be a breath of fresh air to those around us, and radiate joy if at all possible. Do not allow ourselves to be dour and dull in our behaviour and looks. And yes, wear a smile if at all possible, for a smile does oneself a lot of good, and can be a huge lift in life to those to whom the smile is directed, and especially to those who are finding life tough, and let's face it, we all at times do find life tough. Life is not always a 'bed of roses', but there is always light around the corner.
- Yes all of us witness periods in life which lack lustre, when we may even face bouts of depression. But let us hold our heads high in these situations, as there is always light around the corner.

Certainly never make rash decisions (particularly self-harm ones) in these low periods in our lives. Like the old weighing scales taking a load, one side goes down while the other goes up.

- Do not underestimate the need for hard work in one's own life, and for commitment to the task on hand. Be prepared to get one's hands dirty, where appropriate, and don't expect other people to do a task that you would consider beneath you. Let us realise that life's goodies have to be worked for and earned, rather than expecting them to be presented to us on a plate. And let us be proficient in keeping up to date in our work and professional practices – yes we constantly have to learn.
- Be committed to undertaking voluntary work and services and be generous with your time and resources. It is a well established maxim that it is in giving that we receive – yes the positive emotional payback from such voluntary undertakings can be very significant, not least in the 'feel good' factor it confers, but also in making us feel a part of a community of helpers. And let us note that God in creating the world did not distribute the goods of our earth equally, but he expects us humans to make good this inequality. This could be regarded as the philosophy of the human international family.
- Certainly, selfishness and 'concern for me only' cannot be a characteristic of a fulfilled life, and will surely give rise to regrets later on in life.
- Try to make time for leisure / sporting activities and for proper physical exercise. [We might note that Dr. Ken Whitaker, well known for his economic planning as Secretary of the Irish Department of Finance, and who has passed from this earth, suggested we all should have a legitimate pastime leisure.]

But let us remember that if contact sports, or the like, is our choice, then it should be looked upon as a leisure activity, so that winning at all costs, fairly or otherwise, must not be part of our attitude thereto. Some very relevant quotations in this regard are provided later on.

- If you are privileged to be a parent, and / or husband / wife, be loving, sincere and responsible in all your relationships and duties. And remember that your children expect guidance and instruction – as it happens as I draft these very words, here is a recent Sunday Mass Scripture reading from the Letter to the Hebrews: “Have you forgotten that encouraging text in which you are addressed as sons? My son, when the Lord corrects, do not treat it lightly; but do not get discouraged when he reprimands you. For the Lord trains the ones that he loves and he punishes all those that he acknowledges as his sons. Suffering is part of your training; God is treating you as his sons. Has there ever been any son whose father did not train him?” (Heb 12:5-7) “Of course, any punishment is most painful at the time, and far from pleasant; but later, in those on whom it has been used, it bears fruit in peace and goodness. So hold up your limp arms and steady your trembling knees and smooth out the path you tread; then the injured limb will not be wrenched, it will grow strong again.” (Heb 12:11-13) Yes suffering is part of our lives and it helps us to grow and develop as human beings. And if we can, let us accept suffering as a gift from God, and this also will probably make it easier to bear!
- Be truthful and honest in all one’s business and life’s dealings. The truth will set us free. People will respect you for being truthful and honest, and if it concerns business matters, one can expect a payback in terms of loyalty. Business people who do not respect the above truth maxim, can often spend a lot of

time and energy in ‘covering their tracks’ for their dishonesty so as to avoid being ‘caught out’ – surely a very wasteful use of one’s talents and energies! Yes for sure, be truthful and honest and then forge ahead with positivity. All the foregoing, implies the practice of good business ethics. And as a ‘young tiger’ in business, do not let your ambitions be too outrageous and which would likely offend against common decency, because later you could pay very dearly for your unbridled behaviour. And don’t set out unfairly to bury a business opponent in the dumps, rather play the game fairly and by ethical rules.

- And as we approach towards the end of this Introduction / Overview, let us remember (as De Chardin wrote) that we are spiritual beings having a human existence on this earth (rather than human beings having a spiritual existence). Thus the practice of religion and belief in God is totally relevant to living a fulfilled life and a life without remorse and serious regrets at the end. That great champion of the youth, Fr. Edward J. Flanagan of Boys Town fame in America (and elsewhere) and one of Ireland’s greatest sons, said, among many of his famous quotes on youth: “Without God at the beginning there can only be confusion at the end”. Fr. Flanagan was highly revered and respected in America, and indeed throughout the world, for his views and practices in the positive development of young people, particularly those from difficult backgrounds, to reaching their full potential in life. And the author of this book before you, who has studied and written widely on the Christian Catholic religion, is utterly convinced that the proper practice of religion is essential in order to live a truly happy and fulfilled life. He, like his siblings, is ever grateful to his now long deceased parents for having been baptised into the Catholic faith and that Mass attendance and family prayer were standard practices for

all our family. He laments the fact that many people do not get the same religious start in life that he and his siblings got, but hopes he has in some small way made up for this shortcoming through his various writings on faith matters, and hopefully this book (almost certainly his last book) will somewhat further help the situation. God is a merciful God and full of love for us (really beyond our comprehension) but he does expect us to make the necessary effort to follow him. And at this point, we might note that various studies, carried out into the possible benefits derived from the practising of religion, have shown that several benefits were found to exist, such as better physical and mental health, reduced suicide, more stable marriages, reduced teenage experimentation with drugs, alcohol and sex, and can also prolong life. Furthermore a study published in the British Medical Journal showed that blood pressure dropped, and the heart rate slowed, and the respiration rate slowed, during the recitation of prayers and mantras. And we might note that some 75% of the medical schools in America have modules in their syllabi on religion / spirituality / healing. Apparently no such modules exist in Irish medical schools.

- Let us try to have balance in our lives, whereby we allocate the necessary time and space to undertake all the relevant activities of life, such as family and personal matters, work/job activities, leisure/sport activities, voluntary work, and above all, time for prayer and the practice of religion. And a common thread going through all of this, must be: treat others as you would like them treat you.
- And finally let us be sober in our personal habits and in our eating and drinking. Let us treat alcohol with respect, and if we do drink do it moderately and please don't start drinking at a young age. One hears so many sad and depressing stories about (young)

teenage drinking. Late teenage years, or better still early 20s, is time enough to take one's first drink of alcohol. And never, never, meddle in drugs. And finally, advice for all of us: let us develop the habit of voluntary denying ourselves from time to time of something we like – this will confer both moral and physical benefits on us and equip us to keep control of our passions.



How would Our Lord Jesus Christ look upon all the foregoing friendly Advice?

Perhaps the following Scriptural extract from St. Paul to the Colossians gives us a hint of the Lord's full agreement therewith!

“You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you, and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”
(Col 3:12-17)



Brief Outlines of other Books written by current Author, which impact on this current Book

The following is a list of these other books:

Title	Publisher	Year
A Life's Catch	Original Writing Ltd, Dublin	2008
Is My Life Relevant?	Lettertec Publishing, Cork	2013
A Guide for a Just Society and a Just World Order	Lettertec Publishing, Cork	2014
The Winding Road of Life	Lettertec Publishing, Cork	2016
In Defence of God, Jesus Christ and His Church - An Evidence-Based Approach	Lettertec Publishing, Cork	2018
Making Faith Practice Exciting and Liberating	Lettertec Publishing, Cork	2018

He also authored two booklets as follows:

An Invitation to Think a Little Deeper about the Mass	Knights of St. Columbanus, Sligo	2005
A Model for the Youth of Today, Fr. Edward Joseph Flanagan	Fr. Flanagan Committee, Sligo	2006



Some details of these publications follow:

[PS Some of the commentaries which follow hereafter on these various publications, recommend that you pursue further reading of them, either on line in the case of 3 of the books, or via hard copies where it is possible to retrieve same. **However, it is strongly suggested that you first complete the reading of this current book, and leave the other readings for a later time when it suits you.** Otherwise the impact of this current book might be partially lost, and in the event that you do not access any of the other readings, this current book still ought to be regarded as a significant publication standing in its own right.]

A Life's Catch.

This was a major publication and presented in hardback and was generally very highly acclaimed. The book is out of print but ought to be available in various libraries throughout the country, and copies are also likely to be available here and there, particularly in counties Leitrim and Roscommon. The blurb on the outside back cover of the book, which follows, gives an indication of the book's contents:

"A Life's Catch gives a beautifully graphic description of rural life in the late 1930s to early 1950s, which encompasses leisure activities, schooling, religion and family life in that era. It recounts the author's family history and varied career, offering insights into the workings of various institutions that have impacted significantly on the development of the Irish economy of today.

The autobiographical account provides the basis for the book to extend beyond the author's life. This includes a fascinating insight into the mining history of Arigna in counties Roscommon and Leitrim from the 1600s onwards as well as a concise but compelling description of angling. Many anglers and non-anglers alike may be

interested in the account of the Atlantic salmon and how its watery world can be a barometer of our management of the environment. This concern about our environment is carried through to the very timely section on climate change.

This is followed by an assessment of the social issues confronting our country today and a consideration of the role of family and religion in helping us to confront these issues. The concluding chapter and the many quotes scattered throughout the book offer insights and reflections from diverse sources on how one might live a more satisfying and full life.”

The blurb on the inside back cover states:

“Dermot Layden is a family man who grew up in county Leitrim in the late 1930s to 1950s. He qualified as a chartered accountant, married Beatrice in Dublin in 1966 and lived there until 1976 when they returned to the West of Ireland with their five children. Dermot’s career has included positions with the Industrial Development, Institute of Technology, Sligo, and the Accountancy Board in Tanzania. His family were involved in the coalmining industry in Arigna for several generations and remain involved today in other energy activities. Dermot is an accomplished angler and an admirer of nature. The spiritual dimension of life is very important to him.”

Is My Life Relevant?

This was a publication to mark the Year of Faith which ran from October 2012 to November 2013. Aid to the Church in Need in Ireland, very kindly made this book available to read free of charge on their web site – simply google ‘Aid to the Church in Need – Is My Life Relevant? by Dermot Layden’ and you can access the book straight away. Some hard copies of the book are also likely to be available, possibly in churches, and maybe elsewhere!

The main contents of the book comprise:

1. A Brief Outline of Vatican II documents, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church
2. Questions and Some Answers about Life (24 Questions in all)
3. Year of Faith Prayers
4. Standard Prayers

And here are the 24 Questions as per 2 above:

1. The 64 Million Dollar Question: What is Life all about?
2. The Everyday Reality Question: Can a successful career in our competitive environment be combined with good moral / religious practice?
3. Do I believe in God and Why should I?
4. What do I know about Creation? Do I create things?
5. Am I familiar with the term ‘Revelation’ and God’s Salvation Plan?
6. What is my understanding of Jesus Christ?

7. Am I familiar with what the 'Deposit of Faith' is about?
8. Could I talk at some length about 'faith'? Are there any striking examples of faith in God's salvation plan?
9. Am I familiar with the Scriptures, and how to read them?
10. Could I discuss the Three Divine Persons, i.e. Trinity – the Triune God?
11. Could I discuss the different visible and invisible elements in Creation? What about angels? What about us humans?
12. Is God good and loving seeing there is so much suffering in the world?
13. Do I believe in sin and the consequences of sin?
14. Could I name the Ten Commandments, and how relevant are they?
15. Could I talk about the Seven Deadly Sins and the Cardinal Virtues?
16. Could I name, and discuss the seven Sacraments?
17. How important is the Mass (the Eucharist) to me? Do I need to hear a convincing story on the Real Presence?
18. When was I last at Confession (Sacrament of Reconciliation)? Anyway, why should I bother with Confession? Surely it is outdated!
19. How is my Prayer Life? Maybe I am too busy to bother with prayer!
20. How familiar am I with the Beatitudes? / the Sermon on the Mount?

21. Am I a forgiving person? Am I patient? Do I get angry? Am I proud?
22. Do I believe in Purgatory, Heaven and Hell? Do I believe in Eternity? If I were to die in the next hour, where might my journey be to?
23. What changes might I need to make in my life to answer to a loving God the opening 64 million Dollar Question: What is Life all about?
24. A Final General Question: Does the Practice of Religion confer any Benefits (physical or otherwise) on us? – well consider the research!

The foregoing comprises a pretty exhaustive questioning about life, and about religion and spiritual matters, but surely all are very relevant Questions! Yes you are invited to look at the answers to these Questions which follow in the book – yes go on line when you are ready!

A Guide for a Just Society and a Just World Order

This short book is (I suggest) a very well professionally prepared document setting out the responsibilities of all of us, Governments, individuals and various organisations, in dispensing justice throughout the world. God did not distribute the resources of the earth equally between all nations and peoples, but he expects us to make good this inequality. Yes we all have moral obligations to help our needy neighbours, both near and far. The book incidentally reflects a lot of the social teachings of the Catholic Church, which generally are very highly regarded universally.

This book has a very particular relevance for Governments, and deals not only with the dispensing of social justice (both nationally and internationally) and doing so in the interest of the common good and with respect for human rights; it also deals with the important issue of how Governments acquire legitimate authority. For this reason, copies of the book were sent free of charge to politicians in Ireland and in the EU. The book which was published in 2014 is out of print and not available for sale. However, copies are likely to be available here and there, and particularly among members of the Oireachtas and also members of some county councils, and possibly also with some MEPs.

The Winding Road of Life

This book which was launched in 2016 and published by Lettertec Ireland Ltd, is also out of print. Possibly Lettertec would be prepared to print more copies, if there was sufficient demand for same – so those interested in acquiring a copy of the book could contact Lettertec Ireland Ltd.

The book covers a wide range of issues which we confront in life. The blurb on the back outside cover of the book, reads:

“This book has a lot to do with encouraging reflection and balance in our living as we confront many of the important day-to-day issues which impact on our lives – these issues will be evident from the Contents page and the Appendices [see later below]. The book’s basic philosophy is to instil hope and encouragement in the way we handle life’s challenges. An alternative title for the book could justly be *The University of Life*. And it could be said that the melodies of early life, middle life and of autumn life flow gently throughout the book, leading to life fulfilment. An interesting feature of the book is the fascinating collection of famous quotes placed at the beginning of each chapter. The

book is very readable and has relevance to both young and old, no matter who you may be. Normal commercial considerations in marketing this book are dispensed with, so that the book can be acquired at little cost.

This is a serious book which attempts to help us all to live happy and fulfilled lives, and one of the surprises in the book is what is deemed to constitute happiness and fulfilment. And the book contains thought-provoking proposals relating to politics, sports, our relationship with alcohol, suicide, the environment, and so on. The role of faith and religious practices in living fulfilled lives gets a suitable airing.”

Included in the above blurb, is the statement: ‘one of the surprises in the book is what is deemed to constitute happiness and fulfilment’. The material used to deal with this important matter is based on the writings of the well-known international columnist, Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, writing in June 2011 under the topic ‘A Life of Meaning and Happiness.’ And here is the gist of what Fr. Rolheiser wrote on this topic:

Fr. Rolheiser identifies a typical type question we ask ourselves: Am I happy? Is my life a happy one? Am I happy with my marriage? Am I happy with my family? Am I happy in my job? And so on. He then asks if these are good questions for us to ask ourselves, and the answer is “No”, as these are questions with which to torture ourselves, and points out that in those questions we should be asking ourselves about meaningfulness rather than happiness. Therefore we would question ourselves as to whether one’s self, life, marriage, job and so on has meaning. He goes on to say: “We need to ask the deep questions about our lives in terms of meaning rather than in terms of happiness, because, for the most part, we have a false, over-idealised, and unrealistic concept

of happiness.” And he goes on to say that “we tend to equate happiness with two things, pleasure and lack of tension. Hence we fantasise that for us to be happy, we need to be in a situation within which we would be free of all tensions that normally flood into our lives ... Happiness as it is superficially conceived of, means perfect health, perfectly fulfilled relationships, a perfect job, no anxiety or tension in life, no disappointments, and time and money to enjoy the good life.”

Fr. Rolheiser reminds us that “meaning is what constitutes happiness, and meaning is not contingent upon pain and tension being absent from our lives. There can be deep meaning in something even if there isn’t happiness in the way we superficially conceive of that.” And he concludes: “and looking back on our lives ... certain periods of our lives that were fraught with all kinds of struggles and within which we had to do with very little, were indeed very happy times. We look back on them now with fondness and warmth. They were meaningful times and our present perspective washes back through time and purges the pain and highlights the joy. Conversely, we can also look back on certain periods of our lives when there may have been pleasure, but that phase of our lives now appears clearly as an unhappy time ...”

And here is an indication of the Contents of ***The Winding Road of Life***:

- Approaches to a Fulfilled Life: Factors and Character Traits likely to lead to fulfilled lives; Preparing Young People for fulfilled lives; Religion as a Factor... for fulfilled lives; Political Systems as a basis for inculcating fulfilled lives; Social Justice/Injustice in the world and its compatibility with fulfilled lives; Our Work and Business Ethics and Practices as a platform for fulfilled lives; Reasons for Cynicism.

- Dealing with Life's Difficulties: Examples of Successful People who had difficult starts or periods in life; Nothing is impossible in life; A look at Alcohol and Drug abuse; A look at Suicide and its prevention; Importance of community and voluntary work; How would you like to be remembered after you die?
- The Role of Leisure and Nature within a fulfilled life: An overview of Sport and Leisure activities, as part of fulfilled lives; A look at contact sports, such as Rugby, football and hurling; Angling; The Natural Environment and the Gospel of Creation.
- Religion within a fulfilled life: Some general comments on religion, and an Overview of Catholicism.

The Book also contains an interesting array of Appendices.

In Defence of God, Jesus Christ and His Church – An Evidence-Based Approach

This book can be read free of charge on the web site of its publishers, www.lettertecbooks.com The blurb on the back cover of the book states:

“This book should be of interest to various categories of people such as: those who are sceptical about the existence of God; those who are doubtful about the validity of practising any religion; those who are lukewarm in the practice of the Catholic faith; and not least those who wish to deepen their knowledge and practice of their faith.”

This book sets out the evidence to prove the genuine existence of God, of Jesus Christ and the authentic Church established by Jesus Christ some 2,000 years ago. Your author here had the privilege in 2012 of standing on the very rock (or thereabouts) at Caesarea Philippi at the foot of Mount Hermon, north of Galilee in the Holy

Land, where Jesus said to Peter (our first Pope) “Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18). The evidence used in this book to prove the genuine existence of God, Jesus Christ and his Church, is mainly based on Scripture, both the Old and New Testaments – and this evidence, it is suggested, is very compelling. However further evidence of a true Godly presence is also provided in the book via the several Marian apparitions over succeeding centuries, and likewise in the several private visions which various individuals (such as St. Faustina, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, and several others) had with the Lord Jesus Christ. Incidentally, there should be no surprise about these (ongoing) Marian apparitions and private visions with Jesus Christ, since Jesus promised he would be with his Church till the end of time.

Obviously other approaches, besides the ones used in this book, can be used to prove the existence of God, such as the Scientific / Creation approaches, which show how the precision of the workings of the cosmos could surely not occur without an overall outside original designer, which we call God, and who was the ‘first cause’ in the creation process. Also philosophical approaches / arguments put forward by such personages as St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Augustine and St. John Henry Newman are all very helpful in coming to a belief in God. At any rate, your attention is drawn to a particularly attractive and a very convincing current ‘You Tube’ series available on the internet, entitled ‘Catholicism Beyond Reasonable Doubt’, which you can watch in a very relaxed atmosphere by simply googling the above, i.e. ‘Catholicism ... Doubt’. The Series contains 7 Episodes of some 20 minutes each as follows:

Episode 1. God Does Exist

Episode 2. Revelation – God has revealed himself

Episode 3. Who God is, the Trinity

Episode 4. Fall and Redemption

Episode 5. Christ through the Sacraments

Episode 6. Christ in the Church

Episode 7. Where from Here?

You are strongly encouraged to view all the above Episodes (and do please pass the word around), and as a very minimum, view Episode 1, and having done so it will, I strongly suggest, be pretty well impossible for anyone to claim that there is no God!

Returning to my book, please at least look it up on the internet, www.lettertecbooks.com and as a very minimum read the headings for the Topics covered in the book, as per Contents page, and the list of Appendices. And furthermore, as a minimum read Appendix 3 'Breath-Taking accounts of Phenomena concerning the Real Presence of Jesus in Consecrated Bread (the Blessed Eucharist). Should you be a 'doubting Thomas' regarding the Real Presence of Jesus in the Sacred Host (as consecrated at Mass by the priest standing in the place of Jesus Christ), then it would be very difficult to understand how one would remain a doubting Thomas having read Appendix 3. [Note however that we do not (or should not) need these Eucharistic miracles as above to believe in the Real Presence, since Jesus Christ, who is God, told us that the consecrated Bread and Wine are his Body and Blood, and being God, he could not tell us a lie.]

Making Faith Practice Exciting & Liberating

This book was published alongside with the previous book "In Defence of God ...". And it can also be read free of charge on the same web site, i.e. www.lettertecbooks.com The blurb on the back cover of the book reads "In this relatively short book, the essence of the Catholic Faith, as contained in the Catechism, is distilled in a highly readable and presentable fashion. This affords the reader to get a real

grasp of what that Faith entails, thereby removing the mystique and misapprehensions that many people seem to hold about the Catholic Faith. With this knowledge, the practice of the Faith can definitely become exciting and liberating. And should you at present find the Mass to be boring, then surely this book is for you! In the opening section, the book presents in summary form convincing evidence for belief in God, Jesus Christ and his Church.”

The first topic covered in the book consists of a summary of its companion book “In Defence of God ...” After that it deals with 4 topics as follows:

- Deposit of Faith and the Four Pillars of that Faith
- The Mass (‘source and summit of the Christian Life’) & the Real Presence
- Introduction to Reading, Understanding and Significance of the Scriptures (Bible)
- An introduction to the very readable YOUCAT catechism

This is a short book and we are **all** strongly encouraged to read it, and do please pass the word around. Here are some comments on the above topics:

Deposit of Faith and the four Pillars of that Faith: The Deposit of Faith is about the contents and truths of the Faith which God has revealed to us down through the ages, particularly through the Prophets and the Scriptures, and ultimately through the revelations and teachings of the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, and then through the subsequent teachings and practices of Jesus’ Apostles. This Deposit of Faith (and the Four Pillars of that Faith) are contained in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the current catechism dates back to 11th October 1992, which was approved by Pope John Paul II in the following words: “The Catechism of the Catholic Church... which I today order

by virtue of my Apostolic Authority, is a statement of the Church's faith and of catholic doctrine, attested to or illumined by Sacred Scripture, the Apostolic Tradition and the Church's Magisterium. I declare it to be a sure norm for teaching the faith ..." You will note there were 3 elements referred to above by Pope John Paul II, i.e. Sacred Scripture, Apostolic Tradition, and the Church's Magisterium. These comprise the 3 elements making up the Deposit of Faith, and all are necessary for the preservation of the complete faith, and are often referred to as the three-legged stool of the faith, whereby the stool topples over if one or more legs are missing. And we might note that certain non-Catholic Christian churches only accept Sacred Scripture as making up the faith. But Scripture itself shows the error in this approach, i.e. St. John's Gospel states: "There were many other things that Jesus did; if all were written down, the world itself, I suppose, would not hold all the books that would have to be written." (John 21:25). The Apostles witnessed Jesus at first hand and they would have developed between them (and their early successors) an established way of behaviour, of believing, of worshipping, and so on. And not only did the New Testament not contain all the things that Jesus said and did, but we must note that it was not written until several years after Jesus' death and resurrection. So preaching of the faith preceded the writing down of Jesus's message. Thus what Jesus and the Apostles did in practice, but not written down, was clearly an important part of the faith – hence the necessity of Apostolic Tradition being part of the faith.

What about the third element of the faith, i.e. the Church's Magisterium? This is the Church's teaching authority, made up of bishops in communion with the pope, and noting that the bishops are in direct line of descent, through the laying on of hands, from the Apostles themselves. Like any business organisation, the Church needs the Magisterium to avoid aspects of the faith being lost, and also to avoid 'corruption and false teaching', including inaccurate

interpretations of the truths of the faith, done with the assistance of the Holy Spirit. The well recognised Maryvale Institute in the UK which runs courses on the Catechism and other relevant topics (and on which were partially relied on for some of above comments) also stated that “the Magisterium cannot make judgements independently of Scripture and Tradition ... it cannot change the faith to suit itself or to suit a rebellious generation that wants to throw off the ‘shackles’ of a particular teaching... these three principles of our faith reinforce one another and enable the faith to be passed on whole and entire.”

So what is involved in this ‘whole and entire’ faith? Essentially it is what is contained in the Four Pillars of faith, which effectively comprises the contents of the Catechism. And these Pillars are:

Pillar 1: Profession of Faith, dealing primarily with the articles of faith contained in the Apostles Creed.

Pillar 2: Celebration of the Christian Mysteries, i.e. the active celebration of the faith through the Seven Sacraments of the Church.

Pillar 3: Life in Christ, responding positively to Jesus Christ through the observance of the Ten Commandments of the Church.

Pillar 4: Christian Prayer, being a positive response to Jesus Christ through prayer.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church deals with the detailed contents of the above 4 Pillars. And we might note that the Catechism can be read online – just google Catechism of the Catholic Church.

There is also a youth version of the Catechism entitled YOUCAT which is easier to read than the main Catechism (but does not deal exhaustively with all matters) but it is highly recommended, at least for a start, for all age groups. YOUCAT is dealt with in my book (‘Making

Faith Practice ...') on pages 41 to 44, and you are encouraged to read same online at www.lettertecbooks.com And do consider buying a hard copy of YOUCAT. And here is another important purchase that you might consider making – if you do not have a copy of the Scriptures (i.e. Bible) do please give serious thought to acquiring one, and seek advice as to which of the available versions would suit you best. Pages 34 to 40 of my book deal with the Scriptures. And here is a statement from the 'Mirror' publication of Aid to the Church in Need, and which is quoted on page 40 of my book:

“Dear Friends, nobody would die just for a book – but for a declaration of love they surely might! So let us once more give the Holy Bible an honoured place in our homes, let us read it often and pray with its help.

And finally, 'keeping the best wine until last', **pages 21 to 33 of the book deal with the Mass and the Real Presence.** Do please do your best to read these pages on web site www.lettertecbooks.com and hopefully you could encourage others to do likewise. The Mass is the very essence and summit of our Catholic Faith. Sadly very many people do not seem to appreciate what happens at the Mass, and thus one hears comments about the Mass being boring. 'Heaven and earth are joined together at the Mass' – that is surely a monumental statement and a monumental reality! And here is an extract from page 27 of the book recounting how St. Padre Pio experienced the Mass: “To St. Padre Pio, the Mass was not only Calvary but also Paradise, and the Blessed Virgin Mary was his constant companion at the altar. When asked about this, he explained that Our Lady is present at every Mass, along with all the angels and 'the whole celestial court'. At each Mass he saw the heavens open, the splendour of God, and the glory of the angels.” And here are some other extracts from the above pages:

- Pope John Paul II issued a very significant Encyclical Letter on the Eucharist (*Ecclesia De Eucharistia*) on Holy Thursday 2003, and here are some extracts therefrom: “I cannot let this Holy Thursday 2003 pass without halting before the ‘Eucharistic face’ of Christ and pointing out with new force to the Church the centrality of the Eucharist. From it the Church draws her life. From this ‘living bread’ she draws her nourishment. How could I not feel the need to urge everyone to experience it ever anew?” ... “even when it is celebrated on the humble altar of a country church, the Eucharist is always in some way celebrated on the altar of the world. It unites heaven and earth. It embraces and permeates all creation.” And we should note also that Pope John Paul II highly recommended the practice of Eucharistic adoration, stating that “The worship of the Eucharist outside the Mass is of inestimable value for the life of the Church.”
- And here is another extract from the above pages based on a book written by Vinny Flynn entitled ‘7 Secrets of the Eucharist’, and concerning heaven and earth becoming united in the Eucharist: “Christ is never alone. When He becomes present in the Eucharist as He is in heaven, without leaving heaven, that means that all of heaven is present with Him. No wonder He told us, ‘The Kingdom of heaven is within you’ (Luke 17:21). Christ doesn’t leave heaven to be present in the Eucharist, and His presence in the Eucharist is not different from His presence in heaven.” Surely the foregoing is a monumental revelation to most of us, and surely we cannot keep it a secret any longer as to what actually takes place in the Mass. No wonder St. John Vianney said “If we really understood the Mass, we would die of joy.” (page 23 of book). Surely too, we should try our very best to make amends from now on (where in the past we have not always attended to our Mass obligations) by attending and participating fully in the celebration of the Mass, and maybe exceed our Mass attendance obligations! And we

should note that we are not mere spectators at Mass – rather (because of our baptism) we share a common (royal) priesthood, and consequently participate with the ordained priest in offering the Mass. Furthermore, relying on comments from the Italian (Papal) preacher, Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, we can silently join with the priest in saying the words of the Consecration (“Take ... Eat” ... “Take ... Drink” ...) and offer our whole selves, indeed everything to Christ. Thus at the Consecration, we can consecrate our bodies with the body of Jesus on Calvary (which in the Mass happens in an un-bloody manner) – this implies that we glorify Jesus with our bodies in our everyday living. And yes, Jesus is really and truly present to us under sacramental signs in the Eucharist.

For sure, the Mass is a stupendous mystery, and Thank you Jesus, Mary and all the Heavenly Court.

Finally a brief reference to the two booklets also written by your author here, one on the Mass in 2005 and the other on Fr. Flanagan of Boys Town, in 2006. Regarding the Mass booklet, its contents were largely incorporated into the last book “Making Faith Practice ...” as covered above, so no further comment is required here.

The Fr. Flanagan booklet is still a very relevant publication, because it tells the story of a great Irish man, Fr. Flanagan and of his life, and particularly of his amazing vision in setting up the Boys Town home in Omaha, Nebraska in the USA, in 1917. Fr. Edward J. Flanagan revolutionised the treatment afforded to wayward boys, from very unsuitable imprisonment to a loving caring family environment in his Boys Town home in Omaha. Thus Fr. Flanagan’s Boys Town home and his concepts and philosophies for the caring and development of wayward boys (and girls) became known and recognised across

the world. He was a man of wonderful vision, and was way ahead of his time in his thinking and views concerning how we can reach our potential in life. Indeed, it could be said, that his thinking and philosophies impinged on the caring and development of all people, and not just on the wayward and the young. For someone who was born a sickly child, on a small farm in Ballymoe (on Roscommon/Galway border) in 1886; as a member of a large family (some of whom emigrated to America); but with a dogged determination to become a priest, despite his repeated respiratory illnesses when (some of) his tutors saw little or no promise for him; his achievements were truly amazing. For sure he was a gift from God. Fr. Flanagan did not spare himself, and he took the trouble to travel widely in the US in order to study the juvenile court system and found it was not fit for purpose, in that the courts were incarcerating young boys in juvenile prisons without any consideration been given to the environments (and likely troubled backgrounds) these boys came from. Soon Fr. Flanagan had the ear of President Roosevelt, and we might say, the rest is history in that Fr. Flanagan's views on the rehabilitation of wayward / troubled boys took precedence. Fr. Flanagan's fame spread with the release in 1938 of the Boys Town film starring Spencer Tracy as Fr. Flanagan and Mickey Rooney as a wayward boy. Also Fr. Flanagan travelled significantly abroad, sometimes at the behest of the American government, to help with the rehabilitation of young people in the aftermath of World War II. In fact it was on one such trip to Berlin in May 1948 that he suffered a massive heart attack and died. It should be noted that Fr. Flanagan visited Ireland in 1946 and studied our various care institutions and prison systems, and found them very unsatisfactory and said so very clearly, but the Irish authorities did not listen to him. But he did plan to return to Ireland to rectify the situation, but it wasn't to be due to his death in 1948.

Before finishing this piece, lets reflect on a paragraph from a beautiful poem on Fr. Flanagan entitled 'A Son of Ballymoe', written by the late

John Duggan (who passed away recently) and features at the start of this booklet on Fr. Flanagan, which we are examining:

He was a special Irishman, a legend in his time
A simple man of faith and love and character sublime
He saw the scars of broken homes reflecting all around
And so in nineteen seventeen a home for boys he found
The seed increased a hundredfold, the home became a town
And word went round the world of this Pastor of renown
The countless men who felt his love in Boys Town long ago
Still remember Father Flanagan the son of Ballymoe

Your author here had the wonderful privilege of visiting the Boys Town home in Omaha in 2007 as part of a delegation from the Diocese of Elphin (of which Ballymoe is part) led by the late Bishop Christopher Jones. The experience was eye-opening, particularly from the point of view of how successful the rehabilitation of boys and girls from difficult backgrounds was. [Note that both boys and girls are catered for in Boys Town, and have been for many years).

And finally, it must be noted that Fr. Flanagan devised a wonderful collection of famous quotes concerning young people and their development and related matters. We will enjoy some of them in the next section. And just to note too, that the Church has declared Fr. Flanagan a Servant of God, and further progress on the road to sainthood is very possible.

[If one googles 'Fr. Flanagan of Boys Town' you will find copious information on him.]

A Sample of Famous Quotations to Help us Live Life Positively and Without Regrets

*Some Quotations by Fr. Flanagan of Boys Town:

“There are no bad boys. There is only bad environment, bad training, bad example, bad thinking.”

“I have yet to find a boy that wants to be bad.”

“When parents fail to do their job, when they allow their children to run the streets and to keep bad company, when they fail to provide them with good examples in the home, then the parents and not the children are the delinquents.”

“The boy goes where his father goes. He does what his father does, not what his father says he should do.”

“The way to win respect is to show respect.”

“Nothing costs so little as a few words of recognition.”

“Criticism, neglect, and indifference have a withering effect on the growing boy or girl.”

“Youth who have not been loved and protected are not likely to love others and protect the rights of others.”

“Character is formed by doing the things we are supposed to do, when it should be done, whether we feel like doing it or not.”

"No one is too good to perform whatever is expected of him."

"A young person should never be made to feel that no great thing is expected of him or her."

"Constant criticism is often the result of impatience in adults rather than imperfections in children."

"There is wisdom in the habit of looking at the bright side of life."

"The person who lacks purpose will never go far or do much."

"No boy's education is complete until he has been taught to accept nothing from life except what he can win with his own hands. We all must work. We all have some job to do."

"Without God at the beginning, there can only be confusion at the end."

"Without religious faith there can be no lasting enthusiasm. Man cannot lift himself by tugging at his own bootstraps."

***Quotations relating to leisure / sports:**

*"The best intelligence test is what we do with our leisure."
(Laurence J. Peter)*

"The soul is covered with the color [colour] of its leisure thoughts." (Dean Inge)

"One player practising sportsmanship is far better than 50 preaching it." (Knute Rockne)

"Most games are lost not won." (Casey Stengel)

*"In our leisure we reveal what kind of people we are."
(An Ovid quote)*

*"Nobody who ever gave his best regretted it."
(George Halas)*

*"You can learn a line from a win and a book from a defeat."
(Paul Brown)*

"Win or lose, do it fairly." (Knut Rockne)

*"Winning isn't everything. There should be no conceit in
victory and no despair in defeat." (Matt Busby)*

*"It is better to fail aiming high than to succeed aiming low."
(Bill Nicholson)*

"No one ever won a game by resigning." (Ksawery Tartakower)

*"Win or lose, I'll feel good about myself. That's what is
important." (Mary Doctor)*

*Lastly, that one-time great Cavan footballer, the late Mick
Higgins who died in 2010, replied when*

*asked how he would like to be remembered?: "I never hit
anyone, I played the game clean, and I never was put off".*

***Quotations relative to living fulfilled lives:**

*"And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's
the life in your years." (President Abraham Lincoln)*

*"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream
a new dream." (C.S. Lewis)*

*“Do not protect yourself by a fence,
but rather by your friends.” (A Czeck)*

*“Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.”
(Albert Einstein)*

*“Life is a process of becoming, a combination of states we
have to go through. Where people fail is that they wish to elect
a state and remain in it. This is a kind of death.” (Anais Nin)*

*“When you were born you cried and the world rejoiced.
Live your life so that when you die the world cries
and you rejoice.” (An Indian Proverb)*

*“An unexamined life is really not worth living.”
(A Greek philosopher)*

*“The gate of heaven is low; only the humble can enter it.”
(St. Elizabeth Seton)*

*“Blessed are those whose relaxed faces lighten
the pain of others.” (Georges Chevot)*

*“Sorrow paralyses the will; one progresses only in joy.”
(Georges Chevot)*

“Forgiveness is an act of strength.” (Georges Chevot)

“One only forgets if one forgives.” (Georges Chevot)

*“Forget, smile and taste one of the best joys of having
forgiven.” (Georges Chevot)*

*“Angry people are those who are most afraid.” (Author
unknown to writer)*

*“Pride makes us artificial, and humility makes us real.”
(Thomas Merton)*

*“Pride comes first, disgrace comes after; with the humble is
wisdom found.” (Proverb 11:2)*

“Happiness is a direction, not a place.” (Sydney J. Harris)

*“Many people die with their music still in them, their songs
unsung, their stories untold.” (Daniel O’ Leary)*

*“If seed in the black earth can turn into such beautiful roses,
what might the heart of man become in its long journey to the
stars.” (G. K. Chesterton)*

*“We are not permitted to choose the frame of our destiny. But
what we put into it is ours.” (Dag Hammarskjold)*

*“Don’t be afraid to go out on a limb. It’s where all the fruit is.”
(Shirley MacLaine)*

“We do not exist for ourselves.” (Thomas Merton)

***Quotations relating to work, and such matters:**

*“Genius is one percent inspiration and 99 percent
perspiration.” (Thomas A. Edison)*

*“Opportunity is missed by most people, it is dressed in overalls
and looks like work.” (Thomas A. Edison)*

*“I have friends in overalls whose friendship I would not swop
for the favour of the kings of the world.” (Thomas A, Edison)”*

"If we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves." (Thomas A. Edison)

*"Imagination is more important than knowledge."
(Albert Einstein)*

"Behold the tortoise. He only makes progress when he sticks his neck out." (James Bryant Conant)

*"Experience is the name we give to our past mistakes."
(Oscar Wilde)*

"A goal is a dream with a deadline." (Napoleon Hill)"

*"Don't ask for the task to be easy. Ask for it to be worth it."
(Jim Rohn)*

"The best preparation for good work tomorrow is to do good work today." (Elbert Hubbard)

*"Happiness is doing with a smile what you have to do anyway."
(Author unknown to writer)*

"The slack hand brings poverty, but the diligent hand brings wealth." (Proverb 10:4)

[A final comment on Work: Let us look upon our work as a God given Duty and a Privilege]

*Some sundry Quotations:

*“Man is so made that when anything fires his soul,
impossibilities vanish.” (Jean Fontaine)*

*“Life is a mirror and will reflect back to the thinker what he
thinks into it.” (Ernest Holmes)*

*“Think big thoughts, but relish small pleasures.”
(H. Jackson Brown, Jr)*

*“Guard well your spare moments. They are like uncut
diamonds. Discard them and their value will never be known.
Improve them and they will become the brightest gems in a
useful life.” (Ralph Emerson)*

*“The straight and narrow path is the only one that does not
seem to have a traffic problem.” (A Proverb saying)*

*“Man cannot live without joy; therefore when he is deprived
of true spiritual joy it is necessary that he becomes addicted to
carnal pleasures.” (St. Thomas Aquinas)*

“Every cloud has a silver lining.” (Author unknown to writer)

*“Life is a journey that must be travelled no matter how bad the
roads and accommodation.” (Oliver Goldsmith)*

*“Success consists of getting up one more time than you fall.”
(Oliver Goldsmith)*

*“Without darkness and winter time, it is very hard to shine.”
(Daniel O’Leary)*

*"The greatest oak was once a little nut who held its ground."
(Author unknown to writer)*

*"We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we
give." (Winston Churchill)*

*"Once you learn how to die, you learn how to live." (Morrie
Swartz from book 'Tuesdays with Morrie', by Mitch Albom)*

*"Ultimately faith reveals how valuable we are, because our
life, in spite of everything, was found by God to be worth dying
for." (Michael Paul Gallagher from his book 'Faith Maps')*

"God is always with us in suffering." (Also from 'Faith Maps')

*"God was there, but I was not there." (St. Augustine looking
back on his wayward life)*

"We are the human lungs of God." (Daniel O'Leary)

*"The more human we are, the more divine we are." – a typical
comment from the late Daniel O'Leary, a great priest, preacher
and writer who had a wonderful appreciation and insight
into the Divine Jesus Christ becoming a human being like us.
For sure we must all honour and respect our human lives and
those of all people, including the unborn.*



Some Conclusions on How to Live Life Without Regrets?

The Conclusions here will be somewhat brief in the sense that it is not intended to significantly encapsulate the contents of this book. As the book is a relatively short one, hopefully that would not be necessary.

1. The first conclusion, is really an additional comment concerning whether it should be the **heart** or the **head** that dictates our lives? It is concluded that both should have a role to play, and particularly to note that the heart has a lot to do with our attitudes towards, and personal feelings for, whatever is at stake. And certainly we cannot always stand aloof from the issue, because the circumstances may require that the heart must come into play. For some people (or maybe for many!) the longest journey they have to make in life is that from the head to the heart, despite its mere short physical distance being less than the length of one's arm. Obviously realism must pertain, but that's not necessarily an excuse to ignore how a clinical head based decision may offend some very deserving human cause. And remember Fr. Daniel O'Leary's mantra "the more Human we are, the more Divine we are".

2. Do try to take to heart, the so-called friendly advice concerning the many behaviour and other life issues dealt with in the first section of the book under **Introduction / Overview – the Essence of this Book.**

The issues covered included:

- practising humility;
- showing respect to others;
- developing the virtue of patience and controlling one's temper/anger;
- avoiding being envious;
- having a forgiving attitude;
- having a positive attitude to life and to life's activities;
- recognising that we all have low periods in life (depressed moments) and the importance of not making rash hasty bad decisions (particularly those relating to self-harm / suicide), and remembering there is always light around the corner;
- recognising the need for conscientious hard work, and commitment to the task on hand, and not to expect the goods of this earth to be handed to us on a plate;
- be committed to undertaking voluntary work and sharing one's resources with the needy, and recognising that there is no room for selfishness in a life that expects to have no regrets;
- try to make time for leisure, sport and physical exercise;
- as a parent / family member be loving and responsible, and parents do remember that your children expect / need instruction from you, and we might note the comments made about suffering, which can be good for us;

- be truthful and honest in one's life and business dealings, and such have paybacks for us;
 - above all let us recognise that we are spiritual beings, made in the image of God, having a human existence on this earth, so that the genuine and honest practice of religion is essential to living a life that will not have regrets. [In this context, it was noted that the practice of religion confers many benefits on the practitioner];
 - let us have 'balance' in our lives, thus allowing adequate time for all necessary activities;
 - and finally let us be sober in all our eating and drinking activities.
3. The next section of this book provides some summary information on the various past publications of your author here. While some hard copies of these books ought to be available here and there, three of the said publications are available to read free of charge online, as follows: 'Is My Life Relevant?' is available on the web site of Aid to the Church in Need (simply google Aid to the Church in Need – Is My Life Relevant? by Dermot Layden); *'In Defence of God, Jesus Christ and His Church' can be read on the Lettertec Publishing web site – simply google www.lettertecbooks.com; *the third book 'Making Faith Practice Exciting & Liberating' can also be read on www.lettertecbooks.com

In regard to the first mentioned book 'Is My Life Relevant?', the reader is encouraged to at least read the 24 Questions listed in the book concerning various life issues, and the subsequent answers attempted in answering these 24 Questions. But do also consider reading the entire book.

In regard to the second book 'In Defence of God ...' you are invited to consider reading it in full online on the Lettertec web site, and the same suggestion applies to the third book 'Making Faith Practice ...' so as to come to a more full understanding of their contents, over and above that provided heretofore in this book.

The book 'In Defence of God ...' sets out primarily to prove that there is a God based on Scripture evidence (both Old and New Testaments) and on the occurrences of the Marian apparitions and private visions from Jesus Christ down through the ages. The book also covers various religious practices / prayers that have emerged from these occurrences and private visions, which the reader might wish to know about and engage in! And in the matter of believing in God, the reader was encouraged to seek further evidence by going online to view the wonderful You Tube series entitled 'Catholicism Beyond Reasonable Doubt', where 7 Episodes (topics) are covered, the first being 'God Does Exist', and this is surely a very compelling evidence of God's existence!

The other book 'Making Faith Practice ...' covers four significant topics i.e. •'Deposit of Faith and the Four Pillars of that Faith'; •'The Mass (source and summit of the Christian Life) & the Real Presence'; •'Introduction to Reading, Understanding and Significance of the Scriptures (Bible)'; •'An introduction to the very readable YOUCAT catechism'. The first two of the foregoing four topics are reasonably well covered heretofore in this book, but you are encouraged to consider reading further thereon on the Lettertec web site, and also to read up on the other two topics (i.e. Scriptures and YOUCAT). Above all, please take special note of the important details provided heretofore on the Mass, but one will find some other interesting details thereon in reading 'Making Faith Practice ...' on the Lettertec web site.

4. In relation to Fr. Flanagan of Boys Town fame, the reader is reminded that by googling same, one will find copious information thereon on the internet. Fr. Flanagan's concepts and philosophies on the development of all young people (and especially those who come from difficult backgrounds) into productive citizens in society, is surely very relevant today and thus should be given serious consideration by the relevant authorities. Fr. Flanagan had wonderful vision, and his views fashioned some 100 years ago, are, it is suggested, totally relevant today.
5. Do enjoy re-engaging with the list of Famous Quotations provided heretofore. As indicated at the beginning of the book, it was noted that these quotations can encapsulate much earned experience and wisdom from life's experiences and ageing, and all wrapped up into a few gem words, which could be very helpful to us in living a fulfilled life without regrets!
6. And let us finish these Conclusions with a fitting quote from the late Pope John XXIII (now a saint) as follows: "Do not walk through time without leaving worthy evidence of your passage."

And finally **thank you** for persevering with this book to this point, and I hope you found it a worthwhile exercise and expenditure of your time.

God Bless. Dermot Layden

