

Statement of
Archbishop Francis Duffy
Archbishop of Tuam and Apostolic Administrator of Killala
on the death of
His Holiness Pope Francis

The announcement today of the death of Pope Francis is truly sad news for the Church and the world. For those in the Church, not only has a spiritual leader died, but a father, *Papa Francesco*, has died. And for people of good will everywhere, a courageous, loving, welcoming, and challenging public figure has died. The outpouring of affection and grief at the death of Pope Francis is quite understandable and not at all unexpected. As one parishioner said “the parish priest of the world has died”.

He is the Pope who gave us the *Year of Mercy* in 2016 with an emphasis on forgiveness and reconciliation. His celebrated letter *Laudato si'* – on caring for our common home, is a document filled with hope. He gave us this Jubilee Year of hope.

Above all, it is Pope Francis’ love for God’s people, especially those in poverty and on the margins, and those who experience rejection because of personal circumstances, that will long live in the memories of all who observed him.

He brought the Church of the twenty-first century on to a synodal pathway, one in which the voice of everyone, without exception, is to be heard.

On a more local level, Pope Francis visited Knock Shrine in the summer of 2018 while he was in Ireland for the World Meeting of Families.

The news of Pope Francis’ death draws from us feelings of gratitude and appreciation, for this son of Italian immigrants to Argentina, who became Pope, *The Rock* – “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.”

Requiescat in pace.

21st April 2025