

WHAT THE 'NET HAS BROUGHT IN



Before he died, Blessed John Paul II recommended all Catholics to take seriously the exhortation of Jesus: 'Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch' Luke 5:4. In the Pioneers, we decided that one form of this was to build up a website and make our message known to a much bigger world. The Pioneer Association, during the twentieth century has been a big fish in the small pond of Ireland, an offshore European island. It will be an answer to prayer if, in the twenty-first century, it becomes a small fish in the much bigger pond of the whole world. RAYMOND O'CONNOR presents a selection of the emails that have come into Central Office in recent weeks

Thank you for your email with all the information about the Pioneers Association. It is early days but I am happy to endeavour to be devoted to the Sacred Heart. I was a very moderate drinker but my real challenge is dieting as I love sweet things. However, over indulgence is what our senses are prone to unless we can turn within and embrace the spirit of sacrifice. The hunger within our hearts is what we are really trying to fill. Thank God, I am part of a loving family and have a full life.

Sincerely, VC

Thanks so much for sending this along. I found it very interesting and very helpful. I have been clean and sober for almost 10 years now. Although prior to that, liquor had caused me major problems. Actually I ended up living on the streets here in San Diego California. I really look forward to being part of the Pioneer Movement.

Thanks so much, BK

I am enjoying keeping to the Pledge and am amazed at how liberating it is. I will study the attached document and would like to thank the organisation for all it does to help people who struggle with alcohol addiction.

Kind regards, Therese

I heard about the Pioneer Association from Monsignor William Hodge. He is pastor in New Jersey, and he is a Pioneer.

I was a social drinker, and never really had a problem with overuse of alcohol. I was sick in the hospital, and my liver was affected by my illness. I did not have to omit alcohol, but I felt it would be best. God put it into my heart to join the Pioneer Association and offer my abstinence for someone who was struggling with alcohol addiction. I went to see Msgr. Hodge and he enrolled me.

At the time, I did not know that, my daughter had a serious alcohol problem. Since she lived more than 3,000 miles away, she was able to keep it hidden from me. She had been drinking steadily for years. Her alcoholism ruined her marriage and caused her to lose her job and her home. She lost her driving privileges, had to spend time in jail for drinking while intoxicated.

I was praying the prayers for about two years, when one day my daughter said, she woke up and had no desire to drink. She has been sober for two-and-a-half years. She had no detox program, and she had no withdrawal symptoms. It was clearly a miracle.

I tell everyone I know how this program saved my daughter, especially people who have family members with alcohol addiction. However, most Americans have never heard of the Pioneer Association. If there is any way I can help to spread the word, I would be glad to help.

RR, USA

I heard of the Pioneers through a cousin that had come to America in the early 1960s from Ireland. He is a member of the Pioneers and I met him again at the wake of his sponsor, my Aunt Kathleen, in 1995. We had a brief conversation about the Pioneers and he said he was still a member in good standing, and he says the prayer every morning and night. It was a few years ago that I saw a program on EWTN Catholic Television and a priest spoke about the Pioneer Association and mentioned there was a Website devoted to the Pioneer Association - the rest is history.

Because many AA meetings are conducted in the basements of Catholic Churches perhaps the priests could start introducing this wonderful program from the altar after Mass.

I thank my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ every day for his gift of sobriety to me.

PC, USA

I became aware of the Pioneers shortly after joining the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous in the Philadelphia, PA area during 2006. My drinking problem has been arrested, thanks to my faith in Our Lord, Jesus Christ and the fellowship of AA – I have been sober for five years. The twelve steps of AA have been and continue to be an important part of my recovery but I need more to help me to stay sober one day at a time. I am a practicing Roman Catholic and attend Mass and receive the Eucharist frequently. I use the Sacrament of Confession to help me stay focused on my primary life goals – to continue building a loving and trusting relationship with God and to abstain from alcohol and help other Alcoholics to do the same.

I am also a member of The Calix Society (www.calixsociety.org) and make use of all of the tools Our Lord makes available to us to increase my Spirituality and to be of service in His name. I have a special devotion to the Sacred Heart – I have no doubt the Pioneers reinforced this understanding of prayer for me.

My life is a journey with the Lord and I am very grateful to be in fellowship with other Alcoholics, including the Pioneers. I trust this answers your question but if not and you want to discuss this in greater detail, please let me know and I will contact you directly. God bless you and everyone associated with the Pioneers.

DH, Pennsylvania, USA

PIONEER MATTERS

PTAA Fundraising Appeal Update

On behalf of Association may I take this opportunity to thank each and every member of the Association who helped make our fundraising appeal such a success.

The Appeal closed on 31 December 2011 and by February of this year had secured over €150,000. I also thank the many, many members of the public who gave so generously to us in our hour of need. In this time of economic recession, our appeal has done exceptionally well. The appeal underlines once more the valuable offering the Pioneers are seen to be making in relation to tackling alcohol abuse in Ireland.

Padraig Brady, Chief Executive Officer, PTAA

Pioneer Presence at the International Eucharistic Congress

Speaking in the lead-up to the Congress, Pioneer CEO, Padraig Brady said: "In recent months we have been busy preparing a strong presence for the Pioneers so that we can serve our existing members and target new members during the week-long Congress. Our stand at the Congress has been developed with a keen eye on communicating a clear message to our national and international audiences. We have developed a number of promotional materials that the Association can use both during and well after the Congress. At all times, the Association remains acutely aware of the cost effectiveness of its Congress undertaking.

"I would encourage as many members as possible to attend the Congress. Please remember to visit the Pioneer stand. Our stand is number 136 and will be located in the middle of the ground floor exhibition area. We look forward to meeting as many Pioneers as possible at the Congress."