

# THE CRESCENT HARP

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS IN LOUISIANA

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SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER, 2010

## LOUISIANA AOH ATTENDS NATIONAL CONVENTION

Fresh off its hugely successful hosting of the 2008 Biennial National Convention, the Louisiana AOH sent a delegation to Cincinnati for the 2010 Convention. National Treasurer James McKay and State President Richard Burke led the delegates to a convention that covered a host of issues.

State Treasurer B.J. Eckholdt, Archbishop Hannan Division President John Fitzmorris Jr., Henry Flanagan, Leo Gallagher, David Waller, Tommy O'Brien, and Pat Power also accompanied Burke and McKay and represented the Louisiana Irish well.

On the agenda, the National AOH re-established the AOH-Notre Dame Scholarship that

had been held in abeyance by Right-to-Life advocates within the AOH. In addition, the IRS conducted a symposium on the tax status of the tax-exempt organizations.

In the National Elections, National President Seamus Boyle was returned for another two year term as was Brendan Moore as Vice-President, Jim McKay as Treasurer, and Thomas McNabb as Secretary. The Rev. Thomas M. O'Donnell of Pittsburgh was named National Chaplain, and Robert Mott was re-elected National Director for the South.

The next national convention will be held in July 2012 outside of Syracuse, New York.

## AOH \$10,000 RAFFLE

The Annual Archbishop Hannan and Cardinal Gibbons Divisions' \$10,000 Raffle Fundraiser will be held on **Friday, October 29, 2010**, at the St. Dominic Gymnasium. 300 tickets are available at \$100 each. The Raffle will be conducted in lottery style format with each ticket pulled until the remaining five ticket holders can negotiate for the grand prize of \$10,000.

All AOH members are asked to purchase a ticket or a share in a ticket. All funds raised go to Hibernians Charities such as the Presentation Sisters Retirement Fund and Catholic Charities. For tickets, please contact Tommy McCrossen at 504-846-5177 or Tommy O'Brien at 985-641-7073.



### FOLLOW THE LOUISIANA AOH ON-LINE

*Our website is under restoration, but you can access the AOH on Facebook*  
Louisiana State Board of the Ancient Order of Hibernians

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

**AOH Archbishop Hannan and Cardinal Gibbons Divisions Meeting**  
**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**ST. DOMINIC GYM**

**HALF WAY TO ST. PATRICK'S DAY MARCH**  
**Friday, September 24**  
**French Quarter**

**AOH Archbishop Hannan and Cardinal Gibbons Divisions Meeting**  
**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 21**  
**7:00 p.m.**  
**ST. DOMINIC GYM**

**AOH ANNUAL \$10,000 RAFFLE**  
**Friday, October 29**  
**7:00 p.m. St. Dominic Gym**

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## YOUR NEW NEWSLETTER

Brother Hibernians,

After a unanimous vote of the membership of the Order, the State Board of the AOH in Louisiana has adopted *The Crescent Harp* as its official newsletter for all future events, activities, and notices.

In addition to being the news organ of the AOH in Louisiana, it is our intention that *The Crescent Harp* serve as a conduit through which the entire Irish community can learn of news and events throughout this area of the country.

We want this newsletter to serve as an arm of the AOH in heightening your aware-

ness of your Irish Catholic heritage, but that is in large part contingent on *your* participation as well. We need you help, brothers, in finding stories of interest to the Irish community and to the Brotherhood.

Thus, please feel free to contact your division and state recording secretaries or this newsletter directly to inform them of whatever news you have. Send us pictures of yourself and your loved ones and your friends at all Irish functions. Make sure we know of all events that involve the Irish.

Last but not least, please help us underwrite the cost

of this newsletter. Tell all businesses who serve and promote the Irish and all things Irish that they should be placing their ads in this newsletter.

Since the last AOH National Convention in New Orleans, the Irish in the South have commanded the attention of the National Board and the brotherhood throughout the nation. *The Crescent Harp* is just one more step in the continuing growth of our Ancient Order.

Slainté

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*Brother Hibernians,*

I want to direct this space to those of you who have—for whatever reason—not been active with the Ancient Order in some time.

Please come back.

More than twenty years ago, a group of men dedicated to their Irish faith resurrected the Ancient Order in New Orleans, then spread to Metairie and the Jefferson Area, and after that helped establish a division for the Irish in Acadiana. We have assembled as a group to express our faith as Irish Catholics each March 17 at St. Patrick's Church. We have celebrated our Irish heritage each St. Patrick's Day at our Annual Banquet. As an Order, we step proudly through Uptown New Orleans the Saturday before St. Patrick's Day to the tunes of pipes and drums and looking our very best. We have held two national conventions widely regarded by the National Officers and members from other divisions as the best time they have ever enjoyed. We have had golf tournaments, raffles, dances, ceilis, feises, and a variety of other activities in which we have enjoyed each other's company.

And not even a man-made disaster five years ago that threatened to push many of us out of our homes

and destroy our great city could quell the spirit of the Irish in Louisiana.

It has been a good twenty years for the AOH.

But now we are ready—in the words of a notable culinary artist—to “kick it up a notch.” This newsletter, the holding of meetings more in line with the proper rituals of the Order, the taking over of the upkeep of the Celtic Cross Monument, and the reestablishment of the Biennial State Convention are but a few of the ways we have labored to make the AOH more relevant to you and your Irish-Catholic faith.

Of course, the only way we can take the AOH even further is through your involvement, so please come back. Come enjoy the Friendship and Unity we share at our gatherings. Come help us practice the Christian Charity that is essential to our Order.

And we also cannot do it without new members. Your sons, grandsons, (great-grandsons?), nephews, friends, and friends' sons out there who are Irish and Catholic may just be looking for the Ancient Order to bring them closer to their heritage and faith.

We are stronger with you than without you. So please come back.

### THE CRESCENT HARP EDITORIAL STAFF

John T. Browne  
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Mark Foley  
Division Presidents

## Chaplain's Message

Friends in Christ,

The Ancient Order of Hibernians is a tremendous Catholic organization in the way it serves the Church and the entire community. The thousands of Irish immigrants that moved to the United States, especially after the Great Hunger of 1845-49, were Catholic and looking for a way to serve or support their community. Thus, our Ancient Order came into being.

Today, many Catholics of Irish descent, both men and women, serve in the AOH and the LAOH. The structure is fairly similar to another great Catholic organization, the Knights of Columbus.

I became a Chaplain to the Order back in March 2002, and I have been impressed with the good work of the Order. I am grateful for the service they have given and continue to give our community.

The passing of Fr. Desmond Crotty in the Spring of 2007 was a sad and somber event for our local divisions and for the Order in general. Des had served as State Chaplain for many years, and we continue to miss him. I am grateful and honored to have been asked to serve as State

*Fr. Patrick Collum, State Chaplain*

Chaplain following Fr. Des.

In my homilies at Annunciation Church in Bogalusa, I continually challenge my congregation to give more of their time, talent, and treasure in the service of the Lord and one another. My message is the same for the Hibernians.

There are many needs in our community that still need our attention, and we are called by the Lord to serve those needs. To be true disciples, to continually strive to serve others, and not be self-serving is the call to discipleship given to us by our Lord. The AOH gives us that opportunity to do our part in the ministry of the Lord.

I encourage the Hibernians to keep up the good work in their unique ministry to the community, to continually address the growing and varying needs of the Church, and to continually strive to be the true disciples that the Lord calls us to be.

Again, I feel very blessed to be a part of this ancient order and the great work and ministry it does in the service of the Lord and one another.

“Do what is  
beyond your  
strength even  
should you fail  
sometimes.”

*Charles Stewart  
Parnell — 1885*

## AOH NEWS HERE AND AROUND

### WELCOME TO OUR NEW BROTHERS IN ALABAMA

The State Board of the AOH extends warmest greetings to Alabama's first AOH Division, the Fr. James E. Coyle Division, which was founded in 2008. This Birmingham Division is named for a Catholic priest, the Rev. James Edwin Coyle. Shot to death in Birmingham in 1921 by an enraged member of the Ku Klux Klan, Fr. Coyle's example of courage and faith in the face of prejudice and racism should serve as an inspiration to all Hibernians throughout the nation and call attention to the ongoing struggle of disparate faiths to live together in peace.

We are proud to welcome another strong division of the AOH in the southern region of the United States and highlight it as a symbol of the strength of the Irish in this part of the country.

*Slainté, Ya'!!!*

### POSSIBLE NEW DIVISION FOR EAST ST. TAMMANY

A contingent of AOH members travelled to Pearl River several weeks ago to conduct an information session for possible new members and the formation of a new division for the Slidell-Pearl River-Lacombe Area.

Deacon Harold Burke hosted the

meeting at his home, and ten men attended. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled after August 20. AOH by-laws for new divisions require that fifteen new members be recruited.

For those in the West Tammany Area; i.e., Mandeville, Covington, and Abita Springs, the Republic of West Florida Division in Tangipahoa Parish will be expanding its division to that area.

### HIBERNIAN DIGEST NOW ONLINE

After months of preparation, the *Hibernian Digest* has entered the digital age. The new Digital Digest will be linked through our national website [www.aoh.com](http://www.aoh.com) and will include an ever expanding archive of articles from past print editions. In addition to the print articles, the site has been designed to offer expanded space for more content not currently able to make it into the printed edition mailed to all members. The Digital Digest will also include a large expansion of pictures associated with articles submitted by members. Keith Carney, editor of the *Digest* commented, *We have numerous pictures submitted by members that only make it to the cutting room floor because of limited space. But pictures tell great stories of the life and times of our Order and it the Digital edition now provides us with the perfect mechanism to bring them to the membership through the Internet.*

The digital Digest will include electronic advertising controlled by the National Board and it is hoped that it will be able to begin generating revenue in the

next few months once the site gains some popularity. The site will also include a comprehensive archive of previously printed Digests in the popular Adobe Acrobat .pdf format.

### PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

The City Council of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, home of National President Seamus Boyle, passed a resolution calling on the English and Irish Governments to take immediate steps necessary to bring to fullness the promises of the all Ireland institutions called for and envisioned by the Good Friday Agreement, requesting the Irish Government to formally study the implications of a United Ireland and outline steps fundamental to restore the Irish nation and publicly report their findings and plans, and respectfully suggesting that the Irish government move without delay to further the peaceful healing of the Irish nation by granting duly elected Northern MP's "Speaking Rights" in the Irish Parliament and expanding the voting rights for the Irish President to the citizens of the six counties of the North of Ireland.

**GOT NEWS ABOUT THE IRISH IN LOUISIANA???**  
**PUT IT HERE IN THE AOH NEWSLETTER!**

THE ANCIENT ORDER OF  
HIBERNIANS IN LOUISIANA

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B.J. ECKHOLDT - TREASURER

US POSTAGE

## AOH TAKES OVER THE CELTIC CROSS MONUMENT

The Ancient Order of Hibernians has assumed curatorship of the Celtic Cross Monument located on the site of the New Basin Canal near Lake Pontchartrain. The Irish-American Cultural Institute, which had erected and maintained the Cross, turned over the Cross to the AOH back in April.

Several members of the Order went out to the Cross on a Saturday morning to pull up and rearrange



Members of the AOH gather around the Celtic Cross Monument after cleaning and improving the site.

the stones surrounding the Cross, cut the grass, and wash and bleach the Cross itself.

The Celtic Cross Monument is located in Lakeview between Pontchartrain and West End Boulevards and was erected in the early 1990s to commemorate the Irish who died in the Great Hunger between 1845 and 1848 and those who died digging the New Basin Canal.

## HISTORICAL MOMENT—AN GORTA MOR

We in the New Orleans Area are all too aware of when our government is culpable in a manmade disaster. The floods following Hurricane Katrina were the result of willful negligence on the part of government agencies who possessed a profound lack of respect for a proud people and the importance of their region to the overall good of the nation as a whole.

As Irish of American descent, such events strike and even deeper resonance within all of us.

More than one hundred and sixty years ago, the entire potato crop in Ireland failed as a result of a fungus. However, the mass starvation that followed in the wake of the

crop failure could have been easily averted, for even as Irish either died or left for America, Ireland still exported food to its English overlords. Economic legislation called the Corn Laws prohibited the Irish from enjoying the fruits of their labor and made them totally dependent upon the potato as their source of nourishment.

The catastrophe did not only cause the mass diaspora to America, but many Irish patriots—now thoroughly disgusted—began a sixty year struggle for Irish independence.

For the Irish, the Great Hunger, or *An Gorta Mor* in Irish, remains the watershed moment in Irish his-

tory and the impetus for the great migrations that helped build America in the 1840s. Author Jane Francesca Elgee, a popular author wrote a moving poem that captured the tragedy of the Hunger.

*Weary men, what reap ye?  
Golden corn for the stranger. What sow ye?  
Human corpses that wait for the avenger.  
Fainting forms, Hunger—stricken,  
what see you in the offing  
Stately ships to bear our food away,  
amid the stranger's scoffing.  
There's a proud array of soldiers  
—what do they round your door?  
They guard our master's granaries  
from the thin hands of the poor.  
Pale mothers, wherefore weeping?  
'Would to God that we were dead—  
Our children swoon before us,  
and we cannot give them bread.*