

SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE & EIFLE/IEEF AGM 2025

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION



Our Hope for the Future



Saturday, 4 Oct 2025

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM



Knock House Hotel

Knock, Co. Mayo, F12 R6Y5

and by ZOOM

CONFERENCE (In person / Zoom) **€60**

BUFFET LUNCH €30

The conference is open to everyone and will focus on the importance of cherishing the *family* as the foundation for a stable society, the importance of respecting the *life* of the child from natural conception as a means to deepen married love and the importance of holistic education and lifelong learning in order to nurture the growth and development of all members of the family. Protecting the role of Christian values in family, life and education ensures the future wellbeing of our society.

Speakers include Dr Phil Boyle (Neo fertility), Nurse Kay O'Dwyer (NaPro Fertility Care) and Dr Fidelma Healy Eames (Former Government Senator and Educator), Sinead Strong (Catholic Mothers), Michelle Kelly (Pure in Heart) and Patrick McCrystal (Human Life International).

Continuous professional development (internal CPD) points for healthcare professionals.

SCHEDULE

- 08:00 Mass at Knock Shrine (Optional)
- 08:30 Registration begins
- 09:00 Conference begins
- 13:00 Lunch
- 15:30 Optional Complimentary tour of Knock Museum & Creation Garden or Workshop on Fertility Charting
- 17:00 Conference ends

REGISTER NOW

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NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING
TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
OF IRELAND



EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF
FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

Family, Life, Education; Our Hope for the Future. Agenda

Mass: 8.00 am: apparition chapel. Fr Chris Garrett

Introduction: 9.15am: welcome and housekeeping. Dr Deirdre Gleeson NFPTAI

Session One: EDUCATION

Chairperson: Dr Kirsty Chapman, GP and Napro Technology Consultant

- 9.30- 10.15am: *Dr Fidelma Healy Eames, Education, Career and Wellbeing Consultant. Director and Lead Educator with Study and Careers:* Enabling the learning of Christian values.
- 10.15-11am: *Michelle Kelly, General Manager of Pure in Heart Ireland:* Our fractured understanding of human sexuality, and the needed remedy.
- 11.00 – 11.15am coffee / tea / visit exhibitors

Session Two: FAMILY

Chairperson: Bernadette Cunningham, Post Primary School Teacher, Assistant Course Director, NFPTAI

- 11.15- 12. 00: *Patrick McCrystal, Director of Human Life International:* Marriage, are you ready?
- 12.00- 12.45pm: *Sinead Strong, Catholic Mothers Ireland:* The vocation and true meaning of being a Catholic mother.
- 12.45-1pm: *Dr Maureen O'Carroll, Radiologist and former Course Director NFPTAI:* Presentation on the life and work of Dr Anna Flynn and Wyn Worthington
- 1-2pm: Buffet lunch / visit exhibitors

Session Three: LIFE

Chairperson: Dr John Kehoe, GP, Chairman Irish Catholic Doctors Association.

- 2-2.45pm: *Dr Phil Boyle, Founder and Director of NeoFertility:* Updates and peer reviewed scientific evidence for NeoFertility compared to IVF official data from the USA and UK
- 2.45- 3.25pm: *Kay O'Dwyer, Creighton Model Practitioner, NaPro and Fertility Care Centres Ireland:* NaPro Fertility Care for Life

Session Four: Knock Shrine Museum tour / workshop

- 3.30-5pm: Complementary tour of Knock Museum & Creation Walk with a Knock Shrine guide. Or Workshop on fertility charting with Kay O'Dwyer

Family, Life, Education; Our Hope for the Future Conference October 4th 2025 Knock House Hotel Co Mayo / By Zoom

1. CONFERENCE DETAILS

The European Institute of Family Life Education / Institution Européen d'Education Familiale (EIFLE/IEEF) in association with the Natural Family Planning Teachers Association of Ireland (NFPTAI) are hosting a conference in Knock on Saturday 4th October 2025.

The title of the conference is: **Family, Life and Education: Our Hope for the Future.**

The conference will focus on:

- The importance of cherishing the family as the foundation for a stable society.
- The importance of respecting life from conception to natural death.
- The importance of ensuring a holistic education and lifelong learning to nurture the growth and development of all members of the family intellectually, psychologically, socially and spiritually.

Protecting the role of Christian values in family life and education ensures the future wellbeing of our society and speakers are chosen for their expertise, knowledge and experience of living, teaching and learning that God's way is nature's way.

The venue for the conference is Knock House Hotel www.knockhousehotel.ie on the grounds of Knock Shrine www.knockshrine.ie. The conference will begin with mass in The Apparition Chapel at 8am followed by presentations divided into three sessions on Family, Life and Education.

Tickets are €60 (in person or by zoom). Lunch is optional at €30 pp.

Tickets (in person and Zoom) for the conference, lunch & a complimentary tour of Knock Shrine Museum and The Creation Walk are available via Eventbrite www.eventbrite.ie/o/nfptai-73350755083/



2. The European Institute of Family Life Education /Institution Européen d'Education Familiale

The conference on Saturday 4th October 2025 is part of the annual general meeting of EIFLE/IEEF that takes place over the weekend of Friday 3rd to Sunday 5th October in Knock. Members of EIFLE/IEEF come together from as far north as Russia and as far south as Malta for a meeting once a year to share scientific updates and to collaborate on research and training projects in education and fertility care. The meeting location varies from year to year and this year the meeting is taking place in Ireland.

EIFLE / IEEF is a multi-denominational umbrella organisation that was founded in 1992 in Grenoble, France to promote the values of family, life and family-life education and, in particular, the study of fertility and its regulation by natural means in Europe and beyond. EIFLE / IEEF accredits courses in fertility awareness according to evidence-based standards in the areas of medical-science, anthropology, ethics and pedagogy.

The institute produces guidance on sex and relationship education in a way that embraces and promotes positive family-oriented values. The group is involved in research in the field of fertility awareness and fertility care. EIFLE / IEEF member associations are found throughout Europe and provide a variety of services, courses and supports to the couple and the family. Organisations seeking to apply for membership to EIFLE/IEEF will find further details and an application form at www.ieef.eu

3. The Natural Family Planning Teacher Association of Ireland

The NFPTAI (Natural Family Planning Teachers Association of Ireland) was established in 1988 by Dr Anna Flynn and Nurse Wynn Worthington who also established the NFPTA in the UK. Dr Anna and Wynn developed the course in the sympto-thermal double check method of natural family planning (NFP) run by the NFPTAI and NFPTA, which are now accredited to the EIFLE / IEEF standards.

The NFPTAI also provides instructors, couples, health professionals and teachers in Ireland with the most up-to-date information and scientific research relating to NFP and fertility awareness. The NFPTAI strives to bring understanding of the value of NFP as a safe, reliable, easy-to-use method of family planning to as wide an audience as possible.

To learn more about the work of NFPTAI and details of the instructor course and one day conferences on fertility awareness go to www.naturalfamilyplanningireland.ie

4. Education

Session one of the conference focuses on Education with the following presentations:

- **Dr Fidelma Healy Eames, Education, Career and Wellbeing Consultant. Director and Lead Educator with Study and Careers:** Enabling the learning of Christian values.
- **Michelle Kelly, General Manager of Pure in Heart Ireland:** Our fractured understanding of human sexuality, and the needed remedy.



Dr Fidelma Healy Eames

Dr. Fidelma Healy Eames, PhD, MSc(Ed), BEd., has a long background in teaching, learning and teacher education.

Fidelma lives with her farming husband Michael in Maree, Oranmore (Galway) and is beyond grateful to be given the opportunity to be a mother to Niall and Ruth, a family she and Michael formed through adoption.

A former Senator, Councillor and Education spokesperson, she was deeply saddened when she was expelled from her party and her political career was cut short as a result of her voting against abortion as a solution to suicidal ideation. Today she continues to maintain an active interest in policy and public affairs and is an occasional media contributor.

Professionally, Fidelma is the founder of **Study and Careers**, an education, wellbeing and careers consultancy that provides courses, coaching and consultations for students, teachers and other professionals. Her enduring interest is making learning and life easier and more meaningful for educators, young people and the not so young!

An accredited tester with the British Psychological Society in the areas of personality, ability, occupation and educational testing, she provides career guidance, coaching and assessments on a consultation basis. Excited about people's futures, her work has been a catalyst for many to find their niche and forge a meaningful path, including at mid-career.

Fidelma's most recent publication '*The Gifted Learner: How to Help*' has been a journey of discovery and joy for herself and those she has studied. Today she works with parents and educators in schools and colleges to enable them to develop Inclusive Gifted and Talented programmes for their students. She is adjunct faculty as a teacher educator for beginning teachers with Hibernia College. To learn more about the services and resources Dr. Healy Eames offers see www.studyandcareers.ie

Fidelma is delighted to be associated with the Family Life Education conference. Her talk Enabling the learning of Christian values discusses the importance of modelling, intentional planning and integration in everyday life.



Michelle Kelly

Michelle Kelly is originally from Co. Mayo, and grew up with a passion for ministry, which led her to study at Christendom College, a Catholic Liberal Arts College in Virginia (USA). After four years, Michelle received her BA in Liberal Arts with a Major in Theology and Minor in Philosophy in 2023. Since then, Michelle has worked predominantly in the fields of youth ministry and promoting the sacredness of human life, including parish ministry and working for the Front Royal Pregnancy Center. Michelle is happily engaged to her fiancée, Joe, and they are due to marry later in October 2025.

After her return to Ireland, Michelle took up the role of General Manager for **Pure in Heart** Ireland, stemming from her love of John Paul II's Theology of the Body. Pure in Heart is an Irish charity that promotes the truth, beauty, and meaning of human sexuality through the understanding of Catholic Church teaching to young people across the country. Pure in Heart was founded in the year 2000 by a small group of young people, and it has continued to spread its mission for the past 25 years. To find out more about the work of Pure in Heart or to support its ministry, visit the website: www.pureinheart.ie

Michelle's presentation will focus on the grave misunderstanding of human sexuality, and how we can be part of the much-needed remedy for our culture and for our young people.

5. FAMILY

The second session of the conference will focus on the Family with the following speakers and presentations:

- **Sinead Strong, Catholic Mothers Ireland:** The vocation and true meaning of being a Catholic mother.
- **Patrick McCrystal, Director of Human Life International:** Marriage, are you ready?



Sinéad Strong:

Sinéad grew up in Omagh and now lives in Castleblayney, Co Monaghan. Sinead studied International Politics and Business at the University of Ulster and has worked in Business management and is now a full-time stay-at-home mum to 7 children and is married to John.

In 2015, Sinead saw the challenges both she and her friends were facing bringing their children up in the Catholic faith. She saw a need for somewhere mothers could go for support and encouragement in their demanding roles as wives and mothers as well as growing in their faith through sharing their experiences. Sinead felt called to start a group with the simple aim for mothers to get together to pray, learn and talk about their faith. Catholic Mothers Ireland (CMI) started with a small group of friends meeting every few months and through their prayers and enthusiasm it has now developed to become an All-Ireland organisation at the heart of a vibrant schedule of Catholic events, breathing new life into faith across the country. From nationwide retreats to major national gatherings, CMI is creating opportunities for families, parents, and communities to reconnect with their catholic roots. With a network of over 500 women and a growing presence, CMI's events are uniting women and families in faith, prayer, and fellowship. A cornerstone of CMI's mission is its series of retreats, held throughout the year in all four provinces. Drawing an average of 50 attendees per retreat, these events offer mothers the chance to reflect, pray, and build meaningful connections. CMI also has a prominent presence at major national events hosting information and membership stands at gatherings such as the Divine Mercy Conference and the All-Ireland Rosary Rally. CMI has grown into a nationwide movement dedicated to supporting women and families through prayer, education, and community engagement.

CMI's events and initiatives are redefining the role of Catholic women in Ireland, fostering connections that nurture both individuals and entire families. For those looking to explore their faith alongside like-minded women, Catholic Mothers Ireland offers a warm and open invitation. To learn more or get involved, visit www.catholicmothers.ie Sinead will speak about the work of Catholic Mothers Ireland and the vocation and true meaning of being a Catholic mother.



Patrick McCrystal

Patrick McCrystal qualified in Pharmacy from Queens University, Belfast in 1987. In 1993, he ceased dispensing the contraceptive pill and other drugs, due to their abortifacient action. As a result, he was unemployed in his profession for three years. In 1997 Patrick was appointed Executive Director of **Human Life International** (Ireland). Patrick is married to Therese and they have nine children aged 21 yrs down. Patrick and Therese featured on EWTN in a documentary in 2004 and his life was profiled by Shalom World TV's 100-Fold series in 2021. Patrick is also an avid beekeeper.

Human Life International was founded by Fr Paul Marx in 1981 as a Catholic, pro-life movement to proclaim the "Culture of Life" and oppose the "Culture of death." HLI Ireland operates from the Guadalupe Centre in Knock. Patrick and his colleagues conduct speaking tours, conferences, Catholic activism formation courses, pregnancy information projects, marriage renewal seminars, rosary and Holy Face prayer campaigns, all-night vigils, nationwide advertising, newsletters, printing of Catholic resources and run two shops in Knock. Patrick and his HLI colleagues speak at youth events and conferences on marriage, faith and life themes. Their motto is "For an Ireland where God is First, Life is Sacred, The Family is Cherished." To learn more about and to support the important work of HLI Ireland go to the website: www.humanlife.ie

Patrick's talk is entitled: Marriage are you ready?

6. Life

The final and afternoon session of the Conference will be on Life, and the speakers are as follows:

- **Dr Phil Boyle, Founder and Director of NeoFertility:** Updates and peer reviewed scientific evidence for NeoFertility and compare outcomes with official IVF data from UK and USA.
- **Kay O'Dwyer, Creighton Model Practitioner, NaPro and Fertility Care Centres Ireland:** NaPro Fertility Care for Life followed by a workshop on fertility charting.



Dr Phil Boyle

Dr Phil Boyle graduated in Medicine from Galway University in 1992 and later qualified as a General Practitioner. He is a member of the Irish College of General Practitioners and is currently president of the International Institute for Restorative Reproductive Medicine. He developed NeoFertility in 2016 after 20 years' experience with NaProTechnology Fertility treatment.

Dr. Boyle is the founder and director of **NeoFertility** and is a co-founder of the Chart NeoFertility app. He has helped many couples achieve successful pregnancies, many after years of infertility, repeated miscarriage, and failed IVF.

Dr Boyle is married to Evanna and is father to 4 children aged 12-21 years. NeoFertility is a Dublin, Ireland-based fertility clinic helping couples conceive naturally by finding and treating the underlying reasons for fertility problems. The service helps couples have babies with love and science. The approach to fertility treatment is simple: if you have a fertility problem, there always has to be a reason. Identifying and treating those specific reasons will resolve the problem and restore your reproductive health. NeoFertility embraces a restorative approach to reproductive healthcare, by addressing the root cause of fertility issues in order to restore balance to the woman's cycle and to improve the chances of conceiving naturally. To find out more about NeoFertility go to www.neofertility.ie

Dr Boyle will present a summary of some peer reviewed scientific evidence for NeoFertility treatment and compare outcomes with IVF official data from UK and USA.



Kay O' Dwyer

Kay O'Dwyer hails from Gibbstown, a townland between Navan and Kells in Co Meath. Kay O'Dwyer is happily married to John for 46 years. They have 4 adult children and 6 grandchildren.

In 1977, Kay qualified as a Registered General nurse. In 1997, she trained as a Creighton Model FertilityCare Practitioner and in 2012 as an Educator in programmes directed by the

St. Paul VI Institute for the Study of Human Reproduction and The American Academy of Fertility Care Professionals (AAFcp's). Kay is a Creighton Model Practitioner and has taught more than 1,200 women & couples in the Creighton Model System to enable them to grow their families while cooperating with the teachings of the Catholic Church & Humane Vitae. Kay is part of the NaProTechnology team of healthcare professionals who have supported thousands of couples struggling with the pain of infertility or miscarriage, while on their journey to parenthood. Kay is a Certified FertilityCare Educator and sits on the Faculty of St Joseph's Practitioner Education Program supervising during the training and certification process.

In 2020, Kay and her husband John established **St Brigid's Centre for Female Health & Fertility** in Kells, Co. Meath where **Fertility Care Centres of Ireland & The NaPro Technology Clinic** is based. It is a "one-stop shop" for all mainstream female health services including Creighton Model education for teens and adults, menopause transition, counselling, breast-feeding support, pelvic floor physiotherapy and more.

To see more about Kay's work and to book an appointment go to www.naprobaby.ie; and www.fccirl.ie

Kay will deliver a presentation on NaPro Fertility Care for Life.

Kay's lecture will be followed by a workshop on fertility charting for delegates who chose not to take the complimentary tour of Knock Museum and the Knock Shrine Creation Walk. Kay will go through the essentials of charting the fertility cycle and provide examples of charts in normal and abnormal cycles.

Conference Chairpeople

We are honoured to have the following guests to chair the three scientific sessions.



Dr Kirsty Chapman, NaproTechnology Ireland

Kirsty Chapman grew up in South Africa and graduated with a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery from the University of Cape Town in 2012 and qualified as a General Practitioner. She, her husband Henry and their three daughters moved to Ireland in 2021, where she joined a GP practice in Kells.

Kirsty trained with the St. Paul VI Institute in Omaha, Nebraska to practice NaproTechnology as a FertilityCare Medical consultant. She is currently a member of the International Institute

for Restorative Reproductive Medicine and of the American Academy of Fertility Care Professionals. NaproTechnology is a comprehensive women's health science, faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church, that works with a woman's cycle to diagnose and treat reproductive health issues and restore normal fertility.

Kirsty currently divides her time between her GP practice and St. Brigid's Centre for Female Health and Fertility in Kells, Co. Meath. Kirsty, Henry and the girls were delighted to welcome a baby brother to the family last year.



Bernadette Cunningham - Natural Family Planning Teacher Association of Ireland

Bernadette Cunningham lives in Belfast, N Ireland. She is married to Paul and has two grown-up children and four grandchildren. She retired after thirty-five years teaching Science and Home Economics in post-primary education. She then trained to become a pre-marriage facilitator with Accord and worked for many years with couples preparing for marriage.

Having had difficulties with her own fertility, including miscarriages, she has a keen interest in this aspect of life and became involved with NFPTAI. She undertook the course that led to her becoming a tutor for the Association. She now teaches the future teachers of NFP, particularly focusing on the practical aspects of charting.

She is involved in parish life including the Pastoral Council, and the teaching of Baptism and Confirmation courses. She is also a member of the Chaplaincy Team in both the NI Hospice and the Royal Victoria Hospital.



Dr John Kehoe - Irish Catholic Doctors Association

John Kehoe qualified in medicine in 1998 as a graduate of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He completed his training in general practice in Scotland in 2002 and practices full-time as a GP in Naas, Co. Kildare. He is married to Jennifer since 1995, and they have six children. John is president of the Irish Catholic Doctors Association



Dr Deirdre Gleeson, Natural Family Planning Teacher Association of Ireland

Dr Deirdre Gleeson is the Medical Director and Specialist Occupational Health Physician OHP at the Medwise clinic, Naas. Dr Gleeson is qualified in general practice and occupational medicine. She is a Member of the Irish College of General Practitioners, a Fellow of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine and a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland. In 2010, Dr Deirdre Gleeson founded the Medwise Calcutta Project to sponsor the education and welfare of street children in Calcutta / Kolkata. Dr Gleeson regularly travels to India to oversee and assist the project. In 2011, Dr Gleeson studied fertility awareness with the NFPTAI and later became the course director. Dr Gleeson delivers workshops on fertility and reproductive health to women and young girls from the slums of Calcutta/ Kolkata.



Dr Maureen O'Carroll, FRCPI, FRCR

Dr Maureen O'Carroll is a retired Consultant Radiologist who worked in Letterkenny General Hospital, Co Donegal. Dr O'Carroll is a Fellow of The Royal College of Radiologists and a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland. In 1996 Dr O'Carroll attended the NFP Teacher Training Course in Liverpool run by Mrs Wyn Worthington, obtained the NFPTA Certificate and met Dr Anna Flynn. In Oct 1997 she became Secretary of the NFPTAI. Under the direction of Wyn Worthington, NFP Teacher Training Courses took place in Ireland, in Letterkenny, Sligo, Cavan, and Derry. Dr O'Carroll edited Dr Anna Flynn's and Wyn Worthington's NFP Teaching Materials which are now printed in two volumes (i) The Manual and (ii) The Workbook and which were first used in the NFP Teacher Training Courses in Monaghan (2010) and in The Rotunda Hospital, Dublin (2011). Dr O'Carroll retired from the NFPTAI in 2014. The FEDRA group of EIFLE/IEEF used Dr O'Carroll's work as the basis for the NFP Teacher Training Course theoretical manual now in its 3rd edition and used by NFP programs throughout Europe.

7. Knock

Knock, Co Mayo is Ireland's Eucharistic and Marian International shrine and the heart of Catholic faith in modern Ireland. On a wet evening on 21st August 1879 about 25 people from the tiny village of Knock witnessed a silent vision of Our Lady with St Joseph, St John the Evangelist and The Lamb of God upon the altar at the gable-end of the parish church for over 2 hours. The visionaries were aged between 5 years and 74 years. Fifteen of them later gave evidence at the subsequent official church enquiries in 1879 and 1936 which found their evidence to be trustworthy and satisfactory.

Many theologians have pondered the rich symbolism of the Knock apparition. The presence of Our Lady reflects the deep Marian devotion of the Irish people. St Joseph is present as the protector of the Holy Family and the Church. St John comes as a preacher and reflects the people's strong Christian faith and devotion to the church and sacraments. The Lamb of God upon the altar symbolises the mystery of The Holy Mass and The Eucharist. The vision at Knock occurred at a time of great hardship for the Irish people and brought them comfort and sustained them in their faith. Today Knock is recognised by the catholic church as an international Eucharistic and Marian shrine that welcomes over 1.5 million pilgrims every year who come to pray for the intercession of Our Lady, St Joseph and St John and to do homage to The Lamb of God.

Knock Shrine management has kindly offered conference delegates a complimentary tour of the Knock Museum and Knock Shrine Creation Walk, from 3.30pm to 5pm. Places are limited and should be booked through Eventbrite.

At Knock Museum you will discover the unique and fascinating story of Knock – covering 140 years of history – and find out why more than 1 million people make the journey to Knock Shrine each year. Knock Museum is accredited to the Museum Standards Programme of Ireland. The new 'Creation Walk' at Knock Shrine weaves its way through the meandering pathways that have been newly developed throughout the mature grounds at Knock Shrine. The prayerful walk consists of 30 stops that explain the evolution of our planet. Along these leafy pathways, there are opportunities to stop and prayerfully reflect on God's Creation. The walk is approximately 0.5km in length and is a peaceful, contemplative space in which to pray, to reflect and to reconnect.

For more information about visiting Knock Shrine go to www.knockshrine.ie.

8. Continuous professional development

Attendees in person or by Zoom will be eligible for 6 internal CPD / CME points.



Mother Teresa, Dr Anna Flynn and Wyn Worthington of NFPTA and NFPTAI in Hong Kong November 1983 at the International Family Life Conference

Prayer to Our Lady of Knock

Our Lady of Knock, Queen of Ireland, you gave hope to our people in a time of distress and comforted them in their sorrow. You have inspired countless pilgrims to pray with confidence to your divine Son, remembering His promise: “Ask and you shall receive, Seek and you shall find”. Help me to remember that we are all pilgrims on the road to heaven. Fill me with love and concern for my brothers and sisters in Christ, especially those who live with me. Comfort me when I am sick or lonely or depressed. Teach me how to take part ever more reverently in the holy Mass. Give me a greater love for Jesus in the blessed sacrament. Pray for me now, and at the hour of my death. Amen.





The European Institute for Family Life Education
Institut Européen d'Education Familiale