

2026: A YEAR OF RECHARGE AT DROMANTINE



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DROMANTINE RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTRE

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE SMA IN DROMANTINE



This year marks a remarkable milestone — 100 years of the Society of African Missions (SMA) in Dromantine. Since 1926, Dromantine has stood as a place of faith, learning, and welcome — its doors open to all who seek peace, purpose, and connection.

When the SMA purchased Dromantine House and its grounds a century ago, it became the heart of missionary formation in Ireland. For almost fifty years, generations of SMA seminarians lived, studied, and prayed here before setting out to serve communities across Africa and beyond. Their dedication and spirit of service still echo in the life of Dromantine today.

Following the seminary years, Dromantine entered a new and vibrant chapter as the Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre — a place of spiritual renewal, dialogue, and hospitality. Though times have changed, the mission remains the same: to be a place of welcome, reflection, and peace.

As we celebrate a century of SMA presence in Dromantine, we give heartfelt thanks for all who have contributed to its story — priests, staff, volunteers, and visitors — and for the continuing spirit of mission, hospitality, and hope that defines this special place.

Dromantine — 100 years of welcome, faith, and service.

RETREAT DIRECTORS FOR 2026

Preached, Silent, and Directed Retreats at SMA Dromantine

In 2026, SMA Dromantine is privileged to welcome a diverse and deeply experienced group of retreat directors who bring a rich blend of spirituality, pastoral skill, and contemplative wisdom. Their unique gifts help shape the reflective and prayerful atmosphere that participants have come to cherish in our Preached, Silent, and Directed Retreat programmes.

Seán Goan

Role: Preacher

An experienced biblical scholar and retreat facilitator, Sean Goan is known for his accessible and inspiring approach to Scripture. Which invites retreatants to encounter the living Word with renewed depth and openness and commitment.

Fr Michael McCabe, SMA

Role: Preacher

One of the foremost mission theologians in Ireland, Fr Michael McCabes work is grounded in decades of experience of mission. His work at the intersection of faith, justice and the missionary call invites us to cultivate a deeper relationship with Jesus in our lives.

Sr Karen Small, OSC

Role: Director

A member of the Order of St Clare, Sr Karen Small OSC draws on the contemplative Franciscan tradition in her retreats, which offer gentle guidance into silence, stillness, and deep while offering attentiveness to God's presence.

Fr Colum O'Shea, SMA

Role: Director

Known for his warm pastoral style and thoughtful teaching, Fr Colum O'Shea SMA helps retreatants engage prayerfully with the challenges and graces of everyday life through reflective, mission-inspired spirituality.

Fr Gerard McCarthy, SVD

Role: Preacher

A Divine Word Missionary, Fr Gerard McCarthy SVD brings broad intercultural and missionary experience to his retreats, which emphasise listening to the Spirit at work in the Word, in the world, and in each person's journey.

Ms Mary Hunt

Role: Director

An experienced spiritual director and retreat guide, Mary Hunt fosters a welcoming and reflective environment, which focuses on companioning individuals as they explore God's movement in the ordinary and extraordinary moments of life.

RETREAT DIRECTORS FOR 2026

Preached, Silent, and Directed Retreats at SMA Dromantine

Fr Des Corrigan, SMA

Role: Director

Fr Des Corrigan SMA is a trained spiritual director with over 40 years experience of directing retreats. His experience and compassionate listening encourages retreatants to reach a deeper and lasting encounter with a loving and merciful God.

Fr Tom McNamara, SMA

Role: Preacher

Deeply committed to reflective prayer and personal growth, Fr Tom McNamara SMA brings a calm, thoughtful presence to his work, while supporting retreatants to discover God's guidance within their own stories.

Rev Ruth Patterson

A renounced and highly respected Presbyterian minister and pioneer in reconciliation ministry, Rev Ruth Patterson offers retreats that blend healing, hope, and inter-church understanding. Her gentle leadership fosters spaces where grace and transformation can unfold.

Fr Brendan Comerford, SJ

Fr Brendan Comerford SJ is a highly regarded spiritual director and retreat leader whose work is deeply rooted in the Ignatian tradition. Known for his reflective approach and his capacity to help individuals discern God's presence in their daily lives, he brings clarity, compassion, and depth to the retreat experience. His sessions support retreatants in developing a richer interior life and a more grounded sense of spiritual direction.

2026 WORKSHOPS

In 2026, SMA Dromantine will offer a series of workshops designed to support personal resilience, emotional wellbeing, and spiritual growth in the midst of today's fast paced and often demanding world. These workshops respond to the growing need for reflective spaces where people can step back, find clarity, and develop practical tools for navigating modern life. Rooted in both contemporary insight and deep spiritual wisdom, they offer participants meaningful opportunities for renewal, balance, and groundedness.

Caroline Brown

Caroline Brown brings a richly grounded pastoral and reflective approach to her workshops. She supports participants in exploring resilience, emotional balance, and the integration of faith into daily life. Her sessions help individuals navigate the demands of modern society with greater self-awareness, compassion, and inner steadiness.

Fr Hugh Lagan, CPsychol, SMA

A chartered clinical psychologist and retreat leader, Fr Hugh Lagan SMA offers workshops that blend psychological insight with deep spiritual understanding. His sessions focus on personal growth, healing, and human flourishing—areas of profound importance in today's fast-paced and often stressful world. Together, their 2026 workshops respond directly to the challenges of contemporary life by providing reflective spaces, practical tools, and compassionate guidance. Participants are invited to cultivate clarity, resilience, and spiritual depth, making these workshops a valuable resource for those seeking renewal and groundedness in an ever-changing society.

WORKSHOP

Saturday 21 March 2026
(9.00am Registration, 9.30am–4.30pm)

LIFE COACHING WORKSHOP

Caroline Brown has been a Life Coach for 25 years. She facilitates workshops for small groups / teams / organisations and also offers one to one sessions.

Her way of working is creative, informative, fun and practical.

This workshop is designed to help participants gain clarity, build confidence, and set meaningful goals in both personal and professional areas of life. Through interactive exercises, reflective practices, and practical coaching tools, attendees will leave with strategies to overcome obstacles, enhance motivation, and create a positive action plan for the future.



Caroline Brown

Cost: £50/€55

Includes 3 course

lunch with tea/coffees

WORKSHOP

Saturday 28 March 2026
(9.00am Registration, 9.30am–4.30pm)

THE JOY OF IMPERFECTION - Silence Your Inner Critic

Fr. Hugh Lagan, CPsychol , SMA

Break free from perfectionism, embrace mistakes, and grow in confidence as your authentic self.

Cost.£50/€55

**Includes 3 course lunch
with tea/coffees**



WORKSHOP

Friday 22nd – Sunday 24 May 2026
(Registration from 4.30pm, ends Sunday 2.00pm)

EXHAUSTED - Proven Self-Care to Restore Work-Life Balance

Feeling drained, burned out, or stuck in survival mode?
Learn practical ways to manage stress, reclaim energy,
and restore balance



Fr Hugh Lagan, CPsychol, SMA Cost £250/€290

WORKSHOP

Saturday 20th June 2026
(9.00am registration, 9.30am–4.30pm)

TRAUMA TO TRANSFORMATION WORKSHOP

**This workshop explores Trauma to
Transformation through the lens of
Compassion.**

Caroline Brown has been a Life Coach for 25 years. She is also a trainer, facilitator, graphic recorder, writer and specialises in supporting people affected by dementia. One of her passions is to support people who have experienced trauma. This workshop explores the journey of healing and growth following experiences of trauma. Participants will be guided through approaches that foster resilience, self-awareness, and emotional wellbeing.

The session combines psychological insight with practical techniques to help individuals transform adversity into personal growth and empowerment.

Cost: £50/€55

Includes 3 course lunch
with tea/coffees

Caroline Brown

WORKSHOP

Monday 24th – Friday 28th August 2026
(starts 4.30pm, ends 2pm)

HEALTHY AGEING & RETIREMENT For Clergy and Religious

The retirement journey begins well before retirement age. This workshop helps you prepare early—reflecting on identity, faith, financial stability, and meaningful connections—so you can enter retirement with confidence, purpose, and a positive spirit.

Fr Hugh Lagan, CPsychol, SMA

Cost: £425/€480



WORKSHOP

Saturday 26th September 2026
9.00am registration, 9.30am–4.30pm

NODDING OFF How to Sleep Deeper and Better for Longer

Discover practical solutions for better rest, deeper sleep, and renewed energy. Say goodbye to restless nights and let sleep restore your health.

Fr. Hugh Lagan, CPsychol, SMA

Cost: £50/€55
Includes 3 course lunch
with tea/coffees



WORKSHOP

Saturday 10th October 2026
(9.00am registration, 9.30am–4.30pm)

CARING FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

Dementia is an illness which many people fear developing. There are currently around 64,000 people living with dementia in Ireland and this number is expected to increase. This workshop provides deeper insights into practical strategies for supporting those living with dementia. Participants will explore communication techniques, compassionate care practices, and resources for families and carers. The session is suitable for healthcare professionals, carers, family members and anyone seeking to have a better understanding of dementia.



Caroline Brown

Cost £50/€55
Includes 3 course lunch
with tea/coffees

WORKSHOP

Friday 13th–Sunday 15th November 2026
(Registration from 4.30pm, ends 2pm)

FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH Discover Your Character Strengths

Uncover your unique character strengths and learn how to use them to boost resilience, well-being, and growth in every area of life.



Fr Hugh Lagan, CPsychol, SMA

Cost: £250/€290

DROMANTINE – A PLACE OF HOSPITALITY AND WELCOME

Set in the peaceful countryside just outside Newry, Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre offers a warm welcome to all who visit. Whether you come for a retreat, conference, or special event, Dromantine provides a tranquil setting where people can gather, reflect, and connect.

With its beautiful lakeside grounds, historic house, and modern facilities, Dromantine combines tradition with comfort. Our professional and friendly staff ensure that every guest feels at home, and our renowned catering team provides delicious, freshly prepared meals to suit all occasions.

We cater for a wide range of events and gatherings, including:

- Retreats and days of reflection
- Faith and community events
- Conferences and workshops
- Training and educational programmes
- Private meetings and celebrations

Whether you are seeking a peaceful retreat, a space for learning, or a venue for your next event, Dromantine offers an experience marked by care, quality, and genuine hospitality.

Dromantine — where every guest is welcomed, and every visit becomes part of our story.

Photos of Dromantine courtesy of Fr. Des Corrigan

RETREAT - LENTEN DAY

Saturday 14th March 2026

(starts 10.00am, ends 4.30pm). Registration from 9.30am

WITH SCRIPTURE THROUGH LENT

Lenten themes abound in Scripture. This day of reflection will explore some of those themes to enrich our own Lenten journey as we seek to follow Christ more closely along the way to the climax of his salvific work in Jerusalem.

Cost: £40/€45

**Includes 3 course
lunch with tea/coffee**

Seán Goan



RETREAT - LENTEN DAY

Saturday 28th March 2026

10.00am-4.30 pm) Registration from 9.30am

LENTEN RETREAT DAY Lent: A Joyful Season?



Lent is a season which prepares us to open our hearts to **"the joy of the Gospel"** (*Pope Francis*).

What is this joy and how can we recover it, and so celebrate the great feast of the Resurrection with minds and hearts renewed?

Cost. £40 /€45

**Includes 3 course
lunch with tea/coffee**

Fr Michael McCabe, SMA

RETREAT - HOLY WEEK

Thursday 2nd April - Sunday 5th April
(Registration from 4.30pm, ends Sunday 9.00am)

HOLY WEEK RETREAT

The SMA Community, Dromantine invites you to join them in reflectively celebrating the Easter Triduum, beginning on Thursday 2nd April. These days of Holy Week provide the opportunity and space to reflect and pray in the peaceful surroundings of Dromantine during this special time for our faith journey.

Let us choose time aside to celebrate the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ and so taste and savour the New Life being offered to us all.

Led by the SMA Community

Cost: £285/€325



SILENT PREACHED RETREAT

Saturday 9th- Friday 15th May 2026
(starts 4.00pm, ends Friday 9.00am)

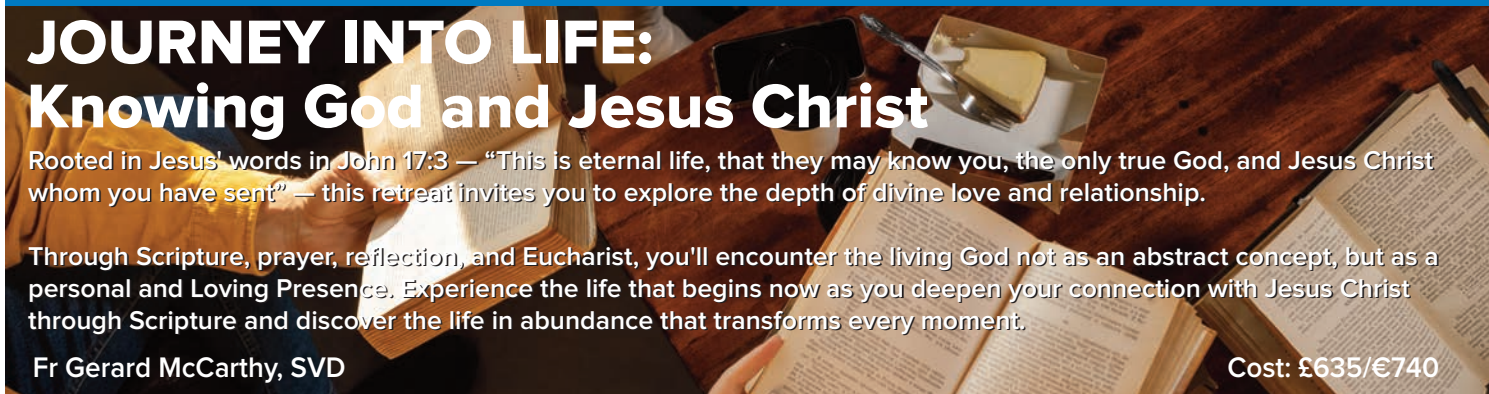
JOURNEY INTO LIFE: Knowing God and Jesus Christ

Rooted in Jesus' words in John 17:3 — "This is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" — this retreat invites you to explore the depth of divine love and relationship.

Through Scripture, prayer, reflection, and Eucharist, you'll encounter the living God not as an abstract concept, but as a personal and Loving Presence. Experience the life that begins now as you deepen your connection with Jesus Christ through Scripture and discover the life in abundance that transforms every moment.

Fr Gerard McCarthy, SVD

Cost: £635/€740



SILENT DIRECTED RETREAT

Saturday 9th - Friday 15th May 2026
(Registration from 4.00pm, ends 9.00am)



Directors:

Sr Karen Small, OSC

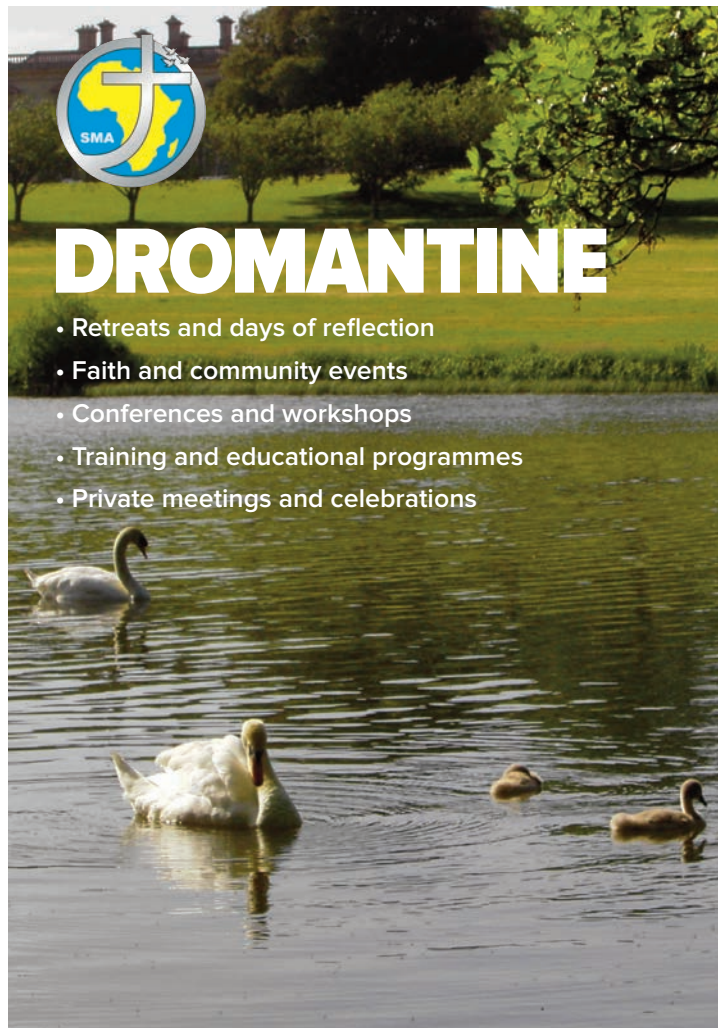
Fr Colum O'Shea, SMA

Cost: £635/€740



DROMANTINE

- Retreats and days of reflection
- Faith and community events
- Conferences and workshops
- Training and educational programmes
- Private meetings and celebrations



SILENT PREACHED RETREAT

Sunday 28th June – Saturday 4th July
(Registration from 4.00pm, ends 9.00am)

THE DIVINE GAZE: Exploring Tender and Tough Love

My image of God, whether of a Critical, Controlling Authority figure and/or a Nurturing, Caring, Loving Friend influences me and my life of Faith. During these days of reflection, we are invited to look at Self and to ponder “the height, the length and the depth of God's personal love for us.” The invitation is to look at Self and to enter into a deeper relationship with God. It is the regrounding and the renewing of Faith and responding accordingly.

Fr Tom McNamara, SMA

Cost: £635/€740



SILENT DIRECTED RETREAT

Sunday 28th - Saturday 4th July 2026
(Registration from 4.00pm, ends 9.00am)

Directors:

Sr Karen Small, OSC

Rev Ruth Patterson

Fr Colum O'Shea, SMA



Cost: £635/€740

SILENT PREACHED RETREAT

Monday 31st August - Sunday 6th September 2026
(Registration from 4.00pm, ends 9.00am)

LIFE'S THIRD ACT: A Spirituality for anyone wishing to live until they die

For anyone 45 years and older, this retreat explores the art of consious ageing, international living and a personal spirituality that empowers and liberates.

Fr Hugh Lagan, SMA

Cost: £635/€740



SILENT DIRECTED RETREAT

Monday 31st August - Sunday 6th September 2026
(Registration from 4.00pm, ends 9.00am)

Directors:

Ms Mary Hunt

Fr Brendan Comerford, SJ

Fr Des Corrigan, SMA

Cost: £635/€740



SILENT ADVENT RETREAT

Friday 4th December – Sunday 6th December
(Registration from 4.30pm, ends 9.00am)

WITH SCRIPTURE THROUGH ADVENT:

Scripture provides us with a treasure trove of readings to illuminate the season of advent. During these days of reflection readings both from the Old Testament and the New Testament will provide us with the opportunity to open our minds and heart to the presence of the God who never ceases to come to us in love.

Seán Goan



Cost: £250/€300

ADVENT DAY RETREAT

Saturday 12th December 2026
(starts 10.00am, ends 4.30pm) registration from 9.30am

ADVENT RETREAT DAY

- Getting Advent Right

In the context of the rampant consumerism which nowadays encourages us to celebrate Christmas months in advance, Advent helps us "to charm back the luxury of a child's soul" (Patrick Kavanagh) so as to truly appreciate Christmas and celebrate it properly.

Fr Michael McCabe, SMA



Cost: £40/€45
Includes 3 course
lunch with tea/coffee



DROMANTINE RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTRE

Dromantine caters for all kinds of groups, conferences, seminars, retreats and chapters, offering a modern, comfortable, well-equipped facility in an idyllic rural setting.

FACILITIES INCLUDE:

- Chapel and Prayer Room.
- 47 single and 25 double bedrooms, all with en-suite facilities, free broadband and Wifi.
- A large conference room and 7 meeting rooms.
- Hearing loop system in the Conference Halls and Chapel.
- Friendly staff and excellent home cooked food
- Free Wifi.
- Major Credit Cards Accepted.
- Situated 45 mins from Belfast and 1 hour from Dublin.
- Excellent public transport by bus and train from Dublin, Dublin Airport and Belfast to Newry.



Sat Nav Coordinates
54.261381, -6.346018

For further information on facilities and upcoming events and detailed directions, visit our website.

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