

Curate says first Mass and admits it's a 'difficult time' to be a priest

By [Kathryn Hayes](#)

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BY HIS own admission, it was a "difficult time" for a priest to step up and face a church congregation.

But a newly ordained Redemptorist said his first Mass in Limerick at the weekend, as controversy raged over the future of Bishop Donal Murray.

Limerick-born Fr Brian Nolan said that it was a "good time" to focus on renewal in a Catholic Church reeling from the fallout of clerical abuse scandals.

He was one of three Redemptorists ordained last weekend -- the largest number to join the order for more than 10 years.

The 31-year-old electronics graduate said the recent ordinations indicated a sign of renewal.

"You could say it comes at a difficult time, and it does in light of the recent report," he said. "But you could also say it comes at a good time because the church is really in need of renewal and its a great sign of renewal when you have three young men taking that position.

"There are challenging times ahead but it's a challenge I am looking forward to facing. It will be difficult, I have no doubt about that.

Support

"But I have great support from friends and family, and all the people that were at the church," he added.

Fr Nolan was ordained alongside colleagues Tony Rice and Sean Duggan.

Fr Seamus Enright, director of communications at the Redemptorist Order, described their decision to join the religious order as "courageous".

"It's courageous of them because it is a difficult time for the church and so few people are making that choice now," said Fr Enright.

There are now 120 Redemptorist priests in Ireland and four more young men are studying to join the organisation.

- *Kathryn Hayes*