



Ancient Order of Hibernians

JOHN CARDINAL D'ALTON DIVISION 3

April 2025

Brother Hibernians _____



I hope this month's newsletter finds you and your family well and you had a wonderful and blessed Easter. Our next meeting is **tonight, Friday, May 2nd, at 8pm.**

We have a very busy ten day stretch in front of us, and we hope to see many of you at all of these events. First up on Sunday, May 4th is the Hibernian Mass and Communion Breakfast where we distribute scholarships to ten high school seniors. And, we are only one week away from our Annual Golf Outing, being held at Blue Hill Golf Course on Friday, May 9th. See the following articles with details on both events including details of how to get involved.

Congratulations to Dennis Madigan and the Hibernian House team that put on yet another successful Comedy Night earlier in April. Also, a huge congratulations and **thank you** to those members who marched with us in the Pearl River St. Patrick's Day parade where we won the Connie and Breda O'Sullivan Memorial Trophy for the best marching unit among Irish Cultural Organizations.

We'll have the opportunity to march again on Memorial Day at the Pearl River Memorial Day parade on Monday, May 26th at 10:15am. More to come on that as the day approaches.

Good & Welfare – Please pray for the repose of the soul of our brother Tom Leahy, and for Brian Fennell, son of member Tommy Fennell and brother of member Brendan Fennell; Bill Kivlehan, father of members Kevin and Joseph Kivlehan; and Joan Horan, mother of member Bill Horan – may they rest in peace. Also keep Tim Diviny, Kevin Haugh and John Kelly in your prayers for a quick recovery as they battle different health challenges.

As always, we pray that you and your family are healthy and safe.

Yours in Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity,

Chuck Parnow

Upcoming Events



Event	Timing	Details
NY AOH State Board Meeting	Sat., 5/3 at 10am	Shamrock House in East Durham, NY
Hibernian Mass & Communion Breakfast	Sun., 5/4; Mass at 9am, breakfast follows	Mass at St. Margaret's and breakfast back at the Hibernian
AOH Annual Golf Outing	Fri., 5/9	Bluehill Golf Course – see article
44 th Anniversary Memorial for the Hungerstrickers	Sat., 5/17; Mass at 6pm	Memorial Mass & Social; Guest of Honor: Joan Moore
Pearl River Memorial Day Parade	Mon., 5/26; stepping off at 10:15am	Meet at the KeyBank on North Middletown Rd.

Hibernian Mass



This coming Sunday – May 4th – we'll have our annual Hibernian Mass and Communion Breakfast. The Mass will be held at St. Margaret Church at the regular 9am Mass, and the Communion Breakfast will be held in the upstairs hall at the Hibernian House immediately thereafter. We will recognize our ten high school scholarship recipients at both events, presenting them their scholarship checks at the breakfast. We're thrilled to have member John McGowan (former NYS Assemblyman and Rockland Legislator) as the guest speaker at the breakfast.

This is a great event – and an important one for an Irish Catholic organization – and you don't have to be a family member of a scholar to attend. The breakfast is only \$10 per individual (\$20 for families). So we can get a headcount estimate, let us know if you're coming at praoh3@gmail.com.

Annual Golf Outing



Our annual golf outing this year is in memory of all the members we lost in the five years from 2020 through 2024. So many of those that we've lost were pivotal in creating the AOH that we know, including many involved in acquiring and building out the Hibernian House. So, we want to make sure all are recognized. See the link for the full list of those we are remembering: https://praoh.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/t-shirt-back_REV.png

It takes a lot of work to pull off such an all-day event – we need volunteers to:

- Supply or collect donations to be included in the tricky tray raffles to be held after golf. Also, there's still time for your business to consider corporate sponsorship if you've got the connection.
- Help with setup the day before, and
- Support the many tasks the day of the event – from working the registration table at the beginning to helping with the raffles and making sure everything runs smoothly in the after-golf cocktail hour and dinner.

Involvement doesn't have to mean dedication of a full day – lots of people providing 2-3 hours will get us where we need to be – and it's a great way to meet other division members. If you want to volunteer, please reach out to committee chairman Scott MacMaster at scottmac31@gmail.com. And as always, you can always reach out to us at praoh3@gmail.com.

We're filling up, but we still need golfers! If you're a golfer, this is a day not to be missed. Your \$200 buys an 18-hole scramble, refreshments on the course and dinner afterward. See the following links for details:

<https://praoh.org/aoh-division-3-golf-outing-2/>

If you don't golf, join us for the cocktail hour and dinner for \$80 and check out the great raffles. We're looking forward to seeing many of you there.

Hibernian House



Best time of the year? Baseball season is on and the NHL playoffs present a great game every night (even if you're a disappointed Ranger or Devil fan). Drop by the pub to watch all the action with your crew. Stop by!

Keep in mind, the Hibernian House monthly drawings continue each month. The Hibernian House February monthly drawing at our February meeting doled out another \$1,400 [1st place (\$1,000); 2nd place (\$250); 3rd place (\$150)]. See a bartender for a ticket that delivers some great odds!

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Starving in a Sea of Plenty



Among the more persistent and insulting myths of the "Great Hunger" is the claim that the Irish "starved while surrounded by fish" because they were too ignorant or too stubborn to help themselves. It's a narrative repeated in history books, classrooms, and casual conversation—a defaming simplification that distorts the truth of what our ancestors endured.

Let's be clear: the Irish didn't starve because they ignored fish. They starved because they were denied access to the means to survive—by poverty, by policy, and by prejudice.

Ireland is an island surrounded by some of the richest fishing grounds in Europe. But presence does not translate to access. English and Scottish fisheries benefited from targeted government investment in boats, harbors, and curing facilities. Irish fisheries received none of these supports; in fact, British policy deliberately repressed it to prevent competition with the English fishing fleet. Ireland lacked harbors, piers, storage facilities, salt or ice for preservation, and roads for transportation. Historians have noted even less-perishable food like Indian meal was hard to distribute. Fresh fish never stood a chance. For the majority of Irish, the fish that surrounded their island was as accessible as bananas from South America.

The traditional Irish fishing boat, the currach—a lightweight, hide-covered or canvas boat—was designed for nearshore fishing and short distances. While ideal for navigating rocky coasts and dangerous surf, it was unsuitable for offshore fishing or large hauls. Its limited capacity and vulnerability to Atlantic weather, especially in winter, meant it could not sustain the fishing operations needed to serve the inland starving population.

To make matters worse, the onset of the potato crop failure triggered a collapse of this already fragile coastal economy. With no crops to sell and no cash reserves, many fishing families were forced to pawn or sell their nets, lines, and even boats to buy food or pay rent. These tools were often the only tangible assets they owned. Once sold, they were gone for good. And without gear, even the meager ability to fish vanished.

Inland, where rivers and lakes were full of trout, salmon, and eels, the story was the same: denial of access. Under British law, freshwater fishing rights belonged to the landlord. These rights were jealously guarded. Tenants were forbidden to fish without permission.

Getting caught poaching from a landlord's river could result in eviction—a death sentence during the famine. So, while Ireland's rivers ran full of life, they were often locked behind absentee landlords' walls. Landlord privilege was protected even as people perished in sight of sustenance.

So why does the myth persist?

Because it fits a colonial narrative, it's easier to suggest the Irish were the architects of their own suffering than to confront the hard truth that the British government chose inaction. It reinforces old stereotypes of the Irish as helpless, lazy, or ignorant. It shifts responsibility away from the policies and structures that caused the famine—and places it on the shoulders of its victims. That narrative still echoes in classrooms today because too many educators fail to question colonial biases when it comes to the story of the Irish.

This myth isn't just historically inaccurate. It's offensive. It accuses our ancestors of deliberately choosing starvation when the record shows they were inhumanly stripped of all means of food.

The Great Hunger wasn't a natural disaster; it was a human one. The Irish did not ignore fish. They were denied the boats, the roads, the salt, the equipment, the investment, and the legal rights to access the resources of their own land and the waters that surrounded them.

The Irish did not die from ignorance or famine. They died from injustice and inhumanity, and we need to end their slander through ignorance.