



**CONTROVERSY** Fr Tom Forde

Order's 'deep regret' over zombie slur

**CLERIC SHOCK 2**

BY CIARA PHELAN

THE Order representing a priest that compared gay people to infected zombies has said it "deeply regrets" the comments.

Fr Tom Forde was blasted for the slur he delivered during his homily at a mass in Kilkenny last weekend.

Speaking on behalf of the Irish Capuchin Friars, Brother Sean Kelly said: "This homily, which had been published as a blog, is no longer posted online."

"On reflection, Fr Tom removed the blog as it was not his intention to cause hurt to anyone."

"The Capuchin Order wishes to state all are welcome in our churches, irrespective of sexual orientation."

"Unfortunate comments were made about homosexuality last Saturday, which gay people would have found hurtful and we deeply regret this."

**BACKLASH**

"When asked about gay people, Pope Francis has said, 'Who am I to judge?'. And speaking to a gay man at an audience in the Vatican he said, 'God made you like this and he loves you'."

"We support Pope Francis in his comments on gay people and we will continue to be guided by him and by our own mission statement, which states, 'We affirm that our fraternities will be places of prayer, hospitality and outreach to all.'"

Fr Forde's homily was met with a fierce backlash and it is understood a number of people left during the service.

Irish Mirror reader Ann Kelly said: "I am so sorry this priest thinks this way."

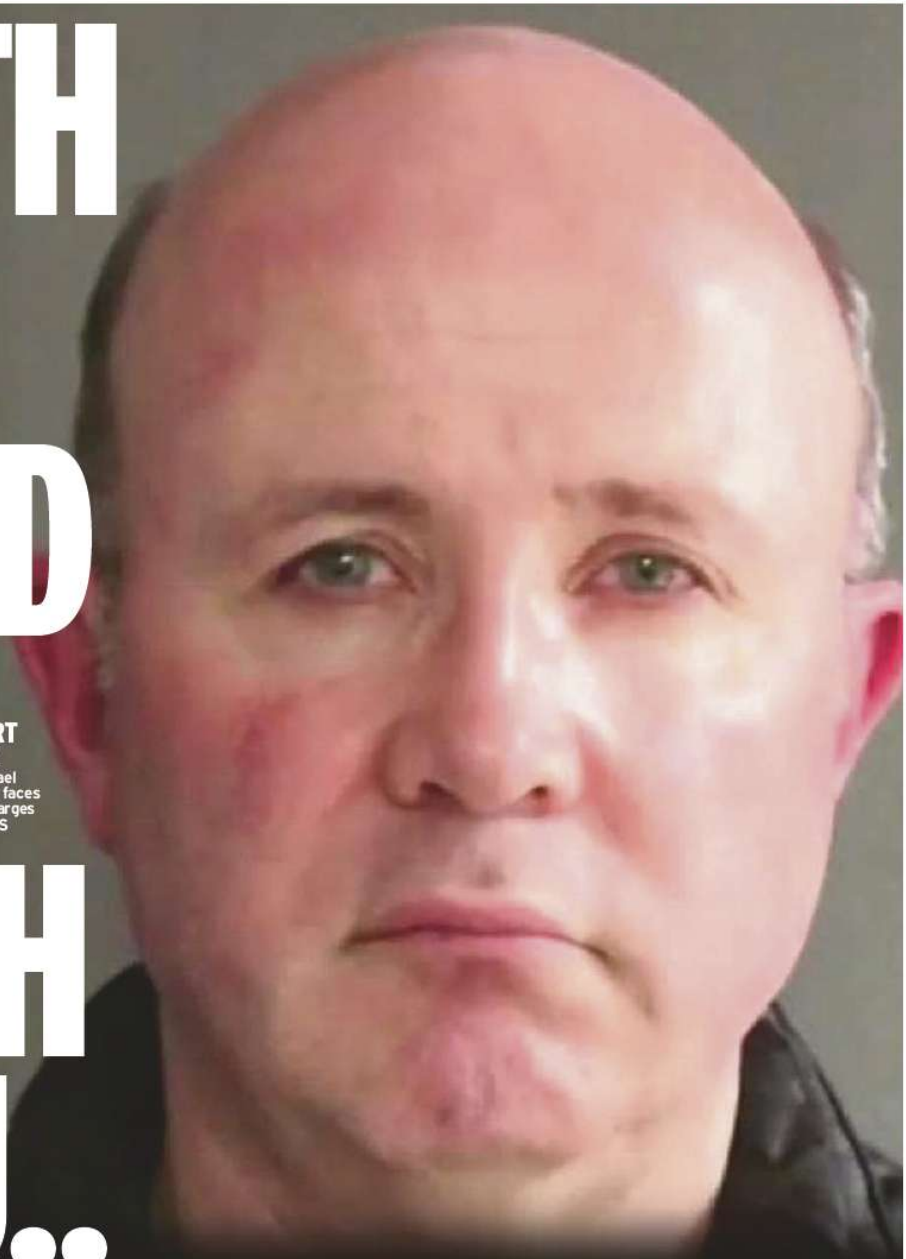
"Sad, sad day for the Friary in Kilkenny."

**HOMILY LABELS GAY PEOPLE AS ZOMBIES**

**SHOCKING** Yesterday's story

# METH THE LORD BE WITH YOU..

**COURT DATE**  
Fr Michael O'Leary faces drug charges in the US



Irish priest on US drug charges stalls family will dispute hearing

**CLERIC SHOCK 1**

BY AODHAN O FAOLAIN

**A COURT dispute involving six siblings over their late mother's will cannot proceed because one of them, a Catholic priest, is charged with drug offences in the US.**

New York-based Fr Michael O'Leary was arrested by police in the early hours of St Patrick's Day after they found him and another man in a vehicle.

Investigating officers claim a search of the car unrecovered half an ounce of methamphetamine, two scales and other materials used for packaging narcotics.

The 50-year-old is currently remanded on bail.

He is charged with criminal possession of a controlled substance with intent to sell and two counts of criminal use of drug paraphernalia and

the criminal possession of a controlled substance.

Meanwhile, in Ireland four of the accused's siblings - Nora Harpur, Barry O'Leary, Tadhg O'Leary and Marie O'Leary - have brought unrelated High Court proceedings against both Fr O'Leary and their brother John O'Leary.

The High Court action is aimed at setting aside the will of their mother who died in September 2014.

The four are seeking an order condemning a will made by the late Elizabeth O'Leary, of Morehampton Road, Donnybrook, South Dublin, in 2009 on the grounds she was not of sound mind when it was made.

It is claimed the family home was left to the defendants, while the residue of the estate was left to the other siblings.

It is also alleged undue influence was exerted over the late Mrs O'Leary by the defendants when she was preparing and executing the will.

The claims are denied. The case had

been fixed for hearing later this month and was expected to last several days, with Fr O'Leary expected to give evidence.

Last week lawyers for the priest asked Ms Justice Leonie Reynolds to adjourn the case as it was not possible for their client to attend court due to "a somewhat sensitive" matter.

The judge was told Fr O'Leary is charged with drug offences and is undergoing a 90-day residential drug rehab programme in New York.

Despite their best efforts, his lawyers have had very little communications with the priest since his arrest and the programme won't be completed until the middle of next month.

It was claimed it would be prejudicial to Fr O'Leary to interrupt it.

The priest is due back before a New York court in respect of the drugs charges later this month.

His lawyers added he is hopeful given his past good behaviour, and having

undergone treatment, the US court will treat him with leniency if convicted.

Fr O'Leary's lawyers are unclear about the terms of their client's bail, but believe he would be unlikely to be able to travel to attend the High Court.

They added that despite being unable to get firm instructions they are concerned Fr O'Leary is unlikely to be emotionally or psychologically ready to address the complex issues raised in the will dispute.

The request for an adjournment was opposed by lawyers for the plaintiffs.

Ms Justice Reynolds expressed the court's displeasure at the application which she said lacked detail about Fr O'Leary's future availability.

The judge adjourned the matter for mention to next week to allow the cleric's lawyers to obtain more information about the criminal proceedings in the US and discover when he would be in a position to give evidence.