

# Goal hires Irish Water woman as its new boss

By Aisling Scally

GOAL has appointed a new general manager following the resignation of Barry Andrews as the charity's CEO last month.

The beleaguered aid agency said Celine Fitzgerald, who is on the board of Irish Water's parent company, had been given a one-year fixed-term contract.

Ms Fitzgerald will start her new role on November 1. As a result of an aid inquiry carried out by the US Office of the Inspector General of USAID, the Department of Foreign Affairs withheld €10.1million funding from Goal pending the results of the inquiry.

Goal is also implementing an action plan, based on a consultant's report, which was commissioned in response to the ongoing



Experience: Celine Fitzgerald

US investigation into alleged supply chain irregularities relating to US-sponsored humanitarian aid programmes in Syria.

The report shows that, despite

the organisation's best intentions, its processes and controls were not adequately equipped to handle the growth and scale of challenges it had set itself. Ms Fitzgerald's duties over the next 12 months will include the implementation of an action plan.

Mr Andrews, a former Fianna Fáil junior minister, announced last week he had tendered his resignation and would step down as soon as a replacement had been appointed.

Ms Fitzgerald has previously worked in management roles in Eircell, Vodafone and outsourcing business Rigney Dolphin, where she was CEO.

She is on the boards of both the VHI and Irish Water's parent company Ervia, and has worked at management level for Trócaire.

# Dr Mark Dooley



## MORAL MATTERS

# A troubadour of truth, Dylan got us all right

**H**E gave me my first glimpse inside the world of real culture. I was too young for classical music and, to me, the synthetic sound of pop was meaningless. Then, at the age of 15, I listened to Bob Dylan's album *Street Legal*.

It was one of those moments we call a 'milestone'. As I listened to this 'man of constant sorrows', I heard pain, loneliness, joy and tenderness. For the first time in my life, I saw how words could reach into a person's heart and offer them redemption:

*Sixteen years  
Sixteen banners united over the fields  
Where the good shepherd grieves  
Desperate men, desperate women  
divided  
Spreading their wings 'neath the falling leaves.*

For me, these were not lyrics but sublime poetry singing to the soul. Just when I needed them most, I heard what sounded like verses from Venus. At once, I knew this was my awakening, a moment of revelation.

My Dylan was not the anti-war protest singer of *Blowin' In The Wind*. He was neither the Salvador Dali of rock nor the 'voice of a generation'. He was something much more: a poet who could peer into the depths of the human psyche and translate what he saw into timeless imagery.

To many of my peers, his words seemed almost senseless. What I saw, however, was a vision of a world where love redeemed the heartbroken and where salvation was the reward for faith. 'There's a lone soldier on the cross, smoke pourin' out of a boxcar door. You didn't know it, you didn't think it could be done, in the final end he won the wars after losin' every battle'.

Dylan was never a counter-cultural force, never someone who sought to tear down tradition. His love of folk music and traditional tunes testifies to his enduring belief that, in cutting our cord to the past, we lose something precious. Similarly, his understanding of the great books of Western civilisation shows why he is such a unique phenomenon.

The 'lone soldier on the cross' became, for me, a symbol of enduring hope. The fact that such words were wrapped in a mantle of musical beauty, made them all the more magical. Dylan's world was one of deep religious intensity, of soulful harmony and exotic encounters:

*In one verse from his 1965 classic Desolation Row, we meet Romeo in search of Cinderella:  
And someone says, 'You're in the wrong place my friend,  
You'd better leave'  
And the only sound that's left  
After the ambulances go  
Is Cinderella sweeping up  
On Desolation Row.*

Dylan gave me a sense of wonder in

a world from which it seemed to have all but disappeared. I considered him on a par with Keats and Shelley, as significant in some ways as Shakespeare. That is because he spoke of eternal things which cast a bright light on the human condition.

I first saw him perform in 1989 at the RDS. It was like witnessing a medieval troubadour singing in the streets. He hid his face, but that didn't matter because I went to hear his words.

The first significant thing I ever penned was a philosophical treatment of Dylan's poetry. He was, I wrote, a mystic who could see 'beyond the moment'. His purpose, as I saw it, was not political, but to bring his listeners to a place of stillness.

He sings to St Peter imploring him to 'ring them bells...with an iron hand'. For 'it's rush hour now...and the sun is going down upon the sacred cow'. He calls out to St Martha and St Catherine, begging them to ring them bells 'for the child that cries when innocence dies'.

In the midst of all the glitz and glamour of the pop world, Bob Dylan was for me a cultural icon who revealed the real power of imagination. He was elusive, evasive but always an evangelist of truth.

**I**HAVE seen him countless times in concert and, even in melodies he has sung a thousand times, I have always heard something new. His genius is that of someone who can paint pictures of our sad world, pictures which, when studied closely, show how we can be saved. Beyond all that, however, Dylan gave me consolation when I needed it most. As a boy, I found it impossible to relate to my time. And then, like a bolt from the blue, he burst into my life and showed me how to distinguish beauty from banality.

For so long, I had searched for someone who saw the world as I did. For so long, I had sought in vain until that moment when I heard him sing: 'Are you so fast that you cannot see that I must have solitude? When I am in the darkness why do you intrude?'

Here was a voice crying in the wilderness, the voice of someone who was summoning us to silence and simplicity. In the silence you will find meaning. In the darkness you will discover lasting light.

Beyond the 'gates of Eden', we find ourselves constantly 'knockin' on Heaven's door'. We find ourselves searching for something to which we can cling as we wander down Desolation Row. We find it in the silence of our hearts, the only place we can truly take 'shelter from the storm'.

Last Thursday, I answered a phone call from my father. 'Dylan has won the Nobel Prize. You were right about him all along!' he exclaimed.

In telling me what I needed to hear, just when I needed to hear it, it seems that Dylan was always more right about me.

—mark.dooley@daily@mail.ie—

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