

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – St. Tighernach's Day celebrated

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Image of the day

St. Tighernach's Day celebrated in Clones



The Different Keys Choir who performed at St Tighernach's Day

The annual celebration of St. Tighernach's Day in Clones took place on Thursday evening, 4th April with a service in St. Tighernach's Church of Ireland, The Diamond, followed by a procession to the Round Tower graveyard.

The event was organised by Clones Community Forum and led by the Chairman, Mr. Walter Pringle with speakers including Bishop Ian Ellis and Very Revd John Chester. The main speaker was Right Revd Monsignor Laurence Flynn, Prior of Lough Derg.



Participating at the St. Tighernach's Day service in Clones.

During the evening, there was singing by the Different Keys Choir and music provided by pipers from the Graham Memorial Pipe Band, Clontibret.

Mgr Laurence Flynn, who is originally from Rosslea, outlined the historic significance of pilgrimage and the importance of Lough Derg as a place for pilgrims to visit.

Bishop Ian Ellis spoke of the people of those early monastic times, who were renowned for their teaching, preaching and charity, having a love of God's world. He said the early Christian saints lived during tough times and now we celebrate the legacy of faith in this land.

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Following the event in the church, a number of people dressed as monks carrying lanterns together with Graham Memorial Pipe Band, led a procession through the streets of Clones to the Round Tower graveyard, assembling close to where St. Tighernach's Sarcophagus is situated. Afterwards everyone was invited for refreshments in the Cassandra Hand Folk and Famine Centre.

St. Tighernach was patron saint of Clones and Bishop of Clogher from 506 to 549. He died on 4th April 549.

News



Connor rector receives MBE from Prince of Wales

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The Rev Canon Tracey McRoberts MBE travelled to Windsor Castle to receive her Honour from HRH The Prince of Wales.

Tracey, who is rector of St Matthew's, Belfast, was awarded her MBE in the King's Birthday Honours for services to the community in Belfast.

She was accompanied to Windsor by her mother and her son Phillip.



Ballygawley MU celebrates 35 years

A fabulous evening celebrating 35 years of Mothers' Union in Ballygawley was held recently with a tea party and some wonderful memories from their members



There was also a little crafting - everyone made and decorated their own frame with their favourite Bible verse in the centre.

Two ladies received long service awards: Mrs Gertie Finlay, 35 years and Mrs Freda Cobane, 30 years. Congratulations ladies... Here's to the next 35!

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St Ann's Dublin partners with National Gallery in Stained Glass Tour



One of the Wilhelmina Geddes windows in St Ann's.

St Ann's Dawson Street has been selected by the National Gallery of Ireland to be a part of its self guided walking tour celebrating the work of An Túr Gloine.

An Túr Gloine (the Tower of Glass) was a stained glass studio founded by Sarah Purser in 1903. The studio was the great achievement of the Irish Arts and Crafts Movement.

It was from this studio that noted artists such as Harry Clarke, Wilhelmina Geddes, and Ethel Rhind produced some of the greatest stained glass windows of the age.

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St Ann's, Dawson Street is fortunate to possess a suite of windows by Wilhelmina Geddes, as well as a memorial window by Ethel Rhind.

The Vicar of St Ann's, Dawson Street, The Revd Canon Paul Arbuthnot, commented: "We are delighted to partner with the National Gallery of Ireland by being a part of their self guided walking tour of the work of An Túr Gloine. St Ann's is very fortunate to possess a collection of windows by Wilhelmina Geddes, and we are thrilled to share these treasures with the people of Dublin.

"These windows do not only showcase world class Irish artistic talent, but also convey a deep sense of faith and God. To have such artwork in the church in the heart of the city is something which we at St Ann's value very highly. St Ann's is an oasis of Godly calm in the middle of the bustling city and the beauty of these windows is a part of this feeling. These windows are of great importance when studying the work of An Túr Gloine, and everybody is welcome to come in to see them and enjoy".

St Ann's opening hours are Monday to Friday, 10am – 2pm and admission is free

Further details are available here:

<https://sourcenationalgallery.ie/node/118>

Missionary's bereavement

CMSI write - We received sad news from Alison Guinness that she has had to travel back to the UK with her two girls,



following the sudden death of her older brother Andrew (43 years old). The family would very much appreciate our prayers during this very difficult time. It has been a real shock, and they are devastated.

Following the memorial service on the 15th April, the Guinness's will travel back to Burundi. It will be very tough for Alison having to leave her parents at a time when their grief and pain is overwhelming.

Please to pray for Paul and Jeremyl. Pray for God's comfort and grace to surround their family and friends at this very challenging time.

65% of young British Muslims oppose Israel's right to exist

Two-thirds of young British Muslims believe Israel should not exist as a Jewish homeland, according to a major new poll.

Based on a survey of 1000 British Muslims, an astonishing 65% of the religious group aged 18-24 said they did not believe Israel has a right to exist. Within the 45-54 demographic, the percentage of those who agree with the statement is almost half that, at 34%. Across all age groups, the proportion who agreed with the statement is 49%.

The J.L. Partners survey also found that 80% of respondents in both the 18-24 and 25-34 brackets believe that Israel is a racist endeavour, compared to 67% in the 55+ age category, suggesting younger British Muslims have far stronger views on the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Bishop Kevin Doran welcomes publication of Dignitas Infinita, on Human Dignity

In response to the publication today by the Dicastery of the Doctrine of the Faith of the document Dignitas Infinita, on Human Dignity, Bishop Kevin Doran of Elphin, chair of the Council for Life of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, stated -

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“I welcome the publication by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith of a new document on human dignity, *Dignitas Infinita*. This document makes it clear that Human Dignity is not something that is given or conceded by law, or something which a person can somehow ‘lose’.



Human dignity is inherent in the human nature of every person.

As the document states, ‘Every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being, which prevails in and beyond every circumstance, state, or situation the person may ever encounter.

This principle, which is fully recognizable even by reason alone, underlies the primacy of the human person and the protection of human rights. In the light of Revelation, the Church resolutely reiterates and confirms the ontological dignity of the human person, created in the image and likeness of God and redeemed in Jesus Christ.”

Bishop Doran continued, “Dignitas Infinita addresses a wide range of circumstances in which particular actions, or failures to act, by individuals or by the State, would contradict the dignity of a person or a whole group of persons. These include sexual abuse, human trafficking, abortion, discrimination against migrants or people with disability and violence against women.

“At a time when euthanasia and assisted suicide are being actively promoted by vocal minorities in many countries including our own, the following extract from Dignitas Infinita is particularly relevant:

‘Certainly, the dignity of those who are critically or terminally ill calls for all suitable and necessary efforts to alleviate their suffering through appropriate palliative care and by avoiding aggressive treatments or disproportionate medical procedures ... Even in its sorrowful state, human life carries a dignity that must always be upheld, that can never be lost, and that calls for unconditional respect. Indeed, there are no circumstances under which human life would cease from being dignified and could, as a result, be put to an end. Each life has the same value and dignity for everyone: the respect of the life of another is the same as the respect owed to one’s own life. Therefore, helping the suicidal person to take his or her own life is an objective offense

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against the dignity of the person asking for it, even if one would be thereby fulfilling the person's wish. We must accompany people towards death, but not provoke death or facilitate any form of suicide. Remember that the right to care and treatment for all must always be prioritized so that the weakest, particularly the elderly and the sick, are never rejected."

Resting place of Bread of Heaven writer saved from sale

Campaigners have won their fight to stop the sale of an historic church where the author of the original Welsh lyrics to Bread of Heaven is buried.

Poet and hymn writer Ann Griffiths penned the Welsh language words to the choir favourite Cwm Rhondda – known as Bread of Heaven in English.

She was baptised, married, and buried in the picturesque St Michael's Church in Llanfihangel-yng-Ngwynfa, Powys, following her death after childbirth aged just 29 in 1805.

The church closed its doors in 2020 after it fell into disrepair and religious leaders said they could not afford to fix it. But campaigners were outraged when the "culturally important" church was listed for auction – and given a guide price of just £30,000.

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A petition to save the church was launched and gathered more than 1,800 signatures in one day – leading church bosses to postpone the sale.

Musician Lleuwen Steffan began the petition to save the church, saying: “We are still riding on the wave of the poetic expression of her faith.

“She was baptised here, and married here. It goes to auction in a week. It is a place of great historical importance. But Welsh History is disregarded.

“Ann Griffiths wrote a total of just 30 hymns and as clichés go it really is quality rather than quantity. Her hymns are imprinted in our collective memory.”

Ann’s poems and hymns have been set to music and an adaptation of one, Yr Arglwydd Iesu (The Lord Jesus) was read at the enthronement of former Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams. The Church in Wales said the sale had been postponed for a year.

The original listing by estate agents said: “Comprising a substantial unlisted former place of worship, situated in a prominent location within the Conservation Area of the small semi-rural village of Llanfihangel yng Ngwynfa.

“Traditionally built, to a particular style, in dressed local stone walls under a slate clad roof. This substantial building offers scope for a variety of alternative uses (subject to planning consent).”

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books



The organisers say - We have exciting news to share about 'The Prayer' - one of our brand new initiatives for ThyKingdomCome 2024.

This Pentecost, we invite you to join thousands of young people, across the nation, as we come together to pray 'The Prayer' that Jesus taught us - The Lord's Prayer in one mighty voice.

We want to encourage all Christian youth groups, around the country, to meet on Pentecost Sunday from 5pm to 6pm, and as part of your time together join in the national moment of youth uniting in prayer - with contributions from The

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Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop of York Rachel Gardner and The Way UK.

Let us raise our voices, and unite in saying The Lord's Prayer with faith that God hears and answers the prayers of his people.

To find out more about #ThePrayer and how you can get involved, visit: <https://bit.ly/3PVJf8S>

Unicorns in churches

Yesterday was #UnicornDay, and you may be surprised to hear that you can find lots of unicorns in churches

In the middle ages, unicorns were commonly found in bestiaries - a book about different beasts. Unicorns were believed to be ferocious creatures, capable of killing elephants, but they would become gentle if they were with a virgin woman. The story of the unicorn followed that once the unicorn was asleep after meeting a virgin, hunters would be able to catch and kill it, and this story was seen as a parallel to the story of Christ's death. Real narwhal horns were often used as unicorn horns, which could supposedly detect poison in food and drink, and be used as a teeth whitener if ground into a powder.

Unicorns are also the national animal of Scotland, and can be found in the royal coat of arms opposite the English lion. There are therefore lots of depictions of unicorns in churches - let us know if you have a favourite church unicorn



Diocesan **Saturday Night Live** youth event with worship, prayer, food and Bible teaching.

Saturday 13 April, 7.30–9.30 pm

St Mark's Dundela, 217 Holywood Rd, Belfast BT4 1DH

Saturday Night Live in St Mark's Dundela

Saturday Night Live is coming to St Mark's this weekend! Join youth fellowships from across the Diocese for worship, prayer, food and Bible teaching.

Guest speaker Andrew McCartney from Open Doors will share their work supplying Bibles, providing emergency relief and helping persecuted Christians in more than 70 countries.

Diocese of Down & Dromore Church of Ireland

In the media

Catholic Herald - Let them finally have a Christian burial: Captain Robert Nairac and last of the 'Disappeared' from Northern Ireland's Troubles

Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh has reiterated his ongoing call for action to finally retrieve the remains of Northern Ireland's last few "Disappeared": four men killed by the IRA during the Troubles, whose bodies have never been found, Declan McSweeney reports.

The Catholic Church in Northern Ireland recalls these men each year at a special Mass, which is designed both to bring spiritual consolation to the loved ones of the 'Disappeared' and to raise awareness among the generations who have grown up since the 1998 Good Friday Agreement – a generation unaware of what it was like to live through violence from the 1960s to the 1990s which cost more than 3,700 lives with up to 100,000 injured in Northern Ireland.

The men include British Army Captain Robert Nairac, who was abducted and murdered by the IRA in County Armagh in May 1977; Joseph Lynskey, a former Cistercian monk from west Belfast who went missing during the summer of 1972; Columba McVeigh from Donaghmore in County

Tyrone who was 19 years old when he was abducted and murdered in October 1975; and Seamus Maguire, who went missing from Lurgan in County Armagh near the end of 1973.

Nairac's disappearance and the IRA's cruel obstinance that meant his body was never returned to his family for a Christian burial despite continued appeals became one of the most infamous cases of Northern Ireland's 'Disappeared'. Described by those who worked with him as a "committed Roman Catholic" and having a "strong Catholic belief", as a boy Nairac attended the Catholic preparatory school Gilling Castle, the feeder school for Ampleforth College that he then attended. Nairac went on to read medieval and military history at Oxford University.

Following Nairac's abduction, torture and murder by the IRA, it emerged that Nairac didn't reveal any information to his captors all the way up to when a bullet was fired into his head. Reportedly, one of those involved in his abduction and interrogation impersonated a Catholic priest to try and trick Nairac into beginning his last confession as he veered in and out of consciousness – that individual apparently never got over his involvement with the murder of the young officer and was plagued by guilt and depression for the rest of his life.

The bodies of 13 other victims have been recovered, including mother-of-ten Jean McConville.

Archbishop Martin told the congregation at the Mass that he commended the recent Kenova report, which highlighted the failure to properly acknowledge the hurt inflicted on families

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and a lack of disclosure about murder that wouldn't be tolerated anywhere else.

Dr Martin added: "Meeting like this, every year, highlights and renews the importance of addressing fully and properly the legacy of our troubled past, and making it clear that we cannot accept the simplistic idea of 'drawing the line' under our past."

This May will mark the 25th anniversary of the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains (ICLVR), established by the Irish and British governments to find the bodies of 17 people murdered and secretly buried by republican paramilitaries during the Troubles.

"The work of the ICLVR down the years is one of the positive outcomes of the Belfast Good Friday agreement," Archbishop Martin said. "And we are grateful to all who have worked on or with the commission in the painstaking task of finding and returning the bodies of loved ones to their families for a proper Christian burial."

Undoubtedly, there are those on all sides of the political equation who see the Troubles as ancient history. Sinn Féin's rise to political prominence on both sides of Ireland's border has benefited from this, attracting in particular the votes of a generation too young to remember the Troubles, and who often see the IRA as gallant freedom fighters.

Equally, the controversy over the UK government's Legacy Bill – that offers a conditional amnesty to those accused of killings during the Troubles – would suggest that the British Government also wants to consign the Troubles to history,

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despite opposition to the bill from all parties in Northern Ireland.

Nonetheless, the Church's focus on the Disappeared is a reminder that the tragedies of the Troubles still resonate painfully for many in Northern Ireland, who remain affected by grief and trauma. Northern Ireland continues to have the highest suicide rate and poorest mental health in the UK.

The archbishop told the families of the Disappeared that the report "makes it clear that families like yours and others who are coping with the legacy of our conflict simply cannot find peace or trust until the truth emerges, and your loss is properly acknowledged".

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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