

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Christ Church Chapter welcome

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Christ Church Chapter welcome



Two new additions to the Chapter of Christ Church Cathedral Dublin were welcomed during Choral Evensong on last Sunday April 14.

Canon Professor Anne Lodge (front page) was installed as 12th Canon while the new Archdeacon of Glendalough, the Ven Ross Styles (front and above), was also installed.

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Prof Lodge is a Self-Supporting Minister and serves as Priest Scholar of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin. She is also Director of the Church of Ireland Centre in the DCU Institute of Education. Prof Lodge's appointment comes following the retirement of Canon Aisling Shine last year.

Archdeacon Ross Styles, Rector of Parish of Newcastle & Newtownmountkennedy with Calary Parish, took up the role of Archdeacon of Glendalough on April 1 following the retirement Archdeacon Neal O'Raw from the post.

They were given their voices in the Chapter and assigned their stalls by Dean Dermot Dunne.

News



GFS Armagh appointment

The Archbishop of Armagh has appointed Valerie Thom, the Diocesan Evangelist, as the Armagh Diocesan GFS (Girls' Friendly Society) Chaplain and wishes her every blessing in this

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additional ministry role in the Diocese.

Archbishop John also expressed his sincere appreciation to Rev'd Dorothy Dunwoody who had previously undertaken this role with the GFS.

Valerie commented: " I was delighted to be asked to become the next Armagh Diocesan GFS Chaplain and I am looking forward to meeting all the branches and supporting the girls and their leaders in any way I can. "

Irish Chaplaincy's new CEO Marie Norbury

The Irish Chaplaincy has announced the appointment of Marie Norbury as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Marie comes with a breadth of experience gained from working in both the charity and corporate sectors as well as ten years in Catholic education. Rooted in Catholic Social Teaching, she joins the Irish Chaplaincy from Pact (Prison Advice & Care Trust) where she has played a key role in raising awareness of the impact of imprisonment on faith communities and has inspired many to get involved to support prisoners and their families. A part-time sessional prison chaplain, she also has first-hand experience of lives lived in prisons.

Speaking about her appointment, Marie said "I am delighted and filled with gratitude to be joining the Irish Chaplaincy team as CEO. I am passionate about social justice and believe strongly in serving those who are vulnerable,



excluded or overlooked. On meeting the team, I was struck by the compassionate approach, rooted in the Gospel, to bringing care, friendship, dignity, and hope to those in need. It is a great privilege to be given the opportunity to contribute, as CEO, to this vitally important work which builds the Common Good, one person at a time".

Clare Coffey, Chair of Trustees of the Irish Chaplaincy commented, "Marie was the stand-out candidate following a thorough selection process. Her authority, authenticity, experience and faith shone through. We have no doubt that she will be an excellent leader, taking the Irish Chaplaincy forward with compassion and mission."

Marie starts in her new role from early May 2024.



Poverty has a ‘woman’s face’ UN summit told

One in ten women globally lives in poverty, the United Nations has said. Women are also more likely than men to be displaced during conflict, to suffer hunger and sexual violence, the worst effects of climate change, and a lack of access to health care.

The latest session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, held in the United States last month, focused on eliminating poverty, which, Anglican women present said, has a “woman’s face” around the world.

Members of the Anglican Communion, and volunteers including church leaders from Burundi and Pakistan, attended the 68th Commission in New York. The

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Commission attracted criticism for the election of a Saudi to chair it. Human-rights organisations said that Saudi Arabia's record on women's rights was "abysmal" and "a far cry from the mandate of the Commission", but the election was unopposed.

The Anglican Communion Office did not comment on the election, but said that it welcomed the agreement achieved by the end of the ten-day meeting. "Amidst narratives of increasing global polarisation, the ability for countries still to come together shouldn't be underestimated."

But it said that, if the agreed conclusions of the Commission were to be implemented successfully, then "communities of faith are essential".

"We need to see action through our governments and our churches," it said.

In a joint statement published ahead of the Commission, the Anglican Communion and the Mothers' Union said: "Poverty has a woman's face. Women and girls, particularly indigenous women, widows, women of colour, women living with disabilities and in rural contexts — are disproportionately impacted by economic poverty and its consequences. So often, these women — who are seen, heard and valued by God — are ignored or harmed in our families, communities and systems. We recognise and repent of the fact that this has also been true inside our churches.

"Poverty may have a woman's face; but transformation also can. There is ample evidence at local level, including

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through the work of Mothers' Union, that women can deliver sustainable change in levels of poverty and gender relationships, through resilience-building, functional literacy training, and facilitating savings groups, working with men to see changes in the community over the long term.”

It called for governments to form partnerships with faith groups to provide funding for reducing poverty, gender-based violence, and education. Faith communities have greater trust and access into many communities, and can be partners in reducing poverty, they said.

The agreed conclusions of the Commission, however, make only one mention of faith communities, and say that “much more is needed to acknowledge that around 80 per cent of the world’s population” views issues through the lens of their faith, the Anglican Communion said afterwards.

The Commission’s agreed conclusions set out the reasons why women are disproportionately more likely to experience poverty, and highlight women who are most affected. The conclusions also call for reforms to financial systems, including debt relief to ensure that money is allocated to gender equality, and increased funding for women’s organisations.

Another oak tree planted in Cork

Bishop Colton updates - Another oak tree planted this morning after church on my silver jubilee wandering around the Church of Ireland in Cork, Cloyne and Ross This one is in the churchyard at St. Fin Barre's Cathedral Thanks to the



clergy and churchwardens there and especially to Guy St Leger.

Down and Connor cleric celebrates Easter in Kazakhstan

Fr Andrew Black from Down and Connor diocese has been celebrating Easter in Almaty, Kazakhstan with its small but vibrant Catholic community.

During his stay he has preached a 9 day retreat to Missionaries of Charity from the Central Asian Region. Christos voskres Christ has Risen! See photo next page



Fr Andrew Black with Missionaries of Charity from the Central Asian Region

120 years of Clogher Mother's Union Branch

Service of Thanksgiving for 120 years since establishment of St Macartan's Cathedral Clogher, Mother's Union Branch.

A beautiful church service with music provided by PSNI Ladies choir and Murley Silver Band. Service officiated by Rev Olivia Downey and The Rt Rev Ian Ellis.



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June Butler, All Ireland Mother's Union President (Left photo above), spoke of the purpose of the organisation within the Church: To encourage parents to bring up their children in the faith and life of the Church. To maintain a world-wide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service. To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children. To help and comfort those met with adversity.

Mass of Welcome for relics of Polish martyrs

This Sunday, 21 April, Good Shepherd Sunday, Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly SMA will celebrate a Mass of Welcome at 1pm for the relics of Polish martyrs, Blessed Zbigniew Strzałkowski and Michal Tomaszek.

This Mass will be celebrated at Saint Joseph and Saint Brigid Church, Bohernanave, Thurles, Co Tipperary, E41 KF98, in the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly.

Looking forward to Sunday's special celebration, Archbishop O'Reilly said: "I welcome the relics of two modern day Polish missionary martyrs, Blessed Zbigniew and Blessed Michal. It is a privilege for the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly to have the opportunity to venerate their memory.

"The Church in the world today has many brave and courageous religious and lay people who are placing their lives in danger to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. The presence of the relics will enable us to bring to our hearts and minds the many Christians in our time who are suffering

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as they witness to their faith. I thank the Polish community, and Father Jaroslaw Kurek OSB, for facilitating the bringing of the holy relics to the Archdiocese"

Glenstal Abbey-based Father Kurek OSB, originally from Poland, has been the lead organiser for the visit of the holy relics to Ireland.

Father Kurek said, "It is the goal of the Polish community to strengthen the Catholic faith by venerating the heroic Franciscans who sacrificed their lives in the Peruvian Andes in 1991. We wish to share the good news of their lives and ministry with both the Polish citizens and with our Irish brothers and sisters in faith who, over the last twenty years, have magnanimously accepted us on their land and in their workplaces."

Attendance at Sunday's Mass of Welcome celebration will include the General Consul of the Embassy of Poland, Mr Maciej Wójcik; the Abbot of Glenstal Brendan Coffey OSB; members of the monastic community; as well as clergy and parishioners of the archdiocese.

Known as the Martyrs of Chimbote, these two Polish Conventual Franciscan Friars, Blessed Zbigniew Strzałkowski and Michal Tomaszek, left their homeland for Peru in 1989 to start missionary work in the Andes. The parish they worked in consisted of 90 villages, with no water or power supplies. Their work, therefore, had to be both pastoral and manual. In 1991, they were warned by the terrorist organisation Shining Path that they would be killed if they stayed. In spite of the danger they remained with their flock. They were shot dead by the terrorists on 9

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August 1991, directly after a Mass they had celebrated in the local church in Pariacoto. Their colleague, Italian missionary Fr Alessandro Dordi, was killed on 25 August 1991. The beatification of the three martyrs took place on 5 December 2015 at Mass celebrated by Cardinal Angelo Amato and 500 other priests, with the congregation of 25,000 people gathered at the stadium in Chimbote, Peru.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

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CHOIR!
PERFORMANCE
THE JOY OF SINGING PRAISE
TOGETHER
Venue: Cooke Church, 216 Ormeau Road, BT72FY
Donations (£5 suggested) in support of the amazing work of the International Meeting Point

Performance
Sat 20th April
7.30pm

The poster features a colorful illustration of four diverse people singing and playing instruments. A woman on the left has her hand raised, a woman in the center has a yellow halo, a child on the right is holding a microphone, and another woman is behind them. Musical notes are floating around them.

Pop up choir at Cooke

This Saturday evening an all age pop-up choir made up of 50+ people from many nations and churches will be in

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action at Cooke.... it will be a great evening of musical praise

Charles Wood Festival - Don't forget that applications are currently open!

From 11-18th August, experience the Charles Wood Festival with the Charles Wood Singers and work under the expert direction of our Artistic Director David Hill MBE (Conductor, The Bach Choir) and our Associate Conductor Philip Scriven (Organist-in-Residence, Cranleigh School).

Prepare and perform for two recorded services for BBC Radio 3 and BBC Radio Ulster, take part in the Charles Wood Festival Choral Community Trail with availability for workshops and lessons from guest composer Errolynn Wallen and world-renowned vocal coach Paul Farrington, and much more!

Applications close on 24th May but catch our early bird offer which is open until the 26th April!

More details can be found on the poster or on their website - <https://www.charleswoodsummerschool.org/>

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Book excerpt - Peace Comes Dropping Slow, by Denis Bradley

It was nerve-racking bringing an MI5 spy to the home of Martin McGuinness' mother to agree ceasefire with the Provos...

The former priest recounts pivotal moments in the Peace Process in this extract from his new memoir. Denis Bradley reveals how he helped run the “Backchannel”, a clandestine group that facilitated talks between the IRA and the British Government for 30 years

It was the pre-existing relationship between Brendan Duddy, Noel Gallagher and me that would result in us forming the hub of the contact between the British government and the IRA over the next 30 years.

This backchannel, as it came to be known, wasn't established in any planned, formal manner.

The idea that bonded Duddy, Gallagher and I together was that a stoppage to the killing and the bombing demanded a negotiated agreement between the main combatants — the IRA and the British government as manifested in the British Army and the police.

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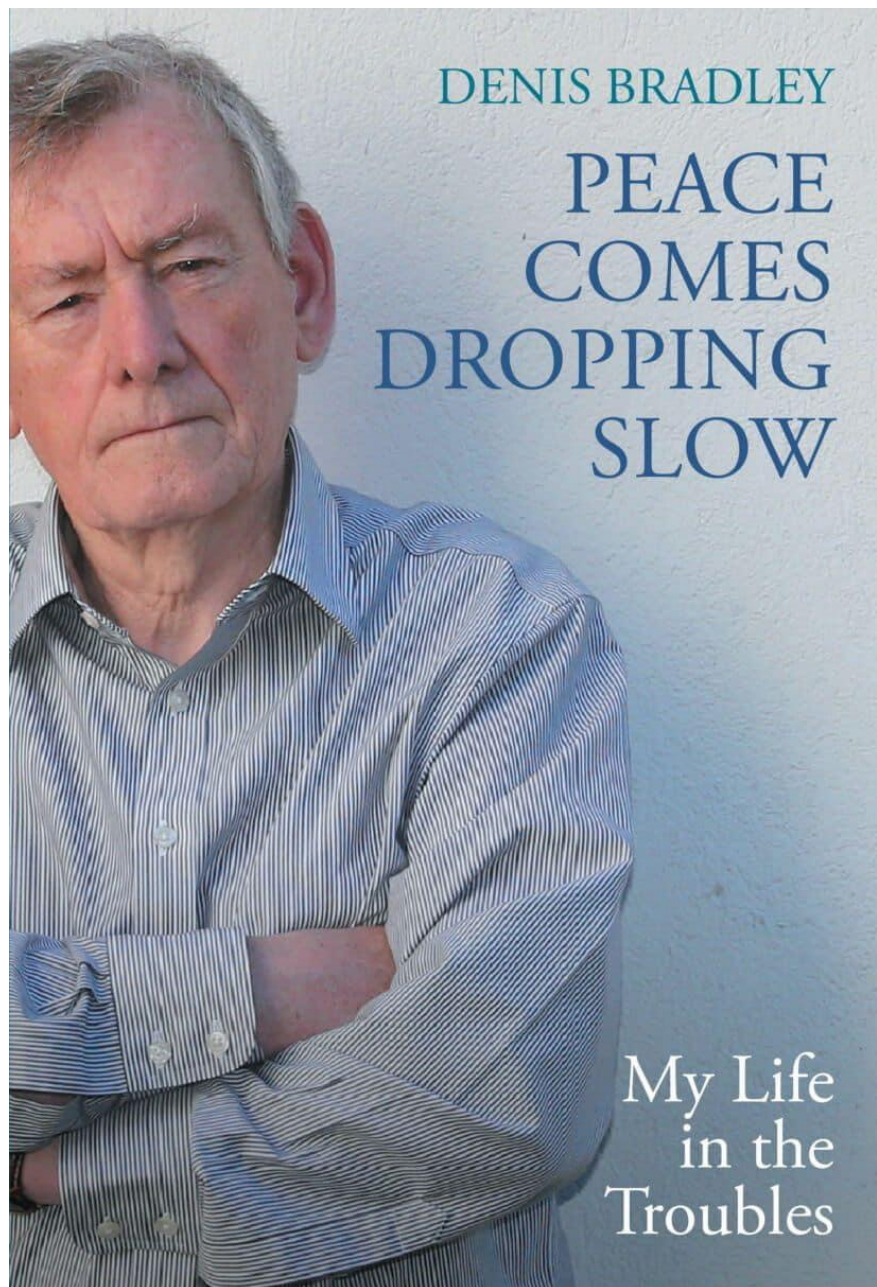
My judgement had been, for a long number of years, that Martin McGuinness would be a key influencer in bringing the IRA to the negotiation table.

My hopes for an end to the violence were considerably raised after a conversation I had with McGuinness in the early 1990s, in which he had expressed an opinion that the

republican movement had to become peacemakers and move away from violence.

However, his attitude to the backchannel had always been sceptical rather than positive. He believed that the 1975 ceasefire and the six-month negotiations with the British had come close to destroying the IRA.

McGuinness and I had a relationship forged in the day-to-day events of the Troubles. It was forthright and sometimes



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argumentative, but there was an underlying trust that was enhanced by the fact that I was the priest who had officiated at his wedding.

In 1993, I drove Fred (MI5 officer Robert McLarnon) to the house of Peggy McGuinness (Martin McGuinness' mother) and left him in the car while I persuaded McGuinness to hear him out.

When McGuinness reluctantly indicated that he would, I fetched Fred and then left him in the kitchen of Peggy's house to make his case to McGuinness and Gerry Kelly.

It was nerve-racking sitting in the living room with Peggy, waiting for the outcome of that discussion. I felt a massive wave of relief when McGuinness emerged from the kitchen with the news that the meeting would go ahead, and I was to tell Gallagher to pick Kelly and himself up in about 15 minutes. Fred and I drove back to Duddy's house.

When the meeting started in Duddy's large boardroom, I thanked everyone for coming and asked Fred to begin by outlining what the British government was proposing. He talked for the best part of an hour. It was a tour de force.

A journey through Anglo-Irish history, connecting it to 40 years of unresolved conflict and the need to bring that conflict to an end, not just temporarily but permanently. When he got to the point of what the British would be offering in the negotiations that would have to take place, he didn't promise too much.

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Britain would not be pushed out of Ireland by force, he said. It had a moral obligation to the unionist population, and it would not turn its back on that position. Neither would it become a persuader for Irish unity.

That was the task of the Irish people themselves. But the government was also reading the signs of the times and it was clear that those signs pointed to the unification of the island, over time.

Therefore, the British government would not do anything in the coming years to enhance or strengthen the union between Northern Ireland and the UK.

Having sketched the bigger picture, he moved on to the logistics of beginning negotiations. It would be a requirement that the IRA would call a two-week ceasefire, but negotiations could begin after a week. Their best judgement was that secrecy could be maintained for no more than a week. Scotland would be the most likely venue, but Norway was a possibility.

Neither McGuinness nor Kelly interrupted this exposition, but as soon as Fred had finished, they put several specific queries to him about his authority and whether it came from the prime minister.

Having been assured that he was speaking on behalf of John Major, they then asked him who else in the government was cognisant of possible negotiations. The questioning continued for nearly an hour, precise, penetrative but polite. Observing only, my judgement was that Fred more than passed the examination.

Difficulties and blockages were acknowledged and nothing extravagant or unrealistic was promised. McGuinness stated that there would be a response in the not-too-distant future. The meeting ended sometime after midnight. The IRA did come back and offer a two-week (or more) ceasefire that would allow such contacts to take place, but that offer was not accepted.

Since the 1980s and up to the previous few weeks, McGuinness had been the sole contact. Now we had McGuinness, Kelly, Pat Doherty and Gerry Adams, all within a short period.

It had only been two years since McGuinness had first talked to me about republicans becoming peacemakers, and while the British had returned with a negative response to a substantial offer, this difficult meeting with a representation of the leadership could also be read as real progress on a road that was always going to be bumpy.

The IRA had offered a ceasefire that the British had quibbled about and finally turned down. That was too important to be left in the secret caverns of a backchannel that allowed politicians and governments to pick and choose what suited them rather than the greater societal needs.

The Irish and the American governments should surely know and utilise such information to pressure both sides, most especially the British, into accepting the need for engagement and negotiation with militant republicanism, as well as with mainstream political parties. Fortunately, Albert Reynolds had unexpectedly become taoiseach of Ireland

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and, of course, there was John Hume, who lived just a few hundred yards down the street.

The Irish government was on the front foot and Albert Reynolds used it to bring about the Downing Street Declaration. It was launched in London just two weeks after that famous meeting in Dublin Castle. The declaration was the first time that the British government formally recognised a right of self-determination for the 'people of the island of Ireland'.

There was no role now for any 'link' or 'backchannel'. Most matters were out in the open and the issues had moved into the political mainstream.

* Peace Comes Dropping Slow, by Denis Bradley, published by Merrion Press, is on sale now for £16.99

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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