

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – The Red Arch**

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## Image of the day

### The Red Arch

**The Red Arch on what is now the Antrim Coast Road was cut through this sandstone headland by the landlord and philanthropist, Francis Turnly, in 1817.**

He lived at Drumnasole near Carnlough and he built the arch so that he could regularly visit the village of Cushendall which he owned. There was, then, no Coast Road, as we know it today, and this meant that his journey was hazardous and he would have had to negotiate the steep and narrow track up to the higher ground to the west. It was to avoid having to do this that he tunnelled through the headland between Waterfoot and Cushendall, thus forming





the arch that we can see in the photograph.

It forms a perfect parabola, thirty-six feet long, twenty-two feet wide and thirty feet high, the soffit being lined with concrete.

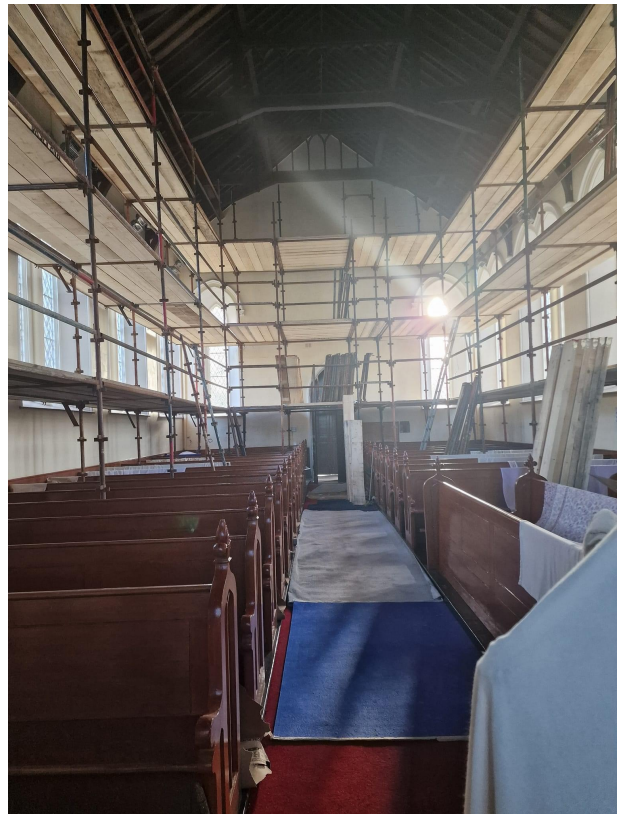
The Red Arch is one of the most spectacular features on the scenic Antrim Coast Road. Courtesy - Glens of Antrim Historical Society

## News

### Exciting time for St John's Ballycarry

**This is an exciting time for St John's Templecorran, as the decorators are in.**

“Because of the health and safety issues around the scaffolding in the interior of the church, we are unable to hold services there.



“However, the Non Subscribing Presbyterian Church have very kindly allowed us to use their hall for Sunday worship, so from Sunday 14th April we are worshipping in the Old Presbyterian Church Hall at the usual time of 11.30am. We envisage being back in our own Church DV, by Sunday 5th May.

## Glendalough clergy retreat

**Thirteen clergy from the Diocese of Glendalough met earlier this week in Ballyvaloo Retreat Centre in Blackwater, Co Wexford for a time of fellowship, discussion, sharing and collegiality.**

They enjoyed different types of services in the centre’s Prayer Room and on one morning the Archbishop celebrated Holy Communion outside overlooking the beautiful Curraclloe Beach.



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Discussion sessions focused on a number of themes including: gathering the flock, turning negatives into positives, keeping spiritually alive and sharing ideas and resources.

There was plenty of time to rest, chat and enjoy delicious meals and relaxing walks on the beach.



## GFS training with US Zoom

**All Ireland training took place in Dublin at the weekend led by All Ireland President Alison Jackson.**

Eight leaders attended and one was on Zoom from America. Marion Smyth and Lyn Collier completed training and were commissioned from Cashel Ferns and Ossory

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## **Busy agenda for Irish Synodality Conference**

**Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops, was the keynote speaker at the Irish Synodality Conference which took place at St. John's Welcome Centre, Knock Shrine over two days.**



His Eminence celebrated Mass in the Apparition Chapel. He is pictured with Fr. Eamonn Conway, expert advisor to the 16th General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, Fr. Declan Hurley, ADM Navan Parish, Fr. Richard Gibbons, PP, Rector of Knock Shrine, Bishop Alan Mc Guckian, Bishop of Down and Connor and Fr. James Murphy, Ferns Diocese.

Following a Conference Welcome Cardinal Grech gave the keynote Address. Fr Declan Hurley spoke on “Being Synodal in Dioceses and Parishes” and Fr Eugene Duffy





spoke on “Living the Synodal Experience”. Special guests were: Dr Myriam Wijlens, Monica Morley and Juliann Moran. There then was an Open Forum with Cardinal Grech and Fr Declan Hurley

## **St Vincent De Paul welcomes renowned musician as Charity Ambassador**

**In a harmonious fusion of melody and philanthropy, Malachi Cush Official, the celebrated singer-songwriter, has assumed the role of Ambassador for the Northern Region of St Vincent de Paul, an international charity dedicated to alleviating poverty.**

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Known for his soul-searching performances and heartfelt lyrics that resonate with audiences of all ages, Dungannon man Malachi brings musical prowess and a genuine dedication to humanity. His ability to connect deeply with local communities, coupled with his unwavering commitment to doing good, makes him an ideal ambassador for SVP.



Mary Waide, SVP Regional Manager for the Northern Region, expressed her deep gratitude to Malachi Cush and said: “We are humbled to welcome Malachi Cush to be an Ambassador of St Vincent de Paul as his values are perfectly aligned with the mission of St Vincent de Paul.

“Loved across the generations, Malachi is a great role model to children and the young and old alike. The qualities he possesses are exceptional and he reaches far beyond the stages he performs on. I believe that his passion transcends boundaries, and his infectious spirit has the ability to lift even the most vulnerable amongst us. As our



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Ambassador, Malachi will be embarking on a journey with SVP to raise the charity's profile locally through fundraising opportunities and public appearances and we are very privileged to have his support."

Commenting on his new role with SVP, Malachi Cush said: "I am deeply honoured to have been chosen as Ambassador for Saint Vincent de Paul. For so many years, this charity has had a remarkable impact on the most vulnerable members of our society, empowering them with dignity and support.

"I admire the dedication and selflessness of the volunteers and staff who tirelessly carry out the organisation's mission. I am inspired by their unwavering commitment to caring for others and hope that I can contribute to their noble cause as part of this wonderful team.

"As Ambassador, I am committed to shedding light on the vital work being done by SVP and raising awareness of the ongoing needs within our communities. I hope to serve as a relatable and approachable advocate for the charity, fostering connections and support for many years to come. Together, we can make a meaningful difference and be a light in the lives of those most in need."

SVP is an international charity and the largest voluntary charity in Ireland. SVP is committed to promoting self-sufficiency and working diligently for social justice.

If you require assistance from SVP, please email [info@svpni.co.uk](mailto:info@svpni.co.uk) and for further information about the charity or to become a member, please visit: [svp.ie](http://svp.ie)

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Read more at - <https://www.svp.ie/news/st-vincent-de-paul-welcomes-renowned-musician-to-centre-stage-as-charity-ambassador/>

## Weekly round up

### UK school prayer ban

The decision by the High Court to back the policy of the Michaela School in north London, banning prayer rituals, has caused controversy, with supporters saying it is the search for a uniting value, and opponents saying it sets a dangerous precedent for religious freedom.

### Impact of covid on cremations continues

A report on the impact of Covid on cremation practice in Britain, which found that cremation and crematorium staff felt they were taken for granted or ignored, and not regarded as key workers despite their workload increasing by 23 per cent. “British Crematorium Managers and Covid19”, by Rev Prof Douglas Davies and Georgina Robinson, says the pandemic's legacy is a continuing high rate of “direct cremations”, more teamwork and collaboration, live transmissions of funeral services online, and invitation-only funerals.

### Ofsted report on Religious Education

An Ofsted report on Religious Education says the RE curriculum in most English schools is superficially broad and lacks depth. “Deep and meaningful? The religious education subject report” criticises the lack of a coherent national plan



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and says multiple local curriculums are confusing and one cause of the subject "continuing to wilt". It recommends that the government should provide better guidance about what should be taught.

## **Safeguarding fall out from Soul Survivor continues**

Matt and Beth Redman, former leaders of Soul Survivor, gave an interview on their experience of abuse under founder Mike Pilavachi. Both criticised the culture of silence in church leadership, saying this has to change and leaders must be held to account.

## **A Chaplain for Snowdonia**

The Church in Wales has appointed a chaplain for people in Snowdonia / Eryri. Former top hockey player, enthusiastic canoeist and sports teacher Jill Ireland will be based in Llanberis, the village where tourist mountain walks start and a centre for mountain and water sports at the foot of Snowdon.

## **And finally... Archbishop of Cheeky Pandas**

The Archbishop of Canterbury made a guest appearance on [Cheeky Pandas TV], joining celebrities reading Bible stories to young children tuning into YouTube from home. They are helped by the cheeky pandas (cartoon characters) who chat, play and ask questions before the story begins. Here is Justin Welby sitting comfortably and telling the story of how Jesus loves the little children

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# Cathedral Call



## Ordinations in Armagh

Congratulations to Fr Davis Haberkorn and Fr Francesco Campiello who were ordained priests for service in the Archdiocese of Armagh. The Joy of the Gospel was alive in the hearts of all present.

The homily of Archbishop Eamon - at the Ordination of Fr Davis Haberkorn and Fr Francesco Campiello is available on You Tube -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3c\ IAkS4-HM>





Archdiocese of Armagh ordination

## St Fin Barre's Cathedral Choir tour to Mallorca

**St Fin Barre's Cathedral Choir were on tour in Mallorca for five days during the week following Easter. Thirty seven people travelled including thirty one singers, with twenty three of them being under eighteen.**

They were staying in the retreat centre Santuari de Lluc, the holiest site on the island and situated high in the mountains. They sang two services for the community in their Basilica which is also home to the statue of the famous Black Madonna.





On Sunday 7th April they were in Palma Cathedral for the main service of the day and afterwards the congregation were anxious to get a photograph of the choir .

The choir also travelled around the island, and they gave three concerts, in Muro as part of their post Easter local festival, in Artá to an appreciative audience of eighty local school children, and finally in Sóller where they sang in the evening sunlight on the steps of the church into the town square. Assistant Director of Music Matthew Breen tried out the traditional Spanish organs with very few pedals, and many sets of different trumpets to compensate.

They found time to take a tram ride through the countryside, to eat ice cream on the beach and to sample homemade paella, tapas, and a local dish made from lamb's liver. The



final day was spent back in Palma, firstly visiting the Royal Palace, but then moving onto the many tourist shops to find a souvenir or two.

## **York Minster seeks three school girls for world-famous choir**

**York Minster is searching for three school girls, currently in Year 3, to audition for their world-famous choir.**

As well as a world-class musical education, choristers receive outstanding education at St Peter's School, one of the oldest in the world and winner of the Times Education Supplement's Independent School of the Year 2021.





Find out more here

<http://www.stpetersyork.org.uk/.../york-minster-choristers>

**Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts,  
and books**

**Guided tours of Narnia parish, Belfast**

**On World Heritage Day it was a treat to get a sneak preview of new guided tours for groups at St Mark's, Dundela, Belfast .**

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“The Lion on the Hill” has strong links to C.S. Lewis and Narnia. And a great cuppa at the end too! Group tours are now available to book:

<http://dundela.down.anglican.org/visit-us.html>



## Book - the Church of Ireland and Black Theology

A book with “potential for real and lasting change” in the Church of Ireland is how the fifteenth volume in the Braemor Series was described at its launch in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute last Monday evening (April 8th).



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The Revd Philip McKinley's 'From George Berkeley, to George Floyd, to George Nkencho – The Church of Ireland and Black Theology' suggests a need for a fresh paradigm to help the Church to fulfil its commitment to racial justice and seeks to explore the extent to which black theology can inform and assist in this.

The book was launched by the Revd Eileen Cremin, formerly Rector of Fermoy in the Diocese of Cloyne, who said that the book was not just an academic exercise but “an instrument for change”.

A lot of the focus since has been on the Hard Gospel project's work on sectarianism but its remit was to focus on difference, and she suggested that the Church missed an opportunity to do further work on dealing with difference. Encouraging people to read the book, she said it was challenging and moving and hoped that it can be a catalyst. “It has certainly made me more curious,” she added, “and I hope and pray that Philip's vision towards a black theology for Ireland can become a reality in helping the Church of Ireland to become a church where all are welcome, all can participate, and we can learn from our history.”

Referring to the Church of England's report From Lament to Action, Mr McKinley said that an element of lament needed to take place. “We need to move from lament to action and from formation to reform and renewal. I hope this book may sow the seeds of action,” he remarked.

Mr McKinley is a curate in Dunboyne and Rathmoylon in the Diocese of Meath and curate in Kildare and Newbridge in



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the Diocese of Kildare; he grew up in Whitechurch parish in Dublin.

The book is available online from the Church of Ireland bookstore – <https://store.ireland.anglican.org> – and the Hard Gospel scoping study is available to download and read from the Church’s online document library: [www.ireland.anglican.org/resources](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/resources)

## In the media

### **RE pupils retain little as too many faiths taught, says Ofsted - Daily Telegraph**

**Schools are covering too many religions in RE classes, Ofsted has warned.**

The watchdog said religious education in most schools lacks “depth” and pupils remember “little” when many faiths are covered in the curriculum.

Ofsted’s report, which looks at how the subject is being taught in England’s schools, said a “superficially broad curriculum” does not always provide pupils with the knowledge they need.

Most non-examined RE in secondary schools is “limited and of a poor quality” – and the curriculum often lacks “sufficient substance to prepare pupils to live in a complex world”, it said.

The report – which draws on findings from 50 visits to schools – also said a “superficial and limited approach to RE sometimes ends up normalising caricatures or the most extreme or ‘unusual’ religious traditions”.

It added: “A superficially broad curriculum does not always provide pupils with the depth of knowledge they require for future study.

“In most cases, where the curriculum tried to cover many religions, like equal slices of a pie, pupils generally remembered very little.”

The review highlighted that some pupils were taught ideas that did not accurately reflect the traditions they were learning about – such as the idea of Christmas as “God’s birthday”.

Pupils in one secondary school had developed misconceptions such as “Christians don’t like gay things”, the report added.

It found a notable proportion of schools did not meet the statutory requirement to teach RE to all pupils at all key stages.

The watchdog has called on the Government to urgently update guidance for schools about its statutory expectations for RE and ensure there is clarity about what should be taught and when.

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It is compulsory for all state schools in England to teach RE to pupils – apart from those who have been withdrawn from lessons by their parents.

It added that the content of some secondary curriculums was “restricted” by what teachers considered pupils needed to know for exams.

It concluded that RE content selected was rarely enough to ensure pupils were “well prepared to engage in a multi-religious and multi-secular society”.

The findings from inspections and research visits, carried out between September 2021 and April 2023, suggested an ambitious RE curriculum is still a “work in progress” in some schools.

Ofsted chief inspector Sir Martyn Oliver said: “A strong RE curriculum is not only important for pupils’ cultural development, it is a requirement of law and too many schools are not meeting that obligation.

“I hope that the examples of good RE curriculum in our report help schools develop their own practice and support the development of a strong RE curriculum for all.”

A Department for Education spokesman said: “To support RE teaching, we provide bursaries of £10,000 for trainee RE teachers, while Oak National Academy is procuring new materials to ensure high-quality RE lessons are available nationwide, benefitting both teachers and pupils.”



# Poem for Today

## Bluebells for love by Patrick Kavanagh

There will be bluebells growing under the big trees  
And you will be there and I will be there in May;  
For some other reason we both will have to delay  
The evening in Dunshaughlin - to please  
Some imagined relation,  
So both of us came to walk through that plantation.

We will be interested in the grass,  
In an old bucket-hoop, in the ivy that weaves  
Green incongruity among the dead leaves,  
We will put on surprise at carts that pass -  
Only sometimes looking sideways at the bluebells in the  
Plantation,  
And never frighten them with too wild an exclamation.

We will be wise, we will not let them guess  
That we are watching them or they will pose  
A mere facade like boys  
Caught out in virtue's naturalness.  
We will not impose on the bluebells in that plantation  
Too much of our desire's adulation.

We will have other loves – or so they'll think;  
The primroses or the ferns or the briars,  
Or even the rusty paling wires,  
Or the violets on the sunless sorrel bank.  
Only as an aside the bluebells in the plantation  
Will mean a thing to our dark contemplation.

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We'll know love little by little, glance by glance.  
Ah, the clay under these roots is so brown!  
We'll steal from Heaven while God is in the town –  
I caught an angel smiling in a chance  
Look through the tree-trunks of the plantation  
As you and I walked slowly to the station.

Patrick Kavanagh 1904 – 1967.

## Speaking to the soul

### Go

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

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