

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Mussenden Temple Tour**

April 25, 2024

## Image of the day

### Mussenden Temple History Tour

**Do you know the history behind the Earl Bishop's gardens and his 'castle'? Would you like to see inside the iconic Mussenden Temple?**

You can join the National Trust and Hervey Heritage Society for a limited run of guided historical tours around the Earl Bishop Hervey's estate at Downhill.

The next tour will be taking place on Monday 06 May.

Booking is essential and only limited spaces are available.

To get your ticket go to:

<https://bit.ly/NT-Mussenden-and-Downhill>

## News

### Volunteer speakers prepare for Christian Aid Week

**A group of wonderful volunteer speakers came along to Orangefield Presbyterian Church in east Belfast on Monday to learn about this year's Christian Aid Week focus story.**

Each year during Christian Aid Week, the organisation relies on volunteers to go into churches and schools to talk about its work and inspire people to support it.

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Back row, left to right: Ian Mullen (Saintfield Road Presbyterian); Dave Thomas (CAI Church and Community Manager); Rev Corrina Heron from Dunmurry Presbyterian; Rev Uel Marrs (Global Mission Secretary at Presbyterian Church in Ireland); Natalie Kelly (City Church Bangor); Lynda Francis (First Holywood Presbyterian); Ruth Cooke (CAI Head of Fundraising and Supporter Engagement); Kaye Steele (CAI Church and Community Officer).

Front row, left to right: Barbara McQuitty (Malone Presbyterian); Rev Dr Liz Hughes (Chair of Christian Aid Ireland); Rev Cheryl Meban (Presbyterian chaplain at Ulster University); Rosamond Bennett (CAI Chief Executive).

In preparation, eight volunteers came along to Orangefield to learn about 35-year-old Aline Nibogora, a mother of six from Burundi and the focus of this year's Christian Aid Week appeal.

Already the volunteers had given the gift of their time.



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If you'd like to book a speaker for your church or school, please visit [caid.ie/bookaspeaker](http://caid.ie/bookaspeaker) or call 028 9064 8133 (Belfast) or 01 496 7040 (Dublin).



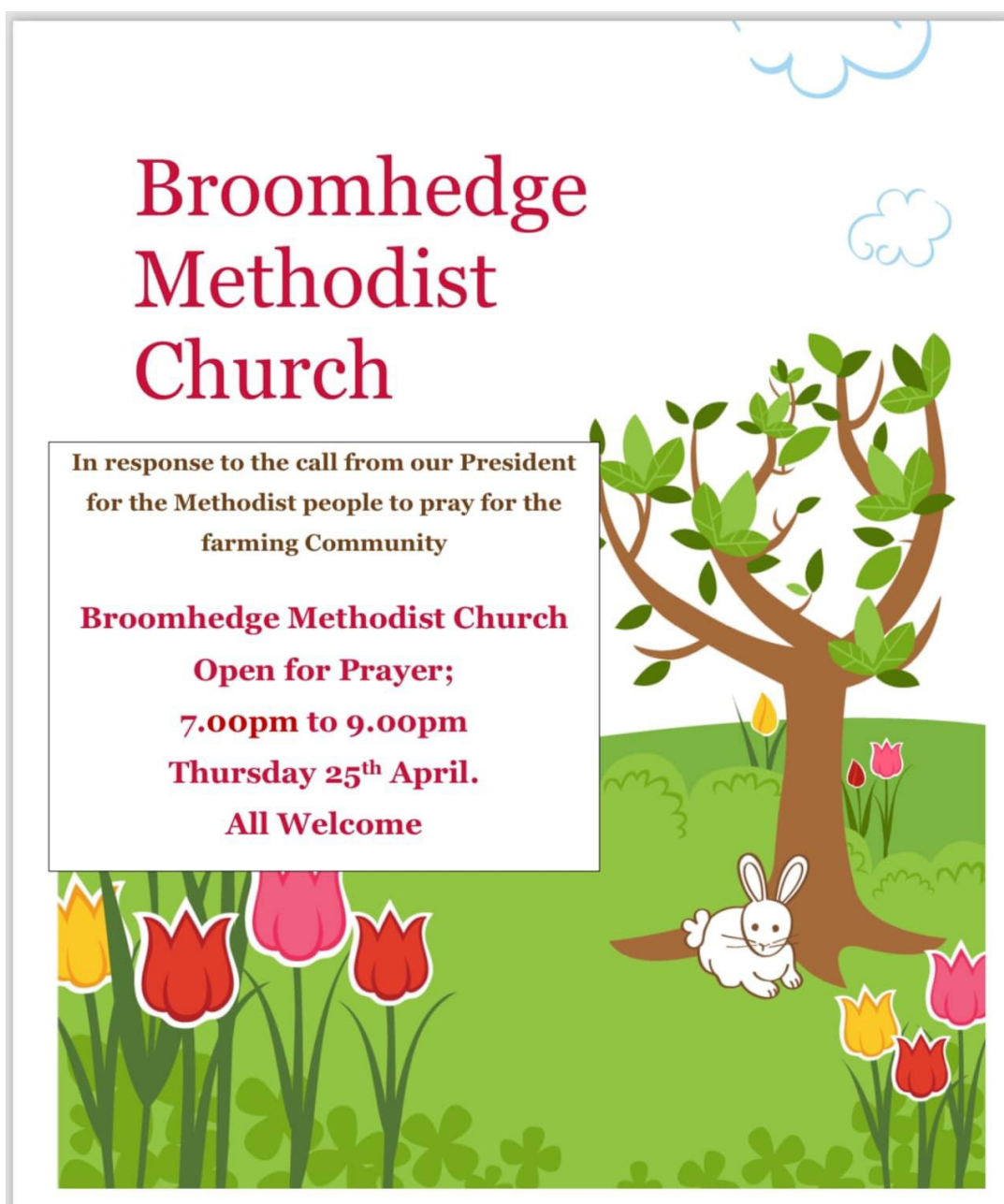
## **Aghalee's Lavery on Location fans**

Aghalee Parish's History project resulted in a great day for this group at the Ulster Museum - enjoying the Lavery on Location exhibition.

## PCI General Assembly 2024 Overview

The 2024 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) will take place in Assembly Buildings, Belfast from Thursday morning, 20 June and close on Saturday afternoon, 22 June.

Approximately 1,000 ministers and elders from PCI's 500-plus congregations the length and breadth of Ireland, corresponding members and delegates from home and



**Broomhedge  
Methodist  
Church**

In response to the call from our President  
for the Methodist people to pray for the  
farming Community

**Broomhedge Methodist Church**  
**Open for Prayer;**  
**7.00pm to 9.00pm**  
**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April.**  
**All Welcome**



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overseas are entitled to meet in General Assembly to worship, pray, celebrate and debate. As the denomination's principal governing and decision-making body and the Church's highest court, decisions taken can set the direction for the life and ministry of PCI over the coming year and beyond.

This year will see the introduction of some significant changes to the traditional format of the annual meeting of the Church, principally the opening of the General Assembly itself and the election and installation of the new Moderator. Details of which you can find [here](#).

The Moderator of the General Assembly for 2024-2025 will be Rev Richard Murray, minister of Drumreagh Presbyterian Church in County Antrim. He will take office during a special Service of Instalation on Friday afternoon at 4.30pm. The current Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Sam Mawhinney, minister of Adelaide Road Presbyterian Church in Dublin, will open and constitute the General Assembly on Thursday morning at

Free event // No booking required

# PRINCIPLES ON EQUALITY & LEADERSHIP

A Consideration of Scripture &  
the Westminster Confession

Rev Dr Trevor Morrow

*Former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*

**10-12.30 // Sat 1st June 2024**

Malone Presbyterian Church



**EQUAL**  
*to lead*

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10am. Dr Mawhinney will go on to chair proceedings until Mr Murray is installed.

The vast majority of the sessions will be open to the public and will be livestreamed. You can follow proceedings and comments on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, by using the hashtag #pciga24.

## **Moderator to give Holyrood special Bible ahead of devolution's 25th anniversary**

**A special Bible to mark the 25th anniversary of devolution is being presented to the Scottish Parliament.**

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, will hand over the holy book to Holyrood's Presiding Officer Alison Johnstone during a visit on Tuesday.

On its front cover it features the words "wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity" – the same words that are engraved on the mace that was presented to the Scottish Parliament by the late Queen Elizabeth II.

On her visit to Holyrood, the Moderator will be joined by Elaine Duncan, chief executive officer of the Scottish Bible Society, which has provided the special gift.

When originally established, the Scottish Parliament met in the General Assembly Hall of the Church of Scotland – with

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MSPs conducting their business there from 1999 until the new Holyrood building opened in 2004.

As Holyrood approaches its 25th anniversary – the first meeting of the Parliament was on May 12 1999 – the Moderator is due to meet party leaders over the course of this week.

She will use these discussions to raise a range of issues, including poverty and deprivation, climate change, the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, assisted dying, ending conversion practices and the treatment of asylum seekers.

Mrs Foster-Fulton: “As part of my moderatorial visit to the Scottish Parliament in the 25th year since devolution, I am giving to the Parliament a copy of the Bible.

“It holds truths and wisdom that shine light on righteousness, holiness, mercy and just government.”

She added that the book invited MSPs into a “lifelong dialogue about how to make real the values etched into the parliamentary mace – wisdom, justice, compassion, integrity”.

The church leader added her time at Holyrood was “also a chance for deep conversations with a range of politicians representing different political groups and ideas”.

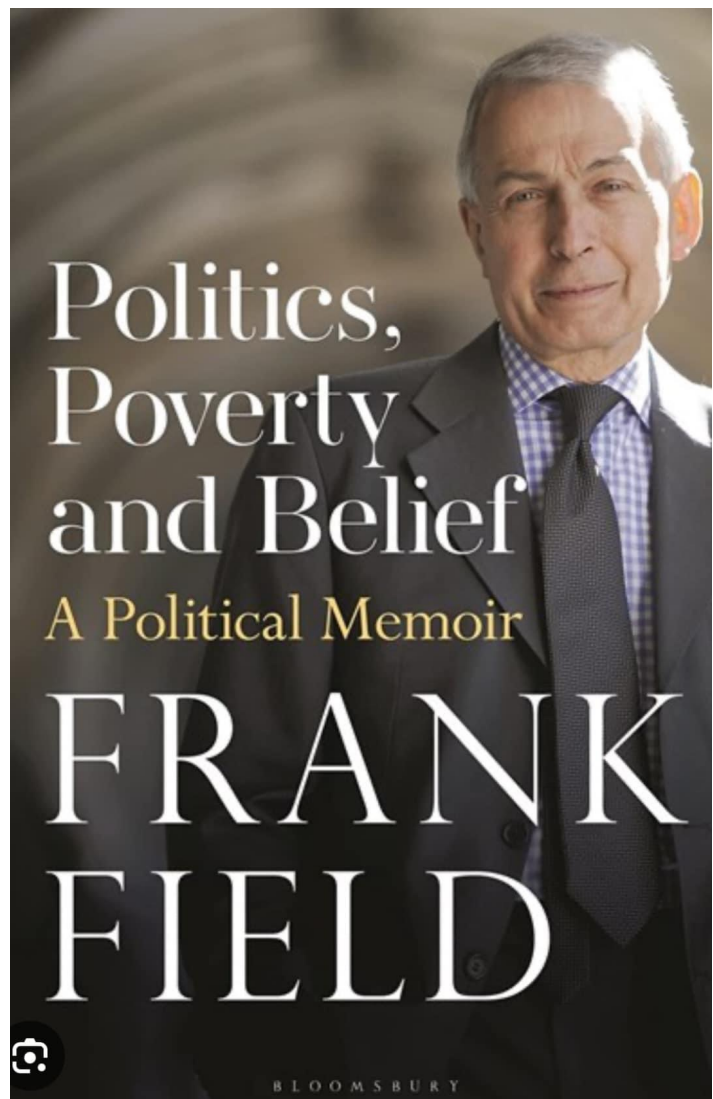
She stated: “This is a chance for me, as Moderator, to represent the concerns and hopes of the wider Church, and to offer the prayers and good wishes of the Church of Scotland to those elected to public service.”



## Court and personal

### Rest in peace Frank Field

**The sad news broke yesterday morning that Lord Field of Birkenhead, a former Labour minister who went on to sit as a crossbench peer, has died aged 81 following a period of illness.**



His family said in a statement: “Frank will be mourned by admirers across the political divide. But above all, he will be deeply missed by those lucky enough to have enjoyed his laughter and friendship.”

Lord Field was elected 10 times to represent Birkenhead between 1979 and 2019, leading on Sir Tony Blair’s welfare reforms.

Leading cross-party tributes, PM Sunak said: “Frank Field was a decent, moral and thoughtful man. He was a great parliamentarian – he made our politics better and raised the level of national debate in this country.”

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Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, added that the news came as a "profound loss to politics and to our nation".

The Lord Field of Birkenhead, CH, PC, DL, was the former maverick MP for Birkenhead for forty years. Quirky and kind, a loyal Churchman and member of General Synod, he was a thinker, often unpredictable, but a decent man.

## Appointment of HRH the Princess of Wales as Companion of Honour

**His Majesty the King has appointed HRH the Princess of Wales a Royal Companion of the Order of Companions of Honour (CH).**

Founded in 1917, the Order is limited to 65 highly distinguished people in nation and Commonwealth. Her Royal Highness is the first member of the Royal Family to be a member of the Order. The Chapel of the Order is HM Chapel Royal Hampton Court Palace.







# Cathedral Call

## Bishops abound at St. Fachtna's Cathedral

**There were a few bishops at St. Fachtna's Cathedral for a service of evensong.**

The Celtic Bishops (Ireland, Wales and Scotland) of the Anglican Communion meet together every second year for a retreat, and on this occasion they were in West Cork.







Gratitude was expressed “to our readers who read in Irish and English, St. Finbarre's Cathedral choir for the wonderful music and The Fish Basket Longstrand for the catering.



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## **BBC TWO's Great Coastal Railway Journeys comes to Canterbury Cathedral**

**On his way from Dover through to Broadstairs and Margate, Michael Portillo stops off in Canterbury for a visit.**

He explores the areas of the Cathedral associated with Becket's martyrdom, and even ascending the pilgrim steps on his knees, as pilgrims would have done for hundreds of years to visit Becket's shrine.

You can watch this episode - Series 3: 13. Dover to Margate - on BBC iPlayer: <https://ow.ly/rYB850RIZoP>

## Coventry chorister, commando and nuclear scientist

### **Nuclear physicist who landed on Gold Beach as a commando**

Norman Rose, who has died aged 98, was still a teenager but already an experienced Royal Marines Commando when on June 6 1944 he landed on Jig Green beach, west of Le Hamel.

In his seventies he did a PhD on chemist Joseph Priestley

Jig Green was the section of Gold Beach at the right-most edge of the British-Canadian front, and the “hinge” between them and the Americans. The beach should have been in the hands of the first wave of troops but it was deserted apart from some wrecked tanks, as heavy fire and the tidal current had pushed the landing parties to the east.

Five of 47 Commando’s landing craft were sunk before they reached the beach, where they suffered thick machine-gun fire, and there were 76 casualties out of a unit strength of just 420. As they came ashore, one marine quipped: “Perhaps we’re intruding: this seems to be a private beach.”

Their objective was the heavily defended harbour of Port-en-Bessin-Huppain, which was needed by the Allied armies for fuel deliveries via the Pluto pipeline until Cherbourg could be liberated. After an overnight march, the commandos stormed the Germans from the rear, while the cruiser Emerald laid down heavy fire against German positions from 5,000 yards.



The marines were helped by two young Frenchmen who gave them information about German defences and minefields, and by a gendarme who guided them through the town; by evening the port was theirs. But by the time mopping-up operations were complete on June 9, the commando had been reduced to 19 officers and 259 men. In 2016, Rose was appointed to the Légion d'honneur.

Norman Francis Rose was born on August 11 1925 at Wixford, Warwickshire, where his father was a gamekeeper. It was a musical family, and Norman was recruited aged eight from Holy Trinity, Stratford-upon-Avon, into the Coventry Cathedral choir.

By 1938 he was head chorister, but his musical career ended after evensong on November 14 1940 when the Germans bombed Coventry Cathedral.

Rose joined the Royal Marines aged 17 and trained at Achnacarry in the Scottish Highlands. Soon he was in action, landing on the beaches at Salerno and then Anzio with 40 Commando.

By the time of the Normandy landings, Rose had been transferred to 47 Commando and he was continually in action as the Allies advanced eastwards until, on October 31 1944, he embarked for the amphibious assault on Walcheren in the Netherlands. The next day, as he waded ashore, he was wounded. His war was over.

Rose was discharged from the Marines in 1947 and was sponsored by Courtaulds to read chemistry at King's

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College London. A degree in physics followed, and he became a chartered engineer.

Over the next 45 years he became one of the country's most senior nuclear physicists, working at Harwell, Dounreay, Aldermaston and Risley. Among more classified activity he developed plutonium fuels for nuclear fast reactors and oversaw the building of 14 gas-cooled nuclear reactors.

A polymath, he loved poetry, literature and music, was an avid walker, astronomer and plantsman, and his home-brewed beer was legendary.

In his seventies Rose threw himself into a PhD on Joseph Priestley, the 18th-century chemist, philosopher, theologian, grammarian and political theorist. He gave lectures on Priestley in the US, and in 2005 marked his 80th birthday by taking the trans-Siberian railway to give a lecture series in Japan.

Norman Rose married Norma Trunkfield in 1947, but they divorced. While singing in a choir in Berkshire he met Daphne James, and they married in 1972. He is survived by a son from his first marriage – another son predeceased him – and by a daughter from his second. He is the grandfather of the soprano Molly Noon.

Norman Rose, born August 11 1925, died February 21 2024

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# Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

## PCI podcast – Confident to Care



**In both good times and dark days, pastoral care is a vital ministry of the church.**

We all want to be confident to walk alongside and care well for those God has placed in our lives. But how do we do that?

In this podcast, Andrew Collins (Director of the Certificate Course, Biblical Counselling UK), Marion Hadden (Family and Youth Coordinator and Elder, Terrace Row Presbyterian Church), and Rev Ben Walker (Minister, Saintfield Road Presbyterian Church) reflect on some ways we can build pastoral connection, hold quality conversation, and bring biblical and prayerful content into our pastoral care.

This podcast highlights the now sold out Confident to Care three-week practical training course being delivered by Andrew Collins, in conjunction with the Council for



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Congregational Life and Witness, at Union Theological College in May.

Listen here:

<https://audioboom.com/channels/5019668-podcasts-from-the-presbyterian-church-in-ireland>

## **From Every Nation? - Handbook for congregation moving from welcome to belonging**

**A new handbook to equip and support churches in understanding diversity and inclusion was launched at the 101st Annual Meeting of the Irish Council of Churches which took place in Gracehill Moravian Church, Co Antrim recently.**

“From Every Nation? A Handbook for a congregation’s journey from welcome to belonging” aims to equip churches with an understanding of diversity and inclusion, and to support actions at the local church level to improve inclusion and work towards racial justice through faith.

Read more and download the handbook from website here: <https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2024/04/22/launch-of-from-every-nation>

Churches in Ireland

## Perspective

### Unknown CS Lewis poem inspired by Saxon epic comes to light

**A previously unknown poem by CS Lewis, in which he finds inspiration in whiskey, warm blankets and the Anglo-Saxon epic Beowulf, has been found.**

CS Lewis wrote the poem in 1935 under the pen name Nat Whilk

The Chronicles of Narnia author wrote the 12-line alliterative poem in 1935, on notepaper from Magdalen College, Oxford, where he taught.

His passionate interest in Old English, or Anglo-Saxon, is reflected in the title, *Mód Prýþe Ne Wæg*, the pen name he used, Nat Whilk, and the word *Prýþ* in the second line.

It was a thank-you poem from one medievalist to another, who would have understood the language and allusions to Beowulf, through the style in which the verse epic was written and its metre.

Lewis wrote the poem after visiting the Manchester home of Dr Ida Lilian Gordon, a specialist in Medieval English and Old Norse, and her husband, Eric Valentine Gordon, a professor of English language. The couple were also good friends with JRR Tolkien, author of *The Lord of the Rings*. The poem casts light on the friendships between these fantasy writers and medievalists.

Thanking the Gordons for his stay, Lewis wrote: "...Talk was kindly,/ Whetted with whiskey. The white blanket,/ Winter's weaving, worked about us/ Till the house was hush'd, the hearth brighter,/ And bed-time better..."

Written in black ink, it had been overlooked among documents relating to Tolkien and the Gordons acquired by the University of Leeds a decade ago.

It has now been discovered by Dr Andoni Cossio, of the University of the Basque Country and the University of Glasgow, while doing some research.

## In the media

### Church must choose between synodality and schism - The Tablet

**"If synodality doesn't work in some of our local churches – like Ireland – we won't have schism, but we will have decay." Sarah MacDonald writes.**

The Catholic Church "needs a new missionary movement" according to Cardinal Mario Grech, Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops.

Speaking to The Tablet at Knock Shrine in Co Mayo, where he delivered the keynote address at the conference, "Synodality Explored: Facing the Future Together", he said, "Even places like Ireland and my home country, Malta,



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Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ of Down and Connor paid a visit to the parish of Ballymena and Kirkonriola and celebrated Mass with Fr. Michael and Fr. Joe. The Bishop was almost on home ground.

which both have a strong catholic tradition, need a new evangelisation.”

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Cardinal Grech said it was his personal conviction that this applied to the whole Church.

“Hopefully through synodality we can learn how to understand better what is the will of God for humanity today and have the will and courage to announce it.”

Asked about the Irish Church’s Synodal Pathway, he said he was “happy and glad” that a national synod was taking place in Ireland and that the bishops wished to share and learn about synodality from the wider process underway in the universal Church.

In his address, the Maltese prelate said his reflection was intended to help churches and the bishops who lead them “not to be afraid to set out on the path of synodality”.

He said the “synodal process is founded on a principle of restitution, (bringing it back to communities) which activates a process of continuous circularity.”

In his address to representatives from dioceses and religious groups from around Ireland, Cardinal Grech said, “There is no shortage of those who claim that these are cosmetic statements. In reality, the verticalist and centralising logic that has been in force in the Church of Rome for centuries has not changed.”

But he underlined that those who support this thesis “do not understand the synodal dynamic, which is founded on two principles that are in balance only on the condition of continuous circularity: diversity and unity. Unity is not uniformity; diversity is not division.”

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Also speaking to The Tablet, the facilitator of the Knock conference, Prof Eamon Conway of Notre Dame University Australia, who is an adviser to the General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, suggested that circularity was about “the way different parts of the body of Christ have of mutually enriching each other. So, in a sense what happens in Mombasa is significant in Mayo.”

According to Prof Eamon Conway one of the key issues for the Church will be the question of accepting that non-bishops have votes.

“Non bishops had votes at the last [assembly] but that is not accepted by everybody. It was accepted by 80 per cent of those who are present which means a majority of the bishops who were present; 80 per cent accepted that the path upon which Pope Francis has embarked us in terms of synodality is the right path. But this specific question of whether non-bishops should have votes in what is properly speaking a synod of bishops is one that still has to be, I think, fully accepted and embraced. It is a key issue.”

Prof Conway, who is a priest of the Archdiocese of Tuam, said he believed the choice facing the church is between synodality and schism.

“If synodality doesn’t work we will have schism in the global Church. If synodality doesn’t work in some of our local churches – like Ireland – we won’t have schism, but we will have decay. I believe that the universal Church can only hold together by getting the balance and the relationship right between unity and diversity – uniformity is no longer an option,” he said.



Fr Declan Hurley of the Diocese of Meath spoke to the conference on the theme, “Being Synodal in Dioceses and Parishes”. He said that while some parish councils can be very co-responsible, it was not always the case.

Speaking to The Tablet, Fr Hurley said the basic premise of synodality is that it involves the entire People of God.

“This is not about a small group of theologians sitting together in a very rarified atmosphere, deciding that our Church is going to be synodal. This is about the People of God having a conversation, conscious that it is the Spirit that is speaking.”

“It is about creating the conditions in our Church where people become aware that by virtue of their equal dignity in baptism, that they can speak and that they are entitled to be listened to.

“That is why, as a Church here in Ireland on a synodal pathway, if it is not at the local level, it is not going to be an authentic synodal pathway. It has to come from what people are articulating at local level about their needs, hopes and fears – all of that has to be articulated at local level so that it can be discerned. And then it needs to be circled back then from the centre back to local level to ask, have we heard what has been said? It is about beginning at local level to hear what the Spirit is saying through the People of God.”

## Poem for today

## Ode To Spring by Elizabeth Bentley

Welcome, sweet season of delight,  
What beauties charm the wond'ring sight  
In thy enchanting reign!  
How fresh descends the morning dew,  
Whilst op'ning flow'rs of various hue  
Bedeck the sprightly plain.  
The artless warblers of the grove  
Again unite in songs of love,  
To bless thy kind return:  
But first the lark, who roaring seems  
To hail the orb of day, whose beams  
With fresh refulgence burn.

The limpid brook that purls along,  
The tuneful blackbird's joyous song,  
The softly-whisp'ring breeze;  
The mossy hills, which now invite,  
These with the verdant meads unite,  
Th' elated mind to please.  
The mind with thoughts of good possest,  
With innocence and virtue blest,  
Untaught in vice's ways;  
May taste those joys by nature giv'n,  
May lift th' enraptur'd eye to heav'n,  
And their great Author praise.  
Stern Winter's gloomy season past,  
We see fair Spring advances fast,  
With Summer in the rear;  
Soon Autumn's shades will interpose,  
And a succeeding Winter close

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The swift-revolving year.

Of human life an emblem true,  
The early morn of youth we view,  
In Spring's delightful face;  
Meridian life's a Summer's day,  
With Autumn fades; its quick decay,  
In winter's blast we trace.  
Then let us prize each fleeting hour,  
Improve the moments in our pow'r,  
E'er time shall cease to be;  
Then shall our spirits, taking wing,  
Be crown'd with an eternal Spring,  
From Wint'ry storms set free.

## Speaking to the soul

### Go

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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