

Church News Ireland



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April 28, 2025

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Image of the day

Personal support for seriously ill Belfast university student by Pope Francis

Pope Francis was a great source of strength for a Queen's University student diagnosed with brain tumour



During his time at Queen's University Belfast, Adam, a student and member of the Catholic men's group, had the privilege of meeting Pope Francis with the QUB Chaplaincy. Not long after, Adam was diagnosed with a brain tumour.

When the Holy Father heard of this, he wrote to Adam, recalling his smile and assuring him of his love and prayers.

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That message was a great source of strength during a difficult time.

By God's grace, Adam made a full recovery. He returned to his studies, took up rowing for Queen's again, and is now studying for a PGCE at Ulster, hoping to become a teacher.

Looking back, Adam says: "Meeting Pope Francis was a gift, but knowing he remembered me and prayed for me was something I will carry in my heart forever."

"May we continue to be inspired by both Adam's resilience and the Holy Father's kindness" QUB Chaplaincy.

News

C of I Archbishop of Dublin attends Memorial Mass for Pope Francis

The Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin, Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson at the invitation of Archbishop Dermot Farrell attended Mary's Pro-Cathedral, Dublin, for an act of worship to commemorate the death of Pope Francis.

Archbishop Jackson commented, 'As millions worldwide mourn the death of Pope Francis, Easter Week has given everyone the opportunity to reflect on discipleship and what it means to follow Jesus Christ.

'Pope Francis has given everyone a legacy of vitality, of energy, and of engagement. It is not possible for any of us



to complete everything we begin, and Francis was no exception, but the leadership of Pope Francis was sustained in service of the excluded and in guidance of the privileged to share resources and humanity.

‘This sense of profound belonging to the ways of the world in the name of God came across forcefully in an act of worship to commemorate the death of Pope Francis which I was privileged to attend on Friday, 25th April, in St Mary’s Pro-Cathedral, Dublin at which Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor, celebrated and Bishop Paul Dempsey preached.’

Pope Francis' tomb

Pope Francis' tomb in the Basilica of St. Mary Major has been made with materials from the Italian region of Liguria.

It is a simple tomb bearing only the inscription "Franciscus" and a reproduction of the late Pope's pectoral cross.

The tomb is located near the Altar of St. Francis, in the niche of the side nave between the Pauline Chapel (Salus Populi Romani Chapel) and the Sforza Chapel.

Speaking on television, the Coadjutor Archpriest of the Basilica, Cardinal Rolandas Makrickas, announced Pope Francis' desire to be buried in a tomb made from the "stone of Liguria, the land of his grandparents."

Waterford bell rung 88 times

The Dean of Waterford joined with Bishop Cullinan, Very Rev Fr. John Harris, The Mayor, Jason Murphy, Cllr. Lola O'Sullivan, Cllr. Jim Griffin and other locals at the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity to remember Pope Francis.

During the act of worship a bell was rung 88 times to mark each year of his life.

Lord, who desires love and fellowship. We thank you for Pope Francis' service to your church and to the poor of the

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world. Rest in peace, Pope Francis. Let light perpetual shine upon him. Amen.

There is only destruction, fighting, and bloodshed. CMS Bishop-partner in Sudan

CMSI's local mission partner, Bishop Hassan, ministering the the Nuba Mountain area, South Sudan

"There is only destruction, fighting, and bloodshed. But in the midst of this oppression, we see the hand of God and His love for man from the salvation of the souls and the extension of the Kingdom of God."

Bishop Hassan, one of our Local Mission Partners, is ministering in a situation of fear and distress. We recognise his courage and faith in this declaration of what is happening in the Nuba Mountains area of Sudan.



cmsireland
equipping the church **in mission**

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Education



MCB at Sisters IN celebration event

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MCB pupils recently attended the Sisters_IN celebration event at the Waterfront Hall, ICC, Belfast, alongside over 1,000 delegates, participants, and mentors!

After an inspiring 8-month leadership programmes, Ellen McGhee was even given the honour to represent the college as a panel mentee.

Thank you to Rebecca McKinney for hosting and to the First and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland for their inspiring keynote speeches.



St Malachy's, Gaudi and Nou Camp

Last week, fifty of St Malachy's College Belfast Year 10 and Year 11 pupils spent five days in Barcelona. During

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their stay, the boys explored some of the city's most iconic landmarks and took part in a range of cultural and educational activities.

Highlights of the trip included a visit to the world-famous Camp Nou Stadium, a day at Port Aventura theme park, and a hands-on learning experience at the CosmoCaixa Science Museum. They also had the opportunity to admire Gaudí's stunning architecture at Park Güell and the Sagrada Familia basilica.

In the evenings, the boys had the opportunity to relax and play football at the beach, as well as sample a variety of local Spanish dishes. Throughout the trip, everyone was encouraged to practise their Spanish in real-world settings, gaining confidence and developing language skills.



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As always, our pupils were a credit to themselves, their families, and the College, showing excellent behaviour, curiosity and enthusiasm throughout the trip. A memorable week for all involved.

The Music department is presenting a **Choral Concert in the College Chapel** next Thursday 1st May at 7:30pm. The concert will feature variety of vocal ensembles performing a range of choral music. It is certainly not to be missed!



Foyle first at Derry Feis Public Speaking

Congratulations to Foyle Deputy Head Boy who was placed First in the Derry Feis Public Speaking (The

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Karen Gallinagh Murphy Shield and Bursary) competition. Well done.

Stranmillis University College Management Skill Training – Operational Leadership

Unit 4 of our popular Post Qualifying Leadership Programme (PQL) commencing 29th April is now open for booking. This is open to new and existing students.

Management Skill Training – Operational Leadership

The day-to-day management of people, budgets, resources, governance, and administration are essential skills for every effective leader. Learning with and from existing and future leaders of education, this comprehensive operational management course dives into real-world case studies to help equip you with the knowledge and understanding of the strategies, planning, and tactics needed to take your leadership and management skills to the next level and, ultimately, boost team performance and teaching excellence across your school or college.

Ready to take your leadership to the next level? Don't miss out on this opportunity for you and/or your team to grow and lead with confidence.

For more information and to book please visit:

<https://www.stran.ac.uk/courses/professional-development/leadership/>

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Cathedral Calls



St Columb's Choristers sing with The Priests

St Columb's Boy and Girl Choristers say they were honoured to sing at the beautiful wedding of Margaret Keys this weekend.

“We were joined by a professional chamber orchestra and of course the world-renowned The Priests at Longtower Chapel. Londonderry.

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“It was a truly special occasion, and we were delighted to play a small part in Margaret’s very special day. Wishing her and her new husband every happiness for the future.”

Truro Cathedral series of summer lunchtime concerts: Tuesday Live

2025 sees the ninth series of summer Tuesday lunchtime concerts. The original aim of the series was to feature the cathedral’s grand piano in a variety of contexts and was referred to as Piano Platform Concerts.

As from this year, the scope of the concerts has widened, and the series has been rebranded as Tuesday Live. The concerts, which take place mainly on the first and third Tuesdays of the month from May to September, offer a chance to hear just a sample of the wealth of musical talent that exists in Cornwall.

Concerts last for around forty-five minutes, so offer a perfect break in your shopping trip or your working day. There is no charge to see these concerts, with donations appreciated to support Truro Cathedral Music, particularly Truro Cathedral Choir.

The first performance to kick off the series will be a Young Musicians Platform Concert. Tuesday 6 May 1:10 pm. For full series dates, visit <https://buff.ly/fOXov5p>

St Peter's Belfast Summer Singing Course

Don't forget to book your place on our Summer Singing Course!

Join us from 7–11 July for a week of singing, fun, and creativity.

Book before 30 April to secure your spot for just £50 – that's only £10 per day!

Spaces are limited, so don't miss out.

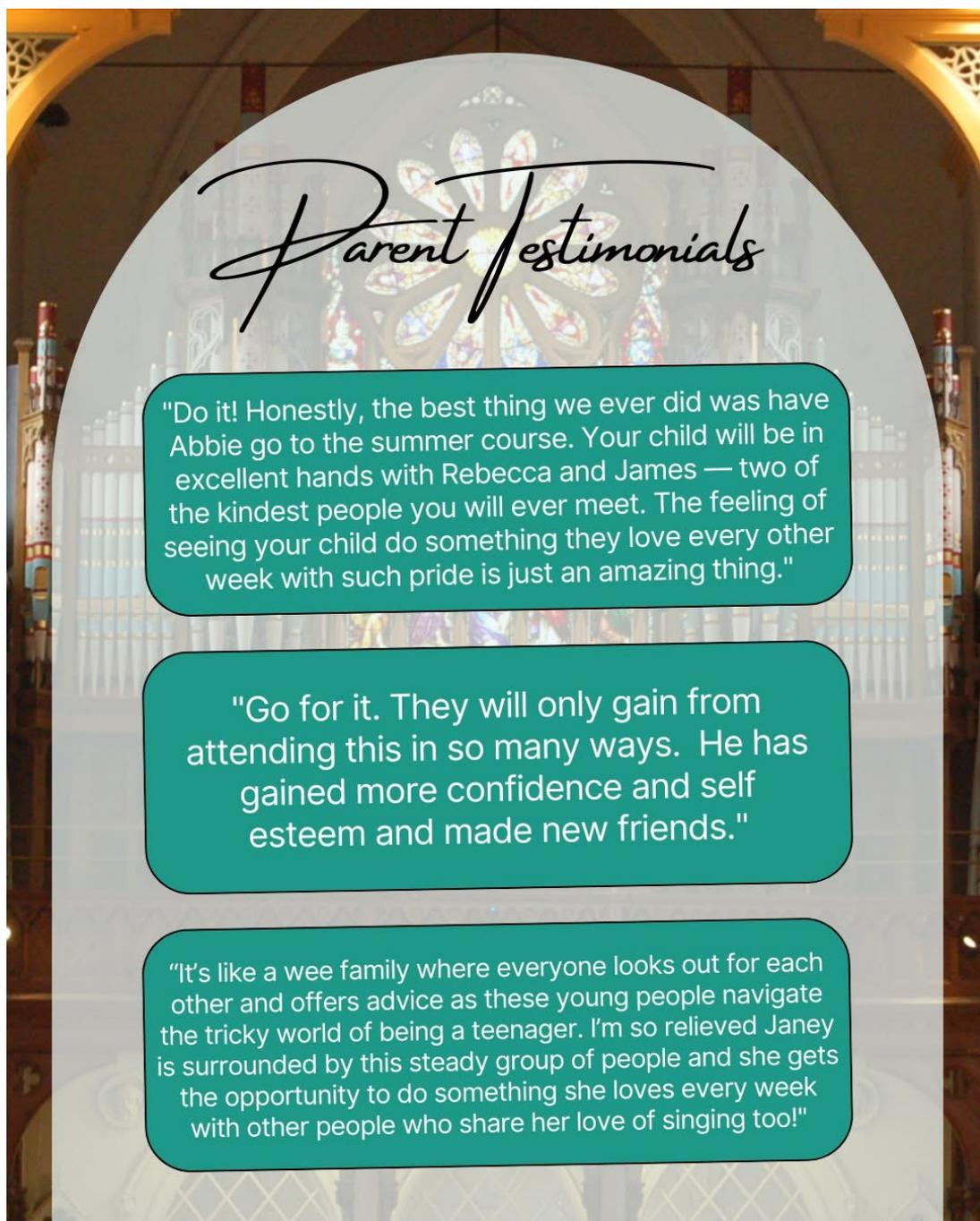
Click the link to apply now: <https://gforms.app/Ew3KatV>

Summer School Music at St Peter's Cathedral, Belfast

Thinking about signing up for our Summer School?

These parents had children attend last year — and since then, their kids have joined one of our choirs and haven't looked back! From confidence to friendship to a love of music, it's been an incredible journey.

Don't let us convince you — read what they've said for yourself in the graphic below. These are real stories from real families who've been through it.



Sign up today for a discounted price of just £50 — that's only £10 a day!

This offer is only available until 30th April, so don't wait!

Click the link below to secure your place:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfLhp0W6nZm5Y88wKRutxsgK6vbpD99Fyior7E_LzRsZIVsZw/viewform?usp=sharing

Perspective

The day we said the Lord's Prayer together

By Stephen Cottrell, Archbishop of York

Before he died, Pope Francis sent a letter to Christian leaders across the world. I received one of them. It was dated Easter Day itself. Francis had signed the letter, the tiny scrawl of his signature a witness both to his frailty and his determination to go on serving.

Noting that Easter is on the same day this year for the Church in the East and the West he wrote that “in a world torn by pain, death, hatred, wars, poverty and disease” we were celebrating the joy of resurrection. And in a passage which reflects his own suffering as well as the sufferings of the world he said this: “Our human condition continues to be marked by our limitations and by suffering, yet after Easter even these become an occasion of grace, if experienced in union with Christ.” He invited the leaders to join him in praying for “the Holy Spirit to guide us on the path of reconciliation, so that our divisions may be healed and our communion become a sign of hope for all humanity”.

It reminded me of words he had said to me when we met a few years ago: “We must walk together, work together, and pray together.”

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Synodality means walking together on the way. [It's a] way of imagining what the Church could be. These ideas were central to his ministry. Synodality, which he introduced into the Catholic Church, means literally "walking together on the way." Not a structural change; but a way of imagining what the Church could be. Not a static institution, but people on a journey. It's a vision that resonated with many others. Francis famously said that shepherds should "smell of the sheep". In other words, those who serve should live among the people they serve. They should be close enough to carry the smell, the grit and the joys of real life.

That's exactly how he lived. He was a Pope of the people. Never distant. Always moving towards them. Always longing to be among them. Right up until the last, blessing and moving among the crowds.

One of my most powerful memories of his ministry was attending World Youth Day in Lisbon in 2023. He preached to hundreds of thousands of young people. His message was simple. "The gospel is for everyone," he said. That was his vision – for a Church and a world where no one is left out. One moment stayed with me when I first met him. At the end of a meeting in Rome, Pope Francis invited me to pray with him. We said the Lord's Prayer – words I've said thousands of times. But that day, praying with him, the first two words struck me afresh: Our Father. Not mine, but ours. And if God is our Father, then all who say this prayer – Catholic, Anglican, Orthodox, Pentecostal, Lutheran, Reformed – we are sisters and brothers. We belong to each other. That moment of shared prayer changed me,

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awakening a deeper desire for Christian unity; that unity Pope Francis wrote about before he died.

I believe I am a better bishop and a better follower of Jesus for meeting him and learning from his example of humility, joy and peace. And he knew that he, too, like all of us, was a sinner saved by God's grace. This gave him joy and peace. It is a joy and peace the world urgently needs. We are one humanity, equally beloved of God and in need of rediscovering our responsibilities to each other across boundaries of difference. We need God's help with this.

Pope Francis was a meek person. This beautiful biblical word is often misunderstood. Meekness doesn't mean weakness, but obedience to a higher agenda. And "the meek", we are told by Jesus, "will inherit the earth". In one sense this is what has happened to Pope Francis. The whole world has been touched by his life and ministry. The whole world mourns his passing. The whole world would do well to follow his example. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

In the media

Senator Frances Black

The poet Tennyson wrote "I am a part of all that I have met"; and the challenges that Senator Frances Black has overcome and the cares of the people she has embraced have shaped her life, Denzel McDaniel writes in the Irish News.



Born and reared in times of poverty in the tough environment of inner-city Dublin, she also recalls idyllic summers on her father Kevin's native Rathlin Island.

“I love Dublin and its people. But I'm also a Rathlin girl at

heart. It's my spiritual home, it was my safe haven and still is,” says Frances, who spends time regularly with family in her father's old farmhouse.

Wikipedia lists Frances Black's occupations as “singer, addiction counsellor”, which doesn't begin to do justice to the many and varied roles she undertakes in a busy life serving others.

Frances has also served for nearly 10 years as an independent Senator, playing a leading role on the

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Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement and the cross-party Friends of Palestine group.

She also chairs the Ireland's Future organisation.

And the wife, mother and grandmother is now being talked about as a potential President of Ireland.

Read Denzil McDaniel's interview. Fee payable.

<https://tinyurl.com/2xx2t55w>

Heritage

Boston's Old North Church celebrates 250-year link to Revolutionary War and Paul Revere

Old North Church, the historic Episcopal church in the North End neighbourhood of Boston, Massachusetts, celebrated its connection to the American Revolution on April 18 when it hosted an event marking the 250th anniversary of Paul Revere's famous ride, David Paulsen writes.

“On this night 250 years ago, two men climbed Old North Church's steeple. They held high two lanterns as a signal for Paul Revere that the British were heading to Concord by way of the Charles River,” the church said in a Facebook post for the occasion.



Paul Revere is depicted in a statue located in a plaza adjacent to Old North Church in Boston, Massachusetts. Photo: David Paulsen

The commemorative events included an evening lantern lighting in Old North Church's steeple. A crowd gathered for speeches in a space adjacent to the church in the Paul Revere Mall, where a statue depicts Revere in action atop his horse. Massachusetts Gov. Maura Healy and Boston Mayor Michelle Wu were among those who spoke.

"Boston is a city where the past, present and future of our nation begin," Wu said. "Revolution wasn't just something we started. It's how we've lived every day of the last two and a half centuries."

Revere is known for riding his horse, with other colonists, to alert their compatriots to the approach of British soldiers

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after a lantern-based signal was hung from Old North Church – “one if by land, two if by sea.” (The British came by the Charles River, therefore two lanterns.) The event was described most famously in Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem, “Paul Revere’s Ride” from 1861.

“Those two signal lanterns set a complex alarm system into motion, a system that included many messengers fanning out across Massachusetts to spread the warning that night,” Old North Church said in an online description of that pivotal episode. “Once Revere got across the river, he began his own famous Midnight Ride as part of this system. Ultimately, when the British arrived in Lexington the next morning, they were met by local militia members, and the shots fired that morning ignited the American Revolutionary War.”

The 250th anniversary of the battles of Lexington and Concord were celebrated the next day, on April 19. Additional historical commemorations are planned in the coming years as other Revolutionary War battles and key mileposts in the nation’s founding reach their semiquincentennial.

Old North Church’s history dates even earlier, to its founding in 1723 as Christ Church. It remains open both as an active Episcopal congregation and a popular historic site for tourists.

The congregation also is in the middle of a restoration project, which is bringing back to life colonial-era artwork depicting angels high above the nave. The 16 cherubic figures were painted by early Old North Church member John Gibbs and are believed to be among the earliest

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surviving art from colonial Boston. They had been painted over in a 1912 renovation but were rediscovered several years ago and, starting last year, now uncovered.

Courtesy David Paulsen editor for Episcopal News Service

Poem for today

Crossing the Bar

By Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

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Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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

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