

Church News Ireland



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Image of the day

Tulips at QUB

Front square in glorious form at the Queen's University of Belfast.

News

Conclave to elect new Pope begins May 7

The conclave to elect a new Pope will begin on May 7 according to the Holy See Press Office.

The Cardinals present in Rome made the decision on Monday at their fifth General Congregation.

The conclave will take place in the Vatican's Sistine Chapel, which remain closed to visitors during those days.

Digital Book of Condolence

Please pray for the happy repose of the soul of Pope Francis

Pay tribute to the late Pope Francis RIP on the digital Book of Condolence on www.catholicbishops.ie



NI scouts for Cambodia with Habitat for Humanity Ireland

This summer, 15 Scouts from across NI will travel to Cambodia as part of a life-changing project in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Ireland.

The team will work alongside local communities to build homes for vulnerable families - putting Scouts' #SkillsForLife into action on a global stage.

April 29, 2025

Get to know the team in their latest update: <https://shorturl.at/hlD16>

The team is currently fundraisiing. If you'd like to show your support, please get in touch with David:
davidscott@scoutsni.org

Ian and Kathleen Stewart from St Marks, Lisburn, are part of this amazing team of Scouts. Centre row left.



Run for the Willowfield Parish roof

On Sunday 4 May Jack will be running the entire 26.2 mile Belfast City Marathon route in aid of the Willowfield Parish 'Here to Stay' building project!

April 29, 2025

Check out and support Jack's GoFundMe as he prepares to #runfortheroof!

<https://gofund.me/e5369062>



Dunluce Parish's 16th annual Art and Photography Exhibition

Dunluce Parish's annual Art and Photography Exhibition returns to the Parish Centre in Priestland Road, Bushmills, from Friday May 2 until Monday May 5.

Bishop of Manchester takes role as Lords Spiritual convenor in House of Lords

The Bishop of Manchester has been appointed the new Convenor of the Lords Spiritual.

[April 29, 2025](#)

Rt Revd David Walker is succeeding the Bishop of St Albans, Rt Revd Alan Smith, who retires at the end of May after nearly three years in the role.



In his new position, Bishop David will lead and coordinate the work of the 26 Church of England bishops who sit in the House of Lords.

Appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Convenor acts as a key liaison between the bishops' bench and Parliament, representing their interests among party leaders, officials, and crossbench peers.

Bishop David reflected on the appointment, saying: "I am looking forward to serving Parliament and my fellow Lords Spiritual in this role.

"There are many challenges facing us as a country and I believe that bishops have a vital role to play in working for the common good, as well as fulfilling our spiritual and constitutional role in Parliament."

Bishop David joined the Lords in 2020 and has played an active role in legislative matters, including poverty, housing, and social justice issues.

He recently piloted a private member's bill supporting care leavers, and has been the Bishop of Manchester since 2013.

Bishop Alan, who will step down after twelve years in the Lords, offered encouragement to his successor, saying: "I am happy to hand over to Bishop David who I know will be an excellent Convenor, with all the wisdom and positivity he has already shown in his time on the Bench."

His retirement takes effect on 31st May.

Declaration of Friendship to be presented to General Synod between Scottish Episcopal Church and Catholic Church in Scotland

A proposed Declaration of Friendship between the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Conference of Bishops of the Catholic Church in Scotland will be put before General Synod in June this year.

The agreement, also to be known as the Saint Ninian Declaration, articulates and supports a deepening relationship between Episcopalians and Roman Catholics in Scotland. It affirms the possibilities for working more closely together while acknowledging that there are distinct differences between the two churches.

The Saint Ninian Declaration follows the Saint Andrew Declaration of 2021 between the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Scotland, which outlined a series of acknowledgments and commitments between the churches intended to deepen their relationship, and looked at new ways of working together to serve the people of Scotland. The following year, the Conference of Bishops of the Catholic Church in Scotland agreed a declaration of friendship with the Church of Scotland, known as the Saint Margaret Declaration.

The Saint Ninian Declaration encourages joint worship and prayer, shared preparation for baptism and confirmation, common study of faith, co-operation in lay and ordained ministry, and shared witness to the world.

A draft of the Declaration has already gone before the Faith & Order Board, and after debate at that stage, a revised version was accepted by the Bishops' Conference at a recent meeting with the College of Bishops.

The Inter-Church Relations Committee will present the Declaration on the second day of General Synod this year, with the College and the Faith and Order Board commending it to General Synod, to the SEC dioceses, and to local congregations.

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Education

Wallace High Robotics Team

Congratulations to the Wallace First Tech Challenge Robotics Team, who were runners-up in the Alliance Final at W5 in Belfast, alongside Foyle College.

The team would like to wish Friends' School Lisburn and Belfast Royal Academy all the best for the UK Finals in London this June.



Belfast City Airport first Autism in the Air session for 2025 is a success

This unique programme gives kids with autism the chance to experience an airport environment before they fly.

April 29, 2025

A big well done to all the families that took part, and thank you to Aer Lingus Regional for facilitating the boarding of a plane, helping give the families the experience from check-in to take off! #autismawarenessmonth

For a good short briefing on this developing initiative see - (<https://www.belfastcityairport.com/News/Autism-in-the-air-takes-flight>)

Irish Holocaust Education Living History Session

The last Living History Session of this academic year is fast approaching.

Third Generation survivor, Kayla Hertz will be speaking to secondary school students on the 12th of May at 10AM over Zoom. Register your school for this session. Limited slots available. Register through link in bio.

Don't miss the chance to bring Living History to your students! Our educational programme, where second and third-generation Holocaust survivors share powerful family stories with students, offers a unique and impactful learning experience.




Why Participate?



First-hand accounts: Students hear real stories of resilience, survival, and remembrance.



Engagement: An opportunity for students to connect deeply with history and its relevance today.

 Free and impactful: No cost for schools to participate—just bring your class, and we'll take care of the rest!

See upcoming events at -
<https://www.holocausteducationireland.org/>

Cathedral Calls

King and Queen to attend Service of Thanksgiving for 80th anniversary VE Day at Westminster Abbey

Their Majesties The King and Queen will attend a Service of Thanksgiving for the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe Day (VE Day) here at the Abbey at midday on Thursday 8th May.

They will be accompanied by The Prince and Princess of Wales, The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, The Princess Royal and Sir Tim Laurence, The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and The Duke of Kent.

The service, which will honour and pay tribute to the Second World War generation, will be conducted by our Dean, the Very Reverend Dr David Hoyle, and will be sung by the Abbey Choir.

At the start of the service, the Royal Family will join the congregation in a national two-minute silence of reflection and remembrance. His Majesty will lay a wreath at the Grave of the Unknown Warrior, followed by The Prince of Wales. The Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, will give a

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reading. After the service, The King and Queen will meet veterans in the congregation and Her Majesty will lead other Members of the Royal Family in laying flowers at the Innocent Victims' Memorial.

The service will be broadcast live in the UK on BBC One from 10.45am and you can find out more at:
www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m002bw9s

Events



Home Grown Hope at Antrim very soon

There's less than a day to go until Home Grown Hope launches on Wednesday 30 April!

You can purchase your tickets at bit.ly/AntrimHGH for an evening of Kenyan cookery from local chef and Ballytrim Pantry owner, Mollie Cunningham.

You'll hear about how rooftop gardens in the most densely populated areas of Nairobi are transforming communities and you'll have the opportunity to taste dishes prepared live by Mollie, made using produce from her kitchen garden and inspired by traditional Kenyan dishes taught to her by those communities.

Home Grown Hope is going to be a feast for the senses, giving you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the unforgettable stories and flavours of Kenya 🌿

Don't miss out, book your tickets for this wonderful evening:
bit.ly/AntrimHGH

Tulips and Squishmallows the countdown has begun! 🌷



April 29, 2025

Get ready to explore thousands of blooming tulips and vibrant spring flowers, browse unique craft stalls, enjoy delicious bites from local eateries, and meet the official Squishmallows (Sunday & Monday only).

We can't wait to welcome you to our beautiful grounds!



Save the date : 3rd - 5th May 2025



Limited tickets available to purchase:

<https://glenarmcastle.com/events/tulip-festival-2025/>

Resources



Monthly Pray and Fast for the Climate Movement

Join with many other Christians from around the world with the monthly Pray and Fast for the Climate Movement on the first of each month.

Prayer points for each month will be on their website \>\>
<https://prayandfastfortheclimate.org.uk/resources/>

Perspective

10 brilliant things Pope Francis said about God by AJ Gomez

Few leaders spoke with the warmth, wisdom and weight of Pope Francis. No matter the subject of his address his words cut through and cha

1. God is unbound by denomination

“I believe in God, not in a Catholic God; there is no Catholic God. There is God and I believe in Jesus Christ, his incarnation” (2013)

2. God loves the unworthy

“Jesus’ love goes before us, his look anticipates our needs. He can see beyond appearances, beyond sin, beyond failures and unworthiness. He sees beyond our rank in society. He sees beyond this, to our dignity as sons and daughters, a dignity at times sullied by sin, but one which endures in the depth of our soul. He came precisely to seek out all those who feel unworthy of God, unworthy of others.” (2015)

3. Beauty points to God

“All that is good, all that is true, all that is beautiful brings us to God. Because God is good, God is beautiful, God is the truth.” (2015)

4. The false promises of idolatry

“Idolatry, then, is always polytheism, an aimless passing from one lord to another. Idolatry does not offer a journey but rather a plethora of paths leading nowhere and forming a vast labyrinth.” (2013)

5. The greatest treasure

“I have neither silver nor gold, but I bring with me the most precious thing given to me: Jesus Christ! I have come in his name, to feed the flame of fraternal love that burns in every heart; and I wish my greeting to reach one and all: The peace of Christ be with you!” (2013)

6. Bring the Bible to the streets

“Let us pray, and let us ensure that the Bible does not remain in the library among the many books that speak of it, but rather that it runs through the streets of the world and waits where people live.” (2017)

7. Jesus is the centre

“The centre of our faith isn’t just a book, but a history of salvation, and above all, it’s about a person: Jesus Christ, the word of God made flesh.” (2013)

8. God knows us by name

“Before God we are not strangers, or numbers. We are faces and hearts, known one by one, by name.” (2020)

9. Share the good news

“Go out to others and share the good news that God, our Father, walks at our side. He frees us from anonymity, from a life of emptiness and selfishness, and brings us to the school of encounter. He removes us from the fray of competition and self-absorption, and he opens before us the path of peace. That peace which is born of accepting others, that peace which fills our hearts whenever we look upon those in need as our brothers and sisters.” (2015)

10. Jesus is with us on the journey

“Life is a journey, along different roads, different paths, which leave their mark on us. We know in faith that Jesus seeks us out. He wants to heal our wounds, to soothe our feet which hurt from traveling alone, to wash each of us clean of the dust from our journey.” (2015)

Poem for today

Once Alien Here

By John Hewitt

Once alien here my fathers built their house,
claimed, drained, and gave the land the shapes of use,
and for their urgent labour grudged no more
than shuffled pennies from the hoarded store
of well rubbed words that had left their overtones
in the ripe England of the mounded downs.

“The sullen Irish limping to the hills
bore with them the enchantments and the spells
that in the clans’ free days hung gay and rich
on every twig of every thorny hedge,
and gave the rain-pocked stone a meaning past
the blurred engraving of the fibrous frost.

“So I, because of all the buried men
in Ulster clay, because of rock and glen
and mist and cloud and quality of air
as native in my thought as any here,
who now would seek a native mode to tell
our stubborn wisdom individual,
yet lacking skill in either scale of song,
the graver English, lyric Irish tongue,
must let this rich earth so enhance the blood
with steady pulse where now is plunging mood
till thought and image may, identified,
find easy voice to utter each aright.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

April 29, 2025

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

Church News Ireland

www.churchnewsireland.org

**Link in Monday through Saturday from
early morning**

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