

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – The Africa Six

Image of the day

Mothers Union support The Africa Six

Africa's pioneering female Anglican bishops, known as Africa Six.

It's been 10 years since women shattered the stained-glass ceiling to become bishops, a senior position of leadership in the Anglican communion. While huge progress has been made, there is still a journey to go to achieve gender equality within the church.

“Mothers' Union has been at the forefront of challenging these gender norms and fighting for equal rights since 1876. We continue to do so today across 83 nations and with over 4 million members.

“We stand in solidarity with these remarkable women as together, we continue to work to build a future where everyone thrives”.

News

Easter brings joy in Bray and Greystones

The Holy Redeemer Church in Bray honoured its Polish congregation over the Easter weekend, when it celebrated the ‘blessing of the Easter baskets’ on Holy Saturday.

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The blessing is an enduring Polish and Eastern European tradition, during which families take a basket of food – which can include painted eggs, to symbolise the resurrection; sausage to denote God’s generosity and cake or sweets to symbolise eternal life – to be blessed and each year, a steady procession of native Polish people arrive at the church for the short ceremony.

It can get a bit competitive, mind, as families do their best to decorate the baskets and in the past at least, the more abundant the basket, the more respect one received in the community.

The basket is generally lined with an embroidered cloth and once it is filled, it is covered with a white linen cloth representing the shroud of Christ. It is then placed at the foot of the altar, where in Bray this year, Fr Michael O’Kelly presided over the short blessing.

Meanwhile, other Easter traditions were played out elsewhere in Bray over the weekend, with the gardens and orangery at Killruddery House hosting an Easter egg hunt which followed a special Easter-themed treasure trail in the grounds, guided by a card that had to be stamped at each location.

The funds raised from the event went to support the Dublin Dublin Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Courtesy The Irish Independent and Tom Galvin



**St Philip's
Vintage
Afternoon Tea**

Saturday 13 April 2-4pm
St Philip's Hall
Temple Rd, DO6 AX71

Raffle

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for the
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**All proceeds
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email: sandfordandstphilips@gmail.com
Phone: Parish Secretary Craig 086 0386432
Bookings close 8th April

Bishops' Appeal thanks supporters for generosity

Thank you! The Bishops' Appeal sends a message of thanks to all those who have supported recent appeals and given so generously to enable those in great need to receive help and practical aid around the world today.

Thanks to the generosity of parishes and individuals, at its meeting in March, the Bishops' Appeal Advisory Committee has been able to allocate more than €200,000 (£171,000) of funds to support a wide range of relief and development work around the world.

From supporting people displaced by the war in the Middle East and sending essential relief funds to the Diocese of Jerusalem, as well as stoves to people in Ukraine whose homes have been destroyed, every pound and euro we have received and can pass on makes an enormous – often life-changing difference.

Bishops' Appeal also supports projects away from the media spotlight where the needs are equally urgent and where climate change is having a devastating impact on the lives of millions of people.

In Madagascar, we have been able to support a project promoting sustainable silk production businesses, which are replacing the previous dependence on cutting down trees to create charcoal. Elsewhere, a Mothers' Union literacy project in Burundi is not only supporting women to run



businesses to support their families, but also basic literacy and numeracy skills help prevent fraud with the added bonus of the women being able to read the Bible for themselves. Both these projects benefitted as a direct result of funds raised by the Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe during Bishop Michael's peregrination around the churches.

Victims of two recent natural disasters in 2023 – the earthquake that devastated large parts of Syria and Turkey, and floods in Libya – have been provided with ongoing support through our partners on the ground locally.

Other projects in Malawi, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Somaliland will all receive support to enable lives to change, with training, green energy projects, and security measures around a vocational college which all help to address the many challenges people face in their everyday lives.

It is our privilege through Bishops' Appeal to support brothers and sisters around the world who are often living in great need, but who are full of faith. As we celebrate the

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wonderful truth of Jesus' Resurrection this Easter, let's pray that the monies raised and distributed will bring the hope, kindness and goodness of God today and always.

Pictured above: At the security fence for Yei Vocational Training College, in South Sudan, funded with help from Bishops' Appeal are Morris Logulomo, manager, Tom Finlay from St John's parish, Moira, and Baraka, an instructor from the college. Photo credit: CMS Ireland.

Episcopal Church announces four candidates for presiding bishop

The next presiding bishop will succeed Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, whose nine-year term concludes on Oct. 31.

Four candidates have been selected to stand for election as the 28th presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, the denomination's highest office. The nominees include Bishop J. Scott Barker of the Diocese of Nebraska, Bishop Daniel G. P. Gutiérrez of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, Bishop Sean Rowe of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Diocese of Western New York and Bishop Robert Wright of the Diocese of Atlanta.

The vote to select the next presiding bishop will be held in June to succeed Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, whose nine-year term concludes on Oct. 31.



Bishop J. Scott Barker of the Diocese of Nebraska, from left, Bishop Daniel G. P. Gutiérrez of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, Bishop Sean Rowe of the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania and Diocese of Western New York, and Bishop Robert Wright of the Diocese of Atlanta. (Courtesy photos)

The election is scheduled for June 26 at the denomination's General Convention, which will take place in Louisville, Kentucky, this year. The House of Bishops will elect the next presiding bishop in a sequestered session, and the House of Deputies, a second voting body of the General Convention made of clergy and lay deputies, will confirm or refuse the bishops' election.

The next Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States is to be selected in June. An initial slate of four was announced on Tuesday.

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From 3 to 15 April, however, any bishop or deputy to the forthcoming General Convention may also nominate a bishop not on the slate.

The four named so far are all men: the Bishops of Nebraska, the Rt Revd J. Scott Barker; Pennsylvania, the Rt Revd Daniel G.P. Gutiérrez; Northwestern Pennsylvania, the Rt Revd Sean Rowe; and Atlanta, the Rt Revd Robert Wright.

The names, announced by the Church's Joint Nominating Committee, will be formally submitted to the 81st General Convention, in Louisville, Kentucky, on 25 June — the day before the House of Bishops is scheduled to elect the 28th Presiding Bishop. The House of Deputies will then be asked to confirm the election.

Whoever is elected will succeed the Most Revd Michael Curry, whose nine-year term ends on 31 October. He has recently undergone brain surgery, after a run of ill-health.

The selection process began in September, when the names of possible candidates were submitted by 111 Episcopalians (News, 22 September 2023). Named bishops were asked to enter the discernment process, if they were willing, and to submit applications. Bishops who agreed to be put forward had to provide video responses to set questions.

The video responses of the four nominees were published by the Presiding Bishop's office of public affairs on Tuesday.

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Bishop Rowe, who is 49, the youngest nominee, has held office since 2007, and is also Bishop Provisional of Western New York during the diocese's vacancy-in-see. He previously served as Bishop Provisional of Bethlehem (2014 to 2018). He was ordained in 2000 in Northwestern Pennsylvania, where he served until his election as bishop. He currently serves as Parliamentarian (adviser on constitutional matters) of the House of Bishops and Executive Council.

Bishop Gutiérrez, who is 59, has held his Pennsylvania see since 2016 — one of five dioceses in the state. A native of New Mexico, he holds a master's degree in theological studies from St Norbert College. He was ordained in 2008 in the diocese of the Rio Grande, where he served as canon to the ordinary, chief operating officer, and chief of staff before he was elected bishop.

Bishop Barker, who is 60, has been the Bishop of Nebraska, where he was born and raised, since 2011. He was ordained in 1992, served for ten years in Omaha, and ten years in the diocese of New York, before his consecration.

Bishop Wright, who is also 60, is a Navy veteran, and was ordained in 1999 in the diocese of New York. Before becoming Bishop of Atlanta in 2012, he was Rector of St Paul's Episcopal Church there.

Nominees, by custom, are not permitted to give media interviews. The Bishop of Alaska, the Rt Revd Mark Lattime, who co-chairs the Nominating Committee, said: "We

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appreciate the many Episcopalians who prayerfully set us on our way to discerning this slate of nominees.”

The candidates were chosen by the Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop, a 20-person committee of bishops, clergy and laypeople that has been gearing up for this election since fall 2021. The committee is required to nominate at least three bishops for the job.



Cashel, Ferns and Ossory diocesan pre-confirmation weekend was held at Newtown School, Waterford. Revd. Cannon Nicola Halford was Chaplain for the weekend.

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Additional bishops may also be nominated via petition. Any bishop or deputy who will be part of the upcoming General Convention can nominate a bishop, with their permission, between April 3 and April 15. After completing the application and required screening process, any additional nominees are expected to be announced in early June. All nominees will be presented to both houses of General Convention on June 21.

“We appreciate the many Episcopalians who prayerfully set us on our way to discerning this slate of nominees,” the Rt. Rev. Mark Lattime, bishop of Alaska, who co-chairs the committee with Canon Steve Nishibayashi of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, said in a press release.

The Rev. Maureen-Elizabeth Hagen, a deacon who chairs the nominations subcommittee, added, “We felt the Holy Spirit’s presence during this process and are prayerfully thankful for the guidance we received.”

The presiding bishop’s job description has greatly evolved since the late 18th century. Originally limited to the role of a senior bishop who presides over the House of Bishops, today those duties have expanded to include the role of pastor, chief executive and prophetic voice for the Episcopal Church. Unlike primates in some other Anglican denominations, the presiding bishop’s office is part of the General Convention, not above it.

Michael Curry, 71, has been among the better-known presiding bishops in recent decades, not only because of the history made by his election as a Black man, but because he was invited to give the sermon at the wedding

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of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex in 2018, when, according to "Today," he "nearly stole the show." Since May 2023, Curry has been receiving medical treatment for internal bleeding and heart conditions. In March, he received a pacemaker to treat his atrial fibrillation, or irregular heartbeat.

Cathedral Call

New hymns by popular Anglican Church composer unveiled at Blackburn Cathedral

Concert attendees experienced a rare treat at Blackburn Cathedral on Wednesday as they were treated to the debut performance of two newly discovered compositions by British composer Sir Edward Bairstow.

These pieces, "Forty Days and Forty Nights" and "O Come O Come Emmanuel," were stumbled upon by volunteer archivist Pete Asher in the archives of Blackburn Central Library.

These musical gems were featured at an Easter concert commemorating the 150th anniversary of the composer's birth. Although the exact dates of the arrangements were unknown, the Blackburn Music Society choir speculated that they may never have been performed publicly before.

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Asher, also a member of the society's choir, told the BBC: "There was something here which probably hadn't seen the light of day for over 100 years."

Born in Huddersfield, Yorkshire, in 1874, Sir Edward Bairstow had deep ties to Blackburn, having served as an organist at York Minster for over three decades until his passing in 1946.

Renowned for his contributions to church music, he was knighted in 1932 for his outstanding services to the field. Pieces such as "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence," "The Lamentation," and "Save Us, O Lord" are among his most celebrated works.

The discovery of these compositions sparked hope that they would be made more widely available, potentially becoming staples in church services throughout the UK.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Thy Kingdom Come 2024 prayer resources

There is a range of resources presented by the Church of England including:

✨ The Novena

✨ The Prayer Journal

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✨ Workplace Prayer Diary

✨ Prayer Station Artwork

Get your resources here: <https://bit.ly/3PvrcX4>

TRC Churches in Schools events

Clergy, school governors, and members of local Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist congregations are invited to three special 'Churches in Schools' events upcoming.



CHURCHES IN SCHOOLS

Seminars for clergy and transferor governors

Lisburn
Coleraine
Enniskillen



Tuesday-Thursday
9th-11th April

Each will be an opportunity to share the current issues in the relationship between faith and education, and churches and schools, and to support churches in their role in nominating school governors.

The events are organised by the Transferor Representatives' Council, and refreshments will be provided with special dietary requirements accommodated.

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The three events are taking place as follows, to reach as many local churches as possible around Northern Ireland:

Lisburn: Tuesday, 9th April

10.30am – 12.30pm

Vic-Ryn, T3 Conference Centre, 5 Rathdown Walk, Lisburn BT28 2RE

Coleraine: Wednesday, 10th April

2.00pm – 4.00pm

New Row Presbyterian Church, New Row, Coleraine BT52 1LA

Enniskillen: Thursday, 11th April

10.30am – 12.30pm

St Macartin's Cathedral Halls, Hall's Lane, Enniskillen BT74 7DR

If you'd like to take part, please indicate which event you wish to attend at:

<https://forms.gle/e53s1EVd3zKjyR4HA>

Lambeth Call on Safe Church webinar

On April 17th and 18th, join the Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission and special guests for the "Exploring the Lambeth Call on Safe Church" webinar.

Don't miss the opportunity to hear about the Safe Church Commission's work, learn about safeguarding within our

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LAMBETH CONFERENCE
God's Church for God's world

ANGLICAN COMMUNION
IN OVER 110 COUNTRIES

SAFE CHURCH

EXPLORING THE LAMBETH CALL ON SAFE CHURCH
AND THE WORK OF THE SAFE CHURCH COMMISSION

Webinar dates: April 17 and 18

communities, and explore resources for building a safer church environment.

Register your place here <https://bit.ly/3Rk2M44>

In the media

Belfast Telegraph - Priest slams dissidents for 'exploiting' young people who attacked journalists

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A priest has condemned dissident republicans who claim they are fighting for “freedom and rights” for arming children with petrol bombs and attacking journalists, Garrett Horgan writes.

Fr Michael Canny was speaking after violence in the Creggan area of Derry saw young people throw petrol bombs at reporters.

It followed an unnotified dissident republican parade from Creggan shops to the City Cemetery.

A van was also torched next to Central Drive Community Centre in the aftermath.

Fr Canny said: “Everybody has the right to respectfully remember their dead and Easter is a special time for the church and for republicanism.

“It was obviously planned to throw these petrol bombs at police and when the police didn't fall into their trap they threw them at journalists or anybody who happened to be in the way.

“Petrol bombs don't just appear out of nowhere, this had to be planned and organised.

“For people who claim to be looking for freedom and rights, they are depriving people of their rights who are out doing a job. That is to be condemned.”

Lyra McKee was killed when a member of the New IRA brought a gun onto the streets of Creggan on April 18, 2019.

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On Monday those carrying petrol bombs were masked, but generally appeared to be in their teens, with other children as young as 10 involved.

Fr Canny added: “I think that anybody who brings a gun or petrol bombs on to the streets is very irresponsible, and it is certainly very irresponsible to put them into the hands of young people.

“Firstly, because they could be endangering their own life and also of course they can be used in the spur of the moment to take anybody's life or damage property. The organisers have to answer questions about this.”

Ms McKee's sister, Nichola McKee Corner, said she fears another journalist could be killed.

She believes more needs to be done to protect members of the press and is becoming “increasingly concerned” about the welfare of young people in Creggan.

“The media was attacked because they have the power to expose these people for what they truly are: people who are purposely and purposefully exploiting young people for their own gratification,” Ms McKee Corner added.

“The media has shown these people for what they truly are. The local community and relevant authorities need to do everything in their power to protect vulnerable young people and children from this exploitation before they end up killing an innocent person and have to face life through bars.”

Belfast Telegraph 02/04/2024

Poem for today

From 'The Absence' by R.S.Thomas

The tomb is empty.
Its rock-hewn walls cup nothing,
only darkness, and silence.
It's easy to imagine how those first followers
looked into that space and felt hopeless,
bereft, as if they, too, were hollowed out.

Stir us, God, to remember
that from the very beginning
a formless void has been
your favourite raw material to work with.

When we feel depleted...
When absence yawns...
When grief overwhelms...
Help us.

May we look again and see, not a tomb
but a womb.
A place pregnant with creative potential.
A cradle for new life.

May our own emptiness
be, to you, an invitation,
room for your Spirit to play.
An opening for your love.

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In the dew-drenched garden,
with springtime bursting forth all around us,
may we hear your familiar voice
speaking our name.

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
