

Church News Ireland



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175th Anniversary of ‘Unique’ St John’s Sandymount**

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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

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Image of the day

Palm Sunday Service marks 175th Anniversary of 'Unique' St John's Sandymount



One hundred and seventy five years of witness and worshiping God at the unique St John's Church, Sandymount was celebrated on Palm Sunday. Photo above - The Liturgy of the Psalms Gospel.

The special service marked the anniversary of the church's dedication and also looked to the future with the sacraments of baptism and confirmation.

Led by Archbishop Michael Jackson, the service was attended by the Lord Mayor of Dublin Emma Blain. St John's Chaplain, Canon Robert Jones was joined by Canon Alistair Graham, who is a member of the board of trustees. The regular congregation was joined by family, friends and well wishers of Josefine, who was baptised, and Paul, who was confirmed, as well as the many people who have had a long association with the church.

The service began with the Liturgy of the Palms Gospel and a procession. Afterwards those in attendance enjoyed a specially commissioned cake. Lord Mayor of Dublin Emma Blain.

In his sermon the Archbishop looked back on the colourful and sometimes controversial history of St John's Sandymount, which with its High Church tradition holds a special place in the Church of Ireland. It was dedicated on Palm Sunday in 1850 having been gifted to Sandymount and Merrion by Sidney Herbert, Lord Herbert of Lea and younger brother of the 12th Earl of Pembroke. It was a time of growth for the Oxford Movement which offered an invitation to return to pre-Reformation liturgy and doctrines of the church while continuing to reject the authority of a Pope.

St John's is a Trustee Church which stands in some ways outside the jurisdiction of the Church of Ireland but chooses to adhere to its principles and come under the umbrella of.



Lord Mayor of Dublin, Emma Blain

the Archbishop of Dublin. Archbishop Jackson said it navigated the Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, a succession of Ecclesiastical Courts of the General Synod, a shift in tone to High Church life and practice, two World Wars and Irish Independence. Its organist Cecil Grange MacDowell gave Ireland her National Anthem at a time when fellow parishioners were giving their lives in the trenches in the service of freedom in Europe during the First World War.

The Archbishop noted that much of St John's colourful liturgical life was associated with Father le Fanu and Father Colquhoun, the latter of whom was suspended for six months from his ecclesiastical duties.

“A testimony to the endurance of the spirit of St John’s surely is to be found in the fact that so many of the things that brought it notoriety in earlier times have been mainstreamed in the contemporary Church of Ireland such as seasonal stoles, altar frontals and candles. This in no way is said in a spirit of triumphalism. It is not my way to diminish another tradition within the totality of the tradition itself. It is simply to state a fact. In its earliest description, The Dublin Evening Mail of the day spoke of the simplicity, massiveness and durability of St John’s. We continue to live in its slipstream today,” he said.

He added: “But: Why would you dedicate a church building on Palm Sunday? This surely is a question that any of us might ask on this day when we celebrate the dedication of this unique church: unique in its beauty and its fabric, unique in its liturgical tradition and unique in its continuing witness to something that the Church of Ireland needs in 2025 as it would have needed in 1850: a strong cord of connection between catholic sensibility and intentional community. St John’s Sandymount is a community dedicated to holy deeds and holy things first and foremost... With faithfulness and fruitfulness, St John’s has kept the flame of God alight in an extremely important and invitational way to everyone and most especially to those of catholic sensibility”.

You can read Archbishop Jackson’s sermon in full. Click on file download at end of text at -

<https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2025/04/14/palm-sunday-service-marks-175th>

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News



Let Your Light Shine - parish Festival of Talents

Kilcronaghan Parish Church in Derry diocese held a Festival of Talents in aid of Chest Heart & Stroke aid. There is a wonderful gallery of photos

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on the Parish Facebook site - a few of which are shown here.

The closing Service of Let Your Light Shine - Festival of Talents with Bishop Andrew Forster on Sunday evening last is also available. Scroll down at

[<https://www.facebook.com/kilcronaghanparishchurch>]

6.30pm Sunday 13th April 2025 CCLI: 2200986 Streaming: 1342913

**Welcome to Trinity Columbarium,
Downpatrick**



We are delighted to introduce Trinity Columbarium Downpatrick, a serene and sacred space offering a dignified resting place for loved ones.

Located within the historic grounds of Downpatrick, our columbarium provides a peaceful and lasting memorial in a setting of spiritual significance.

We have renovated the Chapel within the former Convent building. Beside St Patrick's Church in Downpatrick.

At Trinity Columbarium, we understand the importance of remembrance and reflection. Our beautifully designed niches offer families a meaningful way to honor and cherish those who have passed, ensuring their memory lives on in a place of tranquility and reverence.

We invite you to visit, learn more about our services, and discover how Trinity Columbarium can provide comfort and continuity for generations to come.

For more information, please get in touch—we're here to support you every step of the way.

Pope opens Holy Week with in-person greeting in St Peter's Square

A convalescing Pope Francis greeted the crowd in St Peter's Square yesterday, wishing more than 20,000 faithful a “happy Palm Sunday, happy Holy Week”.

Many reached out to touch Francis' hand or garments as he was brought in a wheelchair down a ramp to the main altar, where he issued his brief greeting into a microphone.

The 88-year-old, who has faced a life-threatening battle with double pneumonia, was not wearing nasal tubes for supplemental oxygen, as he had during a similar appearance last Sunday.

On his way back to St Peter's Basilica from where he had emerged, Francis stopped to bless a rosary, and offered candy to a boy who greeted him.

Francis is entering his fourth week of convalescence during which doctors have advised him to avoid crowds. While Francis is clearly eager to show he is feeling better, he has not spoken more than a few words in public.

The Vatican said it was waiting to advise on what role he may play in upcoming Holy Week events leading up to Easter Sunday.

It was his second time in St Peter's Square before a crowd since leaving the hospital, following last Sunday's unexpected appearance that thrilled the faithful. He also met privately with King Charles III and Queen Camilla last week, and made an impromptu tour of St Peter's Basilica, stopping to pray, and to thank a pair of restorers for their work on the basilica's masterpieces.

On Saturday, the eve of Holy Week, Francis went to the St Mary Major Basilica in central Rome to pray privately before a favourite icon of the Virgin Mary, Salus Populi Romani.

The basilica, which he typically visits before and after his foreign trips, was also his first stop after leaving the Gemelli hospital on March 23.

The pontiff thanked the faithful for their prayers.

He said: "At this time of physical weakness, they help me to feel God's closeness, compassion and tenderness even more." For the ninth week, including his five-week hospitalisation starting on February 14, the blessing was delivered as a text.

The Pope offered prayers for those suffering in the conflict in Sudan, which marks its second anniversary tomorrow, and for Lebanon, where civil war began 50 years ago, as well as for peace in Ukraine, the Middle East, Congo, Myanmar and South Sudan.

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In a prepared Palm Sunday homily read by a top Vatican cardinal, Francis urged the faithful to carry the cross “of those who suffer around us” to mark the start of the solemn Holy Week.

Education



Belfast High School's Abaana Uganda trip

Day 1 - We arrived at the Abaana guest house at approximately 6.30am and quickly settled into our rooms.

After a bit of a bug and gecko removal we managed to catch a quick nap before regrouping for breakfast at 10.00am including sausage, egg, beans, cereal, toast and fruit. Following breakfast we had an orientation session which



ended with a surprise cake generously provided by the Abaana guest house staff. Later we divided into teams for a market challenge in the heart of Kampala. Each team ventured out to bargain for local produce such as bananas, mangos, pineapple and rolex, embracing the lively atmosphere and trying out our very limited Ugandan language skills! We also took a trip to see the vast and bustling Kampala taxi park with its organised chaos. We rounded off the day with a quick trip to the local supermarket for some supplies before heading back to the guest house for dinner.
Karis and Lila

Save the date as BRA celebrates 240 years

The second in the series of commemorative events to celebrate the 240th anniversary of Belfast Royal Academy will take place on Tuesday 16th September. Alumnus the Hon Mr Justice David Scofield will deliver a law lecture at 2.15 p.m. in the School Assembly Hall. Sir



1785

240TH ANNIVERSARY

LECTURE

WITH ALUMNUS THE HON
MR JUSTICE DAVID SCOFFIELD

ASSEMBLY HALL

TUESDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER

2.15PM

240 years of transforming lives through an outstanding education

2025

Scofield is a Judge of the High Court in Northern Ireland. He was educated at University College, Oxford and Queen's University, Belfast. He was called to the Bar of Northern Ireland in 1999 where he practised primarily in the field of public, administrative and constitutional law, with interests in planning and procurement law, and appeared regularly before the UK Supreme Court. He took silk in 2011, aged 34; and was appointed to the High Court Bench in 2020. He is currently assigned to the Judicial Review Section of the

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Queen's Bench Division. He is also Chair of the Northern Ireland Law Commission.

To reserve your place email alumni@belfastacademy.net



Bishop guest at Irish School Heads' Association annual dinner

Rt Rev Paul Colton of Cork said he and his wife Susan and were delighted last week to be guests of the Irish School Heads' Association (ISA) at their annual dinner.

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The photo shows a small group before dinner, from left Deirdre Matthew's (Joint Managerial Body), Dr Andrew Forrest (The High School, Dublin), Niamh McShane (Bandon Grammar School), yours truly, Dr Edward Gash (Midleton College) and Michael Hall (Sligo Grammar School).



First day of Dalriada's trip to Rome

Our first day was a long one, having met at school just after midnight!

“We arrived in Naples and immediately went to visit the excavations at Pompeii. We then made the 3 hour journey north to Rome where after a rest in our hotel, we ventured out for our first meal and a chance to see some of the



sights. Today we will visit the Vatican and the four major Basilicas of Rome”.

Clergy and ministry

Institution of Rector of Kildrumferton Group of Parishes

On Sunday evening, 13th April, the Revd Mark Smith was instituted as Rector of the Kildrumferton Group of Parishes.

St Paul's, Ballymachugh, was filled with parishioners, friends, family and colleagues for a service led by Bishop



From left: Mr Colin Gordon, the Revd Mark Smith, Veronica Roe, Bishop Ferran Glenfield, and Mr Alan Bleakley.

Ferran Glenfield. Revd. Mark has been serving as the Minister-in-Charge of the group since May 2021 and his institution as Incumbent of the Group was a wonderful moment in the life of the parishes as well as the Diocese.

Ian Stokes, who is a Parish Reader in the Kildrumferton Group, read from Galatians 1:1–12 and Mark's mother, the Revd Linnet Smith, read the Gospel reading from Luke 7:1–10. Archdeacon Ian Horner gave the address at the institution. Preaching from Luke 7, he reminded the congregation that in a world of suspect, unstable authority,

there is one supreme authority we can truly have faith in. As Christians we sit under an authority that nothing can corrupt – an authority that can heal, restore and bring life out of death.

Christian faith is about abandoning trust in our own merit and relying instead on the person of Jesus and his authoritative word. Speaking of Mark and his wife Ruth, Archdeacon Ian said they were people who sit faithfully and happily under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. He encouraged us all to keep faith in Jesus and to love and serve one another as we walk together under Christ.

The Act of Institution was then read by Bishop Ferran Glenfield and Mark was presented to the congregation as the Rector of Kildrumferton Group. During the commissioning the congregation were asked to affirm their commitment to be a witness to the love of Christ and to serve others in the name of Christ. Gifts of a Bible, water (representing baptism), the Book of Common Prayer, bread and wine, a key to the door of the church and a towel (reminding us of the calling to serve) were presented to Mark as symbols of his commitment to guiding, nurturing and strengthening our faith.

Following the Act of Institution, Mark was welcomed as Rector of the Kildrumferton Group by Colin Gordon, Church Warden of Ballymachugh. Dean Nigel Crossey spoke on behalf of the clergy of the Diocese. Padraic Corley spoke on behalf of the Cavan Royal School where Mark is currently serving as Chaplain and Orla O'Connor spoke on behalf of Billis National School. Mark was spoken of as someone with a great deal of warmth and generosity, who

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was easily approachable. The delight that he would remain a part of the community was clearly evident.


Cashel, Ferns & Ossory MU Council hears of MU support of Visitor's Centre at the Midlands Prison

Cashel, Ferns & Ossory held their Spring Council in the Woodford Dolmen Hotel, Carlow . It was a wonderful day of sharing Mothers' Union news, fellowship and fun.

The day began with a very moving Holy Communion service led by the Chaplain, Revd. Ger James. Members were delighted to welcome Revd. Janet Finlay to the meeting after lunch when she told us all about the Visitor's Centre at the Midlands Prison and how much the support they receive from Mothers' Union in the Diocese is appreciated. The Diocesan President, Linda Ward, was thanked for hosting such an enjoyable and informative day.



Events



Knock Shrine building with people walking in the garden.

**RAISING HOPE
FOR OUR
COMMON HOME**

Saturday, April 26th 2025
10am to 4pm | Blessed Sacrament Chapel, Knock Shrine

GUEST SPEAKERS AND PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Éanna Ní Lamhna Scientist & Broadcaster	Jane Mellett Outreach Officer - Trócaire	Dr Brendan O'Keeffe Geographer & Social Scientist
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Laudato Si'

Discussion and dialogue at Knock on 10th anniversary of 'Laudato Si'

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the publication of 'Laudato Si' - On Care for Our Common Home, by Pope Francis. Knock Shrine will celebrate this milestone on Saturday, April 26th with a lively day of

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discussion and dialogue with renowned guest speakers.

Advanced booking is recommended as spaces are limited. For booking and more information, contact Nicola Mitchell at faithrenewal@knockshrine.ie or phone 094 93 88100 ext 408

Lambeth Conference Mission and Evangelism webinar

"Prayer is not an optional extra; it's the very foundation of everything we do in mission. We are workers together with Christ. From Genesis to Revelation, it is God who is the great evangelist. We get the privilege of joining in."

Ahead of the Mission and Evangelism webinar on May 14 and 15, the Lambeth Conference team spoke with the Very Reverend Robert (Bob) Key, Anglican Communion Lead for Thy Kingdom Come (Photo here). He reflected on the past 10 years of this united call to evangelism



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through prayer and what it can teach us about mission and evangelism now.

Thy Kingdom Come is a global ecumenical prayer initiative that began in 2016 as an invitation from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to encourage Christians to pray for others to come to know Jesus.

Since then, it has grown into an international ecumenical movement involving 85 denominations in nearly every country around the world.

Read the full reflection here: <https://bit.ly/4jjtHrY>

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

Please recommend to your friends