

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – King's Easter message

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Image of the day

King's Easter message praises the ethics of Judaism and the human instinct of Islam on Maundy Thursday

The King has praised the ethics of Judaism and the “human instinct” of Islam in his Easter message.



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In a message issued yesterday on Maundy Thursday, the King wished the public a “blessed and peaceful Easter”, saying the greatest virtue the world needs is “love”.

Durham toppers were well prepared for the Royal Maundy visit

On Thursday, he and the Queen joined the congregation at **Durham Cathedral** for a service before he distributed “**Maundy Money**”, a royal tradition.

In an Easter message published ahead of the service, the King said: “On Maundy Thursday, Jesus knelt and washed the feet of many of those who would abandon Him.

“His humble action was a token of His love that knew no bounds or boundaries and is central to Christian belief.

“The love He showed when He walked the Earth reflected the Jewish ethic of caring for the stranger and those in need, a deep human instinct echoed in Islam and other



religious traditions, and in the hearts of all who seek the good of others.”

The King has made “interfaith dialogue” one of his key causes, regularly sharing his admiration for elements of other faiths and urging greater communication across religion.

He has issued several Easter messages before, including during his last few years as Prince of Wales, but has not made such an explicit reference to celebrating other faiths before.

In 2019, in an article for The Telegraph on Good Friday, he referred to one Muslim leader, Farid Ahmed, as a “remarkable example of forgiveness following the utterly appalling attack on Muslims in Christchurch, New Zealand” in which Mr Ahmed’s wife had been killed.

In this year’s message, the King refers to modern conflicts and a recent palace reception at which he met members of the public who had been awarded a humanitarian medal for work in Gaza, Sudan, Ukraine, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkey-Syria.

The King said: “One of the puzzles of our humanity is how we are capable of both great cruelty and great kindness.

“This paradox of human life runs through the Easter story and in the scenes that daily come before our eyes – at one moment, terrible images of human suffering and, in another,

heroic acts in war-torn countries where humanitarians of every kind risk their own lives to protect the lives of others.

“A few weeks ago, I met many such people at a reception in Buckingham Palace and felt a profound sense of admiration for their resilience, courage and compassion.”

‘Three virtues the world needs’

Returning to the Christian message, he added: “The abiding message of Easter is that God so loved the world – the whole world – that He sent His son to live among us to show us how to love one another, and to lay down His own life for others in a love that proved stronger than death.

“There are three virtues that the world still needs – faith, hope and love. And the greatest of these is love.

“It is with these timeless truths in my mind, and my heart, that I wish you all a blessed and peaceful Easter.”

News

12 Christian World Communions mark the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council at Nicaea

This Easter, the Anglican Communion is one of 12 Christian World Communions that have issued a message to mark the shared date of Easter in 2025 by



all Christians, in conjunction with the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council at Nicaea.

The message seeks to bear witness to the Resurrection of Christ and has been signed by General Secretaries and ecumenical representatives of Christian World Communions.

Photo above - Speaking in support of the Easter letter, the **Right Reverend Anthony Poggio, Secretary General of the Anglican Communion said:**

“2025 is an important year, in which we celebrate a joint Easter and celebrate the Nicene Creed as a universal statement of faith for all Christian people. The Anglican Communion joyfully stands with fellow Christian World

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Communities in calling Christians globally to prayer, to common witness and to the unity of God's Church."

This Easter, the Anglican Communion has joined with representatives from Christian World Communities to issue a message to mark the shared date of Easter in 2025 by all Christians, in conjunction with the 1700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council at Nicaea.

Read the full story: <https://bit.ly/4jzGTJm>



ECI Climate Justice Candle visits Parish of Glenavy and Killead

The Catholic Parish of Glenavy and Killead, Co Antrim is about to begin a renovation of Mater Dei Church in

Crumlin to make a significant impact on the parish's carbon footprint.

Canon Colm Mc Bride commented - "The Church was constructed in 1975 within a limited budget. It was also built in a different era when environmental considerations were well down the list of considerations. The Church was well built and does not require any major alterations to its appearance. However in the proposed renovation in 2025, the roof, the walls and floor will be insulated for the first time.

"The single glazed windows will be replaced with double glazed units and solar panels fixed on a roof to the rear of the building. All the wood from the existing seats will be recycled in new seating.

"The original oil-fired heating system directing hot air through underfloor ducts will be replaced by energy efficient hot water radiators fueled by Natural Gas. We anticipate that these changes which will greatly enhance parishioners worship experience but also make a significant impact on our parish's carbon footprint."

The photo shows their architect Gerard Rodgers of GMR Architects Belfast, the Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council, Rose Crozier and Parish Priest, Canon Colm Mc Bride with the ECI Climate Justice Candle.

‘Al–Ahli remains a vital lifeline for Gaza City’ – Hospital Director Shares Plans to Reopen

Just two days after the Palm Sunday missile attack on al–Ahli Anglican Hospital in Gaza City, the hospital’s courageous staff are already working to reopen it.

Canon Don Binder, pastor to the English speaking congregation at St George’s Cathedral in Jerusalem and chaplain to the Archbishop of Jerusalem gave an update from hospital director Suhaila Tarazi on Tuesday April 15).

Suhaila reported that staff were working around the clock to restore full medical services, even as they have begun to receive more wounded people.

Having received messages from around the world she wrote: “Thank you for your heartfelt messages and unwavering support during this challenging time. . . . Despite the destruction, our dedicated team is working tirelessly to restore essential services and continue providing care to the community.

“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, al–Ahli remains a vital lifeline for Gaza City and the northern region and we are committed to maintaining our operations to the best of our abilities. Your solidarity, prayers, heartfelt thoughts and kind words are a source of strength for all of us here. We deeply appreciate your concern and support.”

Canon Binder stated that the Diocese of Jerusalem was planning for the reconstruction of the hospital’s destroyed buildings, and Archbishop Hosam Naoum would soon be

issuing a fresh appeal for those wishing to contribute to these rebuilding efforts.

“In the meantime, we welcome your support of our Christian mission of healing in war–torn Gaza through one of our existing appeals,” he said on Facebook. “Please share this post to get wider exposure to these rebuilding efforts. And please continue to advocate with your national leaders for an end to this horrific war and in the meantime, for international pressure for protection of all medical facilities around the world, whether they be in Ukraine or Gaza or anywhere else. Thanks for all your prayers and support.”

Dublin and Glendalough dioceses are currently setting up a new appeal to support the rebuilding programme.

Archbishop Michael Jackson said that he was devastated by the attack on the hospital, both for people who clung on to hope for medical provision for it and for the brave and dedicated staff of the hospital.

“To see it reduced to rubble, like a nuclear wasteland, would tear very strongly at my heart,” he stated sharing the outrage of the staff, patients and the people of the Diocese of Jerusalem and expressing solidarity with them. “Now just days later, in yet another testament to their resilience, we hear from Suhaila Tarazi that staff are working around the clock to reopen the hospital. We do not yet know what this will look like given the complete lack of materials and medical supplies entering Gaza but al–Ahli Arab Hospital is truly a beacon of hope, both to the people of Gaza and those who seek to offer Christian mission throughout the world.”

Education



Fantastic day of schools' show-jumping

Strabane Academy's team had a fantastic day of show-jumping at Ecclesville Arena, brilliantly hosted by St. Oliver Plunkett's School, Beragh.

Our Junior Team (Year 8s) – Maya, Casey-Lee, Amelia, and Molly – put in amazing performances, showing great skill and teamwork.

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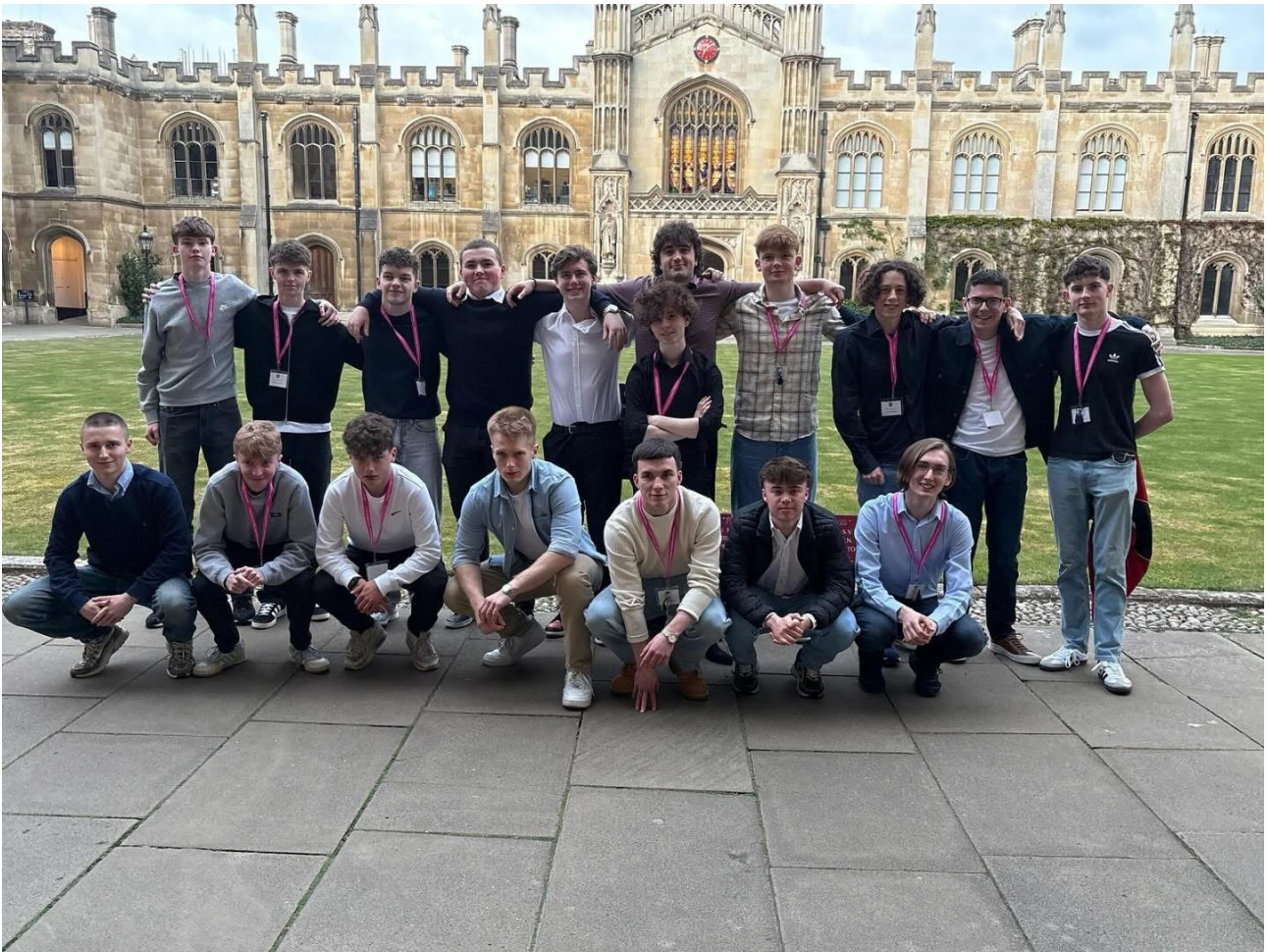
Our Senior Team –
Rebecca and Sarah – also did a superb job in their classes, riding with confidence and style.

Well done to all the girls for representing



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their schools so well – a successful day all round!



Four Belfast schools visit Cambridge University

18 of St Malachi's Year 13 students recently visited Corpus Christi College, Cambridge University.

The students had the opportunity to get a taste of life at Cambridge University, and heard from undergraduate students and experts in their field of interest. St Malachi's were joined by students from Methodist College, St. Dominic's, and St. Mary's CBS. This was certainly a valuable and inspiring experience, and we thank everyone at Corpus Christi for their excellent hospitality.



Belfast HS Abaana Uganda Day 7

**Today we had
our team treat
and travelled across Lake Victoria to Ngamba Island
Chimpanzee Sanctuary.**



While on the Island we were briefed on the history of the Sanctuary, chimpanzees, their endangerment and the help the Sanctuary has provided them. We were treated to a

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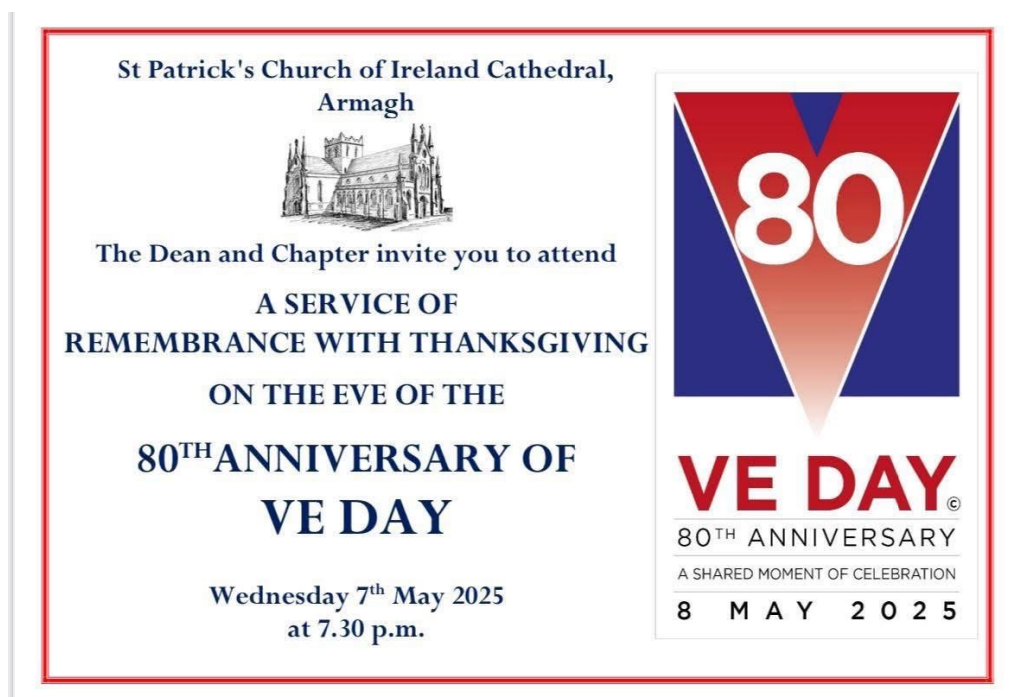
delicious lunch in the Sanctuary restaurant, following which we had the privilege of witnessing the chimpanzees being fed their lunch. We were also able to hear some stories about the pasts and personalities of the chimpanzees. After that we visited the onsite vet clinic that is used for the chimps' annual health checkups and got to meet the vet and hear about his experiences.

Just before boarding our boat back to Entebbe, the staff of the Sanctuary surprised the youngest team member with a birthday cake and song.

On our boat journey home we stopped at the equator and crossed from the southern to the northern hemisphere - a tick off everyone's bucket list!

Aimee and Sophia

Cathedral Calls



Events

Anzac Service St Ann's Dublin

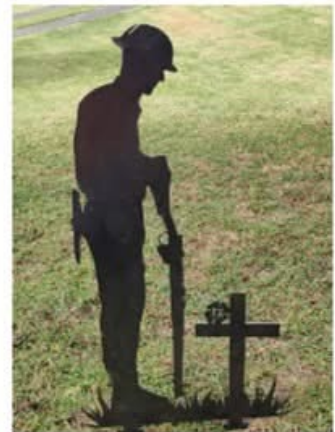
Anzac Day Evening Service 2025

Please join the New Zealand Ireland Association for an evening service of remembrance and reflection



Lest We Forget

- Friday 25th April 2025, 7pm
- St Ann's Church, Dawson Street, Dublin 1
- Complimentary food and refreshments following the service



What could you tackle 70,000 of this May?

This Christian Aid Week, CA Ireland would love for as many as possible of you to join our fundraising challenge - 70k in May!

It's simple: complete 70,000 of anything throughout the month of May.

 **ULSTER
YOUTH
ORCHESTRA**



Summer Concerts 2025

Conductor Michael Seal

Shostakovich Symphony No.12 'The Year 1917'

Dvořák Othello Overture

Mussorgsky Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. Ravel)

Friday 15 August 2025 Guildhall, Derry/Londonderry Tickets: £17.50 / £13 / £6 www.millenniumforum.co.uk T: +4428 7126 4455	Saturday 16 August 2025 Ulster Hall, Belfast Tickets: £17.50 / £13 / £6 www.ulsterhall.co.uk T: +4428 9033 4455
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  www.uyo.org.uk

   **LOTTERY FUNDED**

**SPECIAL RATES AVAILABLE
FOR SCHOOL GROUPS**



Looking for a physical challenge? You could walk, run, cycle or even swim 70,000 km. If you're looking to focus more on creativity or spirituality, why not set a goal of knitting 70,000 stitches or reading 70,000 words of prayer? The only limit is your imagination! ★

Head over to our website for more information and to sign up - <https://caweek.ie/BL>



Heritage

The father of Belfast medicine

Dr James MacDonnell, the Ulster-Scot who was “father of Belfast medicine”, was born on April 14th, 1763, near Cushendall in County Antrim.

MacDonnell was instrumental in creating the Belfast we know today, being a founding patron of institutions that

would become the **Royal Victoria Hospital, the Royal Belfast Academical Institution, and the Linen Hall Library.**

In 1780, James, aged 17 went to Edinburgh University to study medicine, graduating with an MD in the shortest time possible. He wrote his university thesis in Latin on methods of resuscitation, before moving back to Belfast in 1784.

Upon returning, he set up his physician's practice at 13 Donegall Place. By the 1790s, MacDonnell, still in his twenties, was a leading physician in the city and instrumental in many other industries and activities.

In May 1788, MacDonnell appeared as one of the founding members of the Belfast Reading Society, forerunner to the The Linen Hall. He also sponsored free medical care for the poor, and helped revive Irish harping. Additionally, though often a background figure, MacDonnell was a significant individual surrounding the United Irishmen.

Though housebound and in failing health towards the end of his life, MacDonnell was still by the 1840s one of the most well-known figures in Belfast. Though he was unable to leave the house, he continued to attend to those sick and poor who attended his physician's practice. He died on Saturday, 5th April 1845, a few days short of his 82nd birthday.

A blue plaque, pictured page above, commemorates James MacDonnell on Queen's Arcade, Belfast, at the street on which he lived and had his practice. Ulster Museum also have a bust of him created by Charles Moore.

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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