

Church News Ireland



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Image of the day

HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court

News

Enniskillen Cathedral to be centre of VE Day 80th commemoration HM Chapel Royal

A special programme of events is planned for Enniskillen on 8 May for the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day.

Enniskillen's programme of events – the most westerly location for the VE Day 80 Commemorations in the UK – balances remembrance with celebration, including a VE Day 80 Commemorative Church Service, Beacon Lighting Ceremony, Pipers' Tribute, Beating Retreat and Concert.

On Thursday, 8 May, at 9am, Gary Wilson will be joining Town Criers and Toastmasters throughout the country to



A Clogher encounter - Members of Clogher Diocesan Mothers' Union Trustees were returning from the All-Ireland Council meeting in Kilternan Parish Centre and detoured to the Church of Ireland Parish Church in Virginia to greet Rev Stephen. He had just stopped in the church at 2.00 pm for an overnight stop. We enjoyed speaking to him about his walk in the sunshine in Co Cavan and hearing about the reflexology care which has helped his sore feet. We wished him well on his remaining journey to Dublin on Palm Sunday.

read the VE Day 80 Proclamation at The Watergate, outside Enniskillen Castle, marking the official start of the day's commemorations. As part of the nationwide celebrations, the bells of St Macartin's Cathedral will ring at 6.30pm, in a symbolic act of remembrance and unity. This will be followed

at 7.30pm when the Inniskillings Museum and four churches on the island of Enniskillen will come together to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day with a Service of Peace starting in St. Macartin's Cathedral with a spectacular parade of 80 pipers and drummers from local bands to form a community-massed band to support the service. The band will gather on Church Street, guiding the congregation to St Michael's Church for the continuation of the service.

Lanterns will be produced, having been presented to Enniskillen's churches in 2018, marking the 100th anniversary of the Armistice. These lanterns, in line with the official VE Day 80 promotion of 'Lamping Lights of Peace', will light the way from St Michael's Church back to St Macartin's Cathedral. There, the service will conclude with the lighting of a ceremonial beacon by Viscount Brookeborough, Lord Lieutenant for County Fermanagh. The beacon will symbolise hope as the light that emerged from the darkness of war.

On Saturday, 10 May at 3pm, the Band, Bugles, Pipes and Drums of the Royal Irish Regiment will perform a 'Beating Retreat' at the Cathedral Hall Car Park to include a special performance by The Erne Highland Dancers. This event is free, with an invitation extended to everyone and no tickets or pre-booking is required.

At 7pm, the VE Day 80 Commemorative Concert comprising the musicians from the Royal Irish Regiment will perform a special concert in St Macartin's Cathedral hosted by The Royal Air Forces Association (Fermanagh Branch). It will be compered by Gary Wilson with guest soloists Lauren Kells

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and Clara Wilson. This event is free, with an invitation extended to everyone and no tickets or pre-booking is required. See also -

<https://www.reservesandcadetsni.org.uk/news/an-exciting-line-up-in-enniskillen-as-the-local-community-celebrate-ve-day-80/>

General Synod meets in Meath and Kildare for first time

General Synod will this year be meeting for the first time in the Dioceses of Meath and Kildare as it gathers in Lawlor's Hotel, Naas, on Friday, 9th May and Saturday, 10th May 2025.

If needs be it will take place remotely on the evenings of Tuesday, 13th May, and Thursday, 15th May Saturday.

More at: <https://www.churchofireland.org/news/12783/general-synod-2025-a-preview>

Naas parishes Circle of Light support for Enable Ireland children's services

Thanks were expressed to the parishioners and friends of the Naas Union of parishes who raised a fantastic €2,500 for Enable Ireland's Kildare children's services from their Circle of Light event held before Christmas.

Enable Ireland was invited to attend service at St. David's Church Naas last Sunday for a cheque presentation.



The Naas Union of Parishes - “is an inclusive and welcoming community. Our sincere thanks to all the members of the Naas Union, to the sponsors, businesses and groups who supported. Particular thanks to Janet Fletcher, Secretary, for all her work organising the Circle of Light event”.

Education

TeamLisneal at Foyle Hospice

Well done to Sam, our Year 11 pupil at Lisneal College who has been working with Dr. Farrelly at Foyle Hospice



as part of his Duke of Edinburgh Award to improve their gardens.

Together, they moved a large amount of stones and planted a beautiful rose garden for all of the patients and families to admire.

Sam has been regularly volunteering and donating his time and skills in order to make a difference to Foyle Hospice.

St Dominic's charity fundraisers

Ciaran Hughes from the Welcome Organisation was delighted to receive a £400 cheque from Emma Meenan and Connla Moore, who have been fundraising as part of their SistersIN project!

He expressed his gratitude to the girls for their incredible donation of clothes before Christmas and now for their



generous fundraising efforts. The students raised the money by selling candy canes during the festive season and participating in a sponsored silence. Ciaran emphasised how much the funds were needed to support the homeless and shared that all the clothes donated before Christmas had already been distributed.

Supporting children and young people who are deaf or hard of hearing

Five schools are participating in a Captioning Pilot aimed at supporting children and young people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The **Speech to Text Software** aims to test and understand the benefits of using the captioning software in schools. This

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innovative project is being delivered by the Education Authority (EA) Sensory Service in collaboration with EA ICT.

For more information on the work of the team and the project visit: <https://ow.ly/aUX50Vta08>

Dalriada win prestigious Feis Ceoil competition

On last Monday the Chamber Choir set off to the RDS in Dublin to take part in the prestigious Feis Ceoil competition.

They were entered in the Alice Yoakley Quirk Cup for mixed choirs and won their class against stiff competition from seven similar choirs from all over Ireland - both North and South. This allowed them to proceed to the final where they competed against three other first prize winners.

Again, they emerged victorious and won the IMRO Ireland award for best Post-Primary school choir. This was a generous bursary which will help cover the costs of the day! We are immensely proud of these pupils and Mrs Montgomery records it as one of the highlights of her teaching career. A great day out!

Economics students at RBAI gain insights from Bank of England Ambassador



Our Year 14 Economics class had the privilege of welcoming Gillian Anderson, Bank of England Deputy Agent for Northern Ireland, for an insightful presentation during their economics lesson.

The session explored the history of the Bank of England, its key roles and responsibilities in the UK



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economy, and how the Bank sets monetary policy, including the use of interest rates and quantitative easing.

This talk provided an excellent conclusion to the CCEA A2 topic of Financial Markets & Monetary Policy, helping students connect their classroom learning to real-world economic decision-making. A big thank you to Gillian for taking the time to share her expertise.

Thanks from NI Education Authority

The NI Education Authority recently expressed thanks to outgoing Board members.

They were Rev Robert Herron OBE, Rev Canon Amanda Adams, Mr Ronnie Hassard and Mrs Patricia Carville OBE who were thanked 'for their service and the valuable contribution they have made to the education sector over the years'.

April's Garden dedicated at Springdale National School in Raheny

On Friday April 4 a garden was dedicated in memory of much-loved Springdale NS Pupil April Banks, a much loved sixth class pupil who passed away last December.

April's classmates led a special assembly in memory of their 'Superstar' and the school's patron, Archbishop Michael Jackson, dedicated a beautiful garden created in her memory.

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April's parents Katie and Grahame and her grandmother Sibhéal joined the assembly along with other sixth class parents and the Rector of Raheny the Revd Kevin Ronne and members of the Board of Management.

The pupils read from the Bible [Matthew 6: 26–29](#), led prayers and recited poems. The school was a sea of blue which was April's favourite colour.



Welcoming everybody, particularly April's family, **Springdale NS Principal Lesley Cahill** explained that while they remembered April every day in different ways, it was fitting to join together on this April morning to pay a special tribute to her.

She said April was one of April's busiest times each year as she got out and about raising funds for a charity close to her heart, Oscar's Kids.

Sixth class remembered their friend earlier on the week by marking the beginning of the month with a five km walk.

The dedication of April's Garden

Archbishop Jackson described the occasion as both poignant and positive. He said everyone was clearly full of



good memories of April, yet grieving very strongly. “What you have done in an amazing way is to give expression to both of those things here this morning in the presence of April’s family, Katie and Grahame her parents, and Sibhéal her grandmother, and all other people who carry April with them this morning,” he said.

The Archbishop thanked sixth class for leading the assembly and for carrying themselves and April as their

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friend throughout her years in this school, and teachers and staff members in the school for doing the same. He said that Kevin had told him of some of the amazing things that April gave to the school and that the school gave to her.

Having just returned from Amman in Jordan, Archbishop Jackson said he spoke to the principal of a school in nearby



Lesley Cahill, Archbishop Michael Jackson and the Revd Kevin Ronne.

Zarqa at breakfast after church on Sunday morning about what he was going to be doing when he returned to Dublin. She offered to plant a tree in their school garden in memory of April. He hoped it would be an olive tree which can live for 2,000 years. "An olive tree is a visible sign of long life and

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my understanding of what April gave and what April was in the life of this school, and still is, is that in a short time frame she lived and gave a very full life,” he explained. He hoped that this could form a link between the two schools.

Outside in April’s garden, Ms Cahill explained the significance of each part of Springdale’s new garden which features some of April’s pixel art and her signature which came from the sixth class school hoodie. The Archbishop dedicated the garden.

Cathedral Calls

Music in Kilkenny

Music in Kilkenny presents one of the great masterpieces of Western classical music - Bach's St. Matthew Passion.

It will be performed by the Irish Baroque Orchestra and Chorus, directed by Peter Whelan.

Saint Canice's Cathedral and Round Tower
Kilkenny, Ireland

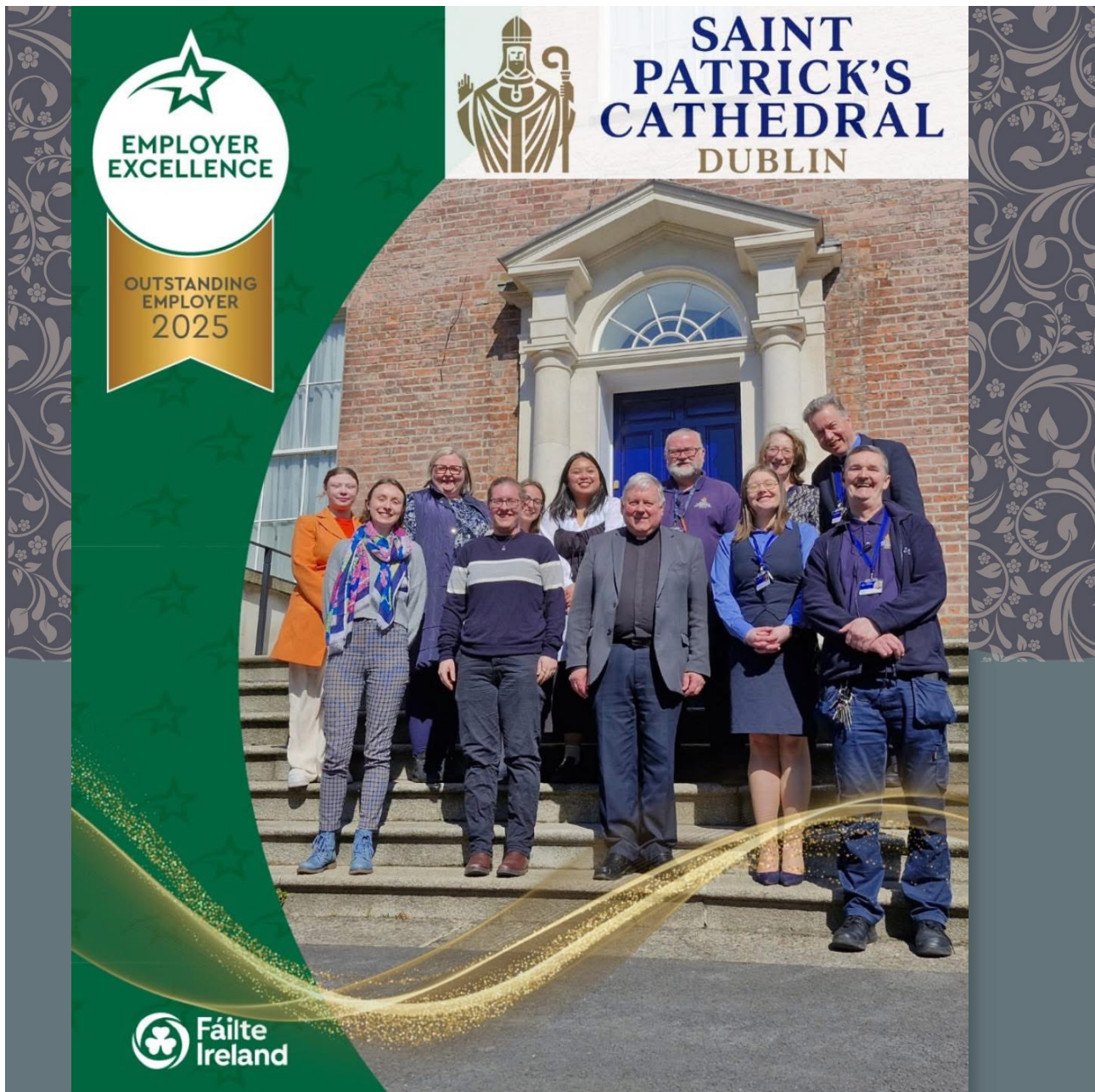
Thursday 10 April 2025

7.00 pm sharp (Note starting time)

Tickets available from www.musicinkilkenny.org

Saint Patrick’s an Outstanding Employer

‘We are delighted to say that Saint Patrick's Cathedral has been certified as an Outstanding Employer for 2025 as part of Fáilte Ireland’s Employer Excellence Programme.



‘This is the highest certification available to a business in the programme and we are thrilled to receive such a fantastic accolade’.

Music Director Coventry moving to Pembroke College, Cambridge

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Having joined the Coventry Cathedral Community as Assistant Director of Music at Easter 2021, Luke Fitzgerald will shortly be returning to Cambridge to take up the role of Director of Music at Pembroke College.

“Luke has been an outstanding member of the Cathedral’s music department, as well as playing an important part in the wider Cathedral leadership, especially during his time as Acting Director of music. We have valued both his musical ability, and his creativity and commitment to the challenges and rewards of work in a busy Cathedral. Luke will be missed, we wish him well for the future!”

<https://www.coventrycathedral.org.uk/news-and-updates>

Clergy and ministry

Meet Rev Wilfred Orr a Presbyterian Chaplain to the Order of St John

Rev Wilfred Orr was promoted to Grade II (KStJ) in 2022, for his long voluntary service as a Presbyterian Chaplain to the Commander of Ards.

In his own words, Wilfred shares: “The two elements in our motto are intimately linked – ‘for faith and in the service of humanity’. The spirit of Christ is found as we serve our neighbour.



“As is so often the case in any service, the gain has been mine over the last 25 years in chaplaincy.

“Meeting the volunteering spirit found amongst those who serve in St John has been a constant source of inspiration: I think of ambulance crews who during our local ‘Troubles’ in Northern Ireland or during the more recent Covid infection displayed such courage and perseverance. Then there are the young folk, Badgers and Cadets, often the recipients of awards and certificates to mark progress in our training

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programmes. Behind them all are the dedicated trainers who share their expertise so willingly. I read, too, of our ophthalmic work in the Middle East. In addition, I greatly enjoy the warm-hearted companionship of Chapter. Who could fail to be inspired simply by being part of this company?"

👁️👁️ Read more about Wilfred's experiences within St John:
<https://ow.ly/6sOx50Va3Pn>

Queens chaplaincy Holy Week at St Michael's

During Holy Week St Michael's Parish in Belfast will have lots of activities for all ages.

"A team of young adults from the Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplaincy at Queen's will be with us and we look forward to a fun time together. Scan the QR code to give us the details needed for our Consent Form for children in P1-P7 and for youth in Y8-13 or speak to Heather".

Derry and Raphoe triennial clergy conference

Most of the diocesan clergy from Derry and Raphoe were in Sligo last week for their triennial clergy conference.

The weather was glorious on day one but there was little time to enjoy it - just brief snatches here and there - as

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clergy listened to two separate presentations and took part in thought-provoking workshops.

In the first sessions, Rev Canon Dr Maurice Elliott, from the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, invited clergy to consider 'Ordination: the weight of its significance', and in the second session, Jenny Smyth from Church Missionary Society: Ireland explored opportunities for parishes to forge links with parishes overseas - and specifically with the Diocese of Kondo, in Tanzania, with which our Diocese has embarked on a five-year partnership.

Would your church or faith community like to host the ECI Climate Justice Candle?

You can use the candle in worship to raise awareness of climate justice and caring for our common home. Just drop a line to info@ecocongregationireland.com and we will arrange to get the candle to you. You can read lots of stories of how faith communities have used the candle in worship [here](https://www.ecocongregationireland.com/shine-a-light-on-climate-justice)

<https://www.ecocongregationireland.com/shine-a-light-on-climate-justice>

Events

Leading into light - RSCM online conference 2025

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RSCM. - We are delighted to announce that celebrated composer and conductor Sir James MacMillan will be in conversation with RSCM Director Hugh Morris.

He will be sharing his views on topics including the role of music in worship - a not-to-be-missed session at this year's online conference on 17 May

Visit the RSCM website for full details of the conference programme and speakers.

[https://
www.rscm.org.uk/
whats-on/leading-into-
light/](https://www.rscm.org.uk/whats-on/leading-into-light/)



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Belfast Careers Fair

Meet up to 40 employers hiring on the day at the Belfast Careers Fair which takes place on the 11th April 2025.

- ✓ Hundreds of job vacancies
- ✓ Open to anyone and everyone
- ✓ Completely free to attend



Taking place at Assembly Buildings, Belfast from 10am

Hiring? Sign up to exhibit at this event via
www.ukcareersfair.com/exhibit-with-us

Journey prayerfully in St Paul's footsteps in Rome

...in the company of an internationally renowned scholar.

Experience St Paul's mission in Rome by visiting sites related to his Jewish faith, the early Christian communities he supported and his martyrdom.

Develop a deeper personal and communal sense of mission.

For registration and information contact us at:
info@anglicancentre.it

Resources

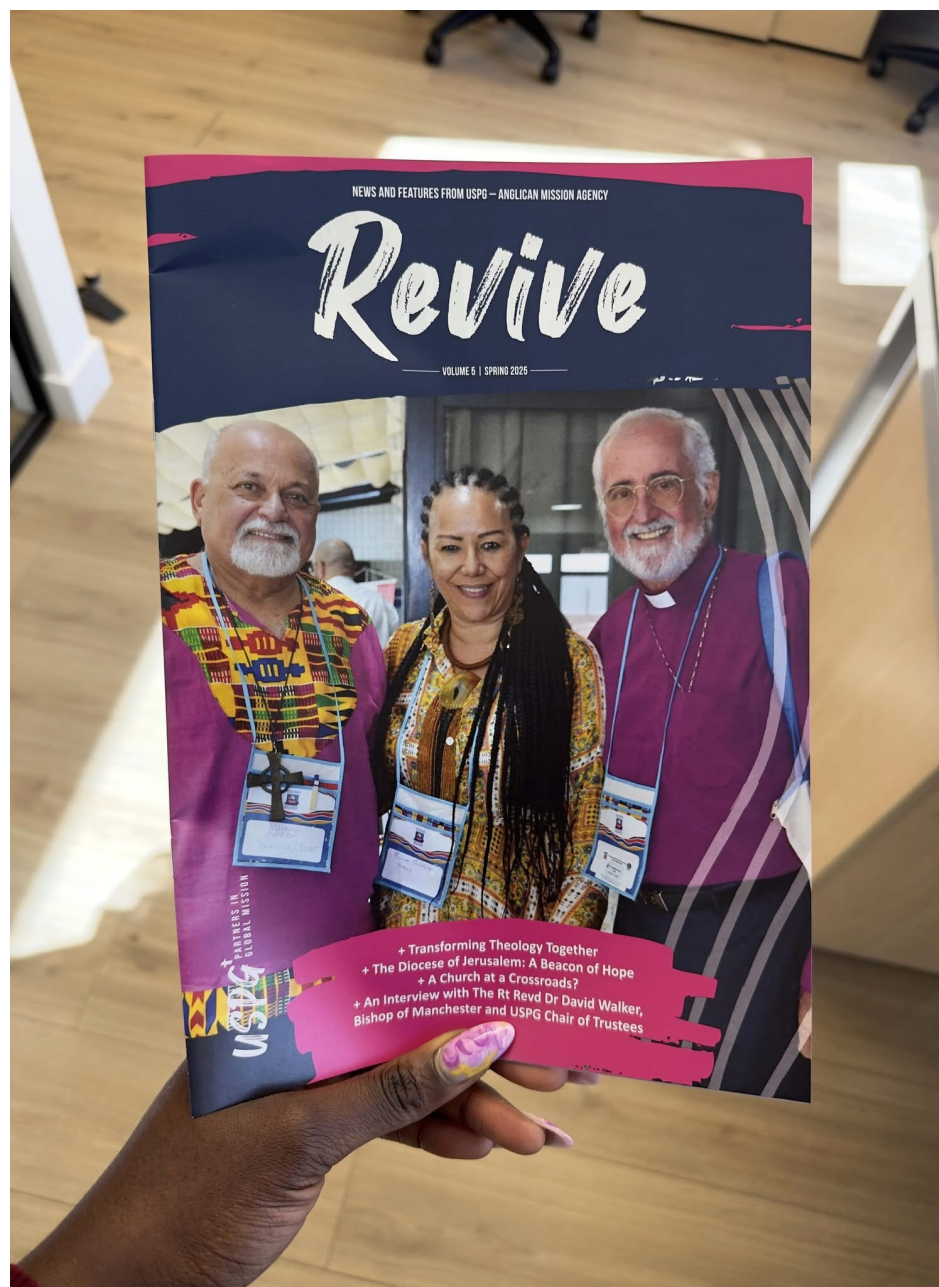
Why not try a St. Brigid's Trail this week

Of the approximately 3,000 holy wells in Ireland, at least 15 of them are dedicated to St. Brigid. We feel very lucky to have one right outside Kildare town.

The walk takes you through beautiful landscapes, historical sites and landmarks associated with Brigid's life and her contributions to Irish culture.

Spring edition of USPG's Revive is out

In this edition, find out about female leadership in Africa, learn about the Anglican Church in Brazil's



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climate justice summit ahead of COP30 and meet The Rt Revd Dr David Walker, Bishop of Manchester and USPG Chair of Trustees.

Print copies are on the way...Read more here:
<https://uspg.org.uk/resource/revive-spring-2025/>

Golden Thread Gallery - City of Stories

This project tells the tales of Belfast through visual arts and involves older people over 65.

Lorraine Calderwood, Arts Council of Northern Ireland, said: "The arts have a vital role to play in helping our older people find their voice, bring people together and promote positive physical and mental health - funding from The National Lottery and the Public Health Agency has been a game changer in helping us achieve that."

Check out our video and news article to learn more!
<https://artscouncil-ni.org/news/belfast-golden-thread-gallery-city-of-stories>

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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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**

Please recommend to your friends
