

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Pope John Paul II Award Ceremony**

February 13, 2024

## Image of the day



## 381 young people at Pope John Paul II Award Ceremony

**On the afternoon of Wednesday, 7th February 2024 the 17th Annual Pope John Paul II Award Ceremony was held in Saint Eugene's Cathedral, Derry.**

The guest speaker, Alexander McLean alongside Bishop Donal McKeown, patron of the award, presented the award to 381 young people from all over the Diocese of Derry and beyond.

This year 3 people received the Papal Cross Award These young people came from 19 second level schools across the Diocese and 3 second level schools outside the





Diocese. They represented 47 parishes in the diocese and 11 parishes outside our Diocese.

The guest speaker, Mr Alexander McLean is the founder of Justice Defenders (formerly African Prisons Project, or APP), which is based in Uganda and seeks to improve the lives of people imprisoned in Africa. Alexander gave an inspiring account of his life and how he saw the need for justice in a prison system in Uganda that lacked basic human rights and dignity.

He inspired the young people of Derry to not let anyone diminish them and encouraged them to continue the great work that they did throughout their award especially with social outreach. Alexanders words and example shone through, and he finished his speech with a prayer from Saint Francis.

The Ceremony came to a close with the beautiful voice of David James. David presents 'The Jivetime Show' on Highland Radio weekdays 2:30-5:00pm. He has travelled the world as a competitive Irish dancer.

The Award was founded and created by Fr Paul Farren of the Diocese of Derry. It was launched in Derry in 2006 by the then Papal Nuncio to Ireland, Archbishop Lazarotto. In the last 16 years the award has been introduced in 25 dioceses in Ireland. Supported by an international coordinator, Mr Tony Brennan, the Award has also been introduced in the Archdiocese of Birmingham, the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle and the Diocese of Portsmouth.

The Pope John Paul II Award continues to be the largest youth movement in the church in Ireland. For more information on the Award contact Lizzie Rea on [lizzie.rea@derrydiocese.org](mailto:lizzie.rea@derrydiocese.org) or phone +44 28 71 264087.  
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## News

### **Archbishop McDowell preacher at St Mary's Church, Carrigaline end of Bicentenary Service**

**A year of celebrations for the bicentenary of the consecration of St Mary's Church in Carrigaline concluded last Wednesday, 7th February 2024, with a service of Choral Evensong, exactly 200 years after the**



**consecration of the church, on 7th February 1824.**

The Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, the Most Rev. John McDowell travelled to Carrigaline to preach at the service. The Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Rev. Dr Paul Colton, also dedicated a new Reredos, Credence Table and the Bicentennial Quilt at the service.







Afterwards the two Bishops planted an oak tree in the church grounds to mark Bishop Colton's 25th anniversary as Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross. St Mary's Church was full for the event with members of the parish as well as clergy, readers and visitors from across the diocese. The Choir of St Fin Barre's Cathedral was invited to sing Evensong conducted by Peter Stobart, Director of Music at St Fin Barre's Cathedral, and St Mary's National School Choir also attended to sing an anthem led by Matthew Breen, Assistant Director of Music at St Fin Barre's Cathedral, who visits the school weekly as part of the Diocesan Church Music Scheme. Members of the Select Vestry led the prayers, and Diocesan Reader Simon Woodworth and the Rev. Richard Dring read the lessons.

As part of his visit to Cork, Archbishop McDowell also visited St Fin Barre's Cathedral, where he had a tour with Barry



Twomey, Cathedral Administrator, and saw the maquette collection curated by Orla O’Byrne, Artist in Residence. In the afternoon, Bishop Colton and Archbishop McDowell travelled to Midleton College, where the Archbishop participated in a Q&A about the Northern Ireland Assembly with Leaving Certificate students of the Politics and Society class, and had lunch with them afterwards.



## Inishowen churches coming together for lay witness weekend in Moville

### Inishowen Churches Together is hosting the inter-denominational Lay Witness Weekend

This is an inter-denominational event, and all are welcome. The event will take place on from Friday, February 16 to Sunday 19th. It will be held in conjunction with St Columb's Church Of Ireland, The Inishowen Four Presbyterian Churches, Inishowen Methodist Churches, and St Pius X Catholic Church, Moville, The Lay Witness Mission began in the 1950s when Rev. Ben Johnson found that lay people had a different type of dialogue with other lay people than they did with members of the clergy. They were more willing to ask pointed questions, or talk about issues they faced in their own lives in a different way. Now, in 2024, the Lay Witness Mission is present in many different countries, including Ireland.

### Lay Witness WEEKEND

### Meals

Friday Dinner  
Saturday Dinner  
Men's Breakfast  
Sunday Light Lunch

Places still  
available

No charge for  
meals

Book Now  
Contact Karen on  
00447547572144





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The weekend will be filled with events, from witness meetings, to meals and coffee mornings. There will be a Men's Breakfast in the Methodist Hall Moville on Saturday 17th February. Meals should be booked by contacting Karen on 00447547572144. Also on Saturday 17th, there will be coffee morning events throughout Inishowen.

The weekend promises to be moving, spiritual and inspirational.

For further information, go to the Inishowen Methodist Churches Facebook page -

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

## **Conservatism will make women think twice about being ministers**

**Alf McCreary, journalist and member of the Presbyterian Church wrote the following letter which was published in the press this week**

“The Moderator-designate of the Presbyterian Church the Reverend Richard Murray stated in one of his first press interviews with the Belfast Telegraph, “It's the Lord who decides, and if the Lord wants a woman minister to be Moderator next year, then that will happen”.

“Are we therefore to believe that the Good Lord is totally satisfied with female leaders in the other main Protestant denominations in Ireland including the Methodists and Anglicans but that He is still trying to make up His mind whether or not a Presbyterian woman can become

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## College of Vicars Choral re-established at St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick

The College of Vicars Choral was founded c.1224, the last Vicar was appointed in 1946. On Sunday the College was re-established and admitted three new members. Thanks were expressed to Craig (left) who has served for a decade as Dean's Verger and has now 'passed on the Verge' to Kariba who was commissioned at the service.

Moderator? Are Presbyterians a cut above, or below, the others?

“Sadly, the increasingly ultra-conservative Presbyterian Church has a most depressing and uninspiring record of failing to allow a woman to take the highest office. This is all



the more disappointing because it was the Presbyterian Church which was the first main denomination in Ireland to ordain a woman minister — the Reverend Ruth Patterson — in 1976. Since then the PCI has consistently failed to follow up its visionary initiative of 47 years ago.

“A number of excellent women ministers have allowed their names to go forward for election as Moderator, including Ruth Patterson herself who was rejected twice, and the second time she received not a single vote from any of the 19 Presbyteries. This year the Reverend Mairisine Stanfield received only two votes.

“Then last year the current Moderator the Right Reverend Sam Mawhinney announced that he does not approve of ordination of women ministers. This unrelenting Presbyterian conservatism is likely to make many more women think twice about becoming ministers, and much less about putting their names forward for Moderator.

“It is little wonder that so many broader-minded Presbyterians are voting with their feet, and joining other Protestant churches who treat women leaders and potential leaders with the respect and understanding they deserve”.

## **Irish representative at Vatican synod addresses local priests**

**The recent day of recollection organised for priests of the Diocese of Cork and Ross was addressed by one of the two bishops who attended last October’s synod in Rome.**

Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ, Bishop of Raphoe, travelled to Clonakilty to address a meeting of the local priests. During his presentation he shared his experience of being at the Synod on synodality which was also attended by Bishop Brendan Leahy of Limerick the other Irish delegate.

He emphasised that growing synodality in the Catholic Church is not easy. It demands a commitment to prayerful discernment, patient listening and honest exchange of what people feel the Holy Spirit is calling us to be.

Bishop McGuckian has recently been appointed by Pope Francis as the new Bishop of Down and Connor.

## **Canon installed at Saint Canice's Cathedral**

**On Sunday 11th February, at a service of Choral Evensong in Saint Canice's Cathedral, The Rev'd Canon Victor Fitzpatrick was installed as Prebendary of Killamery.**

The Bishop, the Rt Rev'd Adrian Wilkinson, welcomed the congregation to the service and congratulated Victor on his appointment. The bishop welcomed Victor's family and parishioners and said that the occasion was one of great joy for Victor and the Cathedral. The Bishop noted that one of Victor's Churches is that of Seirkieran, from which the ancient Saint Kieron's Chair was brought to St Canice's



# What is Lent?

Lent is a **liturgical season** that marks the preparation of the Church for Easter. It emphasizes the practices of **prayer, almsgiving and fasting**, alongside meditation on the Word of God, conversion and **reconciliation**.

## 4 keys



Begins on **Ash Wednesday** and ends on the evening of **Holy Thursday**.



On **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday** we practice **fasting** and **abstinence**.



The 3 **Lenten practices** are **prayer, penance** and **charity**.



The **liturgical color** of this season is **purple**, which symbolizes **penitence**.



Cathedral when it became the centre of the Diocese of Ossory.

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The Registrar, Sean Rafter BL read the bishop's licence appointing the canon, following which Victor subscribed to the Declarations and signed the Diocesan Roll and the Chapter Book. The Registrar read the Bishop's mandate to the Dean to install the new canon. Canon Fitzpatrick was then taken by the arm and led into the quire and placed in his stall by the Dean, the Very Rev'd Stephen Farrell.

Evensong followed, with music by Smith and Purcell sung by St Canice's Cathedral Choir under the Director of Music, Dr Harry Meehan FRCO. Lessons were read by Canon Fitzpatrick's brother, and the Prebendary of Blackrath, Canon Ian Coulter.

In his sermon Canon Fitzpatrick drew on the second canticle at Evensong, the Nunc Dimittis, considering the privilege Simeon had of cradling his infant Saviour in his arms. Quoting the Song of Simeon Canon Fitzpatrick made the

A purple poster for an Ash Wednesday service. On the left is a large, stylized white cross with a rough, ash-like texture. To the right of the cross, the text reads: "Inter-Church Service" in a white serif font; "Ash Wednesday" in a large, white, serif font; "Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7.30pm" in a smaller white serif font; and "St. Matthew's Parish Church, 30 Woodvale Road, Belfast, BT13 3BS" in a white serif font. In the bottom left corner, the phrase "Everyone welcome" is written in a white, cursive script.

Inter-Church Service

**Ash  
Wednesday**

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 7.30pm

St. Matthew's Parish Church,  
30 Woodvale Road, Belfast, BT13 3BS

*Everyone  
welcome*



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point that we can all just as tangibly grasp the Light to Lighten the Gentiles through faith.

The Bishop drew the service to a close with his blessing and all retired to the Lady Chapel of the cathedral for tea.

Killamery is the site of a monastery founded in 632AD by Saint Gobhan of Armagh, who was also Abbot of Saint Laserian's, Old Leighlin. After his death Gobhan was buried in the ancient abbey at Clonenagh, and it is fitting that Canon Fitzpatrick as Rector of Clonenagh would hold the Prebendal Stall of Killamery.

## **The Organ Podcast has launched**

**Dedicated to the world of the organ, organists and organ music, The Organ Podcast from the RCO is for organists and organ enthusiasts alike.**

Hosted by organist and award-winning former BBC radio and TV producer Mark O'Brien, this fortnightly show will feature interviews with leading UK and international organists, visit historic or little-known organs of interest, catch-up with organ rebuilds and restorations, news, discussions and so much more.

In the first episode of The Organ Podcast, Mark O'Brien takes a closer look at the huge project to restore Manchester Town Hall's 1877 Cavallé-Coll organ, talks to Tom Bell about his latest Messiaen project and sits down with Margaret Phillips to hear about her illustrious career, and collection of historic pipe organs.

Available free of charge from Apple, Spotify, Amazon, Google, and all popular podcast directories.

Read more: <https://bit.ly/3UwJTgq>

## **Veritas set to wind down its business operations and close its retail outlets.**

**Ireland’s leading religious publisher and retailer of religious goods, with seven shops across the island of Ireland and a warehouse facility in Blanchardstown is to close.**

Veritas said it “envisages closing all seven remaining retail locations plus the warehouse facility by the end of 2024”.

However, it will “operate on a business-as-usual basis in the meantime” and that the wind down will be completed in a “controlled and orderly manner” with the assistance of a loan from the Irish Episcopal Conference.

Veritas was founded in 1899 to publish religious books, pamphlets and materials for the market in Ireland.

It opened its first store on Lower Abbey Street in Dublin in 1928, and this location today also serves as its head office.

Veritas employs around 80 people across its publishing, education and retail outlets.





In a statement, Veritas said it intends to “begin a wind down of the business in a controlled and orderly manner”.

It added that the decision follows a “comprehensive strategic review of the business which determined that the alternative of a restructuring process would not mitigate the challenges that exist or sufficiently improve the commercial prospects of the business”.

Veritas added that it has “experienced a significant and sustained business downturn in recent years” which has “impacted both the competitiveness and commercial viability of the business”.

Veritas added that it is still in the process of determining options for the continued publication of titles that form part of the syllabus for many primary schools and that it is “confident a solution will be found”.

Chris Queenan, chairperson of Veritas, described it as a “highly unfortunate situation which we are acutely aware will impact our employees, customers, and the communities we have served for close to 100 years”.

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He added: “We are committed to an orderly wind down process where our focus will be on supporting our colleagues during this challenging time.”

The Irish Catholic Bishops’ Conference said that Veritas has “served the publishing and catechetical needs of the Irish Episcopal Conference very well for many years”.

It added that the decision to begin the wind down and closure of its business operations, including its retail stores, “represents a great loss to the Church in Ireland”.

“We understand that Veritas has made this very difficult decision following a number of years of challenging trading conditions, but today’s announcement brings especially sad news for Veritas employees as well as the many customers and friends of Veritas,” added that statement.

## **Parishioners who bully vicars could be banned**

**The Church of England is to consider bans for parishioners who bully their vicars, writes Gabriella Sterling, Social and Religious Affairs Editor in the Daily Telegraph**

The proposal comes as a string of “devastating” and “unacceptable” incidents emerged in papers submitted to the General Synod, the Church’s lawmaking body, which is to convene later this month.

The papers cite examples of vicars being “hounded out of office” by aggressive congregants, with some parishes having a reputation for “breaking clergy”, leaving vacant posts impossible to fill. Synod will hear measures in favour of legal sanctions for bullying – including the possibility of disqualification from holding office within the Church and a new code of conduct for Parochial Church Councils (PCC).

The moves come amid claims that meetings descend into “aggressive”, “psychologically damaging” and “physically threatening behaviour” with parishioners slamming their fists on tables, “continually interrupting when others speak”, withholding keys to store rooms, blocking each other on email and harassing others by printing out messages after being blocked.

The Archdeacon of Blackburn, the Venerable Mark Ireland, called for Synod to recognise “that bullying is unacceptable behaviour within the Church of God, whether by clergy or lay people” and for it to be tackled.

He also warned against the “unfairness” that arises from clergy being subject to penalties for bullying “that include prohibition and removal from office”, while there was no means of disqualifying from holding office a churchwarden, PCC member or other lay officer who is guilty of bullying. They, too, should be “disqualified from holding office”, he insisted.

He added that bullying and harassment has “devastating \ [effects], on mental health, on physical health, on... relationships, and [leads to] the blighting of local Christian communities”.



See also Church Times report -  
<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2024/16-february/news/uk/synod-asked-to-tackle-bullying-behaviour-by-lay-people-in-church>

## Insight on Killaloe diocese

**The diocese of Killaloe was founded early in the 6th century. ‘Lord Belmont’ writes in his well-established blog.**

In the 12th century it was incorporated with the ancient bishopric of Roscrea founded in 620.

In 1752, the See of Kilfenora, which had been established about the 12th century, was united to it; and although very small in extent and value, had continued separate until the Restoration, when it was first annexed to the archbishopric of Tuam.

That union continued 81 years, till 1741, when Ardagh being annexed to Tuam, this bishopric was given in commendam to the Lord Bishop of Clonfert.

<http://lordbelmontinnorthernireland.blogspot.com/2015/10/killaloe-palace.html>

## In social media - they said

I'm planting Irish oak trees as I go around in this silver jubilee year as bishop. The oak I planted tonight at Carrigaline was grown from an acorn by a child in the parish school. Very touching.

**Bishop Paul Colton**

Absolute honour to attend the funeral of Former Taoiseach John Bruton this morning. I shared the condolences, as deputy First Minister and on behalf of the Unionist community of Northern Ireland for his strong stance against the violence we endured. A man of faith, much respected

**Emma Little Pengelly**

John Bruton would be chuffed by your attendance as he layed the foundations for peace in Northern Ireland

**Paul Kehoe TD**

From the funeral oration for John Bruton by Leo Varadkar. "John was pro-life and believed in the sanctity of life...He believed that political parties could be a broad church and a big tent, especially on issues of conscience and faith." Fine Gael needs to become that again.

**David Quinn**

We are overwhelmed by the response to Gary's death. The outpouring of kind words is appreciated by all of us. We shared many voyages. He will forever be our crew. He was not just our helmsman, he was a kind man, a gentle man, a generous man and a Glensman.

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"It's a mystery. If I knew where poems came from, I would go there."

**Michael Longley** - See

Film delves into work of award-winning poet

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-68255896>

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## 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](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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