

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Bandon team spirit**

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## Image of the day

### Bandon team spirit

**Bandon Grammar School was well represented at the Aviva Stadium on Saturday last for Ireland vs Wales**

Well done Jack and all the students and coaches who went up to support the team and their man.

Photos courtesy of Bandon Grammar School and Irish Rugby.

## News

### Coleraine and Limavady Presbytery youth fill local church



**A great team from Coleraine and Limavady Presbytery organised BASIC.**



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Moneydig Presbyterian Church was filled with young people from across the Presbytery. There was a special shout out to Portstewart's Michelle Mullan for the work she does in making this happen.

## Full house for Winter Madness in Holy Trinity Rathmines

There was a full house on Saturday evening (February 24) for Dublin and Glendalough Youth Council's Winter Madness event.



Over 200 young people filled Holy Trinity Church in Rathmines for the evening which was organised by DGYC's Youth Ministry Coordinator Emma Fawcett in conjunction with Summer Madness.

Emma and CIYD's Simon Henry welcomed young people and youth groups from all over Dublin and Glendalough as well as groups who came from Limerick and Down and Dromore.

Oliver Rea and his band led the worship and the speaker was Laurence Bellew from Belfast whose talk was on the theme of 'Don't miss the goal' based on the story of Jonah.

He urged the young people to keep their eyes on Jesus and not be distracted by what was going on around them. "God





has amazing things planned for you but you have to keep your eyes on Jesus so that you don't miss them," he commented.

Taking up the theme that Jonah was told by God to 'go', Emma said that to go sometimes might mean a big moment in someone's life. But it also might just be to step out.

"Jonah might have turned away from the 'go' or you might be ignoring the 'go'," she said. "Sometimes it's scary to go but God is safe hands and he will not fail you."

DGYC celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. One of the ways the youth council is marking the milestone is giving copies of the book 'Luke: an eyewitness account'

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to young people. Everybody present on Saturday evening was given a copy.

Winter Madness took place for the first time in Dublin last year. This year more than twice as many people attended.

DGYC and Kill o' the Grange are hosting a youth worship night on April 19.



## St Patrick's Cathedral Dublin tourism outreach in New York

It was a busy couple of days for

**St Patrick's Dublin tourism team in the Big Apple.**

From a visit to the Tourism Ireland New York Office, to hosting lunch for key East Coast based tour operators to attending a concert by their own choir in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, New York.



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The St Patrick's team said, "Big thanks to Tourism Ireland for their help and advice in making it all happen".



## **New ministry in Kilkenny**

**The Bishop of Cashel Ferns and Ossory has appointed the Rev'd Billy Burke as Bishop's Vicar of Saint Canice's Cathedral and Curate Assistant in the Kilkenny Union of Parishes.**

Greeting the appointment the Very Rev'd Stephen Farrell said that he is delighted that Billy will be Bishop's Vicar and that he greatly looks forward to working alongside Billy in this part of the Kingdom of God. He noted that Billy brings with him huge pastoral gifts and pastoral experience, having

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served as a Catholic Priest and later as lay chaplain in Hospice and prison ministry.

Billy is married to Mara and they have two young daughters, Isabella and Abigail.

Billy is completing a period of training in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute as set out in the 2013 House of Bishop's Protocol For Receiving Priests Who Have Been Ordained In Either The Roman Catholic Church Or The Eastern Orthodox Churches.

Billy's Licensing and liturgical welcome to the parish will be on Sunday 2nd June at 3pm in Saint Canice's Cathedral.

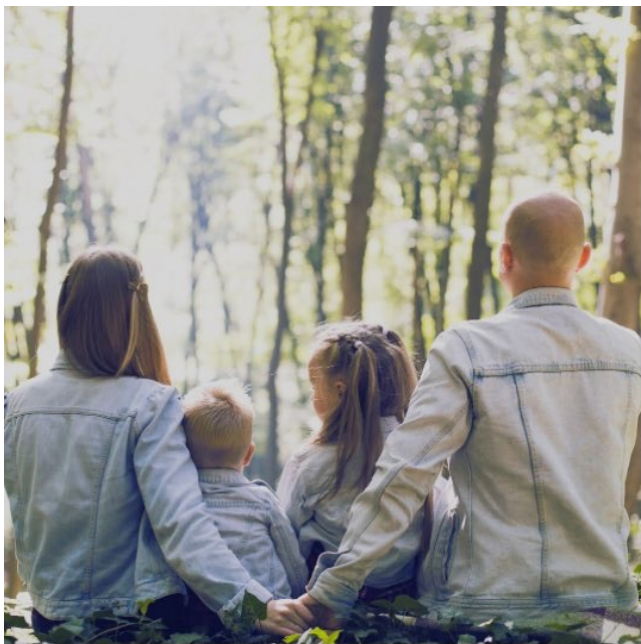
## **Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference statement on Family and Care referendums**

### **Two sentences succinctly express the Bishops' Statement -**

- The proposed Family amendment to the Constitution diminishes the unique importance of the relationship between marriage and family in the eyes of Society and State and is likely to lead to a weakening of the incentive for young people to marry.

- The Care amendment would have the effect of abolishing all reference to motherhood in the Constitution and leave unacknowledged the particular and incalculable societal





contribution that mothers in the home have made and continue to make in Ireland ... The role of mothers should continue to be cherished in our Constitution.

To read the statement of the Bishops of Ireland on the proposed constitutional referendums to take place on Friday 8 March concerning the family and care in Bunreacht na hÉireann, please click link -

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[\[https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2024/02/25/irish-catholic-bishops-conference-statement-on-the-family-and-care-referendums/\]](https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2024/02/25/irish-catholic-bishops-conference-statement-on-the-family-and-care-referendums/)

## **Bishop's tribute to former Chancellor, Judge Derek Rodgers**

**The Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev George Davison, has paid tribute to Judge Derek Rodgers, a former Chancellor of Connor Diocese, who died on Thursday February 22.**

Judge Rodgers was a lifelong member of St Patrick's, Jordanstown, where a Service of Celebration for this Life will be held on Wednesday February 28 at 12 noon.

A former pupil of Whiteabbey Primary School and RBAI, Judge Rodgers studied law at Queen's University, graduating in 1970. He qualified as a solicitor in 1973 and worked at the firm of JC Taylor and Co in Belfast until 1989 when he left the practice following his appointment as a District Judge.

He served as District Judge in Fermanagh and Tyrone and Armagh and South Down for six years, before his appointment as District Judge for Belfast, a role he occupied from September 1995 until March 1997, when he was appointed County Court Judge.

Prior to his retirement, Judge Rodgers worked primarily in family and criminal courts.





Bishop Davison said: “Judge Derek Rodgers was a familiar figure to many people in the Diocese of Connor because of his faithful and diligent service as Chancellor of the diocese over some 12 years. His wise counsel was a gift deeply appreciated by many of us at diocesan synods and on many less public occasions too.

“Derek was a lifelong member of St Patrick’s, Jordanstown, from his baptism until his funeral service, and he contributed to the parish in many active roles throughout his life.”

Bishop Davison continued: “On behalf of the diocese, I extend our sincere sympathy and prayerful good wishes to Kathleen and to their children, Suzanne, Paul, and their families, and assure them all of our prayerful support as we mourn Derek’s passing with them.”

# News focus – Church of England General Synod

## Support for racial justice resources

### **General Synod backs call for ‘crucial resources’ to remain available for racial justice work**

Racial justice work in the Church of England is not a 'box ticking' exercise, says Bishop of Dover

The General Synod has backed a call for ‘crucial’ resources to remain available for racial justice as members heard that more work needs to be done for the full inclusion of Global Majority Heritage (GMH) people in the Church of England.

Synod members commended the outcomes in From Lament to Action, the report from the Archbishops’ Racial Justice Taskforce that sets out a series of recommendations for the Church on racial justice in the areas of participation, governance, training, education and young people.

The Synod approved a call to request the Archbishops’ Council ensure effective monitoring of racial justice in the Church of England after the Archbishops’ Racial Justice Commission has completed its term.

The Commission began work following preparatory work by the Taskforce on scrutinising the Church of England's





## Salisbury Cathedral on a misty day

policies, practices and culture in relation to racial justice. Its three-year term finishes in November this year.

Introducing the debate at the Synod, the Bishop of Dover Rose Hudson-Wilkin said the Church of England cannot just pay ‘lip service’ to racial justice but needs to ensure the right resources are available for this work.

She said: “I am in no doubt that the church must continue to work at embedding racial justice in all its life and structures. Lip service will not do, neither will ticking boxes. If we are going to do justice to this then we must allocate resources, both in the form of people, finance and governance.”



## The Bishop of Dover Rose Hudson-Wilkin

She added that there had been some progress on racial justice in the church including recent appointments of GMH clergy to Suffragan Bishop posts. This represented a ‘glimmer of hope’ for the Church, she said, but more needed to be done to ensure GMH people in the Church rise to senior positions.

“I ask the question, how easy will it be for GMH suffragans to seamlessly become diocesan bishops - and we only need to look at the picture of bishops who happen to be women; they are already occupying suffragan roles in significant numbers but rarely being considered for diocesan roles,” she said.



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“I do not believe that there are no GMH clergy with a vocation or a calling to become a diocesan, to become incumbents, deans, archdeacons. I am not convinced that there are no GMH individuals with a desire to be diocesan secretaries or TEI principals.”

The motion backed by the General Synod:

‘That this Synod:

commend the practical and positive outcomes in From Lament to Action but recognising the need to further embed racial justice in the life and practice of our Church, request that the national Church ensures crucial resources remain available including appropriate governance arrangement and funding, recommend that Dioceses give priority to the collection, monitoring and measuring of relevant data, and encourage parishes and deaneries to develop local action plans to address issues of racial injustice.

note that the Archbishops’ Commission for Racial Justice shall complete its mandated three-year term in November 2024 and request the Archbishops’ Council ensure effective structures exist for monitoring actions and outcomes on racial justice, including a possible review and strengthening of the role of the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns, and that the Synod Group Sessions in February 2025 review the progress made by Dioceses, the NCIs and other related institutions in implementing the recommendations in From Lament to Action.’

The motion was passed by a counted vote of the whole Synod: 364 in favour, none against and two abstentions.

## Archbishop of York's key speech in racial justice debate

**The Archbishop of York spoke in the General Synod debate on Racial Justice: Furthering the implementation of 'From Lament to Action'. His speech follows in full:**

So Synod, I want to suggest that there is an emerging theme to these sessions which is about looking, non-anxiously, without fear to the future.

The Archbishop of Canterbury challenged us deeply in his Presidential Address to not be fearful, to be bold and courageous in meeting the challenges we face. Yesterday we had a hard but a profound conversation lamenting the past but looking to the future of our safeguarding work. Today we discuss Racial Justice. Tomorrow we think about how we move forward into the future in our response to the church's involvement in chattel slavery. All this requires us to be honest about the terrible failings of the past, not to flinch from the failings and the challenges of the present; and to build a better future for everyone.

I want to pay tribute to those who continue to lead us and to stir us up over issues on racial justice. There are too many names to mention but you have taught me so much. We know our legacy in this work is not good; we have not responded as we should. But we are emboldened to do better. Racial Justice is about Justice. It is about the dignity, place and belonging of all of us. It is about living as part of the kingdom of God.





Synod, we must be clear: this is a journey for us all. Racial justice is everybody's business, because it is an issue about how we follow Jesus. It is about who we are in Christ, how we follow Jesus and how we commend his life and his grace to others. Or if we turn from this, it is how we get in people's way. Prevent them coming to Christ by our lack of racial justice. Count them out.

I welcome this report and this call for continued and purposeful action. So let me make some specific observations.

Firstly the work of racial justice, like safeguarding, is the work of the whole church – this isn't just the concern of a few people, not just the concern of our GMH and UKME communities. It is how we are the body of Christ and who we are.

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I believe there is real value in having an independent body, as the Racial Justice Commission has done, enabling us to help set out a compelling agenda for racial justice and racial change in the Church.

We need to lean in and support the work of the Racial Justice Directorate to ensure delivery, monitoring, and accountability for racial justice actions, centrally and across all dioceses, to provide not just a theory of change but an engine of change, reversing the Church of England's track record of inaction.

We need further research so as to understand what strategies and policies work and what don't and to engage with stakeholders across and beyond the church.

It is encouraging that racial justice groups have been commissioned in the Dioceses, I was in Blackburn recently to set one up and we have a group in York. But we must not be complacent and there is more we can do. I have been a member of CMEAC for many years and this does need to move forward to help monitor actions and outcomes on racial justice.

Brothers and Sisters, I want action, but in this issue as with others, I continue to lament. Our track record isn't good. But I pay tribute to the work of those who have got us here, there is not the time to mention names but we do need to thank Lord Boateng. Paul, you have been the best friend to us, you have told us how it is. Thank you for your tenacious witness, we want to do better and we ask that you keep working with us.



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I urge you to support this motion that seeks to ensure that we keep moving in the right direction. We believe in the catholic Church, a universal church. But we are not universal. Not while racism and discrimination rupture our body. Not while such inequalities persist. Not while those of us who happen to be white think we're normal. Not while we fail to embrace the beautiful diverse vision given us in scripture, the Pentecostal and eschatological vision of a church which is every tongue and every nation. May the Lord have mercy upon us and may the Spirit which enabled the Church to speak in every language make us a church of England, a church for all this nation and a church for everyone of its children.

## **Code of conduct for Parochial Church Council members**

**The CofE is to consider a Code of Conduct to address poor behaviour in Parochial Church Councils**

A Code of Conduct for Parochial Church Council (PCC) members and lay volunteers is to be explored by the Church of England.

Members of the CofE's General Synod backed a motion by the Diocese of Chelmsford seeking to address an imbalance of accountability in relationships where lay volunteers currently face no significant consequences for persistent departures from acceptable standards of behaviour.

Whereas clergy can be disciplined for unacceptable behaviour under the Clergy Discipline Measure (CDM)

process, currently there is no proportionate means for laity to be held to account for their actions.

The paper cited National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) advice that, while disagreement is a healthy part of decision making, it was recommended that charities should use a code of conduct for their trustees.

It highlighted instances of uncooperative or aggressive behaviour in meetings over a long period where there was no mechanism to remove a member from the PCC.

Introducing the motion, The Revd Dr Sara Batts-Neale from Chelmsford Diocese said: “It’s not news to discover that human beings sometimes fail to be loving, kind, patient, gentle or self-controlled. It’s not news that sometimes human beings fail to love their neighbours. We are all a work in progress. growing in holiness.

“When [things] do go wrong, there is currently no way to change the composition of a PCC. There is a lack of clear accountability.

“There are big questions about why we, as the body of Christ, sometimes find ourselves in fraught relationships - not just about doctrinal or ecclesiological disagreements, but about the small and local challenges.

“A code of conduct can help guide us all in places whilst we prayerfully find the grace to live alongside each other in peace.

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“We seek a review into a code of conduct to encourage healthy cultures, and to give a possible remedy for intransigent behaviours that damage people, the church, and hinder our ability to share the good news of Christ Jesus.”

The Archbishops' Council will now carry out a review to consider drawing up a Code of Conduct for PCC members and lay volunteers.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

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