

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Women, Faith and Climate Network

February 27, 2025

Image for today - Women, Faith and Climate Network

News -

Carmoney Mothers' Union support of Mission to Seafarers
Southern Area Hospice needs collectors in Dungannon and Coalisland

'People will starve' because of US aid cut to Sudan - BBC
Irish Cardinal, Kevin Farrell, will have a crucial role if Pope Francis dies

Education and opportunities -

The Roost and Meadow Opening Celebration at Mt St Catherine's PS

Final concert after 37 years for Inst's Director of Music.
Largest Children's Festival in the UK and the island of Ireland

Cathedral Calls -

Installation of Dean of Down

Clergy and ministry -

The Rt Rev Paddington, Diocese of Peru and SAMS
Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Confirmation Day

Events & Resources -

Cookstown Youth Choir join with Peter Corry

The Walled City Music Festival returns

Care for the Family event for couples

The Passion in a new podcast series by Riding Lights Theatre

Dementia Research Infoline

Speaking to the soul -

Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

February 27, 2025

Image of the day



Women, Faith and Climate Network

Maureen Rowan, who is one of the Methodist reps on the Eco Congregation Ireland committee, attended this meeting in Belfast earlier this month on behalf of ECI and the Methodist Church in Ireland (Environmental Action Group).



February 27, 2025

Attendance included climate activists from a range of faith and community groups and they were cordially hosted by NICVA (Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action) and Join the Dots Together.

The aim was to discuss how the new Women, Faith and Climate Network might continue to develop.

Lynda Gould from NICVA reminded us of lines from WR Rogers:

It is always the women who are the Watchers
And keepers of life: they guard our exits
And our entrances. They are both tomb and womb,
End and beginning. Bitterly they bring forth
And bitterly take back the light they gave.
The last to leave and still the first to come,
They circle us like sleep or like the grave.
Earth is their element, and it lies
The seed and silence of the lighted skies,
The seasons with their fall and slow uprise,
Man with his sight and militant surmise.
It is always the women who are the Watchers
And Wakeners.

(Poems: WR Rodgers, edited by Michael Longley, Gallery Press)

You can read Maureen's report on this interesting event [here](https://tinyurl.com/2hjfxrc2).
<https://tinyurl.com/2hjfxrc2>



Carnmoney Mothers' Union support of Mission to Seafarers

Carnmoney Parish Mothers' Union members had an enjoyable afternoon when Rev. Mark Reid, Chaplain to the Mission to Seafarers, came to talk about his work and the amazing work of this worldwide organisation, formerly known as The Mission to Seamen, which was established in Belfast in 1860.

Mark was pleased to receive their donations of hats, scarves, gloves and blankets, lovingly knit by the members



Flashback - Volunteers at the Mission

and their friends which will be greatfully received by the seafarers

Southern Area Hospice needs collectors in Dungannon and Coalisland

The Southern Area Hospice will hold its annual Big Bucket Collection 2025, on Friday, 7th March in Dungannon and Coalisland.

The goal is to raise £40,000 to support the Hospice's specialist palliative care services and the Hospice is calling on the local community to get involved.

February 27, 2025

If you could collect for 1 – 2 hours, please contact Rosie Teggarty - 028 3026 7711 or email vs@southernareahospiceservices.org.

'People will starve' because of US aid cut to Sudan - BBC

The freezing of US humanitarian assistance has forced the closure of almost 80% of the emergency food kitchens set up to help people left destitute by Sudan's civil war, the BBC has learned.

Aid volunteers said the impact of President Donald Trump's executive order halting contributions from the US government's development organisation (USAID) for 90 days meant more than 1,100

**THE BELFAST TENORS
CELEBRATE
THE HEART OF
ST. PATRICK**

AN EVENING OF SACRED INSPIRATIONAL & TRADITIONAL MUSIC
WITH SPECIAL GUESTS: PIANIST RYAN CONGRIDGE & VIOLINIST NAOMI HILL

SATURDAY 15TH MARCH 7PM
ABBEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MONKSTOWN

Dementia NI
NIC 106148

SUGGESTED DONATION £10
PROCEEDS IN AID OF DEMENTIA NI

communal kitchens had shut.

It is estimated that nearly two million people struggling to survive have been affected.

The conflict between the army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) has killed tens of thousands of people, forced millions from their homes and left many facing famine since it erupted in April 2023.

The kitchens are run by groups known as emergency response rooms, a grassroots network of activists who stayed on the frontlines to respond to the crises in their neighbourhoods.

"People are knocking on the volunteers' doors," says Duaa Tariq, one of the emergency room organisers. "People are screaming from hunger in the streets."

The Trump administration abruptly suspended all US aid last month to determine whether it was "serving US interests", and moved to begin dismantling USAID.

The State Department has issued an exemption for emergency food assistance, but Sudanese groups and others say there is significant confusion and uncertainty about what that means in practice.

The normal channels for processing a waiver through USAID no longer exist, and it is not clear if cash assistance - on which the communal kitchens depend - will be restored, or only goods in-kind. According to some estimates, USAID provided 70-80% of the total funding to these flexible cash programme.

Irish Cardinal, Kevin Farrell, will have a crucial role if Pope Francis dies

If the pope were to pass away, an Irish Cardinal, Kevin Farrell, will play a crucial role in sharing the news with the world and will also become interim pope until a new pontiff is elected

Pope Francis, 88, has been in hospital for over a week with a double pneumonia infection in both lungs. While his health remains in a fragile state, the world's one billion Catholics are anxiously awaiting what may come next.

If the pontiff was to pass, a complicated weeks-long process begins to appoint a successor. Here, we break down what will happen in that unfortunate, but inevitable, event:

If the pope dies...

If the pope dies, it is typically up to the camerlengo (a senior Vatican official) to confirm the death of a pope. That position is held by Irish Cardinal Kevin Farrell. Traditionally, in the event of the pope's death - and after doctors have declared him dead - Farrell reportedly visits the pope's body in his private chapel and calls his name. If he doesn't respond, it is tradition to destroy his signet ring and mark the end of his reign.

February 27, 2025

Farrell will then inform the College of Cardinals, before his death is announced to the world via a media statement from the Vatican.

The pope's death triggers a nine day mourning period which impacts the whole of Italy. During that time, his body will be exhibited in St. Peter's Basilica for public viewing, where hundreds of thousands will line up to pay their respects, including world leaders.

A purple-themed calendar graphic for Lent and Holy Week 2025. At the top, the year '2025' is in a purple oval. Below it, the title 'LENT & HOLY WEEK' is in large purple letters. The main event is 'Ash Wednesday' on March 05, 2025, with a circular image of a forehead with ash. A descriptive paragraph follows: 'Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. It is a season of penance, reflection, and fasting which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday, through which we attain redemption.' Below this are ten purple boxes, each with a circular icon and text for a specific day: 1st Sunday of Lent (March 09), Palm Sunday (April 13), 2nd Sunday of Lent (March 16), Maundy Thursday (April 17), 3rd Sunday of Lent (March 23), Good Friday (April 18), Laetere Sunday (March 30), Holy Saturday (April 19), 5th Sunday of Lent (April 06), and Easter Sunday (April 20). At the bottom center is a decorative floral graphic.

2025

LENT & HOLY WEEK

Ash Wednesday

March 05, 2025

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. It is a season of penance, reflection, and fasting which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday, through which we attain redemption.

1st Sunday of Lent March 09, 2025	Palm Sunday April 13, 2025
2nd Sunday of Lent March 16, 2025	Maundy Thursday April 17, 2025
3rd Sunday of Lent March 23, 2025	Good Friday April 18, 2025
Laetere Sunday March 30, 2025	Holy Saturday April 19, 2025
5th Sunday of Lent April 06, 2025	Easter Sunday April 20, 2025

Pope Francis, who lost part of his lung to a respiratory infection in his youth, previously approved a pared-back funeral for himself, forgoing some of the more elaborate rituals that usually take place when a pope passes away. As such, the pope's body will be displayed in an open coffin, and not on a raised platform like his predecessors.

Additionally, past popes were entombed in three coffins: one made out of cypress, one of zinc and one of elm, nested inside each other, but Francis has ordered that he be buried in a single coffin, made of wood and zinc.

Choosing a new pope

About two weeks after the pope's funeral, the College of Cardinals will meet in the Sistine Chapel to hold the highly secretive process of electing a new pope. Technically, any baptized male Roman Catholic is eligible for the papacy, but for the past 700 years, the pope has always been chosen from the College of Cardinals.

On the day of voting, the Sistine Chapel is sealed off and around 120 cardinals who have taken an oath of secrecy are locked inside to place their vote. If no candidate receives the required two-thirds majority, another round of voting takes place. There can be up to four rounds per day. In 2013 it took about 24 hours and five ballots to elect Pope Francis but the process can take longer.

Once ballots are counted, they are burned in a stove inside the Sistine Chapel, sending up a smoke signal through a chimney to the outside world: Black smoke means a new pope has not been selected, white smoke means one has.

February 27, 2025

Courtesy of RSVP

(<https://www.rsvplive.ie/news/uk-world-news/what-happen-pope-dies-pared-34720646>)

Education



The Roost and Meadow Opening Celebration at Mt St Catherine's PS

There was a wonderful sense of community when Mount St Catherine's held a tea party to celebrate the opening of two new specialist classrooms.

The principal, Ms Ciara Farley welcomed a room-full of visitors to the newly re-furbished nurture room, The Bee-



hive so she could thank the parents, principal, Sacred Heart sisters and Network representatives, board of Governors members and many EA specialist education Staff and Maintenance Team members.

The school's decision to open a further two rooms after last years two new rooms was a natural progression, providing a much needed pathway for KS 1 and KS2 children.

The Roost and The Meadow are in two beautifully refurbished learning spaces, with state-of-the-art sensory rooms, toilet and changing facilities and purpose- built outdoor spaces that are safe and inviting.

The Ribbons on the Roost and the Meadow were kindly cut by Mrs Noreen Heenan, Sacred Heart Education Network Co-ordinator with the assistance of the Pupil Leadership Team; head boys and head girls; Amelia, Brendan, Lauren and Adrijana. Father Barry Matthews, St Patrick's Parish Administrator came to bless each room and Monika and Connor from the Meadow were delighted to meet the visitors who came to celebrate with them.



Mrs Farley said, ‘This is a testament to our unwavering commitment to our Sacred heart ethos which emphasises compassion, understanding, and the celebration of every child’s unique ability. These new rooms will ensure the provision of a nurturing space where every child can thrive, regardless of their challenges.

Our school has always been a place where diversity is embraced, and inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. We believe that every child deserves the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed in an environment that respects and values their individuality. These specialist classrooms are designed to offer tailored support and resources, ensuring that our pupils with additional needs receive the best possible education and a positive start in life.

February 27, 2025

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to making this vision a reality.'

Final concert after 37 years for Inst's Director of Music.

The Royal Belfast Academical Institution returns to the Waterfront Hall in Belfast for a very special evening of music on 11 April 2025.

The musicians of Inst will proudly present a spectacular Gala Concert for our times.



February 27, 2025

Showcasing the rich talent and dedication of the boys, and combining the huge forces of RBAI's Choir, Orchestra and Jazz Band, this concert invites the audience on a mystery tour through different periods and styles.

With choral and instrumental music to suit all tastes, the programme promises a riot of colour from Stravinsky and Ravel to Dire Straits and Queen.

It will also be Mr Bolton's final concert after 37 years as Director of Music.

Tickets on sale now: <https://www.waterfront.co.uk/what-s-on/rbai-gala-concert/>

Largest Children's Festival in the UK and the island of Ireland

Belfast Children's Festival is the largest children's Festival in the UK and on the island of Ireland. It his encouraging parents and kids alike to enjoy what's on offer, writes Aine Toner

Belfast Children's Festival will stage more than 100 events and performances over 10 days (March 6-15), with the festival director saying its aim is to speak to children "at eye level". "It's not about finding kids' shows; it's about finding outstanding performance work that is really suitable for a young audience," says Eibhlín de Barra.

"But it's also suitable for families of all ages. You don't have to be a child, or have a child with you, to come to Belfast

February 27, 2025

Children's Festival. But you do know that if you do bring a young person with you, they're going to have a great time and it's going to be age appropriate.

“With it being the Belfast Children's Festival, we've got some really spectacular shows. That's the one thing I'm very proud of what we do. I really do think that we bring high-quality work here that you just simply don't see in Northern Ireland at any other time of year.”

Close to three decades in existence, the festival is every bit as important as it was when established.

“When you just think about when Young at Art was formed, we were right at the dawn of the Good Friday Agreement,” says Eibhlín.

“If you just think of the journey that we've made, not just as an arts organisation, but also as a country, it's quite phenomenal.

“Just think that some of those children who came to the very first Belfast Children's Festival — or Young at Art, as it was called at that time — are now bringing their children.

“We are engaging with, on average, about 37,500 people every year, because we work on a year-long basis.

“The festival itself is 10 days, but we have a wide range of education engagement projects that actually work, particularly in the city of Belfast, year round.

February 27, 2025

“One of our most popular and one of our most long-standing events is Baby Rave. Last year we had a staff member who came [to it] as a baby.”

Not just an international festival, it's a platform for performances for young audiences from this island.

“I think it's the importance of that international programme that is about internationalism,” she says.

“It's about connecting children and young people here to the wider world around them. It's about broadening those cultural horizons and also trying to make sure that diversity is reflected on the stage as well.

“Northern Ireland has a changing face. We want to make sure that's represented and that all young people can look at the stage and go: 'I can see myself there.'

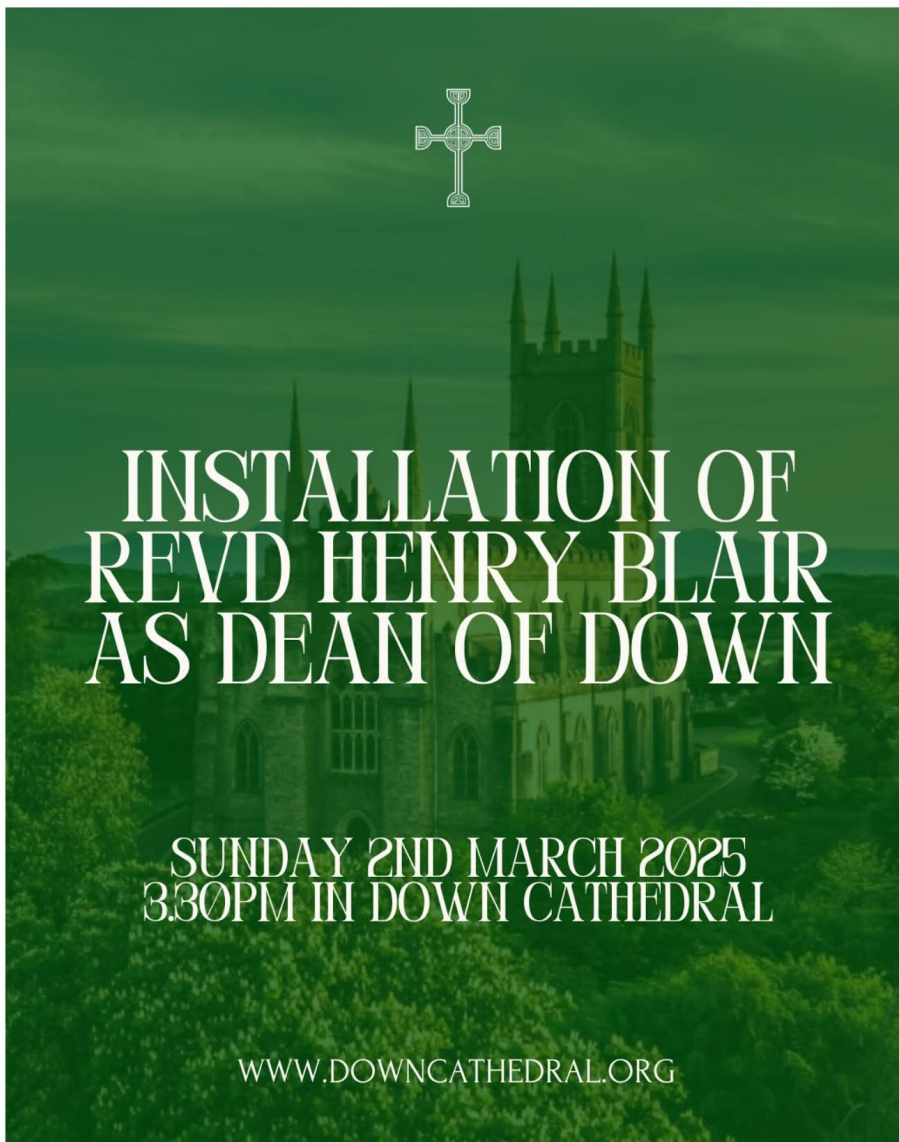
Cathedral Calls

Installation of Dean of Down

You are warmly invited to Down Cathedral on Sunday 2nd March 2025 at 3.30pm for the installation of Revd Henry Blair as Dean of Down.

Bishop David McClay said:

“I am delighted that in addition to his new role as rector of LAMP the Revd Henry Blair has accepted the role of Dean of Down.



“A cathedral church today needs increasingly to be a centre of mission. Our heritage of St Patrick’s life and ministry gives Down Cathedral a mission focus and the impetus and opportunity for the proclamation of the Gospel.

“Henry’s demonstrated zeal for that

same Gospel and his love for the worldwide church makes him an outstanding candidate to become the next Dean of Down and rector of LAMP.

“Please pray for him as he undertakes both these roles.”

Henry is the Ireland National Director for Sharing of Ministry Abroad (SOMA), prior to which he was Incumbent of the Parish of Tullanisken and Clonoe in the Diocese of Armagh. He was ordained in 2004 and has a background in both agriculture and accountancy. Henry is married to Helen and they have four grown up sons and three grandchildren.

February 27, 2025

He said of his appointment:

“Helen and I are looking forward to the new season of ministry as rector of the Lecale Area Mission Partnership and getting to know everyone in the area. My appointment as Dean of Down comes as a pleasant surprise and I thank Bishop David for the trust that he is placing in me in this role. We do pray that God will bless our ministry in Down Cathedral and the parish as we see God’s kingdom grow in the Lecale area.”

Clergy and ministry



The Rt Rev Paddington, Diocese of Peru and SAMS, explains the Filioque Clause to Canon Nesbitt

February 27, 2025

Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Confirmation Day

Around 30 young people took part in the first of this year's Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Confirmation Days, which was held in Christ Church Limavady's parish hall.

The event was led by their Diocesan Youth Ministry Officer, Claire Hinchliff, who was ably supported by Children's Ministry Officer, Kirsty McCartney, and by clergy and leaders from a number of parishes.

The day combined scriptural teaching with activities. When the showers stayed away, the young people managed to squeeze in some fun and games outside the hall.

Claire spoke to the young people about the divinity of Christ, the significance of miracles, the importance of the Easter season and the wonder of the resurrection. The participants' biblical knowledge was tested – gently – in a series of quizzes.

Every army – even a young, Christian one – marches on its stomach, and there was ample fare on offer to sustain body and soul for the duration of today's event... Lots of pics at -

<https://www.facebook.com/528414856142420/posts/954355260215042>

Events

February 27, 2025

Cookstown Youth Choir join with Peter Corry

Cookstown Youth Choir join with Peter Corry, Plunkett McGartland and Oisín McCann in The Burnavon Theatre next month.



Cookstown Youth Choir
In concert with **Peter Corry**
&
Instrumentalist **Plunkett McGartland**
Traditional Musician **Oisín McCann**

The poster features a background of musical notes and a treble clef. It includes two photographs: one of the Cookstown Youth Choir members in blue uniforms on stage, and another of Peter Corry in a dark patterned jacket holding a microphone. At the bottom, there is a white box with event details and a logo for the Mid Ulster District Council.

The Burnavon Theatre Cookstown
Saturday 1st March 2025 @ 7.30 pm
Tickets £15
Booking office 028 8676 9949
Book online; www.burnavon.com

Supported by
Comhairle Ceantair
Lár Uladh
Mid Ulster
District Council

<https://www.burnavon.com/whats-on/cookstown-youth-choir-in-concert-with-peter-corry/129570937>

The Walled City Music Festival returns

On 16 March 2025, bringing world-class music once more to the heart of Derry.

This year's festival promises four days of incredible music, featuring internationally acclaimed artists, stunning collaborations, and guaranteed breathtaking performances in the intimate Great Hall at Ulster University.

February 27, 2025

Join us from 13 to 16 March 2025 for a stellar line-up of concerts, workshops and educational performances by some of the world's finest musicians.

Finghin Collins | piano

Kristīne Balanas | violin

Gerard McChrystal | saxophone

Creviston Duo | saxophone & piano

Hellas Ensemble | music & poetry

Linda Buckley | resident composer

Sabrina Hu | flute & co-artistic director

Cathal Breslin | piano & co-artistic director

Walled City Music is the leading promoter of classical, contemporary and choral music in the North West of Northern Ireland.

Walled City Music present a year-round programme of events including the [Walled City Music Festival](#), [WCM International Academy](#), [City of Derry International Choir Festival](#) and many one-off events with local, national and international musicians and ensembles.

walledcitymusic.com

Care for the Family event for couples

Going the Distance is a new event for couples from Care for the Family.

This explores practical ideas of how to communicate well, deepen connection with each other and intentionally set the course for a relationship.



Care for the Family will hold **Going the Distance** in **Lurgan on March 25**, in **Wellington Presbyterian Church**, **Ballymena on March 26** from 7.30-10pm, **East Belfast on March 27** - three Northern Ireland locations for this UK-wide event.

To find out more and to book a place, please follow this link. (<https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/events/tourevents/going-the-distance/>)

Resources

The Passion in a new podcast series by Riding Lights Theatre

Riding Lights Theatre Company presents The Passion, a new podcast series taking you to the heart of Easter. Eight stories, eight voices, eight days journey to the cross.

February 27, 2025

Written and directed by Paul Birch taking you to the heart of Easter.

New episodes will be released every week through Lent, beginning on March 7th. The Passion will be available for free on most major podcast platforms including Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Audible and YouTube. More information available on their website.

[https://
www.ridinglights.org/
thepassion](https://www.ridinglights.org/thepassion)

www.ridinglights.org



Dementia Research Infoline

Our Dementia Research Infoline is here to support you. Whether you have questions about dementia, dementia research or want to take part in research studies. You can contact us via phone, email or post.

Our Infoline team can help you with:

February 27, 2025

Questions about dementia.

Information about symptoms, causes, diagnosis, risk factors and treatments for dementia.

The opportunity to take part in dementia research studies.

Information about dementia research, such as the research evidence behind media headlines or claims made on the internet.

Signposting to organisations that can help with enquiries not covered by the remit of the Dementia Research Infoline.

Please note that the Infoline does not offer advice or counselling and we are not medically trained. We cannot offer guidance on dementia care.

Contacting the Dementia Research Infoline should not replace any information provided by your doctor or nurse, or another healthcare or legal professional.

It is not within our remit to assist students with their projects. However, if you are a student and are unable to find the help you need using the information available on our website, please do contact us and we will endeavour to reply to you within five working days.

Call us

You can call us on 0300 111 5111 (9.00-5.00pm Monday to Friday - excluding bank holidays).

Calls are charged at the same rate as 01 or 02 numbers and should be included in any free call packages you have.

Charges for mobiles are likely to be higher.

February 27, 2025

We try to answer calls as quickly as possible, but if the Infoline is busy or you call outside our operating hours, you can leave us a message with your contact details and one of our team will aim to get back to you within three working days.

Email us

infoline@alzheimersresearchuk.org

We will reply to your email within 3 working days.

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

www.churchnewsireland.org

Link in Monday through Saturday from early morning

Please recommend to your friends

