

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Burn’s link with Dundalk church

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Robert Burn's link with Dundalk church

Ulster-Scots Agency CEO Ian Crozier was joined for the Burn's Day ceremony by Robert Burns performer, Christopher Tait; Martin McElligott, Town Commercial Manager; and Liam Gaynor, local tour guide and historian. Front page photo - Christopher Tait, Robert Burns performer, at the Burns Monument in St Nicholas' Church, Dundalk.

Yesterday saw celebrations of the birth of the National Bard of Scotland, born on that day in 1759. Burns is the best known poet to have written in the Scots language, and his writing had a profound effect on writing in Ulster and beyond.



Burns has a unique relationship with Belfast, the Ulster-Scots speaking town that was the first place outside Scotland to publish his work. His friends and family made their homes there and over 200 years later, his life and legacy continues to be celebrated for auld lang syne.

Every year, as part of the celebrations for the birthday of Rabbie Burns,

Scotland's national bard, Ulster Scots once again honoured their tradition of placing a wreath at the Burns Monument in Dundalk, Co Louth.

The Burns Monument is located at St Nicholas Church of Ireland in Dundalk, where the poet's sister, Agnes, is buried.

Ulster-Scots Agency CEO Ian Crozier was joined for the ceremony by Robert Burns performer, Christopher Tait; Martin McElligott, Town Commercial Manager; and Liam Gaynor, local tour guide and historian.

People and places



Service marks 100th birthday of WW2 RAF veteran

The Royal Air Force has honoured a Scarva woman who is set to become a centenarian.

Ena Kinnin's 100th birthday is today (Friday) and she is expected to receive a telegram from King Charles. The popular local lady served in the RAF during the Second World War, reaching the rank of sergeant.

RAF personnel from 502 (Ulster) Squadron took part in Sunday's service at St. Matthew's Parish Church, where Ena has been a loyal, lifelong member. An RAF piper played happy birthday, with the congregation singing along! Scarva

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minister, the Rev. Rodney Magennis, conducted and led the service.

[Ena Kinnin during her war service](#)

There were presentations from Air Marshal Sean Reynolds, Air Officer Northern Ireland, the church and Upper Bann MP Carla Lockhart.

Report and pictures courtesy The Banbridge Chronicle.



[Derry Unity worship despite Storms Isha and Jocelyn](#)

The resourcefulness of the team who organised this week's Service in Londonderry marking the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was tested to the full and – the good news is – they passed with flying colours.



Finding themselves caught between two storms, with Storm Isha having barely subsided and Storm Jocelyn heading in from the Atlantic, the organisers thought better of their original intention – to walk in unison around various city centre landmarks, praying en route.

Instead, the decision was made on safety grounds to hold the Service indoors, at First Derry Presbyterian Church.

The minister there, Rev Colin Jones, and his team, responded brilliantly, and quickly, piecing together a slide show which included photographs of each of the stops that were scheduled for the Prayer Walk.

The theme of the 2024 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, 'Go and do likewise', is drawn from the Parable of the Good Samaritan, Luke 10 v 25-37, which invites us to reflect on



what it means to love the Lord our God and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

Among the clergy who led the prayers were Rev Jones, Rev Peter Morris of the Methodist Church, Bishop Donal McKeown, Archdeacon Robert Miller, the Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart, Rev Canon Katie McAteer, Fr Stephen Ward of St Columba's Church Long Tower, and Rev Nigel Cairns of St Augustine's Church. The annual Service is coordinated by Mrs Joan Doherty.

Spirit of Catholic Education awards presentation

The Spirit of Catholic Education Awards, hosted by the Catholic Schools Support Service were presented at St Mary's College this week.



“Congratulations to all the recipients for their awards and how they have demonstrated the true spirit of our schools.”

St Teresa’s Nursery,
Creggan Primary
School Moneynick
Primary School
Mercy Primary
School St Brigid’s
Primary School St.
Joseph’s Primary
School, Crumlin,
Trinity Belfast, St

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Colman's Primary School, De La Salle College and St Mary's Primary, Aughnislafin

€5,500 raised at Cork's Nine Lessons and Carols in aid of local charities

At the 2023 Festivals of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork, a collection of over €5,500 was taken in aid of the Bishop of Cork Pastoral Care Fund and other local charities.

One quarter of the collection will be donated to the Bishop of Cork Pastoral Care Fund, a charity established by Bishop



Carlow Union of Parishes
Lent - Easter Talks 2024
Living Faith



1. Thursday 22nd February 7.30pm **"Lent/Easter, The Journey"**
Dean Tom Gordon, Cathedral Church of Saint Laserian's, Leighlin.
2. Wednesday 28th February 7.30pm **"Prayer / Spirituality"**
Rev. Liam Dunne Chaplain, Carlow/Saint Patrick's College.
3. Wednesday 6th March 7.30pm **"The Cross"**
Rev. Katherine Kehoe, Carlow and Kilkenny Methodist Church,
4. Wednesday 13th March 7.30pm **"Triduum / Resurrection"**
Bishop Denis Nulty, Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin
5. Friday 15th March 7.30pm **"Songs of Prayer, Faith and Praise"**
with the Carlow Community Choir and their Director Mary Amond O' Brien.
6. Wednesday 20th March 7.30pm **"Grief and Loss - A Christian Perspective"**
Rev. Paul Fitzpatrick, in conjunction with the Carlow Mental Health Association.

Saint Mary's Church, Haymarket, Carlow R93YW77



Bishop of Cork
Pastoral Care Fund



Society of St. Vincent de Paul



Paul Colton in 2020, which has been set up to help the relief of poverty or economic hardship, the advancement of education and community welfare, and the promotion of religious and racial harmony.

Three quarters will go to the Bishop of Cork Pastoral Care Fund for distribution in equal shares to Cork Simon, St Vincent de Paul, and Threshold.

Cork Simon works in solidarity with men and women who are homeless in Cork, offering housing and support in their journey back to independent living.

St Vincent de Paul provides direct assistance to those in need, including caring for the homeless, providing social housing, operating social support activities, and promoting community self-sufficiency.

Threshold helps prevent homelessness by providing free advice to people in housing difficulty and campaigning for a fairer housing system.

Church News Ireland

News

Anglican martyrs link Canterbury and Vatican at bishops ecumenical summit in Rome

Yesterday, the Archbishop of Canterbury preached at San Bartolomeo in Rome – a church dedicated to the memory of 20th and 21st Century Martyrs in Rome - during "Growing Together", an ecumenical summit of Anglican and Catholic bishops that's meeting in Rome and Canterbury this week.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, preached yesterday at Anglican Eucharist held at San Bartolomeo all'Isola on Tiber Island (Sanctuary of the New Martyrs), a ninth century Basilica in Rome.

The Anglican Eucharist at 1145 was attended by Catholic and Anglican bishops from across the globe who are currently in Rome for the ecumenical summit Growing Together, organised by IARCCUM, the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission.

Later in the day, The Archbishop of Canterbury took part in Vespers at 1730, at the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls, where Pope Francis and the Archbishop commissioned the bishops for their joint witness and mission.



The Archbishop of Canterbury preaching at San Bartolomeo in Rome

Yesterday's morning's Eucharist at San Bartolomeo was one of the pilgrimages the bishops taking part in "Growing Together" have made this week. In 2000, the Basilica of San Bartolomeo all'Isola was dedicated by Pope John Paul II to the memory of new martyrs of the 20th Century.

In his sermon, the Archbishop addressed the congregation which included the bishops taking part in the IARCCUM ecumenical summit, on the role of the Church to serve and love. He said:

"We must find ways of being joyful in our disagreement, generous in our disputes, hospitable in our differences with one another, in character, in appearance, in temperament



and in culture.... around this world we are all deeply different.

“We come from the mountains of Papua New Guinea and the oceans of Melanesia, to the canyons of Wall Street, to the swamps of West Africa, we come from all places... We come from prosperity and poverty. We are all different.”

He encouraged the Church to be “...the miracle of unity amidst enormous, inhuman, unimaginable difference, which for the world, has always been a reason to fight and conquer one another, not to love and value one another other.

“Demonstrating that love amongst each other is the key that opens human hearts to the good news of Christ and that means suffering.”

Before the Eucharist, the Archbishop and bishops of IARCCUM toured the Sanctuary of the New Martyrs, which

is a memorial in the crypt, to continue commemorating the stories of the Christian martyrs of the 20th and 21st centuries. It was opened in March 2023.

Martyrs from churches other than the Roman Catholic Church are commemorated in the sanctuary. Among them are the seven martyrs of the Melanesian Brotherhood, an Anglican religious order, who were murdered by rebels in the Solomon Islands in 2003, while engaged in peacebuilding work in the wake of the Townsville Peace Agreement. Among the relics preserved in the basilica of San Bartolomeo are religious medals and correspondence belonging to three of the martyred Melanesian brothers, Br Robin Lindsay, Br Alfred Hill and Br Patterson Gattu.

Two archbishops from the Solomon Islands, Archbishop Christopher Cardone (Roman Catholic) and Archbishop Leonard Dawea (Anglican), are participating in the “Growing Together” IARCCUM summit. As Primate of the Anglican Church of Melanesia, Archbishop Dawea serves as Father of the Melanesian Brotherhood and, as a young man, spent twelve years as a member of it.

The Melanesian Martyrs are also commemorated in Canterbury Cathedral, where an icon of them was dedicated at the closing service of the 2008 Lambeth Conference of bishops. The icon is housed in the Cathedral’s Chapel of Saints and Martyrs of our own Time, Corona.

At the end of the service, the Archbishop laid a wreath at the chapel where the martyrs of Oceania are commemorated. The IARRCUM summit moves to Canterbury on Friday Jan 26.



Berlin and St Paul's cathedrals strengthen links

On Sunday last, Bishop Christian Stäblein was introduced as Honorary Canon in the Diocese of London.

This makes him a member of the Cathedral Chapter and he gets the right to preach in the world-famous St Paul's Cathedral in North London. The introduction and visit of Bishop Stäblein is another big step in the partnership of the two churches. This is how Lord Bishop Sarah Mullally

already became an honorary preacher at the Berlin Cathedral.

In the media

The Windsor Framework does not breach the principle of consent for Northern Ireland - News Letter

The issue of consent is central to the current debate on the governance of Northern Ireland, Dr Andrew McCormick, a former senior Civil Servant writes.

The 1998 Belfast/Good Friday Agreement states the principle of consent as relating to "...Northern Ireland's status as part of the United Kingdom..." (Constitutional Issues 1 (ii) and (iii)). Hence, Northern Ireland is subject to UK sovereignty for as long as that has the consent of a majority of its population. Irish nationalists and republicans can tolerate that outcome because of the express provision for a change of sovereignty if a majority so wishes and because of the checks and balances across all three strands of the agreement that ensure "parity of esteem" for the Irish identity. On the other hand, the 1998 agreement did not give some unionists what they would most want – a cemented, unconditional union – agreement was only possible on the basis of power-sharing, the 'Irish dimension' and the conditionality of the Union.

The concept of self-determination is also very difficult to apply here. The Troubles were at least partly about the fact

that the 'unit of self-determination' was disputed. The IRA rejected the alleged legitimacy of the 'six county' unit. The most essential feature of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement was that it secured a balanced definition of the constitutional position of Northern Ireland that was supported by majorities in the two referenda of May 1998, and hence it has unique legitimacy.

Brexit would appear to many to be a change in the status of Northern Ireland, which did not have the consent of a majority of the population of Northern Ireland. Such an argument would imply it was a breach of the 1998 Agreement. But Brexit was a sovereign act of the Crown in Parliament, and made no change to the fact that Northern Ireland is subject to that sovereignty.

Similarly, the post-Brexit agreement between the UK and the EU does not involve any dilution of the sovereignty of the Crown in Parliament over Northern Ireland, because all the provisions (including the application of EU law in Northern Ireland) flow from decisive votes of approval in the UK parliament. Indeed, the UK government secured its democratic mandate in December 2019 explicitly on the basis of the Withdrawal Agreement (which included, and was known to include, the protocol). Also, all the available evidence suggests that the protocol/Windsor Framework had and has the consent of the majority in Northern Ireland. Hence the narrative that protocol/Windsor Framework breaches the principle of consent does not stand up to scrutiny, as there is no provision in either the Act of Union (1800) or the 1998 Agreement for a minority in Northern Ireland to overturn a sovereign act of the Crown in Parliament.

In addition, unionist opposition to the protocol/Windsor Framework ignores the realpolitik that the issue is not solely about Northern Ireland's place in the UK, but affects all 27 member states as well as the UK. Any model that would be radically different to the Windsor Framework would not be acceptable to that group, which is much larger and more influential than the unionist community. No-one has a monopoly on consent. In settling an arrangement for the regulation of trade involving so many countries, the best practical outcome that can be reasonably expected is a compromise that as many as possible can accept.

In the wider context of “the constitutional issue”, the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement remains clear and unchanged. It has been argued that there are aspects of UK constitutional law that should not be subject to the “whims of Parliament” – most strongly in the context of Section 6 of the Act of Union. But the agreement to the protocol was manifestly not a mere “whim of Parliament”. On the contrary, it followed several years of detailed negotiation (with the EU and within the UK government) when parliament had rejected all the other options. Following the General Election of December 2019, few things have or could have greater legitimacy in a representative democracy. Parliament's resolved position was to choose to leave the EU Single Market and Customs Union, and to avoid a hard border on the island of Ireland. This was and is in line with the preference of the majority of Northern Ireland's elected representatives, and it also includes explicit provision for a unique arrangement giving a role to the Northern Ireland Assembly in relation to the possible continued application of the protocol.

The 1998 agreement was a profound compromise (an agreement to disagree) that recognises that neither the Union in undiluted form (“as British as Finchley”), nor simply a united Ireland, have or could be expected to have anything like sufficient acquiescence never mind consent, and hence that a unique, awkward and messy form of government is necessary, at least while Northern Ireland remains part of the UK and very possibly in a united Ireland too. It does not make provision for the refusal of a party to participate in the institutions, but the obvious if undesirable default (which could and should have been applied in 2017, and in 2022), is to revert to Direct Rule with clear arrangements for the UK government to consult the Irish government as agreed in 1985. Joint Authority would be a change of the status of Northern Ireland, and hence a clear breach of the 1998 agreement, unless it had the consent of a majority of the population of Northern Ireland.

The establishment, or re-establishment of a form of government for Northern Ireland that can command sufficient consent to be stable and viable requires a new foundation, as the post-Brexit controversy has undermined the 1998 consensus. This should be based on a renewed commitment to the essential features of the 1998 agreement, and needs strong and positive engagement by the political leaders of Northern Ireland, and sustained commitment from the UK and Irish governments. Working together on how that can be applied maximises the possibility for securing the consent (or at least the acquiescence) of as many as possible.

These issues will be discussed further in my full-length report forthcoming with the Constitution Society.

January 26, 2024

Dr Andrew McCormick was a civil servant for 41 years, 19 of which were at permanent secretary level. His last role was lead official on Brexit for the Stormont executive
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Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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