

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Anglican and Catholic partners at Canterbury

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Anglican and Catholic partners at Canterbury

Anglican and Catholic bishops who had worshipped and dialogued in Rome last week came to Canterbury at the week end to continue the process. See News on page 11 of this issue.

People and places



Limavady Parish Readers commissioned

Bishop Andrew Forster of Derry & Raphoe visited Christ Church, Limavady to commission their two newest Parish Readers, Elaine and Martin. It was a service of great encouragement as the Bishop called on

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the new readers, and the whole congregation likewise, to share the story of hope that is the Gospel.



Meath & Kildare representatives at C of I Youth Forum

Luke Hawkins, Meath & Kildare Diocesan Youth Officer, and a group of young people from across the diocese had a great weekend attending the 2024 Church of Ireland Youth Forum, in Dromantine Conference Centre (near Newry).

The CIYD (Church of Ireland Youth Department) Youth Forum seeks to bring young people from across the Church

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together to debate issues affecting all young people, encourage and support youth participation, facilitate change and action, and support young people on their spiritual journey.



Bishop of Cork's anniversary photo

Bishop Paul Colton commented earlier this week - On this day 25 years ago - 29th January 1999 - I received a phone call from the Archbishop of Dublin to tell me that an Episcopal Electoral College of the Church of Ireland had elected me to be a bishop to serve in the Church of Ireland in Cork, Cloyne and Ross.

This photo was taken the next day and published by what was then 'The Examiner', now the Irish Examiner

“Today I give thanks for the countless people at home and abroad, in the Church and not in the Church, who have been kind and supportive to me and my family. Thank you.”

Secondary school age members sought for band being formed in Derry

Ever wondered what it is like to form your own Music Band? And perform your first gig in professional venues across the city?

Now is your chance to find out!

St Columb's School of Music is facilitating a Music Band Formation Project - generously sponsored by Apex Housing.

The project objective is to enhance pop music by fostering good relations among music students of various religions and backgrounds, offering workshops and providing mentorship from experienced tutors to form their own bands. The ultimate goal is to enable students to participate in live performances, promoting not only their musical growth and creativity, but also understanding, respect and unity.

The project is for students secondary school children aged 11-18 and who have a keen interest in playing with other musicians in a band. The project is completely FREE and starts on Friday 9th February with 3 weeks of workshops at St. Columb's School of Music (4-5pm).

ST. COLUMB'S
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

apex

MUSIC HARMONY

FRIDAY
9TH
FEBRUARY

DO YOU WANT TO BE A FOUNDING
MEMBER OF THE NEWEST,
HOTTEST BAND IN TOWN?

LEARN WHAT IT TAKES TO FORM A BAND...AND DO IT
AT ST. COLUMB'S SCHOOL OF MUSIC

After these workshops, students will be assigned roles in order to form their own band(s); and will be mentored by our professional tutors every Friday until June - when the students will perform several gigs in professional venues across the city as part of their newly formed band(s). To sign up, all you need to do is fill out the following link before Tuesday 6th February:
<https://forms.gle/PqNNjdEnskZJM2189>

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For more information, please do not hesitate to contact -
07366602407 or email them at:
music@stcolumbsschoolofmusic.com

They would love to hear from you!

Archbishop of Dublin offers solidarity to Palestinian Ambassador

Archbishop Michael Jackson has had a meeting with the Palestinian Ambassador to Ireland, Dr Jilan Wahba Abdalmajid. The meeting took place in the Embassy at the invitation of the Ambassador. They spoke about what is happening in Palestine and the Ambassador said that her family was still living in Gaza, although she had lost contact with them for two weeks.

The Archbishop highlighted the link between the Diocese of Jerusalem and the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough as well as his travels to Gaza and the Westbank, the friendly and welcoming people he met there and the appeal to help with the reconstruction of Al Ahli Hospital. Dr Abdalmajid said that two of her three children were born in Al Ahli.

“We offered our solidarity and our friendship. And we will both continue to keep and build this friendship,” Archbishop Jackson said after the meeting. “We hope that when members of the Diocese of Jerusalem come to Dublin later in the year that we can all meet together.”

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You can donate to the Shine a Light for the Diocese of Jerusalem appeal online at:

Diocesan Funds of Dublin and Glendalough No 1 A/C Current Account, Bank of Ireland, 2 COLLEGE GREEN DUBLIN 2 IBAN: IE50 BOFI 9000 1769 3548 78, BIC: BOFIIIE2D.

Cheques may be sent to Diocesan Offices of Dublin and Glendalough, Church of Ireland House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6, D06 CF67

The appeal has now raised over €100,000 which will be used in the reconstruction phase. The appeal runs until February 2.

News

Cathedral congregations flock back to pre-pandemic levels, survey finds

Attendance at services at Christmas exceeded pre-pandemic levels in more than a dozen English cathedrals, according to an investigation in The Times this week.

Of the 26 cathedrals that provided data on attendance levels in 2019 — the year before the pandemic began — 13 experienced an increase in the number of people attending Christmas services.

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Southwark Cathedral was one of those at which attendance this year was higher than in 2019. On Wednesday, the Sub-Dean, Canon Michael Rawson, told the Church Times that “various things conspire together” to draw people in: “Live music in a stunning building, the quality of welcome where people feel that they will be noticed and looked after, and the way that the services are put together.”

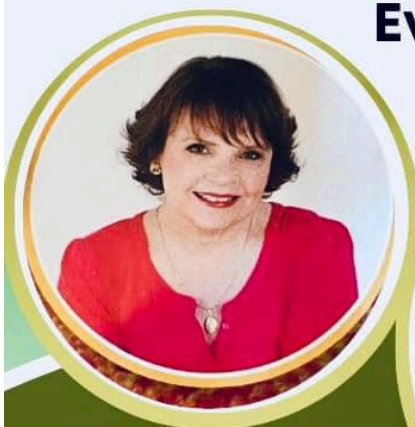
He also referred to the volume of Christmas services as another factor: multiple carol services for specific causes or

Saturday 3rd February

ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH DOWNPATRICK

11:00am - Mass

**Dana lights the fire of faith with the
Catholic Guides of Ireland
for 1500 years of the life of St. Brigid.
Everyone Welcome!!**



St. Patrick's Parish Webcam
www.churchmedia.tv



charities helped the cathedral to reach out into the community, he said.

Of the 30 cathedrals that provided data to The Times, 24 reported that the size of congregations had risen between 2022 and 2023.

The Acting Dean of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Jan McFarlane, told The Times: “Our experience this Christmas leads us to conclude that we shouldn’t be nailing down the lid on the Church of England’s coffin any time soon.”

In the C of E, attendance has risen since 2020, but has not yet reached pre-pandemic levels.

The Dean of St Albans, the Very Revd Jo Kelly-Moore, who chairs the Association of English Cathedrals, said in a statement that the rise in attendance was indicative of “the central place that cathedrals hold in the cities and dioceses they serve, and is undoubtedly a result also of the increasingly varied ways in which our cathedrals are committed to offering people of all faiths and none the chance to engage with their stories”.

She said: “January, the season of Epiphany, offers a continued chance to welcome people, and cathedrals have started the New Year with lots of opportunities on offer. Here at St Albans Cathedral, for example, we have higher January service attendances, so far, than last year, and much higher visitor footfall.

“Many parish churches are reporting the same increases over Christmas as they, too, have engaged with their

communities creatively. All this offers great encouragement as we welcome new people and grow back from the impact of the global pandemic.”

"Called to be Jesus Partners" - Anglican and Catholic ecumenical summit "Growing Together" makes pilgrimage to Canterbury

The second phase of the latest joint summit bringing together Anglican and Catholic bishops from around the world, has been taking place in Canterbury this week.

Over a four-day weekend, the bishops took part in a candlelit tour of Canterbury Cathedral, a Vigil Mass of St Thomas of Canterbury parish and Cathedral Eucharist (Holy Communion) together.

The summit, entitled, “Growing Together” has seen pairs of Anglican and Catholic bishops gather for a series of ecumenical discussions and visits to holy sites in Rome, that have significance to the common roots shared by both traditions.

The summit's focus on partnership and friendship was best summed up by Cardinal Stephen Chow Sau-yan (Bishop of Hong Kong), who was invited to preach at Sunday Eucharist at Canterbury Cathedral. He said:



Gathered at Canterbury Cathedral

“We Anglicans and Roman Catholics are called to be Jesus partners, individually and collectively. The twelve apostles and disciples were not called to form camps, working for their own missions, or competing against each other. They were called to become an assembly, a community, a communion, a synodal koinonia, praying and discerning, teaching and serving for the mission of our Triune God.

“... May God's ever loving and ever inclusive mission of salvation....and what we have learned at this summit... enlighten us and spur us forward so that we can be counted as worthy mission partners of the Son of God. May God bless you, all my sisters and brothers in a church that is of Christ. Amen.”



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have significance to the common roots shared by both traditions.

The International Anglican–Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) aims to foster closer co-operation between the Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions and put into practice progress made in theological conversations.

The group held ecumenical discussions on joint witness and mission, and work on the preparation of a Joint Statement, for how the bishops will take forward the fruits of their discussion in their home dioceses.

IARCCUM was established in 2000, by Archbishop George Carey and Cardinal Edward Cassidy, the then President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

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This is the second time during Archbishop Justin Welby's and Pope Francis' leadership that the summit has been commissioned. The two leaders have met often in Rome, and along with Stephen Cottrell, the Archbishop of York, they have spoken repeatedly of the vital importance of churches working together for the sake of the gospel.

On a visit to Rome last May, Archbishop Stephen said:

“My prayer is that Christians of all denominations can work together more and be united in our desire to follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit as we look to share the love of God as seen in Jesus with the many in our world who long for hope and meaning in their lives.

He added that when churches "reach out together in mission, in service of the world and in proclamation of the gospel," unity is strengthened and revealed.

In the media

Faith with me from start to finish - Belfast Telegraph

‘I never came to faith, it was with me from the start’ - **The Reverend Dr Richard Clarke**, a retired minister of the Methodist Church in Ireland and also of the United Church of Canada featured in a recent interview by the Belfast Telegraph.

Archbishop urged to bin trans guidance for schools - Daily Telegraph

Christian parents have urged the Archbishop of Canterbury to withdraw Church of England guidance that states children can change gender in school, Louisa Clarence-Smith, Education Editor writes.

Justin Welby has been asked by Christian parents to scrap the 'Valuing All God's Children' guidance for schools.

Parents have written to the Most Rev Justin Welby asking him to scrap Valuing All God's Children, which advises schools on how to create an inclusive environment for "transgender" pupils.

The guidance states: "The protected characteristic of gender reassignment only works one way – not being transgender is not a protected characteristic.

"Consequently schools can make adjustments to meet the needs of a trans pupil without being accused of discriminating against non-trans pupils."

The letter to Archbishop Welby is signed by Nigel and Sally Rowe, who claimed in 2017 that a Church of England primary school had said their six-year-old son would be deemed transphobic if he did not recognise another boy as a little girl.

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The parents, who are being supported by the Christian Legal Centre, brought a legal challenge against the Department for Education. The Government settled the case in 2022 and committed to reviewing transgender policies in schools.

Guidance, first produced by Cornwall council and shared with schools across the country, had advised head teachers to install gender-neutral lavatories and allow pupils to wear clothes “they feel are reflective of their gender identity, rather than their biological sex”.

The letter comes after The Telegraph revealed that a Church of England primary school in the South East of England allowed a four-year-old boy to join as a girl. His classmates only discovered his biological sex three years later, leaving a group of seven-year-old girls traumatised, according to a parent of one child at the school.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

What does Being Anglican mean in today's world?

“We invite you to join us on February 7th and 8th for the next Phase 3 discussion webinar - Being Anglican: Exploring the Lambeth Call on Anglican Identity.

BEING ANGLICAN

EXPLORING THE LAMBETH CALL ON ANGLICAN IDENTITY



“Hear from Anglicans, across the world, as we explore what it means to be Anglican, how we can be in communion through mission, and ways to share life together through Companion links.

“Don’t miss the opportunity to discover new resources and strategies that will help you take forward the Lambeth Call on Anglican Identity.”

Register here: <https://bit.ly/3Rk2M44>

Mass celebrated by Bishop Denis Nulty for the installation of the holy Relic of Saint Brigid

Kildare & Leighlin Diocese - RTÉ News - Brigid1500

See Bishop Nulty's full homily

<https://catholicbishops.ie/2024/01/28/mass-celebrated-by-bishop-denis-nulty-for-the-installation-of-the-holy-relic-of-saint-brigid/>

Lecture on 'Catch-My-Pal' and the Temperance Movement

The PHSI (Presbyterian Historical Society Ireland) Lecture on 'Catch-My-Pal' and the Temperance Movement will be given by Rev Dr Mark Wilson on Thursday 15th February 2024 at 8.00 p.m. in First Portadown Presbyterian Church, Bridge Street, Portadown BT63 5AA

Founded in 1909 by the Rev Robert J Patterson, Minister of 3rd Armagh (now The Mall) Presbyterian Church, the Movement set out to break the dominion of drink over Ireland....

Methodist Church Creative Ministries grants

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Methodist Church Creative Ministries grants are available to lay people within the Methodist Church in Ireland, whether voluntary or employed, for exploring, starting or maintaining creative ministries within their local church/context.

To read the criteria and apply now visit:
irishmethodist.org/creative-ministries-grant

Perspective



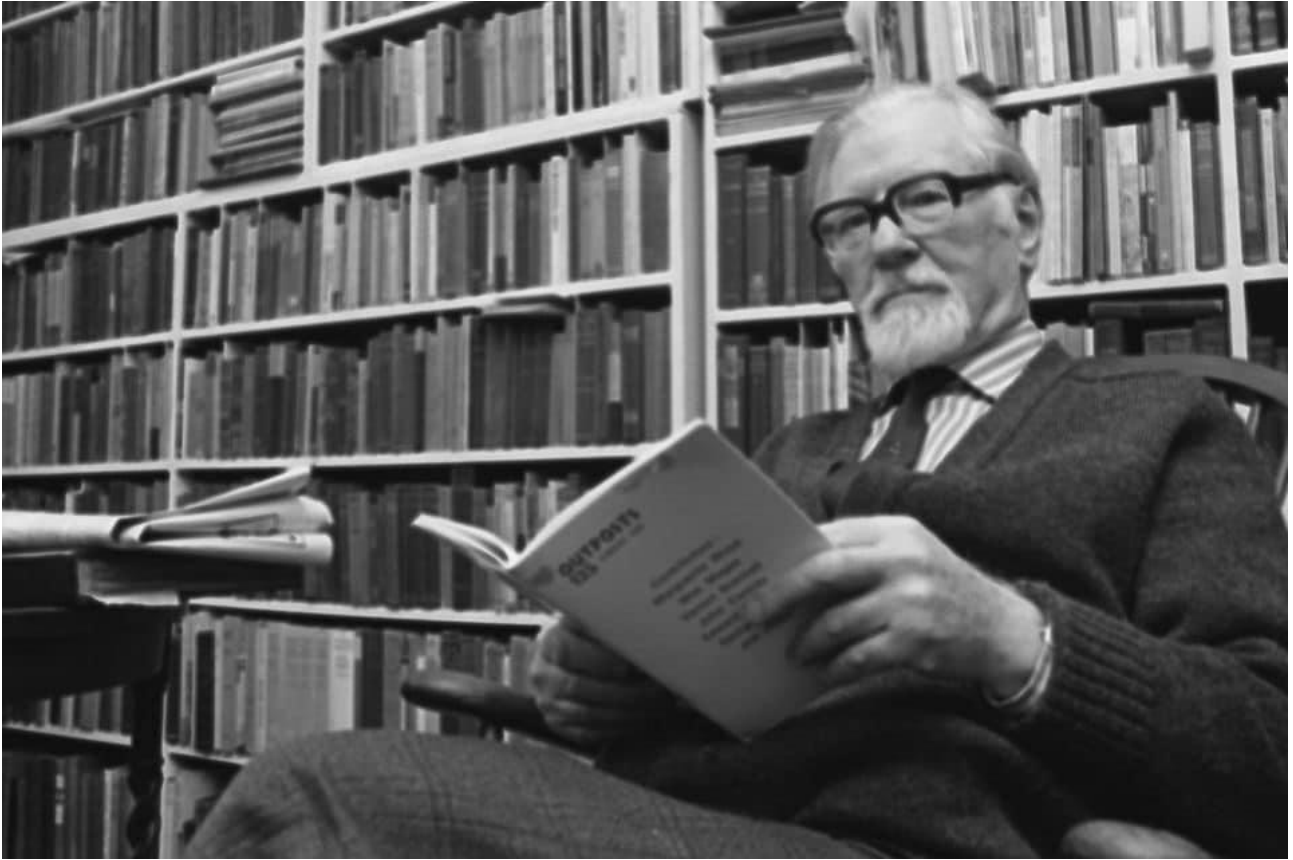
Consider creating a sacred space to enthrone your Bible - St John's Parish, Falls Road

Consider creating a sacred space to enthrone your Bible at home, a place to come regularly to read the Bible, individually and as a family.

Choose a book of the Bible to read over a period of time or the Sunday Mass readings. You could follow the five stages of the ancient practice of Lectio Divina to guide you.

1. **READING.** Read the verses aloud, slowly and carefully, realising that God is speaking through the sacred text. Imagine the scene, notice the feelings evoked by the text, and consider the type of writing used by the author.
2. **MEDITATION.** Considering what particular phrases or images have caught your attention, ask yourself what the text is saying personally to you. What insight, comfort, or challenge is God offering you?
3. **PRAYER.** Respond to God who has spoken to you in the text. In words of thanks, praise, repentance, or petition, speak to God from your heart.
4. **CONTEMPLATION.** Simply rest in God's presence. Trust God to work within you and form you in the divine image. Stay in silence and savour the Holy Spirit.
5. **ACTION.** Determine how you can turn your prayerful reflection into practical experience. Let the power of God's word have an effect in your life, making you a more committed disciple of Jesus.

Poem for today



The Coasters **By John Hewitt (1969)**

You coasted along
To larger houses, gadgets, more machines
To golf and weekend bungalows,
Caravans when the children were small,
the Mediterranean, later, with the wife.

You did not go to Church often,
Weddings were special;
But you kept your name on the books
Against eventualities;
And the parson called, or the curate.

You showed a sense of responsibility,
With subscriptions to worthwhile causes
And service in voluntary organisations;
And, anyhow, this did the business no harm,
No harm at all.
Relations were improving. A good
useful life. You coasted along.

You even had a friend of two of the other sort,
Coasting too: your ways ran parallel.
Their children and yours seldom met, though,
Being at different schools.
You visited each other, decent folk with a sense
Of humour. Introduced, even, to
One of their clergy. And then you smiled
In the looking-glass, admiring, a
Little moved by, your broadmindedness.
Your father would never have known
One of them. Come to think of it,
When you were young, your own home was never
Visited by one of the other sort.

Church News Ireland

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