

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Friendship award for Portglenone Parishioner

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Image of the day

Friendship award for Portglenone Parishioner

Very well done to Anne Bell (Portglenone Parish). Anne does amazing work with the Monday Club in Portglenone and this has been recognised by winning the Friendship Award at the recent Agewell Awards in Ballymena.

Representatives from the Monday club attended the Agewell Awards on Friday 1st March in Tullyglass Hotel. They had entered for the Friendship Award in which there were 15 nominees and they won. Congratulations to Anne Bell and her team.

Less One Friendship group organised by Angela Whyte was placed second, so Portglenone is a very friendly village.

Just look at their network organisations -

Bann Maine West Cluster, Portglenone Community Playgroup, Fullans Department Store and Coffee Lounge Portglenone, SuperValu Portglenone, 1st Portglenone Presbyterian Church, Townhill Presbyterian Church, St Colmanells and Portglenone Church of Ireland, Portglenone Community Workshop & Mens Shed, Bannside Pharmacy, Portglenone Primary School, St. Mary's Primary School, Greenlough, Photo's of Portglenone, The Parishes of Kilrea, Tamlaght O'Crilly Upper & Lower, Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership

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News

East Belfast Mission new step for homeless

Monday past was the first day of construction at 240 Newtownards Road. Now, an empty building, it will be turned into 6 private apartments and a community relations space.



Each of the 6 apartments will provide a home for those who are ready to take the next step and leave the Methodist mission's homelessness hostel.

This project is set to take roughly 40 weeks. For more information please call 028 9045 8560 or email info@ebm.org.uk.

Connor Connections news spread



The current issue of Connor Connections is an interview with 84-year-old Kay Hutchinson, who has raised an incredible £96,000 for Holy Trinity Portrush.

We hear about Carnmoney Parish Church. eco projects and meet some of the volunteers at the United Parish of Ballymoney, Finvoy and Rasharkin Community Fridge.

Belfast Cathedral steward Mike Johnston (above) tells us about the rewards of welcoming visitors to the iconic building, and teenager Charlie Smyth from St Colmanells and Portglenone reflects on his visit to Poland where he worked at a Bible Camp and helped support Ukrainian refugees.

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And for those interested in history, we hear something of the history of 17th Belfast BB Company which marks its 70th anniversary this year. All this and more - you can pick up a free copy of Connor Connections at the churches in the diocese

Children and Family Ministry workshop in Cork, Cloyne and Ross



The diocesan Children and Family Ministry Group's second workshop day highlighting the theme of 'Welcome' took place on Saturday, 2nd March 2024 at Northridge House.

The Rev. Abigail Sines writes:

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Following on from last October's event, 'Renewing our Welcome', this recent event highlighted the theme of 'Welcoming All Ages', focusing on how parishes can include and nurture the participation of children and young people in our regular patterns of worship. Representatives of twelve parish unions took part in the event, which featured a presentation by Joanna Griffin, Kinsale Union, sharing her learning from the Hand in Hand Children's Ministry Conference, which she recently attended on behalf of CCR.

Ivy Tanner, Fermoy Union, shared:

'I really loved the Lord's Prayer and especially the Grace, with actions. It slowed down the prayers and brought focus to the words rather than having them just 'rattled' off. The "Fizzy Forgiveness" prayer space, well, there should be a bowl of that in every house! What a great calmer for children in particular, where they can take the time to consider their grievance/hurt and decide to let it go – love it!'

Eoghan Healy, a candidate for OLM in Cloyne Union, shared:

'I found the workshop to be really informative. I liked the way it was practising being accessible by being accessible. The various activities: crafts, singing, dancing, playing, and discussing are very implementable by regular people like myself. We all know people who are naturally wonderful when it comes to engaging with young people, but this workshop wasn't about those people (I have no doubt some were in the room). It gave concrete activities and resources

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that we all can use and implement in our own churches. The



workshop modelled how various spaces can be set up to allow groups to work together. The workshop also highlighted how all age worship can flow into our regular patterns of worship. The structures seem to be already in place upon which we can hang our engagement with families. I left the workshop with some very simple, easily run activities that can profoundly communicate our faith to the whole of our Church family.

April Gunn, from Carrigrohane Union and a member of the organising group, shared:

‘My personal highlights of the day were: learning and singing together the songs, ‘Gloria! Gloria! In excelsis Deo!’ by Mike Anderson and ‘Creator God’ by Nick and Becky

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Drake; the discussion group time where we discussed the question 'What does it mean to be welcoming to all ages?' and then came up with a list of practical ways to incorporate this thinking into the various parts of a Church Service; the craft time; hearing from Joanna about the Hand in Hand Conference and seeing some of the resources from that; and generally getting to spend time and to chat to people who are equally passionate, about working with children and families, as I am. It truly was an encouraging, fun-filled and inspiring event.'

@ @ @

Powerful movement at United Methodist women convention in Central Nigeria

"God is moving so mighty and powerfully at the ongoing 2024 United Methodist Women Convention of Central Nigeria Annual Conference being held in Bambur." There was an unimaginable crowd at this convention and they vowed to remain in the United Methodist Church in Nigeria.

Changed lives in a Kenyan school through C of I parish partnerships

CMSI writes - We praise God for the ongoing development of Tujisaidie Community Centre School in Nairobi, and for the transformation that has been taking place there over recent weeks.

This is down to the combined efforts of the Tujisaidie Self-Help Group, the school staff and input from link parishes and organisations in Ireland.

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Team and link parish visits not only strengthen relationships, frequently they facilitate a richer understanding which helps channel partner prayer and support.

A 2018 CMSI team visit from St Columba's Portadown and Drumglass, Dungannon, resulted in a lot of improvements to the fabric of the school such as the painting of classrooms and installation of electricity. Some of the funds raised at that time were reserved for a planned project to rebuild the old single storey wing. Over the intervening years Isabelle Prondzynski, Lucy Irungu and others worked hard to submit a funding proposal to Misesan Cara to meet the rest of the project costs. This proposal was approved subject to certain conditions before Christmas and so work has now begun, adding extra classrooms to increase the capacity of the school.

Meanwhile, another CMSI Team visit in 2023 witnessed the phenomenal dedication of the school cooks Jennifer Wanjiku and Elizabeth Wanjiru who provide 320 free meals every school day for the staff and pupils, a project supported by St Mark's Dundela. During the cost-of-living crisis many families in the Soweto area of Kayole struggle to provide food for their children, so for a large number of the students this is the only proper meal they may have all day. Talking to the parents and children, however, it was noted that these same children often miss out on nutrition during the long holidays over Christmas.

Discussions with the local Tujisaidie leaders resulted in increased fundraising for a trial project to provide food parcels for the children to take home with them. Generous donations soon arrived and the 320 holiday food parcels

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were procured and distributed on the last day of the Autumn term (27 October). All the children and staff went home with their food packets consisting of 2 bags of maize flour (4 kg), 3.2 kg of rice and 2 bars of soap. Those children who were sick at home were represented by a parent who collected the food on their behalf.

Principal John Omondi reported that these parcels had such a huge impact in the community that other schools sent representatives to find out how it was organised so they could replicate the idea.

Another project that emerged out of discussions with the 2023 Team was the decoration of plain-plaster walls in the new assembly area. These colourful murals were funded by generous donations given in memory of long time St Mark's, Dundela, member Mrs Flada Smyth. The artwork focuses on Kenyan wildlife, landscapes and community life. When the children returned after the holidays they were absolutely delighted with the new look!

Cathedral call

Mother's Union "Big Hymn Sing" in St. Canice's Cathedral

The service in St. Canice's Cathedral in Kilkenny "was inspirational and the singing was wonderful".

The MU gave a special word of thanks to The Very Revd. Stephen Farrell for all his help and assistance in facilitating

MOTHERS' UNION

BIG HYMN SING

Saturday 2nd March 2024
at 2.00 p.m.



St. Canice's Cathedral Kilkenny



the use of St. Canice's Cathedral for this service. Their thanks were also expressed to the Cathedral staff, to Dr Harry Meehan, Director of Music, and to members of the Cathedral Choir for leading the singing and to The Right Revd. Adrian Wilkinson for his address. Gratitude also to Kilkenny Branch of Mothers'



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Union for coordinating refreshments after the service

Jane Austen statue making news in Winchester

The Times says a Jane Austen expert has criticised plans for a statue of the author close to her final resting place at Winchester Cathedral. The £100,000 life-sized sculpture is expected to be unveiled next year to mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of the writer. But at a public meeting, Elizabeth Proudman,, a leading light in the Jane Austen society, raised concerns at the prospect of tourists taking selfies with the statue. She added that it also wasn't in keeping with what's known about the author, a very private person who "despised publicity".

Special visit at Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin



Organised through The Department of Foreign Affairs, a delegation from The Embassy of The Socialist Republic of Vietnam to The United Kingdom and Ireland recently paid a courtesy visit to Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, where they were met by the Dean, Dr William Morton, and given a guided tour by Mr Derek Tobin from the team of vergers.

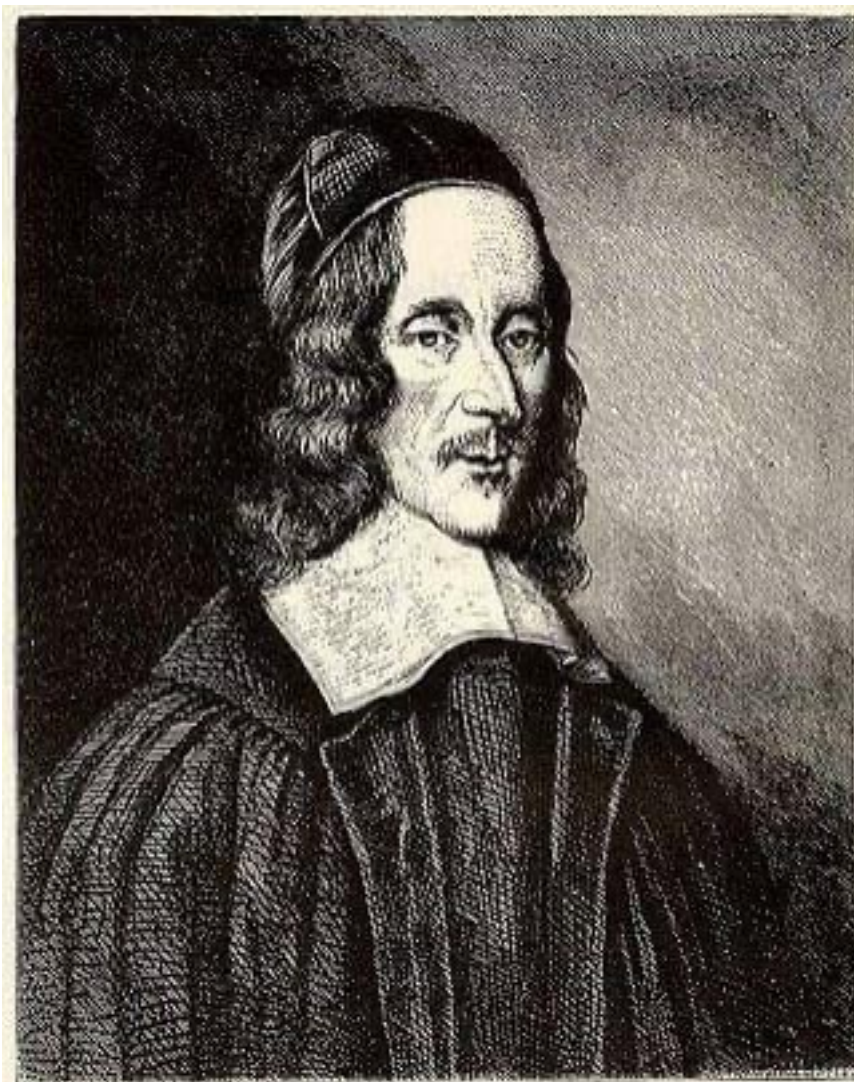
On the delegation, pictured left to right, were: Mr Nguyen Minh Hung, Director General, Mr Bin Thanh Son, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and His Excellency, Mr Nguyen Hoang Long, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of The

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Socialist Republic of Vietnam to The United Kingdom and Ireland.

Heritage

From Killybegs to Nova Scotia



On February 24 in 1816, Charles Inglis, the Ulster-Scot who became the first Anglican bishop in the mission to North America, passed away.

Inglis was born to the Reverend Archibald Inglis, rector of Glencolmcille and Kilcar, a remote parish in southwest County Donegal, Ulster,

into a family of Scottish ancestry.

Inglis became rector of Killybegs, Donegal, but in 1755 he sailed to America before his 21st birthday and worked as a teacher.

After he had taught for three years at a Church of England school in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Inglis obtained the required testimonials to enable him to be admitted to holy orders in England. Ordained deacon and priest by the bishop of Rochester on 24 Dec. 1758, the young cleric returned to America as missionary to Dover, Delaware, where he served for six years.

On 11 August 1787, George III created the Diocese of Nova Scotia by Letters Patent, and named Inglis its first bishop, where he preached at St. Paul's Church in Halifax.

Charles' son John Inglis also became Bishop of Nova Scotia, in 1825, having been ordained by his father in 1801.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Danny Boy - Superb music and graphics

Jonathan Scott - On the magnificent organ at Hollywood Parish Church with two further U-tube melodies.

Hopefully still available at -

[<https://youtu.be/XXw1nrcPs\ Q?si=acXQDY4ScC1js69x>]

Teach us to Pray”, the guide for the Year of Prayer is now available

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To mark the Year of Prayer, the Dicastery for Evangelization has prepared a series of useful materials and aids which can be used by Christian communities and individuals in their preparations for the 2025 Jubilee.

A new guide "Teach us to Pray" is now available online and a digital version can be downloaded free from the website. The title is taken from the 11th chapter of the Gospel of Luke (Lk 11.1).

The booklet, inspired by the teachings of Pope Francis, is written as an invitation to intensify prayer, understood as a personal dialogue with God, and to lead readers to reflect on their faith, and their commitment in today's world, in the various contexts in which they are called to live.

The aim is to offer reflections, ideas, and advice to help people to live their dialogue with the Lord more fully in their relationships with others. The guide is made up of sections dedicated to prayer in the parish community, and in the family, with other sections dedicated to young people, cloistered communities, catechesis, and spiritual retreats.

"Teach us to Pray", the guide for the Year of Prayer is now available.

Highlighted book of the week - Praying the Stations with Pope Francis

Author - Bill Huebsch. Redemptorist publications. 2.25

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Walk the Stations this year with the Holy Father. Let his wisdom and insight draw you into greater repentance, more generous forgiveness and importantly a closer relationship with Jesus and an understanding of what he did for you on the Cross. Click the link to buy now <https://buff.ly/3RKWc5O>

Perspective

God in our interdependence

God in our interdependence
God in our mutual wellbeing:
what a joy to discover
we don't know our true selves
until we become
something new with others.
Reverse any colonial impulse
that leads us to believe
people would be better off
if they were more like us.
Restore us into your image
by being changed
through and with community:
the people of God
you created us to be.
Amen.

Inspired by biblical texts and by the philosophy of 'Ubuntu': I am because we are.

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In the media

Kilkenny Live - Kilkenny bishops reflect on special international Anglican - Roman Catholic summit

Bishop Niall Coll (Bishop of Ossory) and Bishop Adrian Wilkinson (Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory) were the two Irish bishops asked to attend the summit.

It was the first time since 2016 that IARCCUM was convened. On this occasion over 50 bishops from 27 different countries, mostly in national pairs, spent between January 22-29 together to listen, pray and discuss how growing together as churches might strengthen our joint witness and mission in the world. Here, they reflect on their pilgrimage together:

Visiting holy sites to pray in both Rome and Canterbury was very much part of the process. On January 23 it was moving for us to be part of an Anglican Choral Evensong being held for only the second time ever in the Choir Chapel of St Peter's Basilica. The meeting coincided in part with the annual Octave of Prayer for Christian Unity which always ends on January 25 when our churches mark the Feast of the Conversation of St Paul.

Appropriately that evening all the bishops attended Catholic vespers at the Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls, where the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury both preached

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and commissioned the IARCCUM delegates in their pairs for their work. For us and many of those attending the liturgy, it was encouraging to observe both church leaders clearly at ease in each other's company and both committed to the goal of Christian unity.

Earlier that day the Archbishop of Canterbury had presided at an Anglican Eucharist in the basilica of San Bartolomeo. Before the service he and the participating bishops, toured the Sanctuary of the New Martyrs, which is a memorial in the crypt of this church. Opened in March last year, this permanent exhibition commemorates the stories of the Christian martyrs of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Here the vestments worn by Archbishop Oscar Romero and a book owned by Maksymilian Kolbe were on display. Martyrs from churches other than the Roman Catholic Church are also 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. One of those attending IARCCUM was the Anglican Archbishop Leonard Dawea from the Solomon Islands. As a young man, he spent twelve years as a member of the Melanesian Brotherhood and so knew some of those martyred. At the end of the service, the Archbishop of Canterbury laid a wreath at the chapel where the martyrs of Oceania are commemorated.

On the last day in Rome, the bishops visited the church where Pope Gregory the Great commissioned St Augustine (the First Archbishop of Canterbury) to convert the Anglo-Saxons. From there they made the same journey he did, albeit using the comfort and speed of Easyjet!

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The second phase of the summit was based in Canterbury and most of the delegates stayed at Cathedral Lodge in the shadow of the great cathedral. There we had time to reflect on many of the issues discussed and began to prepare the final text of a statement setting out our aims and achievements.

We had heard the contributions from other bishops living in Brazil on the need to defend the rights of indigenous people living in the rain forest, from bishops in the Middle East on how the Anglican Diocese in Jerusalem is continuing to support a hospital in war torn Gaza, on the challenge of secularism in some parts of the world, as well as the contrasting challenge of religious fundamentalism in other countries, and these issues were reflected in the text of our statement. As the week unfolded, it was obvious that some of our episcopal colleagues were returning to situations of religious discrimination if not persecution, as well as places of political instability; all very far removed from our experience in Kilkenny.

For us as bishops from Ireland, the summit's focus on partnership and friendship was best summed up by Cardinal Stephen Chow Sau-yan (Bishop of Hong Kong), who preached at the final Sunday Eucharist at Canterbury Cathedral. He said:

“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

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communion, praying and discerning, teaching and serving for the mission of our Triune God.”

The memory of IARCCUM will live long with us and our hope is that it will be a stimulus for continued fruitful ecumenical engagement, not only between the two of us as friends and fellow bishops, but for the wider diocese and church too.

News Letter - Ireland Referendums 2024: Presbyterian Church in Ireland question moves to update Irish constitution's definition of family and role of women

The Presbyterian Church has questioned moves to update the Irish constitution's definition of the family and the role of women in society, Philip Bradfield writes.

The Irish government is holding two referendums on 8 March to update the constitutional definition of the family and women's role in society.

At present the Irish constitution says in Article 41 that the state “guarantees to protect the family in its constitution and authority, as the necessary basis of social order and as indispensable to the welfare of the nation and the state”.

“In particular, the state recognises that by her life within the home, woman gives to the state support without which the common good cannot be achieved.

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“The state shall, therefore, endeavour to ensure that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home.

“The state pledges itself to guard with special care the institution of Marriage, on which the family is founded, and to protect it against attack.”

The proposed changes would expand the definition of a family by putting “other durable relationship” on an equal footing to marriage, thereby qualifying them for equal state support.

The changes would also remove the reference to the role of women in fulfilling their duties in the home as providing critical support to the state.

This will be replaced by gender neutral wording which states that any member of a family can fulfill the supportive role.

Announcing the referendums, Taoiseach Leo Varadkar said families may be “founded on lasting relationships other than marriage”.

He added: “For example, a family headed by a lone parent, or a family headed by a grandparent or guardian all of us know people who are committed to each other in a loving relationship over a sustained period of time, who are not married.”

However, in a letter to its ministers and congregations across the Republic of Ireland, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) outlined its view of the proposed changes.

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The Convener of PCI's Council for Public Affairs, Rev Daniel Kane (from Ballymena), and the Convener of the Council's Republic of Ireland Panel, Rev William Hayes (from Tullamore in County Offaly), said they recognised that in a changing society there are "a great many other households that count as families".

However they were "disappointed" that the proposed amendment "seeks to remove the link between marriage and family".

There had been significant debate about adding the phrase "other durable relationships" to the constitution as "a new way to define 'family'" they said.

And they were therefore "not alone in foreseeing major problems that will arise from the lack of clarity surrounding this new definition".

The biblical role of women is "much greater and more varied" than was "controversially" defined in the Irish constitution 90 years ago, they added.

However the church still recognises "the pivotal role that mothers have in nurturing and bringing up children" they said, and deleting all reference to this "may unintentionally devalue their pivotal role to the detriment of society".

They were also concerned that the new constitution would therefore fail to provide any recognition for the role of "parents" in raising children, adding that they "would like to see the relationship between a child and their parent/s affirmed".

Speaking to the soul

Go

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
