

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Hanami season Lurgan**

May 1, 2025

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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

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## Image of the day



## Hanami season Lurgan

**In Japan, this is Hanami season, where people go out to admire the flowers, especially the cherry trees.**

But we have Hanami in Lurgan too, and are always taken by the magnificent cherry tree in the grounds of St John's Parish Church in Lurgan.

Here it is in all its glory, it was just in time for Easter.

## News

### Adaptive Ukrainian clothing St Mary's, Howth

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**Busy but productive day... Easter General Vestry this morning and then an incredible €2050 raised for Adaptive clothing for wounded Ukrainian soldiers this afternoon.**

Thank you to so many for your generosity. Thanks to all who baked, brought and bought.



**James Martin fantastic ambassador for Corrymeela**

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**Sharing the news with Dr. James Martin about his successful fundraising golf event for Corrymeela was a delight.**

Over £16k raised which will go to support Corrymeela's work across Northern Ireland and beyond.

Thank you @James Martin for being a fantastic ambassador for Corrymeela!

## **Get on your bike in Galway**

**St Nicholas Collegiate Church Galway - It was lovely to see our new bicycle rack full of bikes this morning at our 11AM Easter service.**

We're very grateful to Galway City Council for providing funding for this infrastructure as part of the Community Recognition Funds. We always encourage our congregation and visitors to walk, cycle, or use public transport as much as possible when visiting us for sightseeing or worship.

## **Short term experience placements in Africa or Nepal**

**CMS Ireland offers Short Term Experience Placements which are a great way to get a taste of God's work around the world.**

Opportunities range from 2 weeks to 1 year, with one of our Global Partners in Africa or Nepal. Get in touch with Gillian

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at our Belfast office if you are sensing God's leading to use your gifts and skills alongside the Church overseas.  
([personnel@cmsireland.org](mailto:personnel@cmsireland.org))

## Education

### Drug education charity promotes play on drug abuse awareness

**One of CNI's school sources writes - Last term, we hosted a powerful play on drug abuse awareness for Year 11 pupils.**

The play, 'I Love You, Mum - I Promise I Won't Die,' tells the tragic story of Daniel Spargo-Mabbs, who tragically died at 16 from an MDMA overdose. Through his story, students learned about the high risks associated with illegal substance misuse and the importance of making informed decisions.

The session concluded with a workshop, helping students develop strategies to navigate difficult situations.

A huge thank you to the **Daniel Spargo-Mabbs Foundation and Ever Unique Productions** for their incredible support and performance. They work with young people, parents, teachers and professionals in schools, colleges and groups in England and Scotland using our evidence-based, multi-component drug and alcohol programme, developed in line with best practice for the most effective outcomes.

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[<https://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk/>](<https://www.dsmfoundation.org.uk/>)

## Post-16 Service Leadership Programme options



## Post-16 Service Leadership Programme

**Another of CNI's school sources writes - Our Year 13 have been engaging with aspects of Catholic Social Teaching as part of the Post-16 Service Leadership Programme.**

North Belfast Foodbank

One group has been learning about Preferential Option for the Poor, with a particular focus on local poverty. They were delighted to be invited to the North Belfast Foodbank Warehouse yesterday to help to process some donations. The students have also gained valuable insight into the work of the North Belfast Foodbank when Sean McCloskey

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visited to speak to them recently. We hope that this will inspire some of our students to volunteer to serve the local community further. Many thanks to North Belfast Foodbank for linking up with us on this programme.

**There are insights on the web site of Belfast Girls' Model School. In answer to the question What does Post 16 offer you? There is this range -**

- Ø A broad range of courses in partnership with Belfast Boys' Model School and Mercy College as well as the wider North Belfast Area Learning Community
- Ø High quality teaching and learning
- Ø Track record of academic success
- Ø Pastoral support from a dedicated team of staff
- Ø Careers guidance, university links and contact with employers
- Ø An interview with you and your parents before entering Post 16
- Ø An efficient Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) scheme
- Ø A caring ethos
- Ø Opportunities to play a leading role in school through the Student School Leadership Team (SSLT)
- Ø State of the art facilities and resources





## Queen's University and Hillsborough Castle in special new partnership

**A very special new partnership with Historic Royal Palaces at Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, that places societal impact at its heart has been announced.**

The partnership, which spans several areas, including collaborative research, student placements, and joint programming, will build on our existing relationship.

A signing ceremony to mark the partnership took place during a special event held at Hillsborough Castle with leading political and business leaders in attendance, including special guest Chancellor Emeritus Senator George Mitchell.

Professor Sir Ian Greer, Queen's President and Vice-Chancellor commented, "Queen's University values the importance of partnership work and collaboration to drive positive change. We have enjoyed a strong working

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relationship with Hillsborough Castle, and we are delighted to formalise our commitment to pursue joint outcomes in areas including collaborative research; cultural promotion and exchange; as well as building deep dialogues that support societal change."

## Cathedral Calls

### Ecumenical service marks the patronal festival of St Laserian


**“Earlier in the evening we held our annual ecumenical service and procession in Old Leighlin to mark the patronal festival of St Laserian.**

St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral,  
Armagh



The Dean and Chapter invite you to attend  
**A SERVICE OF  
REMEMBRANCE WITH THANKSGIVING  
ON THE EVE OF THE  
80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF  
VE DAY**

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025  
at 7.30 p.m.



**VE DAY**®  
80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
A SHARED MOMENT OF CELEBRATION  
8 M A Y 2 0 2 5

“We began in the cathedral and then walked to the nearby well. It was good to share this service with Bishop Denis Nulty and local clergy and to meet so many people there. Thanks to Dermot Mulligan from Carlow County Museum for some of the photographs”.



## The Little Way Novena

### 10 - 18 May 2025

#### Saint Eugene's Cathedral, Derry



*When I am charitable  
it is Jesus alone who acts in me*

**Saturday 10th**  
7.30pm

**Mass with  
Sacrament of the Sick**

**Sunday 11th**  
6.00pm

**Evening Devotions**

**Monday to Friday**  
6.30am Mass  
10.00am Mass

7.30pm Evening Devotions



**Saturday 17th**  
10.00am

**Mass for the Dead**

**Sunday 18th**  
3.00pm

**Closing Ceremony  
& Blessing of Roses**

**Sacrament of  
Confession  
available during  
Novena**

### Guest Speakers

**Sunday**

**Monday**

**Tuesday**

**Wednesday**

**Thursday**

**Friday**



**Bishop Donal  
Mc Keown**



**Colin Bell**



**Archdeacon  
Robert Miller**



**Sile Quinlan**



**Sr. Rosa Goretti**



**Fr. John Joe Duffy**

**www.steugenescathedral.com Tel: 028 71262894**

# Clergy and ministry

## Hub Team's Easter Mission 25

**“Thank you to everyone from the Hub Team from QUB chaplaincy who led our Easter Mission 25”.**

They worked so hard in so many different ways and have left a lasting legacy not only in hearts but also on the walls of our youth space!! Thank you also to Rev Jim Carson, Ste and the ladies in St Stephen's and St Michael's who helped during the week. It was a wonderful time together for all ages in the community.

## Dementia's Got Talent

**Seven people living with dementia, who are supported by The Salvation Army, took to the stage and shone in Dementia's Got Talent recently in Darlington.**

Darlington Salvation Army's leader, Major Shirley, said: 'It was an absolutely fantastic night. We had comedians, a salsa dancer, a 91-year-old lady playing piano, another playing the harmonica, and a husband and wife who did a comedy sketch and sang Ernie (The Fastest Milkman in the West)! The atmosphere in the theatre was electric, it was so supportive with everyone clapping along, singing and cheering.'

The event raised £8,000 through ticket sales and raffles, which will be used to support dementia groups in Darlington.

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Congratulations to all involved - especially to the fantastic contestants who took part.

## Events

Church's Ministry of Healing Ireland

BENEFACT TRUST

# Restival

INVITATION INTO  
**SACRED PAUSE**

Restival is a day long immersion in nature, a space to simply be and to return to the Source of our Being.

**Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 10.30am - 3.30pm**

- \*\* mindful wander
- \*\* working with clay
- \*\* scripture circle
- \*\* centring prayer
- \*\* journaling
- \*\* nature art
- \*\* time among trees & beside fire & water

Book via [Eventbrite](#)

Lynn, near Mullingar, Co. Westmeath

**RETURN TO YOUR REST,  
O MY SOUL. PS. 116:7A**

## Resources

**5 new episodes coming soon from Methodist 'Living Wholeheartedly' Podcast**

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EPISODE 1 OF 5  
AVAILABLE NOW

– Join John and Ruth Alderdice as they unpack John’s Presidential theme for this Connexional year and invite us all to think about how we are called to transform the world.

## In the media

**No matter the outcome with Putin, we must have stronger armed forces - Daily Telegraph**

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**Richard Dannatt writes -When Sergey Lavrov famously said that Vladimir Putin only had three advisers – Ivan the Terrible, Catherine the Great and Peter the Great –**

- he was correctly pointing to the motivation at the heart of Putin's strategic intent and the purpose of his war in Ukraine. Anyone who believes that Putin will agree to a voluntary end to this war is indulging in serious and dangerous wishful thinking.

All reasonable people would like to see an end to the killing on both sides and an end to the destruction of the land of Ukraine but such an outcome will only be achieved if Vladimir Putin feels such pressure on himself that his personal position and leadership is in serious question.

As an unreconstructed KGB colonel whose beloved Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact were destroyed by the unity of Nato and the West in the late 1980s, Putin wishes his epitaph to celebrate the heroic Russian leader who divided and destroyed the West and restored Russian pride. That is his objective, and until that extraordinary conversation in St Peter's Basilica on Saturday with Volodymyr Zelensky, Donald Trump seemed to be playing into Putin's hands, either willingly or unwittingly. To be charitable, it may be more of the latter, but the result could be the same – a potential disaster for Ukraine and decades of insecurity for Europe. Rather than bullying Ukraine into accepting the loss of part of its sovereign territory in return for a short-term ceasefire which Russia will undoubtedly break when it has refurbished its armed forces, the focus of pressure should be fiercely on the Russian economy. Rising prices, steep inflation, international isolation of the Kremlin elite amongst

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other factors are more likely to discredit or topple Putin and end the war, than meekly blessing his illegal annexation of Crimea. In the meantime, the Ukrainian armed forces and economy must be given all that they need to keep an unrelenting pressure on the Russian military on the battlefield, at sea and in the air. It will continue to be ugly and bloody, but it will be noble and right.

The parallels with the late 1930's have well been worked over already and this time, unlike Czechoslovakia being sacrificed in 1938 without consultation, President Zelensky is invited into the conversation, albeit with a gun to his head. Worse still, the man holding the gun has been trying steal his victim's natural wealth and pretend that this is some kind of legitimate deal. These are harsh criticisms, and a British government spokesperson could not voice them, but independent commentators can see the reality of the situation. To his credit, our Prime Minister is trying to walk a series of tightropes tying together a trade deal and good relations with the United States, unwavering support for Ukraine, closer trading and defence relations with the European Union and burnishing the United Kingdom's position on the world stage. It is an enormous challenge.

At the heart of that challenge is the ticking time bomb of the war in Ukraine. Blood and treasure are being sacrificed every day. When Donald Trump realises that he cannot conclude his deal with Vladimir Putin anytime soon, it has already been suggested that he will walk away and switch his attention elsewhere. In any event, he has signalled that the United States intends to reduce its military support to Europe and on that point his intention is legitimate.



This places the onus squarely on the European governments and their national economies. Those closest to Russia are already digging deep into their resource pool and generating more money for defence by one means or another. Why else would Sweden and Finland have chosen this moment to join Nato with Poland now spending 4.7 per cent of its GDP on defence and Germany planning to create a 500 billion euro defence fund?

Why else would worried Baltic States be withdrawing from international agreements banning the use of certain defensive weapon systems? These countries can feel the heat, smell the fear and are taking substantive action now. They have all experienced the devastating costs of fighting deadly wars and now quite correctly believe that paying a much higher premium today to deter future war represents strategic investment in their best national and collective European security interests.

In contrast to these decisive initiatives, the United Kingdom government has announced a meagre rise in defence spending from 2.3 per cent of GDP to 2.5 per cent. This was only financed by raiding our international development budget, thereby diminishing our soft power which is a key component of our ability to exercise influence on the world stage.

Meanwhile, the much-heralded Strategic Defence Review is yet to be published. There is a general pledge to increase defence spending to 3 per cent by the end of the decade and if the SDR is to be of real value, it must set out the pathway to that higher level of expenditure. However, the extent of the hollowing out of our armed forces by

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successive governments since the end of the Cold War demands a defence budget nearer to 3.5 per cent of GDP. Even though the Prime Minister will have enjoyed his recent night embarked in HMS Prince of Wales as she leads a major naval deployment to the Indo-Pacific region, he must realise that our military capability is skin deep and that the highest defence priority for the United Kingdom is the security of Europe.

The Chancellor will hold the purse strings tightly, but it is the responsibility of the Prime Minister to direct more money towards defence. With little projected growth in the economy and borrowing levels well above forecast, the Government will have to confront the remaining option – to raise taxes. Adherence to manifesto pledges is admirable but when the international context has changed to the extent that it has since the Labour Party manifesto was drafted last year, the mark of real leadership is to have the courage to reevaluate the situation and take different decisions. It will need a concerted public communications campaign to explain to the electorate why VAT or Income Tax must rise, but many in the business community are expecting this. To govern is to choose and some choices are painful. Far better to take pain in our pocket now to deter war than face the utter disaster of fighting one later. The Ukrainians are buying us time to rearm – we must not waste it.

**General the Lord Dannatt GCB CBE MC DL is a former Chief of the General Staff** – the professional head of the British Army. He is co-author of *Korea – War without End* to be published on 22 May by Osprey/Bloomsbury

# Heritage

## Sir Hans Sloane

**Sir Hans Sloane, the famous Ulster-Scot who invented milk chocolate and helped found the British Museum, was born on April 16th, 1660.**

Sloane was born as the seventh son of Alexander Sloane, of Scottish ancestry, in Killyleagh, County Down. His mother, Sarah Hicks, came to Ulster as a companion of the wife of James Hamilton, the Earl of Clanbrassil, who lived in Killyleagh Castle and whose father, also James Hamilton, was an agent for the future King James in Ireland and an orchestrator of the settlements that immediately preceded the Ulster Plantation.

The lives of the Sloanes and Hamiltons were intertwined. Hans' father died when he was 6 years old, and his education afterwards was encouraged and sponsored by the Hamilton family. When his mother remarried and left Killyleagh, Hans stayed, living with the Hamiltons and receiving his tuition there. His brother, William, married Jane Hamilton of Killyleagh, sibling to the Earl of Clanbrassil.

Sloane moved to London to study medicine at the age of 19, before moving to France to achieve a Doctorate in Physic at the University of Orange in 1683. He returned to London and was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, becoming lifelong friends with its President Samuel Pepys.

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He travelled to the West Indies in 1687, where he encountered people in Jamaica drinking a beverage made from cocoa beans. He found this to be too distasteful, and later would mix cocoa beans, sugar and milk together to create milk chocolate. His recipe was later sold to the Cadbury brothers.

Sloane, upon returning to London, set up his own medical practice which was to become a great success. He was the physician to three successive sovereigns: Queen Anne, George I and George II. He became the first medical practitioner to receive a hereditary title, being appointed Baronet in 1719. He was also simultaneously President of the Royal Society and President of the Royal College of Physicians, the only person to ever achieve such a feat.

Over his lifetime, Sloane collected over 100,000 notable objects, including books, drawings, plant specimens, coins, and much else. Many notable people travelled from far and wide to view this collection, including figures such as Benjamin Franklin and Voltaire.

Towards the end of his life, he viewed that this collection should be sold to the nation rather than split up and sold to individual collectors. An Act of Parliament allowed the government to buy this collection, and it would go on to form the foundations of the British Museum, the British Library, and the National History Museum.

Sloane passed away in 1753, aged 92. The statue of Hans Sloane, pictured, can be found in Hans Sloane Square in his hometown of Killyleagh. Another version of the statue can

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be found in London, just off the renowned Sloane Square area, which is likewise named after him.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## 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](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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# Church News Ireland

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**Link in Monday through Saturday from early morning**

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