

Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – RTE's Service on Sunday
by Christian Aid Ireland**

Image of the day

RTE's Service on Sunday by Christian Aid Ireland

Please tune in to 'Service on Sunday' led by Christian Aid Ireland which will be aired tomorrow Sunday 12 May at 11am on both RTÉ One television and RTÉ Radio 1.

It will be available to view afterwards on the RTÉ player.

The service focuses on Aline Nibogora in Burundi, the story for this year's Christian Aid Week appeal.

Christian Aid Ireland's Chief Executive Rosamond Bennett leads the service throughout and the sermon is delivered by CAI's Chair, Rev Dr Liz Hughes.

The band of Orangefield Church in east Belfast is providing the beautiful music - Ellen Hartin (vocals), Gillian Hartin (piano), Scott Mackey (vocals and acoustic guitar), Johnathan Shaw (electric guitar) and Keith Trimble (bass).

News

Ascension Day Pudding in the Middle East

For Christians living in the Holy Land and throughout the Middle East, it is customary to share a special pudding on Ascension Day.



Rev Don Binder This is what we had tonight at St. George's Cathedral after services—and it is yet another delightful Middle Eastern custom that we've come to enjoy here in more ways than one!

Most often, it's a milky-white dessert called Mahalabia, where the color represents the clouds into which Christ ascended as he was taken into heaven (Acts 1:9).

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Less commonly, it's chocolate pudding layered under vanilla and sprinkled with coconut. This represents Christ ascending from earth into heaven through the coconut clouds.

Unexpected Dromore Cathedral Mothers' Union wedding dress



Dromore Cathedral Mothers' Union have a wedding dress on display at the Cathedral 'Beauty of the Bride' exhibition taking place 9 - 12 May.

Their display is not what you might expect, - a dress is made from the range of knitted items they continually send to local hospital for use in the neo-natal department.



New C of I Youth Ministry Officer for Southern Region

Luke Hawkins is the new CIYD Youth Ministry Development Officer (Southern Region).

A former teacher, Luke has most recently been serving in Meath and Kildare Diocese as Diocesan Youth Officer and Chaplain at Wilson's Hospital School, Mullingar.

His role, amongst other things, is to support existing and new youth ministries in the Dioceses of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh; Meath and Kildare; Dublin and Glendalough; Cashel, Ferns and Ossory; Cork, Cloyne and Ross; and Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe.

Speaking of the new appointment, CIYD's President, Bishop Pat Storey, said: "Luke will bring experience and enthusiasm to this key role. We look forward to him settling in and developing new initiatives and opportunities for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom together. We very much hope that dioceses across the Church will know that CIYD is a resource that seeks to equip, engage and empower youth ministry at all levels."

For more information about the work of the Church of Ireland Youth Department is available at www.ciyd.org and through its social media channels.

Small parish presents Choral Evensong for Ascension Day

The small village parish of Kilmore near Downpatrick in Northern Ireland celebrated Ascension Day with a full Choral Evensong.

"We had a small choir of only six people, who come together for special occasions. This was the first Choral Evensong in the church for many years, and singing Anglican chant and a full setting of the Magnificat and Nunc Dumittis was, to start with, a little out of the singers' comfort zone, but once they got the feel of the music, they all thoroughly enjoyed it, as did the small appreciative congregation.

"It is hoped that this can be the start of further services of Choral Evensong at Kilmore".

From the Choral Evensong Appreciation Society on Facebook.

The Church as God's 'repair shop' bringing hope in a broken world

Members of the Church of Ireland's General Synod gathered in St Patrick's Cathedral, yesterday morning for a Service of Holy Communion before business commenced in the Armagh City Hotel.

The Bishop of Clogher, Bishop Ian Ellis, was the guest preacher at the service and spoke on the Church being God's repair shop in a broken world. Drawing on the BBC TV programme, Bishop Ellis noted that The Repair Shop "is a great illustration of hope at work" and added: "I wonder if this is a good paradigm for the work of the Church – to be the kind of place where the weary can find refreshment, the despairing find hope, the hurting can find healing, the penitent find new beginnings." See Perspective on page 14 below for text of sermon

This is the first meeting of the General Synod to take place in Armagh since 2018, and will continue in person today with an online session to follow on Tuesday evening, 14th May.

Leading US seminary selects woman dean who has not taught in a seminary

The selection of Dr. Lauren Whitnah as Nashotah House's next dean and president may seem to signal a major break with the Wisconsin Anglo-Catholic seminary's 182 years of tradition, Mark Michael writes in 'The Living Church'.

Whitnah is only the second layperson to lead the institution and the first woman (indeed, she will be the only woman on the faculty). She hasn't taught in a seminary before, and her current job is mostly focused on writing grants for a large-data computing lab. She is almost certainly the first dean to have a side hustle teaching Argentine tango.

But Whitnah was raised in an Episcopal rectory and is descended from generations of educators. Her background as a medieval historian deepens her appreciation for the seminary's Benedictine ethos. The Pax Nashotah, a local truce in North American Anglicanism's wars that allows Episcopal and Anglican Church in North America students to prepare for ministry together, matters deeply to Whitnah, because her life as a worshiper has been on both sides of this divide.

Whitnah recognizes that the job before her is challenging: building trust with stakeholders that often disagree, increasing residential enrollment as it declines across American seminaries, raising millions to put a cash-poor institution on a more solid financial footing. But keeping the 12th century so often in her frame of reference has its advantages.

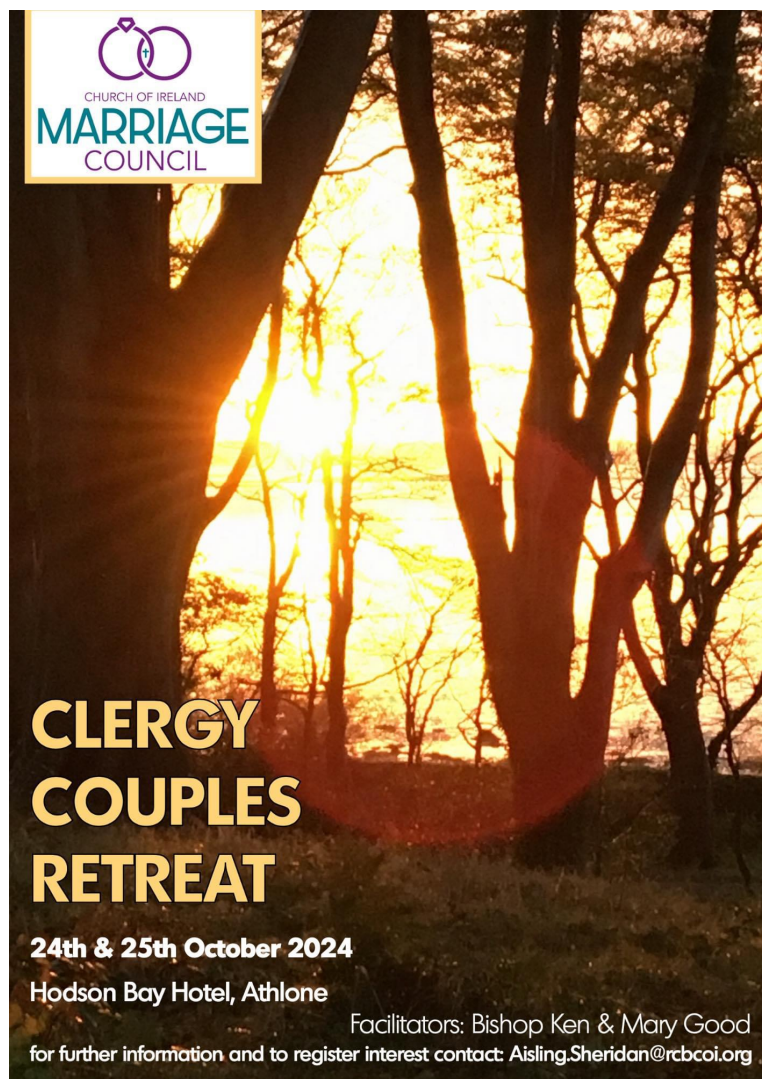
"Maybe this is from my training as a historian, and particularly as a medievalist, that I take the long view and I think of things in terms of centuries. So, we are planting trees that we will not live to see grow to their full height. I find that a terrific opportunity," she says.

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“I don’t operate from a place of handwringing about it, because I see how things have ebbed and flowed over the life of the Church.”

“There is such a strong sense at Nashotah House of the distinctiveness of the site, as a place that people deeply love. Participating in that — and being able to be the next in line of the custodians of that place — is very, very appealing.”

See - [<https://livingchurch.org/2024/04/26/nashotah-calls-medieval-scholar-lauren-whitnah-as-dean/>]



**CLERGY
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for further information and to register interest contact: Aisling.Sheridan@rcbcoi.org

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**Night away for
C of I clergy
and their
spouses,**

For all clergy and their
spouses, the C of I

Pause . Unwind . Grow

In the busyness of parish life, it is so easy to miss time for our own family relationships. The Marriage Council is therefore inviting clergy and their spouses to a relaxing 24-hour break at the Hodson Bay Hotel, on the quiet, picturesque shores of Lough Ree, Athlone from 24th - 25th October.

It is our desire that this mini-break away will refresh you and allow you time for one another. Therefore we want you to have as much space to enjoy the hotel and beautiful surroundings of Lough Ree.

Whilst the time is yours, Bishop Ken Good and his wife Mary will facilitate a few mini-sessions sharing stories, and providing practical insights into navigating marriage which we hope will help couples who attend.

The cost of the break will be borne by the Marriage Council with couples being asked for a small donation if possible.

If you would like to reserve a space, please contact Aisling Sheridan at aisling.sheridan@rcbcoi.org




Marriage Council is offering a night away in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone in October.

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The Council says - “We recognise that parish life can sometimes mean sacrifice on clergy families so we want to give couples an opportunity to rest and unwind. Whilst there “will be a lot of time for couples to relax, we have invited Bishop Ken Good and his wife Mary to facilitate short sessions to encourage couples in their marriages.

“So if you are clergy then get in touch with Aisling who will secure your place. If you are a member of a parish then share this with your rector.”



PRAY FOR LIFE
NOVENA
23-31 MAY
Feast of the Visitation

Sign up at:
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An Initiative of the Council for Life of the
Catholic Bishops Conference of Ireland

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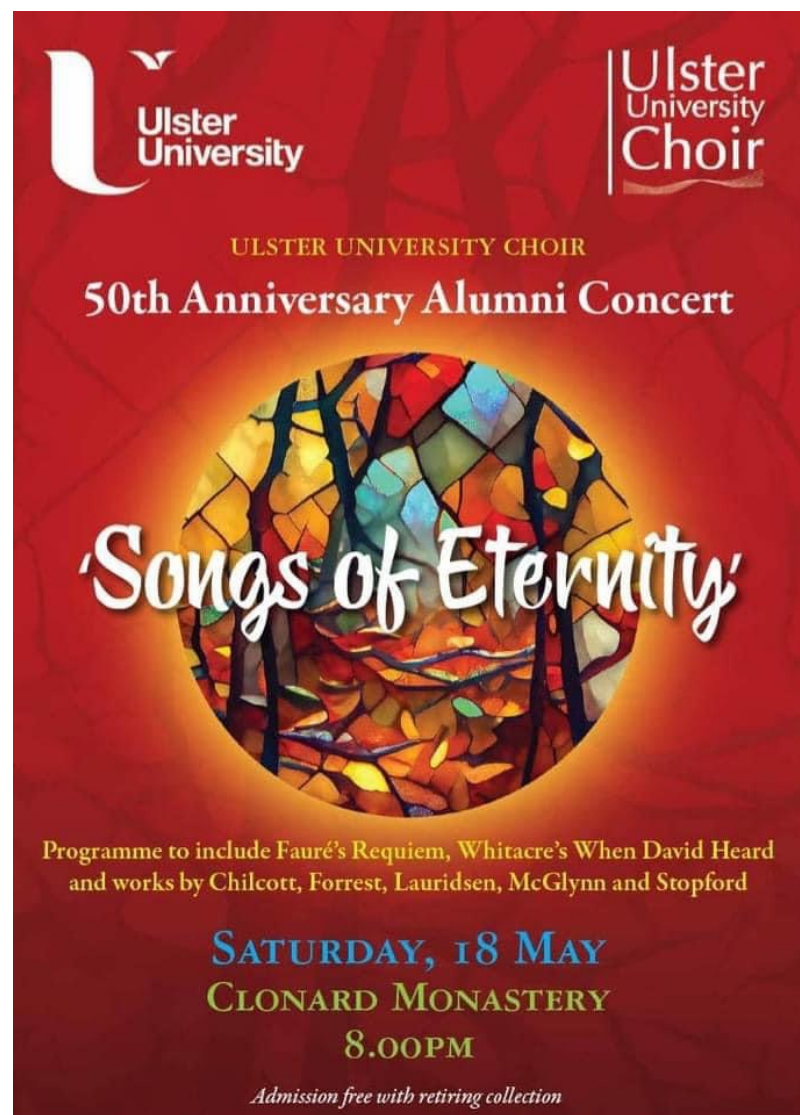
Irish Catholic Bishops Pray for Life Novena

The Council for Life of the Irish Catholic Bishops Conference is running a Pray for Life Novena starting in two weeks (Thursday 23rd May 2024) and ending on the Feast of the Visitation (and including the date the right to life was removed in the South).

This is a powerful way of keeping this crucial issue in the prayers, thoughts and actions of people of faith across Ireland and beyond.

Please share the sign up link and promotional image below, and encourage individuals, families, parishes, and prayer and evangelisation groups to participate for the nine days.
<https://prayforlife.ie/#signup>

Ulster University Choir Songs of Eternity



May 11, 2024

Ulster University Choir is celebrating 50 years of its existence this year. They will be performing a special concert with alumni members in Clonard Monastery with over 120 singers. Music will include Faure Requiem with Wells Kennedy's own Stewart Smith at the organ.

Harmony Too at Hollywood

In a year when Hollywood Parish has already hosted and enjoyed some great musical events the parish is delighted to be hosting another concert in June.

ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH
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2024
Pentecost
IRELAND

SATURDAY 18TH MAY 2024 - 10AM - 10PM
VIGIL MASS 5:30PM WITH BISHOP ALAN MCGUCKIAN
! everyone welcome !

FR OISIN MARTIN CFR PENTECOST TEAM NET MINISTRIES IRELAND FR JAMES O'REILLY

TALKS - PRAYER MINISTRY - FELLOWSHIP - WORSHIP
CONFESSION - ADORATION - MASS - HOLY SPIRIT

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“Many of you will be familiar with Edwin's 'other' choir- the award winning Miskelly Chorale and with the virtuoso talent of Rowel Friers - also of this parish. You may not know of Lisburn based, Harmony Too, so come along and enjoy them ... too!”

The event is a charity fundraiser for Angel Wings and in support of young musicians and takes place on Saturday 15th June.

Tickets are available at this link:

<https://holywood-parish-church.sumupstore.com/>

Perspective

Bishop Ian Ellis - The Repair Shop church

Sermon given by the Bishop of Clogher at the Holy Communion service in Armagh Cathedral at the commencement of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland.

Jesus said: ‘So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.’ John 16.22

There is a television programme which I find myself watching and being absorbed by – it’s called The Repair Shop.

The basic premise of the programme is that individuals bring for repair much loved household or personal items which have long lost their earlier beauty or function, but which have great sentimental value. The repair shop has skilled craftsmen and women whose speciality is restoration.



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FRIDAY 7TH JUNE 2024

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The fascination is to see the patience and skill of the repairers who find a way to bring something which looks a lost cause back to vibrant life again. They bring hope to a situation of despair and loss.

After a few weeks the owners return, and the repaired item which has been brought back to life is revealed.

The impact upon the owner is remarkable – because so much of their life or the remembrance of someone else associated with the item is wrapped up in it – they almost always shed tears of joy to see the much-loved piece restored the way they used to remember it.

The Repair Shop is a great illustration of hope at work – what seems a hopeless cause of an old decrepit thing decayed by time and misuse – can be lovingly restored to awaken memories and bring joy.

I wonder if this is a good paradigm for the work of the Church – to be the kind of place where the weary can find refreshment, the despairing find hope, the hurting can find healing, the penitent find new beginnings. You and I are workers in God's repair-shop called to use our patience, skills, and loving care to help any who come near the church door. And the impact we may have to bring hope and healing is immeasurable through the grace of God.

In the reading this morning from St John, Jesus gives his disciples that cherished and firm assurance of hope – 'So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you'. He was speaking just before his crucifixion and pointing to a time in a little while when despite what was to happen, they would

see him again and their pain of loss will be turned to joy. And that hope is held out for all time, to all people and all creation.

The Church is called to proclaim that Jesus Christ brings to this world hope of salvation, inspiration for living, the possibility of new beginnings and purpose in times of despair. It's exactly the message of comfort we need to speak out and live out today – no matter how bleak things seem we have God's gift of hope found in the resurrection of Jesus his Son.

One New Testament theologian has recently written that all of us are in some way or another, coping with being overwhelmed in life and we need to find a shape to our living.

Many people live with extraordinary challenges which seem overwhelming – perhaps caring for a dementia sufferer, supporting a child with a disability, dealing with unexpected life events. Conversely, some things may overwhelm us in a good way – we can be overawed by outstanding beauty, generosity, and gratitude. More often though we can be overcome by world news, job insecurity, pain, exhaustion. Many of us also have more trivial overwhelmings. I find I am overwhelmed when that pack of papers for General Synod arrives, and I suffer extreme information overload! Jesus declares for all who are feeling overwhelmed – 'Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest' – that is his gift of hope. However, to help us bring shape to our living takes another divine gift – the gift of wisdom to grasp hope and take it in and allow it to infuse our hearts.

The Bible reveals Wisdom as being an eternal characteristic of God present from the creation of the world. The apostles came to believe that the wisdom of God was incarnate in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the one to whom we look to see the eternal word, wisdom and power.

Today at the outset of our General Synod we meet to pursue God's shaping of our church life.

This morning by prayer, and gathering around the Lord's table, we seek his wisdom and grace to help us in our discussions and decisions. Meeting in Synod is our corporate opportunity to bring to God's repair shop, matters in our church and society which we need help with to make better, to strengthen, and renew.

We seek that wisdom gift as we shape our governance, our structures, finances, ministry, or safeguarding. We seek wisdom's insight also to repair broken relationships – pastoral or otherwise, and to make room for acceptance and better understanding wherever there is difference. We need that gift of faith to believe that things can be made better and that nothing is beyond his power to change.

Churches like many organisations can have blind-spots. In recent years General Synod has highlighted important subjects and issues we needed help to grasp. Last year the young people of Mullingar alerted us to the challenge of climate change and responsible stewardship of creation. The topic of good mental health in church life developed by the Mind Matters programme is another area drawn to our attention, and we look forward to a presentation tomorrow to



Celebrating the Gifts of the Breath of Christ *A Pentecost Retreat*

The Retreat

Pentecost Sunday brings to a close the 50-day season between Jesus' Resurrection and the empowering descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples which marked the birth of the Church.

In this non-residential, contemplative prayer retreat, we consider key moments in Jesus' earthly ministry and his post Resurrection encounters with his followers. In so doing, we will deepen our awareness of our own gifts of the Holy Spirit, embracing them in gratitude and renewing our will to use them in the service of Christ.

Through guided prayer, reflection on pieces of art, private contemplative prayer exercises and journaling, we will gain insight into how to use these gifts within our families, communities, and the world.

Tom Cashman, an Ignatian Spiritual Director from Tucson, Arizona, will present this retreat in six sessions, supported by his wife Rosemary and the BJC team. It begins on Friday evening and concludes with Mass on Sunday at 12noon..



Schedule

Friday 17th May



7.30pm - 9.00pm

Saturday 18th May



9.30am - 5.00pm

Lunch Included

Sunday 19th May



**9.30am concluding with Mass
of Pentecost at 12noon.**

Cost

A non refundable deposit of £10 to book your place and a suggested donation of £40-£50 payable during the retreat.

To Book

Visit www.belfastjesuitcentre.co.uk or contact us by email or phone. **Details below.**



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further inform and challenge us. Equally we acknowledge that we live in a very diverse society and look to the presentation by the Primate's Diversity Group to help challenge our attitudes and priorities in church life.

Let us then listen out in these next few days in our speeches and debates look for that wisdom of God and being open to it leading us perhaps unexpectedly to better and renewed understandings.

So to conclude: As we gather together from so many different contexts and experiences, may we be open to hearing wisdom's call to bring a shape to our living— as we seek to cope with what can overwhelm us in our personal, community or church life.

And returning to the thought of God's repair shop, may we be useful in his hands to bring hope to many. May the Lord revive our spirit, cleanse, and restore us and that the hope we hold, may be seen in the service of love to transform a broken world.

'So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.'

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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