

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Beautiful Ballintoy

May 20, 2024

Image of the day



Beautiful Ballintoy

The beauty of Ballintoy harbour on the north coast of Antrim is now known internationally from the fame of House of Thrones.





On the rather twisting road to the harbour one passes the parish church which is surely one of the most photographed churches in Ireland with Rathlin Island to the east and the Giant's Causeway to the west - not to mention the Carrick. - a - Rede rope bridge which also is found within the parish bounds.

The church that now stands dates from 1813, replacing an earlier structure. The unique sundial dating from 1817 was used to record the tides as well as the time. Step inside to see the two beautiful stained glass windows. One depicts Saint Patrick at Slemish Mountain.

Ballintoy church lost its steeple after a hurricane struck this windswept coast in December of 1894. Parts of the steeple crashed through the church roof, headstones were blown

over, and houses in the village were damaged and destroyed.

The gravestones in the yard record the names of many notable landed families, such as the Stewarts of Ballintoy.

The Reverend Robert Trail who died in 1842 and is buried in the graveyard was the longest serving Minister of Ballintoy Church having been there for 66 years.

News

Prime Papal honour for Dana

Dana has been named a Dame to the Order of St. Gregory the Great by His Holiness Pope Francis. This is one of the highest honours for a lay person in the Catholic Church. The decree states:

"Gladly acceding to a request made to Us from which we have gathered that you are most deserving for what you have done for the Holy Catholic Church and its affairs, and in order that We might give a clear sign of Our pleasure and appreciation, We choose, make and declare Dana Rosemary Scallon of the Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora a Dame of the Order of St. Gregory the Great." Francis Pontifex Maximus

The Investiture Ceremony took place on Thursday, May 16 at the Church of the Assumption and St. James in Clare.

Next Bishop of Sodor and Man

The Venerable Patricia Hillas has been appointed as the next Bishop of Sodor and Man.



In response to this the Archbishop of York has tweeted: "I'm absolutely delighted that The Venerable Patricia Hillas is to be the next Bishop of Sodor and Man. Tricia is a person of wisdom and faithfulness who will use her considerable gifts in the service of the whole community on the Lovely Isle of Man."

Read more at: <https://www.sodorandman.im/the-venerable-patricia-hillas-appointed-as-the-next-bishop-of-sodor-and-man/>

Maghera & Upperlands MU celebrate 90th anniversary

Maghera & Upperlands MU celebrated their 90th anniversary this year with a wonderful morning of praise and thanksgiving.

Anne Crooks, Adeleine Selfridge, Breege McKinley and the ladies of Maghera & Upperlands, alongside Rev. Jonathan and Julie Brown, put together a memorable, fulfilling and

May 20, 2024

meaningful service incorporating many ventures and adventures through the decades, from supportive community ventures, family fun, nurturing faith, to days out and ... sky diving.

This service was a morning of special memories, now to be added to the annals of Maghera & Upperlands MU.

Funeral Ministers commissioned for Diocese of Clogher

It was an historic day for the Diocese of Clogher as Bishop Larry Duffy formally commissioned 45 new members of the laity to the Parish Bereavement Teams across the Diocese. at Holy Cross Church, Lisnaskea.

It was confirmed in September that over 40 new 'lay leaders' will be introduced to Clogher Diocese to preside over funerals as parishioners take on more duties, Mark McGoldrick reports in the Fermanagh Herald.

It was also confirmed that over 70 new lay leaders have been undertaking training in Clogher and Down and Connor dioceses, as the shortage of priests in Ireland continues.

"This morning [Sunday] in Holy Cross Church Lisnaskea, Bishop Larry Duffy commissioned 45 members of Parish Bereavement Teams from throughout the Diocese," posted the Parish of Aghalurcher.

"Congratulations to all. We look forward to seeing more of our laity taking up these new roles."

“Today was an historic day for the Diocese of Clogher as Bishop Larry formally commissioned 29 Funeral Ministers from across the diocese at Holy Cross Church, Lisnaskea,” said a diocesan spokesperson.

“These ministers will accompany families and communities at times of bereavement and loss and to lead some parts of funeral liturgies. As Bishop Larry has said, ‘Our Baptism calls us to serve in new ways’.”

In worrying news for the Catholic Church in Ireland, the Bishop of Clogher recently warned that there will be fewer than 10 priests covering the 85 churches across the whole diocese in the next 20 years

Communications Officer for the Diocese of Clogher, Dr Gary Carville, previously told the Irish Catholic newspaper that laity must take an active role in the Church.

“It’s a very welcome development and flows from the initiative of Bishop of Clogher Larry Duffy, who sought to invite and involve more lay people in parish ministry including some liturgical ministry,” he said.

“It’s heartening that over 40 people have been nominated by their parish and volunteered to come forward for their training \[which will be carried out in conjunction with the ministry teams of Down and Connor].”

Locally, there was no 12 noon mass throughout the month of August last year at St Michael’s Church in Enniskillen due to clerical shortages impacting across the Diocese of Clogher.

Monsignor Peter O'Reilly previously called on the laity to have a greater involvement in local churches.

“Looking to the future, it is clear that we should no longer maintain a provision that depends integrally on a situation where two of the three priests in the parish are aged over 70,” said the Enniskillen priest.

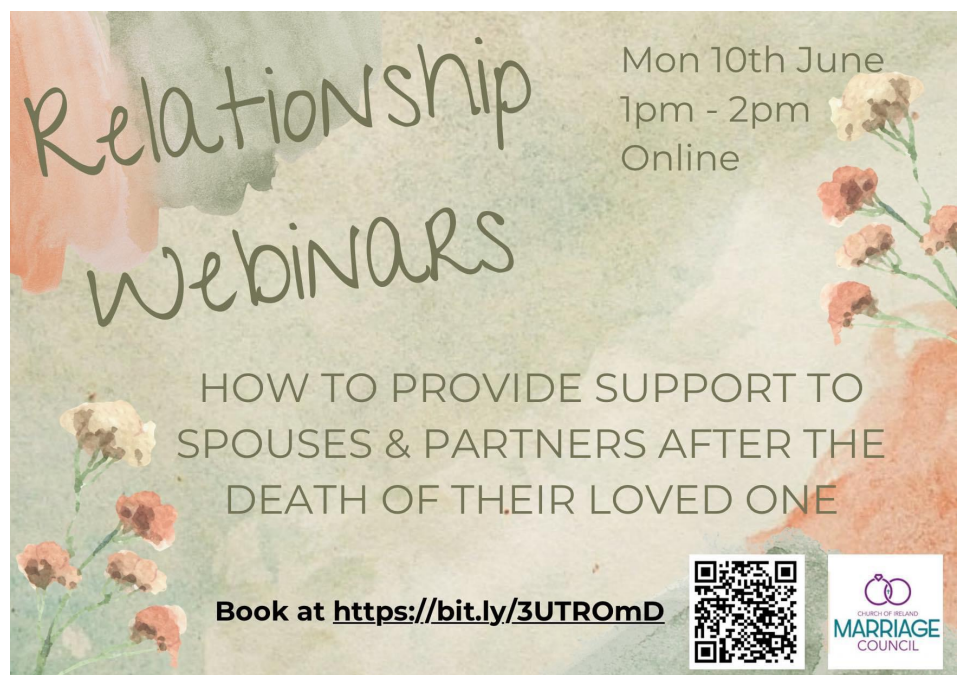
“Future provision will have to take account of a greater role for lay people in the celebration of liturgies.” Courtesy The Fermanagh Herald.

Marriage guidance support and resources at Antrim Rural Deanery

“Couples journey with each other through the joys and excitement of married life.

“They also have to deal with challenges along the way. But when a spouse dies, it leaves an incredible hole for their partner who is left behind.

“The Marriage Council are keen to support Church leaders and pastoral teams who may be there



May 20, 2024

to support someone after the loss of their partner.

“And therefore we are hosting a short 1 hour online session to provide guidance and resources to those who may be supporting someone. We will have a panel of experts to share helpful advice”.

You can register at <https://bit.ly/3UTROmD>



Divine Healing team member celebrates 90th anniversary

**Joan Weir from
the DHM Team
was 90 years
young last week.
Joan has been**

**part of Divine Healing Ministries from the early days
over 30 years ago when she joined with Br David
Jardine and the early pioneers of this
interdenominational prayer ministry.**

Joan prayed alongside her husband Alec until he passed into glory. They had seen many miracles of healing over the years in response to the prayer of faith.

Joan's wisdom, faith and experience continue to be a great gift to DHM and to many.

She also ministered alongside Canon Billy Lendrum for many years and gained much experience and wisdom in deliverance ministry from Billy which she has brought to DHM. Joan has been a key person in the prayer ministry trainings provided by DHM over many years and particularly in teaching on the "Gifts of the Holy Spirit".

Joan was at the healing service at St. Patrick's Ballymacarrett where the gathering blessed Joan and also received her blessing as a true "mother in Israel".

Services provided by the Capuchin Day Centre.

Many people are unaware of the sheer scope and scale of the services provided by the Capuchin Day Centre.

Last year the Centre provided 117,603 hot breakfasts, 195,857 full dinners and distributed 73,527 food parcels.

Social Evening at Bishop's House for Cashel, Ferns and Ossory Primary Teachers

On Wednesday last week, over 70 principals and staff, representing nearly all the 25 primary schools across the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory, enjoyed a



buffet supper at Bishop's House in Kilkenny at the invitation of Bishop Adrian and Dr Jacqui Wilkinson.

Speaking as Patron, Bishop Wilkinson said that he valued the important links between the school, parish and diocese and such social events were a way of emphasising this.

The special guest speaker this year was the Revd Olive Donohoe who had served some of her ministry in the diocese. She shared from her experience as a writer of

May 20, 2024

icons and had some of her work on display. Olive also explained the significance of icons within the Orthodox tradition. Given that there are an increasing



number of pupils attending primary schools who belong to the various Orthodox Churches, it was important to be aware of this.

The theme of the Bishop's Art Competition this year was stained glass. Pupils from across the diocese were encouraged to visit their local church and draw and describe what their favourite window meant to them. The list of prize winners has just been

announced and a video montage of some of the winning entries is now also available on the Diocesan social media channels.



New Presbyterian Women's President encourages women to be 'fearless for God'



The Presbyterian Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Sam Mawhinney with his wife Karen, who attended the annual conference of Presbyterian Women, with Ellen Hillen, President of Presbyterian Women, guest speaker, Dr Amy Orr-Ewing, and PCI's Women's Ministry and Presbyterian Women Development Officer, Pauline Kennedy.

Women from across Ireland attended the Annual Women's Conference of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland in Belfast recently.

The conference was hailed as "a wonderful opportunity to come together to be blessed and to be a blessing to others." by Ellen Hillen, the new President of Presbyterian Women who leads one of Ireland's largest Christian women's groups. Mrs Hillen who was one of nearly 1,000 women who gathered in the Church's Assembly Buildings in central Belfast for the annual meeting encouraged women to be 'fearless for God'.

Attendees heard from guest speaker Dr Amy Orr-Ewing, the leading best-selling Christian author and theologian who gave two addresses around the organisation's theme for the year - 'Entrusted', inspired by a passage from Luke's gospel '... from one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked' (Luke 12:48).

Ann Wilson of First Ballynahinch Presbyterian Church, the outgoing President of Presbyterian Women, welcomed Dr Orr-Ewing and PCI's Moderator, Rt Rev Dr Sam Mawhinney, who spoke briefly and prayed for the work that the organisation, its projects and leadership team.

Founded over 130 years ago, and with around 450 groups across the all-Ireland denomination, it aims to encourage and equip women in the spirit of its motto, which is 'to live for Jesus'. With an important missional focus, Presbyterian Women raise around £380,000 last year to support the work of PCI's deaconesses at home, the training of new student deaconesses, the work of South Belfast Friendship House, and PCI's 29 Global Mission Workers in 11 countries. Two special projects were also unveiled at the Conference, as Pauline Kennedy, PCI's Women's Ministry and Presbyterian Women Development Officer, explained.



Mrs Ann Wilson (left), outgoing President of Presbyterian Women hands over the specially commissioned presidential broach, which can also be worn as a neckless, to her successor as president, Mrs Ellen Hillen.

“One of our strengths as an organisation is that we are women supporting women at home, and women supporting women overseas. To this end, on Saturday we launched two great projects that have the potential to be life changing,” she said.

“For our Special Home project, we will come alongside the amazing work of Prison Fellowship Northern Ireland, a Christian ministry which has for over 40 years responded to the practical, emotional and spiritual needs of prisoners. The number of women in custody is at an all-time high and, I am told, is set to increase. It is our prayer that the £10,000 we

hope to raise will support the development of the Prison Fellowship's Female Aftercare Programme, which seeks to ensure that no woman leaves prison alone, as well as offering care and support in a number of ways."

Mrs Kennedy also said that the Special Overseas Project will support the Women's Guild in Zambia. "Last year I visited one of PCI's partner churches in Africa, the Central Church of Africa Presbyterian, and met with the leaders of its Women's Guild to learn about the needs of women across the Church. Out of that came this year's Special Project, where we hope to raise between £15,000-£20,000 to support the development of a leadership programme and resource, especially for women in rural areas, who have little formal education. Like our Special Home Project, it also has the potential to change lives, and I pray that it does."

The Annual Conference is always one of the highlights of the Church year and is the biggest single gathering in PCI after the General Assembly, which will open next month. Looking to the year ahead as president, Ellen Hillen said she felt "very humbled and privileged to have been entrusted with the position," adding, "and a bit nervous!"

"Our structure provides Presbyterian Women with a basis to deliver women's ministry that is most suited to their church environment and offers resources and support to those in leadership roles. Saturday was a wonderful opportunity to hear God's word and learn how we can live His word in our everyday lives. I hope that many would have been greatly encouraged by the message that Amy brought to us and I want to thank her for it. Saturday was also a wonderful

opportunity to come together to be blessed and to be a blessing to others,” she said.

Mrs Hillen, who has been an active member of St Columba’s Presbyterian Women’s group in Lisburn for 24 years, and group leader for the past 12 years continued, “For me the real value of our groups is the deep and lasting friendships that can be made and links that help us grow in our knowledge and understanding of God. Having people to walk alongside you on a journey of faith, and together ensure that there is an effective women's ministry programme that brings God's word to others within our churches and community and across the generations, is an important part of what we do. I am really looking forward to encouraging that, as I visit groups around the country,” she said.

“I also would like to encourage women to be fearless for God - to have the courage to answer God's call on their lives. None of us feels worthy, but God has given us all different spiritual gifts and abilities, and when He calls us to do something He will prepare the way, enabling us for the task. God has entrusted us with the next generation, so let's get to action!”

Reflecting on her year in office, outgoing president, Mrs Ann Wilson, said that it had been a wonderful opportunity to serve in a year that had just flown by. “It has been a real privilege to be invited to speak at group meetings and many church services, all of which has led me to meet women of all ages who are seeking to encourage each other to live for Jesus and to reach out to others.”

Mrs Wilson continued, “It has been an amazing year in which our Special Home Project focussed on mental health supporting the work of REACH and Biblical Counselling Ireland, while we were also able to support the work of Christian broadcaster, and PCI global partner, Sat-7 in the Middle East and North Africa.

“It has only been God’s strength and presence with me, along with the prayerful support and encouragement from my husband Alan, and so many others, who helped me through it. I would like to thank everyone for their support and pray every blessing upon Ellen, as she takes things forward this year,” she said.

@ @ @

Cathedral Calls

Westminster Abbey to Christ Church Oxford

The Abbey expressed “Congratulations to our Sub-Organist, Peter Holder, who has been appointed Organist at Christ Church, Oxford.

“Peter has been Sub-Organist here at the Abbey since 2017, playing the organ at our daily services and accompanying the Abbey Choir in recordings and concerts.”

He served as principal organist at the State Funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II and at last year's Coronation of Their Majesties The King and Queen. Earlier this year he was

May 20, 2024

made a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music in recognition of his achievements. He will take up his new post in Oxford in the autumn.



More: www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-news/peter-holder-to-be-organist-at-christ-church-oxford

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Last chance to prepare churches for European Heritage Open Days

Get ready for the European Heritage Open Days, an annual celebration of local architecture, history, and culture.

In N Ireland EHOD is organised by the Department for Communities “Love Heritage NI “ with support from the Council of Europe and the European Commission.

May 20, 2024

Mark your calendars for September 14th and 15th, 2024! Plus, don't miss out on EHOD digital offerings happening from September 9th to 15th!

Registration closes on May 22nd, 2024. Treasure Ireland grantees are required to open their doors as part of their grant conditions during European Heritage Open Days. Showcase your church's heritage and be part of this remarkable event!

Register your church here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XDDW6SN>

For more information visit:

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/european-heritage-open-days>

Let's celebrate our rich heritage together...

Showcasing the Painters of Cushendun

Tony Kennedy comments - For the first time, the Old Church Centre will showcase a collection of paintings (kindly donated) from artists, who in their day, were known all over Ireland and beyond.

“We are now in a special position to display a collection of beautiful works of Charles McAuley, Rowland Hill, Maurice Wilks, James Humbert Craig, Kenneth Webb and Hans Iten. In collaboration with many different art collectors, we are now in a special position to exhibit the best Northern Irish artists of the mid-20th century in one space.



The Painters of Cushendun
An exhibition of work by 20th century artists
associated with Cushendun and the Glens of
Antrim School of Art.

The Old Church Centre, Cushendun
Open weekends of 8th & 15th June
11am to 5pm

1 Church Lane, Cushendun,
Ballymena BT44 0PG

Artists on show include;
James Humbert Craig,
Maurice Wilks, Charles
McAuley, Theo Gracey,
Rowland Hill & Kenneth
Webb

We gratefully
acknowledge our
funders

**Esmé
Mitchell
Trust**

This exhibition will run on the weekends of 8th & 15th June, open from 11am-5pm and everyone is most welcome. There is no entry fee.

Speaking to the soul

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
