

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – New Director of Anglican Centre in Rome

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Molua's Moravian safari

Take home seeds from synod request from Bishops Appeal

Jack ran for the roof of Willowfield Parish Church at Belfast
Marathon

Support for Marie Curie from Knock Holy Week Services

Education -

Rainey Endowed student selected for National Youth Choir
of NI

New build for Islandmagee Primary School

Craft your 'Really Rubbish Scarecrow', Calling all Primary
Schools ✨

Cathedral calls -

VE Day 80 Royal Link with Denmark

Prayer for the Conclave at St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry

Clergy and ministry -

New archdeacon appointed for Meath and Kildare

Post at Corrymeela Community

Events -

Patrick Rafter and Barry Douglas at St Mary's Cathedral,
Kilkenny

Resources -

New video as part of the Church of Ireland's Inspiring
Angles series

Perspective -

Primate reflects on what was won in 1945

Poem for today

To a cat. Do not stand at your bowl and cry

Speaking to the soul -

Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

Image of the day



New Director of Anglican Centre in Rome

In the middle of all the other exciting things happening in Rome this week, the new Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome, Bishop Anthony Ball, was officially commissioned by the Chairman of the Governors of the Centre, Bishop Michael Burrows of the Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe (Photo page 1).

Archbishop Flavio Pace, of the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity (above), also offered a greeting on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church.

News



Molua's Moravian safari

St Molua's Dundonald Men@10 group were out on their travels again recently when they visited the beautiful village of Gracehill in Co. Antrim.

“We were delighted to be joined on this occasion by quite a few ladies and were given a warm welcome by our guide Derek who led us around the various buildings and grounds of this





UNESCO World Heritage Site. The village was originally established by Moravian settlers in 1759.

Thank you to Des for organising the trip, to Derek for his welcome and encyclopaedic knowledge, and to our hosts in the Millside Restaurant, housed in the old Gracehill School, for their hospitality after our tour.”

<https://gracehillvillage.org>

Take home seeds from synod request from Bishops Appeal

Church of Ireland General Synod members are encouraged to take away seeded paper or seeds to plant in pots as a reminder that Bishops' Appeal donations plants seeds of hope around the world.

Thanks to the generosity of parishes and individuals across the Church of Ireland the Bishops' Appeal is able to give



project grants and emergency aid that plant seeds of hope. Seeds of hope in terms of education, seeds of health with agriculture projects, seeds of hope with rural development projects and health projects.

This year at General Synod, members will have the opportunity to visit the Bishops' Appeal stand and take home a biodegradable pot (simply peel off the label) and a handful of sunflower seeds – or a sheet of

seeded paper to plant – and when the flowers bloom they will serve as a reminder of the seeds of hope being planted all around the world as a result of the generosity of your giving to Bishops' Appeal.

Jack ran for the roof of Willowfield Parish Church at the Belfast City Marathon

On Sunday Jack ran for the roof at the Belfast City Marathon, completing it in 3hrs 41mins! Thank you Jack. There is still time to



May 10, 2025

support Jack at the link below! 👉

<https://gofund.me/e5369062>



Support for Marie Curie from Knock Holy Week Services

The Revd Fiona McCrea and Canon John Auchmuty of St Columba's, Belfast, presented Marie Curie on the Kensington Road with a cheque for £1,259.50 which was the total amount collected during the parish's Holy Week Services.

Education

May 10, 2025

Rainey Endowed School student selected for National Youth Choir of Northern Ireland

Congratulations to Gabriella who, after a series of successful auditions, had the wonderful opportunity to participate in the National Youth Choir of Northern Ireland's Girls' Choir over the Easter break.

Gabriella previously took part in the Junior Choir, and we are incredibly proud of



May 10, 2025

her continued musical journey.

“Well done, Gabriella, on this fantastic achievement and thank you for representing our school in such a prestigious ensemble!”




New build for Islandmagee Primary School

Education Minister, Paul Givan MLA has officially opened a new build five class base school for Islandmagee Primary School

The project has enabled the school to move to one site, providing the children and staff with a new, modern, energy

May 10, 2025

efficient school building. The new facility represents a significant capital investment of £5.4 million.

Find out more  www.education-ni.gov.uk/news/education-minister-opens-new-building-islandmagee-primary-school

Craft your ‘Really Rubbish Scarecrow’, Calling all Primary Schools

**Get ready to craft your ‘Really Rubbish Scarecrow’ for
Garden Show Ireland.**

Unleash your creativity and design a scarecrow that welcomes birds instead of scaring them away! Use recycled materials and let your imagination run wild to build the most unique, eco-friendly scarecrow around.
Join the fun at Antrim Castle Gardens, 13–15 June 2025.

This is open to all schools in Northern Ireland

Categories



Best in Show



Most Eco-Friendly



Most Imaginative



Quirkiest



Best at Attracting Birds

Important date



Deadline to enter is 9 June 2025

Cathedral Calls

VEDay80 Royal Link with Denmark

On Sunday, The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester were in Denmark to attend the official commemoration of the Liberation of Denmark.

During the visit, Their Royal Highnesses attended a service of thanksgiving at **Copenhagen Cathedral**. Joined by the Danish Government and official representatives of Denmark, the service marked the anniversary of the country's liberation in 1945.

Later, Their Royal Highnesses joined the Danish Royal Family to honour fallen Danish resistance fighters at Mindelunden (The Memorial Park). Together with Their Majesties The King and Queen of Denmark, The Duke and Duchess laid a wreath dedicated to those who gave their lives during the Second World War at the monument.

The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester have links with Northern Ireland. The duchess is a patron of Fleming Fulton School. The Duke has active links with St John's Ambulance and the Royal Army Medical Corps and has attended their services in **Belfast Cathedral**.

Prayer for the Conclave at St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry

The 10am Mass on Wednesday morning was offered in prayer for the start of the Conclave in Rome. Praying

May 10, 2025



that the Cardinals discover the Pope the Lord has chosen.

Thanks to St Eugene's Primary School for singing so well.
We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

Clergy and ministry

New archdeacon appointed for Meath and Kildare

Bishop Pat Storey has announced the appointment of Canon Katharine Poulton as the new archdeacon of Meath and Kildare.



She will replace archdeacon Leslie Stevenson, who retires at the end of this month.

Katharine is rector of Julianstown parish, a Canon of St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin as well as already fulfilling a number of diocesan roles. She will continue in these posts.

Katharine was born in Belfast. Her father was a clergyperson and she grew up in rectories there and in Hillsborough.

She was ordained in 1987 and was the first ever woman ever ordained as deacon in the Church of Ireland. She has

worked in parishes, both north and south of the border. Before becoming rector of Julianstown she had been Dean of St. Canice's Cathedral and Rector of the very diverse Kilkenny Union of Parishes for over seven years. Prior to this she worked for a decade in a parish in Dublin city centre.

In announcing her appointment Bishop Pat Storey said, "I am delighted that Katharine has agreed to take up a new role as archdeacon of Meath and Kildare. She has both a wide and deep experience of ministry and she will bring much to this important role within Meath and Kildare. I know that she will receive a warm and supportive welcome from our diocesan family."

Post at Corrymeela Community

The Corrymeela Community now wishes to recruit for the post of Programme Manager – Interfaith & Belief

Fixed Term Contract (Until December 2027 dependent on funding with a possible extension of up to 6 months),

37.5hrs per week. Salary: £34,693

Location: Corrymeela Office, Skainos Centre. Newtownards Rd, Belfast, with occasional travel to Corrymeela Ballycastle.

Overall Purpose: The Programme Manager: Interfaith & Belief is responsible for the management and delivery of the Interfaith & Belief Programme across Belfast in partnership

May 10, 2025

with organisations / groups from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds. To focus on good relations, peace building, understanding difference, addressing sectarianism and racism, and embracing diversity.



**We're hiring
Programme Manager -
Interfaith & Belief**

<https://www.communityni.org/job/programme-manager-interfaith-belief>

Closing date for applications is 2nd June 2025 @12:00hrs

Interviews: Week commencing 9 June 2025

To apply: Contact the Corrymeela Finance Office requesting an application pack.

Tel: 02820 762626 Email: finance@corrymeela.org

The Corrymeela Community is an Equal Opportunity Employer

Events

**PATRICK RAFTER
& BARRY DOUGLAS**
IN RECITAL

FRIDAY 16TH MAY 7.30 PM

ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL KILKENNY

PROGRAMME

MUSSORGSKY: PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION
C FRANCK: SONATA IN A FOR VIOLIN AND PIANO

**TICKETS: FROM €25 ONLINE
OR AT FRANK WALL MANS SHOP**

TICKETS:

Design: www.godolub.ie

In association with
YFM McKean Stone Club House PEMBROKE WITH ASSISTANCE FROM KILKENNY CC COUNCIL

WWW.MARBLECITYMUSICFESTIVAL.COM

Resources

New video as part of the Church of Ireland's Inspiring Angles series

In this new video as part of the Church of Ireland's Inspiring Angles series, Librarian and Archivist Dr Susan Hood recalls how the vision and generosity of Rosamond Stephen led to the founding of the Representative Church Body Library in a turbulent time of Irish history.

Ms Stephen and her family used their education for the benefit of others, including on Belfast's Crumlin Road before

the Library came about, and this legacy of learning and making the stories from its collections available to people from many backgrounds continues today.

Some special featured items include an original 1552 Book of Common Prayer and its 1608 translation into the Irish language, and a book of hand-painted drawings sent from India by Rosamond's father, Sir James Stephen, for her to read as a child.

Viewers may also be interested in reading 'The Borderless Church' – a series of archive-based articles available here on this link:

<https://www.churchofireland.org/about/rcb-library/the-borderless-church> –

commissioned by the Library, reflecting on changes in life in our Church and wider society across our island as reported by the 'Church of Ireland Gazette' from the 1950s to the 1990s. This was featured in the context of the Library's successful completion of the digitization of the Gazette as a fully searchable online resource which is available through the link below.

The RCB Library continues to collect, protect and make available the thousands of archives and manuscripts relating to the Church of Ireland, its people, buildings and related institutions spanning from medieval times to the present.

The digitized Gazette archive can be found here:

[https://esearch.informa.ie/Exe/ZyNET.exe?
ZyAction=ZyActionr&Client=7094%5FRCB%20Library%20A
rchive&User=ANONYMOUS&Password=ANONYMOUS](https://esearch.informa.ie/Exe/ZyNET.exe?ZyAction=ZyActionr&Client=7094%5FRCB%20Library%20Archive&User=ANONYMOUS&Password=ANONYMOUS)

Perspective

Primate reflects on what was won in 1945

A Service of Remembrance with Thanksgiving took place on the Eve of VE Day's 80th anniversary in St Patrick's Cathedral, on the Hill of Armagh.

The service featured members of the Ukrainian community, in recognition of continuing conflict on our shared continent today.

Archbishop John McDowell was preacher. He compared the beginnings and endings of the First World War and the Second World War, including how German Protestant Churches – learning from their failures in the 1930s – contributed greatly to reconciliation in Northern Ireland in the 1970s.

Northern Ireland's VE Day Service in 1946 also included a collection for homeless refugees in Europe, as part of the rebuilding of the continent: "The victors in war needed to put Germany, their enemy, not 'back in its place' but back on its feet."

Today, he concluded, we thank God "for the men and women who fought or who endured what was without doubt a morally-justifiable war. And we thank God, too, that when

victory was secured they set about the reconciliation of an entire continent and the making of a peace that would last.”

The archbishop's sermon is in full as follows:

Almost everyone here this evening will have had parents or grandparents or other relatives who fought in, or at least lived through, the Second World War. But the sense of the war being a lived experience was not, of course, confined to that generation. For about twenty years after VE Day, boys of my generation enjoyed a weekly diet of little magazines dedicated to the exploits of the war. Then there were the films: *Mrs Miniver*, *In which we Serve*, *Colditz*, and many, many more. It is interesting that possibly one of the most evocative books and TV series about the war's indirect impact on society – *Brideshead Revisited* – showed this impact in part through the lens of an individual's religious consciousness. It is a very accomplished book and a very beautiful television series, but the nostalgia it evokes is highly rarefied and bears little resemblance to the social realities of the time.

To mark this 80th anniversary of VE Day, the Imperial War Museum republished a number of novels, most of them by forgotten authors long out of print. They are not such accomplished works of art as those by Evelyn Waugh but they bring to the surface experiences and themes which the more artful books don't really deal with.

For instance in a novel called *The Human Kind*, by a man called Alexander Baron, some young men who have joined up are in a cinema in England in 1940. One of them compares watching the film to the strange sense of being

onlookers to the war: “in fascinated incredulity... everybody was waiting to see how the film was going to end”. Isn’t that a very vivid image of what it must have been like during what has been called “the phoney war”? But then when the fighting begins, the same narrator talks about another sort of incredulity, reflecting on what he calls “the incredible disappearance of the future”.

One war can be very different from another, not only in how it is fought but in how it begins and ends. The Great War began in a jamboree of patriotic fervour and ended in disillusionment and utter exhaustion. We say simply “the guns fell silent”. The Second World War began with that almost apologetic statement broadcast by the Prime Minister of the time, Neville Chamberlain, in the whispered words “...and as a result, this country is at war with Germany”. It ended with the unconditional surrender of Germany, her cities in ruins, her armed forces prostrated, and her defeat celebrated by street parties all over the United Kingdom.

At the end of the Great War, “revenge and “punishment” were the dominant themes of what was (unironically) known as the Peace Conference. After the Second World War there was no single peace conference but the dominant aim was for the rebuilding of the world economy and the laying out of a rules-based international order. The politicians of that war and those soldiers who fought in it and who later became politicians, officials and diplomats also went on to create the Welfare State, the Bretton Woods Agreement (which was designed to stabilise financial markets), and of course the United Nations.

At the end of the Great War, it wasn't long before suspicion began to fall on its senior military leaders. After the Second World War politicians and military figures were cheered to the rafters as heroes, although some were more likeable than others. As Churchill said of Montgomery: "In defeat indomitable; in advance invincible; in victory insufferable." The grammar school that I attended, which was built just after the war, had as the names of its Houses, Alexander, Alanbrooke, Montgomery and Dill – the four Irish field marshals who played so prominent a part in the Allied victory in different theatres of the war.

Before the First World War, there was a debased diplomacy, with imperial powers sending their representatives out into the world with the message that theirs was the greatest nation and all the others had to make do with being second best. And to do this they were happy to exploit God in order to elevate the nation. In their public statements they were forever reminding God whose side he was on: theirs. They had forgotten that God was not their patron and ally; forgotten that he was their Judge and their Redeemer. But they learned, at great cost to many millions of Europeans, God will not be exploited.

The bishops and the theologians in Britain and Germany must take their share of the blame for making Christianity into something simply aesthetic, sentimental and mystical. A thing with a divine atmosphere but not with a divine foundation. Too easy for judgement, too feeble to have any authority in public life, and fit only to become a branch of culture. Such a notion is evident in Evelyn Waugh's depiction of religious conviction, as poignant as it is.

After the war, after VE Day, the German Churches took recognition of such a grave misuse and misrepresentation of Christianity to heart. Believe it or not, that would prove to have consequences for Northern Ireland thirty years later.

It is a very uncomfortable political fact that, despite its early associations with Nuremberg, it was in the Lutheran (that is, the Protestant) parts of Germany that Nazism was most influential. Even before the war, or the talk of war, in 1932 the greatest electoral expert in Germany, the equivalent of Professor Sir John Curtice today, wrote this:

“It is clear that the key predictor of the Nazi vote in Weimar Germany (that is Germany after the First World War) is the Protestant ratio of the local population. Hitler’s strongholds were clearly in the Lutheran countryside”.

After the War, the German Protestant Churches did not shy away from acknowledging and facing what this means. This is one of the reasons why, when sectarian violence broke out in Northern Ireland in the 1970s, the German Churches were the first to support peace movements and places of courageous togetherness, such as Corrymeela. In fact, it was the Protestant Churches of Nord Rhine-Westphalia who bought a large building in Elmwood Avenue in Belfast and gave it as a gift to the Irish Council of Churches to use as its headquarters.

It is also worth noting that at the original VE Day Service held in Northern Ireland in 1946, a collection towards helping refugees in Europe who had been made homeless during the war. It was given to a fund called Christian Reconstruction for Europe which later became Christian Aid.

So, above all else on this day, we give thanks for those men and women, believers and unbelievers alike, who during and after the Second World War were not prepared to let the future disappear, and most certainly not to allow it to descend down the same catastrophic path of revenge and reparations.

It may seem like a strange thing to us – who too often, like Tam O'Shanter, tend to keep our hatreds warm – that despite what they had suffered during the war, that mid-century generation wanted now to build. They had seen time and again how easy it is to destroy a house – and to end a life – and they knew how much effort it takes to build and to create. Notably, they were determined to rebuild not just their own cities and countries, but all of Europe at the very least.

And to do that, the victors in war needed to put Germany, their enemy, not 'back in its place' but back on its feet. Apart from anything else, they couldn't afford to keep Germany poor.

One of the strange things at the end of the war was that German households had a lot of savings in the bank. There had been nothing to spend money on during those years of destruction. So after the unconditional surrender of Germany, the head of the Bundesbank, in cooperation with the British, the French and the American authorities but against the wishes of the Soviet Union (it would seem that the current neo-imperialist regime in the Kremlin have learned just as little about maintaining the peace of Europe as their Soviet predecessors) devised a plan to stop those

savings from bringing Germany back to the hyper-inflationary years of the Weimar Republic.

They abolished the German currency, the Reichmark, and printed a strictly limited number of notes of a new currency, the Deutschemark, secretly in the United States. Then they told German households with savings in the bank that they could exchange their Reichmarks for Deutschemarks at a ratio of 15:1. Most German households lost most of the value of their savings overnight, but they were glad to be alive and to be able to contribute to the creation of a stable currency, so they accepted it.

The British, the Americans and the French then told German businesses that they could exchange their Reichmark cash reserves at a ratio just short of 1:1, thereby providing businesses with the necessary capital to rebuild. And that was the basis of the so-called German Miracle. Thus, the cause of that 'miracle' was the willingness of the Allies to see Germany soon prosper again and of the German population to accept the far from favourable terms on which that prosperity could begin.

It is an historical truth that leaders and citizens across Europe accepted that reconciliation was needed in order to build – in order to secure the future that they were determined would never again 'disappear'. It was not a universal feeling, of course, and there were many who suffered greatly during the war who found the post-war rapprochement very difficult. Like the original damage caused, the process of reconciliation is gruelling and painful.

I remember visiting a man in his house one day when I was a parish clergyman. He had been sick and was in his pyjamas and dressing gown as he sat watching an England v Germany football match. He was also wearing his RAF Flight Lieutenant's cap. He was a motor mechanic by trade and when anyone brought a BMW to his garage to be fixed he would mutter, "It's like a Panzer, they've just taken the tracks off and stuck on four wheels".

It is odd that, despite the enormous suffering of the Great War and the bitterness of many servicemen returning home, very little social progress was made in the inter-war years, and a fairly rudimentary form of protest was crushed in the General Strike of 1926. The servicemen and women dancing in the streets on 8th May 1945 were not going to make the same mistake. They changed the Government, and they would go on in future years changing governments if they didn't live up to honest expectations.

We heard earlier the prophetic oracle of Micah about the peace and justice which will reign on God's holy mountain. Contrary to what many people seem to believe, Old Testament prophets were not soothsayers. They were seers, people with the task of calling Israel, the nation, back to its original vocation and its original foundations. Perhaps their guiding principle was a little half verse from Deuteronomy: "There shall be no poor among you". So they called on Israel to be a society based on social justice. The prophets called on Israel to be a society which could worship God in the sanctuary with clean hands because they were faithful to his demand for fairness and generosity in their social dealings and in their international affairs. More often than not Israel ignored or persecuted her prophets.

As that generation who suffered so much during the war years knew, peace, prosperity and justice do not just happen. They have to be made and they have to be maintained. And they cannot be maintained if they are made as though a country consisted of just one community or a world of just one nation; as though no one else other than they lived on the planet. Belonging to a national community involves a sort of a daily referendum of choices which can produce fruitfulness and vibrancy, or it can lead to damage and desolation.

Jesus told his disciples:

“...all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you... you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should last.”

I have never understood why the teaching of the one who is Redeemer of the whole world and the Eternal Word of the Father should be thought only to apply to religious matters. Political and diplomatic decisions are also fruitful or desolate depending on how closely they conform to, or diverge, from the things that God's Christ has made known to us. Material decisions have spiritual consequences for individuals and nations and continents.

So, today we thank God for the men and women who fought or who endured what was without doubt a morally-justifiable war. And we thank God, too, that when victory was secured they set about the reconciliation of an entire continent and the making of a peace that would last.

Poem for today

To a cat. Do not stand at your bowl and cry

"Do not stand at your bowl and meow.
I gave you food. It's in there now.
I feed you at the dawning light,
I feed you at the fall of night.
I feed you kibble mixed with meat
And wet food for a special treat.
I feed you even though you scoff
At all the food within your trough.
I feed you, yet and still you yell
Like as a beast from deepest hell.
Do not stand at your bowl and cry.
I gave you food. You will not die."

~ from Close Cover Before Striking

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

May 10, 2025

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

Church News Ireland

www.churchnewsireland.org

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

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