



Image of the day - Lest we forget, Semper Fi

People and places

Open air ordinations in Down & Dromore



On Sunday past the Revd Jim Fleming and Revd Colin Birnie were ordained presbyter (OLM) for their continuing ministry in Killicomaine Community Church, Portadown and in St Clement's, Templemore Avenue.

Bishop David ordained Jim and Colin at an outdoor service in C.S. Lewis Square in East Belfast on Sunday 29 August.

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The preacher was Canon Phil Potter who was formerly the Archbishop of Canterbury's Missioner and Team Leader of Fresh Expressions UK. Phil is now in a part-time role leading a Pioneer Ministry initiative within the Church of Ireland. His address centred on Christ's call on our lives which is radical and challenging but also personal. Worship was led by James and Elise Turner and soloist, Jenny Hart.

Farmer's Market in St James's Church, Mallow

On Friday 27th August from 9am to 12 Noon, the Mallow Farmers' Market opened for the first time in its new home in the grounds of St James's Church, Mallow, Co. Cork

Welcoming the market to the church grounds, the Rector, the Reverend Meurig Williams said, "This is a great opportunity for us to be hospitable, not only to the local



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producers and growers who have stalls in the market, but people from the town and further afield.”

Commenting on the environmental significance of farmers’ markets, the Rector said, “At a time when we are conscious of the need to cut down on food miles, I hope the people of Mallow and the surrounding area will support the market and our local growers – and then stay around the town to use other shops and businesses too.”

Presentation at Belfast Cathedral

Last Sunday 22nd August, the cathedral congregation made a special presentation to Jack Wilson to mark the end of his time as Assistant Director of Music at Belfast Cathedral.

Jack takes up his new position as an organist of Ely Cathedral from 29th August.

Jack's last morning service in Belfast was attended by both of Jack's grandmothers, his parents, sister and other family members.

At the end of the service the Dean presented Jack with a cheque and also a very special momento to Jack's past five years at St Anne's as Organ Scholar, acting Assistant Organist, and finally from 2019, Assistant Director of Music.

The momento was created from three small organ pipes that formed part of the collection of the late Philip Prosser. Designed and crafted by Philip's son Stephen, himself a

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former chorister at St Anne's, this gift will hold a very special place for Jack as he moves to England.

Both gifts were presented with the good wishes of the Board, congregation and choir of Belfast Cathedral.

Praise In The Barn - Extra night of the Gospel Heirs

The Gospel Heirs have confirmed a second night concert on Friday 10 September in Harpers Barn, Kinallen, Dromore.

They will be supported by talented local singers Sharon Morrison, Paul Irwin and Margaret Johnston. Tickets are available from Faith Mission (Banbridge, Lisburn and Portadown) or through this link to our website <http://www.nsconcerts.com/tickets/event/praise-in-the-barn/> Limited availability at the door. Gates open 6.45pm for a 7.30pm start.

Heritage Week at St Coleman's Church, Macroom

As part of Heritage Week, environmental educator Ted Cook gave a talk in the grounds of St Coleman's Church, Macroom on Sunday 15th August.

It was a fascinating look into the history of the church, which closed in the early 1990s. During the entertaining, enlightening but also poignant talk, music was played from



Ted Cook presented the Rev. Bowles with the autobiography of A.J.S. (Stephen) Brady's, 'The Briar of Life'

the recently serviced organ in St Andrew's Church, Kilmurry. Present at the event were Monsignor James O'Donnell from Macroom Roman Catholic Parish and Priest-in-charge, the Rev. David Bowles.

After the talk, Ted Cook presented the Rev. Bowles with the autobiography of A.J.S. (Stephen) Brady's, 'The Briar of Life', who was the son of the rector of Macroom, Rev. Albert Brady in the early 1900s.

The Rev. David Bowles extended his gratitude to Ted Cook for organising such an interesting event.

City of Derry International Choir Festival, 20 - 24 Oct

Tenebrae

Friday 22 October, St. Columb's Cathedral

Described as “phenomenal” (The Times) and “devastatingly beautiful” (Gramophone Magazine), award-winning choir Tenebrae, under the direction of Nigel Short, is one of the world’s leading vocal ensembles renowned for its passion and precision and we are thrilled to be welcoming them back to Derry for LIVE performance this October.

The Road Home

Thursday 21 October, St. Columba's Church, Long Tower

Featuring award-winning chamber choir Codetta and Derry cellist Kim Vaughan, this concert will feature a stunningly beautiful programme including Stephen Paulus' The Road Home, and the world premiere of a brand-new festival commission by Irish composer Eoghan Desmond, as part of the Colmcille 1500 celebratory programme.

The Voyage

Wednesday 20 October, Millennium Forum

Featuring local choirs and singers alongside members of the Ulster Orchestra, this concert will include a performance of Bob Chilcott's The Voyage, conducted by the composer, as well as the world premiere of A Topography of Love, Part 3

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by Brian Irvine and John McIllduff from Belfast creative production company Dumbworld.

Primary School Big Sing **Thursday 21 October, Millennium Forum**

A celebratory day of singing, to include a workshop led by music education expert Lucinda Geoghegan with fun songs, games and rhymes, and a specially-composed piece for young voices by leading Catalan composer and conductor, Josep Vila i Casañas.

Post-Primary Competitions & Big Sing **Friday 22 October, Millennium Forum**

A day of exciting competitions for post-primary schools and a Big Sing workshop, featuring a newly-composed song for youth choirs by leading Catalan composer and conductor, Josep Vila i Casañas.

National Competitions **Saturday 23 October, Millennium Forum**

A day of singing for national choirs featuring competitions in Equal Voice, Mixed Voice, Youth Choir, Vocal Ensemble, Sacred, Pop, Jazz and Gospel categories, culminating in the brand-new Choir of the Festival competition.

COVID19: All live events will be subject to restrictions and guidelines for indoor performances. The Festival will adhere to all social-distancing and COVID safety rules in place at the time of the event. Full details will be available on the Festival website -

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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derrychoirfest.com.

Tickets on sale soon at Millennium Forum
See CNI tomorrow for virtual programme



Vacancy – Part-time Office Administrator – Mothers' Union All-Ireland

The Provincial President and Trustee Board of Mothers' Union are seeking to appoint a Part-time Office Administrator to work as part of the All-Ireland Mothers' Union team. The post holder will support the work of Mothers' Union throughout the dioceses in Ireland.

The successful candidate will be required to work flexibly, from their home base or in the office, which is in central Dublin, and closely with the Board of Trustees of the Mothers' Union.

Hours: 12 hours per week. There may be additional hours offered when workload demands this.

Reasonable office and travelling expenses will be paid. Further information, a job description and the application form available from:

Mrs H Ellis (P/T Office Administrator post)
Rossorry Rectory, 59 Derrygonnelly Road, Enniskillen

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BT74 5PX

Email: heatherme.ellis@gmail.com

Telephone number for information 00447557507879

Closing date: Monday 20th September 2021

Reports

14 arrested after Christian climate protest inside St Paul's Cathedral

There were arrests inside St Paul's Cathedral on Sunday after 14 Christians held a protest calling on the Church of England to divest from fossil fuels.

Following Sunday morning's Eucharist service, protesters with Christian Climate Action unfurled banners in front of the altar with the words 'No faith in fossil fuels' and 'Churches divest now'.

Banners bearing the same message were also displayed by several dozen protesters outside the cathedral.

The protesters demanded that the Church of England completely divest from fossil fuel companies by 31 December, and that it call for immediate action to address irreversible harm caused by climate change.

It was part of wider protests in London over the weekend by Extinction Rebellion targeting 'blood money' in the City of London.

The protesters at St Paul's included members of the clergy.

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The Rev Canon Jonathan Herbert said: "The Church Commissioners and Pension Board rightly don't invest in companies producing arms or tobacco, but surely investing in fossil fuels, with what we now know, is almost as deadly.

"It's time for the Church Commissioners to take a lead and divest from death-dealing fossil fuels."

Rev Tim Hewes said, "The Pensions Board and the Church Commissioners, by investing in fossil fuels, mistakenly believe that they can steer these all-powerful companies towards climate friendly policies.

"After years of engagement we know it's not working. These companies are deaf to the entreaties of the church. We need to divest."

All 14 Christians involved in the protest inside the cathedral were arrested.

Pope calls for prayer and fasting for Afghanistan

Pope Francis is asking Christians to stand with the people of Afghanistan by praying and fasting.

At the Angelus on Sunday, he expressed particular concern for women and children, and the victims of the suicide bombing at Kabul airport last week.

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He said that Christians had a duty to respond to the needs of Afghanistan's "sorely tried population", and that the world "cannot remain indifferent".

"I am following the situation in Afghanistan with great concern," he said.

"I share in the suffering of those who mourn for the people who lost their lives in the suicide attacks last Thursday, and of those who are seeking help and protection."

He called on the Church to assist those in need and "pray that dialogue and solidarity may lead to peaceful and fraternal coexistence, and offer hope for the future of the country."

"I appeal to everyone to intensify prayer and practise fasting: prayer and fasting, prayer and penance. Now is the time to do it," he said.

"I'm serious - intensify prayer and practise fasting, asking the Lord for mercy and forgiveness."

The UK has ended evacuation flights from Kabul after airlifting 15,000 people, but hundreds who were eligible to come have been left behind.

The Taliban has said it will allow Afghans to leave the country beyond the 31 August deadline, but the UK has said it is "sceptical" of this promise.

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Middle East minister James Cleverly told BBC Breakfast that he could not give "absolute assurances" to those left behind.

"If [the Taliban] start acting like a government, if they start facilitating both internal travel and exiting from Afghanistan, then we will engage with them on that basis," he said.

Catholics are being cancelled on campus

Catholics are accustomed to swimming against the tide. On a host of matters – from abortion to divorce – the doctrine of our church is out of step with prevailing liberal orthodoxies, Olivia Utley writes in the Daily Telegraph.

Unlike other denominations, which leave their followers with plenty of wiggle room on the thorniest subjects, the Catholic Church's teaching on issues such as euthanasia is unequivocal: it considers the practice to be an "intrinsically evil act" which constitutes a "crime against life" and a "crime against God".

Given there are 1.4 billion baptised Catholics in the world, most people would agree that this belief is pretty mainstream – or at the very least that it is within the Overton window. But at the University of Nottingham? After decades of making provision for a Catholic chaplain, Fr David Palmer says that the university won't officially recognise him due to "problematic tweets" – including one expressing the view that assisted suicide constitutes the "killing of the vulnerable". Nottingham maintains that its concern is not Fr

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David's views, but the manner in which they have been expressed. It says a compromise has been reached, whereby Fr David is still allowed to celebrate Sunday Mass each week on campus and that it is "committed to supporting staff and students of Catholic faith".

But the university does have form. Last year, Julia Rynkiewicz, a midwifery undergraduate, faced expulsion from her degree after lecturers raised concerns about her fitness to practice. Her crime? Being a vocal member of Nottingham Students for Life. The university eventually reversed its decision and allowed her to finish her degree, but the investigation dragged on for so long that she graduated a year late.

Both Ms Rynkiewicz and Fr David expressed themselves forcefully, in language that may jar with metropolitan 20-somethings. But their shared belief around the sanctity of human life is not only in line with Catholic teaching, it is the only acceptable stance on the issue in the eyes of the Catholic Church. In other words, they expressed a belief that is intrinsic to being a Catholic.

Most practising Catholics I know are resigned to the fact that they will never hold high office in Britain. Whenever a politician with Christian views begins edging towards real power – Jacob Rees-Mogg springs to mind – it quickly becomes clear that the "liberal" establishment feels uncomfortable with them holding any position of real responsibility. What concerns me, however, is how this intolerance seems to be spreading. On campuses, once "safe spaces" for free expression, it seems to be becoming increasingly difficult to be a vocal, practising Catholic.

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Whether anti-Catholicism, per se, is rife in Britain is a matter for debate. It's true that a certain prejudice lingers, and it's something of a mystery why it tends to be Catholics who are singled out when almost all major world religions are opposed to euthanasia and abortion. But the more likely option is perhaps also the more sinister: that the acceptability of any given philosophical belief on campus is now conditional on its compatibility with the liberal pieties of the day. More than five hundred years after the Reformation and it seems as though, one way or another, Catholics are being hounded out of public life once again.

Poem for today

Digging by Seamus Heaney

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests; snug as a gun.

Under my window, a clean rasping sound
When the spade sinks into gravelly ground:
My father, digging. I look down

Till his straining rump among the flowerbeds
Bends low, comes up twenty years away
Stooping in rhythm through potato drills
Where he was digging.

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked,

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Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

By God, the old man could handle a spade.
Just like his old man.

My grandfather cut more turf in a day
Than any other man on Toner's bog.
Once I carried him milk in a bottle
Corked sloppily with paper. He straightened up
To drink it, then fell to right away
Nicking and slicing neatly, heaving sods
Over his shoulder, going down and down
For the good turf. Digging.

The cold smell of potato mould, the squelch and slap
Of soggy peat, the curt cuts of an edge
Through living roots awaken in my head.
But I've no spade to follow men like them.

Between my finger and my thumb
The squat pen rests.
I'll dig with it.

Pointers for prayer

World cycle of prayer - Liberia, Sierra Leone

The mothers from the Mothers clubs of Buchanan, Liberia, created a song about washing hands as part of the fight against Ebola.

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INTERCESSIONS

We are thankful for:

the natural resources in these countries, that they might benefit the peace and welfare of all

the diverse ethnic and religious groups who long have lived together in peace and harmony, especially the Muslims and Christians in Sierra Leone

We praise You, faithful God,
for the steadfast love which has always guided us,
for the promise which has never faltered,
for the light which has lightened our way,
for the story which has reminded us of those who
came before us.



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democratic election of leaders who have brought political stability and accountability

how diseases such as Ebola have been brought under control.

We pray for:

the churches in these countries, for their evangelism and social outreach, faithful witness and action in times of conflict, and for interfaith cooperation with others

the majority of the people who are still impoverished, that adequate services and policies will be provided that enable them to live with dignity and good health

more just governance, free of corruption, accountable to the people, and that manages resources in ways that benefit all.

PRAYERS

A prayer for the survivors (John 1: 1-14)

Living word, who became flesh
through whom all have life,
thank you for your light
in the darkness of the Ebola crisis.

Thank you for those who have overcome,
for those who have survived.

We pray for them as they return
to live among their families and communities.

We pray for the enlightenment needed
so that stigma around Ebola will not spread,
so that livelihoods and homes would not be destroyed,
so that those who survive can be a light of comfort and hope

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among those who are afraid.

Thank you for your incarnation, living word,
full of the grace and truth that blesses all flesh.

Amen.

Prayer for Afghanistan

God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Eternal God, we pray in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, for Mali, Chad, Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso.

We know that in our part of the world some people are getting carried away by hatred – people who are unable to think clearly, and turn furiously on the people whom you have placed in this part of the world to enjoy your creation and witness to you. We pray for girls and boys, women and men, children and adults, and the elderly, for you to grant them peace, your peace. In the name of Jesus Christ, Lord, change the hearts of all those who are carried away by hatred, that they may find in you the Hope of Salvation, and that they may become messengers of peace for ever.

We thank you, Lord, for you are faithful to your promise. Glory and praise be given to you for ever and ever. Amen

Speaking to the Soul

When I heard their complaints, I was very angry. After thinking it over, I spoke out against these nobles and officials. I told them, “You are hurting your own relatives by charging interest when they borrow

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money!” Then I called a public meeting to deal with the problem.

Nehemiah 5:6-7 NLT

These verses give us a fascinating insight into Nehemiah’s leadership. First of all, he listened. The rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem might sound a simple and straightforward task however it proved to be anything but.



The problem, as so often, was money. People were struggling to pay their taxes. Some things never change! This problem was made worse by the fact that, in order to pay their taxes, they were needing to mortgage their properties and fields and even sell their children into slavery. Nehemiah listened to the complaints. No leader will ever succeed unless they learn to listen carefully. This sounds simple enough, but true listening is incredibly demanding. It demands our full attention, compassion and wisdom. It’s easy to listen to pleasant and comforting things, but listening to people’s problems and complaints is never easy.

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As Nehemiah listened it's no wonder that he became angry. Some of their people saw the crisis as an opportunity to exploit the poor and needy. They were lending money at huge interest and forcing people into slavery. Fired up with his anger, it would have been very easy for Nehemiah to have gone off and sorted the people out. But he didn't. He tells us that he thought it over. The Hebrew literally means "he took counsel with himself". This is the only time we find this word in the Bible. Nehemiah drew breath and calmly thought things over. Often the most important response to a crisis is to sleep on it.

Having calmly thought matters through, Nehemiah took action. He had a conversation with the nobles and officials and gave them a piece of his mind. He accused them of acting inappropriately and then he called a meeting. When they gathered, he faced them clearly and forcefully with the error of their ways and the result was that they owned up. They admitted that Nehemiah was right and they promised to mend their ways. Result! But it only happened because he had, first of all, listened carefully and spent time reflecting.

QUESTION

What has this story taught you?

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for the powerful example of Nehemiah. Help me to be humble enough to learn from it. Amen

