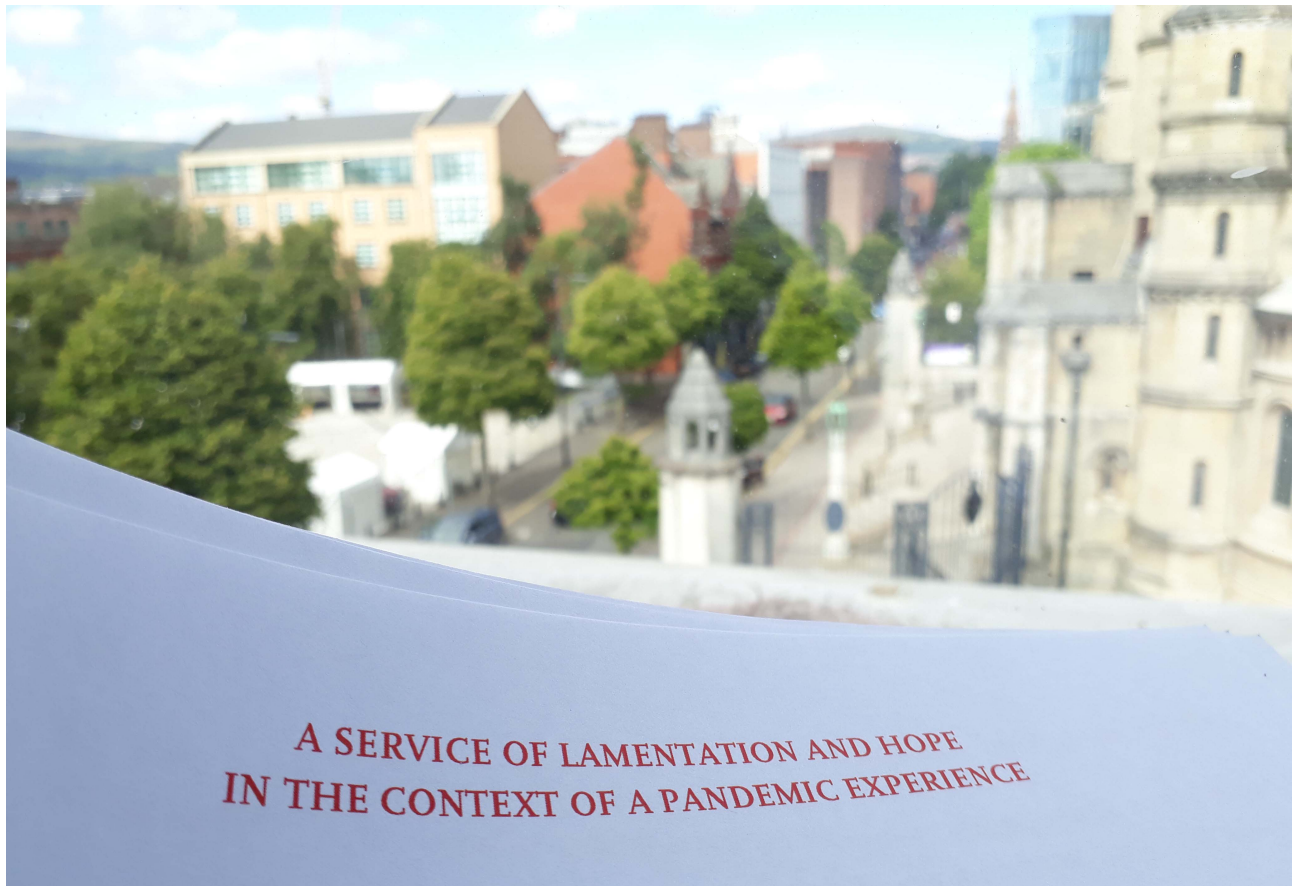




**Image of the day**

**Coventry Cathedral**

## People and places



### New C of I Service aims to help children reflect on pandemic experiences

**The Liturgical Advisory Committee (LAC) of the Church of Ireland has published a resource for use in the Church to help children to reflect on their experiences of the pandemic.**

The resource, entitled “A Service of Lamentation and Hope in the Context of a Pandemic Experience”, centres around the themes of lament and hope and is available at the following link:

[ <https://bit.ly/3DHwdEz> ] <https://bit.ly/3DHwdEz>

This resource has been prepared in such a way that it may be used as an all–age service in a parish context, in a school setting, or with a Sunday School or Sunday Club.

Through the use of Psalms and a series of short Scripture readings, the service moves through themes of lament and hope, concluding with an act of renewal and commitment. It is intended to help create space for the whole Church to acknowledge the losses that everyone within our communities, including children, have endured over the past months. Suggestions for creative and experiential prayer around the themes of lament, hope, and renewal are included, and may be adapted as needed to suit particular local contexts.

Lydia Monds, a member of the LAC children’s sub–group and co–ordinator of the Children’s Ministry Network, writes: “There can be a perception that the children are fine, they are shielded, they don’t understand much, it’s over their heads. Of course, some children have flourished during lockdown and many have shown incredible resilience, but there have been losses, hardships, struggles and grief that have at times defied words. The strap line from Barnardo’s speaks volumes when it says: ‘Childhood lasts a lifetime’.

“This time of dedicated prayer is a recognition that children have been affected and, in some instances, have been the most affected by the pandemic. As people of faith, we recognise their need to lament.

“Taking time to listen to children and their experiences is not to suggest that the experiences of adults are less important; it is a statement that as a worshipping community, we will

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make space for all voices to be heard and for people of all ages to belong. By listening, we are modelling a God who listens to us and who heals us in our hearts and in community.”

## **Archbishop Jackson welcomes easing of Covid restrictions**

**In a statement issued on Tuesday, the Archbishop of Dublin commented -**

We welcome today’s announcement of further relaxation of pandemic restrictions, while also knowing that we must continue to be cautious. We welcome the opportunities presented by the Government’s new plan, entitled ‘Reframing the Challenge, Continuing Our Recovery and Reconnecting’.

We look forward to learning of the finer details of the plan and exploring how we can incorporate them into our church worship in the days and weeks ahead.

As we anticipate greater freedom and as we progress through the coming months, we remain eternally grateful to those who have put their professional skills and personal wellbeing at the service of all members of our society over the lifetime of this pandemic. We know that they will continue to do so for the time to come when Covid–19 will inevitably remain part of our lives. While often we may have been frustrated at having to navigate the obstacles which have changed the landscape of our lives in general and our worship in particular, we have at all times recognised that





The Irish Church leaders met recently - the first face to face after a series of online meetings due to covid.

the guidelines have been put in place in the interest of public health and safety.

I encourage everyone to continue to follow the public health advice as it is updated, and as the Taoiseach stated this evening, to exercise personal responsibility. We do this for our own sake and for the sake of others.

As we prepare to explore the new opportunities to form society afresh over the coming weeks, we must also look ahead and reflect on what has been lost and gained through this pandemic. There has been tremendous grief and loss. For many it has not been possible to express this grief in the  
[churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)

traditional and time–honoured ways. I urge members of our church communities to consider how we can support positively and sensitively each other and others in our communities in such ongoing need.

During the past 18 months society as a whole has demonstrated its capacity for solidarity, the ability to ‘love thy neighbour’ and to put others before ourselves. Such neighbourliness has taken many new and positive forms. It is my hope that we can continue this spirit of solidarity, inclusion and openness for the betterment of our society. I wish everyone well as together we move into a new landscape, thankful for many blessings every bit as much as mindful of many sadnesses.

## **Corrymeela looking for a Shared Education Co-ordinator**

**Corrymeela - “We have received EA Youth Service NI Funding to develop and deliver an online resource for the Shared Education Programme.**

“This project is about the development of creative, high quality and age appropriate multimedia resources for children and young people. The Shared Education Project Coordinator will play a significant role in a dynamic and supportive team, and will co–ordinate this project. The successful post holder will operate from our offices in Belfast and Ballycastle with extensive work across Northern Ireland to partner, pilot and train on the resources. This post is based on a 37.5 hour working week but flexible working arrangements would be considered.”

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For full details on this position and an application pack, please contact Fiona Campbell via email at [finance@corrymeela.org](mailto:finance@corrymeela.org)

Closing date for applications is Monday 20th September 2021 at noon.

[[] <https://www.corrymeela.org/about/recruitment/shared-education-project-coordinator> ]

## News briefs



## 45km fundraiser

On 28th September, Revd. Christian Snell and others ran or cycled a 45km route between Longford, Ballinalee, Granard, [churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)



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Streete and Edgeworthstown raising over €5000 for church funds. There is still a chance to support this challenge at: <https://gofund.me/ceb483bc>



## Retirement at Cashel

On Sunday past presentations were made after the final Service in the Cathedral by Dean Gerald Field as Dean and Rector of Cashel Union of Parishes.

## Progress at St Patrick's

The tower crane for the roof replacement was dismantled and removed from the grounds of St Patrick's Cathedral,





Dublin. This significant milestone means that the project is really very near completion! In the next couple weeks the rest of the site will be cleared and the grounds restored.

### **Kilmore ordinations**

This September eight men and women will be ordained for

ministry in Kilmore, Elphin and Armagh diocese. Pray please for John Addy, Adam Norris, Xanthe Pratt, Andrew Pierce , Albert Dawson, Steve Frost, Edmund Smyth and Malcolm Young as they continue to journey together with God and for God.

## **Reports**

### **Church's 'Google Maps for graves' to help genealogists**

**An online database billed as a “Google Maps for graves” is being set up by the Church of England to help alleviate pressure on vicars bombarded with requests from amateur genealogists about their family trees.**



A team of surveyors, equipped with laser scanners, have already begun work in Cumbria and plan to map every grave, headstone and memorial in England's 19,000 graveyards.

The project aims to create a free database for people keen to discover where their ancestors are buried.

Television programmes such as the BBC's genealogy documentary series, *Who Do You Think You Are?* and online databases, DNA test websites, including 23andMe and Ancestry.co.uk, have led to an increase in demand.

However, the project is also expected to ease the pressure on vicars struggling to deal with queries from amateur genealogists around the world trying to trace their English roots and heritage.

The project is being funded by Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund as well as the genealogy websites, Family Search and My Heritage. Tim Viney, owner of Atlantic Geomatics, the company mapping the churchyards said he hopes to expand the project to other religious denominations, as well as other countries.

“It’s a bit Ghostbusters,” he said of the £10,000 scanners which the surveyors wear on their backs to map the land.

The technology collects a couple of thousand measurements per second using laser scanners, GPS and cameras.

“This is far more accurate than Google Maps though,” he added. “We can pinpoint down to around 15cm (six inches) with this gear.”

It works by surveyors walking along every alternate row of graves, and scanning the position of each memorial, building, wall and tree. This will take up to 50 million measurements in every graveyard.

The Venerable Richard Pratt, Archdeacon of West Cumberland in the Diocese of Carlisle, said that churches are seeing an “enormous amount of interest in family trees”. He said: “I think there’s an understandable interest that humans have in wanting to find out who we are and where we come from.”

It is hoped the first digitised churchyards will be online by autumn but the project could take seven years to finish.



## **Long running dispute continues at Christ Church, Oxford**

**In an electronic letter to former students and others, from the Development Office of the College, dated 27 August, the following information is included:**

“We also wanted to take this opportunity to update you on the status of the Dean. The current situation is a source of great pain and frustration to us all. It will be even harder to comprehend for those of you looking on from afar, especially through the lens of public speculation and, at times, disinformation.

“The Dean voluntarily withdrew from his duties last November, following an allegation made against him. An independent investigation into the allegation was commissioned; this allegation is now being addressed under the relevant House procedures. We are sure that you will understand that due confidentiality is essential in such a matter.

“In addition, the Dean has made a number of employment tribunal claims against Christ Church, which the House is defending. Sadly, these will now not be heard in court until 2023. It had been anticipated that, through mediation, a much earlier resolution could be reached but unfortunately the current phase of mediation was halted by the independent mediator earlier in the summer, after several months of negotiation.

“Christ Church remains committed to a full review of its governance structures in due course, but this cannot take place until the Employment Tribunal has concluded. We understand there may be frustration at the amount of time these various processes are taking, but they must be allowed to run their proper course. In the meantime, Governing Body is continually reviewing and updating our policies and procedures to support the smooth running of Christ Church”.

Christ Church college chapel also serves as a cathedral for Oxford diocese.

Recent comments on the Thinking Anglicans web site included -

+ “Justice delayed is justice denied.” Whatever actually did or did not happen, the delay means that those who want to manage ChCh without the Dean are in effect getting what they want.

+ “the Bishop and the Vice Chancellor have no jurisdiction and this has been pointed out any number of times here on TA and elsewhere by people better qualified than I who are closer to the Oxford scene and familiar with the extraordinary legal complexities at Christ Church. The only body with unqualified power to intervene, so far as I am aware, is the Crown as Visitor of both Cathedral and College. The Charity Commission might further intervene if satisfied that the stage for this had now been reached.

“The Ch Ch Development Office letter is not addressed to us, but with the words “public speculation and

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disinformation” it effectively tells outsiders to mind their own business.

“This continues to be an intractable scenario”.

## Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars

### Building a community at Gloucester Centre of Mission



Hear Andy Wilson, Church Army Evangelist, share about his work building a community at the Gloucester Centre of Mission on @BBCSounds

<http://bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p09t1869>





## **New book 'God's Diplomats' unveils the secret history of Vatican diplomacy**

**A new book on the history of the Vatican's international relations shows how Pope Francis is only following in his predecessors' footsteps in standing up to the United States.**

One of the Vatican's most important but least studied departments is actually one of its most extensive: the massive network of lay and religious people engaged in peacemaking, information gathering and international diplomacy who throughout history have swayed governments and challenged kings.

In a new book, 'God's Diplomats: Pope Francis, Vatican Diplomacy and America's Armageddon,' journalist Victor Gaetan unveils the inner workings of the Holy See's diplomatic efforts. The book not only corrects the relative anonymity of the Catholic Church's crucial function, but also discloses how Vatican diplomats often find themselves clashing with United States foreign policy.

"As pope, Francis practices diplomacy for a multipolar world," said Gaetan in an interview with Religion News Service. "In three major theaters today, the Holy See sees U.S. hubris as particularly counterproductive: Middle East, Russia and China."

"And in each place, Francis goes out of his way to model dialogue as the antidote to conflict," he said.

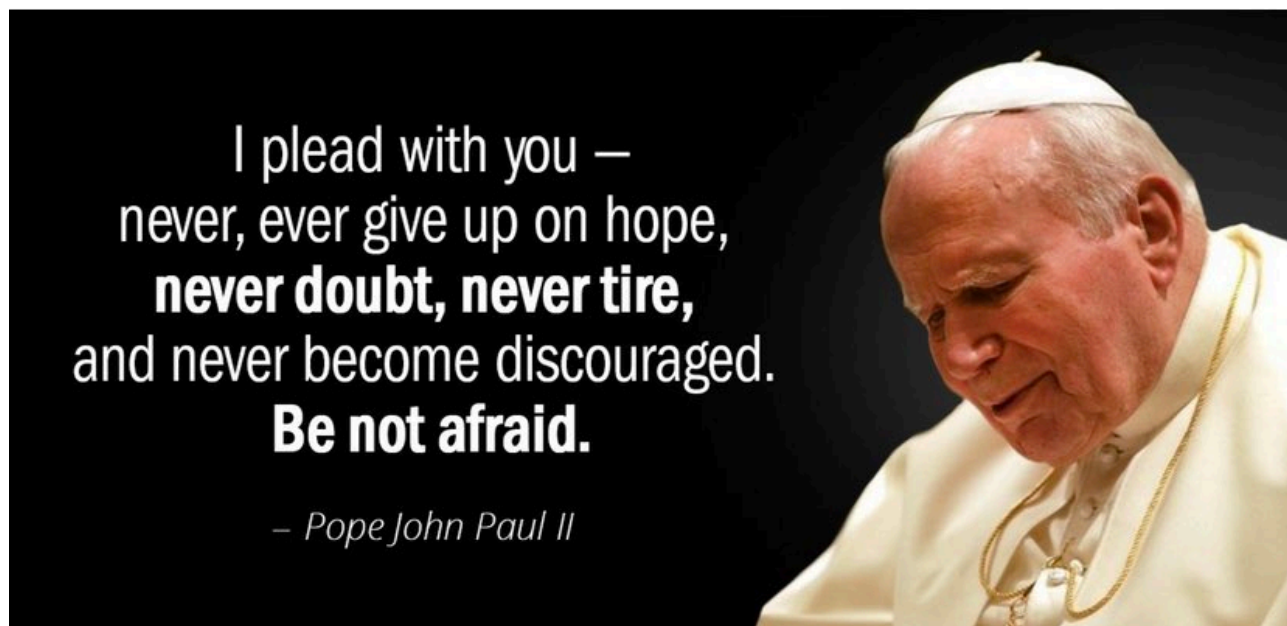
Rich in personal anecdotes and interviews, “God’s Diplomats” is divided into two parts. In the first part of the book, Gaetan unpacks what makes Vatican diplomacy effective and unique before taking up case studies in which cassocked diplomats have tipped the balance in favor of dialogue and encounter amid global crises.

An important and often confusing distinction underlies the book. Vatican City is an independent city-state, “smaller than Central Park,” as Gaetan puts it, while the Holy See is a global entity that reaches wherever its more than 1.2 billion faithful are. “That duality is at the heart of what makes Vatican diplomacy nimble — and successful,” said Gaetan.

The Holy See’s top diplomat is the secretary of state, currently Cardinal Pietro Parolin, who holds a position comparable to that of prime minister. His office is divided in three parts, one for general church affairs, another for relations with other states and the third, created by Francis in 2017, comprises diplomatic staff.

The secretariat can count on a network of Catholic charitable organizations, lay movements, missionaries and nuns spread across the world who have a direct insight into the communities they serve. In addition, it has a permanent observer status at the United Nations, allowing it to get “involved in the nitty-gritty of global debates,” Gaetan said.

Holy See representatives, called nuncios, cultivate relationships with most of the world’s governments, relying on information gathered by Catholics on the ground. They are trained at the oldest training institute for professional diplomats in the world, the Pontifical Ecclesiastical



Academy, created in 1701. Gaetan dissects a nuncios' preparation, which includes international and diplomatic history, negotiation techniques and fluency in at least four languages. Historically, the author explains, Vatican diplomats applied principles of prudence and discretion, born from their experience in the confessional.

Francis has ordered the development of courses on the plight of immigrants and refugees, and aspiring Vatican diplomats must now undergo a mandatory year of missionary work. Like his predecessors, Francis asked a Catholic lay movement to help him forward his vision, the Catholic Movement of St. Egidio, which is centered on “prayer, poor and peace.”

As a state without an army and with its biggest export being postcards, it can remain above the push and pull of economic and political power. Its charitable works further burnish its reputation. The pope's diplomats are nonetheless powerful intermediaries on the world stage. If they are little



recognized, it's in part because they often prefer to work behind the scenes.

Under Francis, Vatican diplomats tipped the balance in favor of dialogue and negotiation from Kenya to Colombia to South Sudan and influenced a host of other issues. “Did you know that under Pope Francis, Vatican diplomats have questioned the ethics of weaponized drones, challenged pharmaceutical companies for claiming intellectual property rights that prevent the poor from accessing medicine, and defended indigenous people losing land to extractive industries such as mining?” Gaetan asks in the book.

This pope and the United States have seen their positions drift farther apart, most recently disagreeing on China. But Gaetan explains that “the worldview clash between the U.S. and Holy See extends back to the start of the modern era” in 1870.

Pope Leo XIII “was horrified” by the U.S. takeover of the Philippines in 1899, Gaetan writes, just as Pope Benedict XV opposed the post-World War I Treaty of Versailles because it deepened resentment among the losing parties, especially Germany. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Pope Pius XII was quick to establish diplomatic relations with Japan (20 million Catholics were in occupied territories at the time), angering president Roosevelt.

More recently, Pope John Paul II condemned the U.S. invasion of Iraq, while Benedict XVI's rekindling of relations with Russia and the local Orthodox church angered the White House.

Questions remain as to whether Francis and President Joe Biden, the second Catholic American chief executive, see eye to eye.

“Can Biden impress on his foreign policy apparatus the need to settle disputes justly, without revenge, without seeking to “win” or to make another nation suffer for disagreeing?” Gaetan asks.

Gaetan points out that Biden helped his then-boss, President Barack Obama, decide to overthrow Libyan President Muammar al-Qaddafi, a move that Francis criticized. “The catastrophic tragedy in Afghanistan should inspire reflection,” Gaetan told RNS, expressing his hope “that the president discerns the need for what Pope Francis counsels: identifying shared interests, even with protagonists. Then, working to expand collaboration from there.”

Gaetan explained. “Francis allies with national and regional stakeholders who have moral authority, whether they are political leaders or religious leaders,” he said. Francis has sought encounter in every major world crisis he has faced since the beginning of his papacy, Gaetan writes, sometimes angering political players as well as Catholics.

The U.S. is most at odds with the Holy See when it comes to Russia and China. When conflict arose in Ukraine in 2014, “the Holy See and Pope Francis refused to side with one party or the other in the conflict,” Gaetan writes. “They did not want a religious cold war to ensue in the country.”

Francis' refusal to be sucked into the partisan conflict in Ukraine underlines how "the Vatican leadership believes Russia is a valuable ally for Europe," Gaetan says.

The same could be said about China. In 2018, the Holy See and China signed a controversial and secretive provisional agreement. Last year, then-U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo all but chastised the pope for the deal during a visit to Rome.

Francis' approach has yielded some landmark moments, from the historic encounter in 2016 at the airport in Cuba with Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill to the document on fraternity signed with the grand imam of al-Azhar, Ahmed al-Tayeb, one of Sunni Islam's most esteemed leaders.

"The Catholic faithful mainly seem oblivious to the positive impact the Church has in the rough and tumble world of foreign relations, probably because so often the work is done behind the scenes," said Gaetan, who said that writing the book has strengthened his own faith.

"But as one of the world's last absolute monarchies, the pope doesn't need affirmation or permission for his policies — except from God. And having practiced diplomacy for some 1,700 years, the Catholic Church will surely keep at it," he added.





## Opinion

# The protocol must work, not work to rule

## Charles Moore

**What with it being August, and what with the humiliation of the US in Afghanistan, you have not heard much about the Northern Irish Protocol recently. That is about to change.**

Despite the Afghan fiasco, the Biden administration has found time to deliver two “demarches” to the British Government. It accuses Britain of not abiding by the protocol properly. As a guarantor of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA), America claims the right to interfere.

Last week, the French president, Emmanuel Macron, was in Dublin. He told the Irish they must get rid of the low corporation tax rate which has done so much for the Republic’s economy. “I’m not one to put pressure on my friend... But...”, was how he silkily put it.

He sought to reassure Ireland that, on the Northern Irish Protocol, “we will never let you down”.

Like the attempt to raise and equalise the corporation tax rate – an idea led by President Biden – these interventions on the protocol are injurious to Ireland: they make trade so sticky. They are harmful to the consent in Northern Ireland on which the GFA insisted to ensure peace.

**The protocol, in parts, does not work. Its processes are absurdly cumbersome.**

Take the issue of which goods entering Northern Ireland might be “at risk” of entering the Republic. HMRC is seeking to reverse the burden of proof so that it would be assumed, unless there were reason to the contrary, that the goods would not go south. No, says, the EU: everything must be checked. It takes 400,000 customs declarations to produce £1.5 million of revenue in duty, a crazy amount of work for such a puny result. Britain’s Trader Support Scheme, which holds the hand of British companies as they struggle through the maze, costs £250 million a year.

There is also a massive task for Royal Mail, which has to scrutinise all parcels destined for Northern Ireland to work out whether they need declarations of goods worth more than £150. It is the United Kingdom, not the EU or the Republic, that bears the burden and most of the costs.

**Currently the new systems can be made to work only by temporary “easements”.**

Some of these end in September, some in October. Our Government wants their extension agreed; but if there is no agreement, it says it will have to extend them anyway to ensure the flow of goods. This could lead to the suspension of the protocol. Trouble looms.

**The obvious weakness in Britain’s position is that we agreed the protocol.**

Deferring to the erroneous idea that any sort of border on the island of Ireland is contrary to the GFA (and failing to drive home that it was the EU, not Britain, that insisted on such a border unless a deal were reached), we signed. Our excuse – politically understandable – was that we must get Brexit done. The price was dangerously high.

The Government could do much more, however, to make the argument from reality. Any agreement has to operate in practice; all agreements need tweaking in the light of that fact. Not for nothing is a “work to rule” a traditionally obstructive trade-union device in disputes with employers, rather than the normal state of affairs. The protocol is dysfunctional at present: it is the duty of both sides to make it function – rules that work, rather than a work to rule.

**The fact that Britain is failing to get its message across suggests that government is not coordinated.**

Lord Frost’s toughness in negotiation needs the support of colleagues. Mr Biden’s hereditary closeness to Irish nationalism is well known, and it is said that the US secretary of state, Anthony Blinken, is a keen francophile. All the more reason for our Foreign Office officials to be working hard to persuade, yet I gather that our able ambassador in Washington, Dame Karen Pierce, has yet to receive instructions on the issue from her boss, Dominic Raab.

Dame Karen is married, as it happens, to Charles Roxburgh, the second permanent secretary of the Treasury. Perhaps this powerful household should make their own trans-departmental demarche to HMG to get started.

Charles Moore a former Editor  
Courtesy the Daily Telegraph August 31, 2021

## Poem for today

### Down By the Salley Gardens by William Butler Yeats

Down by the salley gardens  
my love and I did meet;  
She passed the salley gardens  
with little snow-white feet.  
She bid me take love easy,  
as the leaves grow on the tree;  
But I, being young and foolish,  
with her would not agree.

In a field by the river  
my love and I did stand,  
And on my leaning shoulder  
she laid her snow-white hand.  
She bid me take life easy,  
as the grass grows on the weirs;

## Pointers for prayer

Intercessions for week following Fourteenth Sunday  
after Trinity Year B – 5th September 2021



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Heavenly Father Mindful of the words of the prophet Isaiah to be strong and fearless, we gather our thoughts and prayers with hope and humbly call on You to help us in our needs.

Give your wisdom and heavenly grace to all those who serve our parish/congregation and to all others who hold office in your church, that, by their service, faith may abound and your kingdom increase.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Creator God we pray for our world leaders; for Heads of State in Europe, The Commonwealth and for the United Nations. We also pray for our community leaders and those in public office dealing with difficult situations, especially all that surrounds the ongoing Pandemic.

(Short Silence)

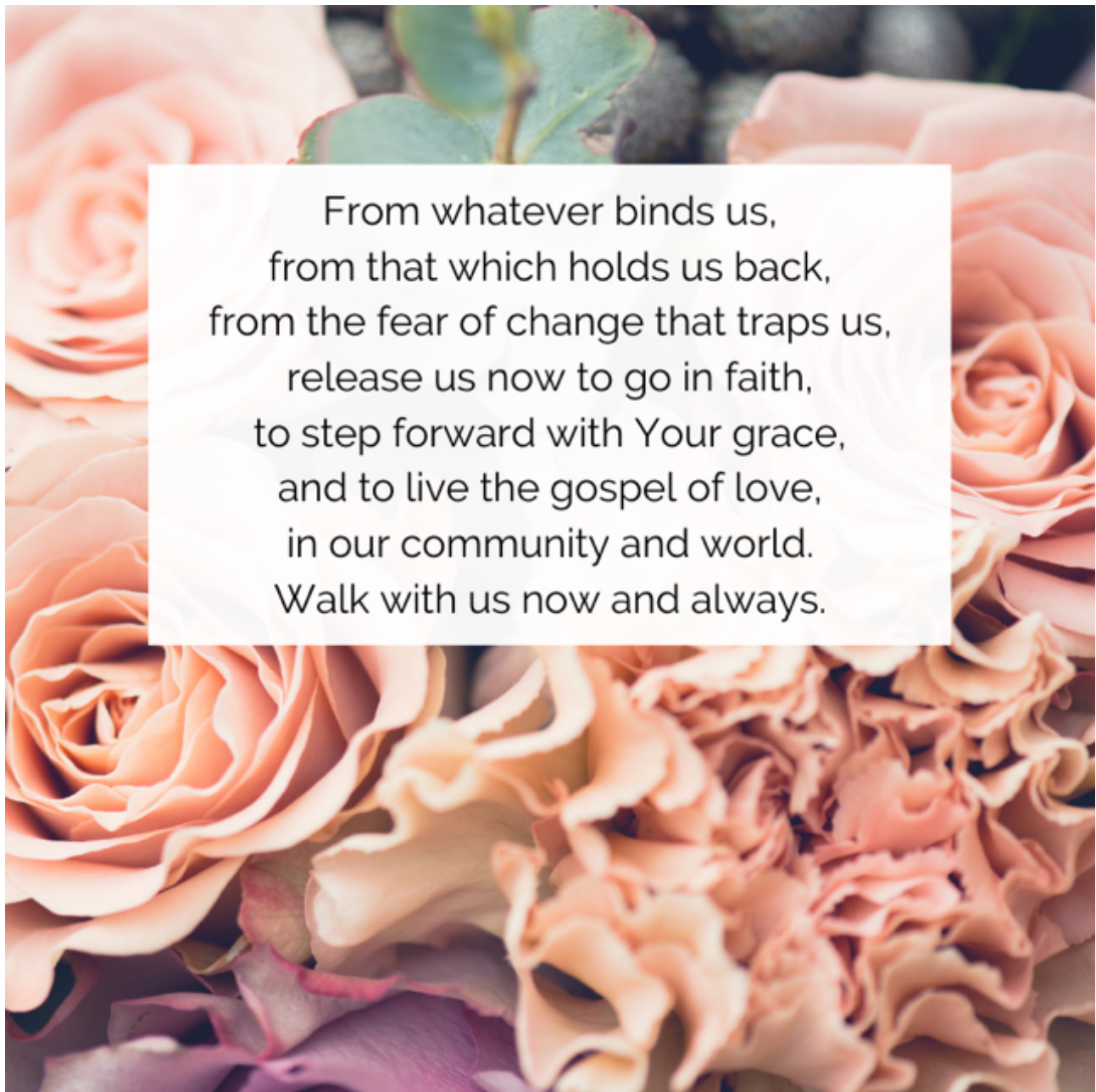
Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Creator God, we worship You as the one who has given us this life, and ask that You will help us to live it to the full. At home may we be the friends and neighbours that we really want to be. Help us to spread the warmth of Your love to everyone we meet.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

[churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)



From whatever binds us,  
from that which holds us back,  
from the fear of change that traps us,  
release us now to go in faith,  
to step forward with Your grace,  
and to live the gospel of love,  
in our community and world.  
Walk with us now and always.

Loving God Isaiah also foretells the time when Jesus came to open the eyes of the blind and unstop deaf ears and cast out evil spirits. We especially pray for any we know who are blind or deaf and for the specialist care which they receive to help them live a normal life. Thank you too for Guide dogs for the Blind and for Hearing dogs for the Deaf and for those who train them to be so helpful.

(Short Silence)

September 2, 2021

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Merciful God we pray for all who are coming to the end of their journey here on earth and pray that they may come into your presence and kingdom. We pray for all those who have come before your face and now rejoice in the fullness of life eternal.

(add names of the recently departed or an Anniversary list)

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Faithful God we thank you that your wisdom not only enlightens us but transforms us and guides us in our daily walk through life with you. Help us, as James advises, to always accompany our words of faith with deeds of action.

Merciful Father: accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen



## Speaking to the Soul

**They were just trying to intimidate us, imagining that they could discourage us and stop the work. So I continued the work with even greater determination.**

Nehemiah 6:9 NLT

I have read the book of Nehemiah many times over the years but what has struck me with special force this time is his amazing resilience. Almost anyone can lead an organisation when the circumstances are easy and the sun is shining. The real test of leadership is what happens when you are living with constant pressure and an endless supply of discouragements. The only way to get through is with resilience and that's what Nehemiah had to a remarkable degree. From the very beginning of his heroic rebuilding operation, he had been mocked and threatened. The opposition intensified with time. No one would have blamed Nehemiah if he had thrown in the towel, complaining about the unfair way in which he had been treated. But he didn't. He not only hung in there but continued the work with even greater determination.

Whatever you do in life, I promise you that there will be times when the going is so tough that it looks as if the only sensible thing to do is to resign and move away. I am not denying that there are some occasions when that is the right response. But often God's calling to us is, just like Nehemiah, to keep going despite all the problems. To do this requires a combination of character and faith. As we trust God, he is shaping our Christian character and, with



time, that grows and matures and becomes more secure and courageous. The wobbliness of our early Christian lives is replaced by a security and confidence as the Holy Spirit takes fuller control of our lives. But none of that happens unless we have a growing faith in the love and power of God. Nehemiah offers us an inspiring example of what that can look like in the midst of the most intense challenges.

## QUESTION

In what situations do you particularly need to be showing resilience at present?

## PRAYER

Loving Father, thank you that you equip us for every challenge that we face. Amen

