

# Church News Ireland

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## Image of the day – Christian witness at Easter



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### Christian witness at Easter - Part 2

Continuing the CNI review of this year's Good Friday and Easter acts of witness.

#### **Above - the Archbishops of Dublin carrying the cross of witness between their cathedrals**

The Church of Ireland and Catholic Archbishops of Dublin brought the powerful message of Good Friday to the streets of Dublin city Centre this evening. Archbishop Michael Jackson and Archbishop Dermot Farrell carried at Taize Cross across the city in what has become a firm ecumenical Good Friday tradition.



## The new building of the Christian Fellowship Church in Antrim town

The church took part in the annual interdenominational cross walk when prayers were offered in a number of churches on the route.

In a change from tradition this year, the Ecumenical Walk of Witness began in St Mary's Pro-Cathedral and processed across the city past the GPO, over O'Connell Bridge and across College Green before travelling up Dame Street to Christ Church Cathedral.

Dean of Christ Church, the Very Revd Dermot Dunne, met pilgrims on arrival and led prayers during the short service in which Archbishop Farrell read the Gospel.

In a short address, Archbishop Jackson focussed on St John 19.30: When Jesus had received the wine, he said, It is finished. Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

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## Participants in the cross walk in Antrim pray in the Christian Fellowship Church

“This happens after the very last attempt to address the parched reality of cracked lips and choking breathing along with the delirium and crumpling of a physical death



that cannot now be undone by any restorative intervention. It really is all over. The stark and shivering reality stands against our sky this evening as together we have carried The Taize Cross from St Mary’s Pro-Cathedral to Christ Church Cathedral just as The Cross itself stood against the sky of Jerusalem on the first Good Friday,” he said.

“Today’s cross we carry as a beacon of ecumenical sharing and as a light of human solidarity in the city of Dublin today for tomorrow. Our torch of hope on this day of desecration, of disempowerment and of departure is that even in 2023 we continue to call this day Good. Across the whole island Good Friday in this year is a day of a particular political and



Participants in the cross walk of witness in Antrim in All Saints C of I Parish Church

## **Good Friday Walk of Witness of the Cross, Easter prayer in five Antrim Churches**

A powerful affirmation of the Christian Faith and Unity in Antrim. On Good Friday church members walked behind a wooden cross through the town of Antrim. Over 300 followers of Jesus worshipped and prayed in various church buildings - Greystone Methodist Church, All Saints Parish Church, CFC Antrim, St Comgall's Church. High Street Presbyterian Church

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social Agreement carrying all the burden of suffering and of grief of every Good Friday.”

## People and places

### Bushmills annual art and photography exhibition

**Dunluce Parish, Bushmills, will again be hosting its annual art and photography exhibition which this year runs from Friday April 28 to Monday May 1.**

Funds raised will be donated to the Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal and the Friends of Pavestone Centre, Coleraine.

Artists and photographers who are interested in showing their works will find details in the Invitation to Artists document and Entry Form on the Downloads page of the parish website at [www.dunluceparish.org](http://www.dunluceparish.org).

The closing date for receipt of entries is Friday April 7. Queries can be sent to Aileen Gault, coordinator of the exhibition, at [dunluceparishart@outlook.com](mailto:dunluceparishart@outlook.com)

Last year, the exhibition featured 195 works on display by 51 artists and photographers and 31 participants made successful sales.

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Aileen said: “Feedback on the quality of the work was excellent and, importantly, we raised almost £2,500 for the Bishops’ Appeal for Ukraine. The Bishops’ Appeal is again our main charity, along with a small local charity, Friends of Pavestone Centre, Coleraine.”

## **Soup and Sandwich Club helps combat social isolation in south Belfast**

**St Bartholomew’s Parish, Stranmillis, has been hosting a weekly Soup and Sandwich Club, supported by Col MindMatters and the Benefact Trust.**

The club focuses on combating social isolation by creating safe space for people to interact and enjoy each other’s company.

Each week, participants receive a choice of soup and sandwiches followed by tea and biscuits.

A recent meeting was attended by members of the local neighbourhood policing team, a member of the Police and Community Safety Partnership for South Belfast and a Crime Prevention Officer, who gave a talk on personal safety and scam awareness from. All those present left with bags of safety gadget and stickers.

The rector, the Rev Canon Kevin Graham, said: “It’s been a great help to us to get the seed funding for our project from Benefact Trust and Col MindMatters. Whilst Stranmillis is usually very busy with students, it also has a significant number of older people who live alone, so it’s lovely to afford



Some of those who attended a recent Soup and Sandwich Club meeting in St Bartholomew's, Stranmillis.

them opportunities to meet together, with the club being very popular.”

Kevin added: “Thank you for the foresight of those who secured the funding for this and other projects.’

Following a week's break for Easter, the Soup and Sandwich Club will be on again each Thursday from 12.30pm.

## **RUC crest from police station dedicated at poignant church service**

**The RUC Crest which was once in Fivemiletown RUC Station has now been erected in St. Ronan's Parish**



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## **Church, Colebrooke, and dedicated by the Bishop of Clogher.**

The service conducted by the Rector, the Rev. John McClenaghan, was attended by the Bishop of Clogher, the Right Rev. Dr. Ian Ellis, who was the preacher; His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant, Viscount Brookeborough, and Lady Brookeborough, as well as members of the RUC GC Association in East Tyrone and Fermanagh.

The service also celebrated the service and sacrifice of the RUC and RUC Reserve.

Bishop Ellis, in his address, said an occasion such as this, of the laying up and dedication of the Fivemiletown RUC station crest, gave everyone an opportunity to consider and be thankful for the work of the police in the community.

“It will also cause us to reflect on the cost of that service over the period of our Troubles in Northern Ireland, in the lives lost and hearts and homes broken.

“Located near the Border, this area was constantly vulnerable, and was particularly impacted by acts of terrorism over those terrible years.

“We must never forget those who sacrificed their lives – their names are well known to us, and their families continue to carry the pain of loss,” he said.

“Throughout the long years of terror, it was the dedicated work of the RUC, and later the PSNI, which kept us from

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slipping into the abyss of civil war, and to even greater horrors than those which we did endure.

“Over 30 years ago, I was a curate in Armagh, and we used to be invited as clergy to attend the annual Remembrance Service held in Newry Road Police Station.

“I clearly remember hearing the names read aloud, as we heard today of those from the subdivision who lost their lives in the service of the community.

“I could not help but reflect on the length of the list, so many lives destroyed, and families devastated.”

He continued: “This crest placed in this church today remains a powerful symbol of the service of police officers from this district, and of those who made that supreme sacrifice.

“We are thankful to God that because of the work of such men and women, we have been spared and could bring up our families and enjoy freedom and a relatively normal life.”

In conclusion, Bishop Ellis said: “So today, as we dedicate this crest, we give thanks for the work of our police service in this district, in their vocation to protect life and uphold the law, and to pray that they may live up to that high calling

“May it remain a symbol of gratitude and honour those who have served with distinction in the past, and ask especially for God’s mercy upon those who have lost someone dear to them because of their devotion to the service.

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“If we fulfil these three things – to do justice, to love with kindness, and to walk humbly with our God – then we will have nothing else to fear in life or in death, because God requires no more of us, and His great love will never let us go,” he added.

A history and celebration of the 100th anniversary of the RUC was given by Rev. Isaac Thompson, from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and Chaplain to East Tyrone RUC GC Association.

The Order of Service included a roll of honour for those from East Tyrone RUC GC from 1946-2001, and Fermanagh RUC GC 1956-2001, who were killed on duty, or who died from injuries sustained.

Murley Silver Band provided the music accompaniment, and a Piper’s Lament was also played.

Report courtesy The Impartial Reporter

## News reports

### **Archbishop’s Easter sermon at Canterbury Cathedral Sung Eucharist**

**Cruel leaders and policies that cause suffering are “doomed to extinction”, the Archbishop of Canterbury said in his Easter sermon on Sunday.**

“All that is against God is temporary, doomed to extinction,” he told the congregation at Canterbury Cathedral. “Injustice



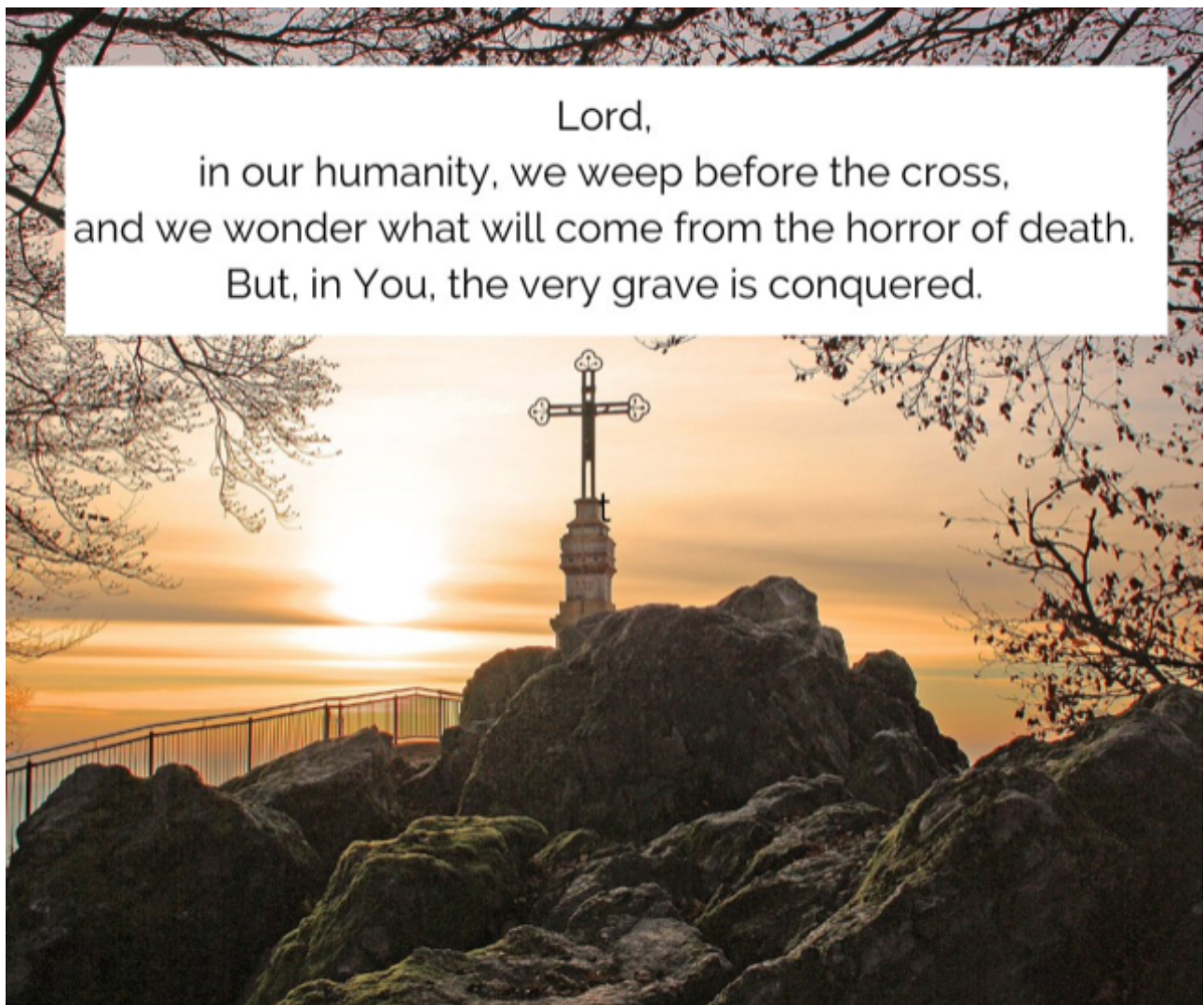
and brutality may seem to triumph in our short lives on earth. Cruel and oppressive rulers might look as though they only get stronger. Yet they will vanish. The power of the resurrection is infinitely greater than they are.

“Even in our lifetimes, as we are surrounded by fears, even by evil, we know that those who oppress and subjugate others will face divine justice, and there is no question of that. We know with certainty that policies that cause suffering and pain will fall away. We can say surely, all that seeks to deny God has no future.” Such policies had “no eternal foundation”, he said.

The resurrection meant that the Church spoke “of eternal values that didn’t die with Christ but rose with him,” Archbishop Welby observed. “And we speak of them even when they are politically uncomfortable, generally unpopular, or treated with derision.”

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He revealed that he had received “hundreds and hundreds” of letters in February and March after the Church Commissioners announced their decision to create a £100-million impact investment fund to mitigate long-term consequences of a connection with the transatlantic slave trade. Ninety-eight per cent of these letters were complaints, he said. Yet, “the living reality of Christ compels us to consider and respond to those actions that deny the reality of God’s power and love. It’s not post-colonial guilt, ambivalent wokery; it is the living presence of Christ, alive in our church and in our lives, who treats us all, high and low, important and unknown, exactly the same, and in the past slave and free, and today.”



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The sermon explored evidence for the resurrection and its impact on the world. The resurrection of Jesus was “among the most certain facts in history”, the Archbishop said.

“People ever since have been changed, know this person Jesus, love him, and give their lives for the truth of the resurrection. That is why Christians long for others to know this God of love who became human; became like us so that for all eternity we might live and grow and become like him.”

He touched on the Church’s failings, including “the scandal of armies marching out in the name of the Church”. But he also celebrated its contribution to healing and peace. This included its role in the peace process in Northern Ireland : “It was churches and monasteries, compelled by the living Christ, who spent years before 1998 secretly, at huge risk, building the bridges that opened the way for the first ceasefires and considerations of peace.”

He highlighted events in Ukraine and in Israel and Palestine as examples of conflict in which “we do not lose heart, because the God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead is at work in our world today . . . Because of the resurrection, peace, true peace, is no aimless daydream but a reality offered. . . We know that life trumps over death, light over darkness.”

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## **Pope prays that Easter joy would break through gloom of sin, war, strife**

**On a bright spring morning, Pope Francis prayed that Christians would experience the joy of Easter and allow Christ's resurrection to be “the light that illumines the darkness and the gloom in which, all too often, our world finds itself enveloped.”**

“In Jesus the decisive passage of humanity has been made: the passage from death to life, from sin to grace, from fear to confidence, from desolation to communion,” the pope said April 9 after celebrating the Easter morning Mass in St. Peter's Square.

In his Easter message, Pope Francis prayed for an end to the war in Ukraine and remembered Christians celebrating Easter “in particular circumstances,” specifically mentioning Nicaragua, where the government has imposed restrictions on public celebrations, has deported dozens of priests and has imprisoned Bishop Rolando Álvarez de Matagalpa.

As is traditional, Pope Francis did not give a homily during the morning Mass but bowed his head and observed several minutes of silent reflection after the chanting of the Gospel in both Latin and Greek

Marking the 38th year they have provided the Easter flowers for St. Peter's Square, Dutch flower growers sent 38,000 blooming bulbs — tulips, daffodils and hyacinths — to the Vatican. The floral gift, arranged in the square by Dutch and Vatican workers, also featured 6,000 Avalanche roses, as well as hundreds of anthurium, delphinium and



Pope Francis waves to the crowd in St. Peter's Square as he arrives to impart his Easter blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica April 9, 2023.

chrysanthemums. Flowering azaleas, ivy and celosia completed the Easter garden set up on the steps leading to the basilica, the area around the altar and the balcony of the church.

Some 45,000 people were present in the square for the morning Mass, the Vatican said, and by noon there were close to 100,000 people inside and outside the square for the pope's Easter message and blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world).

U.S. Cardinal James M. Harvey, archpriest of Rome's Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, stood alongside Pope



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Francis on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica for the blessing, announcing a plenary indulgence available for everyone present, listening by radio or watching on television or following with "other means of communication."

Wishing everyone a happy Easter, Pope Francis prayed that the day would mark "a passage from affliction to consolation" for all, especially "the sick and the poor, the elderly and those experiencing moments of trial and weariness."

"We are not alone: Jesus, the living one, is with us forever," he said. "Let the church and the world rejoice, for today our hopes no longer come up against the wall of death, for the Lord has built us a bridge to life."

"Yes, brothers and sisters, at Easter the destiny of the world was changed," he said, "and on this day, which also coincides with the most probable date of Christ's resurrection, we can rejoice to celebrate, by pure grace, the most important and beautiful day of history."

Pope Francis noted how the various Gospel accounts of Easter mention Jesus' followers rushing or going in haste to share the news of his resurrection, spurred on by joy and renewed in hope.

"At Easter, then, the journey quickens and becomes a race, since humanity now sees the goal of its journey, the meaning of its destiny, Jesus Christ, and is called to make haste to meet him, who is the hope of the world," the pope said.

He prayed that all people would "make haste to progress on a journey of reciprocal trust: trust among individuals,

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peoples and nations,” overcoming conflicts and divisions and opening their hearts to those in need.

“Let us hasten to pursue paths of peace and fraternity,” he said.

“Help the beloved Ukrainian people on their journey toward peace and shed the light of Easter upon the people of Russia,” the pope prayed. “Comfort the wounded and all those who have lost loved ones because of the war, and grant that prisoners may return safe and sound to their families.”

“On this day, Lord, we entrust to you the city of Jerusalem, the first witness of your resurrection,” he continued, adding to his prepared text his “deep concern” about the attacks that had taken place in the Holy Land in the previous few days, leading to deaths, injuries and an increase of tensions.

The attacks, he said, make it difficult to resume “dialogue, in a climate of trust and reciprocal respect, between Israelis and Palestinians, so that peace may reign in the Holy City and in the entire region.”

The pope also offered special prayers for Syria, Lebanon, Haiti, Tunisia, Congo, Myanmar and other nations experiencing hardship and unrest.

He prayed that God would “comfort refugees, deportees, political prisoners and migrants, especially those who are most vulnerable, as well as the victims of hunger, poverty and the dire effects of the drug trade, human trafficking and all other forms of slavery.”

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“Lord,” he continued, “inspire the leaders of nations to ensure that no man or woman may encounter discrimination and be violated in his or her dignity; that in full respect for human rights and democracy these social wounds may be healed; that the common good of the citizenry may be pursued always and solely; and that security and the conditions needed for dialogue and peaceful coexistence may be guaranteed.”

## Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

### **Easter Day Service from Southwell Minster**

A traditional celebration for Easter, live from the glorious setting of Southwell Minster, led by the Dean, the Very Rev Nicola Sullivan. The preacher is the bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, the Rt Rev Paul Williams. With favourite seasonal hymns and choral music, including Jesus Christ Is Risen Today and Thine Be the Glory, sung by the Cathedral Choir and congregation, directed by Jonathan Allsopp.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001l0w7>

### **Bishop Michael Burrows Easter reflection**

Bishop Michael Burrows the Church of Ireland Bishop of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe gives his Easter Reflection 2023

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You can find out more at  
<https://tlk.ie/bishop-michaels-easter-reflection/>

## Poem for today

### Daffodowndilly by A A Milne

She wore her yellow sun-bonnet,  
She wore her greenest gown;  
She turned to the south wind  
And curtsied up and down.  
She turned to the sunlight  
And shook her yellow head,  
And whispered to her neighbour:  
"Winter is dead."

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## 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](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

