

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day -  
Walk the Way of the Cross on Good Friday with the  
Archbishops of Dublin**

## News reports

### Join the Archbishops of Dublin to Walk the Way of the Cross on Good Friday

**Archbishop Dermot Farrell and Archbishop Michael Jackson in an empty St Mary's Pro-Cathedral on Good Friday last year.**

The Good Friday Walk of Witness returns to Dublin City Centre during Holy Week 2022. For the first time since 2019 all are welcome to join the Archbishops of Dublin, Archbishop Michael Jackson and Archbishop Dermot Farrell, as they carry the cross from Christ Church Cathedral to St Mary's Pro-Cathedral.

The Walk of Witness begins in Christ Church Cathedral at 7pm with a short time of prayer and reflection with the two Archbishops. They will then lead participants from the cathedral, down Dame Street to College Green and Westmoreland Street to O'Connell Street before turning down Talbot Street towards St Mary's Pro-Cathedral where there will also be a short service.

Archbishop Michael Jackson has encouraged people to join him and Archbishop Farrell.

“The Good Friday Walk of Witness from Christ Church Cathedral to St Mary's Pro-Cathedral is an annual opportunity for people in Dublin to walk the Way of The

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Cross. In recent years, because of Covid 19, this has been greatly reduced in scope. This year both Archbishop Farrell and I will lead this walk from one cathedral to another,” he commented.

“With the help of the Gardai all are safe literally to walk the road of witness, faith and compassion. With so many Ukrainian people terrorised and displaced, participating in this year’s walk is a way of showing our solidarity with everyone who is dispossessed and marginalised. These were, after all, the people whose company Jesus enjoyed and with whom he ate. I invite you to find your walking shoes and to join us on Good Friday at 7pm, starting in Christ Church Cathedral. You will be very welcome,” the Archbishop added.

## **Golden Jubilee Gala marks Catholic Chaplaincy at Queen’s**

**On Friday evening, the Catholic Chaplaincy hosted a Golden Jubilee Gala. The event, held in the University’s Great Hall, marked 50 years at the Chaplaincy’s iconic site situated at the very heart of the Queen’s campus.**

Distinguished guests and friends included the Bishop of Down and Connor, Dr Noel Treanor, Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo, and the University’s Vice Chancellor, Professor Ian Greer. All gathered were treated to a rich programme of art, poetry and music, much of which was performed by current students and alumni.



Professor Michael Longley, perhaps Ireland's best living poet, recited a specially commissioned poem, 'Canticle', and world-renowned artist and newly appointed Chancellor of Ulster University, Dr Colin Davidson, unveiled a commemorative painting.

Davidson is best known for his portraits of noted figures but each year, he paints a cityscape of his native Belfast. The Chaplaincy commissioned his cityscape for 2022, which takes in the University Quarter and pans over Belfast as far as Cave Hill.

Davidson's painting, together with a copy of 'Canticle' handwritten by Longley, and a complementary illustration by the poet's daughter, Sarah Longley, will be displayed in a newly refurbished Chaplaincy, plans for which are well advanced.



Throughout the evening, guests enjoyed music and song provided by the University's Chamber Choir, under the direction of Donal McCrisken. The Chaplaincy's Choir also contributed, with solo performances by celebrated soprano Marcella Walsh, and cellist Niall Leonard, both Queen's alumni.

The highlight of the musical programme was the world premiere of Sir James MacMillan's 'With my heart I worship'. The renowned Scottish composer set to music the ancient Eucharistic hymn, Adoro te Devote, written by Thomas Aquinas, excerpts of which feature in the University Chapel's artwork. MacMillan used an English translation of the text by celebrated medievalist and Queen's alumna, Helen Waddell.



The specially commissioned work for choir and organ was performed by the Chamber Choir, in the presence of the composer, and received a standing ovation. All present agreed with MacMillan that the evening demonstrated ‘the power of the arts to communicate the Divine.’

University Chaplain, Fr Dominic McGrattan, commented:

“With the support of generous benefactors, we have engaged the best of creative talent across these islands to help us celebrate this important milestone in our distinguished record of service to the University. We hope to honour past achievements and envision the future with confidence.”

At the event, Bishop Treanor announced that the Chaplaincy, in partnership with Down and Connor Diocese, is working to safeguard its important work with students,

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well into the future, progressing ambitious plans to develop the Chaplaincy building and ministry “in new and exciting ways.”

Fr McGrattan concluded a memorable evening with heartfelt thanks to all who made the event possible and he invited all gathered to “look forward, with confidence, to a bright future for the Chaplaincy and the University it serves.”

## General Synod 2022 Preview

**The following preview of General Synod 2022 was first published in the April edition of the Church of Ireland Gazette.**

The second meeting of the 52nd General Synod will take place in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, from Wednesday, 4th May, to Friday, 6th May 2022, with the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland presiding. This will be the first in-person meeting of the General Synod since its meeting in Derry/Londonderry in May 2019.

The General Synod Service of Holy Communion will be held in St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast, on Wednesday, 4th May, at 10.30am. The business of General Synod will then commence at 12noon, followed by the Presidential Address.

### Representative Church Body

The reports of the Representative Church Body (RCB), the Standing Committee and all other committees reporting to



the General Synod will be presented for the year leading up to March 2022.

The RCB report notes that during 2021, the total funds available to the RCB increased by €41 million to €249 million. Expenditure from General Funds, decreased by €100,000 to €7.1 million. Allocations have been set at €3.7 million for 2022.

The initial research phase of the MindMatters COI project, to promote better awareness of mental health, was completed during 2021 and the project team will this year develop training and the application process for grants to dioceses and parishes.

### **Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee received a report from the House of Bishops on women in ministry and reviewed the possible future use of online technology for central church meetings.



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It also provided a subvention to Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise (the Irish Guild of the Church) towards the reprinting and republishing of An Bíobla Naofa (the Holy Bible) in the Irish language.

The Bishops' Appeal for World Aid and Development is this year celebrating 50 years of standing in solidarity with people who live in poverty. The Church and Society Commission supported the Irish Churches Creation Care Conference, which is taking place on 8th April, and responded to public consultations on marriage law, organ donation, and the Northern Ireland Programme for Government.

The Working Group on Pioneer Ministry will bring forward proposals for pioneer ministry with the aim of reaching more people outside the Church in a way that complements existing ministry within the Church of Ireland.

## **Other reports**

Committee reports will also be presented by the Board of Education, Church of Ireland Youth Department, Covenant Council, Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue, Liturgical Advisory Committee, Council for Mission, Commission on Ministry, and Marriage Council.

The Council for Mission is continuing its work on promoting the Anglican Communion's Five Marks of Mission with a focus on discipleship and our care for Creation, and is completing a series of videos to raise awareness of all Five Marks.

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The Commission on Ministry is undertaking the follow-up work on the Report on Women's Ministry.

In its report to General Synod, the Commission welcomes feedback and responses from members of the General Synod on the theme of rural ministry, which will form part of its work in 2022 and 2023. The Commission is aware of the many positives of serving in rural communities alongside the challenges involved and the particular issues affecting rural areas more greatly than urban areas.

The Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue reports on a busy year with many meetings and discussions to maintain good relationships with other Churches and faiths undertaken by its working groups on Anglican and ecumenical affairs, Europe, and inter-faith matters. The Covenant Council continues to encourage the implementation of the Church of Ireland-Methodist Covenant at every level and to consider how to best support the interchangeability of ministry.

Further information on this year's General Synod, including Bills, notices of motion and the indicative timetable, will be made available at

<https://synod.ireland.anglican.org/2022>

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## **Former Anglican Bishop of Rochester elevated to rank of ‘monsignor’ by Pope**

**Pope Francis has conferred the title of “monsignor” upon Michael Nazir Ali, the former Anglican Bishop of Rochester who was ordained a Catholic priest last year.**

The Holy Father made Rev. Dr Nazir Ali a Prelate of Honour to His Holiness in keeping with the tradition of elevating high-profile Anglicans who join the Catholic Church.

Mgr Nazir Ali was received into the full communion of the Catholic Church on September 29, the Feast of St Michael and All Angels.

He was ordained to the Catholic priesthood for the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham at Our Lady of the Assumption in Warwick Street, London, on October 30 by Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster.

Mgr Keith Newton, the Ordinary of the Personal Ordinariate, said: “This is a well-deserved honour.

“Michael has worked for Christian unity throughout his ministry and supported the Ordinariate, albeit from outside it, since its erection in 2011.

“Over the years he has been in dialogue with the Catholic Church both through the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

“He was a member of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission and the International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission.

“So I am delighted that the Holy See has recognised his huge contribution to Christian thinking over many years.”

On his appointment, Mgr Nazir Ali said: “It is very generous of the Holy Father to confer this honour on me which I hardly deserve. Please pray that I will be worthy of it.”

He is the author of many books on doctrine, ecumenism, mission and relations with people of

Michael Nazir-Ali was born in Pakistan in 1949 and has both British and Pakistani citizenship.

He holds many academic awards including from the Universities of Karachi, Oxford and Cambridge, as well as the Lambeth Doctor of Divinity. He has taught and researched at a number of institutions and continues to teach and supervise research.

He was ordained an Anglican priest in 1976 and served in England and Pakistan before being consecrated Anglican Bishop of Raiwind in 1984.

He was the General Secretary of the Church Missionary Society (1989-94) before his appointment as Bishop of Rochester in 1994.

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He entered the House of Lords in 1999 and was active in the areas of international relations, dialogue among people of different faiths, freedom of expression and speech and defence of marriage and human life.

He also served on many public and church bodies. He resigned as Bishop of Rochester in 2009.

Since then he has been Director of OXTRAD: Oxford Centre for Training, Research, Advocacy and Dialogue. OXTRAD's mission is to prepare Christians for ministry in situations where the Church is under pressure and in danger of persecution.

Michael has been married to Valerie since 1972 and they have two adult sons.

## **Archbishop condemns Russian Patriarch**

**THE Archbishop of York has condemned the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, accusing him of not speaking “in the name of Christ” by supporting the war in Ukraine.**

The Most Rev Stephen Cottrell accused Patriarch Kirill, a powerful figure in Russia with close ties to the Kremlin, of failing to “condemn this war”.

On Sunday, the Patriarch called on people to rally around authorities as Moscow pursues its military intervention in Ukraine.

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The 75-year-old leader has previously made statements defending Moscow's actions in Ukraine.

Last month, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, urged the Patriarch to publicly call for peace.

On Monday April 11 the Archbishop of York entered the debate for the first time, directly condemning him for supporting the war.

Speaking to Good Morning Britain, he said of the war in Ukraine: "This is not the self-defence of Russia, it's the invasion and oppression of the people of Ukraine, and therefore there can be no justification of it.

"And therefore joining with the Pope in calling for a ceasefire and for peace, we have made and continue to make an appeal to the Russian Orthodox Church to condemn this war – which, by the way, other orthodox churches are condemning, as are many thousands of individual Christian people in Russia." He added: "Let's be absolutely clear, the way of Christ is the way of peace, and any Christian leader who is condoning oppression, violence, invasion and the terrible atrocities we've seen, is not speaking in the name of Christ."

Last week, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Williams of Oystermouth, accused the Patriarch of "killing your own flock in Ukraine".

Lord Williams also called for the Russian Orthodox Church to be expelled from the World Council of Churches (WCC).

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The WCC's acting general secretary, Father Ioan Sauca – a Romanian Orthodox priest – recently called an emergency consultation with church leaders from eight European nations. Russians and Ukrainians were invited but unable to attend.

## **The Archbishop of Dublin's Easter letter**

**The Most Reverend Dr Michael Jackson writes**

Dear friend,

We have come through an elongated winter and emerged into an unfolding spring. We are also coming through Covid-19. Many of us bear the scars of illness, bereavement, dislocation from ourselves and from others, along with a never-ending exhaustion. Much of this we have recognized only when what has seemed to be the worst of Covid-19 to date has receded. Others of us are terrified to leave behind the familiarity of our own homes and experience greater and greater anxiety because of the escalating cost of living. There is no going back to where we were before Covid-19.

Post-Covid is not Pre-Covid replayed. It is not possible to deny experiences that are real and tangible. They happened. What we had to do, we did. There are no two ways about it. Many, many people did much more than they ever thought they could. I congratulate every one of you on your commitment and your compassion and your concern for others. I am immensely proud of what you have done,

and done instinctively. However, there needs to be a way of moving forward into a new space in the same world, into a new picture in the same frame. The world and the frame are not of our making; the space and the picture are ours to shape confidently and to inhabit wisely. This is the opportunity that we have been waiting for, that we need to take and that we have to grasp – not impetuously – but we need to want to try it and we need to try to want it. All of us who have endured this pandemic owe it to ourselves and to those who have seen us through to today, to contribute and to make the difference that all of us can make in this unfolding spring.

While the Season of Holy Week and of Easter does not, nor can it, speak to all of us in the Ireland of today, because of our diversity in culture and in faith and in inheritance, there are messages embedded in the Christian narrative that can, I suggest, reflect into our society and into our state of mind. This is irrespective of our personal convictions, whether we believe in anything divine or in anyone divine, and irrespective of whether we are younger or older. But it may enrich the human and the social understanding of every one of us. My purpose is not to strip away any of the specific content of what is called The Passion and The Easter Story from the belief–system of those who are Christian people. It is, rather, to let the Christian narrative ripple into the life of humanity more generally and to highlight threads and themes that connect people of every age with one another in the range of our dynamic diversity. They do this because human predictability, in its actions and in its reactions, lies at the heart of this narrative every bit as much as does any specific religious interpretation.



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And so, what I want to do is to outline some of the pictures of human action and reaction that the concentrated timeframe from Holy Week to Easter charts. The first of these would seem to me to be crowds and spectacle. This is seen on what is called Palm Sunday when Jesus enters Jerusalem for a specific purpose, to die. A spectacle draws a crowd. A spectacle can hold a crowd. But to do so it needs to be thrilling. A crowd has its own logic and its own chaos all at the same time. Both The Passion and The Resurrection seem, on Biblical evidence, to have been neither spectacular nor thrilling. There was no more than a handful of people gathered at the foot of the cross and no more than two handfuls of people gathered in fear on the evening of the resurrection itself. Abandonment is closer to what the record of both tells. This may surprize many. Maybe from this we can learn that, while we all love the spectacle, it is not always where good things start or even where the best of things happen. We need to develop our own discernment, our own judgement and make our own decisions. Frequently, it is the development of ourselves, of ideas and of relationships that makes the difference in understanding or misunderstanding what really is going on. This is worth it for any of us.

Anyone reading this narrative will see the swing from crowds and spectacle to individual and aloneness. There are many points at which Jesus finds himself to be a very lone person. If you read this story through that lens, you can see a number of things that matters every bit as much to you in your own life today. In a world almost saturated with communications, more and more people are experiencing acute aloneness. Conviction is what motivates people. Conviction connects us with big words like justice and

ecology, strategy and policy. But conviction also alienates us from other people who do not share our own particular conviction at any particular time. Conviction can breed conflict just as easily as it can build harmony. Conviction on its own can suddenly find that it is running on empty. It needs to be prepared for this. Some of you will have found yourselves in situations of this sort your lives through. Others of you will have all of this still ahead of you. Jesus is alone at the pivotal points where transformative things happen through him, to him and to others.

Jesus is alone when things change radically. We can take courage, if not comfort, from this as it is the way in which human relations often still work.

The power of suffering and the impact of transformation hit us forcefully in this narrative. Suffering is a word made up of many different threads. Suffering is a word and an experience of silence as well as of noise. Suffering frequently is the outcome of intense cruelty visited on the vulnerable and the defenceless and the defeated in heart, mind and body. But suffering is also the place where the martyr stands, taking suffering herself or himself in any and every part of the body for the sake of others and for their welfare. Throughout our lives, we meet and experience both of these, degradation and martyrdom, and again we see these two strands in the life and death of Jesus.

Easter, nonetheless, is a time of joy. It is a time of a new dawn and a new community. Fragments of the old are knit together with new people to develop something that is quite different in every conceivable way. As the story unfolds,

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people take up a new and a living story after a time of tension, bickering and fear.

Yet again, all of this is familiar to any of us in the communities to which we belong, whether they be schools, homes, workplaces or residential homes and hospitals, and in the situations and relationships which form the bedrock of our everyday life. A community of loyalty is formed at the foot of the cross. A community of solidarity leading to outreach and numerical growth is formed in the two meetings in an upper room. This community expands across the then known world with more and more people coming on board and taking the plunge. A new and different sense of community is what we need today. It is the core of true joy for social and gregarious creatures such as ourselves after two years of Lock-in.

And now what of Ukraine? Everyone has a view on The War in Ukraine. This war is little more than a month old and yet we have seen from afar, and from close at hand through the media and the social media channels, the most atrocious of human cruelty and human suffering in Europe in the twenty first century to date.

We have seen not only homes, theatres and shops destroyed but also schools and maternity hospitals. Individual and community life has been shattered by the thunder and the precision of war. Seven million children alone have been severely affected. People are forced first to become refugees in their own country and then to become refugees wherever they can flee onwards.

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Suffering, solidarity and sympathy; crowds and individuals, contempt and cruelty, compassion and response: all of the components of Holy Week and Easter find expression in an entirely new and unprecedented situation. The worst and the best of human nature show themselves in a landscape of loss and fragmentation. The worst and the best of human response show themselves in a landscape of war and escape. We in Ireland, in every way possible, are now being given our chance to respond.

Many people have already done so magnificently. Our challenge is to keep this going and keep shifting our emphasis and our impact. The only ways in which this can be done is for us to listen to what people actually want and need – and to say less rather than more. I encourage you all to offer welcome. That will be a real place to start.

St Mark 13.1, 2: As Jesus was leaving the temple, one of his disciples exclaimed, Look, Teacher, what huge stones! What fine buildings! Jesus said to him, You see these great buildings? Not one stone will be left upon another; they will all be thrown down.

Let us continue to watch, to care and to respond and may you have time for relaxation at Easter,

+Michael

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