

Church News Ireland



**Image of the day –
Cross at
Cloughfern
Parish
Church**

News reports

Churchgoers on island of Ireland raise 3.25 million euro for Ukraine

Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh and Archbishop Dermot Farrell of Dublin paid tribute to the generosity of parishioners.

Catholic churchgoers on the island of Ireland have raised 3.25 million euro for the people of Ukraine since the war began.

Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh and Archbishop Dermot Farrell of Dublin paid tribute to the generosity of parishioners.

Irish bishops had asked for a special collection in parishes across the island, in the wake of the Russian invasion.

The collection took place largely over the weekend of March 26-27.

“It is also heartening that some parish communities have established direct links with Ukrainian parishes and local charitable projects to support refugees and those remaining in Ukraine.”

Prince of Wales gives out Maundy money at St George's Chapel in absence of Queen

The Prince of Wales distributed Maundy money to community stalwarts from across the country as he represented the Queen at the ancient ritual for the first time.

Prince Charles followed the tradition of presenting Maundy coins to those who have provided Christian service to the elderly, worked tirelessly during the pandemic or been a comfort to those in need, during the service at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle.

The Queen, who has been experiencing mobility issues, was missing. Buckingham Palace had announced she would not attend and be represented by the prince and Duchess of Cornwall.

The Bishop of Worcester, Dr John Inge, speaking in his role as Lord High Almoner, said the Queen had a copy of the order of service and a list of Maundy money recipients and details about them.

He told the congregation before the service began: "She's close by and would want me to extend to you her greetings." The Queen is expected to miss another traditional event of the Easter period, the Sunday service attended by the royal family this weekend.



It is a staple in the royal calendar but the monarch will not be joining other members of the monarchy at St George's Chapel.

During the service, Charles handed out the Maundy coins to 96 men and 96 women – as the Queen will be 96 this year, celebrating her birthday on April 21.

The heir to the throne walked along the lines of recipients saying a few words of thanks to each one and clasping their hand with both of his.

Muriel Davies, 99, who served in the Women's Land Army during the Second World War, was recognised for her 50 years of fundraising for the RNLI in her home town of Bolton.

April 16, 2022

She said after the service: “It was lovely meeting Prince Charles, he said ‘it’s your birthday, I wish you a happy birthday for July – it’s lovely that you’re here today’.”

Mrs Davies will celebrate her 100th birthday on July 9 and, when asked if she missed the Queen, she joked about Charles deputising, saying: “I was glad to see anybody”

The 99-year-old said she was “honoured” to receive Maundy money and, speaking about her efforts collecting for the RNLI, she said charity boxes were left in pubs and clubs in Bolton, and quipped: “They fill them up and I empty them.”

Commenting on the importance of fundraising for the RNLI, she added: “Because it’s a good charity and water’s so dangerous, I know that fire is as well, but water is very dangerous – saving lives at sea is worth helping.”

Each of the elderly recipients received two purses, one red and one white.

The white purse is filled with uniquely minted Maundy money – silver 10p and 3p pieces – to the value of 96 pence.

In the red pouch is a £5 coin and a 50p coin portraying the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. Both coins have been newly minted this year.

Charles presented Maundy money to William Sanderson, aged 101, who after joining a missionary fellowship has spent more than 70 years either working or supporting in his retirement the distribution of bibles and Christian books around the world.



Born in Scotland but now living in Alresford in Hampshire, the 101-year-old, who served as an RAF mechanic during the Second World War, said he was “just from an ordinary working class background” and to receive the coins from Charles was “overwhelming”.

“It’s something I could never have believed possible, I couldn’t even have hoped for. To be in the presence of royalty here in Windsor is just overwhelming.

“I’m not usually speechless, but I’m really lost for words now.”

The Royal Maundy is an ancient ceremony which originated in the commandment Christ gave after washing the feet of his disciples the day before Good Friday.

April 16, 2022

Following tradition, Charles and Camilla were presented with nosegays – sweet-smelling bouquets – which in centuries past were used to ward off unpleasant smells, and before leaving posed for a picture with the clergy and ceremonial units that took part.

Two people within Clogher Diocese receive Maundy Money:

Two people from within Clogher Diocese received Maundy money, after they were nominated for their contributions to their church and community.

Ronnie Robertson, from Fivemiletown was nominated for his work at St. John's Parish Church, Fivemiletown, where he has followed the tradition of the Robertson family over the last 120 years as a gravedigger. Ronnie has carried the responsibility as Sexton and gravedigger for more than 40 years and is still actively involved. He also provides gravedigging for St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church at Aughentaine as well as Cavanaleck Presbyterian Church.

The second recipient from within Clogher Diocese is Betty Abercrombie, an active member of Darling Street Methodist Church in Enniskillen.

Betty has served the Methodist church and other churches for over 60 years. She regularly plays the organ in Enniskillen Methodist Church.

After growing up in the Springfield area, Betty worked for many years in Ballymena where she played the organ and trained the choir for over 20 years. On her return to

April 16, 2022

Fermanagh she has retained her interest in church music by continuing to play at services.

Betty has been involved in numerous organisations within the Methodist church and has also been a member of the Fermanagh Churches Forum. She is regarded as someone who is always available to help and who gives without seeking recognition.

Betty travelled to Windsor this week with some family members to attend the service and reception at Windsor Castle.

Statements on the murders of Aidan Moffitt and Michael Snee in Sligo

The Methodist Church in Ireland is horrified by the murders of Aidan Moffitt and Michael Snee in Sligo.

A statement from the MCI said - "These brutal killings and the cold-hearted premeditation behind them are very disturbing. We are shocked that two men have lost their lives in this way. We express our sympathy to those closest to them.

"We are also very saddened by recent homophobic attacks, including that on a man in Dublin in recent days. People from across the community need to know that they can conduct their ordinary lives without fear of attack. The attacks this week have resulted in the worst of crimes, the taking of human life. However, this is also a reminder that many are attacked verbally or otherwise on a regular basis –

April 16, 2022

narratives that induce fear and embolden others.

“We are praying at this time for those suffering loss and for all in the LGBT+



community who feel the impact of this the most. And we again express our commitment to exercise compassion to all in society, particularly those who may feel most marginalised and vulnerable.”

Changing Attitudes Ireland said - “The committee and members of CAI wants to express our deep sadness at the cruel murders of Michael Snee and Aidan Moffit, in Sligo, earlier this week. As we struggle to come to terms with the brutality, hatred and senseless of these heinous crimes we want to extend our sympathy to both men’s families, loved ones and friends, assuring them of our thoughts, love, and solidarity at this heartbreaking time.

“We also want to remember and send messages of care, concern and support to the other two men attacked and injured over the last ten days, in Sligo and Dublin and that we are thinking of them in their respective recoveries.”

The Camino de Santiago pilgrimage shatters historic record

World famous pilgrimage the Camino De Santiago has broken records with a whopping 21,000 walkers seen already this 2022.

There have been over 20,700 walkers to have made the famous pilgrimage so far this year, the highest figure ever seen in the history of the Camino de Santiago, according to Alfonso Rueda, the First Vice President and Councillor of Presidency, Justice and Tourism of Galicia.

On Wednesday 13, April, 1,600 Compostelas were stamped at the Pilgrim's Welcome Office, which is the highest daily number of 2022. "The numbers indicate that we already have more pilgrims than in 2019, the last normal year, and also more than in 2010, also a Holy Year. Last year at this point there were only 1,000," explained Rueda.

These statistics show that international pilgrimage is on the rise, with 46% of pilgrims arriving in Santiago since January coming from other countries such as Portugal, which has the highest amount with 8% followed by Germany, the US, Italy, Mexico, France and the UK.

The Regional Minister of Tourism has proposed a new method that will help in the counting of pilgrims, "since many pilgrims who make the route and do not stamp the Compostela or even do not reach Santiago and, therefore, do not appear in the statistics", that will calculate the amount

April 16, 2022

of walkers through mobile phones with wifi or bluetooth installed on the busiest routes. Courtesy EuroWeekly



French Ambassador explores Ireland's Huguenot heritage

The French Ambassador, Vincent Guerend, visited The French Church, Portarlington this week.

The invitation was made through local TD Cathal Berry.

The aim of the visit is promote Portarlington and its Huguenot heritage and establish links through twinning arrangements with suitable French communities.

The Ambassador was welcomed by the Rector, there were pupils from Sandylane School whose uniform crest includes the Huguenot Cross. There were also parishioners in attendance including members of the Champ family who are direct descendants of a Huguenot family.



The French Ambassador pupils from Sandylane School whose uniform crest includes the Huguenot Cross.

New Church of Ireland rector in Wexford

A new rector has been appointed to the Church of Ireland parishes of Wexford and Kilscuran to succeed Reverend Arthur Minion who recently moved to Birr, County Offaly after a decade of service.

The new incumbent is the Reverend Norman McCausland who is currently rector of the parish of Raheny and Coolock in the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough where he has served for nine years.

April 16, 2022

Ordained in 1989, Reverend McCausland has a variety of pastoral and parochial experience in urban and rural areas. He also served for a time on the staff of the Church of Ireland Theological College and is known for his interests and qualifications in music, theatre and communications.



He is married to Tara and has three sons - Cian 23, Tom 21, and Conor 12. He is also a keen gardener and rugby fan.

“We look forward to welcoming him to the south east”, said a spokeswoman for the parish, adding that arrangements for Reverend McCausland’s institution will be handled in due course by the Archbishop of Dublin during the current episcopal vacancy in the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory following the departure of Bishop Michael Burrows.

Reverend McCausland said he looked forward to working with parishioners in Wexford and responding with them to the opportunities and challenges of being members of the Church today.

Translation of bishop of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe

Bishop Michael Burrows, formerly Bishop of Bishop of Cashel, Waterford, Lismore, Ferns, Ossory & Leighlin , assumed his new post of Bishop of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe on Thursday 14th April.

Whilst there is no official ‘ceremony’ to mark the bishop’s translation, he will, in the course of the next few weeks, be Enthroned in his several Cathedral Churches across the diocese. Details of these ceremonies can be found on the Events Page of this website.

Bishop Burrows’ first act in his new diocese will be to lead the clergy of the Diocese in a Service of Renewal of Ordination Vows.

Father John Cargan

Derry Diocese said it was “with deep sadness and a profound sense of loss that we announce the death of Fr John Cargan”.

“A Castlerock man, Fr John attended St Columb’s College, Derry, as a boarder. He was ordained a Priest in 1978. Serving as a diocesan priest he ministered to the parishes of Omagh, Our Lady of Lourdes Steelstown, Faughanvale, Maghera and Kilrea. Throughout his long life of service, Fr John was passionate about mission, the power of prayer and the good that the Church could do in the world. Many



people have benefitted from his wisdom over the years and we thank him for his distinguished contribution towards the life of the church here in the Diocese of Derry.”

Perspective 1

How do we celebrate Easter in the shadow of war? - Archbishop Justin Welby

This week has been Passiontide, which means lots of wonderful plainsong in the choir of Canterbury Cathedral as my predecessors sleep.

Holy Week began on Sunday in the shadow of war, suffering, loss and pain. How do we celebrate the promise of everlasting life in such darkness?

Good Friday is ‘good’ because on the cross we see the goodness of God in the middle of the mess of our own creation. Jesus refuses to answer his accusers on their terms, to use his own power to overcome by force, or to see others hurt – even those who hurt him. Jesus lays down his life for the sake of others. He reaches out, on the cross, to the thief next to him, even in the depths of his own suffering. It’s in that shining goodness – the light that the darkness does not overcome – that we can say, like the Roman Centurion: ‘Truly, this man was the Son of God.’

Palm Sunday is a day of contrasts and surprises. Jesus’s Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem is a paradox – a king arriving on a donkey, an itinerant rabbi who receives a royal welcome. The crowd is eager to listen, but less happy to act. People often ask why, if God exists, he doesn’t ‘do something’ about suffering. On the first day of Holy Week, we see our answer: the God that is coming isn’t the God people expected, or even wanted. He doesn’t do things to us; he lives with us. He fulfils the final paradox: in service to God, giving away our lives for the lives of others, is ultimately how we can live life in all its fullness.

There are overused words and phrases I don’t much like. ‘Literally’ and ‘unprecedented’ are two – there is almost nothing truly unprecedented, and very rarely do people mean ‘literally’ literally. I keep forgetting that I am Primate, not Pedant, of All England; the latter is easier. Another is the word ‘crisis’, which comes from the Greek ‘krisis’. ‘Krisis’

April 16, 2022

means a time of decision. In the New Testament, there are two concepts of time: *chronos*, which is daily time, and *kairos*, which is a moment where there is a choice. A 'kairos moment' is another phrase I don't like because in the church we now use it to describe anything from the coffee rota to who manages the tombola at the village fête. Yet at the moment I am tempted to use most of the banned words. At a five-day meeting with the 36 senior Anglican archbishops from around the world we heard of war, economic struggle, refugee numbers growing, Covid and other diseases rife, food shortages in many countries, and environmental degradation. With Ukraine's horrors and problems here, the 'krisis' is real; the *kairos* moment is to choose to trust in God, not wealth, strength or our cleverness.

Attending an iftar meal at the Old Kent Road Mosque, I was reminded how grateful I am for our relationships with those of different faiths. This year Lent and Ramadan overlap. Christians and Muslims should all be taking time to remember that the things of God matter above all else and are reflected in our love for others lived in action. Plenty for me to do a U-turn on – or as we say, repent. I don't take these interfaith friendships for granted. In my travels around the world, I have seen the destruction that occurs when religion becomes an easy hook to hang conflict on.

I appeared on Question Time in Canterbury, the diocese I serve. It was the first time an Archbishop of Canterbury has been on the programme, so no pressure there. There were impassioned discussions about the appalling atrocities in Ukraine, the cost of living crisis, the government's energy strategy and the impact of lorry tailbacks on the people of Kent. There were also lots of sharp disagreements, but I

April 16, 2022

came away with a strong sense that so many of us share a deep desire for justice, fairness and the common good.

Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, arrived in nearby Thanet in 597 ad. Being in this diocese, surrounded by reminders of my predecessors, I'm struck by the history of this church in this country – from the violent death of Thomas Becket on the orders of Henry II to the welcome of French Huguenot refugees in the 17th century. Our calling has remained the same: to be the Church for England, making the good news of Jesus Christ known, serving those on the margins and loving our neighbour. As I celebrate this Easter Sunday, I will do so with the suffering of people at home and abroad on my mind and the hope of the risen Christ in my heart.

The Spectator April 16, 2022

Perspective 2

In the world's present darkness, a light shines by Cardinal Archbishop Vincent Nichols

The Easter message is particularly resonant in the midst of the suffering we are seeing in Ukraine

Yesterday, Friday, Trafalgar Square echoes with the noise of crucifixion. It is filled with the shouts of a crowd, the brutal orders of a centurion, the hammering of nails and the cries of a death agony. Yes, the Passion and death of Christ is

April 16, 2022

being played out there by actors from Wintershall. It is dramatic, colourful and deeply moving.

The images from Ukraine are no pageant. They show us the stark reality of evil at work in power and ruthlessness, targeting the weak and the innocent in acts which cry to heaven for justice.

In faith, it is impossible to separate these two events. We believe that in his Passion and death, Jesus accepts and absorbs all the evil and violence that broken humanity inflicts on itself. He does so in his nature as divine, for no solely human being could bear such a dreadful load.

He does so on our behalf in his nature as one of us, born in our flesh and blood. The crucified Jesus holds all the destructiveness brought about by sin from Adam to the present day.

In the face of the bloodied woman of Ukraine, in the image of the dead on the railway platform, in the photographs of the bodies of civilians slaughtered in the streets, the eyes of faith see the battered face of Christ, his broken body being carried to the tomb.

As Blaise Pascal said in his *Pensées*: “Christ will be in agony until the end of the world. We should not sleep during that time.”

The images show us the stark reality of evil at work, targeting the weak and innocent
Yet there is a moment in the agony of Christ that is not to be forgotten. As death finally comes to take him, the Gospel of

April 16, 2022

John tells us: “After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said: ‘It is accomplished’; and bowing his head, he gave up his spirit” (John 19.30). Something is done. Something has been achieved. There is resolution, as at the end of a great piece of music. From that moment the drama changes. The horror is still there, but a calmness descends for already the first glimmer of new light is dawning. It is not now. But it will come in his rising from the dead.

For us that moment is far off. Yet the words creep into our hearts even as we live amid the destructiveness of evil. There is a resolution. There will be an end and it will be full of light and life.

The first pinpricks of that light are to be seen so clearly in this darkness: the utter determination and resolve of those who defend their country and freedom; the best efforts of political leaders to find the pathway of response while avoiding escalation; the outpouring of generosity and compassion to those reduced to the status of refugees; the constant effort of prayer, that bridging all division and uniting so many diverse voices.

In the midst of horror we find something of our true selves, some first signs of the promised accomplishment.

Today we stand at the foot of the Cross, a place for our decision-making. Which way do we turn? We can turn away, believing that the burden of such suffering is too much for us to bear. We can wail and cry in lament, in fine speeches which result in little change of heart.

April 16, 2022

We can, like the soldiers there on Calvary, play a game or two, indifferent to the events before us. Or we can tentatively reach up and put one hand onto the Cross of Christ, sensing that by doing so we may indeed be infused with a spirit of compassion and perseverance, knowing that in him a far greater design and plan is indeed accomplished.

In his book *Dominion*, the historian Tom Holland pinpoints the radical nature of the Christian faith: the divinity of Jesus Christ. He explains that to claim divinity for a human was nothing new, particularly to the Roman mind. After all, the Emperor did so. Through prestige and power, the great and the good entered the realms of the divine, becoming the “divine Augustus”.

No, what was radical in Christianity was that one seen to be a criminal, the lowest of the low from Nazareth, was claiming to be one with God and Lord of all.

When this faith is embraced all is changed, for every person, from the least to the greatest, stands equal before God and is to evoke from others respect, protection and support. To this principle there are no exceptions.

The greatest invitation to this faith is held before us today in the image of the crucified. To the people of Ukraine, and to the victims of every violence, we owe our best efforts and our deepest respect, knowing that darkness is not the end even as we stand in its midst.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols is Archbishop of Westminster and President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales

Poem for today

Holy Cross, by Sir Shane Leslie

It is the bare and leafless Tree
Our sins once sowed on Calvary,
And mockers digged with trembling knee —
Holy Cross.

It is the dead impitying Wood,
That like a crimson pillar stood,
Where none unmoved unweeping could —
Holy Cross.

O fearful sight foretold to man,
The cloven spar, the sacred span,
Whence God's atoning Blood once ran —
Holy Cross.

It is the Holy Gibbet Tree,
All stained with Love's last agony
And marked with awful mystery —
Holy Cross.

What stains are these incarnadine,
What scars are these more red than wine
Of more than human Passion sign?
Holy Cross.

It is the sunless stricken Tree,
Upon whose branches sore to see

April 16, 2022

O mystery, died One of Three —
Holy Cross.

What storm swept o'er its boughs that day,
When God to God did sorely pray.
And human guilt ebbed slow away —
Holy Cross.

When earth shall smoke and sun shall flee,
Alone unmoved o'er sinking sea
Shall stand one all-redeeming Tree —
Holy Cross.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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