



**Image of the day**  
**The Chapel of St George's Windsor**

## Prince Philip's funeral: St George's Chapel, inside Windsor Castle



**St George's Chapel is a place of worship for The Queen and the Royal Family as well as a church serving the local community.**

Built by kings, shaped by the history of the Royal Family and still the location for both splendid Royal events and private family moments.

The construction of the Chapel was begun in 1475 by Edward IV and completed by Henry VIII in 1528. The

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architecture represents one of the finest examples of 'Perpendicular Gothic' style in the country.

The Chapel has been the scene of many Royal marriages, in particular from the reign of Queen Victoria onwards. The most recent Royal weddings include those of Princess Eugenie and Jack Brooksbank in October 2019, and The Duke and Duchess of Sussex in May 2018.

Ten former Sovereigns are buried in St George's Chapel. Five are in two burial vaults beneath the choir; the other five are in tombs in the Chapel, including The Queen's father, the late King George VI, HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, and HRH The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, all rest together in the memorial Chapel.

On each side of the choir are the beautifully carved stalls of the Knights and Ladies of the Garter, constructed between 1478 and 1495. Above the stalls are the helmets, crests and banners of the present Knights and Ladies.

## **Window tribute to 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' hymn writer**

**A parish church in Co Tyrone will celebrate its links with a famous hymn-writer this Sunday with the unveiling of a special stained glass window. Mark Rainey writes in the News Letter.**

The 'big reveal' at Killeter, in the parish of Derg and Termonamongan, on Sunday 18 April will be the first public



## Rev Peter Ferguson at St Bestius' Parish Church in Killeter, Co Tyrone

display of the 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' showpiece feature.

The much-loved hymn was composed by Cecil Frances Alexander – the wife of Church of Ireland Bishop William Alexander – who lived in the Castlederg area in the mid 1800s.

St Bestius' rector Rev Peter Ferguson said he believes the window will become a “must see” attraction for anyone visiting the area.

“I have seen the window and it is a thing of beauty,” he said.

“It’s something our entire community can be proud of. I believe that for anybody doing a visit or a daytrip to Killeter, this window will be a ‘must-see’ part of any visit to our area.”

The stained glass window project was launched in 2018, on the 200th anniversary of Cecil Frances Alexander’s birth.

“As a community, we’ve grown together,” Rev Patterson said.

“And we’ve also grown in our knowledge, our understanding, our appreciation, our respect, our celebration of the Alexanders and what they brought – not just to the Church of Ireland community here but to everybody in the community and further afield – through her beloved hymns and poems.

“So, this project will see St Bestius’ Parish Church completely restored and some innovative and exciting community ideas as well.”

The unveiling will take place during a ‘Bright and Beautiful Giving Day’ in St Bestius between 2pm and 5pm.

“Church wardens will be on hand to ensure a Covid-safe environment, and our procedures have been approved by the police,” Rev Patterson said.

He added: “I will be there in person to receive donations and to share details of the parish’s plans. We need St Bestius’ parishioners and supporters to be generous and to contribute according to their means. I’m encouraging them

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to ask their family members for donations... and I'm hoping that St Bestius parishioners will get behind this and do the same."

## Mums in May fund raise



Valerie Reilly, winner of recent Mothers Union All Ireland poetry competition, Irene Gates Diocesan Secretary, Alberta Miskimmin and All Ireland President June Butler, took part in the 'Mums in May, 21 in 21' walks.

**“Mums in May” is an All-Ireland Fund which was established in 2012 in celebration of 125 years of MU in Ireland. The Fund supports new and on-going MU projects throughout Ireland as well as specific important overseas projects.**

Every third year the MIM Fund is replenished through the efforts of members in Ireland and 2021 will be the fourth occasion when MU fundraising will focus on the Fund.

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All monies raised on '21 in 21' walks will go to the 'MUMS in MAY' fund to provide support for MU projects in Ireland and overseas. More at -

<https://www.belfastcathedral.org/news/21-in-21-mothers-union-all-ireland-presidents-walk>

## **Meeting between the Taoiseach and the Church Leaders Group**

**The following statement was published by the Irish Government Press Office:**

The Taoiseach today (April 15) met with all island Christian Church Leaders:

Most Rev Eamon Martin, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh & Primate of all Ireland

Most Rev John McDowell, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh & Primate of all Ireland

Rt Rev Dr David Bruce, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland

Rev Dr Tom McKnight, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland and

Very Rev Dr Ivan Patterson, President of the Irish Council of Churches

The Taoiseach praised the Church Leaders for their ongoing contribution to peace building, and recognised the work that Churches undertake on an ongoing and daily basis at community levels in Northern Ireland.

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The Taoiseach and Church Leaders had a very constructive discussion on Northern Ireland, including a shared and grave concern at recent incidents of violence on the streets.

The Taoiseach and Church Leaders agreed that the causes of the recent violence are complex, – but reiterated that it is essential that calm, measured and positive leadership be exercised at every level – political, civic and community, for all the people of Northern Ireland.

The Taoiseach and the Church Leaders discussed the complexities and sensitivities around implementation of the NI/Ire Protocol and the commitment to uphold the B/GFA in all its parts and to disrupt life in NI as little as possible.

The Taoiseach and Church Leaders recognised the 1921 centenaries as profoundly important and sensitive moments in engaging with the shared history of these islands and agreed that it would be important to promote a sensitive, inclusive and respectful approach in the marking of those centenaries still to come.

In this context, the Taoiseach welcomed the Church Leaders' St Patrick's Day message reflecting on the centenary of partition and of the formation of Northern Ireland, which highlighted the valuable opportunity they provide to recognise different perspectives on our history in a way that explores what can be learned for today and contributes to reconciliation and healing on the island.

The Taoiseach discussed with the Church Leaders the Government's Shared Island initiative. Both the Church Leaders and the Taoiseach recognised the importance of



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dialogue, engagement and respect for all communities and traditions on these islands in fostering reconciliation through the framework of the Good Friday Agreement.

The meeting also focused on a number of issues relating to social cohesion, in particular the need to ensure that, as we build towards recovery following the pandemic, that it is inclusive and balanced, leaving no one behind.

The Taoiseach referred to the Government's intention to publish a *National Economic Recovery Plan*. *The Plan* will outline how Government will help people return to work, and support sectors which have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and who will face particular challenges during the recovery phase.

The Taoiseach stressed the importance that, as we plot a pathway through recovery and beyond, there is a need to move beyond uniquely economic measures in gauging our progress as a country, to ensure a more holistic approach, which encompasses people's quality of life. To this end, work has begun on developing an overarching *Well-being Framework for Ireland*. This was welcomed by the Church Leaders who noted the link to the work being done through the Irish Inter-Church Meeting with DCU on '*The Economics of Belonging*'.

The Taoiseach and Church Leaders agreed the pandemic has posed challenges for all of our citizens in terms of their mental health and wellbeing and recognised the importance of faith to the spiritual and mental well-being of many people and communities and look forward to the time when church services and other in-person activities can resume.

## Canon Dermot Jameson

**The death of Canon Dermot Jameson has been announced.**

Canon Jameson was ordained in 1950 and served as curate-assistant in Seagoe (1950– 53) and Holywood (1953–57). He served as Incumbent in three parishes, Kilkeel from 1957 to 1962, Donaghcloney from 1962 to 1979 and then lastly Kilbroney from 1979 until his retirement in 1993. He celebrated the 70 anniversary of his ordination on Sunday 18 October 2020.

In retirement Canon Jameson took a keen interest in the work of the Kilbroney Centre, the wider work of the diocese and as a keen ecumenist all his life continued to build relationships with many. He was a faithful friend to many, and a will be greatly missed. He is survived by his wife Sheila and the family circle.

## The Catholic priest who refused a lifeboat rescue: A forgotten story from the sinking of the Titanic

**The R.M.S. Titanic sank on April 15, 1912, ending its maiden voyage across the Atlantic; of the 2,224 people on the ship, 1,503 lost their lives in the icy waters, Ashley Herzog writes.**

More than a century later, this story still captivates imaginations around the world, inspiring prolific fiction and

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nonfiction, movies and musicals. In the words of James Cameron, director of the 1997 film named after the ship, “her story is like a great novel that really happened.”

The sinking of the Titanic was also a “lifeboat ethics” scenario involving actual lifeboats. Looking back on the disaster allows people to ask themselves, “Why did this passenger or crew member do what they did? What would I have done?”

Many of us have a passing familiarity with some of the famous passengers aboard the ship, including John Jacob Astor IV, one of the richest men in the world; Isidor Straus, a co-owner of Macy’s department store, and his wife, Ida; and Benjamin Guggenheim, a businessman from the family that later founded the Guggenheim Museum in New York. But fewer have heard the story of Thomas Byles, the 42-year-old Catholic priest whose heroic actions during the sinking, some argue, should put him on a path to sainthood.

Father Byles was born in Roussel Byles in Leeds, England, the oldest son of a Protestant minister. While studying theology at Oxford, Byles decided to convert to Catholicism. He was ordained in Rome in 1902 and took the first name Thomas.

Ten years later, his brother William, who had also converted to Catholicism, asked him to officiate at his wedding in New York. So Father Byles boarded the Titanic as a second-class passenger in Southampton on April 10.

At first, Father Byles must have enjoyed a quiet and uneventful voyage. On the morning of Sunday, April 14, he



celebrated Mass for Catholics in the third-class section, many of whom were leaving Ireland, Continental Europe and even the Middle East for a new life in America. His homily was reportedly about the need for a “lifeboat in the shape of religious consolation at hand in case of spiritual shipwreck.”

According to witnesses, Father Byles was out on deck praying his breviary shortly before midnight, when the ship struck an iceberg. When the captain ordered the launching of the lifeboats, Father Byles made his way to steerage, where members of his flock were trying to navigate the stairwells to the upper deck but in many cases found themselves trapped behind locked iron gates. Many did not speak English and could not understand the crew’s orders. Father Byles calmly led third-class passengers to the boat deck, where the lifeboats were.

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“When the crash came, we were thrown from our berths,” Ellen Mary Mockler, an Irish immigrant in third class, said after the sinking. “We saw before us, coming down the passageway, with his hand uplifted, Father Byles.... ‘Be calm, my good people,’ he said, and then he went about the steerage giving absolution and blessings.”

Mockler also said she overheard a crewman trying to convince Father Byles to get into a boat, but he refused.

“Father Byles could have been saved, but he would not leave,” Mockler said. “After I got in the boat, which was the last one to leave, and we were slowly going further away from the ship, I could hear distinctly the voice of the priest and the responses to his prayers.”

Father Byles’ actions set him apart from other prominent men aboard the ship, some of whom attempted to bribe their way into lifeboats. A British couple, Sir Cosmo and Lucy Lady Duff-Gordon, were said to have hogged Lifeboat No. 1 for themselves, their servants and their dogs. Meanwhile, entire families of British people in third class died. The owner of the White Star Line, Joseph Bruce Ismay, made the notorious decision to step aboard one of the last lifeboats, which was otherwise packed with third-class women and children who had escaped from steerage at the last minute. Father Byles, on the other hand, prayed the rosary with his flock and granted absolution until the very end.

“When the Titanic went to the bottom, Father Thomas B. Byles stood on the deck with Catholics, Protestants and Jews kneeling around him,” Agnes McCoy, another Irish

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immigrant, told the New York Telegram after the sinking, according to the website FatherByles.com. “Father Byles was saying the rosary and praying for the repose of the souls of those about to perish. To many he administered the last rites of the Church.”



Father Byles may have perished in the sinking, but like the theme song to the Titanic movie says, his heart goes on.

Graham Smith, a priest who headed Father Byles' former parish of St. Helen's in Ongar, England, introduced the cause for beatification in 2015. Father Smith described Father Byles to the BBC as “an extraordinary man who gave his life for others.” He added, “We hope people around the world will pray to him if they are in need and, if a miracle occurs, then beatification and then canonisation can go forward.” At least two miracles must be attributed to the intercession of a candidate for sainthood.

Father Thomas Byles lived his message that some things are more important than mere self-preservation. He showed that spiritual lifeboats can offer more lasting salvation than physical ones.

Courtesy America 14.04/2021

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

## Media focus - Philip's funeral is the Church of England's second chance

**The Church of England has floundered during the pandemic. Now we are reminded why we need it, Tim Stanley writes in the Daily Telegraph**

The funeral of Prince Philip will be a test for the Church of England, and I have no doubt it will pass with flying colours. This is what it's for: to sanctify moments of national life. Births, marriages, funerals, the Church provides us with a language and a choreography that many of us find comforting. When someone has died, I like to be told what to sing and where to stand – it takes the pressure off. The plans for Prince Philip's farewell look perfect. Proper, but no fuss, like the man himself. He once said of sermons that go on too long: "The mind cannot absorb what the backside cannot endure." My God, we'll miss him.

The Queen is the most devout Anglican in public life. The Duke, testament to the internationalism of the aristocratic class in which he was born, was in fact baptised into the Greek Orthodox Church, and his great aunt, who died during the Russian Revolution, was considered a saint. Obituaries in the last few days have been unkind to his mother, Princess Alice, who lived and dressed as a nun without technically being one – so the media has labelled her as mad, unaware that the line between madness and holiness is often invisible. The fact that she chain-smoked has no bearing on the matter; it might be a plus.

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Philip later said that wearing a habit meant she didn't have to worry about her hair or her clothes, and for all her eccentricity, Princess Alice had the presence of mind to hide Jews from the Nazis during the Second World War. When she congratulated her son on his part in the sinking of ships at the Battle of Cape Matapan in 1941, the Duke shrugged it off. "It was as near murder as anything could be in wartime," he said. We honour that generation, rightly so, but what they saw and did defies comprehension.

I often think the most sacred spots in Anglican churches are the chapels reserved for war remembrance. It's a rooted connection between present and past that my Catholic Church lacks. The Latin-speaking church is culturally global; the Anglicans are reassuringly English (with a worldwide presence), though their status on these islands has always been debated.

People have complained for centuries that the CofE's beliefs are fuzzy, that its clergy is out of touch or its claim to spiritual leadership outdated, but in the past year it's come under particular criticism for its failure to find the right role, or even the right words, to suit the pandemic.

The Archbishop of Canterbury admits that he didn't push hard enough to keep churches open, but would they have been bursting at the seams if he had? The vast majority of people applauded the NHS, they did not instinctively fall on their knees, and even though the Christian faith is founded upon a story of death and resurrection, in post-Christian Britain churches of all stripes have felt strangely irrelevant – concerned too much with drippy politics and corporate governance. That in the middle of a global disaster, the



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Archbishop of York should advertise for a chief-of-staff with a remuneration of £90,000 a year was the ultimate indictment of woke hypocrisy.

“I believe we can become a simpler, humbler ... Church,” said the Archbishop in 2020. To quote Dolly Parton, it obviously costs a lot of money to look that cheap.

Yet you can never rule out the CofE, and only a mad nation would disestablish it because, for all its faults, it is always to hand, like an old friend – patient and kind. Justin Welby found exactly the right words at a remembrance service yesterday when he observed that, regardless of age or how predictable a death might be, nothing “can reach into the depth of sorrow that goes into bereavement ... Loss is loss.” That a caste of men and women exist in our society for the purpose of saying the right thing at the right time is invaluable. Britain needs its clerics.

There’s no avoiding the timing of the Duke’s death, coming just as the fear of the virus is easing, when we have an opportunity to take stock and reflect on what we have lost. There is also no escaping Prince Philip’s status as a kind of grandfather to the nation, a definitive member of the Greatest Generation, which we have been striving to keep safe but, some day, will have to let go. This is a chance for the CofE to join the dots, and to say, gently: “We are always here, our door is always open.”

Christianity is the religion of second chances. The Church deserves one too.

Courtesy the Daily Telegraph 12.04.2021

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## **Books, Broadcasts, resources and webinars**

### **General Synod 2021 – Change of Dates**

This year's meeting of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland will no longer be taking place in May but will be held by electronic communication technology from September 30 to October 2 2021, as approved by the Standing Committee.

The hours, and the link for the electronic meeting, will be communicated to Synod members in due course. Please visit the General Synod website for further information:

<https://synod.ireland.anglican.org/2021/welcome>

### **"Everybody agrees that the Church of Ireland is the worst in Christendom; there are now bishopricks vacant" .....**

The episcopacy of the Church of Ireland, 1689-1694. The title of the opening talk by Dr Brendan Twomey this Saturday at the Annual Conference of the Church of Ireland Historical Society. Programme and booking at

□ <http://churchofirelandhist.org/date-for-your-diary-coihs-spring-conference-online-17-april-2021/>

□

## **Media review**

### **Today marks the 80th anniversary of the night the Luftwaffe bombed Derry**

Derry Now

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Both were buried in Glendermott Parish Church. ... William married Elizabeth Reid in 1921 at St Augustine's Church of Ireland and worked after the ...

[[] <https://www.derrynow.com/news/news/624933/today-marks-the-80th-anniversary-of-the-night-the-luftwaffe-bombed-derry.html> ]

## **Michael McDowell: We have to stop pressing for a border poll**

Irish Times

Legitimacy of the unionist position is a cornerstone of the Belfast Agreement

[[] <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/michael-mcdowell-we-have-to-stop-pressing-for-a-border-poll-1.4536432> ]

## **Joe Biden: Could his tax plan affect US investment in Ireland?**

BBC News: John Campbell

[[] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-56692865> ]

## **THROUGH THE ARCHIVES: Security blunder as Prince Charles pays a 'surprise' visit (1991)**

News Letter

At St. George's Church the Prince met Canon Edgar Turner who outlined the history and architecture of the church which had occupied a site known to have been used for worship since the 14th century.

Canon Turner was accompanied by the Right Reverend Samuel Poyntz, Church of Ireland Bishop of Down and Connor, Vice Lord Lieutenant for Belfast Colonel Robert Maddocks, Lord Mayor Fred Cobain and High Sheriff Joe Coggle, the Prince also heard details of inner city regeneration plans for the area.

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[[] <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/heritage-and-retro/retro/through-the-archives-security-blunder-as-prince-charles-pays-a-surprise-visit-1991-3201118> ]



## Pointers for prayer

Today we pray for Northern Ireland. Last week, violence broke out on consecutive nights in parts of Northern Ireland, as issues around Brexit have caused concern around peace in the country. God, we pray for your peace in Northern Ireland, and an end to divisions.

God, We reflect on and give praise for the life lived by Prince Philip.

We thank you for his faith in Our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Comfort the Queen at this time and strengthen her Christian faith.

Amen.

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## A prayer from the Church of Scotland...

Almighty and everlasting God, 'the life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more.'

But You are forever, from everlasting to everlasting, and we put our trust in You for You have promised never to leave us nor forsake us.

Loving Lord, in this last year, through the worst of a global pandemic, we've been face to face with our fragility and vulnerability, perhaps for some of us as never before.

Against that backdrop of hurt and loss, we give you thanks for the life and service of Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. Some are called to the front of the stage, others to supporting roles and we rejoice in the way he supported Her Majesty the Queen through all of the years of her reign.

We remember, too, his work supporting charities and, perhaps most memorably for young people for over sixty years, his patronage of The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

In this hour of loss, we offer our heartfelt prayers for Her Majesty and her family. Comfort them in their loss, bind up their wounds and grant them the consolation of a store of treasured memories. Grant Her Majesty the peace that comes from knowing you and which passes all understanding.

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These and all our prayers we ask in the name of Jesus, who through his life, death and resurrection offers us hope instead of despair, life instead of death.

Amen.

Some went down to the sea in ships,  
doing business on the mighty waters;  
they saw the deeds of the Lord,  
his wondrous works in the deep.

For he commanded and raised the stormy wind,  
which lifted up the waves of the sea.

They mounted up to heaven, they went down to the depths;  
their courage melted away in their calamity;  
they reeled and staggered like drunkards,  
and were at their wits' end.

Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,  
and he brought them out from their distress;  
he made the storm be still,  
and the waves of the sea were hushed.

Then they were glad because they had quiet,  
and he brought them to their desired haven.  
Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,  
for his wonderful works to humankind.

## Speaking to the Soul

**I pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honour at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.**

Ephesians 1:19-20 NLT

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I love everything about Easter. Winter has gone and we can see evidence of new life springing up all around us. It is as if creation is joining in the celebrations of Easter and confirming the promise of new life in Jesus. Easter is a happy time to share with other Christians and the services are full of confidence and hope. We are absolutely right to enjoy this wonderful time of the year, but we need to be careful that we don't leave it behind us and move on to something else. And that is because we are always an Easter people. Every single day is an Easter day because what happened when Jesus rose from death is an ongoing reality.

You cannot imagine a greater miracle than Jesus' resurrection! There is an absolute finality about death and from the gospel accounts of Jesus crucifixion there is no doubt that he died on the cross. The Romans were experienced executioners but to make doubly sure that he was dead one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side causing a sudden flow of blood and water. Everyone knows that that's the end. But not when God is at work. God is the source of all life and, when he decides to raise Jesus from death, that's what happens.

Every day we meet many challenges. We face situations of struggle, confusion and brokenness and as we do so we need to remind ourselves that God is a God of resurrection. He loves bringing new life, not just on Easter day but everyday as we put our trust in him.

## QUESTION

In what situation are you going to pray for new life today?

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## PRAYER

Loving God, we worship you because you are the God of resurrection. Help me to welcome the new life that you want to bring today. Amen

