

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Church and Easter bunnies**

# People and places

## Annual Diocesan Chrism Eucharist back in Cork after two years



From left to right: the Archdeacon, the Ven. Adrian Wilkinson, the Bishop's Chaplain, the Rev. Anne Skuse, the Right Rev. Dr Richard Clarke, the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Rev. Dr Paul Colton, the Right Rev. Harold Miller, the Rev. Carole Pound, the Rev. John Ardis, currently priest in charge of Ross Union.

**After an absence of two years, the annual Chrism Eucharist in in Cork, Cloyne and Ross was finally held**

April 19, 2022

## **again this year on Maundy Thursday at noon in Saint Fachtna's Cathedral, Rosscarbery, County Cork.**

People from all over the diocese gathered yesterday to celebrate together, to renew their commitment to their ministry, and for the blessing of the oils used in the pastoral and sacramental aspects of their ministry in the coming year.



Following the celebration of the Eucharist everyone was invited by Bishop Paul Colton to enjoy lunch together at the Celtic Ross Hotel, before heading back to their own places to begin the most solemn three days – known as the Triduum – in the Church's calendar.

The preacher this year was the Right Rev. Harold Miller, (Photo above) former Bishop of the Diocese of Down and

April 19, 2022

Dromore in Northern Ireland. The organist was the Director of Music at St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork, Mr Peter Stobart.



## **Dawn services across Ireland mark Easter Sunday morning**

**The religious ceremonies were held from 6am, around the time of the first sunrises in Northern Ireland, Ben Lowry writes in the News Letter**

Some of the services to mark the resurrection of Christ got under way at six exactly, just before dawn, some at almost exactly dawn, some just after.

On Helen's Bay beach (Photo above), the worship began at 6.10am, minutes before sun rose over that part of the Co Down coast at 6.16am (albeit the rays filtered by cloud).



**Killadeas at dawn (we'd be pushed to say sunrise with the rain). Eucharist on the Killadeas shore of Lower Lough Erne. And some much needed hot bacon baps and coffee afterwards.**

Many of the services being held are Presbyterian, but at Helen's Bay it was conducted jointly with Church of Ireland ministers.

A congregation huddled on the sand, amid the sound of the tide rolling in from Belfast Lough, before the ceremony began with the hymn Thine Be The Glory.

The service, lasted about 20 minutes. was conducted by Rev Colin Megaw of Helen's Bay Presbyterian, Rev Craig Jackson of Ballygilbert Presbyterian, Rev Tim Kinahan of Helen's Bay Church of Ireland, and Rev Catherine Simpson of Glencraig Church of Ireland.



## **Gathering on Arklow South Beach to greet the sunrise on Easter Sunday morning.**

Elsewhere on the beach, swimmers gathered to mark the sunrise in a different way, with a dip in the sea. There have long been swimmers at Crawfordsburn and Helen' Bay beach but it became a particularly popular practice during the Covid lockdowns, even in winter.

# **Church News Ireland**

## News reports

### Rev Richard Coles says Church ‘excludes gay people’

**The Rev Richard Coles said he is retiring from his country parish duties because the Church of England increasingly “excludes” same-sex couples, the Daily Telegraph reports.**

The priest, 60, is one of the most famous vicars in the UK thanks to his other roles as a musician, journalist and broadcaster.

However, he is retiring from his parish role after Easter and will no longer be the vicar of St Mary the Virgin, in the village of Finedon, in Northants, a role he has held since January 2011.

Coles, who is a regular host of BBC Radio 4’s Saturday Live programme, as well as being a contributor to QI and Have I Got News for You, has previously spoken about how the death of his partner, the Rev David Coles, in 2019 prompted his retirement.

He has now spoken out about his concerns for the future of the Church of England and about how homosexual people “are not welcome”, as well as the sustainability of the parish system.

April 19, 2022

Regarding the Church's stance on same-sex relationships, he told The Sunday Times Magazine: "I see change more to exclusion than inclusion ... the Church of England I love is a church of liberal sympathies, of broad inclusion, beautiful worship, wise preaching ....

"But the churches that are viable – by that I mean growing in numbers and income – tend to be conservative, punchy, fundamentalist in matters of scripture ..."

## **Mary McAleese accuses churches in Ireland of being 'conduits for homophobia'**

**The former president of Ireland Mary McAleese has spoken out against the major churches of Ireland, branding them as 'conduits for homophobia' following the killing of two men in Sligo last week.**

42-year-old Aidan Moffitt and 58-year-old Michael Snee were found dead in their respective homes in Sligo town earlier this week, in two separate attacks which have left their local community reeling, Rebecca Fisher reports on Extra.ie.

Speaking on the events of the past week as part of The Anton Savage Show on Newstalk, the former president claimed that while Ireland is a safe space for many, homophobia has 'never gone away' fully in this nation.

The politician and activist spoke fondly of the work that has been done to safeguard the LGTBQAI+ community in

April 19, 2022

Ireland, but believes more needs to be done to fully eradicate homophobia and bigotry on our shores.

‘There are countries all over the world where homosexual activity is criminalised, and indeed not only criminalised, but in some cases, amenable to death penalties.’ Mrs McAleese chimed.

‘We’re fortunate to live, I think, in a very modern and very progressive democracy, where our people have been educated about human rights.’

Despite how far we’ve come the former president was adamant that homophobia and a culture of hate was still prevalent within Irish society and ‘out there’ in 2022.

## Healing Service

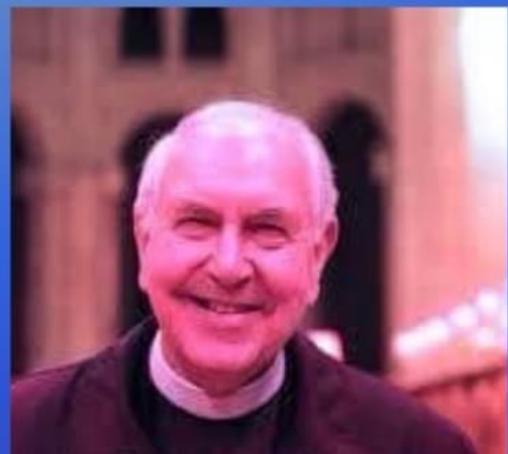
*"Today is the Day of your Miracle"*



**7.30pm Thursday 28th April**

**DHM**  
Divine Healing Ministries

**St. Patrick's Church of Ireland  
Ballymacarrett  
220 Newtownards Road  
Belfast, BT4 1GZ**



**Speaker: Br. David Jardine**

*"The Healing Power of Forgiveness"*



## **Recently commissioned Newry Parish Bereavement Ministers with Canon Francis Brown and Deacon Brendan McAllister.**

Being a mother to a member of the community herself, Mary McAleese recounted her own son's experiences with homophobia in Ireland, referencing a speech she made on his wedding day.

‘When my son was married a couple of years ago – he’s gay – when he and his husband got married, I was doing a homily at the wedding, I just made the point about how fortunate we are to live in a place where he and his partner, his husband, can walk the streets in relative safety.’

The former president continued; ‘But knowing too that there’s always the homophobe, there’s always the hatred

April 19, 2022

that can outcrop but also knowing there are parts of the world he simply cannot visit.’

The 70-year-old went on to suggest that religion plays a role in this hateful mindset, citing churches as one of the main issues facing the LGBTQAI+ community.

‘In a country where religion plays a very, very, very big role and is a huge key influencer of attitudes, I think the churches, and I’m not just talking about the Catholic church, I’m talking about all the major denominations because all of them are conduits for homophobia.’

## **Bishop condemns hate crimes and homophobia during service at Sligo Cathedral**

**Two of the country’s church leaders have condemned hate crimes and homophobia, saying people who identify as LGBTQ+ “should not have to live in fear any more than anybody else”, Sarah MacDonald reports in Independent.ie**

Speaking in Sligo Cathedral, Catholic bishop Kevin Doran said the community had been left “badly shaken” following the deaths of two men “who were our neighbours and, for some of us, friends and colleagues”. He told the congregation gathered for Easter services in the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Sligo: “Each of them, in different ways, served his community well. Each one was a much loved son and brother and uncle.”

April 19, 2022

He said that homophobia was “something that we as Christians can never condone. People who identify as LGBTI should not have to live in fear any more than anybody else”.

The Bishop of Elphin also criticised acts of vandalism on properties associated with the Islamic community in the past few days.

It was another form of oppression based on people being easily identifiable as “different” and “a failure to recognise our shared humanity and the fact that Islamic people, no less than the rest of us, are created in the image of God.”

Noting that Jesus challenged the smug, self-righteousness attitudes of people who thought they were better than everyone else, Dr Doran warned that in Irish society there are minority groups who are at risk of being oppressed because they are different.

## **Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin condemns homophobic attacks**

Separately, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin also condemned homophobic attacks this Easter and expressed solidarity with those who have fled the war in Ukraine and found refuge in Ireland.

In an address following his Good Friday Walk of Witness with his Catholic counterpart, Archbishop Michael Jackson expressed his sympathy to the families and friends of Aidan Moffitt and Michael Snee in Sligo. “The inhumanity and cruelty of these attacks are rightly to be condemned. I

April 19, 2022

condemn them and have every confidence I speak for the vast majority of people who have seen and heard what has happened in recent days,” Dr Jackson said.

## **Cost-of-living crisis has people waking up in fear every day, Archbishop of Canterbury says**

**The Archbishop of Canterbury said families are “waking up in fear” because of the cost-of-living crisis.**

In his Easter sermon at Canterbury Cathedral, Justin Welby spoke of his concern for families struggling with rising energy and food prices as well as for those bereaved by Covid.

The Archbishop also called for a ceasefire in the Russian war on Ukraine and condemned the Government's plan to send asylum-seekers to Rwanda as the “opposite of the nature of God”.

He said: “Families across the country are waking up to cold homes and empty stomachs as we face the greatest cost-of-living crisis we have known in our lifetimes.  
“And because of this they wake up with fear.”

He later added: “For many in this country the news from Ukraine is terrible, but the rising cost of power, fuel and basic food will be the first and overwhelming thought of the day.

April 19, 2022

“For others it will be the continued deep sense of loss of someone from Covid, or during Covid, to whom they could not say a proper farewell. The news might move on, but grief does not.”

Speaking about the Government's plans to send asylum seekers to Rwanda, he said Christ's resurrection should be a time for “repentance and renewal”, not for “sub-contracting our responsibilities”.

He said: “The principle must stand the judgement of God and it cannot. It cannot carry the weight of resurrection justice, of life conquering death.

“It cannot carry the weight of the resurrection that was first to the least valued, for it privileges the rich and strong.



April 19, 2022

“And it cannot carry the weight of our national responsibility as a country formed by Christian values, because subcontracting out our responsibilities, even to a country that seeks to do well like Rwanda, is the opposite of the nature of God who himself took responsibility for our failures.”

On the war in Ukraine, he said: “Ukrainians have woken up to the end of the world as they knew it. Now they are awakened by the noises of war, and the sickening reality of terror. They wake up to mortal fear.

He later added: “Let this be a time for Russian ceasefire, withdrawal and a commitment to talks.

“This is a time for resetting the ways of peace, not for what Bismarck called blood and iron. Let Christ prevail! Let the darkness of war be banished.”

Reflecting on what the resurrection means for us as individuals, the Archbishop said: “In dying for us, He sees and knows the wounds that cause us so much pain.



## Cashel choristers

April 19, 2022

“He hears the cry of the mothers in Ukraine, He sees the fear of boys too young to become soldiers, and He knows the vulnerability of the orphans and refugees.

### Church in Ukraine

“Closer to home, He sees the humiliation of the grandparent visiting the food bank for the first time, the desperate choice of parents in poverty and the grief and weariness of the pandemic.



“The resurrection of Jesus is not a magic wand that makes the world perfect.”

The Archbishop gave another sermon at the 11am service, which was followed by rare applause from the congregation.

He repeated parts of his sermon from the earlier, including his comments on Rwanda and referencing Volodymyr Zelensky's speech on March 3 in which the Ukrainian President said the “end of the world has arrived”. In his second sermon, the Archbishop elaborated on this, saying:

April 19, 2022

“All that they knew was not only under threat, it was being obliterated.

“The end of the world had arrived and we know that what they are experiencing has been experienced in even greater magnitude by Syrians and South Sudanese, by Afghanis and those having to flee from Myanmar, by so many others, those for whom the end of the world has arrived.”

## Poem for today

### Spring

by Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Soft-littered is the new-year's lambing fold,  
And in the hollowed haystack at its side  
The shepherd lies o' night now, wakeful-eyed  
At the ewes' travailing call through the dark cold.  
The young rooks cheep 'mid the thick caw o' the old:  
And near unpeopled stream-sides, on the ground,  
By her Spring cry the moorhen's nest is found,  
Where the drained flood-lands flaunt their marigold.

Chill are the gusts to which the pastures cower,  
And chill the current where the young reeds stand  
As green and close as the young wheat on land  
Yet here the cuckoo and cuckoo-flower  
Plight to the heart Spring's perfect imminent hour  
Whose breath shall soothe you like your dear one's hand.

April 19, 2022

# Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

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