

# Church News Ireland

---



**Image of the day – Scouts annual St George's Day celebrations at Windsor Castle**

## Image of the day

### NI Scouts and leaders at Windsor St George's Day of celebration and achievement

**Scouts and leaders from Northern Ireland were present at the annual St George's Day celebrations at Windsor Castle.**

Each year, the Scout Association brings together various Scouts and their invited guests to enjoy this prestigious and special event.

Mr & Mrs Stewart, Scout leaders from Lisburn District



The Scout Association says, "We have the pleasure of recognising Queen's Scouts and King's Scouts, who've achieved the highest youth award in Scouts."



APRIL 25, 2023

“We celebrate Gallantry, Meritorious Conduct and Cornwall Scout Badge award holders, who've been nominated for their bravery and heroism.

And the Chief Scout Bear Grylls has family roots in County Down



“We also recognise adult award holders, who've been nominated for their outstanding volunteer contributions to Scouts”.

In the morning, adult award holders may attend Mattins, a service in St George's Chapel within the grounds of Windsor Castle. Invited members of Scouts and members of the public can watch the service. Meanwhile, Queen's Scouts and King's Scouts rehearsed for the afternoon in the nearby Victoria Barracks.





## Some of the Northern Ireland participants

Around midday, the Quadrangle of Windsor Castle (a private area, which is a privilege to use) fills with around 2,000 award holders and guests. The Queen's Scouts and King's

[Church News Ireland](#)





APRIL 25, 2023

Scouts march into the Quadrangle where the Parade is reviewed by a representative of the Royal Family.

The Parade marches through the Castle and down to St George's Chapel, where Scouts and Leaders took part in the National Scout Service. More guests joined at the Lower Ward to watch the Parade and took part in the service, which was relayed over the PA system to the crowds outside. Finally, the Parade moved out of the Castle and back to Mews Road.

## People and places

### North West Belfast St. George's Day Service





**The annual North West Belfast District Scout Council St. George's Day Service, was held in Immanuel Church of Ireland, Ardoyne.**

This year's Service was hosted by the 45th Scout Group. It was very pleasing to see the church packed.

Thanks were expressed to the District Chaplain, Rev. Tracey McRoberts, for leading the service and to Frank, from the Rural Deanery, for "a very different talk on faith", which the young people enjoyed.

Members of the District Team who took part in the Service. Congratulations to those Leaders and young people who received awards.



APRIL 25, 2023

Members were delighted to be joined by their former District President, Wesley Burton, after his recent illness.



## **Pope recognises service of Hollywood parishioner**

Ann Moore (80) is pictured after receiving the Benemerenti medal from Pope Francis at a Mass to celebrate her award in her home church St Colmcille's, Hollywood.

Ms Moore cuts the cake with her son Fr David Moore PP of Pomeroy, daughter Linda and son Stephen. Photo: Bill Smyth and Irish Catholic newspaper

APRIL 25, 2023

## Tobar Mhuire conversations marking 25th anniversary of Good Friday Agreement

**As a way of marking the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, Tobar Mhuire is hosting a series of conversations with people involved in the life of the community and working for peace and reconciliation.**

Among people already confirmed are Rev Bill Shaw of the Duncairn Cultural Centre on the Antrim Road, Belfast. Bill grew up in Belfast through the worst excesses of 'the Troubles'. After 10 years in the construction business, he studied theology at Queens University Belfast and entered ministry in the Presbyterian Church where, among other posts and after ordination, Bill served in a church on the Shankill Road.

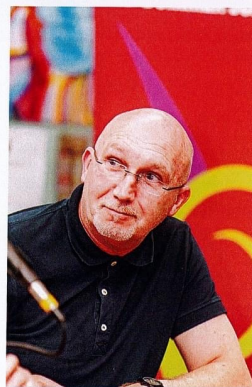
Bill is

[Church News Ireland](#)

*Tobar Mhuire Retreat Centre*

*Stories of Life, Faith and Hope*

*A series of conversations for people across our community*



A warm welcome is extended to people from across our community to a series of conversations with people who play a central role in the life of our community. This is an opportunity to explore their experience of life, faith and where they find sources of hope in their lives.

Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May – Rev Dr Bill Shaw OBE (CEO 174 Trust, Belfast)  
*Begins at 7pm*

*This evening is open to all. Please come and join in the conversation. Voluntary Donation.*



**COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS  
COUNCIL**

Equity | Diversity | Interdependence



APRIL 25, 2023

committed to building peace and promoting reconciliation in the community and is deeply involved in a number of projects to encourage dialogue and celebrate cultural diversity within the North Belfast community.

Other speakers agreed so far are Rev Harold Good (former president of the Methodist Church in Ireland and overseer of the decommissioning of weapons with Ref Alec Reid from Clonard) on 23 May, Baroness Nuala O'Loan (former Police Ombudsman) and on 30th May, Fr Aidan Troy CP on 6 June (parish priest in Holy Cross, Ardoyne during the school blockade in 2001 and advocate on issues around suicide).

Other speakers and dates are still to be confirmed. Further information can be received from the reception at Tobar Mhuire, telephone 02844830242 or email [reception@tobarmhuire.com](mailto:reception@tobarmhuire.com).

## Appointments

**Archdeacon Brian Harper**, rector of Magheracross Parish, has been appointed to be the rector of Dunluce Parish in the Diocese of Connor. The Parish Church of St John the Baptist is situated in Bushmills and the parish incorporates Port Ballintrae, part of Bushmills and includes Dunluce



APRIL 25, 2023

Castle where the remains of the original Parish Church are situated. The date of the Insitution has not yet been determined.

**The Revd Kevin Ronné** has been appointed as Rector of Raheny & Coolock. He is currently Rector of the Dunleckney in the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns & Ossory where he has served for 10 years.

**The Revd Caroline Casserly** has begun her ministry as Assistant Priest in Zion parish. She was ordained deacon in 2013 in the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns & Ossory to serve in the non-stipendiary ministry. She currently works as a director for a large not-for-profit housing association in Dublin. The parishes of Castleknock & Mulhuddart with Clonsilla will welcome the **Revd Natasha Quinn-Thomas** as new Curate Assistant in June. She comes to the parish with extensive experience both in lay ministry and as a Curate in Dyffryn Clwyd Mission Area within St Asaph Diocese in Wales.

**Canon Craig McCauley**, rector of Naas Union of parishes, has been appointed as Rural Dean for Kildare by Bishop Pat Storey.

**David McGrory** has





APRIL 25, 2023

joined the Connor Diocesan Staff team as Safeguarding Compliance Officer. (Photo. Page 10 above). This is a new part-time position, and David will be responsible for ensuring the safeguarding policies and procedures across the diocese are complied with. More at <https://bit.ly/3ouSd22>

## In the media

### **Unionists had to listen to a chorus of patronising rubbish during the Belfast Agreement 25th anniversary celebrations - Owen Polley**

**So, it's all over for another five years, or (dare we hope?) twenty-five, Owen Polley writes in in The Newsletter**

Have you taken down your Good Friday Agreement decorations yet? Is the Spring lamb from your 'Irish Accords' dinner gone? Or maybe you celebrated with turkey.

'Twas certainly the season to lecture and talk down to unionists. The festivities started on Easter Tuesday, when Joe Biden gave a rambling speech that at least avoided hectoring opponents of the Irish Sea border. Last week, at Queen's University's 'Agreement 25' conference, though, the condescension reached full volume.

We should start with Chris Heaton-Harris, the latest Conservative minister sent to Northern Ireland with a

reputation for independence, only to be assimilated into the 'hive mind' of the NIO. It's difficult to exaggerate how misjudged Mr Heaton-Harris's comments were on the Belfast Agreement and his attempts to link 1998 to current difficulties at Stormont. "Martin McGuinness and Gerry Adams," he said, "will be remembered for the courage and leadership they showed, in persuading the republican movement for peace."

It was sickening enough, particularly for the victims of terrorism, to hear these two characterised as peacemakers. But to ignore the fact that this supposedly peaceful movement kept its army council, retained weapons, spied and even committed murders after the agreement was wilfully negligent from a self-declared unionist minister. Perhaps worse, Heaton-Harris then praised Lord Trimble and the PUP's David Ervine for persuading unionism and loyalism to say 'yes, to peace'. Now, Ervine may have helped stop the UVF's murderous activities, but the idea that unionists needed cajoled into peacefulness is both inaccurate and offensive. The only people who had to be persuaded to embrace peace were the terrorist thugs who perpetrated violence. Should we really need to point that out to a Conservative secretary of state?

The argument that Mr Heaton-Harris was making so crassly was that "real leaders know when to say yes". I.e. The DUP should accept the Windsor Framework, and, by implication, the full implementation of the Irish Sea border, thought by leading hauliers to be deeper and more permanent than the one we know today. According to Heaton-Harris, people who are proud of Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom, should 'put the Union first' and restore power-sharing. "The



biggest threat to Northern Ireland's place in the Union is failing to deliver on these priorities," he said.

Admittedly, boycotting Stormont could begin to erode support for our place in the UK over time. But it would have work to do to become as big a threat as a Conservative administration that repeatedly agreed to a legal and commercial border in the Irish Sea: a government so determined to deliver Brexit for the rest of the country, that it was prepared to flatten anything in its path, including the Union between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

A theme of Heaton-Harris's comments, which was common to many speeches delivered last week, was that unionists should 'compromise' to secure a hopeful future. That idea was developed too by Bertie Ahern, a leader who was usually fair in his treatment of pro-Union politicians. Some of Mr Ahern's comments at Queen's, though, were slapdash and baffling. "There's too many big things to be dealing with," mused the former Taoiseach, "to be arguing about some detail that was caused over something or another, which I'm not sure what it is even."

This may read like dialogue from a drunk trying to end a row in a pub, but the 'detail' that unionists are concerned with is a trade border that cuts them off from the rest of the UK's economy. They're against the imposition of EU law in Northern Ireland, diverging ever further from the British mainstream and a framework that entrenches a sea border. Mr Ahern really should remember those details, if he intends to comment on the current impasse at Stormont with authority.

As for the idea that unionists should ‘compromise’, that was voiced by Ahern, Tony Blair, Bill Clinton and others, it was expressed in a way that suggested unionism was unaccustomed to accommodating nationalists. In fact, unionists in Northern Ireland have choked down some of the most unpalatable concessions over the decades, in order to secure stability. The Belfast Agreement involved the release of paramilitary prisoners, terrorists in government, a role for Dublin and, eventually, the abolition of the RUC. Since then, we’ve had to swallow letters of comfort for on-the-runs, attempts to placate republicans on legacy and the continued activity of the IRA, none of which toppled Stormont permanently.

Only three years ago, the DUP agreed a deal that promised, effectively, official status and legislation for the Irish language. Unionism compromised repeatedly, with little reciprocation, and, even now, some unionists want to concede fundamental aspects of our UK status, to satisfy the demands of nationalism and stop the lectures of statesmen who just want our problems to go away.

Of course, unionists will struggle to devise a strategy that both recognises that the protocol and framework are a constitutional demotion, and causes no new damage to what’s left of the Union. The idea, though, that any of this was inevitable, or self-inflicted, or even that it presents a wonderful opportunity, is the most patronising rubbish. If the speakers at QUB hoped to persuade unionists back into Stormont, rather than gaining applause from a very particular kind of audience, many of them could not have done a worse job.



## Perspective

### Scouting played a big part in my childhood and upbringing - Archbishop of York

#### **Archbishop Stephen Cottrell's address at the 2023 Scouting and Guiding Celebration, St George's and Founders' Day Celebration at York Minster.**

Scouting played a big part in my childhood and upbringing. My father was a Cub master. We have a lovely old family photo of him and my mum emerging from church on their wedding day flanked on either side by rows of cubs.

I was a Cub Scout and a Sea Scout myself. In my early teenage years, many a weekend was spent on scouting activities, and, of course, the annual scout camp.

My mother was a Girl Guide leader for a time, and actually, not having been brought up as a churchgoer, my first real introduction to church was through church parade services, which, in my day were once a month. In fact, my sister, a Guide, so enjoyed what she found at the 'once a month, church parade services' that she and a small group of friends started going on the other Sundays in between, got confirmed, and joined the church, and this was the catalyst for my becoming part of the church myself - though, I'm not quite sure this was all down to scouting, since I did rather fancy one of my sister's friends, and since joining the Girl Guides to get to know her wasn't an option at the time (though I'm now aware that girls and boys do join together in

APRIL 25, 2023

the scouts) I took myself off to church, and also to the youth club on Sunday evenings.

Church became part of my life.

Jesus became someone to follow - someone who showed me what being human, being alive, is meant to be like; and although I'm not sure I made the connection at the time, I can see now that Baden Powell and the others who started the Scout movement also knew and saw this connection; that the Scout motto, 'be prepared', was about being prepared for the whole of life, not just the obvious things that scouting gives you – and, as I say, I did enjoy and benefit hugely from this in my own growing up – but being prepared in our inner life, and having the spiritual resources to help face life's difficulties, challenges, sorrows and fears; even, one day, death itself.

And the Scout promise that I made, to do duty to God and the King – well, the Queen in my day - enfolds in a single promise our duties to one another within the life of our nation, and our duties to the world, and all our neighbours across the world, because to believe and honour God is to declare an accountability and a belonging to one another: one human family inhabiting one world.

And of course, Scouting itself has become a worldwide organisation, and a force for good in many nations.

Today is St George's Day, the Patron Saint of England, but also, interestingly, and not so very well known, St George was a refugee. And not English at all.



APRIL 25, 2023

So how did he become our patron saint? And what does he have to say to us today?

St George was a Palestinian Christian. But he was born in Turkey around A.D.270 and after his father died for his faith during one of the persecutions of Christianity, he and his mother fled to Palestine.

He served in the Roman army but in the year 303, and during one of the most brutal persecutions of the church, under the Emperor Diocletian, he too was killed for refusing to renounce his Christian faith.

Because of his brave and unapologetic affirmation of faith, George has always been revered by Christians in the east, and also by many Muslims, who admired his bravery, his faithfulness, and his tenacity.

And it was for these same reasons that English Crusaders to the Holy land (Palestine) adopted George as a patron, and later King Edward III made him patron saint of England. And although he never visited this country, and although all this was a long time ago, I think he still has much of relevance to say to us today.

In a world where people are still persecuted for their beliefs, St George speaks of bravery and courage.

In a world where Christians were a tiny minority, St George speaks of tenacious faithfulness, and invites us to confront prejudice.

APRIL 25, 2023

In a world where people were expected to question the status quo, St George stands out for truth and witness in the public square.

In a world where thousands of people still flee conflict and persecution, St George reminds us of our responsibilities to the excluded, the powerless, the exiled, and the despised.

And in England today, where we could easily and unthinkingly assume that because he's our patron saint he must be English, it is helpful to be reminded that he was Palestinian and of Turkish origin, was a refugee himself, and died under persecution because he wasn't prepared to denounce his faith or turn his back on what he believed in. He can therefore be a great example to us in our multicultural and multifaith society, and especially to Scouts and Guides who are also called to serve God and serve their nation and serve the world.

St George encourages us to speak up for the values of generosity, faithfulness, tolerance, devotion to duty, and the pursuit of justice, not least for refugees, in Britain today.

He may not have slayed actual dragons – the thing we most likely remember him for – but he can inspire us to slay the dragons of prejudice, injustice, selfishness and greed, things which too easily take hold of the human heart and for which St George, the Scout and Guide Association, and the Christian faith stand against. For in this great endeavour, and with St George himself, we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and are called to persevere in the race that is set before us.

Amen



## Poem for today

### Dublin by Louis MacNeice

Grey brick upon brick,  
Declamatory bronze  
On sombre pedestals –  
O'Connell, Grattan, Moore –  
And the brewery tugs and the swans  
On the balustraded stream  
And the bare bones of a fanlight  
Over a hungry door  
And the air soft on the cheek  
And porter running from the taps  
With a head of yellow cream  
And Nelson on his pillar  
Watching his world collapse.  
This never was my town,  
I was not born or bred  
Nor schooled here and she will not  
Have me alive or dead  
But yet she holds my mind  
With her seedy elegance,  
With her gentle veils of rain  
And all her ghosts that walk  
And all that hide behind  
Her Georgian facades –  
The catcalls and the pain,  
The glamour of her squalor,  
The bravado of her talk.

APRIL 25, 2023

The lights jig in the river  
With a concertina movement  
And the sun comes up in the morning  
Like barley-sugar on the water  
And the mist on the Wicklow hills  
Is close, as close  
As the peasantry were to the landlord,  
As the Irish to the Anglo-Irish,  
As the killer is close one moment  
To the man he kills,  
Or as the moment itself  
Is close to the next moment.

She is not an Irish town  
And she is not English,  
Historic with guns and vermin  
And the cold renown  
Of a fragment of Church latin,  
Of an oratorical phrase.  
But oh the days are soft,  
Soft enough to forget  
The lesson better learnt,  
The bullet on the wet  
Streets, the crooked deal,  
The steel behind the laugh,  
The Four Courts burnt.

Fort of the Dane,  
Garrison of the Saxon,  
Augustan capital  
Of a Gaelic nation,  
Appropriating all  
The alien brought,



APRIL 25, 2023

You give me time for thought  
And by a juggler's trick  
You poise the toppling hour –  
O greyness run to flower,  
Grey stone, grey water,  
And brick upon grey brick.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

---

# 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)