



Image of the day - Trinity College, Dublin



Archbishop Eames' message to Boris Johnson - Urgent action needed now to tackle problems and violence created by Brexit protocol

Archbishop Eames is one of nine signatories including four former secretaries of state for Northern Ireland and an ex-PSNI chief constable to voice serious concern about loyalist violence and to call on Boris Johnson to "step up" and take urgent action to regain the political initiative in Northern Ireland.

April 27, 2021

In a letter to the Prime Minister, they are implicitly critical of his government's approach to tackling the problems created by the protocol. They say that these will not be resolved by Secretary of State Brandon Lewis "engaging in periodic Zoom sessions whether in Belfast or from London".

They warn that without "serious engagement" with local parties and communities, there is a very real risk that the situation could quickly "fall over" again in Northern Ireland.

The cross-party letter is signed by former NI Secretaries of State, Lord Hain, Lord Mandelson, Lord Murphy and Shaun Woodward.

It has also been signed by ex-PSNI chief constable, **Sir Hugh Orde**; former Tory chairman and cabinet minister Chris Patten whose report on policing reform led to the PSNI's formation; retired Church of Ireland primate Lord Eames; the former chair of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee **Sir Patrick Cormack**; and ex-Defence Secretary **Lord Browne of Ladyton**.

The nine signatories tell the Prime Minister: "With our long collective experience we are extremely worried that violent unrest on the streets of loyalist areas and at interfaces is a consequence of politics, both in Stormont and in Whitehall, failing the people of Northern Ireland.

"We stress that the peace process did not end with the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. Indeed, after decades of horror and centuries of division and bitterness, it was only a beginning and, to take Northern Ireland forward, requires positive political momentum to be maintained.

April 27, 2021

"Tony Blair and Gordon Brown recognised that, as did John Major before them. They each took personal charge of the peace process, convening regular summits and being in constant touch with all the parties."

They tell Mr Johnson that the recent street unrest "whether orchestrated by shadowy figures on social media or, in some instances, by loyalist paramilitaries - will not literally burn itself out over time".

They state: "While the violence is unacceptable, the fact is that there are grievances, real and perceived, within the broader unionist community and that cannot be ignored by the UK government. Politics must be made to work again and crucially politics must be seen to work again."

"There is a strong sense within loyalist and unionist communities that no one is listening to them, and that nobody in authority in Whitehall has been honest with them about the consequences of Brexit. The most immediate step is therefore for the government, at the highest level, to be seen to take an interest."

The nine men tell the Prime Minister that he must "as a matter of urgency" address the outworking of the protocol with Brussels.

"This will not be achieved by Lord Frost flying in for a dinner with EU Commission vice-president Maros Sefcovic and flying out again. Nor the Secretary of State engaging in periodic Zoom sessions, whether in Belfast or from London," they say.

April 27, 2021

"Serious engagement must be continuous, inclusive and be seen to be happening. And if, as is likely, there is no alternative to maintaining the protocol which it has legally agreed, then the government must be honest and say so while securing whatever mitigations it can negotiate with Brussels."

The letter notes that the people of Northern Ireland were promised the "best of both worlds" by Mr Lewis and First Minister Arlene Foster who spoke about the opportunities and possibilities that post-Brexit arrangements would open up.

"Yet these have not transpired and, in respect of continuing trade with the rest of the UK, opportunities and possibilities have been reduced not increased," they say.

"The Prime Minister and the Secretary of State must urgently create the space for local politics to regain the initiative.

They need to engage directly with local parties and the broader community, and they need to listen and be seen to be listening, not intermittently as has been the case but continuously."

The letter calls for London to rebuild trust with Dublin "which has been badly damaged, and to breathe fresh life into the British-Irish intergovernmental process that is a key part of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement".

April 27, 2021

It says that the lesson of the past 50 years in Northern Ireland is that, without forward momentum, "things do not stand still, they fall over".

The authors conclude: "It is the responsibility of the UK government to ensure that does not happen because there is nothing more dangerous than a political vacuum. Action is needed now."

St Anne's Cathedral business manager handed suspended jail term for drug dealing

The 'champion' of Belfast's famous St Anne's Cathedral has expressed her remorse after being convicted of drug dealing alongside her partner, Sunday Life reports.

Holly Wilson (29), the high-profile head of commercial business at St Anne's, sobbed as her partner Peter O'Hare was jailed last week over what the judge described as a "well-run commercial" cannabis dealing operation.

Wilson, who received a suspended sentence for her lesser role, told Sunday Life: "It's been a very difficult time and a very strange few days".

But she said her cathedral colleagues had been very supportive.

Newtownabbey couple O'Hare (30) and Wilson were arrested following a police operation which uncovered over



Holly Wilson, commercial business manager at St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast, was last week handed a suspended jail term after being convicted of drug dealing alongside her partner.

£9,000 in cash and 880 grams of cannabis with a street value of around £6,000 in their then south Belfast home.

At a tearful sentencing hearing at Antrim Crown Court, Wilson wept as O'Hare, who the court heard had turned to drug dealing to finance his university degree in radiography and provide for his son, was jailed.

O'Hare sat with his head in his hands, shoulders shaking, while Wilson wept uncontrollably as Judge Neil Rafferty QC ordered O'Hare to surrender himself to custody.

“Please, please no,” she pleaded through her tears.

At an earlier hearing, the pair from Fairview Crescent admitted possessing cannabis with intent to supply in 2019.

O'Hare, who also admitted supplying the class B drug and possessing criminal property, was handed a 12-month sentence with half to be served on licence.

Wilson — hailed as the 'cathedral champion' on the St Anne's website — was given a seven-month jail term suspended for three years.

She is still employed by St Anne's pending an internal investigation.

Wilson told Sunday Life they were both very sorry for their actions and hoped to rebuild their lives when he leaves jail.

“I'm his partner and I will remain his partner and it's very upsetting what has happened but he has accepted responsibility from the word go and here we are,” she said.

An Irish News report concluded -

Sentencing the pair, Judge Neil Rafferty QC said: "It's with great sadness that I categorise this as commercial dealing.

"It may have been to a limited number of friends and trusted fellow users, but nevertheless it has all the hallmarks of well-run commercial dealing in class B drugs."

When asked about the case, the Dean of Belfast Cathedral, Stephen Forde told the Sunday World: "We are aware of a situation going through the courts and the cathedral is

April 27, 2021

currently following disciplinary procedures and therefore we can't say anything further at this moment."

In conversation with broadcaster Sally Magnusson

One of Scotland's best known broadcasters has revealed she started her career on the small screen thanks to a church minister.

Sally Magnusson said she was invited to get involved in a programme produced by Rev Dr Nelson Gray, a former head of religious broadcasting at Scottish Television, after he read a newspaper article she wrote.

She said she had no aspiration to work in television despite the fact that her father, Magnus Magnusson, was a broadcaster of renown but she thoroughly enjoyed the experience and it led to more offers of work.

Ms Magnusson, who once presented a documentary about Kirk missionary Jane Haining who died in Auschwitz in 1944, shared her thoughts in the latest episode of It's a Fair Question.

She told Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair, Moderator of the General Assembly, that the first book she wrote was about Eric Liddell, a Scottish athlete who refused to run on Sundays and later served as a missionary in China.

Ms Magnusson said she was given just six weeks to write it to coincide with the release of Chariots of Fire in 1981– a



film about Liddell's participation in the 1924 Olympic Games where he ran for the glory of God.

She revealed that she moved back to her family home and enlisted the help of her father, mother and sister to finish it on time.

Dementia and music

Ms Magnusson, a BBC Scotland journalist, also speaks about her late mother, Mamie, a former newspaper journalist and author who lived with dementia.

After her mother's death in 2012, she founded Playlist for Life, a music and dementia charity which has inspired church congregations to reach out and support sufferers and their carers.

April 27, 2021

Ms Magnusson said: “My mother had always been a great singer, when I say that I don't mean any professional pretension, but she's had a lovely singing voice and an ability to harmonise instinctively with absolutely anything, which made any song rather more beautiful than it would have been.

“As her dementia progressed, it was more and more obvious that singing with her could perk her up or could indeed soothe or calm her down.”

Ms Magnusson said it is important for people to try and understand as much as possible what people living with dementia are going through.

“Once you understand it's much easier to respond but don't think that you have lost that person,” she explained.

“Music which connects us to the very deepest parts of ourselves can make the connection that you desperately want to retain with that person.

“So, go and make a playlist, try and find as many pieces of music as you can that have been meaningful to this person in the past.

“You will see fingers tapping and joy returning to a face.”

Ms Magnusson appeared at the Heart and Soul festival, part of General Assembly week, in 2018.

You Tube link to interview with Ms Magnusson -

April 27, 2021

[[] <https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/articles/its-a-fair-question-in-conversation-with-broadcaster-sally-magnusson>]

Sourceless Light - Trinity College, Dublin, Service of Fellows and Scholars

Address of Archbishop Dermot Farrell at an Ecumenical Service of Fellows and Scholars at Trinity College, Dublin. The address was delivered via video-link

It is a privilege to deliver the address for the ‘Trinity Monday’ Service in this College, and I want to express my appreciation for extending the invitation.

In these difficult times, I also wish—on my own behalf, and on behalf of many people in this city and beyond—to pay tribute to and thank the researchers and academics from this and other universities, for their significant contributions in the fight against Covid-19 which is not only affecting peoples’ health and incomes, but also the entire social, cultural, and spiritual fabric of society. Its effects are palpable in all dimensions of our lives—in our work, in industry, in our relationships, and even in the ability of religious communities to gather for worship. In an environment of isolation and fear, the expertise and profound humanity of many researchers have provided reassurance and calm in a sea of fear and uncertainty. In expressing our indebtedness, it is also necessary to note, that unlike Jonah’s gourd, this is not something that appeared from one day to the next. As you appreciate, contributions are made, because research is constant,

April 27, 2021

ongoing, and valued. It is here that we see the ‘sense’ of the university—and not just in the sciences, but in the humanities as well—in the quiet but constant *quaerens intellectum*—a seeking to understand.

At the end of March, my attention was drawn to piece in the Financial Times by American poet, Molly McCully Brown. McCully Brown, recipient of a year-long writing fellowship, the single stipulation of which was to travel and write outside America for one year without returning. In May 2019 she found herself in Dublin, and after a visit to the Seamus Heaney exhibit in the National Library finds herself in the Long Room. She writes, “it was as sacred a space as any cathedral I’d seen, or tried, to see all year...I felt acutely how unlikely and irreplicable an experience I was having.” In the Long Room McCully Brown senses something of the deeper life the University seeks to promote.

The last fifty years have witnessed enormous change in Irish Universities as they tried to respond to the perceived social needs and market demands. Some have dubbed it the commercialisation or commodification of education. When I retired as President of Maynooth in 2007 the metrics of the commercial world were already embedded in the *lingua franca* of Third Level education. Under such pressure to be relevant, universities sometimes lose sight of what led to their foundation, and of what their authentic mission consists. Of course, marketable skills are essential, but universities also have to provide enduring values—information, knowledge, even wisdom need to find a right relationship to the earth “and all its inhabitants,” as it says in the Psalm (Ps 24:1). Without this broader relationship, the insight of Maurice Blondel’s sardonic aphorism is rapidly



realised: “The one who marries the spirit of the age is soon widowed.” Many of you will have seen first-hand the threat to languages—ancient and modern, to classics, and to the academic study of religion in such an environment.

The university is a very long established institution—in its idea much older than the dates assigned for the beginning of even the oldest universities conventionally so called. As you know, the great universities of the West have their roots in the philosophical and theological schools of the Middle Ages. As you also know, the 21st century is a long way from the Middle Ages. And yet, we would be foolish if we let ourselves be convinced, that the only complexity was technical. There are other complexities—existential complexities—which it is the University’s privilege and responsibility to explore and communicate. People are much more than potential sources of revenue, or bases for power. Philosophical knowledge as distinct from knowledge of philosophy is important.

April 27, 2021

It is clear from the complex history of Trinity College that the changes built on what went before. The College exists today because it was dynamic and did not jettison the values associated with disciplines and those associated with practice and vocation, or cling rigidly to its past achievements. That same dynamism will be the guarantee of its future. I wish to congratulate Professor Linda Doyle upon her appointment as Provost. I hope that in working for a higher inspiration among the philosophers, scientists, artists and the humanitarians, you will help humanity to advance.

Most of us have the experience that the reality that is happening to us is only revealed over time, be it the growth of a friendship or a lifelong relationship, be it in the growth of knowledge, understanding or wisdom. Indeed, this is true of love itself: it is revealed over time—as any older person will tell you. What a loss it would be, if your new vision, and your hard-earned skills and your youthful energy has no impact on what is being gradually revealed by the transcendent One across the globe. You are members of your generation and as women and men inculturated in this age, can do something that others cannot do as we seek to be freed from the limits that life imposes on everyone. What a difference Trinity graduates are going to make to the world! No one can foresee just how each one of you will respond to life's challenges. But one thing is certain: there is no shortage of work to be done in the vineyard. There are families to be established and nurtured; intellectual frontiers to be explored; young minds to be taught; the sick to be cared for; the poor to be lifted up; strangers to be welcomed, and much wisdom to be handed on to future generations.

April 27, 2021

Our world changes rapidly—and rarely has it changed as suddenly as in this past tragic year. It is easy to be overwhelmed by the many dimensions and demands. And in the midst of all this—there is something profoundly personal, deeply intimate. I am reminded of the lines of the late Welsh poet R.S. Thomas:

Some ask the world
and are diminished
in the receiving
of it. You gave me
only this small pool
that the more I drink
from, the more overflows
me with sourceless light.

I wish you God's blessing on your work, and energy and joy in the way that opens up before you. I pray that each of you will touch many lives, and be touched by the wonders that have been given you. Yes, that you may be blessed by 'sourceless light.'

Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars

Consecration in Clogher

The Consecration of the Revd Canon Dr Ian Ellis as Bishop of Clogher took place on Monday 26 April. A recording of the service is available at -

[<http://www.enniskillencathedral.com>]

April 27, 2021

An evening with Bishop Jill Duff

On Thursday 29 April at 8.00 pm, CIEF (Church of Ireland Evangelical Fellowship) is hosting an evening on Zoom with Bishop Jill Duff as she shares some thoughts about what it will mean to follow Jesus in the days ahead.

Bishop Jill is the Bishop of Lancaster, one of two suffragan bishops in the Diocese of Blackburn.

She went to Bolton School before studying at Christ College, Cambridge and Worcester College, Oxford. Several years in the oil industry followed before training for the ministry at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. Bishop Jill was the founding Director of the St Mellitus College, North West.
Register

The event entitled 'Lighting the Beacons' is open to everyone, but please register at: [<https://register.cief.church>]

Media review

Boris Johnson is warned of 'dangerous political vacuum' in Northern Ireland

The Guardian

Northern Ireland is in a dangerous political vacuum and could “fall over” ... The letter tacitly accuses Johnson and the Northern Ireland secretary, ... of Northern Ireland, Lord Robin Eames, a former Church of Ireland primate, Des ...
Boris Johnson · Peter Hain · Peter Mandelson · Shaun Woodward

April 27, 2021

[[] <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/26/boris-johnson-is-warned-of-dangerous-political-vacuum-in-northern-ireland>]

New Catholic primary school sex education programme is published

The Irish Times

However, the Irish Bishops' Conference said all teaching in Catholic primary schools in areas relating to the church's teaching is done in an ...

[[] <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/new-catholic-primary-school-sex-education-programme-published-1.4547221>]

Schools required to implement anti-bullying laws

BBC News

[[] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-56882308>]

Glengormley High School applies for integrated status

BBC News

[[] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-56852795>]

NI Brexit: Supply of medicines to NI fears as end of grace period looms

Belfast News Letter

Health Minister Robin Swann admits he is concerned

[[] <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/politics/ni-brexit-supply-of-medicines-to-ni-fears-as-end-of-grace-period-looms-health-minister-robin-swann-admits-he-is-concerned-3210129>]

April 27, 2021

Mayor stands by decision to withdraw staff from check duties at ports

Belfast Telegraph

[[] <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/mayor-stands-by-decision-to-withdraw-staff-from-check-duties-at-ports-40342810.html>]

For all their 'sorrow' over the killing of my brother Edgar Graham, Sinn Fein will not condemn it as murder

Belfast News Letter

[[] <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/opinion/letters/for-all-their-sorrow-over-the-killing-of-my-brother-edgar-graham-sinn-fein-will-not-condemn-it-as-murder-3208375>]

Post office scandal: Ex-boss quits director role after convictions quashed

BBC News

Steps back from C of E ministry role

[[] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-56882496>]



Pointers for prayer

April 27, 2021

Mighty God,
in whom we know the power of redemption,
you stand among us in the shadows of our time.
As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life,
uphold us with knowledge of the final morning
when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son,
we will share in his resurrection,
redeemed and restored to the fullness of life
and forever freed to be your people. Amen.

Living God,
long ago, faithful women
proclaimed the good news
of Jesus' resurrection,
and the world was changed forever.
Teach us to keep faith with them,
that our witness may be as bold,
our love as deep,
and our faith as true. Amen.

Creator of the universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.
We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love,
and peace, to the glory of your name. Amen.

O God, your Son remained with his disciples after his
resurrection, teaching them to love all people as neighbours.
As his disciples in this age,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the universe

April 27, 2021

in which we are privileged to live
and our neighbours with whom we share it...
...Intercessions

Open our hearts to your power moving
around us and between us and within us,
until your glory is revealed in our love of both friend and
enemy,
in communities transformed by justice and compassion,
and in the healing of all that is broken. Amen.

Holy God,
you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son,
and to care for those who are our companions,
not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love.
Seeking to be true friends of all,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the church and the
world....

...Intercessions

Guide us in the path of discipleship,
so that, as you have blessed us,
we may be a blessing for others,
bringing the promise of the kingdom near
by our words and deeds. Amen.

Speaking to the Soul

**The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn,
which shines ever brighter until the full light of day. But
the way of the wicked is like total darkness. They have
no idea what they are stumbling over.**

Proverbs 4:18-19 NLT

April 27, 2021

I have spent most of my life living in towns or cities which means that I have had very little experience of darkness. However, when I lived in a village in India I found out exactly what it was like. I can recall occasions when I would walk around on our compound without a single clue as to what was in front of me. Pathetically I would reach out my hands in the hope that I would feel a building or tree before I collided with it. Such complete darkness is very threatening and it isn't surprising that the Bible often uses it as a picture of living without God. With none of his light to shine on life's path it is certain that a person will spend their life stumbling about, lurching from one danger to the next.

The contrast couldn't be sharper for the person who walks in God's way. The righteous person, who deliberately seeks to live their lives in step with God, lives in the light. When a person sets off on a life with God the first gleam of dawn shines on them and as they walk with God the brightness continually grows until they are walking in the full light of day. In his letter to the Ephesians, the apostle Paul tells his readers that they are children of the light (Ephesians 5.8). In that passage he quotes what many scholars think was an early church hymn which might have been sung at a service of baptism. It goes, "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." As the early Christians lived as a tiny minority amidst a sea of immorality and godlessness they needed to be clear where their light came from. They would face many struggles and difficulties and darkness was never far away, but amidst it all Christ's light shone on them.

QUESTION

April 27, 2021

In what specific ways have you experienced God's light shining on you?

PRAYER

Lord God we worship you because you are the source of light. I invite you to shine your light on my life today. Amen

