

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – A New Zealand sanctuary

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A New Zealand sanctuary

Photo at Evensong in the Church of the Good Shepherd in Tekapo. An inspirational Easter view from the Holy table. Photo by Michael Earle who had time afterwards to bike along the gravel roads covered with wild rosehip, see old telescopes from the Dark Sky project, and learn about the Maori world view of the stars and planets in the sky

People and places

Handbell Ringers Rathlin Island workshop

Kilbroney
Handbell
Ringers gave a
workshop in St
Thomas's
church on Rathlin Island, a beautiful noise.



The efforts of Elizabeth Farnan and team were appreciated.



Mayor grateful for Annahilt parish support of charities

Alderman Stephen Martin, Mayor of Lisburn and Castlereagh recently said “I am very grateful to the Rev Canon Robert Howard and everyone at the Church of the Ascension, Annahilt, for their very generous donation towards my Mayoral charities Addni Childrens Charity and MACS Supporting Children & Young People

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Curate's Chaplaincy role with Lurgan sports club



Congratulations to keen sportsman Revd Rodney Blair who has recently become Club Chaplain to Lurgan RF&CC.

Rodney is Curate Assistant in Shankill, Lurgan, and will be supported by a Pastoral Care Team of Peter Maxwell, Sandra McIlwaine and Andrew Davis.

He tells us about his exciting new role below:

How did you come to be the new Club Chaplain?

When I moved to Lurgan I wanted to get involved in the local community and get to know others. I had been playing rugby for Portadown, so I moved rugby club to train and play locally.

The pandemic and lockdown highlighted the vital role played by clubs in supporting the lives and wellbeing of their membership. The club recognised the importance of positioning themselves alongside players to support them in times of difficulty and this led them to set up a pastoral care team headed by a chaplain. I was appointed by the Club Committee.

Sport has been a huge part of my life since childhood and I feel privileged and excited about being able to support sports players in my local community through the role of Chaplain.

Do you need particular qualifications or training to fulfil the role?

There are no specific ‘must have’ qualifications to be a club chaplain but during ordination training I had the opportunity to complete a micro–counselling skills course along with pastoral care and mission modules. I also have a degree in Youth & Community Work with JNC. This learning along with the listening and signposting skills involved in ministry have equipped me for the role. Ministry is a calling where the learning never stops so I hope that I can develop these skills further as I take on the role of Chaplain.

How will the Chaplaincy work out in practice?

During the rugby season I will continue to train and play as normal with the senior squad. I hope to support at matches when I am not playing and be around the club on Saturdays too. I am a ‘people person’ so it is natural for me to spend time getting to know others and this will be a big part of the

role. I hope this will allow me to form good relationships, to follow up with those who are injured or anyone disappointed that they didn't make selection and to check in on family issues, bereavements etc.

The Chaplain is the visible head of the pastoral care team and may have matters referred to them by members of the club. I hope to be a listening ear to offer support in a confidential manner along with other duties as directed by the club management. This will, like any pastoral role, differ from week to week and I will rely on the pastoral care team to support me.

Tell us about the pastoral care team

Andrew, Sandra and Peter have been involved in the club for a long time and they know the players, members and coaches. They have established great trust and links over the years. We want to be a team who are visible and available in times of crisis, and to be a non-judgemental listening ear to those of all faiths and none. Two of the team are Shankill parishioners but it wasn't essential that they had to be involved in our church.

The pastoral care team are there to support the health and wellbeing of all the club members as well as myself. Their role is to speak to people and organise events to get folks together to help encourage good physical and mental well-being. Importantly, they will ensure all referrals are dealt with in a timely manner and medium to long term support measures are in place when required. They will assist with any wellbeing initiatives offered to the wider club membership too.

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We have recently launched our first initiative in connection with Craigavon Area Foodbank. We have asked the club members from all teams to support a food collection over the coming weeks which will then go to the local foodbank for distribution in our area.

Sport Northern Ireland offer the Reaching Out Through Sport Mental Health Course of which the Pastoral Care Team have completed Levels 1 and 2.

150th anniversary of Holy Trinity Church in Castlemacadam

Parishioners of Castlemacadam, Ballinaclash and Aughrim gathered on Sunday morning to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Holy Trinity Church in Castlemacadam.

The service, at which Archbishop Michael Jackson was the preacher, was part of a weekend of festivities which saw about 300 people attending a concert in the church on Friday evening.

Over €2,000 was raised at the concert for the Irish Red Cross's work for the people of Ukraine. The programme included the Avondale Voices choir, Karla and Avril from Avoca Parish, Emily from Greystones Community College and parishioners Becky, Bruce and John. Erica and Elsa sang a duet and Venetia did a poetry reading.

On Sunday morning, parishioners gave thanks for all who had gone before them and for the worship and witness



which has taken place in the area since 1430. After the service a tree was placed in the church grounds to mark the occasion.

In his sermon, the Archbishop said it was wonderful to celebrate the anniversary of the church. “The church as a living and a sharing community of people, knit together within the love of God the Holy Trinity, carries on throughout and in the face of political events, regardless of wars and rumours of wars;

and for countless generations, the church has offered a constancy and a stability in the lives of so many people in joy and in sorrow. Events affect its working.

Events do not distort its purpose. The church heralds God’s presence and God’s people in the world,” he said.

Reflecting on the Gospel reading [St John 20: 19 “... Jesus came and stood among them and said, Peace be with

you...”], Archbishop Jackson said that the gift of peace was to be cherished and nurtured.

“We seek peace today as perhaps never before in the lifetime of our own generation with the brutality of warfare in Ukraine, with millions of women and children dispersed across the world and separated from their menfolk who have no option but to stay and fight. Having just emerged from the deepest and starkest Lockdown known to any of us through the ravages of Covid–19, we now find ourselves to be spectators in the arena of war, with instant communications so sophisticated as never before known, that we see atrocities as they happen; and also we are responders to human tragedy and helplessness such that we never expected to happen in a sophisticated and civilized Europe in 2022. Peace is more than the absence of war. Peace is a state of settled living that enables young and old to flourish without fear of their own destruction and that enables the common good to be much more than the quest for raw survival or trying in vain to secure dignified burial for the dead,” he stated.

He added that on the 150th anniversary of Castlemacadam Church, as they remembered with thanksgiving all who had gone before and their contributions to the life of the church and its community, the gift of peace had been expected but world history showed that it could change in an instant.

The Archbishop suggested that peace could be described in three words: harmony, relationships and ecology. He said that each generation had the chance to shape the inheritance of the church, not in its own image but in the

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image of God as reflected in the people of God and the people of the world and the world itself.

Associate Minister in the Lecale Area Mission Partnership (LAMP) sought

The Dean of Down wishes to appoint a full-time stipendiary priest to serve as an Associate Minister in the Lecale Area Mission Partnership (LAMP).

LAMP serves the Lecale Area of South Down which includes Downpatrick and the villages of Strangford, Ardglass Killough, Clough and Seaford.

The person appointed would be part of a team of clergy and lay people and their role would include pastoral responsibility for two small parishes; assisting in the life and ministry of Down Cathedral; and developing outreach in the wider community.

For a more detailed job description please contact Very Revd Henry Hull, Dean of Down, by email (henryhull@downcathedral.org) no later than Tuesday 10 May 2022.

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News reports

Girls fit to sing before HM – after waiting for 674 years

St George's Chapel choir based at Windsor Castle that regularly sings in front of the Queen will include girls for the first time in 674 years.

Lucy Howe and Julia Johnson, both aged nine, are Year 4 pupils at St George's School Windsor Castle.

They have become the first female choristers to join the choir of St George's Chapel, and will live in the school's boarding house during the week and participate in daily rehearsals in Windsor Castle.

The choir of St George's Chapel, founded in 1348, sings regularly in the presence of the Queen and other members of the Royal family.

Eventually, the girls will be involved in the choir's regular services alongside their normal schooling.

This follows a decision announced by the Dean of Canons of Windsor in January that girls and boys would sing alongside each other in the choir.

William Goldsmith, headmaster at St George's School Windsor Castle, said: "We are tremendously proud of our long-standing tradition of educating and housing the choristers of St George's Chapel.

“To be able to offer this opportunity to everybody at the school, regardless of gender, is very much aligned to our philosophy of valuing all students and recognising that each child has his or her own unique contribution to make to the life of our community and to global society as a whole.”

In 2018, this included singing at royal weddings in the chapel for the Duke and Duchess of Sussex and for Princess Eugenie and Jack Brooksbank.

Choristers typically remain in the choir until the end of Year 8, when they leave St George’s School Windsor Castle for senior school.

Mr Goldsmith added: “While only accounting for a small number of the children here at St George’s, the choristers fulfil a vital role in the daily life of the school and the chapel.”

In the media

Reflection by Lord Eames on this his 85th birthday

Alf McCreary writes in the Belfast Telegraph

'This could be our last chance to show that devolution does work' Lord Eames says a rethink is needed on the Government's legacy legislation and comments n why the upcoming election is so important.

Lord Eames has warned the future of Stormont is in doubt if politicians fail to make devolution work following next month's election.

The former Church of Ireland Primate and Archbishop of Armagh also criticised the proposed Westminster legislation on legacy, urging a Government rethink.

In an interview to mark his 85th birthday this week, he said: "A lot depends on the election outcome, but from what I have been hearing, it is likely that there may not be an agreement on the way forward.

"People from across the board are yearning for stability. They face the rising costs of living, health issues, education needs and much else. Are all these going to take second place to sectarianism and purely tribal issues?

"These crying needs have to be met in political terms, and unless that can be done, I don't think that devolution as we see it now holds the answers. Stormont has got to get to grips in a way that will allow it to continue, but I fear this may be the last chance for our politicians to show that devolution here works."

Lord Eames was joint author of the controversial Eames-Bradley Report of 2009.

The 190-page publication, co-written with former priest Denis Bradley, contained more than 30 recommendations around dealing with legacy, including a £12,000 payment for families of all those killed, and a legacy commission led by an international figure.

Lord Eames added: “It amazes me that many years later people still refer to some of the things in that report. I am often told by people, 'You got it right, but it wasn't the right time to say it'.”

He says that, thus far, the Government's proposals on legacy show that they “misunderstand what reconciliation means. If the legislation on legacy is brought to Parliament, it will fail if there is not a strong connection between what they are proposing and a desire to promote reconciliation.

“Where evidence is available, which could lead to prosecutions, there is a moral duty that this process should not be closed down for the sake of drawing a line in the sand. Too many people here bear the scars of suffering from the Troubles simply to be cut off in this way.

“The Government so far has got it wrong, and it has failed to appreciate fully that individual cases cannot be dealt with by a broad-brush approach. I have said so much directly to the Government in London, but are they listening?

“I would encourage a rethink and I hope that this may be happening. The opposition to their legacy proposals, which the Government has seen across the board in Northern Ireland, is a true representation of what most people here think about dealing with the past.”

One of Lord Eames' most difficult challenges during the Troubles was the stand-off with the Orange Order at Drumcree in the mid-1990s.

Eames and the Church of Ireland were strongly criticised for allowing the Orange Order to use the Drumcree Parish Church as the venue for their march along a route fiercely disputed by republicans.

He said: “I still believe that it was right not to close the church. The protests were held outside the building, but there was much more at stake than closing the Drumcree Church. It was a place where people came to say their prayers and to see the face of God.

“In reality, if we had closed the church, members of the Orange Order may have held their commemorative service outside the building. It was a massively divisive issue at a time when feelings were running high. A great deal of harm was avoided eventually by negotiation and I still have strong feelings about our action at that time which was to keep the church open.”

Lord Eames was Primate from 1986 to 2006. Shortly after he took over, he became directly involved in the aftermath of the Provisional IRA no-warning Enniskillen bombing in November 1987 which killed 12 people, including young student nurse Marie Wilson, and badly injured many others.

“It was dreadful to be robed in the Enniskillen Church waiting for the Remembrance Day parade to reach there, and suddenly to find myself in the wards of the local hospital ministering to the sick and the dying with other clergy,” he recalled of the day.

“I remember Gordon Wilson asking me to find out about his daughter Marie. She died in the hospital.

“I have always greatly admired the courage and Christian witness of Gordon and his wife Joan at the loss of their daughter. I have also admired all the 'Gordons and Joans' on all sides across Northern Ireland who reached out in their Christian faith in a way which many other people have admired.”

Lord Eames played an important behind-the-scenes role in the crucial and complex negotiations preceding the Downing Street Declaration of 1993 which established the basis for the long-term peace process culminating in the Good Friday Agreement.

He said: “Prime Minister John Major and the Taoiseach Albert Reynolds both played a major part. John Major kept himself fully informed and Albert Reynolds understood Northern Ireland in a way which few people recognised.

“Their important joint role has not always received the great credit it deserves.”

Lord Eames is a member of the exclusive Order of Merit, which has a fixed number of only 24 people, and is a personal gift from the Queen, whom he has met on many occasions.

“She is one of the warmest people you could meet and she shows a genuine interest in the person she is talking to,” he said. “She has had an enormous role in a very unstable century for our country and her faith is seen and lived out in many ways, but her personal life is based rock-solid on her Christian faith.”

A special communion service will be held in Hillsborough Parish Church on Wednesday to mark Lord Eames' birthday and to honour his career as one of the most distinguished Irish Primate for many decades.

He was ordained in Bangor in 1963, served as rector in Gilnahirk and St Mark's Dundela, and then as Bishop of Derry and Raphoe and later as a Bishop of Down and Dromore before becoming Primate in 1986.

He also had a distinguished career in the worldwide Anglican Communion where he chaired several important commissions. He was senior Primate during the primacies of the Archbishops of Canterbury Robert Runcie and George Carey.

He was one of only three senior clergy well in the running to succeed Runcie in 1991, but says he has no regrets in not getting the top post in the Anglican Church.

Lord Eames agrees that this demanding job might have been “a bed of nails”, but points out that “the final decision was made far from Northern Ireland”.

He added: “I was bemused that my name was widely mentioned at that time, but there was much more to be done during the peace process here than in Lambeth Palace.”

Now an active cross-bencher in the House of Lords, he travels to Westminster each week when in session, where he still has access to some of the key policy-makers.

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He keeps active by walking the family dog Dinky and has an extensive model railway system which he has built up over 30 years.

A former second row forward with Methody and Collegians, Lord Eames retains a lively interest in rugby and has also been a keen yachtsman.

He paid a warm tribute to the lifelong support from his wife Christine: "I have had a life of enormous privilege, though I regret at perhaps not doing more at times and not showing enough courage when courage was needed.

"While I had a very public life, in many ways I am a very private person. I am content in my home and with my family."

Courtesy Belfast Telegraph

Nobody's Fool, Alf McCreary's biography on Lord Eames, is publised by Hodder and Stoughton

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Webinar on faith and severe intellectual disabilities

'Are they educable in faith? Faith and severe intellectual disabilities' is the subject of a webinar this Friday to be given by Dr Sarah Shea of Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, for the Yuan Dao Study Society and Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology this Friday.

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This is a key question for many catechists and RE teachers. Dr Shea's aim is to expose unhelpful myths about the relationship between faith and severe intellectual disabilities, and to review literature and its implications for the practices of care. There will be response from Wensan (Hannah) CHEN, Research Associate of Divinity School of Chung Chi College.

Zoom link

Time: 29 April, 2022 5pm HK (10am UK)

[<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88178269130?pwd=RHIRV3RtRUM1aE9JYWVLOHJBaThldz09>]

Meeting ID: 881 7826 9130

Passcode: 661345

Scottish Laity Network talks: Towards Pentecost 2022

John Dear, Lawrie Morgan Klein, Kim Pratt, Philippa Whitford, Sarah Augustine and Tom O'Laughlin feature in the Scottish Laity Network new series of talks entitled Towards Pentecost 2022.

Robert Burnett from SLN writes: On Sunday, in his powerful Ubi et Orbi message Pope Francis prayed for the many areas of the world where there is war, conflict and division and called us to 'be won over by the peace of Christ!' he further stated that 'Peace is possible; peace is a duty; peace is everyone's primary responsibility!'

At each session of the Scottish Laity Network's recent Lenten Journey 2022 we began by praying for the People of Ukraine and for all people who are suffering from war,

violence and conflict. After spending time in prayer we recalled the words of Daniel Berrigan - Poet, Prophet and Peacemaker:

We have assumed the name of peacemakers, but we have been, by and large, unwilling to pay any significant price. And because we want the peace with half a heart and half a life and will, the war, of course, continues, because the waging of war, by its nature, is total - but the waging of peace, by our own cowardice, is partial.

In a world that is brutally divided into rich and poor, that suffers through war and violence, that fails to take the radical action to prevent climate devastation have we, the followers of Christ, been guilty of cowardice?

As we look towards Pentecost we recall the handful of women and men, who by the power of the Holy Spirit, grew into a movement who turned their world upside down [Acts 17.6]. The climate emergency and COVID have clearly shown the interconnectedness of all forms of life on our planet and the need to find radically new ways of living together in harmony with the planet and all who inhabit it. As followers of Jesus we need to return to that Gospel authenticity that turns our current world systems upside down.

As we seek to read the 'signs of the times' we are faced with the challenge of knowing who to trust when lies and deception mask and distort the truth. We do well to recall the dialogue between Jesus and Pilate about 'truth' and where we see a confrontation between the Empire's 'truth', based on injustice and lies, and the truth of Jesus.

If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples; you will come to know the truth, and the truth will set you free. [John 8:31-32]

The truth of Jesus is a liberating truth, a truth that can empower us to live as our Creator intended us to, in harmony with Mother Earth and with all who inhabit it. It will empower us to speak truth to power, to denounce injustice and expose actions that are the 'opposite of the nature of God'.

In our Towards Pentecost 2022 series we welcome a range of companions who will share with us their insights on Listening and Responding to the Cry of the Poor and the Cry of the Earth.

See the programme below:

Thursday 28 April 7pm

Faith and Politics With a particular focus on Jesus and nonviolence.

Speaker: John Dear

Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSckGQbAwlwX12PgmMzQbGAZZVEP-mdFoyZA7KbAg60_wfzgAQ/viewform

Thursday 5th May: 7pm

The Cry of the Poor. With a particular focus on Poverty in Scotland.

Speaker: Lawrie Morgan Klein

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Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSckGQbAwlwX12PgmMzQbGAZZVEP-mdFoyZA7KbAg60_wfzgAQ/viewform

Thursday 12th May: 7pm

Is a Circular Economy a Way Forward?

Speaker: Kim Pratt

Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSckGQbAwlwX12PgmMzQbGAZZVEP-mdFoyZA7KbAg60_wfzgAQ/viewform

Thursday 19th May: 7pm

A Wellbeing Recovery from Covid.

Speaker: Philippa Whitford

Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSckGQbAwlwX12PgmMzQbGAZZVEP-mdFoyZA7KbAg60_wfzgAQ/viewform

Thursday 26th May: 7pm

Owning our Christian History - with a particular focus on the Doctrine of Discovery.

Speaker: Sarah Augustine

Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSckGQbAwlwX12PgmMzQbGAZZVEP-mdFoyZA7KbAg60_wfzgAQ/viewform

Thursday 2nd June: 7pm

The Eucharist as an Act of Political Subversion

Speaker: Tom O'Laughlin

Link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSckGQbAwlwX12PgmMzQbGAZZVEP-mdFoyZA7KbAg60_wfzgAQ/viewform

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Click to download the Programme and further details:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o-cG061rY-FCEIHqvb6Gm3glaweTesAB/view>

For Registration Form click here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSckGQbAwIwX12PgmMzQbGAZZVEP-mdFoyZA7KbAg60_wfzgAQ/viewform

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

