

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Sunflower season**

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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site



August 1, 2025

## Image of the day



## Sunflower season



In various parts of the country sunflowers are making impact albeit the season of blooming is short. Please enjoy these photographs from County Down.



# Sunflower season





## 'SPARK' Week youth outreach in Garvagh



**It's 'SPARK' Week, in Garvagh where the Parishes of Errigal and Desertoghill's five-day youth outreach programme is into its second day.**

The acronym, SPARK, stands for Servants Pursuing a Radical Kingdom and the cross-community programme offers a range of wholesome, parish-based activities – combined with worship and teaching – for young people aged between 11 and 16. This year, more than 30 are taking part.

Each year, the participants – who are overseen by a team of around 10 leaders (including our Diocesan Children's Ministry Officer, Kirsty McCartney) – help out in local neighbourhoods with tasks such as fence-painting, litter picks and gardening work. The programme is coordinated





by Garvagh parishioner Melissa McGurgan.

One new feature, this year, is an emphasis on 'safe relationships', with leaders from the Christian Charity, 'Love for Life', teaching the young people about the dangers that lurk online and in the real world. During sessions in the hall, the participants were asked to 'surrender' their mobile devices which were placed in a 'phone jail' for safekeeping.



It's definitely not a case of "all work, no play", however, with plenty of time set aside for games and activities, such as 'Seeking Jesus' (in which miniature figurines of Our Lord are hidden around the village) and 'Garvagh Rocks' (in which the young people use stones to create artwork). SPARK Week continues in St Paul's Church Hall, beside Garvagh Parish Church, until Friday 1st August.

## **NICVA leaders meet Minister on role of faith and Community Faiths' Forum**

**Last week, NICVA's Faith Project Co-ordinator Lynda Gould and Director of Policy & Insight Jonny Currie joined Kate Clifford (CEO, Rural Community Network) in meeting Minister Gordon Lyons to discuss the role of faith in society and the work of the Community Faiths' Forum.**

The meeting provided an opportunity to reflect on the Forum's development through the Regional Infrastructure Support Programme (RISP), and to highlight the vital contribution of faith-based organisations in addressing poverty, building inclusion, and strengthening community life across Northern Ireland.

“We also discussed how the Forum can continue to evolve and support faith-based community organisations across Northern Ireland.

“We're committed to ensuring that faith-based social action remains a valued and supported part of a thriving voluntary and community sector”.





## **Volunteer lay led church amongst largest Methodist Church in the Republic**

**Cavan Methodist is one of the largest Methodist churches in the Republic of Ireland and is a community that is largely lay volunteer led.**

What started in a living room in Cavan about 7 years ago is currently about 75 people meeting weekly in a community hall. Cavan Methodist Church is a story of sustained and continuing growth but has a lot more to teach us.

Methodism largely ceased in Cavan town about 50 years ago and the church buildings were sold. However, Ireland has changed considerably over the subsequent decades; with new citizens and many new possibilities.



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There is no church building and no current desire for one. There is no resident minister or lay worker, and there is very little finance involved. Cavan Methodist is one of the largest Methodist churches in the Republic of Ireland and is a community that is largely lay volunteer led. Preachers, musicians, two choirs, IT experts and close to all that is required.

Rev Dr Stephen Skuce is with this church around once a month and Rev Ken Lindsay is there roughly once every two months, but apart from that, this church is led by a small

## ANNOUNCING: The Royal British Legion



# Belfast

## INTERNATIONAL TATTOO



5th & 6th September 2025

[www.belfastinternationaltattoo.com](http://www.belfastinternationaltattoo.com)

group of excellent people and an inspirational key leader called Martha.

Of course there are challenges. The church is in their third premises and starting to look for their fourth as they continue to outgrow buildings. A church that has an African background congregation and a largely Pentecostal approach fits well within Methodism, but not always smoothly.

Speaking about Cavan Methodist, the Rev Dr Stephen Skuce said, “My approach is invariably to see how the rest of MCI can learn from Cavan rather than trying to get Cavan to conform. New wine does need new wineskins.”

If there is a secret to Cavan Methodism, it's that there are people who are committed to Christ, committed to building and growing a church who welcome all and have deliberately become family to each other.

Most members have moved to Ireland after a decade or more living elsewhere in Europe and some others direct from a wide variety of African countries.

Almost nobody has their wider family in Ireland. However, every time there is a birthday, anniversary, celebration or bereavement, it's so obvious that the church is a family.

## Education



## **Queens University members at Jubilee of Youth in Rome**

**Some members of the Catholic Chaplaincy at Queens University have joined the Diocese of Down and Connor and Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ for the Jubilee of Youth in Rome.**

One commented, “It is a joyful time of prayer, friendship, and connection with young people from across the world – all walking together in faith.

“Please keep them in your prayers as they take part in this special celebration.”

Pointer for prayer - Holding in prayer all the young people from the Diocese of Down and Connor and the world as they gather in Rome over the coming days for the Jubilee of Youth. May it be a prayerful, joy filled time of faith, hope and encounter. Have the best time.

## **Exercise Campbell Reflect 2025**

**The Bugles, Pipes and Drums from Campbell College visited the Ulster Tower as part of their Exercise Campbell Reflect 2025.**

Comment -“Great to see you at Northern Ireland’s National War Memorial. We Will Remember Them”

## **St Malachi’s on Youth Orchestra Italy tour**

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**From the 13th-21st July, a number of Malachians, past and present, took part in a tour of Italy with the City of Belfast Youth Orchestra.**

The orchestra performed in three concerts in Florence, Montecatini-Terre and in Riva Del Garda. Well done to all the pupils and staff in what was an unforgettable experience.



## **St John's teamwork in Action at SuperCup NI**

**A huge shoutout to the amazing volunteers from St John's Ambulance (NI) Coleraine - including Badgers,**





**Cadets, and Adult Volunteers - who supported the SuperCup NI 2025 opening parade.**

It's fantastic to see the youngest members working side by side with experienced volunteers, representing SJA(NI) with pride and professionalism.





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# Cathedral Calls

## St Paul's Watch free outdoor exhibition

**This year marks 80 years since the end of the Second World War. Amidst devastating destruction around the City of London, St Paul's remained standing, its iconic dome rising out of the surrounding rubble.**



“The secret to our survival was not luck, as is commonly thought, but rather the bravery and dedication of a group called the St Paul's Watch, whose commitment to St Paul's saved the Cathedral from the fate of our neighbouring buildings”.

From May to October 2025, the free outdoor exhibition **Saving St Paul's: The Watch and the Second World War**



will honour the St Paul's Watch and their heroic efforts to protect the Cathedral during the Blitz.

Come and visit the exhibition in the Cathedral Garden, open during regular visiting times, and discover the incredible stories of the Watch.

## **Saint Patrick's Cathedral in RTÉ's The Last Irish Missionaries**

**The Cathedral recently featured in Episode 2 of RTÉ's The Last Irish Missionaries, a powerful look at Irish missionaries still serving abroad in their 80s.**

The Cathedral's inclusion in the program reflects its ongoing role in Ireland's religious and cultural life, as well as its connection to the global story of Irish mission work. Catch a glimpse of Saint Patrick's Cathedral and the legacy of Irish faith around the world.

<https://www.rte.ie/player/series/the-last-irish-missionaries/10010670-00-0000?epguid=IP10010671-01-0002>

## **Clergy and ministry**

### **Sadness in Fermanagh at death of Archdeacon Cecil Pringle**

**Archdeacon Emeritus Cecil Pringle, a widely respected figure in the Church of Ireland and former rector of**

## **Rossorry Parish Church in Clogher diocese, has died. The Impartial Reporter carried this tribute.**

The retired clergyman, known for his unwavering faith, leadership, and decades of service, passed away on Tuesday.

For many, he will be remembered for his pastoral care and his commitment to cross-community relations, particularly through his long-standing friendship and work alongside Father Brian D'Arcy, who got to spend time with him before he died.

Speaking to The Impartial Reporter yesterday, Fr. Brian said: "I learnt a lot from him, and I hope he learnt a lot from me. We were able to come together to pray and to support each other in various communities."

Fr. Brian noted that the relationship between Rossorry Parish Church and the Graan was particularly special to both clergymen.

"Cecil said this on many occasions, and I would agree. Our prayers between Rossorry and the Graan were among the most heartening and spiritual experiences of our lives."

Describing the partnership between the two Christian leaders as "God's work", Fr. Brian added: "We had a 30-year partnership that was wonderful and effortless in many ways. Once we made the initial contact, we knew it was not our work but God's work, though both of us had to lead to ensure it was done."



Concluding, he said: “Cecil was a wonderful Christian man, a wonderful Christian leader and a genuine man of God.”

Archdeacon Pringle’s ministry spanned more than 50 years. With the exception of his curacy, he served exclusively within the Church of Ireland Diocese of Clogher. At the time of his retirement, he was the longest-serving minister in the diocese.

He is survived by his wife; Hilary, his three children, Tanya, Mark and Claire, his grandchildren and the family circle.

Upon his retirement in February 2018, when asked to reflect on any highlights of his ministry, he remarked: “I can’t pick out any particular highlights. For me, I just did the things that needed to be done; whether it was the wedding of Paul McCartney or preaching for the first time in a Catholic church, I just did them, and that’s it.”

After completing his degree and theological training at Trinity College Dublin, he was ordained for the curacy of St Donard’s Parish, East Belfast, in 1966, where he served until 1969.

He was then appointed rector of Cleenish Parish, near Bellanaleck, in 1969. In 1978, he oversaw its grouping with Mullaghdun Parish, near Letterbreen.

In 1980, he moved to the neighbouring parish of Rossorry, where he served for 28 years. For many, this is where his ministry is most closely associated.

During his time in Rossorry, he was appointed a Canon in 1985 and then Archdeacon of Clogher in 1989, a position he held for 25 years.

It was while serving in Rossorry that he and Fr Brian began their work fostering cross-community relations between Rossorry and the Graan Monastery.

In 2008, Archdeacon Pringle was appointed Bishop's Curate of the Drumkeeran, Muckross and Templecarne group of parishes, where he remained until his retirement in 2018.

Over the course of his ministry, he worked with six bishops and served on numerous diocesan and national Church of Ireland committees. He was a member of the Representative Church Body and served on its Executive Committee.

He also had a deep interest in education. As well as teaching Religious Education, he was a governor of Jones Memorial Primary School, Enniskillen, and Chairman of the Board of Management of [[Enniskillen]] High School for many years.

He served as a Church representative on the Western Education and Library Board and chaired its Teaching Appointments Committee for a time.

In 2018, reflecting on his years in ministry, he said the key to success was letting people know they were cared for and that clergy must be prepared to listen.



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Speaking at the Graan monastery once, the Archdeacon recalled his childhood in County Monaghan after his father died when he was just seven.

“If it hadn’t been for our neighbours who looked after our farm, we wouldn’t have survived. All our neighbours were Catholics – that has had a tremendous influence on my life and ministry.”

He quipped: “When the time comes and I’m laying the body down at Rossorry, I want you to make sure you are there and will say some nice Catholic words!”

His funeral service will take place at Rossorry Parish Church at 2pm on Friday, August 1, and he will be buried in the adjoining churchyard. The service will be conducted by the Bishop of Clogher, the Rt Rev Dr. Ian Ellis.

Funeral arrangements are being carried out by Mr Keith Elliott, W.T. Morrison Funeral Directors.

Courtesy - The Impartial Reporter

## **New Archbishop of Church in Wales**

**The Church in Wales has elected the Rt Revd Cherry Vann as 15th Archbishop.**

Originally from Leicestershire, Archbishop Cherry Vann was consecrated as Bishop of Monmouth in 2020. Cherry was ordained as a deacon in 1989. She was then among the first women to be ordained as a priest in the Church of England

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in 1994. She then served as Archdeacon of Rochdale, in the Diocese of Manchester, for 11 years.

Read more on Anglican News: <https://bit.ly/4mkXcv4>

## **ECI Climate Justice Candle visits the Dominican Sisters Chapter Meeting**

**The Congregation hosted the ECI Climate Justice Candle during the Chapter meeting at the start of July.**

It was a visible reminder of the Ecology Mission of the Dominicans. Among those present were the outgoing members of the Council, Sisters Liz Ferguson, Bridget O'Driscoll, Martina Phelan, Veronica Rafferty and Miriam Weir

## **Dufferin Area Dean**

**Rev Dr Stanley Gamble is the rector of Killinchy and Kilmood parish in Down & Dromore.**

He said: "I am honoured to be appointed as Area Dean by the bishop. Area Deaneries play an important role in encouraging and supporting local parish ministries and outreach activities. We have a number of vibrant and healthy parishes in the Dufferin Area Deanery, and I look forward to working alongside colleagues and friends as we seek to grow and develop our ministries."



## Events

### Free entry weekend to Ulster Aviation Society

**Dates for your Diary — free entry weekend to our Hangars during European Heritage Open Days — — 13th-14th SEPT. NO Ticket Req'd! Bring your Family and Friends and enjoy a great day out at the UAS.**

Sit in our aircraft (many of which will be outside, weather-permitting), explore our hangars and see what we do.

Details: <https://www.ulsteraviationsociety.org/events>

### OPW Heritage Sites free to under 18s this month

**For the month of August, under 18s can access OPW Heritage Sites for free.**

From music events to military trails to art exhibitions to relaxing with friends over a coffee; Whatever your August looks like, we have the event for you!

Join in making this pilot programme unforgettable.

**All children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult**  
Excludes Kilmainham Gaol and Brú na Boinne

To see the full Press release see here,

## Resources

### Funding opportunity for local groups

**The Live Here Love Here Small Grants Scheme is now open, offering £500 to £3,000 to support projects that improve and care for our local green spaces.**

Open to:

- ✓ Community groups
- ✓ Sports clubs
- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Churches
- ✓ Not-for-profit organisations
- ✓ Unconstituted groups

If you have a project that could benefit, apply now:

[https://bit.ly/LHLH\\_SmallGrants](https://bit.ly/LHLH_SmallGrants)

**Applications close on Monday 18th August 2025**

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site



## Church News Ireland

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# Church News Ireland

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**Link in Monday through Saturday from  
early morning**

**Please recommend to your friends**

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