



Image of the day - Cathedral cloisters

August 13, 2021

People and places



L'Étape du Deanery d'antrim sponsored cycle

David Holmes, a parish reader in Kilbride Parish, Diocese of Connor, is planning L'Étape du Deanery – a sponsored cycle in aid of Northern Ireland Chest, Heart and Stroke.

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

Page 2

August 13, 2021

Taking place on Saturday September 4, the route will take in all 14 parish churches in the deanery and cover a total distance of 75 miles in one day.

He is appealing to cyclists who are members of any of the 14 churches in the deanery to join him – if not for the entire circuit, then for sections between churches.

Kilbride parish reader David Holmes is in training for a 75-mile sponsored cycle around the Antrim Rural Deanery to raise funds for NI Chest Heart and Stroke.

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Outlining the proposed route, David said: “It will start and finish at Christ Church, Ballynure, going on a circular route around all 14 churches in the rural deanery. Furthest churches are Gartree near Crumlin, Ballyscullion near Randalstown and Kells. There is an option to only do a section of the route for those who don’t want to try the full distance.”

David is a keen cyclist and a former rugby player. He had hoped to organise something like this last year, but had to defer due to the pandemic. “With so many people taking to bikes since Covid–19 started, it is growing in popularity as a sport,” he said.

He emphasised that although the full 75–mile route was ‘not for the faint–hearted’ he would very much like to involve all parishes in the rural deanery. “People are welcome to sign up for just one leg,” he stressed.

August 13, 2021

Anyone who is interested in taking part in this challenge and supporting NI Chest, Heart and Stroke – which celebrates its 75th anniversary this year – is asked to contact David by email at david22holmes@gmail.com or on his mobile: 07899 666222.



Cathedral Nights at Christ Church, Dublin - Labyrinth Experience

A labyrinth is a tool for prayer and meditation. The slow walk through the twists and turns of the labyrinth helps to still the mind, as body and breathing become part of our prayer. Suggested points for prayer, as well as quiet, reflective music will be available inside the cathedral for those wishing to have some guidance in their prayers, or individuals will be welcome to simply walk the labyrinth in the cathedral grounds in their own time and at their own pace. For those not able to join in person, the prayers and reflection will be

August 13, 2021

viewable on the cathedral's webcam. The event - Tuesday, 16 August, 19.30-20.30



Choir camp for Cork cathedral choristers

This year and for the first time, seventeen choristers of St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork joined a five-day summer camp during the first week of August. The camp was the idea of the Director of Music, Peter Stobart:

I was aware that the children had missed out on so much during the last eighteen months. In addition, the holiday period can be a long time with very little to keep them occupied. A summer camp seemed like the right thing for us to be offering.

August 13, 2021

The camp was held outdoors in the grounds of the cathedral and in line with current regulations. A tent covering meant that the summer showers did not dampen enthusiasm.

In addition to plenty of singing, the choristers took part in a treasure hunt, following clues which were based around the architecture of the building and the many distinctive features of the grounds. They also attempted to recreate some of the decorative floor mosaics by painting pebbles and embedding them into a clay base.

We were on site for almost five hours every day and a varied programme of activities was always going to be required. During the many sessions which we held on Zoom during the lockdown, I began to develop their interest and knowledge of the cathedral building by showing them pictures of the artwork and architecture. The treasure hunt and mosaic making were an extension of this learning and gave their regular singing environment a wider context.

The choristers also furthered their understanding of psalm singing by writing their own psalm words describing the ten plagues of Egypt. They also composed and sang their own psalm chants and worked out how to put the words and music together.

Eco–Congregation Ireland’s latest newsletter

Eco–Congregation Ireland’s latest newsletter is now available, highlighting examples of environmental

August 13, 2021

projects undertaken by churches across the island of Ireland.

This features resources for the Season of Creation and Climate Sunday walks for water organised to raise funds for people supported by Christian Aid in St Gall's Carnalea, St John's Orangefield, and Annahilt parishes, in the Diocese of Down and Dromore, a similar walk by pupils of the Model School, Dunmanway, in Cork, Cloyne and Ross, and a mural made of plastic bottle tops at Ballymoney National School, also in County Cork. Reports from parish projects in Rathfarnham, Carrigaline and Westport are also included.

Eco-Congregation Ireland is an initiative of the Irish Inter Church Meeting, and includes members from the Roman Catholic Church, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church, and Religious Society of Friends.

Links -

info@ecocongregationireland.com

www.ecocongregationireland.com

Controversial preacher Leslie Hale dies in US

A controversial pastor who left Northern Ireland after he was investigated by the RUC Fraud Squad has died in the US, Steven Alexander reports in the Belfast Telegraph

August 13, 2021

Pastor Leslie Hale, beset by financial troubles, moved to the US and became a TV evangelist after plans for the Faith Cathedral at Ballyearl near Glengormley — what was supposed to have been the UK's biggest church since the Second World War — ended in failure.

It would have featured a luxury 2,000-seater auditorium, Bible college, motel, offices, youth centre and restaurant.

Mr Hale's Faith Cathedral fundraising activities were at one stage probed by Fraud Squad detectives.

The inquiries concluded in 1984 with the DPP recommending that no action be taken.

The preacher made a brief return from the States at the end of that year to proclaim a “complete, total 100% vindication” from the police investigation.

He also alleged that his ministry had been subjected to “vicious propaganda” and “journalistic villainy”.

Belfast-born Mr Hale was still pledging at that time that the Glengormley cathedral project would be completed.

He later headed a church in Tarpon Springs, Florida, where he described himself as “the Irish preacher”.

His grandson Ryan took to YouTube yesterday to deliver the news of the pastor's death.

He said his grandfather “went home to be with the Lord” the day before.

“His body had been through so much in the last few months since the passing of my grandmother and now we just have to rejoice that they're together again in the Kingdom of God.”

He said Pastor Hale had been “very specific” about the future of the ministry, and that it should continue with the laying on of hands and “the casting out of demons”.

He continued: “Leslie used to say that the Word of God is not just a bed of flowers to be admired, but it's a weapon to be fired.”

He said he had “an entire arsenal of his teachings and his preachings that are going to get out there and going to be a blessing to you”.

One online tribute from Eileen Bryson read: “I was saved through Leslie Hale ministry 50 years ago, in faith Tabernacle Belfast, saw some wonderful things, enjoyed the teaching, still friends with people I knew from away back then .

“Love and prayers to the family, and the church family at this very sad time. As Leslie always said, God's way is the best way. Maranatha.” Courtesy the Belfast Telegraph 12.08.2021

Reports

A Call to prayer from Keith & Krystn Getty

Psalm 16:8-9 (ESV) —“ I have set the Lord always before me;



because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.
Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices...."

Dear Friends,

We are writing to you to ask for your partnership in prayer as we embark on the next five weeks.

This year's Sing Conference may be the most eagerly anticipated event we have ever been involved in and, as such, is an extraordinary opportunity for ministry at this time. The need to sing, study and refocus our lives, families and churches on Christ Alone is so critical.

Can we ask you to pray for the following things?

1. Pray for the hymns: Our original vision for the Sing! Conference was to spend the 5th year, 2021, "Singing through History," and we are maintaining that focus with over 30 historic hymns being sung at the conference. (The

arrangements of these classic songs will be shared with all participants so they can easily become part of your own church's ongoing worship.) Pray for depth to the sung worship at the conference, for the joy it will be to add our voices together to this unique congregation, and for the ongoing effects as churches adopt many of these extraordinary hymns as part of their culture.

2. Pray for the conference theme, In Christ Alone: This year's event celebrates the theme of "In Christ Alone" at this most unusual moment in history. Pray that the Holy Spirit will be our teacher, encourager, comforter and guide as we lift our eyes from the pressures of the pandemic and of all the tensions on churches and the whole world over the past two years. Pray for all our speakers to know fresh depths of insight into God's Word as they prepare their talks and present the foundation of the great gospel story.

3. Pray for artistry: for the bands, artists, concerts, seminars, composers, orchestra, choir and all those bringing their creative gifting to this year's conference. May imaginations be inspired and souls be filled by the work of their hands.

4. Pray for children & families: this week we launch registration for the Children's Leadership Forum which takes place as a pre-conference on Sunday, September 12. This year's Forum will focus on teaching the next generation of kids to learn the great hymns of the faith and how they help us answer the most difficult questions of life. We will also sing through the new Getty Kids Hymnal project, "Hymns from Home." Pray for the building up of the next generation

August 13, 2021

of children to have deep faith and godly wisdom through what they sing with all the challenges before them.

5. Pray for our team as we navigate all the preparation and opportunities presented by hosting simultaneous live and online conferences.

With gratitude for your partnership at this time,

~ Keith, Kristyn, and our team

It's not too late to join us for this year's Sing! Conference. To learn more about how you can get involved in-person or online, please visit

[www.gettymusicworshipconference.com.]

CAFOD tells PM: Time to throw kitchen sink at climate change

CAFOD is urging Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, to take radical action to fight climate change both at home and abroad and keep "1.5 alive" in the face of this latest devastating research from the IPCC.

Ahead of the 9 August launch of the AR6 WGI report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Neil Thorns, Director of Advocacy for the charity, says: "No ifs, no buts, this report is clear it's an urgent fight to keep below 1.5 degree warming and avoid the destruction that entails, especially for those living in poverty. Prime Minister we need you to throw everything at this with less than 100 days to COP26 - we are at crisis point.

August 13, 2021

"We cannot preach to countries with fragile economies and crippling global debt to divest from fossil fuels if we are still investing in oil fields, such as Cambo Sands in the Shetlands, behind closed doors. Or funding gas power-plants overseas in the name of sustainable development. Such hypocrisy makes a mockery of Britain on the global stage, and we must reject it if we are to have any semblance of credibility amongst the international community."

As hosts of the UN's Climate Conference, COP26, the UK must lead by example in committing to radical actions to fight climate change, both at home and abroad. That includes rejecting controversial proposals for new coal mines and oil fields on UK shores, as well as divesting from fossil fuels abroad.

Thorns continued: "The communities CAFOD works with overseas have been dealing with the horrific effects of the climate crisis for decades. The weight of our collective responsibility ahead of COP26 is unbearable, there can be no excuses.

"To take that chance, we must act now by decarbonising our economies and prioritising investment in adaptation, particularly in low-income countries already straddled with global debt."

Across the world, Indigenous communities are facing down governments in desperate attempts to defend protected lands from mining and farming. One such activist, Sineia do Vale, Environmental Manager of the Indigenous Council of Roraima, explained that after years of battling with President

August 13, 2021

Bolsonaro to try and save the Amazon, it is clear international action is already overdue. The AR6 report, she said: "sadly tells us nothing that we are not already all too aware of".

"We are steering the planet on a crash course to disaster. Indigenous peoples around the world have felt this environmental crisis but we are resilient because we have strategies - what we need is firm commitments from global leaders to support us so we can continue the fight for our land and lives.

Whether it is forests, ploughed land, or savannahs; in the various biomes where we live, indigenous people manage nature, become the guardians of the forest, and act as the barrier to contain damaging events like deforestation and fires. The world cannot give up now. The AR6 WG1 report may paint a bleak picture, but it is vital that we commit to the 1.5 warming target of the Paris Agreement, for not just the future of the Amazon, but for all countries and communities. Now is the time for urgent, radical action - not more empty promises."

Thousands of Catholics have signed a petition urging the Prime Minister to show the leadership needed to keep temperature rises below 1.5 degrees and put communities hardest hit by the crisis at the heart of COP26. We know that the UK must take radical and concrete action to fight climate change, but does Boris Johnson?

"The grim and disturbing findings of the AR6 report only reinforce the message of Pope Francis' Laudato Si - we must do everything we can, and now, to protect and defend

August 13, 2021

Our Common Home." warned Chair of CAFOD, Bishop John Arnold, "World leaders must come together with urgency for the common good and commit to making real progress, on a global level, not just pay lip service to the facts and figures of which we are all too aware. This is a time to be acting for the common good, not self-interest or self-serving politics.

LINKS

IPCC Report - www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg1/

CAFOD - www.cafod.org.uk

Christian ethicist Donald W. Shriver Jr., who called America to repent of racism, dies

The former president of Union Theological Seminary in New York, Shriver believed public repentance was the only hope for 'a future less evil than our pasts.'

The Rev. Donald W. Shriver Jr., an acclaimed Christian ethicist and Presbyterian minister who wrote widely about the need for white Americans to face and repent of their racist past, died July 28 at 93.

Shriver served as president of Union Theological Seminary in New York from 1975 to 1991 and is credited with having hired leading Black scholars and clergy including James Forbes, James Washington and Cornel West. West once called Shriver "the most prophetic seminary president in the late 20th century."



A son of the South, born in Norfolk, Virginia, Shriver took to heart the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail" and its call to white clergy. Shriver's most celebrated book, "Honest Patriots: Loving a Country Enough to Remember its Misdeeds," published in 2005, compared the work of public repentance in Germany and in South Africa with that of the United States.

In it, he suggested those two countries could teach the U.S. how to publicly acknowledge and repent for past evils. Shriver believed repentance was the only hope for "a future less evil than our pasts."

American culture, Shriver wrote, will never be truly reformed, "unless the past we ought to mourn is mourned, in fact, in public, and in the context of concrete gestures and

August 13, 2021

measures that put the past behind us in our very act of confronting it.”

The book won the Grawemeyer Award in Religion in 2009.

“He was a profoundly Christian man,” said philosopher and social activist Cornel West. “He was someone fundamentally committed to the Christian gospel and making the connection between love, power and justice. There was nobody like him.”

Shriver hired West as a 23-year-old Princeton University graduate student before he had completed his doctorate. He also raised money for the prestigious Dietrich Bonhoeffer chair at Union that West will fill once again in the 2021-22 academic year. They remained friends till the end, West said, breaking bread once a month.

Shriver was born in 1927 to a family that supported segregation. His parents hired a Black domestic worker to care for him and a sibling, but she was never allowed to sit with the family at the dinner table. At 21, while still a student at Davidson College, he attended an ecumenical youth conference where for the first time he took Communion and sat as an equal with Black representatives to the conference who shared their terrors of living in a segregated South. It was a watershed “occasion for racial repentance,” he recalled.

Years later, in 1965, he marched in Selma, Alabama, for voting rights alongside King and others. Afterward, church elders tried to have him fired from North Carolina State University’s Presbyterian campus ministry, which he served

August 13, 2021

at the time. That year he also published his first book: “The Unsilent South: Prophetic Preaching in Racial Crisis,” a collection of 19 sermons from Presbyterian pastors in the South who spoke out against white supremacy.

While Shriver served as a pastor earlier in his life — mostly in North Carolina — he spent the better part of his career in higher education. He earned a doctorate from Harvard, writing his dissertation on the theology of forgiveness, and later taught at North Carolina State University in Raleigh.

But he spent most of his career at Union Theological Seminary. He is credited with pulling the seminary back from the financial brink in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In addition to hiring up-and-coming Black scholars, he also hired feminist theologians such as Beverly Wildung Harrison and Phyllis Trible — leading the institution on a justice-oriented trajectory.

Shriver and his wife, Peggy, a poet, were members of Riverside Church, the towering Baptist and Congregationalist church in the Morningside Heights neighbourhood of Manhattan. The couple had three children. His daughter, Lionel, is a fiction writer and a journalist who lives in London.

Poem for today

June Thunder by Louis MacNeice

The Junes were free and full, driving through tiny
Roads, the mudguards brushing the cowparsley,

August 13, 2021

Through fields of mustard and under boldly embattled
Mays and chestnuts

Or between beeches verdurous and voluptuous
Or where broom and gorse beflagged the chalkland--
All the flare and gusto of the unending
Joys of a season
Now returned but I note as more appropriate
To the maturer mood impending thunder
With an indigo sky and the garden hushed except for
The treetops moving.

Then the curtains in my room blow suddenly inward,
The shrubbery rustles, birds fly heavily homeward,
The white flowers fade to nothing on the trees and rain
comes
Down like a dropscene.
Now there comes catharsis, the cleansing downpour
Breaking the blossoms of our overdated fancies
Our old sentimentality and whimsicality
Loves of the morning.

Blackness at half-past eight, the night's precursor,
Clouds like falling masonry and lightning's lavish
Annunciation, the sword of the mad archangel
Flashed from the scabbard.

If only you would come and dare the crystal
Rampart of the rain and the bottomless moat of thunder,
If only now you would come I should be happy
Now if now only.

Pointers for prayer

Intercessions from Tenth Sunday after Trinity Year B— 8th August 2021

Everlasting God Help us to understand the way that you would like things to be done and to be ready to follow your ways until we too can enter the wide open doors of heaven.

Almighty God you want us hold the needs of our sisters and brothers in Christ as dear to us as ourselves. Help us to love our neighbours as ourselves as we offer our thanks and our intercessions on behalf of the church here in the Costa Blanca and throughout the world.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Creator God, you call us all to love and serve you with body, mind, and spirit. Help us to demonstrate our love for your creation and the world in the way that we live. Open the hearts of those with power both elected and non-elected and give them compassion in all that they do for the good of the people that they lead.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Creator God we pray for all those here in the Costa Blanca on holiday this Summer despite the ongoing restrictions

August 13, 2021

imposed because of the Pandemic. Thank you for the refreshment which holiday brings to their lives, for the freedom from routine and for the new experiences and opportunities they have as they explore our countryside and relax in our resorts. Thank you for the gift of your wonderful creation and help us to be good steward especially in our leisure time and also to continue to take all the necessary precautions for the safety of ourselves and others.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Loving God friend of those in need, your Son Jesus has healed so many in body, mind and spirit. We hold before you those still burdened, those seeking healing, those in need within the church and the world.

(Short Silence)

(add names of those requesting prayer)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Merciful God we pray for all who grieve for loved ones who have died. Be with them in their sorrow, lead them with your love to accept their loss and to go on with their lives. We raise before you those who have died recently and those whose anniversary falls at this time

(Short Silence)

(add names of the recently departed or on Anniversary list)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

God of power, hear our prayers, and through the ministry of your Son free us from the grip of the world and all that is evil. Lead us as we go forward into another week strengthened and upheld by your love, the knowledge of the Gospel and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Merciful Father: accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

Intercessions for Eleventh Sunday after Trinity Year B – 15th August 2021

Everlasting God as we approach your throne in the House of Wisdom in humility and simplicity we ask that you will hear our prayers of thanksgiving and intercession.

Almighty God we pray for our churches in The Costa Blanca and ask that our church here in..... be given a clear vision of what is needed to be both focused and relevant in all that is good and serves your purpose of spreading the Good News to both residents and visitors.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Creator God we thank you for the beauty of the created world; for its wonderful variety and the bounty that it brings forth. Help us all to be good stewards showing love and friendship to all peoples and the enjoying the warmth and

August 13, 2021

light they bring to our lives. Be close to all who govern ensuring the decisions that they make, day by day, are made for the benefit all of the people entrusted to them in their leadership.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Father God we pray for our own communities and all of our neighbours. We thank you also for our families and friends, raising before you those we know with particular needs. May your peace and love surround them bringing with it comfort and strength.

(Short Silence)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Gracious God we thank you for those we know who are on the road to recovery and for the miracle of healing. We pray for all who minister to the sick and infirm, both at home and in hospital care centres. We name before you now, those we know who are ill or in need of our prayers asking that through these requests they may all experience the light of the Gospel and a real sense of your healing presence.

(Short Silence)

(add names of those requesting prayer)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

August 13, 2021

Merciful God we pray for those whose lives have been shattered by the death of someone close and dear to them. We pray for members of our natural and church families who have died and whose anniversary we remember now.

(Short Silence)

(add names of the recently departed or on Anniversary list)

Lord, in your Mercy: Hear our Prayer

Faithful God receive our intercessions and thanksgiving on behalf of the church and the world. Hear our prayers and reward our stewardship of this earth with the riches of heaven.

Merciful Father: accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen

Speaking to the Soul

Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example. For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ.

Philippians 3:17-18 NLT

Paul doesn't pull his punches does he? He tells it like it is! He declares that some people are enemies of Christ. This is very harsh language but he knows that it is essential for the Philippian Christians to know the difference between those



who were true followers of Christ and those who were fighting against Him. What they needed was a clear example of what it meant to be a follower of Jesus, and Paul says that he himself was the person they should be following. I don't interpret this as arrogance but as a matter of necessity. The Christians, most of whom would have been very young in their faith, needed to have a clear example of what it meant to live for Christ in everyday life. As Paul wrote this, he was in prison so he invited them to pattern their lives on those who had followed his example. This all begs the question of where Paul got his example from and in 1 Corinthians 11.1 he explains that his life was based on following Christ.

It's good to follow the example of other Christians. I know that my Christian life has been massively affected by the example that has been set for me by Christians that I have known. I was given the example of carefulness from Peter, gentleness from Frank, graciousness from Victor, faithfulness from David, cheerfulness from Fred, courage from Tim and so on. I wonder who has inspired you, and I encourage you to keep actively remembering and thanking

August 13, 2021

God for their example. But this works in the other direction as well. People are looking at you and me, whether we like it or not. We too are setting an example of what it means to follow Jesus and we need to make sure that it's a good one.

QUESTION

Whose Christian example has been particularly important to you?

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord, for the people who have shown me what it means to follow you. Help me to set a good example for others. Amen

