



Image of the day - St Clement Danes Church

Image of the day - St Clement Danes Church

St Clement Danes Church is on the Strand in London. Designed by Christopher Wren, it was completed in 1682 but gutted during the Blitz. It was restored in 1958 and is now the central church of the Royal Air Force. The pews can apparently be extended to almost double the seating capacity.

People and places

Plaque in memory of Bishop Edward Daly unveiled in Ethiopia

A plaque in memory of the late bishop of Derry Edward Daly has been unveiled at a hospital in Ethiopia to mark the fifth anniversary of his death, Seamus McKinney writes in The Irish News

Unveiled by the Children in Crossfire charity, the plaque has been placed at St Luke's hospital in Wolisso, Ethiopia.

Children in Crossfire was established by Derry man Richard Moore in 1996 to help children in conflict zones in Tanzania and Ethiopia in particular.

Mr Moore - who was himself a child victim of the Troubles when he was blinded by a rubber bullet in 1972 – said the commemorative plaque was placed at the therapeutic feeding unit at St Luke's which provides life-saving treatment for children with severe acute malnutrition.

“So many people in Derry and the wider diocese hold Bishop Edward Daly close to our hearts because of the pastoral care and compassion that exemplified his long ministry. He was a truly remarkable man who made an invaluable contribution to life here in the most challenging of times,” Mr Moore said.

“Bishop Daly was also a great friend of Children in Crossfire, especially our international programme work. We are privileged to have benefited from his kindness and felt it was timely on his fifth anniversary to recognise that support.”

St Luke’s was chosen as a site for the plaque because the hospital’s work in partnership with Children in Crossfire was one of the reasons Bishop Daly was such a strong supporter of the charity.

“Even now, five years after his passing, St Luke’s and the therapeutic feeding unit continue to benefit from Bishop Daly’s support. One of his lasting legacies is that some of the world’s most vulnerable children receive life-saving medical support when they need it most,” Mr Moore said.

Bishop Daly’s sister, Anne Gibson, said her family was delighted that her brother was being remembered in such a way.

“It is very comforting for us to know that he continues to be so fondly remembered and highly regarded in Derry and beyond,” Mrs Gibson said.

August 16+, 2021

Co Derry priest, Fr Eamon Graham, who was a close friend of Bishop Daly, said his support for local charities was well-known.

“It was his wish that, after his death, he could still in some way support these charities, especially Children in Crossfire. As one of his executors, I am delighted to see his wishes carried out,” Fr Graham said.

Courtesy The Irish News



Summer Fundraiser in Ballydehob

On three consecutive Fridays over the past weeks Ballydehob Union of Parishes met at the Danno O'Mahony Statue in the centre of Ballydehob to host a Summer Fundraiser.

Members of the congregation and visitors alike brought home-baked goods, handmade crafts, country produce, and books for sale.



Nick and Annie Bowen selling country produce and plants at the Ballydehob Union Summer Fundraiser

The event was also an opportunity for community-building and socialising after many months of not being able to meet up, and in line with current government guidelines.

The Rev. Steve McCann, Rector of Ballydehob Union, said, “The highlight of the three Fridays was witnessing so many friends and neighbours sharing reunions with one another. “Thank you to all those who organised, contributed to, and supported this new opportunity of fundraising for the Ballydehob Union of Parishes. A special thank you to Mrs. Annie O’Donovan who oversaw the organisation of the event with her gifted insight and her mindfulness for detail. “We look forward to future events which foster the growth of our community and parish.”

Inishmacsaint Church Heritage Weekend

**From Saturday 11th - Sunday 12th September 2021
Inishmacsaint Church Heritage Weekend will be part of
Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Heritage Days.**

The focus is to commemorate the legacy of the Ely family and to mark the erection of a headstone at the burial site in the crypt.

The church will be opened on 11th and 12th September as part of Omagh and Fermanagh Heritage Days to commemorate the legacy of the Ely family and to mark the erection of a head stone to mark who is buried in the crypt in the graveyard. Church grounds will be opened from 10am to 6pm on Saturday and on Sunday afternoon. The 11.30am service will include an act of thanksgiving attended by The Bishop of Clogher.

Reports

More than 1,000 children to be fed through church led summer holiday scheme

Churches are hosting activities from curry nights to community barbecues as part of a summer holiday scheme that is expected to feed more than 1,000 children in one diocese alone.



A total of 21 churches in the Diocese of Liverpool are taking part in the Feast of Fun programme, a series of activities over the summer holidays, from play schemes and breakfast clubs to cookery classes, community barbecues and curry nights.

Feast of Fun is run in the city by Together Liverpool, the partnership

between Church Urban Fund and the Diocese of Liverpool.

Dr Naomi Maynard, who is Food Insecurity Lead Executive at Together Liverpool, said: “It has been wonderful to see the creative ways churches are looking to tackle holiday hunger and connect with families in their communities this summer.

“For many churches this will be the first in-person activities they have hosted in 18 months, often using their church yards, local parks and church halls to put on events in a safe way.

August 16+, 2021

“We are particularly encouraged to see churches working in partnership with other local groups to bring communities together, cementing new partnerships forged during the pandemic. “

The summer holiday scheme is the second Feast of Fun programme in Liverpool this year after 2,164 children were fed over the February half term through food hamper deliveries made by 24 church-run schemes.

Feast of Fun is being run as Micah Liverpool, the ecumenical social justice charity based at Liverpool Cathedral, reported that the number of food parcels handed out at the start of the summer holidays rose by nearly a third compared to the last week of term.

A total of 364 parcels were given out in the first week of the summer holidays, compared to 277 in the last week of the summer term.

CMF welcomes BMA decision to debate 'significant problems' in changing law on assisted suicide

The Christian Medical Fellowship (CMF) has welcomed the decision of the British Medical Association (BMA) to debate the significant problems associated with changing the law on euthanasia and assisted suicide (EAS) at its annual conference this September.

CMF's CEO, Dr Mark Pickering, commented: "We welcome the decision by the BMA to extend the EAS debate to



include a detailed discussion on how they can 'best represent our members' professional interests and concerns in the event of future legislative proposals'.

"There are very significant problems associated with changing the law. This is a recognition of the clear divide in medical opinion, between practising and non-practising doctors; and between doctors who work closely with dying people and those who do not.

"The 2020 BMA members' survey found that doctors at the coal face of caring for the elderly and terminally ill, who work in Palliative Care, Geriatric Medicine and General Practice are more likely to oppose assisted suicide and euthanasia, whereas retired doctors, and students who have never practised medicine, remain the most supportive. Indeed, 70 per cent of Palliative Care doctors opposed the BMA supporting a change in the law to allow physician assisted suicide and 44 per cent of geriatricians were opposed to the BMA supporting assisted suicide, while just one in four (27 per cent) were in favour."

Dr Pickering continued: "This is an issue that would have profound effects on doctor patient relationships. Simply being 'opposed' or 'neutral' does not do justice to the complexity of the issues. 'Neutrality' is a favoured position of EAS campaigners, as this can then be presented to lawmakers as support for law change.

"We only have to look at Canada, which legalised EAS in 2015, to see what can happen. The Canadian Medical Association went neutral on EAS in 2013, and this was a crucial step in facilitating law change. This law, coming into force in 2016, was originally limited to those with a foreseeable death. Yet by 2020, deaths had risen to 7,595, including 1,412 who cited loneliness as a reason for opting to be killed, no doubt compounded by Covid.

"In September 2019, the Quebec Superior Court struck down the requirement that a natural death must be 'reasonably foreseeable'. This rapid extension of Canadian law to those with chronic disease and disability shows the fallacy of trusting in proposed legal safeguards in the UK.

Dr Pickering concluded: "No wonder the World Medical Association (WMA) reiterated its opposition to euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide in 2019, adding, 'No physician should be forced to participate in euthanasia or assisted suicide, nor should any physician be obliged to make referral decisions to this end...'.

"Our current laws protect vulnerable people and do not need changing, instead we need to refocus our attention on how to ensure we provide the very best palliative care to those who need it."

The Christian Medical Fellowship (CMF) was founded in 1949 and is an interdenominational organisation with over 4,500 British doctor, nurse and midwife members in all specialties. It is linked to about 80 similar bodies in other countries throughout the world.

LINKS

If you are affected by any details in this report, and would like to talk to someone, the Samaritans are available 24 hours a day see: www.samaritans.org/

Christian Medical Fellowship - www.cmf.org.uk/

German archbishop pledges to name pastoral minister for LGBT community

Archbishop Heiner Koch said he would appoint a pastoral minister as a contact person for gay people, the Berlin Archdiocese announced.

The German Catholic news agency KNA reported Archbishop Koch made the pledge when he met with representatives of the Lesbian and Gay Association of Berlin-Brandenburg, with the archbishop saying this was important so that the marginalization and discrimination of the LBGTQ community could be addressed in the church without fear. Archbishop Koch said he regarded the double marginalization of gay Catholics — within the Catholic community as well as in the LBGTQ community — as “problematic and painful.”

The reason behind the discussion, which the Lesbian and Gay Association had requested, was to look at the contradictions within the Catholic Church and the simultaneous solidarity shown toward LGBTQ people in the wake of the Vatican's renewed rejection last February of any church blessing for homosexual couples, KNA reported.

Ulrich Kessler, a member of the board of the Lesbian and Gay Association of Berlin-Brandenburg, said he had been surprised and thrilled “that the rainbow flags were also waving from Catholic Church spires, decorated internet pages and posts in the social media and that many church congregations had called out for blessing services.”

Archbishop Koch asked for understanding that, as bishop, “for the sake of the unity of the church, I cannot disregard such a position from Rome.” At the same time, he said he was committed “without reservation to award God's blessing to the love and relationship of people.” He pledged that he would continue the discussion, including within the framework of the Synodal Path reform project of the Catholic Church in Germany.

But he said he regarded it as problematic “when church political pressure should be exerted by means of blessing services.” This remark was seen as a reference to an action last May dubbed “Love Wins,” when blessing services were held in many Catholic churches around Germany for same-sex and divorced couples in a protest against the Vatican.



Opinion - Losing parishes would devastate the Church by Archbishop George Carey

Undermining historic parish system risks Church of England's special place at the heart of the nation

As one travels across our beautiful countryside, our churches stand as proud sentinels of our past. With their lofty steeples and sturdy turreted towers, the parish churches of England are faithful witnesses of the congregations and communities that have tilled the land and lived and died under their shadows.

The parish system of England predates the English monarchy, the Norman conquest, and the Reformation. It was already there in rudimentary form in the seventh century when the Pope sent Theodore of Tarsus to organise the English church and develop the parish system.

The parish is a clear expression of the Church serving the people of our land down the centuries. It provided an early form of welfare state and of local government. It proclaims: "Whoever you are, you have a right to seek the help and support of the parish in which you reside. You may be baptised, married or be buried here."

However, this historic gift of the past is in jeopardy as the current leadership of the Church wrestles with the puzzle of how, with limited means, it can serve the people of England best. The bishops' well-meant proposals for a "mixed

ecology” of parishes, church plants and “fresh expressions”, including churches in cafes and skate parks, have met with anxiety and some anger. Many clergy feel demoralised as they have seen money and resources chase the new upstarts. Parish posts have disappeared and clergy are not replaced when they retire. This crisis of confidence was exacerbated by lockdown. And in March 2020, clergy were told that they should not even go to their churches alone to pray.

The problem is not new and the parish system has faced many previous challenges. We cannot look back nostalgically at a past where there was always one parson to one parish. That was never wholly true. Industrialisation, urbanisation and secularisation have provoked waves of challenges to the parish system. And in the present day the parish is now thinned out and depleted.

It is said that we have too many churches and that many congregations are too small to be viable. If we were a business we would have closed these unproductive buildings long ago. But we are a church and we never abandon any area, because our motivation and theology is that people are spiritual and we must be there for them.

If you close some, here and there, at what point do you find that you have reduced the Church to the point that it is no longer the church of the nation?

Stephen Cottrell, the Archbishop of York, will remember when he was bishop of Reading going to a church near Newbury, where I now live. He told a small congregation of less than 10 that their days were numbered. He encouraged

them to try new ideas and reach out. They did and that church now gets more than 40 people regularly on a Sunday and it is serving its small community effectively and well.

But some churches cannot simply help themselves out of decline. We need to see more resources go into strengthening the local churches and empowering ministry there. As a former principal of one of our larger theological colleges, I regret that we don't insist on residential training for our clergy and many of our lay leaders. Online and distance learning courses are not as effective as learning in a community where people pray together. Well-trained clergy honed in worship and deep learning will not let the Church down.

The objection will be that the Church of England doesn't have the money. I find that ironic. When I became Archbishop of Canterbury I discovered that the Church Commissioners had lost £800 million in poor and speculative investments. Since then they have made all that money back and many millions more. We are a rich Church, blessed by the past with the most amazing buildings. It is there that we need to focus our attention and pray and work for growth. Dr Alison Milbank, Canon of Southwell Minster, argued recently that the Church of England now has a tendency to view the parish like some "inherited, embarrassing knick-knack from a great-aunt that you wish were in the attic".

We must reject that valuation of the parish system, and regard it instead as the fundamental unit of ministry and mission. It is the best way to grow and thrive even in a society which is thoroughly secularised and fragmented.

August 16+, 2021

The campaign, led by figures such as Rev Marcus Walker, Rector of Great St Bartholomew's in London, to protect the parish is timely and much-needed. There is an inchoate yearning on the part of many UK citizens for a sense of belonging – to be people of “somewhere” rather than “nowhere”. For many Christians and other spiritual seekers, the parish can again be that “somewhere”.

Some years ago on a holiday in Normandy with my wife, we attended a Roman Catholic service and afterwards spoke with the parish priest. In broken English he told us that he had 41 churches to look after and was not confident that a priest would succeed him. I hope the bishops are not leading us to that nightmare.

What a travesty of our mission that would be – and what an injustice to Archbishop Theodore of Tarsus and the rich past of the parish.

Lord Carey was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1991 to 2002. Article courtesy the Daily Telegraph 14.08.2022

Poem for today

Summer 1969 by Seamus Heaney

While the Constabulary covered the mob
Firing into the Falls, I was suffering
Only the bullying sun of Madrid.
Each afternoon, in the casserole heat
Of the flat, as I sweated my way through
The life of Joyce, stinks from the fishmarket

Rose like the reek off a flax-dam.
At night on the balcony, gules of wine,
A sense of children in their dark corners,
Old women in black shawls near open windows,
The air a canyon rivering in Spanish.
We talked our way home over starlit plains
Where patent leather of the Guardia Civil
Gleamed like fish-bellies in flax-poisoned waters.

‘Go back,’ one said, ‘try to touch the people.’
Another conjured Lorca from his hill.
We sat through death-counts and bullfight reports
On the television, celebrities
Arrived from where the real thing still happened.

I retreated to the cool of the Prado.
Goya’s ‘Shootings of the Third of May’
Covered a wall—the thrown-up arms
And spasm of the rebel, the helmeted
And knapsacked military, the efficient
Rake of the fusillade. In the next room,
His nightmares, grafted to the palace wall—
Dark cyclones, hosting, breaking; Saturn
Jewelled in the blood of his own children,
Gigantic Chaos turning his brute hips
Over the world. Also, that holmgang
Where two berserks club each other to death
For honour’s sake, greaved in a bog, and sinking.
He painted with his fists and elbows, flourished
The stained cape of his heart as history charged.



Pointers for prayer

For the week following the 11th Sunday after Trinity.

Creator God,
you call us to love and serve you
with body, mind, and spirit
through loving your creation
and our sisters and brothers.
Open our hearts in compassion
and receive our petitions
on behalf of the needs of the church and the world.
Holy One,
hear our prayers and make us faithful stewards
of the fragile bounty of this earth
so that we may be entrusted with the riches of heaven. Amen.

We praise your abiding guidance, O God,
for you sent us Jesus, our Teacher and Messiah,
to model for us the way of love for the whole universe.
We offer these prayers of love
on behalf of ourselves and our neighbours,
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures.
Loving God,
open our ears to hear your word
and draw us closer to you,
that the whole world may be one with you
as you are one with us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of salvation,
who sent your Son to seek out and save what is lost,
hear our prayers
on behalf of those who are lost in our day,
receiving these petitions and thanksgivings
with your unending compassion.
Redeeming Sustainer,
visit your people
and pour out your strength and courage upon us,

August 16+, 2021

that we may hurry to make you welcome
not only in our concern for others,
but by serving them
generously and faithfully in your name. Amen.

Living God,
you are the giver of wisdom and true discernment,
guiding those who seek your ways to choose the good.
Mercifully grant that your people,
feasting on the true bread of heaven,
may have eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and everlasting God,
you are always more ready to hear than we to pray
and to give more than either we desire, or deserve:
Pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy,
forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid,
and giving us those good things
which we are not worthy to ask
save through the merits and mediation
of Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

Speaking to the Soul

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honourable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

Philippians 4:8 NLT

Never in history have those words been more important than right now. When Sir Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web in 1989 no-one could have foreseen the way in which it would completely transform the way in which



we access information. Our mobile phones are the gateway to a world of information and that has incalculable benefits. But the downside is undeniable. It has never been easier to view destructive and depraved information which is able to ruin lives. In such a situation we desperately need to hear Paul's words. We need to become fixated on those things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

Paul lived in the real world. He wasn't inviting the Philippian Christians to hide away from their society. Being a prisoner Paul, of all people, knew about the dark side of Roman life. Doubtless his times in prison gave him a very clear picture of the seamier aspects of society. Paul had no illusions about the world in which he lived, and probably that served to reinforce his conviction that Christians needed to deliberately focus their attention on the true, the pure and the admirable.

This is a big challenge for all of us in modern society. Paul knew that what goes on in a Christian's mind is the most crucial issue of all. In Romans 12.2 he urged the Roman Christians not to "copy the behaviour and customs of this

August 16+, 2021

world, but to let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think”. As we welcome the true, honourable, right, pure, lovely and admirable influences into our minds, God is able to bring about that amazing transformation.

QUESTION

How do you focus your attention on the things that are excellent and praiseworthy?

PRAYER

Lord God I invite you to guide my thoughts by your Holy Spirit. Help me to become fixated on those things that will make me stronger in living for you. Amen

