

Church News Ireland



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Image of the day

Lecale's lakeside beauty

Lecale is a peninsula in County Down, located between Strangford Lough and Dundrum Bay. It's a lowland area known for its drumlins and fens. Historically, it was a Gaelic Irish district and later became a county within the Earldom of Ulster. Today, Lecale is recognized for its rich history, natural beauty, and cultural significance.

And the local parishioners have a wonderful backdrop for picnics after morning worship.



News

600 young Irish pilgrims in Rome

Bishop Fintan Gavin: our 600 young Irish pilgrims in Rome are celebrating grace, hope, communion in the universal Church.

To read more about the young adults journey click <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2025/07/31/bishop-fintan-gavin-our-600-young-irish-pilgrims-in-rome-are-celebrating-grace-hope-communion-in-the-universal-church/>

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Claudy remembrance



Claudy remembrance

On 31 July 1972, nine innocent lives were taken in a series of devastating bombings...

...A child at her parents' shop. A teenager on his milk round.
A mother of eight.

Each one deeply loved. Each one still missed. 53 years later, families and a community still carry that grief.

Thinking of those families and the Claudy community who move forward with strength and quiet dignity. Claire Sugden

Team NI heading to Dresden for World Transplant Games 2025

Athletics NI are proud to support 27 incredible athletes representing Northern Ireland at the World Transplant Games 2025 – a global celebration of life, sport and the power of organ donation.



17–24 August 2025



22 transplant recipients & 5 living donors



Competing in swimming, cycling, athletics & more!



Joining 50+ nations to raise awareness for organ donation

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👉 Read more: <https://athleticsni.org/News/Athletics-NI-News/Team-Northern-Ireland-are-Dresdenbound-for-the-World-Transplant-Games-2025>

Highlight

<https://athleticsni.org/News/Athletics-NI-News>



Cork 2 Port Challenge - Portrush man to walk home from Cork for Air Ambulance NI

Portrush man Marcus Christie is preparing to walk the length of Ireland—from Cork to his hometown of Portrush, starting on 17th August, almost 400 miles and a marathon a day for two weeks!

In honour of his late mother, Joan Christie CVO OBE, Marcus aims to raise £20,000 through this challenge. The funds will help the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service team deliver urgent pre-hospital care—potentially supporting five more patients in critical need.

Following the sudden loss of his mother on New Year's Day 2023, Marcus was inspired to support Air Ambulance Northern Ireland—the service that responded in an effort to help her. Though she tragically passed away, Marcus channelled his grief into purpose, becoming a dedicated volunteer, fundraiser, and ambassador for the charity.

Marcus is looking for a number of T-shirt sponsors and you can support Marcus' Cork 2 Port Challenge by donating through his JustGiving page: <https://rb.gy/yzkjwa>

To date, Marcus has raised approximately £50,000 for Air Ambulance NI through a range of events and personal challenges. These have included a gala ball for 200 people, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in 2024, and completing the Three Peaks Challenge—scaling the highest mountains in England, Scotland, and Wales in just over 21 hours in 2023.

Marcus said: “I know the value that Air Ambulance NI brings to local people who are having the worst day of their lives. Being able to make a positive difference keeps me going, and mum was very charitable, so it is lovely to keep her memory alive and hopefully make her proud. Everyone keeps telling me how challenging the distance will be—but I wanted to take on something even more testing than I've done before. Fourteen marathons it is!”

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Kerry Anderson, Head of Fundraising at Air Ambulance NI, added:

“We've had supporters cycle around Ireland before, but this is the first time someone is attempting it on foot! Marcus seems unfazed by the challenge so far, but it's certainly not for the faint-hearted. We hope many friends, family, and colleagues will join Marcus for sections of the walk to help keep his motivation high. We're so grateful for everything he's doing for Air Ambulance NI.”

Air Ambulance NI is the charity that partners with the Northern Ireland Ambulance Service to provide the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service for the region. The service is needed on average twice a day to bring critical pre-hospital care to the scene, saving lives, brains, and limbs. The charity relies on the public to raise £3 million in fundraising annually.

Learn more at www.airambulanceni.org

Presbyterian Church's countdown to today's unique Gaelic matches

The countdown is on for a unique Gaelic sporting encounter today Saturday (2 August), when Select Antrim Hurling and Camogie teams face two shinty teams from Scotland using composite rules.

The two matches are part of the 140th celebrations of Antrim GAA and organised by the Presbyterian Church in



Ireland (PCI) and the County. They will take place at Antrim's current home ground, Corrigan Park in west Belfast.

Part of the West Belfast Festival, Féile an Phobail, the initiative for the matches comes from an unusual source – PCI minister, Rev David Moore, who is leading the Church's special ministry in the west of the city known as An Tionólann, or The Gathering.

“There is a long tradition of Gaelic games in these islands and the coming together of these sports from Scotland and Ireland will be something special. As they are playing composite rules, we have called the event ‘Between the Sticks’ or ‘Idir Camánaibh’, as it paints a picture of the two



Gaelic games coming together. It is also symbolic of much more besides, as we seek to reconnect with the west of the city as a church,” Mr Moore said.

“We could not have done it without the support of Antrim GAA, and I want to thank them, especially Collie Donnelly, former County hurler and chairman, who has got us to this point. Antrim is providing the special teams’ kits, County facilities on the day, and has just been really engaged and supportive,” he said.

The men’s shinty squad is drawn from a team from Stirling in Stirlingshire and Uddingston in Lanarkshire, with the

women's team coming from the Isle of Skye in the Inner Hebrides, north west of the Scottish mainland.

There is a history of the two games coming together, with the first shinty-Hurling match between Irish and Scottish Gaelic teams taking place in 1896 in London. Annual international fixtures in both countries have become a regular fixture, with 2024's international between Ireland and Scotland resulting in an Irish victory. Jenna Beaton, who has been playing shinty since primary school is the coach of Skye Camanachd.

In 2013 she played for Scotland in the women's international and is looking forward to Saturday's match. "In 2013 we won that match, but win or lose it's good craic and we are all looking forward to Saturday. Half of the team have played combined rules, and I hope that everyone watching will enjoy it.

"For us it is always a tough game, because we use different rules, and you have to get used to that, which makes it more exciting to play and, I hope to watch. I might make a wee appearance up front, depending on how things go," she said.

Playing shinty-Hurling-Camogie composite rules, with 14 players aside, aspects of each sport are involved, which means that both sides are equally disadvantaged. Each half will last for 35 minutes, with teams using their own sticks. Like the scoring, the goal to be used is the goal used for hurling.

Al Reed, who is captain of the joint men's shinty team has been playing for 17 years. In 2018 he played for Scotland at university level against Maynooth University in the County Kildare town. "Shinty is a Highland sport that was brought to the central belt of Scotland, and has a special place in Scottish Gaelic culture. It was actually brought here by the Irish centuries ago, and has developed into its own local game. All the guys are looking forward to Saturday's match and a big shout out to the organisers for having us over," he said.

As for tactics, both Scots were keeping their cards close to their chests, although Mr Reed said, they'd be aiming "to get to the ball first from the throw in and then get it away quickly, but not too high."

The gates open at 3pm with the men's game starting at 4pm. The women's match is scheduled for 6pm. The two friendlies are free for everyone and will have a 'carnival atmosphere' with a Photo Booth opportunity for the children with some of Antrim's Hurlers, which is being provided by County sponsor, Fibrus. Antrim's half pace hurlers will also be showing their skills, and pace, during the half-time game providing entertainment for all the family.

County Chairman, Séamus McMullan, will be at the match and is looking forward to it as part of Antrim's 140th year of celebration, "This event is a powerful reminder of the enduring ties between Antrim, particularly the Glens of Antrim, and the Highlands of Scotland - links rooted in Gaelic language, culture, and sport. As we celebrate 140 years of the GAA in Antrim, it's fitting to honour that shared heritage through our ancient games of hurling and shinty. In



coming together across traditions and communities, we're not just marking history - we're continuing it."

Mr McMullan continued, "The bond of friendship developed between Collie and Rev David has brought this game into being. We really thank them for that and wish the teams the best for Saturday's games."

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland once had several congregations in west Belfast, which closed during the 1970s and 1980s for various reasons. On the first Sunday of each month, Mr Moore holds a service in An Chultúrlann, the Irish cultural heritage centre on the Falls Road – which from 1882 for 100 years was Broadway Presbyterian Church.

"There is a link with west Belfast that has been lost and as Presbyterians we're trying to re-establish it through An

Tionólann. In reconnecting we have held a number of events during recent Festivals as a way of initially reconnecting and ‘Between the Sticks’ is very much part of that,” Mr Moore said.

Talking about people’s perceptions, he continued, “In the north of Scotland, you have people who speak a Gaelic language, they play a Gaelic game, they’re in a Gaelic culture, but their background is probably, but not always, Presbyterian. In some ways, what we are doing here is a kind of ‘narrative disruption’ and we think the matches are a great way to do this, as it may not fit with what most people ideally see as ‘Presbyterian’. We would like as many people to come along as possible on Saturday. It’s a free family-fun day out and I’m looking forward to it,” Mr Moore said.

Education

Day 3 of Exercise Campbell Reflect 2025

We started with a visit to Delville Wood to commemorate OC 842 Lt Robert Ross KOSB who was killed in September 1916.

We also paid our respects to former Pipe Major Lt R Thorburn of the South African Infantry South African Irish Regiment Pipes and Drums who is also buried there. The memorial in Delville Wood is stunning but the story of the battle fought there is difficult to comprehend.

A short stop to the Pipers Memorial at Longueval before heading to the Ulster Tower The Somme Association &

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Somme Museum where we held a short Act of Remembrance. A visit to Thiepval Wood followed to see where the men of the 36th Ulster Division launched their attack on 1 July 1916. Thanks to the staff at the Tower for facilitating our visit.

Three Old Campbellians are buried a short distance away in Mill Road Cemetery OC 1010 William McCaw, OC 888 George Rogers and OC 475 Robert Kerr. They are buried on the site of the Schwaben Redoubt - the formidable defensive position which was one of the objectives on the 1 July 1916.

We moved to Adanac Cemetery to visit the grave of Piper James Richardson VC who was killed on 9 October 1916 and who is the subject of Sound of the Somme - a short film that is due to be released in the near future.

Our final visit was to Thiepval Memorial to the Missing where 15 OCs are commemorated including 5 members of the 13th Battalion of the Royal Irish Rifles who were killed on 1 July 1916. A busy day but one that was awe inspiring. Thanks to The Old Campbellian Society, RFCA NI, The Royal Irish Regiment and Cadets In Schools for supporting this trip.

Book of Condolence at Dromore High School

From Monday morning, August 4th a 'Book of Condolence' for the Wilkinson family will be available to sign at Dromore High School.

“We invite you to contribute to this as a past or current student, member of staff or friend of the school. You should enter by the main entrance where the book will be made available.

“Access to the book will be available from 9.00 a.m. until 2.30 p.m. initially”.

Green Zion new environmental project

‘Green Zion’ is an exciting new environmental project shared between the children of Zion Church of Ireland Parish Sunday Club and Zion Parish Primary School.



They are all part of the same campus in Rathgar, Dublin 6, and many children are part of both communities. The children have been having fun with microgreens, growing their own food: sowing seeds and planting plug plants and learning about tubers and herbaceous perennials and feeding the bees.



You can read Rev David White's report in full here \>\>
<https://www.ecocongregationireland.com/2025/07/30/green-zion-project-gets-off-to-a-great-start/>

Cathedral Calls

Visiting St Eugene's Derry

Bridie from Star of the Sea parish, Portstewart, Co Antrim and her overseas visitors, Albert & his family from Belo Horizonte, Brazil. They loved their tour of St Eugene's.

It's always a joy to welcome visitors to St. Eugene's Cathedral

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Back in 1873 the Cathedral cost a little over £40,000 to build, of which £4,000 was raised in America and the rest was donated by the people of Derry.

William Roddy, editor of the Derry Journal said in 1899: “Do not let us forget that this is a Cathedral built out of the pennies of the poor, the sixpences of those not quite so poor and the shillings of those who were better-to-do”.

Come and take a tour of this magnificent Cathedral - you're very welcome

Clergy and ministry

C of I cleric's new post with Intercontinental Church Society

The Revd Tim Wright has been appointed as the new Recruitment and Short-Term Mission Manager for the Intercontinental Church Society (ICS).

Tim brings with him a wealth of experience in both ministry and his long-standing involvement with ICS.

Tim's previous roles include serving as Deputy Chaplain-in-Chief with the Royal Air Force, Dean of Kildare, and working with the Soldiers' and Aviators' Scripture Readers Association (SASRA).

These roles included the recruitment of chaplains, full time Christian workers and civil servants as well as the



leadership of dispersed clergy teams. He has ministered in English-speaking churches in Germany, the Netherlands and Cyprus. Within ICS, Tim has served faithfully on the Council for nine years, has been a dedicated Short-term Mission volunteer, and has regularly supported our recruitment and interview processes.

Tim shared his thoughts on the new role. 'I am honoured to be joining the ICS team in this new capacity as it continues to help people find Jesus'. Having been involved with ICS for many years—as a Council member, a Short-Term Mission volunteer, and through recruitment—I've seen firsthand the impact of its ministry. I'm excited to support and encourage those exploring their calling, and to help strengthen the mission of ICS across diverse contexts.'

Richard Bromley, ICS Mission Director, commented, 'I can think of no one better suited to bridge these two roles while continuing to nurture our vital relationships with the churches in Ireland. Over the years, I've learned a great deal from Tim. His depth of experience and broad

understanding of the complexities of international ministry give me full confidence that, under God, he is the right person for this moment.'

Tim will officially take up his position on 1 October, and we are very much looking forward to welcoming him as a valuable member of the ICS team.

Heritage

Cork sister survived Ravensbruck concentration camp

In WW2, Cork's sister Kate McCarthy, worked in war hospitals across Europe, helping to smuggle Allied soldiers to safety. Her role in the French resistance during WW2 would prove vitally important to the allied war effort.



She would be caught by the Gestapo in 1941, and was tortured and sent to Ravensbruck concentration camp. In her daily task there, of having to make belts for paratroopers, she intentionally skipped every 5th stitch

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meaning when the parachute cord was pulled, the soldier would free fall to his death.

In this role, it's estimated she killed up to 40 Nazis per day.

Miraculously, Sister Kate survived the camp and was on the last bus out of Ravensbruck after the camp was liberated. Kate was extremely malnourished and weighed little more than four stone. Sister Kate returned to Cork to recover and eventually became mother superior of Honan Home in Co Cork for elderly people and spent the rest of her life there.

She was awarded the Médaille de la Résistance by Charles de Gaulle and in 2014 there was a plaque unveiled in Paris in the Irish College and Sister Kate's name was added.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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

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