

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – At the ould Lammas Fair

Image of the day

At the ould Lammas Fair in Ballycastle, Oh!

Steve McDonagh riffs on memories of the Corrymeela Community and Ballycastle

For our family, the North Coast town of Ballycastle will always hold a special place in our hearts, nestled as it is near the Corrymeela community. And this weekend brings its famous event: the Ould Lammas Fair. This is no modern invention; it's one of Ireland's oldest fairs, dating back hundreds of years. In fact, its roots run even deeper. The castle that once stood on the headland was marked on old maps as Dún an Aonaigh—"The Fort of the Fair." Also the August timing pairs with the ancient festival of Lughnasadh, the traditional start of the harvest.

It also shares the season with another legendary fair: The Puck Fair in Killorglin County Kerry where a wild goat is crowned king. And that reminds me of a glorious piece of chaos from 1966! That year, King Puck himself was brought up to Ballycastle to lead a parade. The plan was to relocate him to the herd of wild Irish goats in Murlough. But on a stop for a restorative pint at Hunter's Bar in Ballyvoy, the king made his escape! He roamed the farmlands for years, living a long and eventful life of glorious freedom, never to be captured again.

But for us McDonaghs, the fair was personal. Our parents would man the Corrymeela stand—a vital piece of outreach to maintain links with the Ballycastle community. We were all drafted in to help. Now, in the scheme of things, my sisters Janet and Ruth were the truly useful ones, their inner organisers fully embraced. Me? Let's just say I have always had a more... philosophical approach to chaos. I prefer to savour it.

And the Lammas Fair is organised chaos at its absolute best. Thousands of people descend upon the town. Farmers buying and selling livestock, stalls lining the streets, the funfair lights, and traditional music spilling from every pub door. My role was often to be happily swept away by it all, sucking on a piece of Yella Man (that unique honeycomb toffee), taking a tentative nibble of dulse proof of the axiom "Everything is Edible, somethings only once" , and just letting the crowd flow around me as I watched the world go by from my perch on the war memorial in The Diamond.

Mum and Dad would be on the stand with other Corrymeela Members and Volunteers, "pressing the flesh" and spreading the word about what the community was doing and why. There would be hot soup in flasks and homemade wheaten bread with lashings of butter made by the quiet force of nature Anna and her team of Kitchen Wizards and when the fair gave itself over to the night, we would pack up into the blue Corrymeela van and wander around the sea front to watch the twinkling lights of the fun-fair rides and the sparking of bumper cars and screams of delight from the fair-goers, before walking along the beach and up the road to the centre, the sounds of celebration drifting over the water to Pan's rocks.

It's a whirlwind of sight, sound, and taste a living, breathing piece of history that we were lucky to be a small part of in days gone by.

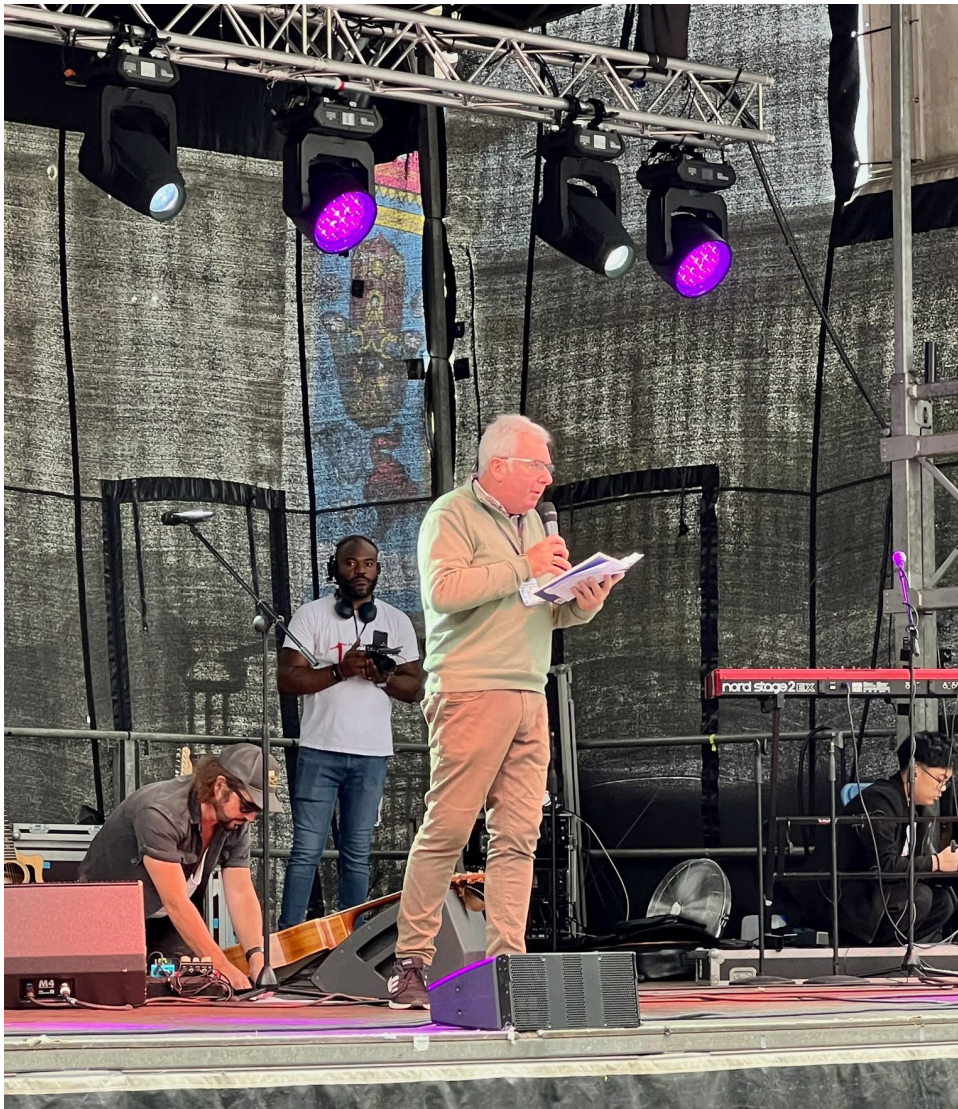
The hymns so familiar in my youth - days singing in church choir,- made the event particularly nostalgic!

News



Thousands 'March for Jesus' in Belfast

Thousands of people have taken part in a 'March for Jesus' in Belfast.



Bishop David McClay of Down & Dromore and Archdeacon Jim were among those in the large crowd attending Saturday's March for Jesus in Belfast March for Jesus Ireland.

Bishop David gave the opening reading and a prayer on the stage at Belfast City Hall.

The parade travelled from Ormeau Embankment and



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moved along the Ravenhill Road before finally ending up at City Hall.

Organisers described the march as a "family-friendly, non-political event to lift up the name of Jesus in Belfast city".



Marian procession in Belfast

Marian procession along Fort William Park, Belfast, August 22 marking end of Novena to BVM on the Church of Our Lady, Antrim Rd.

Education



Welcome to new Year 8 pupils at RBAI

🟡🟤 **Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.
Live the life you have imagined.” – Henry David Thoreau**
★

We are delighted to welcome our new Year 8 pupils as they begin their journey through RBAI. Starting a new school is both exciting and challenging, but it also opens the door to new opportunities, friendships, and achievements.



Here's to a year
filled with
friendship,
discovery, and
success. 🟤🟡



New Headmaster of Campbell College

We are
delighted to
welcome Mr
Jonathan



Anderson as the new Headmaster of Campbell College.

A Northern Irish native with nearly three decades of experience in education across some of the UK's leading independent schools, Mr Anderson brings a deep commitment to academic excellence and pastoral care, values that align closely with the ethos of Campbell College.

His arrival marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for our school: one rooted in tradition yet looking confidently to the future.

We look forward to introducing Mr Anderson further in the coming weeks as he settles into life at Campbell.

Please join us in welcoming Mr Anderson and his family to the Campbell community.

Read the full story here: <https://bit.ly/45lq9dy>

Outstanding GCSE results for Dalriada pupils

Dalriada School is delighted to announce another year of excellent GCSE results for their 2024/25 cohort. 99% of all pupils attained at least 5 or more A* to C grades with 96% of pupils achieving 7 or more A*-C grades.

We were delighted to see 36 pupils achieving 8 or more A*/A grades.



We are extremely proud of all the pupils' achievements, but special mention goes to Benny Huang who achieved 11 A* grades, as well as Jessica Mellett and Gabrielle Sutherland who both attained 10 A* grades. The following pupils also attained outstanding results with 10A/A* grades – Molly Brown, Adam Cooper, Emily Dunn, Grace Dysart, Caleb Glenny, Stuart Graham, Jenson Harkin, Ben Harkness, Erin Hart, Naomi Johnston, Brooke McCalmont, Junia Mullan, Jack Orr, Tom Patterson, Rosa Setterfield, Charlie Wilkinson and Eva Wimberley.

We were also delighted with the number of pupils who achieved at least 8 A*/A grades including Hope Ballantyne, Isabella Borthwick, Wallace Campbell, Michael Carlin, Ross Carson, Luke Croxford, Amy-Joyce Doncom, Patrick Elliott,



Halle Guy, Alex Leighton, Daniel Lobb, Eve Lynas, Taisie O'Donnell, Sofia Pajer, Zara Sims, and Patryk Stecyk.

The vast majority of these GCSE pupils will now progress to Sixth Form at Dalriada School, where they will be joined by a number of pupils from other schools in the area.

The Principal, Mrs Louise Aitcheson added,

“We are absolutely delighted with this year’s results, which are a testament to the continued commitment and hard work of both our pupils and staff. At Dalriada School, we remain dedicated to fostering academic excellence through enriching experiences both within and beyond the classroom. These achievements clearly demonstrate how our approach is empowering our pupils to reach their full

potential. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our teaching staff for their unwavering support and dedication. We are incredibly proud of all our pupils and look forward to seeing them thrive as they continue their academic journey at Dalriada and beyond. To those few pupils who are moving on, we wish them every success in their future paths, and we are thrilled to welcome new external pupils to our ever-growing Dalriada Family.”

Cathedral Calls

10 Reasons to Visit Saint Mary's Cathedral, Limerick

Whether you're a history lover, music fan, or just looking for a peaceful stop in the city – Saint Mary's Cathedral has something special for





everyone.

Here's why it's a must-visit in Limerick

1. 🪨 Ireland's Largest High Altar Stone

Be amazed by the limestone altar – the largest of its kind in Ireland and a powerful symbol of faith and craftsmanship.

2. 🎨 Marvel at the Reredos

Behind the altar lies the stunning reredos – an ornately carved screen that adds beauty and depth to the cathedral's sacred space.

3. 🙇 **Medieval Misericords**

The oldest in Ireland today – quirky wooden carvings filled with medieval humor, faces, and creatures. A rare treasure!

4. 🎵 **A Rich Musical Tradition**

Enjoy the uplifting sound of music in this historic space – from choir services to special concerts, the cathedral's acoustics are unforgettable.

5. 🏛️ **Limerick's Oldest Building Still in Use**

Founded in 1168, Saint Mary's is the oldest building in Limerick still in daily use – standing strong through centuries of change.

6. 🏰 **Stunning Norman & Gothic Architecture**

Explore the blend of Norman solidity and Gothic elegance – soaring arches and ancient stone.

7. 🕯️ **A Peaceful Escape in the City**

Step inside and feel the calm. The cathedral offers a quiet space for reflection right in the heart of Limerick's vibrant city.


8. 😊 **Warm & Welcoming People**


The cathedral team and community are full of heart. Expect a genuine welcome and passionate stories from those who care for this sacred site.

9. **Fascinating Exhibitions All Year Round**

From local art displays to historical exhibitions, the cathedral regularly hosts engaging exhibits that bring new perspectives to an ancient and sacred space.

10. **Perfect for Photos & Memories**

Capture unforgettable moments – from the majestic interior to the peaceful garden outside. Saint Mary's is a photographer's dream! 

 Located in Limerick's medieval quarter, Saint Mary's Cathedral is a true gem waiting to be discovered. Step inside and experience 850+ years of beauty, music, and Irish heritage.

Derry Cathedral Parish Summer Pilgrimage

We had a great day on our Parish Summer Pilgrimage to Doon Well, Ards Friary and Carrigart.

Thanks to everyone who came along and took part. Thanks to everyone in Ards Friary Retreat Centre for welcoming us for Mass. Thanks to the Management and Staff of Carrigart Hotel for the wonderful service and the delicious food. Thanks to Michael Mc Gee, Catch a Coach Travel for organising our transport.

Thank God for the beautiful weather we had to spend a lovely day all together in prayer and friendship.



Like our Face Book page for more updates on up and coming trips and events



Clergy and ministry

Tributes to the Reverend Martin Smyth

Unionist leaders past and present have led tributes after the death of former UUP MP, Rev Martin Smyth.

Rev Smyth (94) served as MP for South Belfast from 1982 until 2005.

He took the seat in a by-election after the sitting MP, Rev Robert Bradford, was murdered by the IRA in November 1981.

Rev Smyth also served as Grand Master of the Orange Order for 26 years.

Ulster Unionist leader Mike Nesbitt led tributes, saying: "I am terribly sorry to hear of the passing of Martin Smyth.

"From my days as a broadcast journalist, he was an ever-present heavyweight in local politics, whose views were always important.

He may not have been as prominent as others in the public sphere, but hugely influential behind the scenes.

"He was another of that fateful generation of what we so euphemistically call 'The Troubles' whose imprint will last forever."



He will be remembered for his quiet confidence but also his power.

Former UUP leader Lord Empey recalled Rev Smyth leading the way in Parliament in his pursuit of legislation to assist the disabled.

"It was a consistent theme of his representation of the people of Northern Ireland," he said.

"While well known and respected for his defence of unionism, his compassion for those less fortunate shone through".

Jim Nicholson, a former UUP MEP, said his late colleague was "a titan" of unionism.

“He will be remembered for his quiet confidence but also his power as an orator and champion of Ulster Unionism,” he added.

Former UUP MLA Danny Kennedy said: “Deeply sorry to learn of the passing of Rev W Martin Smyth. He was a committed Christian and a dedicated Unionist. He gave leadership in difficult and different times and he showed considerable personal courage in his long public service as MP for South Belfast and Sovereign Grand Master of the GOLI. I didn’t always agree with him on Party matters, but found him honourable and deeply courteous. Whatever differences Martin had, he remained loyal to the Ulster Unionist Party and I admired him for that. He and his wife Kathleen were a devoted couple and showed much kindness to many people over the years. I offer my sincere and profound sympathy to his family and friends at this sad time. May they all know God’s comfort and blessing. 2nd Timothy Chapter 4 verse 7”.

DUP leader Gavin Robinson also offered his condolences to Rev Smyth’s family.

The East Belfast MP said: “A stalwart of unionism, he stepped forward in South Belfast at a most volatile time.

Firm and faithful, he represented his constituents and NI with a strong sincere strength and unswerving belief in the Union.”

TUV leader Jim Allister said Rev Smyth “served Protestantism and unionism for many years through some of the worst of the terrorist campaign”.

The Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland described Rev Smyth as "a leader of unwavering principle and determination through often difficult times and a stalwart of the Orange cause".

Former First Minister Arlene Foster reminisced on the "happy memories" she shared with Rev Smyth.

Lord Peter Weir, a former Education Minister, said he was "a staunch unionist and Orangeman, dedicated public servant and man of conviction".

"He was prepared to be a political representative at a time when it literally risked his life," he added.

Rev Smyth's views were conservative and often hardline.

He resigned his ministry and was elected to Parliament in the 1982 by-election following the murder of Rev Bradford.

Rev Bradford (40) and a 29-year-old caretaker, Ken Campbell, were shot dead during a constituency clinic at Finaghy Community Centre.

In a lengthy political career, Rev Smyth was an unsuccessful candidate for the UUP leadership in 1995 after the resignation of Lord Molyneaux, finishing fourth to the winner, David Trimble.

In 2000, Rev Smyth unsuccessfully attempted to oust Mr Trimble as leader on an anti-agreement platform.

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In January 2005, he announced he would be stepping down from Westminster at the next election to spend more time with his wife.

Alasdair McDonnell took the South Belfast seat for the SDLP in the 2005 election.

Events

HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace

MONDAY 8th SEPTEMBER 2025

Birthday of the Blessed Virgin Mary

ACCESSION DAY OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING

1630

CHORAL EVENSONG for Accession Day

sung by the Choir of Ardingly College

ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US IN WORSHIP

Palace tickets not required to attend chapel services. Please enter via Tennis Court Lane.

Hampton Court is served by half-hourly train services from London Waterloo. Buses 111, 216, 411, 461 & R68 serve the palace. Parking is available onsite, at the Railway Station and on Hampton Court Green.

We look forward to welcoming you!

Beaulieu Estate and Gardens

Welcome to the Boyne Valley Trails September Festival. Join guide Dusty on his guided tour of the Beaulieu Estate and Gardens.

Explore Beaulieu and Newtownstalaban in an area full of history, nature and wildlife. This guided walk is off the beaten track in the woods and fields of the Boyne Valley east of Drogheda.

Parking at Beaulieu House A92 PD3R. Gates open at 9.45am with walk starting at 10am sharp and finish at approx. 1.30pm. Gates will be closed once walk begins . No dogs allowed other than guide dogs

The Boyne Valley Trails September Walking Festival is sponsored by Failte Ireland and supported by Love Drogheda BID (Business Improvement District-Drogheda ratepayers). Photos and video may be captured during this event.

Registration email/URL - <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/beaulieu-estate-and-gardens-tickets-1321200138179?aff=oddttdtcreator>

Date And Time

14-09-2025 @ 09:30 to
14-09-2025 @ 14:00

Location

Beaulieu House and Garden A92 PD3R

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

Church News Ireland

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

Please recommend to your friends

