

Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Remembering Ukraine
Independence Day**

Image of the day



Remembering Ukraine Independence Day

The 34th Anniversary since Ukraine gained its independence from the Soviet Union was marked in many places and ways in Ireland.

St Mary's Parish Church in Howth held services of worship to mark Ukraine's Independence Day. The Rector, Rev Philip Heak welcomed those who took part.



Close to 80,000 Ukrainians are living in Ireland following Russia's launch of its full-scale invasion in February 2022. This year saw the fourth annual festival marking Ukraine's Independence Day.

RTE reported Many people at the event were feeling apprehensive that their country's future is again the focus of significant discussions on the world stage.

Michael Baskin, CEO of the Ukrainian Crisis Centre in Ireland (UCCI), said: "This is the main key event in the Ukrainian calendar now.

"We all know that's important because we fight for independence every day."

UK Ukrainian insight from VE Day.

In May, Londoners saw a sight that won't soon be forgotten: Ukrainian soldiers, marching shoulder to shoulder with their own Armed Forces to mark 80 years since VE Day.

It was a fitting moment. As we remembered the generation that secured our freedom, we could show our respect for the men and women fighting for it in Europe right now.

On Ukrainian Independence Day the courage of their armed forces and





their people is an inspiration. The UK's support for their fight, for as long as it takes, is absolute.

News

24 Hours of Prayer in Armagh diocese for Gaza

“Men from east and west, from north and south, will come to take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. Yes, there are those now last who will be first, and those now first who will be last.”

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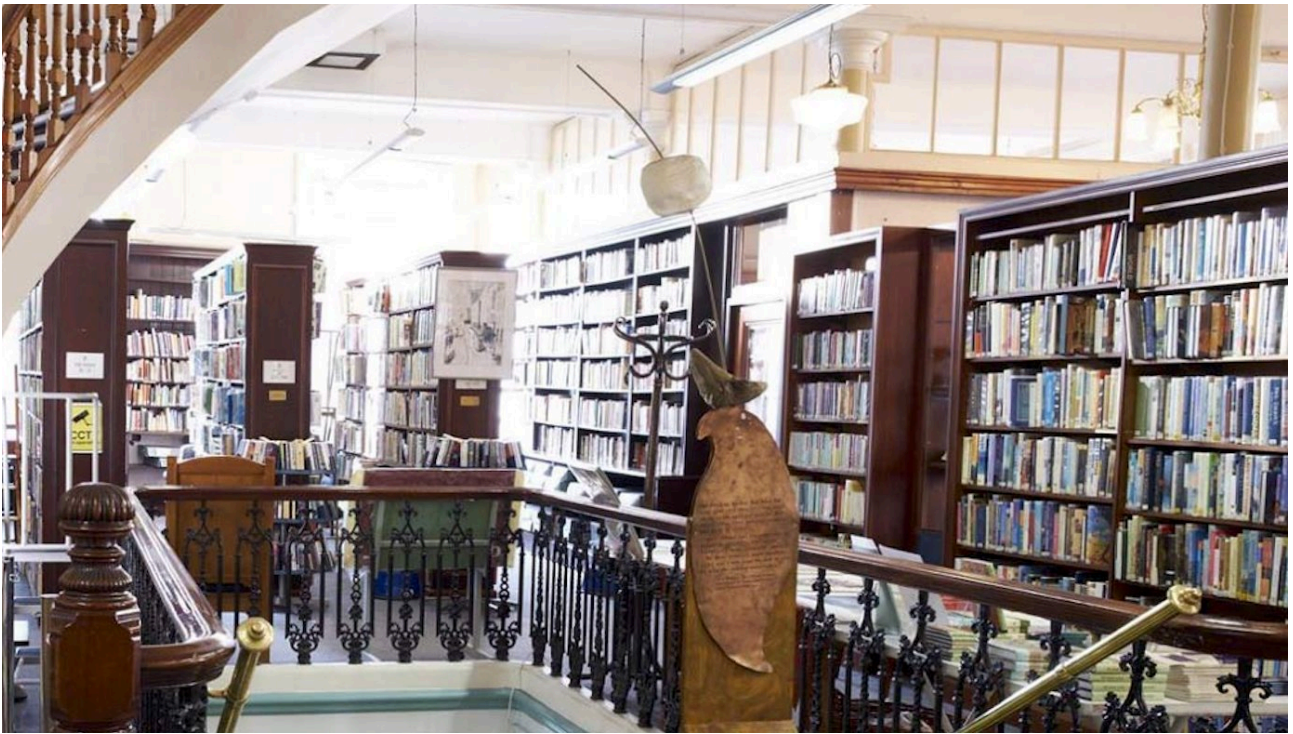


Throughout this 24 hours of prayer, we stand in solidarity with the people of Gaza and with all who long for peace. We pray that leaders choose the narrow way of justice and compassion, so that the doors of peace may never be closed.

Lord, hear our prayer for Gaza.

Flight from Prague: The Making of a Refugee

Book launch event at the Linen Hall Library, Belfast. It is Czechoslovakia, 1938.



As German soldiers cross the border, Jewish businessman Harry Lewy flees for his life. In this powerful new book, his son Michael Lewis tells Harry's story, drawing on memories, interviews, family documents and archival research.

Danger and uncertainty follow him across Europe and through Nazi Germany until he finds refuge in Belfast. There, after the war, he is reunited with and marries his childhood sweetheart, dancer, choreographer and Holocaust survivor Helen Lewis (née Helena Katz).

At this special event, Seamus McKee talks with Michael Lewis about the challenges of writing a family memoir and about how Harry's journey speaks to the enduring plight of refugees.

Michael Lewis was born and grew up in Belfast. After reading Modern Languages at Oxford, he trained as a teacher at York University and taught in comprehensive schools in England for 35 years, the last twenty of which

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were as the headteacher of King Edward VII School in Sheffield.

After retirement in 2008, he took on a variety of roles, including as a member of the Employment Tribunal, the Independent Ethics Panel of South Yorkshire Police and the Teaching Regulation Agency's professional conduct panel. In 2009 the University of Sheffield awarded him an honorary Doctor of Letters in recognition of his contribution to education. He is married to Petra and has two sons and three grandchildren.

This event is part of Aspects Festival. 26th September – 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm £5.00



Open air Summer Celebration at Killanne and Killegney

On Sunday past Bishop Adrian of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory posted - " This morning it was good to be with the people of Killanne and Killegney Union for their open air



Summer Celebration which was held beside St Eigneach's Church.

“A prayer of blessing was said with the children as they prepare

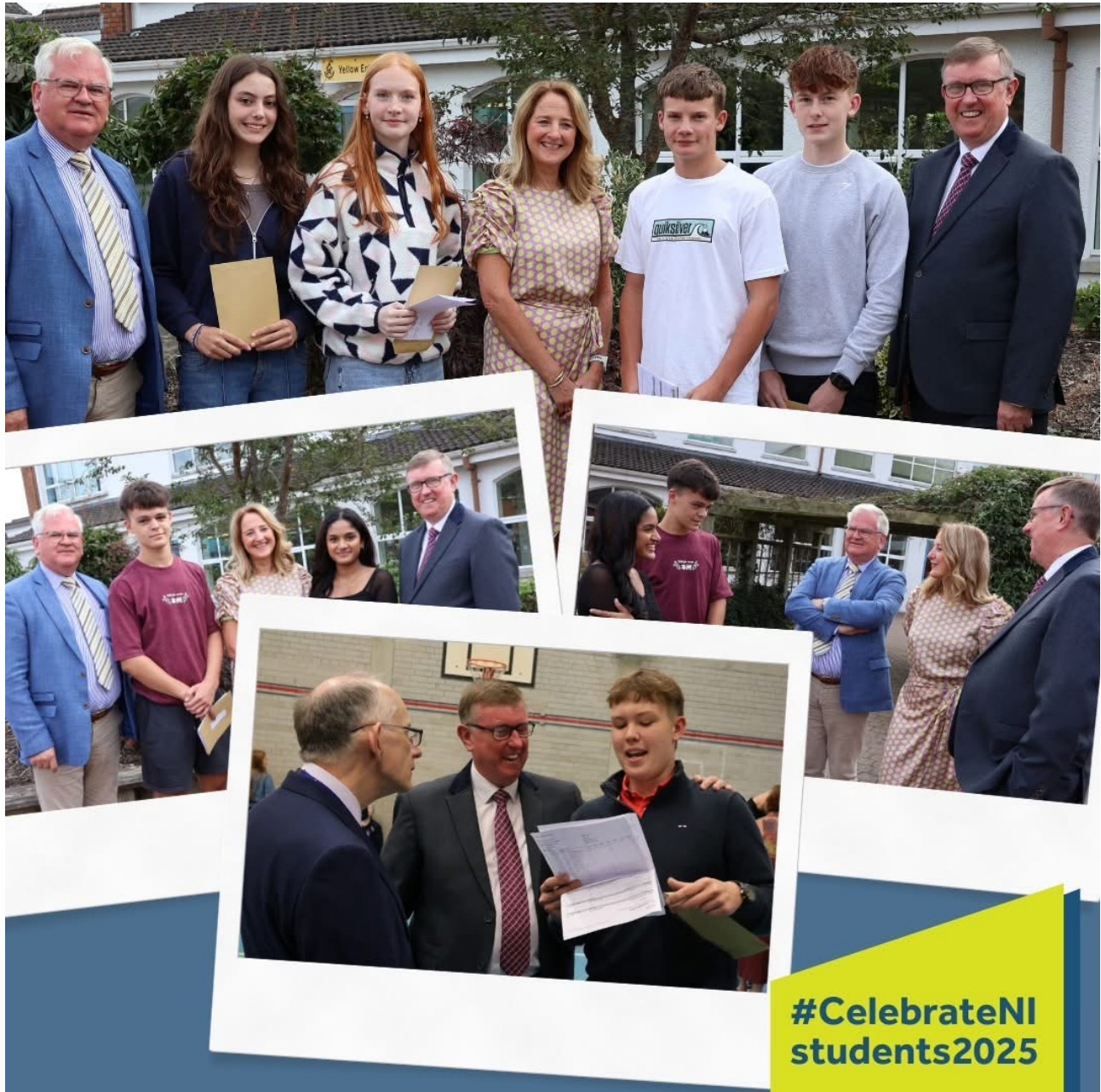
to return to school. Jacqui and I also enjoyed a wonderful picnic with Arthur Barrett and Brigid Barrett afterwards. Then



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it was off to my favourite beach in Wexford for an afternoon walk”.

Education



EA Chairperson Mervyn Storey attended Limavady Grammar as pupils received their GCSE results

Speaking at a visit to Limavady Grammar School, EA Chairperson, Mervyn Storey praised the hard work and dedication of all young people across Northern Ireland receiving their results.

“Today’s results are a testament to our young people, who have worked tremendously hard over the last two years. I hope they can celebrate their achievement and take pride in their efforts.

I wish to also acknowledge the vital role of parents, school leaders and all staff across our schools who have guided and supported young people throughout their studies.

“For those who did not achieve the grades they hoped for, I ask them not to be disheartened. There are many options open to them in school, further education, training or employment, and there are many sources of support and guidance out there for them to avail of. I would encourage young people to discuss their options with their teachers.”

Speaking directly to young people, Mr Storey added:

“Each of you have enormous potential and I wish you the very best, whichever pathway you choose for your future.”

Pictured above: Education Authority Chairman, Mervyn Storey (right of picture) picture alongside staff and pupils at Limavady Grammar School on GCSE results day.

St Mary’s Primary in Rathlin Island marks 200 years

A huge congratulations to St Mary’s Primary School on Rathlin Island, marking an incredible 200 years!

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With support from Power NI Brighter Communities funding, the school has created a beautiful commemorative booklet capturing its history, legacy, and impact on generations of islanders.

Power NI - We're proud to play a small part in celebrating such an important milestone in the heart of the Rathlin community.

To find out more on how we support communities, visit <https://ow.ly/qYBo50WI6lx>

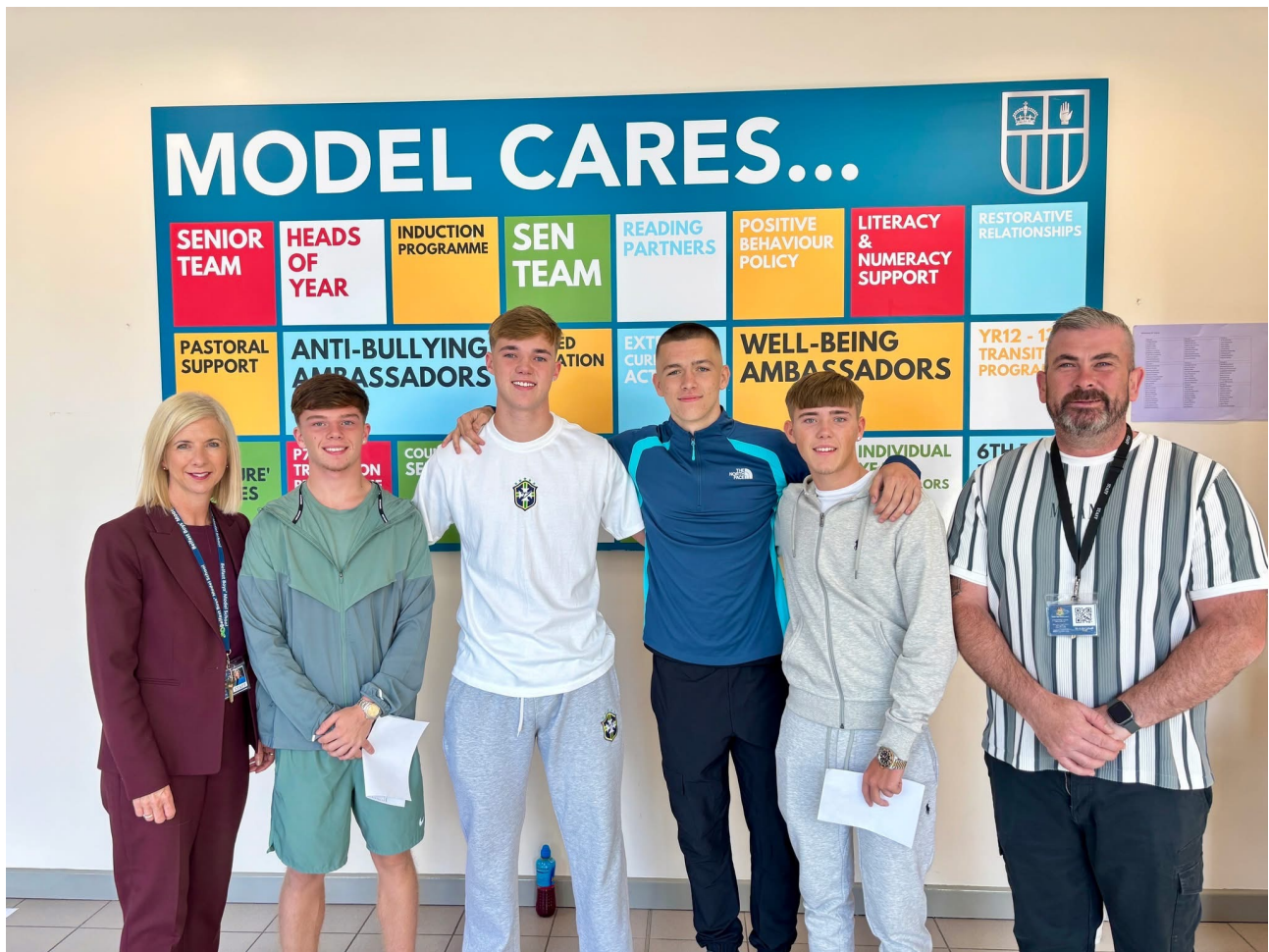


Congratulations Yago from RBAI

RBAI - We are extremely proud of Yago Azuara-Lois who will be going on to study Medicine at Christ Church College, Oxford when term begins.

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This is an incredible achievement which reflects his immense talent and dedication — we wish him every success in this exciting next chapter!



BBM Champions on and off the pitch

Huge congratulations to Joshua, Zac, Jake and Theo of Belfast Boys Model School — not only did they help secure the East Antrim League and Cup double in Year 12, but they've also achieved fantastic GCSE results today!

The school says it is proud of their achievements and wish them every success as they take their next steps — whether continuing with Post-16 studies here at the Model or starting exciting Apprenticeships. Well done, boys!

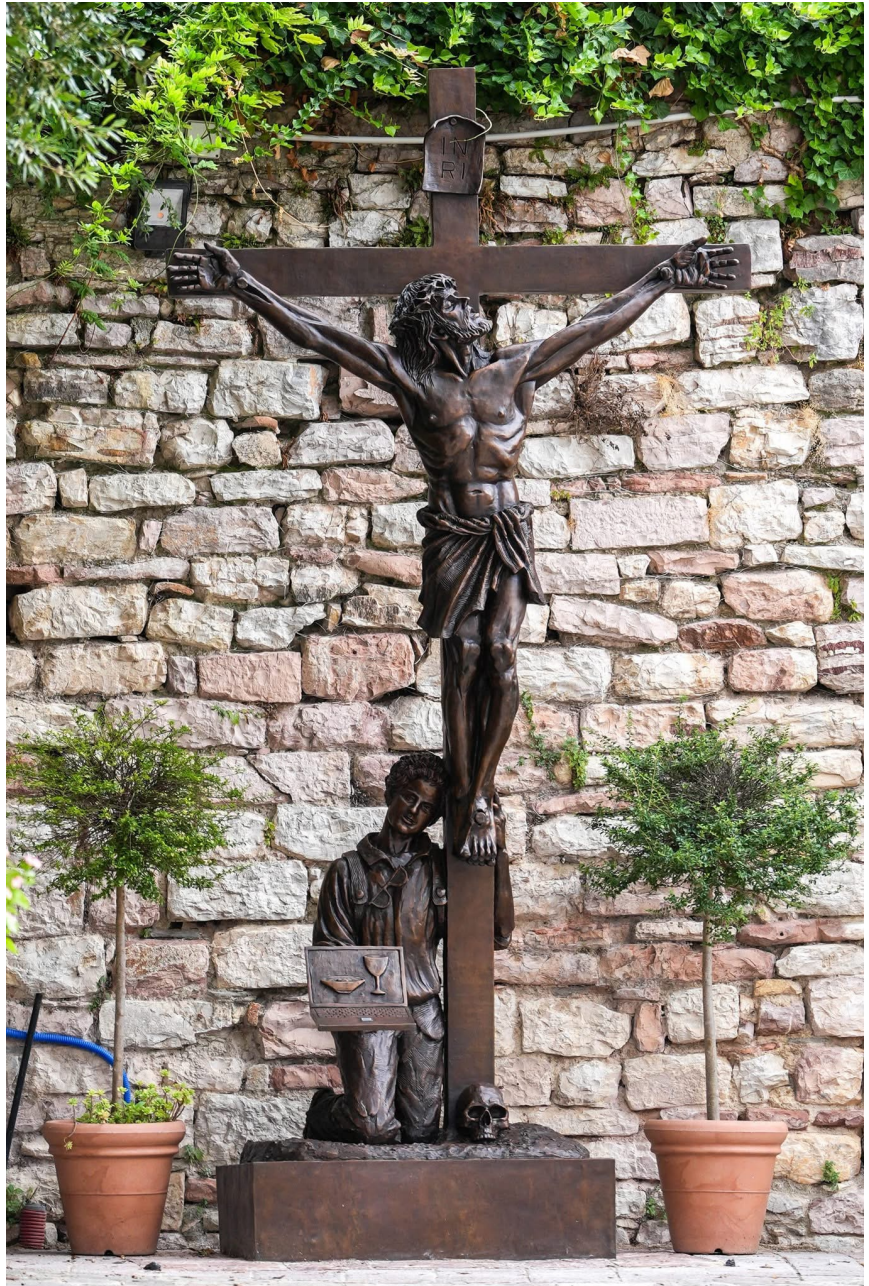
Cathedral Calls

New statue of Blessed Carlo Acutis unveiled in Assisi

Ahead of canonization, new statue of Blessed Carlo Acutis unveiled in Assisi.

Unveiled Aug. 15 outside the Shrine of the Renunciation at the Church of St. Mary Major in Assisi, where the soon-to-be-saint is buried, Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz said that “the church is for the youth and it’s a growing church.”

<https://iobserve.org/2025/08/23/ahead-of-canonization-new-statue-of-blessed-carlo-acutis-unveiled-in-assisi/>



Events

Welcome to the Rotunda for Culture Night

We're excited to welcome you to the Rotunda for this year's Culture Night. Come in for a rare opportunity to visit the world's oldest maternity hospital's Chapel and historical Front Hall with a lecture from our Head Librarian.

Book your free tickets via the link in our bio to learn about the history of one of Dublin's most recognisable landmarks.
www.eventbrite.com/e/culture-night-2025-the-rotunda-hospital-tickets-1449271282419

In the media

Minister calls for removal of 'triple lock' at Michael Collins commemoration

Minister for Health Jennifer Carroll MacNeill has called for the removal of the 'triple lock' which requires Ireland to get UN approval if it wants to send Defence Forces personnel abroad as peacekeepers, Jennie O'Sullivan writes in RTE.

Speaking at the annual Michael Collins Memorial at Béal na Bláth in West Cork, Ms Carroll MacNeill said Ireland is proud of its global peacekeeping missions, but in reality, a new peacekeeping mission has not been sanctioned since 2014.

Under existing rules, any foreign deployment of 12 or more Irish Defence Forces personnel can only take place when it has been approved by the Dáil, the Government and has received a United Nations mandate.

"We cannot be held by others. We must remove the triple lock and take charge of our own affairs and be held to account for own decisions," she told the gathering on the 103rd anniversary of the ambush and shooting dead of the first Commander-in-Chief of the Irish Defence Forces.

Ms Carroll MacNeill said the decision in 2001 to "hand the decision making" to the UN Security Council, has meant Ireland has taken away its own sovereignty "as though we are incapable of deciding where our peacekeepers should be".

Ireland, she said, condemns "the utterly illegal and genocidal actions of Russia and Israel and yet we handed our sovereign decision making to some of them because we cannot trust ourselves?

"This is not the thing of a sovereign people. There have been no new peacekeeping missions approved by the UN Security Council since 2014, the year Russia first invaded Ukraine - again.

"We cannot be held by others. We must remove the triple lock and take charge of our own affairs and be held to account for our own decisions," she told the gathering.

In a wide-ranging address entitled 'Thinking - in Long Strides', a reference to a phrase Collins reportedly used

about himself "I think in long strides". Ms Carroll MacNeill also asked that having built the walls of a "successful and resilient State, what is our next ambition?"

She cited energy security and ensuring enduring sovereign wealth.

"To those who object today to the development of solar and wind energy, I say: please no, please think in long strides. This is not a short-term issue. Energy security is integral to our sovereignty."

She said she believed the Future Ireland Fund has the potential to allow the State build enduring sovereign wealth and to avoid the "boom-bust cycles" of the past, if "we have the political discipline to leave it alone".

She concluded with a reference to nine-year-old Harvey Morrison, who had spina bifida and scoliosis and died last month.

"Let me be clear, we can and should debate the issues in our society and in our politics. As is very clear from another most important commemoration this weekend for a beautiful young boy named Harvey, there are many ways our society can and should do better by its citizens.

"We can, we must and we will do better."

Fine Gael MEP Sean Kelly, who declared his interest in running for the presidency earlier this week, was warmly greeted by Health Minister Jennifer Carroll MacNeill on her arrival to the monument at Béal na Bláth.

Ask about his decision to put his name forward, Mr Kelly said it was "a very long week last week".

"It was a bit difficult, no doubt about it because of the nomination process and I need 20 members of the parliamentary party.

"That has been, surprisingly to me, a little more difficult to get that I thought, but a week is a long time in politics and there is another week to run, so let's see," he said.

Each year, a commemoration is held at the site of Collins' death on the Sunday closest to 22 August.

Mr Collins was 31 years old when he died.

Poem for today

Begin

By Brendan Kennelly

Begin again to the summoning birds
to the sight of the light at the window,
begin to the roar of morning traffic
all along Pembroke Road.
Every beginning is a promise
born in light and dying in dark
determination and exaltation of springtime
flowering the way to work.
Begin to the pageant of queuing girls



the arrogant loneliness of swans in the canal
bridges linking the past and future
old friends passing though with us still.
Begin to the loneliness that cannot end
since it perhaps is what makes us begin,
begin to wonder at unknown faces
at crying birds in the sudden rain
at branches stark in the willing sunlight
at seagulls foraging for bread
at couples sharing a sunny secret
alone together while making good.
Though we live in a world that dreams of ending
that always seems about to give in
something that will not acknowledge conclusion
insists that we forever begin.

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

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

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