

Church News Ireland



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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

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Image of the day

Saying Good Bye - Both churches in the Parish of Castlerock and Dunboe bade a fond farewell this Sunday morning to their rector Rev. Dr Chris Mac. Bruithin and family. God's blessings on you all as you go forward doing God's work..

News



NI Scout Network supporting Habitat community building

Safe times to the team from NI Scout Network who are in Cambodia.

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The team is supporting Habitat NIs partnership with Habitat Cambodia, building homes alongside some of the most vulnerable communities.

Wishing the team a safe and rewarding trip- check in with CNI throughout the week to see updates from Phnom Penh!

Want to be the first to hear about global opportunities in 2026? Sign up here: <https://www.tfaforms.com/5190094>

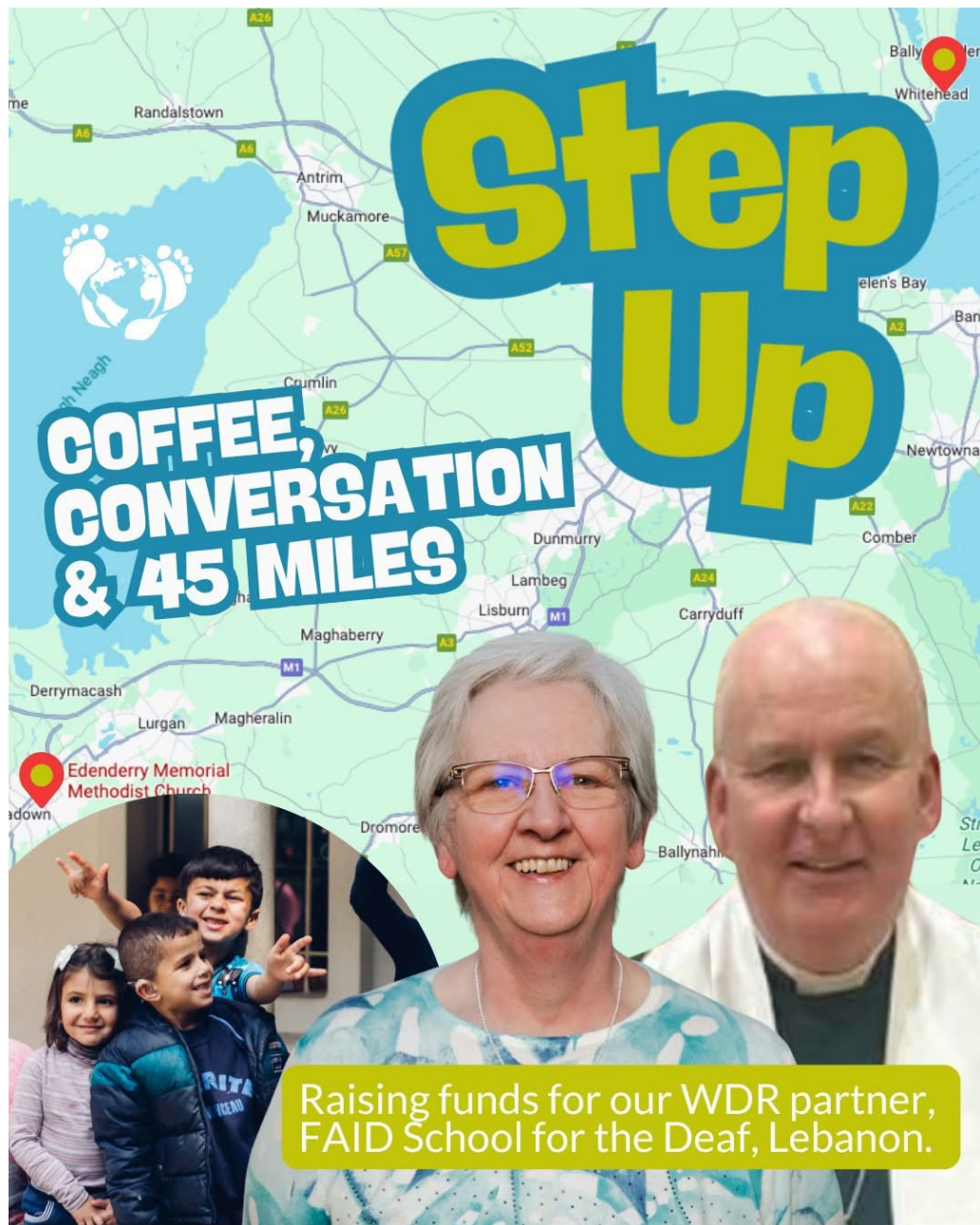
Armagh Diocesan group in Romania with Habitat for Humanity

Please pray for the young people and their leaders (led by Canon Malcolm Kingston) as they serve Romanian families living in poverty.

Methodist leaders step up for School for the Deaf in Lebanon

The Methodist Church in Ireland President Rev Alan Wardlow, and Lay Leader Elaine Barnett are Stepping Up with WDR this summer.

Rev Alan and Elaine are hosting two coffee mornings, one in Whitehead Methodist Church in August and one in Edenderry Methodist Church in September. The two churches sit 45 miles away from each other, so, in the weeks between the two coffee mornings, Rev Alan and Elaine will walk 45 miles!



They are doing this to raise much-needed funds for our partner in Lebanon, FAID School for the Deaf. FAID provide education and life-skills, helping their students unlock their potential, not limited by disability.

You can sponsor Rev Alan and Elaine here:
[https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/alanelaine?](https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/alanelaine?utm_medium=CA&utm_source=CL)
[utm_medium=CA&utm_source=CL](https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/alanelaine?utm_medium=CA&utm_source=CL)



Keep your eyes peeled for more information if you'd like to join them at either coffee morning!

Encouraging update on the VAT reclaim scheme for listed churches

According to the Historic Religious Buildings Alliance: there has been an encouraging development in the ongoing review of the Listed Places of Worship VAT reclaim scheme.

The Chair of the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, Dame Caroline Dinenage, has formally written to Baroness Twycross, who is the Minister for Gambling and Heritage at DCMS.

Dame Caroline has called for the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme (LPWGS) to "be made permanent and for the cap of £25,000 per annum on individual claimants to be removed."

Her letter identifies the important role churches play in society, and that the ongoing rolling renewal basis of the scheme each year creates anxiety and uncertainty in churches planning for the future.

Currently, the LPWGS is scheduled to run until the end of this financial year, March 2026.

To be clear, the letter from Dame Caroline does not signify any forthcoming decisions or changes. The Government has not stated when the future of the LPWGS will be announced

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or if any changes will be introduced. There is a feeling in the air that an update from the government will be made in early October 2025.

You can read her letter in full here:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/49047/documents/257714/default/>

Amazing Church Doors info wanted

Andrew Clark has always been interested in the beautiful, historic and sometimes interesting nature and stories behind our church doors.

He is starting to research a new book and wants to hear from any churches that either have an amazing church door themselves that they want to share or could recommend any from across the UK or Europe to research.

Please email Andrew at info@churchgrants.co.uk

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/>



Young pilgrims in Rome from Down and Connor with their bishop.

Pope surprises 100K youth at Vatican Jubilee

More than 100,000 young Catholics packed into St. Peter's Square erupted in joyful cheers as Pope Leo XIV made a surprise appearance during the Jubilee of Youth opening ceremony in Rome.



The Pope unexpectedly toured the square in his popemobile after an evening Mass, smiling and waving as he soaked in the energy of the massive crowd.

Organisers had hinted at “a surprise”, but few expected the Pope to attend so early

in the week-long event, according to the Associated Press.

“You are this message [of hope], and must give hope to everyone,” the Pope told the gathering, before repeating: “We want peace in the world. We want peace in the world!”

The Jubilee of Youth, part of the 2025 Jubilee Holy Year, is drawing hundreds of thousands of young people to Rome.

Events include liturgies, processions through the Holy Door, and talks from Catholic social media influencers who use digital platforms to evangelise.



Earlier that day, Pope Leo addressed these influencers, thanking them for spreading the Gospel online but warning against losing touch with real-world relationships.

“Always look for the ‘suffering flesh of Christ’ in every brother and sister you encounter online,” he urged. “It is up to us... to ensure that this culture remains human.”

The Pope is expected to return later in the week to close the Jubilee with a final Mass.

New York vigil to mark 80th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

A peace gathering to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will take place today Tuesday, 5 August from 11.50am-1pm, in front of the Consulate General of Japan in New York, 299 Park Avenue, New York,

A spokesperson states - Eighty years have passed since the US dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is estimated that the bombs killed 210,000 citizens by the end of 1945 and, over the years, have ruined the health of many of the survivors. The average age of the hibakusha, or atomic bomb survivors, is now 86 years old, and many of them are still suffering from terrible health issues. To honour the memory of those who lost their lives to the atomic bombings, a coalition of citizens and peace activists will gather in front of the Japan Consulate General on Tuesday, August 5th, at 11.50am.

There we will join our voices to express our sincere regrets and apologies for our nations' atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

We will also express our solidarity with all peoples and nations across the globe who say NO to any and all nuclear weapons, NO to mining for radioactive fuel, NO to manufacturing them, NO to upgrading them, NO to storing them, NO to proliferating them, NO to threatening their use, simply NO! And we will say a resounding YES to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), calling for both the US and Japan to sign and ratify it along with the 73 countries and states that have already done so.

Our urgent message comes because, 80 years since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we are closer to nuclear annihilation than ever before. Russia has threatened the use of nuclear weapons against Ukraine. Nuclear-armed Israel and the nuclear-armed US have attacked Iran supposedly to stop any nuclear ambitions Iran may have, rather than abolishing their own nuclear arsenals.

In addition, the Trump administration has ordered a 29% increase in the US National Nuclear Security Administration and has signed multiple executive orders to re-establish the US "as the global leader in nuclear energy." Simultaneously, the other eight nuclear-armed states are modernizing their nuclear weapon programs. And New York State Governor Hochul is looking to add at least a new nuclear-power generation to New York State's energy supply. We know these actions make us neither safer nor more secure, but rather put our environment, our economy, our very lives at enormous risk.

Consequently, we demand that all uranium mining and other uranium activities be halted, nuclear weapons manufacturing sites be shut down, all nuclear weapons be abolished, and focus our efforts and resources to provide assistance for nuclear victims and to safely store radioactive waste. The future of our world is at stake if we don't.

The Co-organizers are Veterans for Peace - NYC Chapter 34, the Manhattan Project, Pax Christi New York State, Peace Action New York State and NYC War Resisters League.

Veterans for Peace is a global organization of Military Veterans and allies whose collective efforts are to build a culture of peace by using our experiences and lifting our voices. We inform the public of the true causes of war and the enormous costs of wars, with an obligation to heal the wounds of wars.

Links

The Manhattan Project for a Nuclear-Free World:

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<https://mp-nuclear-free.com/>

Pax Christi New York State:

<https://paxchristinys.org/>

Peace Action New York State: www.panys.org/

NYC War Resisters League: <https://nycwarresisters.org/>

Veterans for Peace: www.veteransforpeace.org/

Statue of St Agnes from Nagasaki Catholic Cathedral
destroyed by the bomb - displayed at UN Headquarters.
Image: Marcelo Schneider/WCC

Education

Day 4 Ex Campbell Reflect 2025

**We left Albert
and left for
Arras where
we visited the
Arras Flying
Services
Memorial and
the Arras
Memorial
where 7 OCs**



**are commemorated - three on the Flying Memorial and
four on the main memorial. Incoming Head Boy of
Campbell College Alfie P paid his respects to Head Boy**

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of 1914 Reginald Whiteside who had been shot down by the Red Baron in 1916.

From Arras we headed to Carrière Wellington for an amazing tour of the tunnels there - we were privileged to have been able to conduct a short Act of Remembrance in the tunnels where the church services took place. From there we moved to Caberet Rouge CWGC Cemetery to pay our respects to OC John Clarke who is buried beside the



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pilot of the plane he was the observer in as well as OC W Berkley South African Infantry.

After lunch we visited Mémorial' 14-18 Notre Dame de Lorette and were honoured to be allowed to perform there - this is one of France's most significant war cemeteries and a place of tranquility - thanks to the staff there who made it possible.

Our final visit was to Veterans Affairs Canada site at Vimy Ridge - another iconic location that takes your breath away. OC Samuel Fleming is commemorated here.

it was a day of firsts for us - Carrière Wellington and Mémorial' 14-18 Notre Dame de Lorette. Two amazing locations and ones that our members will remember for ever.

Cathedral Calls

Charles Wood Singers return to Armagh

The Charles Wood Singers return to Armagh for this year's Festival, bringing together a professional vocal ensemble made up of some of the finest singers from across these islands and beyond. Under the direction of David Hill, the choir will feature in several of the week's major events.

Their appearances include Choral Evensong in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral on Tuesday 12th at 5.00pm,



and a special BBC Radio 3 broadcast Evensong on Wednesday 13th at 4.00pm. They also feature in the Gala Concert on Friday 15th at 8.00pm, and the Festal Evensong on Sunday 17th at 3.00pm, following Sung Mass that morning in St Patrick's Roman Catholic Cathedral.

Alongside public performances, the singers will take music into local care homes on Saturday 16th, and join forces with





singers from all over Northern Ireland for our Community Prom on The Mall at 6.30pm.

Open rehearsals will take place in the Methodist Church Hall on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at 10.00am, offering a behind-the-scenes look at the work of this outstanding ensemble.

We're also proud to share that two of their performances—Morning Worship for BBC Radio 4 and BBC Radio Ulster—will be broadcast on Sunday 31st August.

Renowned for their versatility, precision and expressive sound, the Charles Wood Singers form the musical backbone of the Festival each year.

Tickets are now available at www.charleswoodsummerschool.org/events

Events



Summer Concerts 2025

Conductor Michael Seal

Shostakovich Symphony No.12 'The Year 1917'

Dvořák Othello Overture

Mussorgsky Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. Ravel)

Friday 15 August 2025

Guildhall, Derry/Londonderry

Tickets: £17.50 / £13 / £6

www.millenniumforum.co.uk

T: +4428 7126 4455

Saturday 16 August 2025

Ulster Hall, Belfast

Tickets: £17.50 / £13 / £6

www.ulsterhall.co.uk

T: +4428 9033 4455



www.uyo.org.uk



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Perspective

Joe Schmidt's real challenge

For a moment, under the lights of Accor Stadium, it felt like 2003 again. The air carried the same electric charge, the kind that makes the hairs on your neck stand up before something historic happens.

The Wallabies weren't just playing—they were “believing”. And at the centre of it all stood Joe Schmidt, the reluctant architect of a revival he won't see through. As his team celebrated a 22-12 triumph over a stunned British and Irish Lions squad, Schmidt stood just off the edge of the euphoria, hands behind his back, eyes searching for something deeper in the moment. He had built something beautiful—but he was already preparing to walk away.

Schmidt isn't leaving because the job is done. Far from it. The Wallabies are only just beginning to scrape the ceiling of their potential, and his fingerprints are all over their rediscovered discipline, their edge, their belief. But sometimes life draws a boundary that sport can't cross. His son, Luke, battles severe epilepsy. On the night his team achieved a rare high, Schmidt's thoughts drifted not to legacy or extensions, but to hospital corridors and late-night seizures, to home and the impossible task of dividing yourself between your calling and your child. He didn't sugarcoat it. “I haven't been home for two months,” he admitted, the weariness not in his voice, but in his pauses. “There's other things I need to make sure I tick off.”



The locker room, he confessed, had caught a flash of that burden. He'd snapped at a player. It wasn't about the game. It was about Luke. Schmidt, ever the composed tactician, had cracked—and instead of hiding it, he owned it. That moment of vulnerability revealed the human cost behind the public success. This wasn't just a coach winning matches. This was a father fighting two battles at once, one with a whistle in hand, the other with hope as his only armour.

He could have asked for more time. Rugby Australia would've listened. After all, even opposition coach Andy Farrell, rarely one for lavish praise, spoke in admiration of what Schmidt had done with a side still limping from the wreckage of the Eddie Jones era. The Wallabies, once

ridiculed, now fought with poise and venom. Their carries were clean. Their defensive structure, sharp. Their unity, unmistakable. They weren't just playing better—they were playing "together". But Schmidt never sought permanence. He came in like a storm to reset the sky, knowing full well he'd leave before the harvest.

And so the transition is already written. Les Kiss, himself no stranger to pressure and patience, will take over after the 2026 Super Rugby season. Schmidt welcomes it. His job was never to lead the Wallabies to the 2027 World Cup on home soil. It was to ensure they arrive there as contenders, not afterthoughts. On that front, his mission might already be a quiet success.

But the road isn't over yet. South Africa looms, and the Springboks don't just defend their turf—they devour it. Two back-to-back matches in the highveld are as brutal as rugby gets, but Schmidt's men won't be short of belief. "Hopefully we're on the way," said captain Harry Wilson, voice still trembling with adrenaline. The Wallabies now travel not as hopefuls, but as hunters.

And when it ends—whenever it ends—Joe Schmidt will return not to medals or parades, but to Luke. To a home that's waited. To a fight that doesn't come with final whistles or roaring crowds. To the reason he's walking away, even as a nation pleads for him to stay.

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

www.churchnewsireland.org

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

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