



**Image of the day -
Whiterocks, Portrush**

People and places



Lambeth Conference - Proclaiming Good News in North India

The second round of Lambeth Conference Bishops' Conversations are in full swing this week. On Tuesday and today, Thursday, bishops gather online to discuss what it means to Proclaim Good News.

Bishop Pradeep Samantaroy of the Diocese of Amritsar, North India shares this inspiring story about leading socially distanced church services from the roof tops during the pandemic:



What does it mean to Proclaim Good News? In the Diocese of Amritsar, North India, it means doing church on the rooftops, for socially distanced worship.

‘We were cut off from each other, which had a tremendous emotional impact on people. And so we began looking for the ways and means to reach out to people. We thought, “if we are not able to go to the church, could we bring the church to the people?” As people were free to use the space in their own homes and most of the Indian houses in Punjab had flat roofs, the idea of rooftop services was born.’

[Read Bishop Pradeep's inspiring story or watch him on our film about Proclaiming Good News here: https://bit.ly/3Cbtpyv](https://bit.ly/3Cbtpyv)

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Posts at The Hub at Queen's

The Hub is still accepting applications for new housekeeping and cafe jobs... please share with anyone you think might be interested!

Cleaner - Over 40 students live on-site in our beautiful Victorian student houses. This is a part-time role (15-20 hours), working alongside the other operations staff. £9.52 per hour.

Care staff - For thirty years The Hub Cafe has been the social space at the heart of our student community. Full-time (Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm) or part-time staff are needed for September 2021. £8.20-£8.91 per hour.

Full training is included in both roles, so experience is helpful but not necessary!

There are a few days left for applications. For more information, a job description and a short application form, go to www.thehubbelfast.org

Irish witness on Mothers Union Mary Sumner month

We hear from a member in Ireland about how Mary Sumner's vision and courage are a source of inspiration for her.

Click here for her clip: <https://youtu.be/YijZ3Oc9mxE>

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Thanks for repairing diocesan Land Cruiser

Bishop Aime Joseph sends his thanks from Burundi for the repair funds used for the Land Cruiser.

He is back on the road leading services in rural parishes. On Sunday 102 people were confirmed. Remember all those being confirmed over the coming weeks and give thanks for the diocese and the work of Church Missionary Society Ireland.

Resourceful team leads summer scheme with a difference

A planned summer scheme for children and young people in the Parishes of St Michael and St Stephen had to be re-invented when rising Covid cases in the area forced its last minute cancellation.

But the change showed just how resilient and resourceful the team behind the scheme, which included several young leaders from an Exodus team, could be, with a fun-filled week going ahead from July 18-25 which ensured everyone stayed safe.

For several months, St Michael's and St Stephen's had worked with the Exodus Team 8 and Connor Diocesan Development Team to plan an action-packed summer



Leaders getting creative with Rice Krispies.

scheme, with seven young people from the North Coast serving alongside them for a week in July.

Connor Children's Ministry Development Officer, Victoria Jackson, said the team was well prepared and excited for the week ahead.

“Thirty five children and young people had signed up, buses had been booked, craft supplies prepared and Tesco food delivery slots secured,” explained Victoria. “Everything was ready, but unfortunately things did not go as planned. Just two days before the Exodus team arrived came news that Covid-19 case numbers in the area were rising quickly, and leaders began receiving messages from families who could

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Members of the Exodus 8 team and local leaders and volunteers.

no longer attend the summer scheme due to having contracted Covid-19 or having to isolate.”

After the Exodus team arrived on the Sunday and took part in church services in St Michael’s and St Stephen’s, the team took the difficult decision that by holding the summer scheme, they could exacerbate the problem in the area and so reluctantly came to the conclusion that it should be cancelled.

Victoria said: “At this point the team could have been forgiven for becoming discouraged or writing the week off.

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Instead, they worked together to come up with alternative ways to serve the community.”

Team members got to work making up activity packs for each child who had been registered for the summer scheme. These were delivered personally to each doorstep. Takeaway lunches were served from the church car park and the team also went on a prayer walk around the community.

On two evenings, the team joined Diocesan Youth Officer Christina Ballie and Church Army Evangelist Stephen Whitten in the Glencairn Community Garden where they put on activities for local children and young people.



The children and young people enjoyed activities in the Glencairn Community Garden.

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Play it By Ear drama company joined the fun for two afternoons, travelling around the community performing drama sketches and telling Bible stories on doorsteps. Even the Community Policing Team joined in the fun and took part in the dramas!

The Exodus Team also joined Victoria and Church Army Evangelist Karen Webb in creating a new Baking Buddies video which was sent out to the families along with the ingredients to make Rice Krispie buns!

All Nation's Ministries, who had been scheduled to take the children for a drumming workshop, were still delighted to visit St Michael's. Along with the team, they gave an outdoor performance at Hemsworth Court, a supported housing scheme for people living with dementia.

The week concluded with a special family service at St Michael's, led by the Exodus Team and followed by a barbecue expertly cooked by the rector, the Rev Canon James Carson.

"During the service, the young people spoke of all they had learned through the unexpected change in plans. They reflected on how they had learned that God's plans are always better than our plans and that He is in control," Victoria said.

"They shared that they had been challenged and pushed out of their comfort zone throughout the week and how this had taught them to trust in God more fully."

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One of the activities which took place during the week of the summer scheme was a prayer walk around the parishes.

Victoria added: “Another positive to come from the week was the feedback from parents who were blown away by the efforts of the team to connect with them and make the week special for their children.

“Overall, it was amazing to witness the resilience and resourcefulness of everyone involved, they turned a negative set back into something so positive and made a lasting impact on their community”

Reports

Bishop congratulates Olympic rowers from West Cork

Bishop Fintan Gavin, Bishop of Cork and Ross, has congratulated Olympic rowers from West Cork who represented Ireland in Tokyo.

Bishop Fintan has written to Emily Hegarty, who won a Bronze medal with her teammates in the Women’s Four A Final, and to Fintan McCarthy and Paul O’Donovan, who won gold in the Lightweight Men’s Double Sculls.

All three are from Aughadown Parish which is near Skibbereen.

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Bishop Fintan also extends his congratulations to their families and to Skibbereen Rowing Club and UCC Rowing Club for the part they have played in this success.

In his message, Bishop Fintan wrote:

“We read in the Gospels how the Lord and His disciples often ventured onto the Sea of Galilee in their boats. Often times while seated in one of the boats, Jesus brought a message of hope and joy to those who listened. You have also brought us great joy from your boats in Tokyo through your dedication to your sport and your year-round commitment.

“Especially in this year when so many people have faced challenges from the pandemic, we are all grateful for the light you have splashed in our direction with your oars and your spirit. Wishing you congratulations and every blessing!”

Lebanon 'in desperate need' a year on from Beirut explosion

Christian Aid's partner Association Najdeh is providing food parcels to vulnerable families in Lebanon.

Economic turmoil and the fallout from the massive Beirut explosion one year ago has brought suffering to countless people in Lebanon, Christian Aid has warned.

August 4 marked the one-year anniversary of the devastating explosion that ripped through the Lebanese



capital, killing over 200 people and leaving at least 300,000 more homeless.

A year on, Christian Aid warns that "justice and accountability for what happened is yet to be achieved", with little or no compensation paid out to the injured and those who lost livelihoods or loved ones.

The tragedy has compounded the country's existing economic crisis, with over half of the Lebanese population now living in poverty and food costing five times what it did in 2019, the aid agency says.

UNICEF estimates that 77% of households are going without enough to eat, rising to 99% among Syrian refugees.

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"People simply can no longer afford to meet their basic needs," Christian Aid said, adding that refugees, migrant workers, children and the elderly are "bearing the brunt" of the crisis.

In the past year, Christian Aid partners have helped 3,324 vulnerable households with food, hygiene kits, and cash to cover essentials like medicine or repairs to homes damaged in the blast.

Partners have also delivered Covid-19 prevention awareness sessions as part of the national effort to keep transmission rates as low as possible.

Zara Mesbah, Christian Aid's Lebanon programme manager, warned that the country is reaching breaking point.

"It's heart-breaking to watch Lebanon sink to this state of socio-economic collapse," she said.

"Corruption and mismanagement have led to an unbearable situation for almost everyone in Lebanon.

"Whilst people still try to recover from the blast last year, poverty levels continue to rise rapidly. Some people have lost everything, whether from the blast or from the economic crisis. The Lebanese people are incredibly resilient, but what will be the limit?

"We're very grateful to Christian Aid supporters and all who have donated to the Christian Aid appeal, but the needs are still rising. Lebanon is in desperate need of continued humanitarian support, structural reform and transparency."

Opinion

Why Catholic Journalism matters by The Catholic Herald

The demise of the Universe, a Catholic paper with 160 years of history, is both sad in itself and telling about the condition of the Catholic media in Britain.

The challenges faced by the Catholic press are several. The most practical is to do with Covid. Historically, religious papers relied on people buying copies from the back of churches, usually after Sunday Mass. This model is still important, notwithstanding the growth of digital subscriptions, which have been particularly useful – ours have risen by over 250 per cent in America in the last year. Indeed, the new media environment has resulted in new opportunities for Catholic podcasts and webinars to supplement print periodicals.

However, at present, fewer British churches stock the religious press (US churches don't sell titles); and where they are available, parishioners, used to using smart technology for other transactions, are often baffled by having to find sufficient loose change to buy their magazine in church.

The Bishops Conference is correct, therefore, to embrace new technology. Parishes (at least those with wi-fi) are currently being provided with electronic card readers, called

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Dona, in churches to allow churchgoers to make contactless “collection” payments. We now need a simple adaptation to that system to allow parishioners to pay for their copy of the Catholic Herald or the Tablet – ideally both. This can help save Catholic journalism.

But there remain fundamental problems. In the heyday of 20th-century religious journalism, when the Herald had a weekly circulation of 100,000 – the Church had a more prominent role in public debate. There were a number of Catholic intellectuals, such as Hilaire Belloc, or priests like Ronnie Knox, who were also household names outside the Church; they were public intellectuals. Father Frederick Copleston SJ used to debate on the BBC’s Brains Trust about the existence of God with Oxford atheist philosopher Freddie Ayer. Alas, since the 1990s we have had few Catholic priests to debate with the likes of Richard Dawkins.

Secular media coverage of religion is dispiritingly limited. The BBC does still have a religious affairs correspondent – recently the now-disgraced Martin Bashir – but there are almost no specialist religious affairs correspondents in the national press, and religious discussion in the broadcast media is dismally narrow, ironically, obsessed with gender and sexuality. Since the mainstream press and broadcast media are so narrow in their religious coverage, those who seek news and debate on issues to do with the Church and moral subjects generally are more reliant than ever on the religious press.

In the absence of “public” priests and laypeople, the responsibility for holding our leaders – both lay and ecclesiastical – to account, as well as celebrating the

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cultural and liturgical riches of Catholicism, now falls on the editors of the Tablet and the Herald. They are very different, but it is imperative that discussion and debate in the Church is genuinely plural. A healthy Catholic press, independent of the bishops, debating the key moral, political and religious issues of the day, is a crucial part of the ecology of the Church. There is space for conservatives and liberals.

There has perhaps never been a time – particularly for the younger generation of Catholics who increasingly get their moral guidance online – when it has been so important for issues of utmost seriousness within the Church to be properly covered. This is especially the case in America where the battle within the Bishops Conference over the question of whether a pro-abortion Catholic president should receive public Communion reflects far wider divisions within the Catholic community.

For 133 years, the Herald has always stood up for Catholic values and teaching. We believe now it is ever more important to be a bold and independent voice, not beholden to any faction of the Church. Many religious magazines do not have this ability to be independent as they are either funded by donation models as “think tanks” with a particular agenda, or they are owned by well-funded religious houses, such as America magazine, founded in 1909, which is an influential media voice for its owners, the American Jesuits.

Whilst the Tablet, founded in 1840 and turned into a charitable trust in 1976, is characterised by its progressive views (at least in recent years), the Herald provides a platform for an alternative and more conservative view of the Catholic life, supportive of Catholic theology, doctrine

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and traditions. Since 1888, we have published many of the world's leading Catholic writers, from GK Chesterton to Evelyn Waugh. We will continue to be an independent voice in the Church and the wider community. One historic Catholic journal has perished; we shall, please God, carry on thanks to our flagship magazine and digital opportunities. But Cardinal Nichols and his bishops must support the electronic church sales of the last two remaining Catholic titles standing.

The Catholic Herald 29.07.2021

Poem for today

The Blackbird of Derrycairn by Austin Clarke

Stop, stop and listen for the bough top
Is whistling and the sun is brighter
Than God's own shadow in the cup now!
Forget the hour-bell. Mournful matins
Will sound, Patric, as well at nightfall.

Faintly through mist of broken water
Fionn heard my melody in Norway.
He found the forest track, he brought back
This beak to gild the branch and tell, there,
Why men must welcome in the daylight.

He loved the breeze that warns the black grouse,
The shouts of gillies in the morning

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When packs are counted and the swans cloud
Loch Erne, but more than all those voices
My throat rejoicing from the hawthorn.

In little cells behind a cashel,
Patric, no handbell gives a glad sound.
But knowledge is found among the branches.
Listen! That song that shakes my feathers
Will thong the leather of your satchels.

Pointers for prayer

Pray for the of children in Zambia during this time. Many children have no access to learning as schools have closed due to the containment measures put in place to avoid the spread of C-19. Families are struggling & cannot afford the cost associated with online learning.

Gracious Father, who gives to us bread from heaven, hear us when we hunger and cry out to the one who is the bread of life. Renew us by your gift and restore us by your presence. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Gracious Father, who gives to us bread from heaven, hear the cry of all who hunger this day and who long for the gifts that renew and restore life. Renew our concern for your creation and for all who inhabit the earth. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Gracious Father, who gives to us bread from heaven, hear us when we thirst and long for living water. May all who



thirst drink deep from the rivers of living water. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Gracious Father, who gives to us bread from heaven, hear the cries of those who long for clean water and who live in parched lands. May all who thirst find living water for daily life. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Gracious Father, who gives to us bread from heaven, hear our cry to the one who is the bread of life: give us this bread always. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Pray the news -

For the Church in Lebanon and the work of Christian Aid- see this issue page 11

Give thanks for summer schemes with children and young people, See page 5



Speaking to the Soul

Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you. And now that I am away, it is even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

Philippians 2:12-13 NLT

If you have given your life to Christ, confessed your sins and received his forgiveness then you have the gift of salvation. This is the amazing Good News that Paul was so desperate to share. But he was equally concerned that his readers should understand that they now had work to do. The situation is much the same as in marriage. Having a wedding and receiving the gift of marriage is just the start of the journey. You now have work to do. Lots of it!

Advertising always reveals a great deal about a society. These days we often hear products being promoted because they will offer us a quick and effortless route to making life easier, smoother, happier and more fulfilled. It's very tempting to speak of the Christian life in the same way. But it would be a lie. I have not the slightest doubt that living for Christ is the most wonderful and fulfilling life that exists here on earth. But nowhere does Paul ever suggest that following Christ requires no effort, pain or hard work.

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I fully recognise that hard work doesn't sound very attractive, but we should never fear it. Jesus once invited his followers to take on his yoke, explaining "my yoke is easy and my burden is light". You don't see many yokes these days so I had better explain. A yoke is simply a wooden beam normally used between a pair of oxen or other animals to enable them to pull together on a load when working in pairs. Jesus doesn't deny that his followers will have burdens to bear, but he makes the incredible promise that as they take his yoke they "will find rest" for their souls. (Matthew 11.28) I know exactly what Jesus means. Over the years I have seen many people working incredibly hard for God in this country and around the world and it has been beautiful to see their peace and contentment because they have done their work yoked to Jesus.

QUESTION

What is the hard work that God is calling you to do?

PRAYER

Thank you, Lord Jesus, that as we accept your yoke we find perfect rest. Amen

