

Church News Ireland



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Image of the day



Mothers Union Armagh remember founder

The Mothers' Union All Ireland Service of Holy Communion for August was hosted by Armagh Diocese in St Andrew's Parish Church, Killyman.

The date also coincided with the anniversary of the death of Mary Sumner who founded the Mothers' Union which is the largest organisation in the Anglican Communion.

The Service was led by Rev Alan Cross, Diocesan Chaplain. The readers were Heather Montgomery, Anne Anderson and

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Diocesan President Debbie Davidson. Rev Derek Kerr delivered an interesting and entertaining Sermon. Prayers and intercessions were lead by Yvonne Woods, Eleanor Orr and Irene Hewitt.

The collection was lifted by Davina McAllister, Teresa Duncan, Lorraine McFarlane and Marilyn Boyd. The Organist was Yvonne McFarland.

Holy Communion was administered by Rev Cross and Canon Matthew Hagan.

Refreshments were served by Killyman Branch members. The Diocesan President thanked all those who contributed to the very successful service, especially Claire Smith, Unit Coordinator who coordinated the service in conjunction with



Rev Cross. Davina McAllister followed with an update on the Diocesan Trip to Burundi in September.

News

Alexandria A Cappella Collective from USA a hit in Galway

St Nicholas Collegiate Church in Galway had Washington D.C.'s Alexandria A Cappella Collective performing with Sligo's Tone Cold Sober.

With a capacity audience, they received a well earned standing ovation for their infectious joyous performances, so if you're in Cork or Dublin over the coming week, be sure to keep an ear out for their gigs in Bandon and Balbriggan.

King Charles to address nation on anniversary of VJ Day

The King will commemorate the 80th anniversary of VJ Day with an address to the nation, Buckingham Palace has announced.

Charles' pre-recorded audio message will be broadcast on VJ Day ahead of a service of remembrance attended by the King and Queen, Second World War veterans and Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

VJ Day on August 15 marks the anniversary of Japan's surrender to the Allies following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, effectively bringing to an end the Second World War.

The service, broadcast live by the BBC, will pay tribute to all those who served in the Asia-Pacific theatre, including Burma Star recipients, British Indian Army veterans, former prisoners of war, and those who fought in pivotal battles including Kohima and Imphal in India.

The event, hosted by the Royal British Legion in partnership with the Government, will see the King and his wife leave floral tributes, as will other senior figures.

A national two-minutes silence will conclude with an aerial display by the Red Arrows.

The service will draw to a close with a flypast by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, before the King and Queen attend a reception with Second World War veterans.

While Charles and Camilla are at the National Memorial Arboretum event, the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh will attend a service at the Scottish National War Memorial at Edinburgh Castle, organised by the Royal British Legion Scotland.

Elsewhere, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester will join the congregation at the Far East Prisoners of War VJ Day 80th Anniversary Service at Norwich Cathedral, before attending a second commemorative service dedicated to the Children and Families of the Far East Prisoners of War in Suffolk.

Ahead of VJ Day, Sophie will meet Second World War veteran Jim Wren, who was serving on HMS Repulse when he was captured and held on the Indonesian island of Sumatra until the end of the war.

Events to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VJ Day will conclude with a reception for veterans at Windsor Castle later in the year.

Tearfund names Silas Balraj as new CEO

Christian international development charity Tearfund has appointed Silas Balraj as its new chief executive, bringing decades of global leadership experience to the role.

Balraj, who spent more than 20 years at Compassion International, will begin his new role in September. His previous leadership positions included Country Director for India, Vice President for Asia, and most recently, Senior Principal in Compassion's global program team.

Balraj said, "I am honored to join Tearfund at such a pivotal time. Around the world, millions still face the harsh realities of extreme poverty and injustice, and I'm deeply inspired by Tearfund's commitment to working through the local church to bring lasting change. I'm passionate about the role of the church to transform communities facing crisis, and I look forward to being part of that mission."

Balraj also brings private sector experience, having worked in India's IT industry prior to his time with Compassion,

leading startups while building HR and operations infrastructure.

Anna Laszlo, Chair of Trustees at Tearfund, said, “Silas brings a wealth of leadership, experience, and vision to Tearfund. His deep commitment to seeing the church act as a catalyst for community transformation will be foundational as we continue to respond to the growing and complex challenges of extreme poverty. He is a visionary leader, and we are incredibly excited about everything Silas will bring to the role.”

In the past year, Tearfund’s work has directly reached 2.9 million people, with another 6.1 million impacted through its church-led community programs.

Tearfund’s Chief Operating Officer, Tim Pilkington, will serve as interim CEO until Balraj takes up the post.

Bishop slams security forces after 37 children killed in church IS attack

A Catholic bishop in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has criticised the country’s security forces after Islamist militants brutally murdered 37 children during a church vigil.

The attack took place in the early hours of 27th July at the Blessed Marie-Clémentine Anuarite Nengapeta Catholic Church in Komanda, Ituri province. Armed extremists from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), a jihadist group aligned

with ISIS, stormed the parish hall where children were gathered to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Eucharistic Crusade movement.

The young victims were shot and hacked to death with machetes. Six others were seriously wounded, and four managed to escape.

Bishop Dieudonné Uringi of Bunia, speaking to Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN), condemned what he described as a delayed and inadequate response by local authorities. He said: “The police and the military were not far away, but they did not act in time. They should have intervened more quickly to protect the population.”

He added that the atrocity has left deep scars on the local community, saying: “Many people have been traumatised. When the adults found out, they came immediately to see what had happened.”

Despite the violence, Bishop Dieudonné said there are no tensions between Christian and Muslim communities locally. He attributed the violence to longstanding rebel activity in the region, particularly by foreign fighters from Uganda.

The bishop, known for his commitment to pastoral ministry, continues to travel into dangerous areas for missions. He revealed that many young priests have been forced to flee their parishes and seek shelter in Bunia, a city in DRC.



Irish Rangers graduate from Army Foundation College

This week 13 Irish Rangers graduated from the Army Foundation College, marking a key milestone in their journey to becoming infantry soldiers.

This September, they will move on to The School of Infantry in Catterick, where they'll join Anzio Company for 14 weeks of intensive training, ready to join 1 Royal Irish Battalion in time for Christmas

New member of UFU membership team

Ruth Morrow joined the UFU as marketing and events executive in May. She comments -

I come from a small place called Carnalbanagh near Glenarm, in the heart of the Glens. I grew up with grandparents and family

members who farm, which initially gave me an interest in agriculture.

Fast forward a few years, I am now an active member of Lisnamurrican Young Farmers' Club and have been for the past six years. I am just finishing my term as treasurer and will be moving on to undertake the same role for County Antrim.



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I recently graduated with a First Class Honours degree in leisure and event management, with a specialisation in marketing in my final year. This background has been invaluable in my new role within the Ulster Farmers' Union. I have now been with the company for almost three months and have enjoyed every minute, developing my knowledge surrounding agriculture each day.

When I began looking for a job in my final few months of university, I didn't think I would be able to find a role which incorporated both my professional skills and interest in agriculture however.... I was wrong! I have now been with the UFU for almost three months and have enjoyed every minute.

Within my role, I hope to positively promote agriculture to both our members and the wider public through my marketing and design contributions. Drawing on my events experience, I'm also focused on delivering engaging, purposeful events that highlight the essential work that the UFU does on behalf of the farming community in Northern Ireland.

Cathedral Calls

A sacred centrepiece of history in Limerick

Did you know the stone altar in Saint Mary's Cathedral, Limerick is believed to be as old as the cathedral itself -



dating back to its founding in 1168? It's one of the very few surviving medieval high altars in Ireland.

This limestone altar, removed during the Reformation, was rediscovered centuries later and restored to its rightful place in the 1960s. Today, it stands once again at the heart of the cathedral, linking past and present in one of the most sacred spaces in Limerick.

A powerful reminder of the cathedral's unbroken thread of worship for over 850 years.

Come and see it for yourself and stand before a piece of living history.

Clergy and ministry

Community Youth Pastor for Ballylesson

Ballylesson parish has announced the appointment of its new Community Youth Pastor. Reece Gordon and his wife Abigail will be familiar faces to the parish where Reece was on placement from Belfast Bible college a few years ago.

“We are really looking forward to welcoming them back into our church community. There will be a service of introduction on Sunday 16th November at 11am.”

Reece is the wrote the following to the parish -

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"Hello all at Ballylesson Church!

“Allow me introduce myself to you all, My name is Reece and I have the privilege of recently being appointed as the Community Youth Pastor at Ballylesson Church.

“Some of you may remember my wife Abigail and I from our time spent at Ballylesson during my placement year from Belfast Bible College, and for those who we don't yet know, we are looking forward to getting to know you all soon!

“This is a role which I am very excited about starting in November and I am particularly excited to catch up with the team and get stuck in!

“I can't wait to get to know each of you and your children / young people when I start in a few months time.



August 9, 2025

"Blessings, Reece Gordon."

Events

Harvesting Hope: A Future for Sustainable Agriculture?

Join us for at Gurteen College on Saturday 20th September (10.30am–4pm), to explore the future of farming in a changing world.



Harvesting Hope:
a future for sustainable agriculture?

A conference on Saturday, September 20th 2025
10.30am - 4pm (lunch included)
Gurteen College, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, E53 TP93
€20 to cover costs & a donation to Embrace Farm Charity

Register for catering purpose by 16th Sept -
michael.hanna4@gmail.com or 0878326113

From practical insights on sustainable agriculture to honest conversations about farm welfare, succession, and survival,

August 9, 2025

this is a day for anyone connected to the land. Our plenary speaker is the brilliant John Feehan, naturalist and theologian as our plenary speaker.

We'll close with a Harvest Service, and there will be a donation to Embrace FARM, supporting farming families through loss

Speakers Jim Dwyer, (chairman of the Board of Governors of Gurteen), Ken Gill (organic beef and tillage farmer), Kim McCall (mixed livestock farmer), George Graham (sheepshearing champion & speaker on mental health and stress), Embrace FARM, an organisation that supports farmers affected by suicide and bereavement, and Anne Marie Doheny (speaking about succession and the supports available to farming families).

Gurteen College, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, E53 TP93

€20 includes lunch | Spaces limited

Register by Sept 16: michael.hanna4@gmail.com | 087 8326113

All welcome as we share conversation, debate, and thoughtful engagement on these important topics!

The Irish Guards are coming to Carrickfergus

It will be quite a spectacle as the Irish Guards mark their 125th anniversary with a massive public parade and musical marching display – and it's happening in Carrickfergus!

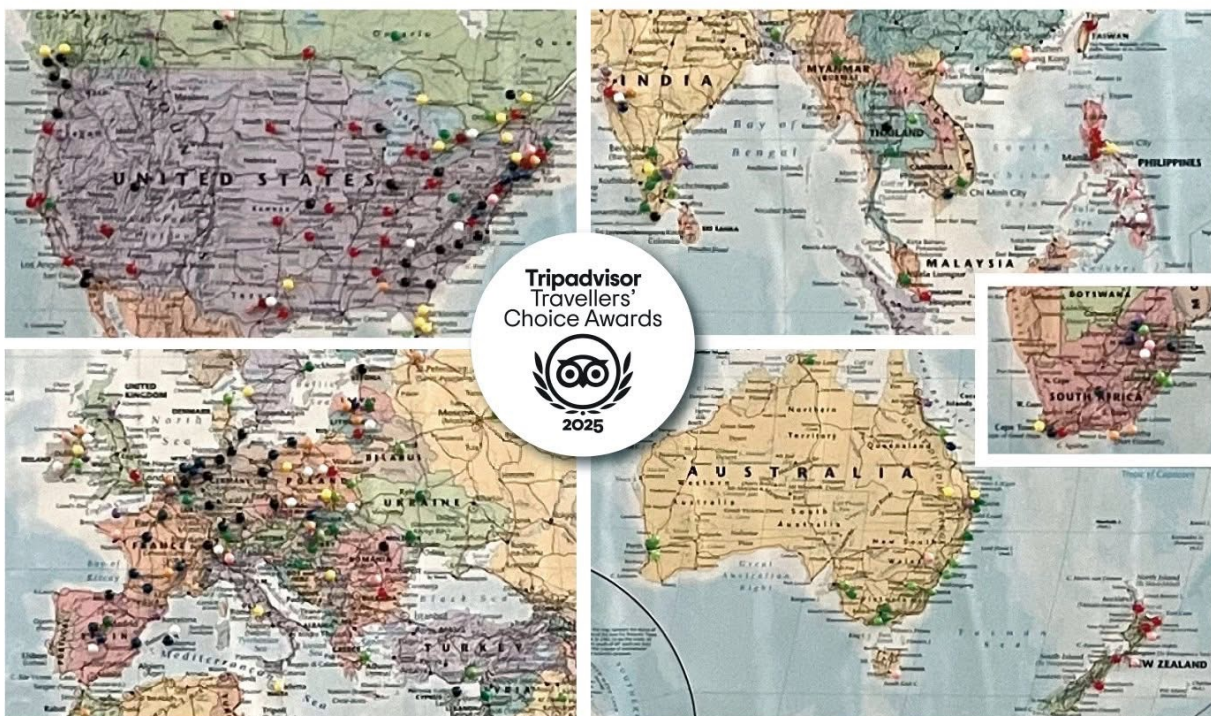
Thursday 4th September in Carrickfergus Town Centre - the incredible Band of the Irish Guards

This is a rare appearance for the Irish Guards in Northern Ireland – and you won't want to miss their full ceremonial glory. Expect precision marching, proud tradition, and a truly unforgettable atmosphere.

No tickets needed – just show up! Everyone's welcome – bring the family and enjoy the event. Event details may be subject to change, so please check official Irish Guards or local council channels for the most up-to-date information before attending.

Another Trip Advisor award for Ulster Aviation Society

UAS — INTERNATIONAL TOURISM MAGNET!



Tourists from all over the world visit the UAS hangars

For a fantastic, family-friendly day out...
European Heritage Open Days Weekend
SAT/SUN 13th ~ 14th SEPT
FREE ENTRY – No Ticket Required!



The Ulster Aviation Society won the Trip Advisor Travellers' Choice Award 2025, making it 5 years in a row.

We are so chuffed to announce that the Ulster Aviation Society has won the Trip Advisor Travellers' Choice Award 2025, making it 5 years in a row.

As our picture shows, we're pulling in visitors from all over the world proving that our unique collection of aircraft and vehicles has truly global appeal.

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We love being a go-to attraction for visitors in Lisburn & Castlereagh and a unique stop for international tourists exploring Northern Ireland. We're proud to be a key part of our local tourism scene.

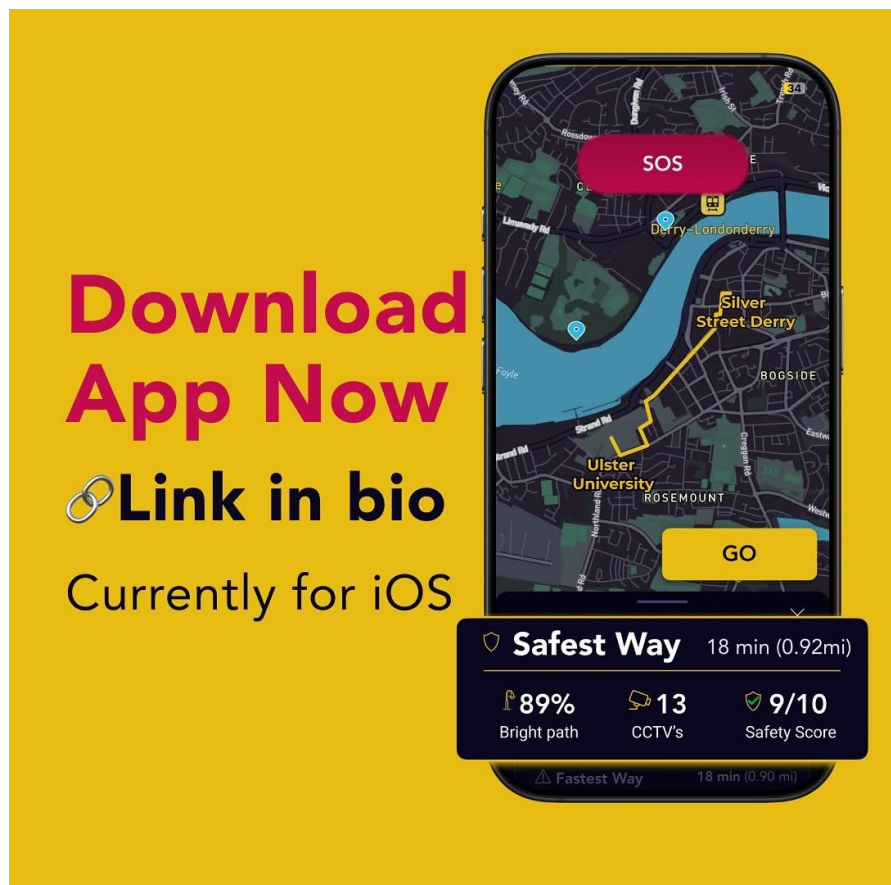
A massive thank you to every single person who visited, left a review on TripAdvisor or Google, and to our amazing volunteers. You made this happen!

Come and see for yourself what all the fuss is about. Book a FREE Guided Tour on our website now, or bring your family and friends to our European Heritage Open Days weekend on 13th-14th September, 2025

Resources

Safest Way launched in Northern Ireland

Proud to partner with the incredible Inner City Assistance Team NI, a volunteer group keeping people safe in Derry/Londonderry.



Download App Now

[Link in bio](#)

Currently for iOS

SOS

GO

Safest Way 18 min (0.92mi)

89% Bright path 13 CCTV's 9/10 Safety Score

Fastest Way 18 min (0.90 mi)



In partnership with Inner City Assistance Team NI. A volunteer group keeping people safe in the heart of Derry/Londonderry.

Safest Way gives you walking routes based on:

✅ Street lighting ✅ CCTV coverage ✅ Crime stats & local insights

It's time to rethink nighttime walking.
Tag a friend who walks alone at night

Download now on iOS <https://safestway.co.uk/>



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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