

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – The Nest on Maritime Mile

August 21, 2025

The Nest on Maritime Mile

Did you know? The Nest sculpture is inspired by both a bird's nest and a ship's crow's nest, symbolising the site's maritime heritage and the return of nature.

Late nights at City Quays Gardens, Belfast ✨

Belfast Maritime Festival Brings Local Flavours to the Waterfront!



Visitors to this year's Belfast Maritime Festival on Saturday 6th and Sunday 7th September will be treated to a new quay-side Artisan Producers Market, championing the very best of Northern Ireland's food scene.

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Funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) through the NI Regional Food Programme. The market will shine a spotlight on local producers, from freshly baked goods to sustainably sourced seafood, handcrafted jams, spirits and sweet treats. Festivalgoers will have the chance to meet the makers, hear their stories, and experience the passion, craft and creativity that goes into every product, from field to fork and dock to dish.

Read the full story here\><https://bit.ly/4mLZGTw>

Don't miss your chance to come face-to-face with dinosaurs at W5 Belfast !

Embark on a journey into a world where dinosaurs roam again! Check out the IAPD headquarters where dino experts



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will introduce you to some curious young dinosaurs. If you're lucky, you might even see some hatching from their eggs! Adventurous explorers can also step into the Carnivore Enclosure with some of the world's most ferocious hunters, including the Spinosaurus, Carnotaurus, and the most famous dinosaur of all, the T. Rex. 🦖

Running daily until 31 August.

Plan your adventure: bit.ly/W5DinosaursSurvive

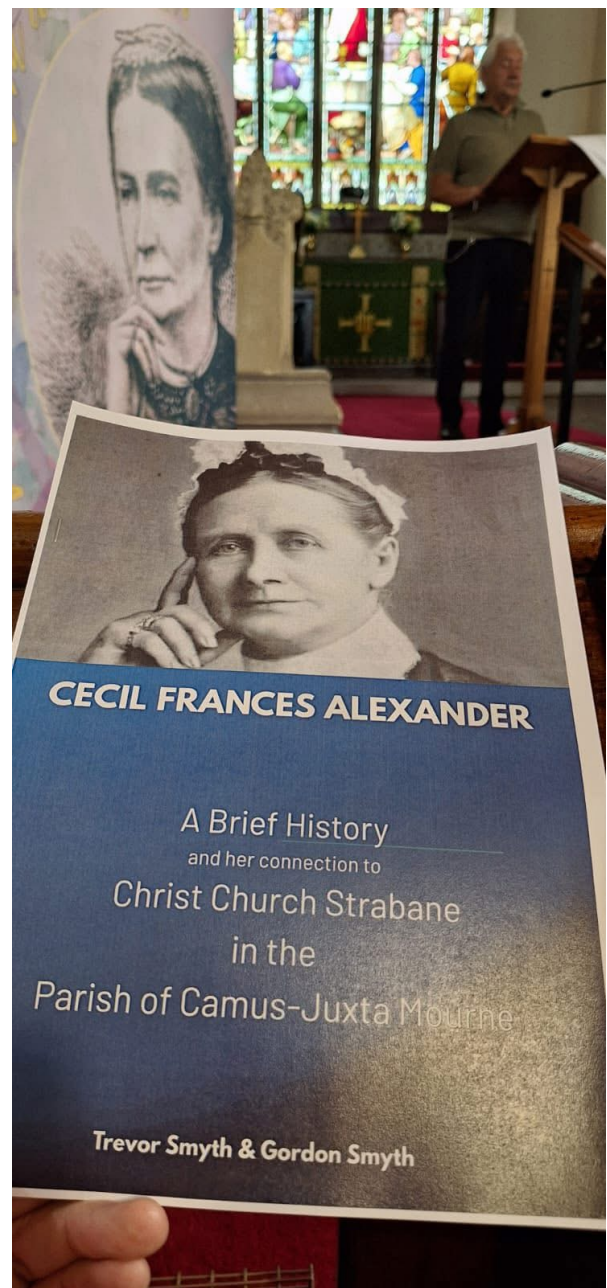
News

Cecil Frances Alexander Project

Christ Church Strabane was delighted to host the second meeting of the Cecil Frances Alexander Celebrated Project steering group led by Sinead Smyth of the Churches Trust.

After the business end was completed, refreshments were provided in the hall.

Afterwards, the group was invited to tour the church and hear a talk from Gordon on the history of the church and the



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special links with Cecil Frances Alexander. Thank you to all who prepared the church and provided the refreshments, music, and sound.



As part of the project, there will be a **creative workshop** held in the hall on 9th October where participants, young and old, can make willow tree lanterns.

There will also be an **All Souls Lantern Walk** on 1st November when the willow tree lanterns will be paraded through the town stopping off at places of faith and significant places related to Cecil Frances Alexander. More details to follow.

There is also a **creative writing workshop. Each Bird Sings** being held in Strabane Community Partnership Grass Roots Cafe and tickets are available through eventbrite online.

Christ Church Strabane is excited to be involved in the Cecil Frances Alexander Celebrated Project, a cross community initiative in collaboration the Churches Trust supported by Peace Plus.

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Service of Dedication – Tamlaght O’Crilly Upper Church

**This Derry &
Raphoe parish
warmly invites
you to a special
Service of
Dedication at
Tamlaght O’Crilly
Upper Church on
Sunday 7th
September at
12:15 PM.**

This meaningful
occasion
celebrates faith, community, and the work of God in our
midst.

We’re honoured to welcome Bishop Andrew as our guest
preacher, bringing encouragement and insight as we
dedicate this space afresh for worship and witness.

Refreshments will be served afterwards in the church hall,
offering a chance to connect, share stories, and enjoy
fellowship together.

**TAMLAGHT O’CRILLY UPPER
CHURCH**



**SERVICE OF
DEDICATION**

SUNDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER • 12:15 PM

**GUEST PREACHER:
BISHOP ANDREW**

Refreshments afterwards in the church hall



Whether you're a regular member, a returning friend, or simply looking for a warm welcome—you'll be most welcome.

Priest deported from Israel after condemning Gaza military action

An Italian Catholic priest has been deported from Israel after he described the country's military action in Gaza as “the genocide of the Palestinian people.”

Don Nandino Capovilla, from Venice, was travelling with a Pax Christi Italy pilgrimage to Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and the West Bank when he was stopped at Ben-Gurion Airport and detained for seven hours before being flown back to Italy via Cyprus and Frankfurt, as reported by The New Arab.

“I do not authorise any journalist to interview me about my seven hours of detention unless they also write about the people who have been prisoners in their own land for seventy years,” Capovilla said, urging focus on the ongoing suffering in Gaza.

Archbishop Giovanni Ricchiuti, leading the delegation, said no official explanation was given for the deportation but believes it is linked to Capovilla's recent book *Under the Gaza Sky*, which compiles testimonies condemning the “ongoing massacre” of Palestinians.

He added: “We’re here, from Rome and Venice, on a pilgrimage as part of our campaign for justice and peace: [build] bridges, not walls.”

The Pax Christi delegation is calling on the Italian government to condemn Israel, halt arms exports, and recognise a Palestinian state.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has defended plans to “take control” of Gaza City, calling it the “best way” to end the war, although this move has been condemned by several UN ambassadors at a security council meeting.

The US defended Israel at the meeting, with Ambassador Dorothy Shea saying Israel's efforts to free hostages and end the conflict were being undermined. She also dismissed genocide claims as "demonstrably false" and added that the war "could end today if Hamas let the hostages go".

<https://catholicbishops.ie/2025/07/25/lectionary-group-from-australia-ireland-and-new-zealand-meet-in-maynooth/>

Lectionary group from Australia, Ireland, and New Zealand met in Maynooth

On 24-25 July, representatives from the Bishops’ Conferences of Australia, Ireland, New Zealand met at the Columba Centre of Saint Patrick’s College, Maynooth, to discuss the progress of the Joint Lectionary Project.

The project commission includes, Bishop Stephen Lowe, Bishop of Auckland and President of the New Zealand

Representatives from the three conferences met in Adelaide in 2023, where the decision was made to work together to develop a new Lectionary based on the Revised New Jerusalem Bible. In October 2024, Mr Foster began his role as Director for the Joint Lectionary Project.

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month to consider the submitted comments and revise the text as necessary.

At its meeting in Maynooth, the commission reviewed the complete text of the first of four volumes, which contains the readings for Sundays and Solemnities. The commission also considered the publication of the Lectionary and the appointment of a publisher.

The next stage will be preparation of texts for the two volumes for weekday Masses and the celebration of Saints, which will be completed by May 2026, and the final volume, which includes Masses for the celebration of the Sacraments and funerals, should be concluded by the end of 2026.

At the meeting, the group also launched a book by Father Xavier titled *Preparing for the New Lectionary*. The publication features the complete text of the General Introduction to the Lectionary, selected papal documents, and newly written essays aimed at assisting parishes and other interested people in preparing for the publication of the new edition.

The bishops expressed their gratitude to all those who have contributed to the process so far.

For over fifty years, parishes and communities across the island of Ireland, Australia and New Zealand have listened to Scripture readings that are drawn from the same translations given in the current Lectionary for Mass. Many of these Lectionary books are now in a poor state and in need of replacing. The bishops of these three countries

have recognised that now is an opportunity for a new edition of the Lectionary, taking advantage of a revised translation of the readings, which is both accessible and faithful to the evolving nuances of the English language and contemporary biblical scholarship.

Multiple attacks on Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza City the oldest and only Christian hospital in Gaza

The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East has issued a statement about multiple attacks on Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza City on 17 August. Seven people were killed and five were injured.

Part of the statement reads: "As the owner and manager of this, the oldest and only Christian hospital in Gaza, the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem condemns these multiple attacks and calls upon all parties to cease from making this sacred place of healing into a battleground, contrary to Articles 18 and 19 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Moreover, we implore the Occupying Power to fulfill its duty of protecting ours and other medical facilities in Gaza, as mandated under Article 56 of that same treaty."

"We invite Christians and all people of goodwill around the world to pray and advocate on behalf of the courageous staff of our hospital - and, indeed, those of all such institutions in the combat zone - that they may continue without further assaults..."

Please join in praying for peace.

USPG stands united with partners in the Diocese of Jerusalem and Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City

“We stand united with our partners in the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East following the recent drone strike on Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City which killed seven people and severely injured five others”.

Sawsan Aranki-Batato, Programs Development Officer for the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East said: “We are so saddened and still shocked. Yesterday at around 2:00 AM, an Israeli airstrike struck the courtyard of Al Ahli Hospital, resulting in the tragic loss of seven people. No injuries or fatalities have been reported among our staff or patients. Our medical team provided life-saving treatment to those wounded in the attack, who remain admitted to our inpatient department and under our care at the hospital.”

Please join us as we continue to pray for an end to the violence and for those who are working tirelessly to bring about long-term peace in the region.

‘Affront to human dignity’ – Archbishop of Dublin on attacks on hospital in Gaza

“It is with shock and sadness that we in the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough learn of the latest attack on the Al–Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City.

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“Such an attack on a place of sanctuary for those who are ill and injured is an affront to human dignity for everyone who holds with the sacredness of life.

“We stand in prayerful solidarity with those who work in the hospital and those who seek treatment there. Need and compassion connect us across the world.

“The United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough has a special relationship with the Diocese of Jerusalem and Al Ahli Arab Hospital. Just over a year ago we welcomed Archbishop Hosam and his clergy to Dublin on retreat.

“This bond of Christian friendship was more recently expressed in our diocesan Shine a Light Appeal. This appeal raised crucial funds to rebuild Al Ahli Arab Hospital, the oldest and only Christian hospital in Gaza, and to assist with the healthcare outreach of the Diocese of Jerusalem. We continue to thank all who have given generously.

“I encourage you all to hold the people who work and seek treatment in the hospital in your prayers as they once again seek to rebuild and regroup in the face of the ongoing threats and unimaginable hardships.

“In these dioceses we will continue to stand with our brothers and sisters in Christ and assist in any way possible.” - Archbishop Michael Jackson.

[https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2025/08/19/affront-to-human-dignity-statement?](https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2025/08/19/affront-to-human-dignity-statement?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook)

[utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook](https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2025/08/19/affront-to-human-dignity-statement?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook)

Education

Belfast High School farewell

We said farewell to Miss J McMullan, Head of Home Economics.

We wish her very success as she moves on to her new post as Head of Department in her alma mater, Strathearn School.



Cathedral Calls

York Minster tour ticket price more expensive than the Vatican

York Minster has defended its decision to increase its standard admission fee by 60 per cent, raising the price from £12.50 to £20.

The Minster says the rise is necessary to cover inflation and the added costs of repairing damage caused by climate change, with heavy rainfall leading to further deterioration of the stonework—especially in hard-to-reach areas.

The cathedral costs £33,000 each day to maintain. While it does receive funding from the Church of England to pay

clergy, it receives no government support and relies heavily on donations to prevent the building from deteriorating.

Paul Peirson, the Minster's head of works, told the BBC that raising enough money is a constant challenge, with £2 million per year set aside for preservation and improvements. He added that this is not enough to cover both materials and labour.

Entry remains free for those attending worship or coming in to pray.

The price increase has come as a shock to some tourists, who point out that it is now cheaper to visit other iconic religious sites such as the Vatican, where a tour ticket to St Peter's Basilica is 20 euros (around £17.50).

The York Minster ticket acts as an annual pass, allowing multiple visits throughout the year, although this may not benefit visitors who are only passing through the city.

Speaking to the BBC, 72-year-old Alan Pilkington said he "can't afford £20, not at our age. I'm afraid we won't be going in again" but acknowledged that the Minster "need to get the money from somewhere".

Michael Firth, 75, described the price as "outrageous", adding: "Alright, ask for donations, but don't pay, bloomin' heck!"

York Minster says carers, children and local residents can visit free of charge. Sightseeing entry is also included with some York tourism passes.

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The building is regarded as one of the city's major landmarks and attracts around 700,000 visitors every year. Its Gothic structure is about 800 years old.

By comparison, St Peter's Basilica in Rome receives around 11 million visitors annually.

York Minster was built as the cathedral for the Archbishop of York and as a symbol of the power, wealth and faith of the medieval Church. It is often considered the religious centre of the North of England.

Clergy and ministry

Archdeacons on the move

Archdeacon Mark Harvey is currently on a Shankill 2 Shankill fundraising walk and heading for Newcastle.

He stopped in Hillsborough Parish and grabbed a bite to eat with Canon Bryan Follis and the Shankill Parish





Lurgan team and hosts from Hillsborough Parish Church

The Archdeacon of Belfast, the Ven Barry Forde, is preparing for the Tour de 4 charity cycle challenge taking place in Glasgow on September 7.



The event, instigated by Olympian Sir Chris Hoy who was diagnosed with Stage 4 Prostate Cancer, will involve some 5,000 people, all cycling and raising funds for cancer charities across the UK.

Barry is aiming to raise money for the Belfast-based Friends of the Cancer Centre.

His cycle will be preceded on August 29 by an evening of music and stories all in aid of the Cancer Centre which is right next door in St Aidan's in Sandy Row, part of the Blackstaff Mission Area. The evening will take place in St Aidan's from 7-9pm and will feature music, open mic, tea, coffee and tasty treats. A warm welcome is extended to all.

Barry is no stranger to cycling challenges – in May 2019, he and a team from the Hub Chaplaincy cycled 450 miles from Mizen to Malin Head over four days, raising funds for Abaana and Waakisi, and last year he joined Armagh Diocesan

Communications Officer Jonathan Hull for 110 miles of Jonathan's 390 mile around Northern Ireland challenge. You can sponsor Barry's two-wheeled fundraiser online

Minister-in-charge at St Molua's, Stormont





It was a wonderful evening in St Molua's, Stormont as Laurence Bellew was introduced as Minister-in-charge. A warm welcome too for Millie and Daniel.

Perspective

Burmah Star reflections post VJ80

I had the good fortune to be chaplain for 29 years to the Royal Artillery army reserve regiment in Northern Ireland and Scotland, Houston McKelvey writes.

The regiment was the direct successor to the 8th (Belfast) Heavy Anti-Aircraft Regiment which served on the



withdrawal to Dunkirk, and some London air raids, before being posted to Burmah.

I learned that they had driven from what became West Pakistan, across the India sub-continent, up the Indus and down the Ganges valleys before getting to their war in Burmah.

In time I learned about their war. Lowering the angle of their large guns from skywards to fire at ground targets. The memorial service to remember their dead which they held before leaving Burmah. Held in a small church they had built.

Over and above their regimental story what impressed me was the calibre of people I was meeting who had served

under **Colonel Jimmy Cunningham** whose family owned the Northern Whig newspaper in Belfast. Men like **Sir Robin Kinahan**, who later served as Lord Mayor of Belfast, but who as a church warden at Belfast Cathedral together with Dean Cuthbert Peacock, a former wartime chaplain, assisted the Rev Chad Varah to establish the Samaritans in the city.

Men like **Norman Brann** who with Sir Robin were Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenants for Belfast. I remember Norman's concern and involvement with the Somme Nursing home.

Norman, **Harry Porter** and another Far East veteran **Jack Baillie** built their own fruit importing company after the war.

Harry became our honorary colonel and I learned of his passion for making cine films long before it became popular. I saw an expert from the Imperial War Museum barely able to contain himself whilst watching a screening of some of them which just recently in 2025 were shown again by BBC NI.

This core of leaders impacted on me. As I went around the city in the early seventies I also would meet men who wore their Burmah Star Association badge in their suits at work.

The fact that I could recognise it and said so, led to many interesting chats.

The overwhelming number of these men had never been further than Bangor on a Sunday School excursion before the war. After it they had been to Dunkirk, endured London



blitzes, and Burmah. They had survived the worst of war and returned.

One of Harry's short films showed their ship coming in to Larne bringing the regiment home after the ceasefire and Japanese surrender. The very buildings told of the age and the impact of war restrictions.

What memories these men brought back. Some were every bit as horrible and some worse than those we know about from more recent wars and conflicts.

Jack, a Gunner officer with another regiment, had been a Japanese prisoner of war. His best friend was caught trying to escape. I know exactly where Jack and I were, when he told me he had been made to watch whilst his friend kneeling on the ground, was beheaded by a Japanese officer using his sword.

I had known Jack for years, and it was a few months after his beloved wife had died that he told me of this horrible experience. Nancy as his girlfriend had waited for him to return. Ministering to Jack in that time of sudden bereavement formed a bond between us which gave me a memory of him and his wife which I cherish and will never forget.

I think of those who served at sea and in the air. Men like the late **Lord Cooke of Islandreagh**, a naval engineering officer, who was the last President of the Belfast Branch of the Burmah Star. I think of the men of the **Inniskillings** who fought in the **Arakan Peninsular** in one of the most deadly areas of the Far East conflict.

Having visited Commonwealth War Graves at Trincomalee and Singapore I have been moved by the immense cost their headstones and memorials convey.

I think of the day I gave the eulogy at the funeral of the first colonel I served in the reserve regiment. He had forged his age, joined the RAF in WW2, and flew over “the hump” - the Himalayas - into China. As I was standing outside Portrush Parish church after the service, a fairly hard man I know, came up to me. He had tears in his eyes as he said to me, “It was O’Hara’s squadron which flew us home from the

camps". **O'Hara Logan** was also the principal teacher of the town's primary school.

I was privileged to be asked to serve as Chaplain to the **Burmah Star Branch in Belfast**. My life was enriched by the men and women I met through our periodic encounters.

I shared their grief that as nature took its course and numbers dwindled, that it was better to close the branch whilst we could still muster to honour those who had gone before both in time of war and in the time of peace they helped directly to secure.

I thank God for **Jim Lennon** who died aged 103. Jim and his daughter did more than anyone I know to record the stories of those from Northern Ireland who served in Burmah. It is a story which must not be allowed to die through neglect.

In all the services I took part in during my years at Belfast Cathedral, that in which we laid the colours of the branch on the altar, and didn't return them at the end of the service, certainly and rightly is one of the foremost memories.

And each day, I was privileged to pass the pavement memorial in the north aisle showing the Burmah Star and that commission of **the Khohima Epitaph** - When you go home tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow we gave our today.

Today we are still the guests of their hospitality and their faith that they were securing a better society.

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We thank God for all those who served their King and country in the Burma campaign,
For those who gave their life in the cause of freedom
For those who returned and kept faith with the fallen,
and worked on behalf of widows, children and stricken comrades,

We thank God for their loyalty to each other
and for all that was good and noble in their lives.

May we continue to keep faith with them

For our today
they gave their tomorrow.

We say this in the name of Christ who knew about untimely death,

Christ who wept at the grave of a friend
and promised us new life and a better future. Amen

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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Church News Ireland

www.churchnewsireland.org

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

Please recommend to your friends