



***The Holy See confirmed that the Pontiff has approved the attribution of a miracle to Jesuit priest and teacher John Sullivan (1861-1933), enabling him to be beatified. Response of Archbishop Martin of Armagh in this issue.***

## **Catholic Church pair to walk 280km across Ireland for C of I church repair scheme**

Eamonn O'Connor and Mickey McKevitt, members of the Star of the Sea Catholic Church in Rostrevor, County Down, have set off on their

long walk from Rostrevor the week to help 'raise the roof' on Kilbroney Parish Church.

News Letter - The walk began from the Church of Ireland, Rostrevor, and then Mr O'Connor and Mr McKevitt were taken by boat across Carlingford Lough and walk on to Dundalk and then onwards to Croagh Patrick.

They hope to finish their strenuous walk by climbing Croagh Patrick on Saturday, May 7 and, in the course of this, raise much needed funds for the roof repairs.

Interestingly both men have taken time off work and are doing this walk totally at their own expense.

When asked about the walking project and why they were doing it, they replied: "We felt it was the natural thing to do."

The walk will take the two local men some 280 kilometres east to west across the width of Ireland.

Kilbroney Parish Church, built in 1821, urgently needs a new roof and requires structural repairs.

The estimated cost of this and other essential work is £230,000. Kilbroney is only one of 16

ringing towers in Northern Ireland. It also has a set of 14 hand bells which were recently refurbished.

## “This is the Day” theme for Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women  
Living out justice

**THIS IS THE DAY**  
...every new day He does not fail  
Zephariah 3:5

Presbyterian

**Annual Meeting 2016**  
Thursday 5th May 2016 @ 2.00pm and repeated on Friday 6th May 2016 @ 7.15pm in Assembly Buildings, Belfast

Guest Speaker: Elaine Duncan  
Praise led by Graham Hawthorne

**Seminar Event 2016**  
This is Your Day - Joining with God in His work everyday  
Guest Speaker: Elaine Duncan  
Friday 6th May 2016 3.00-3.45pm

Join us as we worship God together and launch our theme for 2016/17, This is the Day, with guest speaker Elaine Duncan.

Elaine is Chief Executive of the Scottish Bible Society which supports the translation, production and distribution of the Bible around the world. She is not only enthusiastic about people having a Bible in their own language, but also in helping them understand it and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Find us on Facebook: Presbyterian Women  
Follow us on Twitter: @PWNIreland  
[www.presbyterianwomen.org/pw](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/pw)

The annual meeting of Presbyterian Women will take place on Thursday, 5th May 2016 at 2pm and repeated on Friday, 6th May at 7.15pm. In Assembly's Building, Belfast.

They will launch their theme for 2016/17, *This is the Day*, with guest speaker Elaine Duncan and praise led by Graham Hawthorne.

Elaine Duncan is Chief Executive of the Scottish Bible Society which supports the translation, production and distribution of the Bible around the world. She is not only enthusiastic about people having a Bible in their own language, but also in helping them understand it and grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

There will also be a seminar - “ This is your Day – joining with God in His work everyday”. Guest Speaker: Elaine Duncan. Friday, 6th May 2016 at 3.00-3.45pm

## **“The Big Picture” theme of Down and Dromore Bible week**

The theme for this year’s Bible Week with Revd Dr Iain Provan is, *The Big Picture: Reading the Bible for All That’s There*.

Iain, who has been the Marshall Sheppard Professor of Biblical Studies at Regent College, Vancouver, since 1997, will give a talk on each of the 4 nights under the following titles:

- Tuesday 30 August – In the Beginning and Now: God Creates  
(Psalm 104:24–35)
- Wednesday 31 August – Of Covenants and Promises: God Commits  
(2 Samuel 7:4–16)
- Thursday 1 September – Of Evil and Suffering: God Saves  
(Psalm 73:1–14)
- Friday 2 September 2 – A Holy People: God Calls  
(Isaiah 42:1–9)



***Revd Dr Iain Provan***

Born and educated in the UK, Dr Provan retains strong family, academic, and church connections

with his homeland. He received his MA at Glasgow University in Mediaeval History and Archaeology, his BA from London Bible College in Theology, and his PhD from Cambridge, where his thesis focused on the books of Kings, and was subsequently published as *Hezekiah and the Books of Kings*. His academic teaching career took him to King's College London, the University of Wales, and the University of Edinburgh, where he was a senior lecturer in Hebrew and Old Testament Studies. Dr. Provan has written numerous essays and articles, and several books.

The venue is Willowfield Church, Belfast, from 30 August – 2 September each night at 7.45 pm. All are invited.

## **Church looks at homelessness in Northern Ireland**

The Church and Society Commission of the Church of Ireland organised an information event on homelessness in Northern Ireland on Wednesday past at the Skainos Centre in East Belfast. The event was attended by 25 clergy and church workers who heard presentations

from Kerry Anthony, CEO of DePaul Ireland, Kelan McClelland, Head of Service for Homelessness Prevention with Simon Community NI, and Kathy Maguire, from Council for the Homeless NI's Youth Unit.

The Rt Revd Alan Abernethy, Bishop of Connor, who opened the event, said: "We are called by Jesus to be there for people wherever they are, especially those who are the most vulnerable. I am confident that the knowledge and passion shared by our speakers will inspire churches to discover the most effective ways to help and support people who are homeless in our society." Issues covered in the presentations and question and answer sessions included the scale of the problem, causes of homelessness, rough sleeping, the need for investment in social housing, youth homelessness, and volunteer programmes in which churches can participate.

The Revd Adrian Dorrian, Chairman of the Church and Society Commission, remarked: "This was a challenging but encouraging event. The speakers prompted those present to ask seriously what our churches can do to support the positive work that charities and statutory agencies are doing. In that sense, today was the

start of what I hope will be an ongoing conversation among and between churches and service providers.” The Commission plans to run a similar event, on homelessness in the Republic of Ireland, in Dublin later this year.

## **Northern Ireland abortion law 'criminalises women' says Amnesty**

Amnesty International has called for a change to Northern Ireland's abortion law, which it branded “cruel and discriminatory”, as another 'abortion pills' case came before the courts in Belfast on 27 April 2016, concerning a woman accused of supplying pills to assist her under-age daughter to induce a miscarriage.

The woman was due to be arraigned at Belfast Crown Court on two charges of procuring a poison or other noxious substance - namely Mifepristone and Misoprostol - knowing that it was to be used with the intention of securing a miscarriage.

However, the case was adjourned until a future date due to legal wrangling over whether or not



the case should be allowed to proceed. The woman, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was charged under the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act and could face a sentence of up to life imprisonment. Last month a 21-year-old Northern Ireland woman was given a three-month suspended prison sentence, after pleading guilty under the same law, to taking pills to procure a miscarriage.

Amnesty International Northern Ireland Programme Director Patrick Corrigan, who was in Belfast Crown Court, said: “The criminalisation of women in Northern Ireland is becoming a grim trend, with this second court case in a matter of weeks.

“How many more women are we to see hauled into the dock before these archaic laws are consigned to the history books where they belong? Northern Ireland’s cruel and discriminatory abortion law must go.

“Reproductive healthcare must be taken out of the realm of criminal justice and addressed as an issue of public health and human rights. Abortion is a matter for women and their doctors, not police and judges.”

Medicated abortion pills are internationally regarded as a safe and recommended option for terminating a pregnancy in the first trimester. Mifepristone and Misoprostol are on the list of essential medicines of the World Health Organisation. However, the criminalisation of abortion in Northern Ireland means that women and girls take these pills without effective medical supervision, therefore potentially resulting in serious health complications.

\* More on Amnesty's campaign for reform of the abortion law in Northern Ireland [here](#).

\*Amnesty International <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/>

See also -

Sinn Fein's first act in the next Assembly term will be to propose legislation to allow same-sex marriage in Northern Ireland.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/sinn-fein-pledges-new-proposal-on-same-sex-marriage-law-1-7353836>

## **Refurbished Chapel at Cork school dedicated**

Ashton House, a Church of Ireland comprehensive school in Cork, was refurbished completely in the course of the recent building of [churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)



***The procession from the sports hall at Ashton School, Cork to the chapel for the Liturgy of Re-Dedication. Front (left to right): school chaplain, Drew Ruttle, the Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton, and the Reverend David Bowles with, behind, students, staff and guests attending the Service.***

a new school. Under the watchful eye of school Chaplain, Mr Drew Ruttle, the Principal, Mr Adrian Landen, and the Deputy Principal, Ms Anne Marie Hewison, the chapel was also refurbished. Students and staff were included in the consultation process. A new altar was purchased with a grant from the Church of Ireland Priorities Fund, and a new piano, glassware and linens were also purchased. A

new cross was made from the wood of the old altar as was a wall mount for plaques. Wall hangings were designed and made by students. All of this was dedicated by the Bishop of Cork, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, at a special liturgy in the school on Saint Mark's Day, 25th April. The entire school assembled in the sports hall for the opening part of the Service, then the Bishop led a group of students, board members, staff and guests to the Chapel where he presided at the celebration of the Eucharist during which the new gifts were dedicated and the new altar was consecrated. A reception followed for everyone in the board room, also in Ashton House. Ashton School has had a school chapel since 1988. That year, on Saint Andrew's Day (30th November) the Bishop of the day, the Right Reverend Roy Warke, dedicated a room in the original Georgian building (known as Ashton House) as a small chapel for use by the school community.

## **Archbishop welcomes Pope's approval of beatification of Venerable John Sullivan**

Archbishop Eamon Martin has welcomed the news that Pope Francis has approved the beatification of Venerable John Sullivan SJ.

Archbishop Eamon said, “It is wonderful news that Pope Francis has approved the decree that has authenticated a miracle attributed to Jesuit priest Father John Sullivan. I know that the news will be welcomed by all those, in Ireland and around the world, who have a devotion to him and who have been inspired by his ministry.”

He continued, “Father Sullivan had great time for and devotion to the sick. He was a man who had a great gift of consolation and healing to those who were sick. In recalling his ministry to the sick today I was reminded of the words of Pope Francis in his message for the World Day of the Sick this year in which he said,

“let us ask Jesus in his mercy, to grant to all of us this same readiness to be serve those in need, and, in particular, our infirm brothers and sisters. At times this service can be tiring and burdensome, yet we are certain that the Lord will surely turn our human efforts into something divine. We too can be hands, arms and hearts which help God to perform his miracles, so often hidden”.

“Father John Sullivan had that readiness to serve those who were in need. It is because of his reputation as a holy and healing person that so many people still visit his tomb in Gardiner Street Church in Dublin each year to pray for his intercession.

In reflecting on Father Sullivan’s dedication to those who were sick, I think of all those who minister to the sick today – hospital chaplains, nurses, doctors, carers and all those who quietly take care of a loved one who is suffering from ill health – and give thanks for their dedication.

“In particular I wish to pay tribute to the Jesuit community for their ministry in education and social justice in Ireland. I know that today’s news will be warmly received by the Society of Jesus. I offer a prayer of thanks for the life of Father John Sullivan SJ and will continue to pray for the cause of his canonisation.”

Archbishop Eamon Martin is Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland.

Father John Sullivan was born in 1861 and entered the Jesuit Order in 1900. He died on 19 February 1933. More information on the life and works of John Sullivan is available at [frjohnsullivan.ie/](http://frjohnsullivan.ie/) and at

March 2

[www.gardinerstreetparish.ie](http://www.gardinerstreetparish.ie) which holds  
the John Sullivan Cross

## **Funeral of Sister Clare Crockett to be on Monday**



The funeral of Sister Clare Crockett will take place in the Long Tower Church in Londonderry on Monday at noon.

The remains of Sister Clare who was killed in the last week's earthquake in Ecuador, will be brought home on Friday night. Her funeral Mass

will be celebrated by Bishop of Derry Donal McKeown.

Sister Clare Theresa Crockett (33) from Iona Terrace in the Brandywell was among the 520 people to lose their lives in the tragedy last week.

In a statement issued last week Sister Clare's relatives said: "We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who have contacted our family, visited the family home and donated to the effort to bring Sister Clare home to Derry."

## **Tribute : David Hull lay Methodist preacher**

A former businessman who died after a car accident has been described as "a humble and self-effacing Christian gentleman" who was honoured by the Queen for services to Methodism.

News Letter - David Hull, 89, from Portadown, died following a collision on the Road in Clabby, Co Fermanagh, on Sunday shortly before 7.15pm. Police said he was taken to hospital for treatment and died the following day.





***David Hill following Royal Maundy service in Armagh***

It is understood he was discharged with no significant injuries and it has not yet been determined whether the crash was linked to his death; he also had pre-existing health issues. A post mortem has been carried out.

He and his wife Ethel started and run a chain of Christian bookshops for many years and he served as a lay preacher in the Portadown and other Methodist circuits.

Mr Hull also served the Methodist Home Mission for 13 years during the 1950s and 1960s, distributing Christian literature and touring all over Ireland, mainly on a motorcycle.

As well as his wife, he is survived by sons Jonathan and Stephen, daughters-in-law Suzanne and Anna, and grandchildren Amy, Christopher, Laura, Jacob and Ella.

Rev Aian Ferguson of Edenderry Methodist Church in Portadown paid a warm tribute to Mr Hull's character.

“David was simply a humble, self-effacing Christian gentleman and a great family man,” he said.

“He loved history and gardening, growing his own vegetables and many other flowers and plants. He was also a lay preacher for many years and was a very faithful member of the church.”

The clergyman noted that Mr Hull and his wife had opened and run Christian bookshops in Kilkeel, Rathfriland, Portadown and Banbridge.

The couple had travelled to Fermanagh on Sunday to visit relatives and while there attended a special annual church service on the theme of friendship at Clabby Church of Ireland.

In 2008 Mr Hull's many years of service to the Methodist Church in Ireland were recognised when the Queen presented him with Maundy Money during her visit to Armagh.

Accompanied by Mrs Hull, he received the famous red and white purses, with one containing a specially minted five pence coin and a 50p piece, and the other 82p in the Royal Maundy money; the significance of the number 82 was the Queen's age in 2008.

The Queen made the presentation, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral in Armagh.

## News briefs

Omagh clergy bid a fond farewell to **Rev Jo Sweeney of Omagh Methodist church** who retires in June this year. A colleague said, "We will miss him at our bi-monthly clergy lunches and at the Omagh churches forum. We will also miss his positive and gracious Christian witness to the wider omagh community and wish him a happy and fruitful retirement."

## Cathedral and choral

[Holy Family Parish Belfast](#) is the venue for a Concert featuring the Notre Dame Folk Choir on Monday 23rd May at 7.30pm. This is a unique opportunity to hear these acclaimed singers and musicians. Please come along and enjoy a delightful evening and give a big welcome to these visitors from Indiana, United States.



 **Holy Family Church** 

226 Limestone Road, Belfast BT15 3AP

*invites you to join us for*

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*Steven C. Warner, Director*

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Holy Family Parish Office: T: 90743119

Email: [holyfamily@downandconnor.org](mailto:holyfamily@downandconnor.org)

*Free admission*

*with retiring collection in aid of Parish Funds*

*Refreshments will be served afterwards*

Admission is free with a retiring collection for Parish Funds. Everyone is warmly invited. For

more information email:  
holyfamily@downandconnor.org

At a reception in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin on 25th April, presentations and speeches were made on behalf of the Cathedral Staff, Choir School, Board, Chapter and friends to mark the retirement of **Dean Victor Stacey**. It was held in the beautiful Lady Chapel which was restored during his four year tenure. The function followed the Dean's valedictory service of Evensong.

## **News links to reports on faith, politics and education**

### **Catholic church defends land deal Irish News**

The Catholic Church has said it believed it "would not be acting in the best interests" of a Co Down parish if it had turned down a supermarket's land deal offer. In a statement from the priests of the parish of Maghera, they confirmed the former St Mary's Girls' Primary School site in Newcastle had been sold to Lidl. It brings to an end the hopes of Newry, Mourne and Down council that the land at Shanslieve Drive could become the site for a new leisure centre, including a swimming pool.

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2016/04/28/news/catholic-church-defends-co-down->

land-deal-501053/?  
mc\_cid=8266386504&mc\_eid=23f2f80c40

### **Sun/Exp**

Further coverage of the CofE's prayer for the EU referendum. The articles includes comments made by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the House magazine last month, "You can't say 'God says you must vote this way or that way.'" The Expressreports that a church spokesman has refused to answer any questions about the prayer but quotes Adrian Hilton of Christians for Britain.

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/politics/7110432/Say-a-prayer-for-the-EU-referendum-Church-of-England-doing-its-bit-to-help-undecided-voters.html?redirect=true>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/664913/Church-of-England-PRAYER-to-help-EU-referendum>

### **Times/Mail/FT**

Report the statement made by Home Secretary Teresa May's on the Hillsbrough inquest results. The articles note that the former Bishop of Liverpool, James Jones, who chaired an independent review into the tragedy listened to the statement from the Peers' Gallery.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/truth-tears-and-time-to-acknowledge-a-tragedy-2km83gnjw> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-3562593/Grace-decency-vicar-s-daughter-QUENTIN-LETTIS-s-solemn-statement-Hillsborough-disaster.html>

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/2a1cc9fe-0c7f-11e6-b0f1-61f222853ff3.html?FTCamp=engage/CAPI/webapp/Channel\\_Moreover//B2B#axzz47051z9WF](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/2a1cc9fe-0c7f-11e6-b0f1-61f222853ff3.html?FTCamp=engage/CAPI/webapp/Channel_Moreover//B2B#axzz47051z9WF)

## **Times/Exp**

Reports figures from the Office of National Statistics, which show that thousands of couples appear to have decided not to marry in 2013 because of superstition surrounding the number 13. Fewer than a quarter of a million couples married in England and Wales, a decline of almost nine per cent, according to figures released by the ONS. It was the first fall since 2009. Church weddings and other religious ceremonies declined almost two and a half times faster than civil ceremonies, down 14 per cent in 2013 compared with 6 per cent.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/couples-avoid-marrying-in-unlucky-year-xkpc2h37>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/665041/REVEALED-Why-fewer-people-getting-married-number-13>

## **New Statesmen**

Former Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams explores the echoes of Nazi populism in today's politics. (Currently exclusive to the print version of the magazine)

<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2016/04/weeks-magazine-new-facism>

## **Comment**

Sun: Rod Liddle on EU Referendum prayer issued by CofE (Scroll down)

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/suncolumnists/rodliddle/7111556/Rod-Liddle-Remember-fans-by-treating-them-like-human-beings.html?redirect=true>

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