

Irish children write a special book to mark the Pope's visit

Well done to Aodhan, a Primary 4 pupil at St Eithne's Primary School, Derry, whose letter to welcome Pope Francis on his visit to Ireland, has been published in a special book to commemorate the visit. Aodhan's letter was one of a few selected from all over Ireland.

This book started when The Irish Catholic launched a Fáilte Pope Francis competition to celebrate the World Meeting of Families and the expected visit of the Pope Francis in August 2018. The competition asked the children from all over the island of Ireland, aged 6 to 9, to draw a picture and write a letter of welcome addressed to Pope Francis.

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The response from primary schools was so overwhelming, one cuter than the next, that the decision was made to publish a book with the most engaging entries.

This is an eclectic mix of images expressing the children's large imaginations and their robust curiosity.

Only a young child would dare to invite the Pope over for a cup of tea and a bun, and there are no better words than those of a six-year old to describe how much of an inspiration Pope Francis is to the world.

Fáilte Pope Francis is a beautiful gift for First Holy Communion and all royalties go to The Children's Medical and Research Foundation (CMRF).

The Book is available from Veritas shops or can be ordered online [here](#). ISBN 9781782183402



Cashel, Ferns and Ossory renew links with Sodor and Man

The Bishop of Sodor and Man, the Right Reverend Peter Eagles (left) and his wife, Gail, recently spent some time visiting the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory.

On their arrival they were treated to a short tour of the Dail with the Reverend Trevor Sargent to experience the national parliament.

It was of interest to Bishop Eagles who, as Bishop of Sodor and Man, is a member of the Legislative Council of Tynwald (the Manx Parliament).

The Diocese of Sodor and Man is the smallest Diocese in the Church of England, overseeing 45 churches and 27 parishes.

Bishop Eagles and his wife then proceeded with Bishop Burrows to Bunclody where they met with the Reverend Michael Stevenson and his wife, Alison.

This was because, before his appointment as Bishop of Sodor and Man, the Right Reverend Peter Eagles was the Deputy Assistant Chaplain General of the British Army. The Reverend Michael Stevenson had served with him in the Royal Army Chaplains Department for many years so it was an opportunity for Bishop Eagles to reconnect with a former colleague who now works in Cashel Diocese.

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Bishop Eagles and his wife visited the medieval sights of Kilkenny, met Diocesan Office staff and some clergy and were also introduced to Phyllis Grothier, All-Ireland President of the Mothers Union. They then visited Cashel Cathedral.

Bishop of Michael Burrows commented on how this link with the Diocese of Sodor and Man came about.

“The link between this Diocese and the Diocese of Sodor and Man originated in a conversation between myself and the then bishop of Sodor and Man during a Celtic bishops’ conference in 2006,” says Bishop Burrows.

“We thought a link would be enriching and appropriate as we have so much common heritage.

Sodor and Man, in terms of size and style of episcopal ministry, is so much more like an Irish diocese than an English one. For me of course there was the additional lure of vintage railways!”

Bishop Peter Eagles said, “The Diocese of Sodor and Man is the smallest and most westerly Diocese of the Church of England. We have a link with this Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory which I am really keen to establish and to build up and to continue so the relations with Bishop Michael is very important to me. This is my first visit over here having just been on the Isle of Man for six months. Bishop Michael came to visit us just before Christmas so I’ve come here with Gail, my wife, just before Holy Week and Easter to see something of the life of the Diocese here and to offer you my best wishes and my prayers for Holy Week and for Easter and as we continue to build on that shared relationship that we have.”

Brian Rowan to give keynote address at Focolare open day

Journalist Brian Rowan will give a keynote address at the [Focolare](#) open day, set for Saturday 7 April in Stranmillis University College, Belfast. Rowan is the author of several books, including [Unfinished Peace](#).

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The theme of the day is '**Building Community Together,**' and is inspired by the words of [Sarah Ban Breathnach](#), "*The world needs dreamers and the world needs doers. But above all the world needs dreamers who do.*"



Chiara Lubich the founder of Focolare visited Ireland in February 2004. Chiara's visit was to inaugurate the Focolare Centre in Prosperous, Co. Kildare, which would from then on be called 'Mariapolis Lieta', as a tribute to Lieta Betoño who was one of the founding members of the Focolare community in Ireland.

[There is a wider weekend gathering, 6-8 April, with more activities.](#)

The day also will include input and personal stories on how we can all be dreamers and doers for our communities today.

The *Focolare Movement* is an international work founded by Chiara Lubich during the Second World War in the North of Italy and which has spread to over a hundred countries. Its aim is to seek to build

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a united world, drawing inspiration from Jesus' prayer "*May they all be one*" and involving people of all creeds and none.

Registration 9:30am * Morning session 10am – 1pm * Afternoon session 2:30pm – 5:30pm

Evening in the Students Bar from 8:30pm

Families are welcome. Separate programmes for children.

For more information:

email nirlfoc@focolare.ie , tel. 0044 (0)28-90661028 (Focolare Belfast) or see www.focolare.org/ireland

Suggested donation to cover the cost of the day £10



Redemption: A Celtic Passion at Clonard

The sufferings and victory of Jesus Christ presented through music, readings and songs from Catholic and Protestant traditions and cultures will be presented in **A Celtic Passion at Clonard Monastery, Belfast, on Sunday 8th April at 7.00 p.m.**

It will feature music by McPeake, Gaelic singing by Fr Clem MacManuis, the Passion and Resurrection passages from St Mark's Gospel to Irish instrumentals, and singers from Belfast Gospel Choir. Singing by soloists, choir and audience. Doors open 7.00pm for 7.30pm start. No tickets . (Donations between £5–£10 at the event would be appreciated to cover the costs). Email: acelticpassion@gmail.com

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The strange case of a Berehaven curate, tin mines and Orangemen

From the Tin Church in Laragh, County Monaghan, to the Beara peninsula in County Cork – specifically the mining community around Allihies – this month’s ‘News Behind the News’ in the C of I’s Archive of the Month slot examines the hidden story behind the dismissal of the curate in the parish of Berehaven 150 years ago.

Having discovered that not one but three addresses affirming support for this man, the Revd George F Stoney (1826-1869), had been published within the space of 18 months in the pages of the *Church of Ireland Gazette*, the historian Dr Miriam Moffitt was prompted to dig deeper, using other sources in the RCB Library, and this research has enabled her again to forensically recover the full background to this intriguing story.

On his departure from the parish in March 1868, Mr Stoney was presented with not one, but two, printed addresses which differed considerably in tone. A third would follow following his death in September 1869. Examination of each of these addresses, supplemented by parish and newspaper records reveals how wealth and social standing exerted considerable influence in this west Cork parish, in the mid-19th century. Printed addresses featured regularly in the pages of the *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette* since its inception in 1856 (named *Church of Ireland Gazette* from 1900). These pieces generally lamented a clerical departure, containing the text of a lavishly-printed address which had been presented to the departing clergyman such as the example previously displayed at this link: <https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/6352/illuminated-address-by-renowned-heraldic>

Usually written in rather quaint and over-enthusiastic language and signed by persons of note within the parish, such addresses were often accompanied by a response from the clergyman in question. Although a vast amount of personal, family and social history is hidden behind these published sources, few people have investigated the background and development of the stories they reveal. Such is the case of the two addresses presented to the

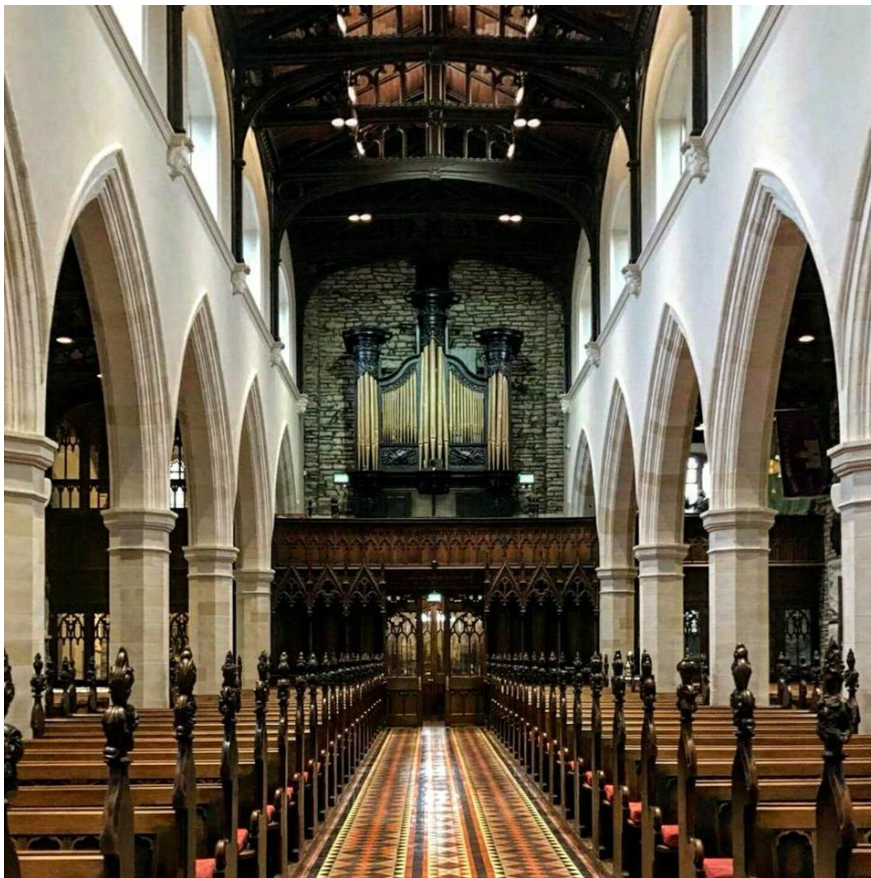
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Revd George Stoney as published in the *Gazette* of 23rd April 1868, offering glimpses of the workings and political interactions of a rural parish, while the third address (published in the *Gazette* of 22nd September 1869) from 'The Loyal Orangemen of Shercock' provides additional insight into his character. As the episode relating to Mr Stoney coincided with the more attention-grabbing disestablishment crisis, it serves as a reminder that while large issues of historical importance capture the attention of the reading public, stories that appear less significant can provide valuable recovery of the complexity of the past.

www.ireland.anglican.org/library/archive

Installation of Derry Canon

On Wednesday 25th April, the Rev Canon Paul Hoey will be installed as a Canon of St Columb's Cathedral (Photo here) at a service led by the Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart, and



attended by the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Ken Good.

And two days later, on Friday 27th April, Rev Gary Millar will be instituted by the Bishop as Rector of Kilrea, Tamlaght O'Crilly Upper and Tamlaght O'Crilly Lower. The Institution Service will take place in St Patrick's Church, Kilrea.

Both services will begin at 8.00pm and everyone is welcome to attend.

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New rector for Larne

The Rev David Lockhart, rector of Cloughfern Parish since 2003, has been appointed rector of the Grouped Parishes of Larne and Inver with Glynn and Raloo. Mr Lockhart was ordained in 1992. He is married to Beverley and they have three children. A date for the service of institution has yet to be set.



Cecil Frances Alexander Flower Festival

A date for your diary:

St James' Parish Church in Donemana will be marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of the distinguished hymn-writer, composer and poet, Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander, with a Flower Festival -

'All Things Bright and Beautiful' - in Earlsgift Hall, from Friday 27th-Sunday 29th of April.

Church leaders begin campaign to 'reclaim Jesus' in US culture

A group of Protestant and Roman Catholic leaders, including Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, have begun what they call a campaign to “reclaim Jesus” from those who they believe are using Christian theology for political gain.

“We are living through perilous and polarizing times as a nation, with a dangerous crisis of moral and political leadership at the highest levels of our government and in our churches,” say [the 23 signers of the statement](#). “We believe the soul of the nation and the integrity of faith are now at stake.”

The group says the church’s role is to change the world through the life and love of Jesus Christ, while the government should serve the common good by protecting justice and peace, rewarding good behavior while restraining bad behavior. “When that role is undermined by political leadership, faith leaders must stand up and speak out,” the signers say, citing the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. who said the church is the conscience of the state, not its master or its servant.

“Reclaiming Jesus: A Confession of Faith in a Time of Crisis” offers six “affirmations” of what the group, currently 23 strong, believes, “and the resulting rejections of practices and policies by political leaders which dangerously corrode the soul of the nation and deeply threaten the public integrity of our faith.

“We pray that we, as followers of Jesus, will find the depth of faith to match the danger of our political crisis.”

In summary, the signers, in their the affirmations and rejections, said they believe:

- Each human being is made in God’s image and likeness, and therefore, “we reject the resurgence of white nationalism and racism in our nation on many fronts, including the highest levels of political leadership.”

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- We are one body and, therefore, “we reject misogyny, the mistreatment, violent abuse, sexual harassment, and assault of women that has been further revealed in our culture and politics, including our churches, and the oppression of any other child of God.”
- “How we treat the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick, and the prisoner is how we treat Christ himself,” and, therefore, “we reject the language and policies of political leaders who would debase and abandon the most vulnerable children of God.”
- “Truth is morally central to our personal and public lives,” and, therefore, “we reject the practice and pattern of lying that is invading our political and civil life.”
- Christ’s way of leadership is servanthood, not domination, and, therefore, “we reject any moves toward autocratic political leadership and authoritarian rule. ... They raise deeper concerns about political idolatry, accompanied by false and unconstitutional notions of authority.”
- Jesus “tells us to go into all nations making disciples,” and, therefore, “we reject ‘America first’ as a theological heresy for followers of Christ.”

The statement says in its conclusion that “our urgent need, in a time of moral and political crisis, is to recover the power of confessing our faith. Lament, repent, and then repair.”

The Rev. Jim Wallis, founder of [Sojourners](#), and Curry began talking earlier this year about the need for such a statement. The signers agreed to the wording of the statement at an Ash Wednesday retreat that Curry hosted at the Episcopal Church Center in New York.

The “Reclaiming Jesus” message, Wallis said in [a March 22 commentary](#) on the Sojourners website, needed to be “something that would be much more than just another statement to sign and then file away.

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“Rather, with a shared humble spirit, we felt called to act as elders for a time such as this and to commend our message to the churches for a process of prayer, study, reflection, and action.”

Wallis called his commentary “Reclaiming Jesus: How Confessing Faith Can Respond to a Moral and Constitutional Crisis.”

Also amongst the signatories are -

Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann, Professor Emeritus, Columbia Theological Seminary

Dr. Tony Campolo, Co-Founder, Red Letter Christians

Dr. Ron Sider, President Emeritus, Evangelicals for Social Action

Bishop Will Willimon, Bishop, The United Methodist Church, retired, Professor of the Practice of Ministry, Duke Divinity School

Today in History

April 6, 1249: Muslims take King Louis IX of France prisoner during the seventh crusade, which was supposed to overcome the Muslim political center in Egypt. After showing bravery in the face of torture, he was allowed to buy his freedom for a huge sum in gold—and the city of Damietta.

April 6, 1528: Albrecht Durer, German painter, engraver, and designer of woodcuts, dies. Famous for his religious scenes, he may have been so influenced by Luther (whom he called "the great Christian man who has helped me out of great anxieties") that he converted to Protestantism. His most popular work is "Praying Hands."

April 6, 1801: The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church recognizes the new African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME). Blacks who were denied membership and/or recognition within white Methodist churches, particularly in Philadelphia and New York, formed the original AME

April 6, 1932: Eric Liddell, the Olympic athlete featured in the film Chariots of Fire, makes his evangelistic debut by sharing his testimony to a group of men in Armadale, Scotland. Liddell later returned to the mission field in China, where he was born, and ministered in an internment camp following the Japanese invasion. He died in 1945 from a massive brain tumour.

