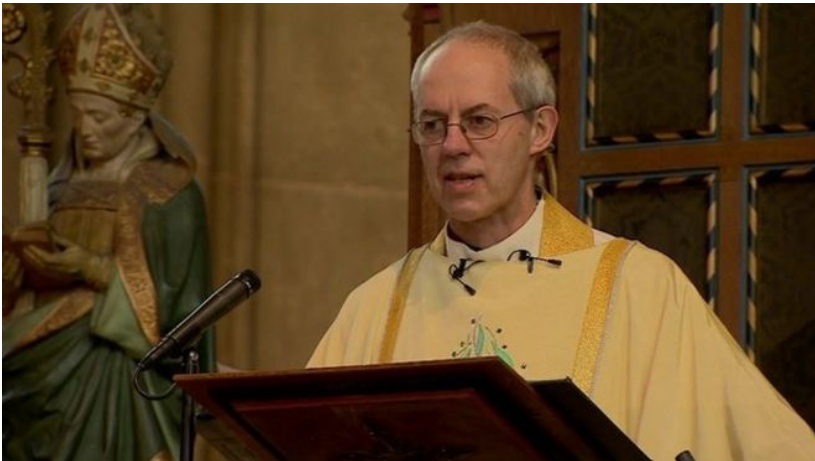


Persecution highlighted in Archbishop of Canterbury's Easter sermon and Pope's 'Urbi et Orbi' message



Archbishop Justin Welby preaching in Canterbury Cathedral yesterday

Christians should resist persecution without using violence, the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has said in his Easter Sunday sermon.

In his Canterbury Cathedral sermon, he spoke of the 148 victims of a Kenyan university attack last week and Coptic Christians killed in Libya in February.

The Archbishop of Canterbury said Christians must support persecuted communities, with "love and goodness and generosity".

He spoke of the need for all Christians to bear witness to Jesus Christ and the resurrection and stated that age, gender, politics and sexuality were irrelevant.

"Witnesses are those people who know Christ - lay or ordained, old or young, gender, politics, sexuality or whatever irrelevant - all are equally witnesses. To witness is to be a martyr," he said.

The archbishop continued: "I am told by the Coptic Bishop in England that the Coptic Christians murdered in Libya last month died proclaiming that Jesus Christ is Lord.

"They are martyrs, a word that means both one that dies for their faith and one that witnesses to faith.

"There have been so many martyrs in the last year. On Maundy Thursday, three days ago,

around 150 Kenyans were killed because of being Christian.

"They are witnesses, unwilling, unjustly, wickedly, and they are martyrs in both senses of the word."

This view was echoed by the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, who said that Christians were at greater risk in many parts of the world because "they follow Jesus Christ".

In an article in the [Mail on Sunday](#) he also urged Christians to be politically involved, calling on people to "engage and vote."



Pope Francis, who delivered his Urbi et Orbi message in Rome, called for peace "above all" in Syria and Iraq

[In his Easter "Urbi et Orbi" message, the Pope](#) prayed for the students killed in Garissa in Kenya and called for more action to halt what he said was a "humanitarian tragedy" in Syria and Iraq.

The Pope "implored" peace in Libya, calling for the "absurd bloodshed and all barbarous acts of violence" in the country to end.

"We ask for peace, above all, for Syria and Iraq, that the roar of arms may cease and that peaceful relations may be restored among the various groups which make up those beloved countries," he told crowds in St Peter's Square.

Kenya in mourning

Three days of national mourning are being held in Kenya for nearly one hundred and fifty people, many of them Christian, who were killed by Islamist militants last week.

In February, 22 Egyptian Coptic Christians were beheaded by Islamic State (IS) militants in Libya.

While the Pope and the archbishop have called on Christians to listen to the Easter message of the risen Christ today and forgive their persecutors, Pope Francis has made it clear for some time that he believes military force is justified to halt the advance of IS militants.

Derry Church leaders carry Cross through city centre to mark Good Friday



The Walk of Witness pauses on Shipquay Street for a gospel passage reading and hymn.

The leaders of the four main Christian denominations in Derry have conducted a joint Walk of Witness through the city centre to mark Good Friday.

Derry Journal - The church leaders gathered with other clergy and members of their congregations to carry a large wooden cross from St Columb's

Hall to the Guildhall via the Richmond Centre and Shipquay Street.

The group, which gathered local people, tourists and curious onlookers along the route, stopped periodically so that passages from the gospels relating to the Easter story of Christ's Crucifixion and the Resurrection could be orated.

Hymns were also sung at various spots, including among the bustling crowds of shoppers on the ground floor of the Richmond Centre.

Jesus himself carried his cross through the through the city centre.

Speaking to the Journal during the event, Church Of Ireland Rev Ken Good said: "On the First Good Friday Jesus himself carried his cross through the market square, through the city centre.

"It was in a way a walk of shame, but we want now this to be a walk of witness whereby we are identifying what he did for us, and all of us from across the city and community as Christian people say: we acknowledge the Cross, we are part of what he did for us and we want to witness to that for the city."

Catholic Bishop of Derry Dr Donal McKeown added: “I think Churches will have all sorts of ceremonies inside Churches for those who come there, but if you look at the news this morning or any morning you will find enormous amounts of bad news from Kenya or wherever else and I think we’re trying to say the Cross is not about the suffering of Jesus and to make us feel bad, it is there to say there is hope: working together as Churches and civic society we can actually confront all the crosses people have to bear, and look forward to some sort of resurrection in God’s own good time.

“It is about giving confidence and hope about facing the future and we want to do that in the public square to say we have something that I hope will help us process all that pain that weighs so heavily on many people’s shoulders.”

The message of the cross and the message of the gospel brings hope

Presbyterian Rev John Hanna from Glendermott Parish Church said: “All that happened to the Saviour in a city all those years ago when they took him to the outside, what was done there would transform the heart of their community and the heart and the life of every city and every community across the world and it is just as true

for us here in Derry today- the message of the cross and the message of the gospel brings hope and we are here to represent that and to present it in a new way again to our people and to call them to that, that faith renewed in Christ Jesus.”

Methodist Minister Rev Peter Murray meanwhile added: “What Jesus came to do was to give people the right kind of pointers for life, to give people the right kind of perspective on living, to say that money is not everything, and we know that and that is what we are doing here together in the city.

“We are saying relationships is the most important thing in people’s lives and the most important of all those relationships is our relationship with God.”

Speaking at the event on Friday afternoon, Mayor of Derry and Strabane Elisha McCallion said: “This is a very religious day for all denominations and I think it is an excellent initiative that has been taken by the four Churches here in the city centre.

<http://www.derryjournal.com/news/community/video-church-leaders-carry-cross-through-city-centre-to-mark-good-friday-1-6672566>

Archbishop calls on Dubliners to stand up to violence in the city



The Way of the Cross ceremony in Phoenix Park led by the archbishop of Dublin Rev Diarmuid Martin.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has called on the people of Dublin to stand up to men of violence in the city and demand an end to it.

Irish Times - "We have to stand up as a community and say to men of violence, whoever they are, 'no more of this'," he said. "The cold-blooded murders on the streets of Dublin solve nothing, but only provoke revenge and more and more violence, and more and more hearts broken. And our world is seeing senseless violence on a scale we have not seen for

decades, sadly in some cases perpetrated in the name of God.

“There are other forms of violence. There is the violence of human trafficking; there is the violence of sexual abuse; there is the violence of extortion. There is the violence of a drug trade which destroys lives, very often fragile young lives, for sordid profit which will bring its perpetrators as much happiness as the 30 pieces of silver did for Judas.”

He was speaking in Phoenix Park during the annual Good Friday Way of the Cross procession from the [Wellington](#) Monument to the Papal Cross. The 13th such event, it is organised by the lay Catholic Communion and Liberation movement. Hundreds took part.

On Good Friday evening, Dublin's two archbishops led an ecumenical walk through the city streets for the fourth year in succession. Archbishop Diarmuid Martin and Church of Ireland archbishop of Dublin and Glendalough Michael Jackson carried a Taizé cross from Christ Church Cathedral to the Pro-Cathedral accompanied by pilgrims from various denominations. The event began with a brief

service in Christ Church and concluded with an ecumenical service at the Pro Cathedral.

Separately, at 12pm in the quiet confines of the Unitarian Church on St Stephen's Green in Dublin, Eileen Delaney approached the pulpit and began to read the names of those killed in the Troubles.

Anthony Abbott, a British army soldier shot dead in 1976, was the first name, followed by Alexander Abercrombie, Colin Abernethy and Kieran Abram. More than three hours later, the last name on the list of more than 3,600 people was William Younger, who, at 87, was one of the oldest victims of the Troubles. He and his daughter Letitia were shot and stabbed to death in their Belfast home in August 1980.

The reading out of the names has been going on since 2001, following the publication of *Lost Lives*, compiled by David McKittrick, Séamus Kelters, Brian Feeney and Chris Thornton, which chronicled every one of the 3,661 people who died a violent death during the Troubles. Since then, 35 names have been added.

More at -

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/archbishop-calls-on-dubliners-to-stand-up-to-violence-in-the-city-1.2164681>

Dublin Easter morning Spire inter-church service

There was an Easter Sunday Morning Ecumenical Service at the foot of the Spire on O'Connell Street in Dublin City Centre organised by the Inner City Churches which includes the Pro Cathedral, St George and St Thomas parish, the Dublin Central Mission, the Presbyterian congregation on Parnell Square and the Salvation Army. The service lasted for about 30 minutes, starting at 9.00am and all who came were invited for breakfast before they retired to their own churches for their Easter services. This year, it was the turn of St George and St Thomas parish to host the breakfast in Cathal Brugha Street.

St Patrick's Deans brought to book

On Thursday evening in St Patrick's Deanery the Archbishop of Dublin will launch *Decani; the Deans of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin*, which has been written by Albert Fenton. A member of the cathedral board, Mr Fenton, who is an accomplished photographer, is also the author of *Albert Fenton's Face to Face: a Collection of Irish Portraits* and *Past Lives: the memorials of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin*.

Willowfield parish Hustings Evening

Naomi Long, Gavin Robinson and Niall O'Donnghaile have confirmed that they will be present at a Hustings Evening in Willowfield Church on Monday 13th April at 7.30pm.

The team from Evangelical Alliance who are facilitating the evening on behalf of the parish are expecting some other candidates to confirm that they will be able to be present as well.

The parish web site states - "It is so important that the voice of local Christians is heard by all those standing for election at the forth coming election so please do come along.

"The evening will also provide us with the opportunity to pray for our local politicians and public representatives."

Red Cross asylum project launched with Black Santa's help

The Dean of Belfast, the city's Black Santa, met a special little boy when the British Red Cross visited St Anne's Cathedral to launch a new project. Six-week-old Adebobola (also called Aaron) was helping the charity launch its new



Dean Mann with Adebobola

scheme to support heavily pregnant asylum seekers. The project was fully funded by a grant from the Dean's Black Santa Appeal, which has allowed the Red Cross to put together maternity bags containing the essential items needed by a woman when she is admitted to hospital to give birth.

They include nappies, sleepsuits for newborns, wet wipes and other essentials for mum and baby, as well as a small amount of money to allow the woman to buy a nightdress and dressing gown. The bags will be made available to staff at the 'New Entrants' service within Belfast Trust who will distribute them to women

who haven't had the time or resources to purchase basic necessities.

Adebobola's mum brought him along to the launch on March 31. She had to flee from her home in Nigeria when she was heavily pregnant with her first child, and arrived in Belfast with nothing.

She did not have the benefit of a Red Cross Hospital Bag when her first little boy was born, but, now mum for a second time, she said the project would be a huge help to refugees arriving in Northern Ireland in the late stages of pregnancy.

At the launch, the Dean of Belfast, the Very Revd John Mann, was delighted to hear that one of the hospital bags had already been given to a new mum recently arrived in Northern Ireland to seek asylum.

Anglican leader urges world to rally behind Kenya

The Anglican Church of Kenya Archbishop Eliud Wabukala has called on the international community to stand with Kenya as it mourns the brutal killing of at least 147 students at the

Garissa University College by the Al-Shabaab militia on Thursday.

Archbishop Wabukala said global leaders must come together and seek a lasting solution to terrorism which continues to affect innocent citizens not only in Kenya, but across the globe.

“I call upon the international community because the challenge of terrorism has now assumed global dimension. This thing is happening in Syria, Nigeria, and in many cities of the world. So we must come together and see this issue as not a Kenyan issue, or African issue but a global problem,” Wabukala said during the Easter church service at All Saints Cathedral in Nairobi.

Appointment of Anglican Communion Secretary General: Statement from ACC Chair

*Statement from the Rt Revd James Tengatenga,
Chair of the Anglican Consultative Council,
regarding the appointment of the Rt Revd Josiah
Idowu-Fearon as new Secretary General of the
Anglican Communion:*

The Panel set up for the appointment of the new Secretary General of the Anglican Communion

acted with due diligence and was unanimous in appointing the Rt Revd Josiah Idowu-Fearon.

The Communion is in need of leadership at the ACO from the majority world, a situation that is long overdue. Bishop Josiah has demonstrated in his life and in his person the integrity required of the position and the fact that he is African also demonstrates the recognition of the place of Africa in the Communion.

The Communion is called to move on and we consider that Bishop Josiah is a gift to all for facilitating this movement into the fullness of the Communion's witness in a divided, broken world. There is more than one issue to address and while some may question his suitability, many in the Communion from different convictions on the issues and both sides of the Atlantic Ocean can vouch for his integrity and commitment to reconciliation.

As I said at the announcement of his appointment, it is Bishop Josiah's experience in this context and commitment to the life of the Anglican Communion that commends this appointment at this challenging time in our life together.

In responding to the appointment of Rt Revd Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon as Secretary General of the

Anglican Communion, some have drawn attention to an article in a Nigerian newspaper concerning an address he gave in Benin on Sunday 23 March 2014.

The article misrepresents and distorts his comments in the sermon in which he challenged the National Assembly on the time and energy spent in criminalizing homosexuality and not the corruption that damages Nigerian society. The views attributed in the article to Bishop Josiah do not reflect what is widely known to be his position, both within Nigeria and amongst those who know him.

In a [statement](#) he said:

"I have never supported the law in Nigeria that criminalizes this community and I will never support it. The Church is called to love and protect everyone without discrimination, 'love the person but hate the sin', whatever the sin may be, corruption, sexual sins of all kinds, misuse of power or anything else."

It is well known that Bishop Josiah holds a conservative view on sexual relations outside of traditional marriage and holds to the commitments expressed in Lambeth 1:10. Through his involvement in the Windsor Report and the wider life of the Communion he has

sought to be a bridge builder and interpreter between different cultures and views.

This is the context in which an interview in Dallas in 2007 should be read. As someone who seeks to assist understanding he has in his statement affirmed his commitment to this task:

“For the majority of African Christians the Bible judges culture, including African culture. As African Christians we must accept other cultures and the way they also understand the Bible’s relationship with culture. I accept and promote a culture of respect for such differences.”

May the "Way of the Cross" we walked yesterday remind us what the Church is about. May we listen to where the Spirit of our crucified saviour is leading us. Now is a moment of decision.

**Response to misrepresentation of remarks:
Statement from the Rt Rev Dr Josiah Idowu-
Fearon**

Statement from the Rt Revd Josiah Idowu-Fearon responding to misleading stories concerning a sermon in 2014 and an interview in 2007:

In Benin on Sunday 23rd March, 2014 at St. Mathew's Cathedral where Knights and their wives were being admitted, I encouraged them to continue to uphold family values in their homes bringing up their children as Christians in order to make a difference in their society. I then went on to challenge the National Assembly, comparing corruption with homosexuality that they had just criminalized. I wished the National Assembly had spent all that time and energy to criminalize corruption rather than homosexuality which is not damaging the Nigerian society as is corruption.

I have never supported the law in Nigeria that criminalizes the gay community and I will never support it. The Church is called to love and protect everyone without discrimination, 'love the person but hate the sin' whatever the sin may be, corruption, sexual sins of all kinds, misuse of power or anything else.

In this I believe I am affirming the position of the Anglican Communion in Lambeth 1:10.

In a Dallas interview in 2007 the question was about the Bible and culture. I did say by way of explanation that the West brought the Christian Faith to us and our forefathers embraced the faith finding it corroborated our view on

marriage. Today, the same West are telling us that the position has changed. To the African, that is confusing, hence the difficulty between the Western church and the African church.

Again, my position is clear. For the majority of African Christians, the Bible judges culture, including African culture. As African Christians we must accept other cultures and the way they also understand the Bible's relationship with culture. I accept and promote a culture of respect for such differences.

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