



The Bishop of Meath and Kildare (left) with walkers raising funds for leprosy sufferers. See News Briefs_

Breakaway move by CofE churches over homosexuality welcomed by Gafcon

The Global Anglican Future Conference, Gafcon, has welcomed the initiative by nearly a dozen churches in the Church of England to align with

the conservative coalition in opposition to gay marriage.

A statement from Gafcon welcoming the move comes in response to a **Telegraph report** which revealed that about 12 parishes from three counties in the south of England are meeting this week to show support for the **Jerusalem Statement**, the statement of faith drawn up by Gafcon.

The meeting, which has sparked fresh debate about whether the Church of England is to split on the issue, will be hosted by Rev Peter Sanlon, Vicar of St Mark's, Tunbridge Wells in the Rochester diocese.

It will discuss the possibility of a new Anglican synod to be set up if the Church of England moves towards formalising same-sex blessings.

"Gafcon UK warmly commends the initiative of Rev Dr Peter Sanlon and others from a number of parishes in the Home Counties to set up a 'shadow synod'," **Gafcon's statement** reads.

"This is a grass-roots initiative by local congregations which is representative of the

views of many across the country, and is in line with the concerns of Anglicans from the Gafcon movement worldwide as expressed in the Jerusalem Declaration of 2008 and subsequently. The message being clearly conveyed is that: there are Church of England churches that hold to the unchanging truths of the gospel and the formularies of the Church of England; these churches oppose the relentless slide towards revisionism in the Church of England structures; these churches are prepared to take action to protect their congregations."

The statement added: "Gafcon UK exists to promote faithfulness to the gospel and provide fellowship for those who share this commitment, and it is for these reasons that we warmly commend this initiative."

At the weekend, Sanlon told the Telegraph: "If senior leaders of the Church of England water down the teaching of the Church of England on key issues like homosexuality, then this synod could easily evolve in to a new Anglican jurisdiction in England. The Archbishop of Canterbury has signalled that he is aware of the possibility that a significant proportion of the church will not accept a change in the church's

teaching. This could be the beginning of that playing out."

He went on: "I am not leaving the Church of England – but in order to stay, I need new partnerships and structures to discharge the mission of the Church of England, which is to bring the message of Christ to every postcode in England."

News of the move came as Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, told the Greenbelt Christian festival that he was "constantly consumed with horror" at how gay people have been treated by the Church.

See also News Links below.

Bishop Leo O'Reilly offers prayers for the Hawe family

"It was with great sadness that I heard the news today of the deaths of the five members of the Hawe family, who lived in Barconey, in the parish of Castlerahan in our diocese.

“As Bishop of Kilmore and patron of Saint Mary’s National School, Castlerahan, I know that I speak for all people of faith and of goodwill when I express my heartfelt prayerful sympathy to the relatives, friends and neighbours of the deceased.

Families are the cornerstone of our parish communities, and the sudden loss of one young family, in such a shocking way, is unbearable and near impossible to comprehend. “Especially now – as the new school year begins – my thoughts and prayers are with the school friends and the teachers of the children who have died in this family tragedy.

“At this time of intense human loss I ask the faithful to unite in prayer at Masses throughout the diocese and beyond for those who have died, and for those who grieve for them. May faith and friendship comfort and console them in their sadness.”

USPG launches new name and look

One of the oldest Anglican mission agencies has returned to its historic name USPG. The 315-

year-old charity, which was briefly called United Society (Us) has responded to calls from its supporters to [reclaim its former name](#), which it re-launched last weekend at the Greenbelt Christian arts festival in Northampton, England.

In 2012, the agency changed its name from USPG, meaning United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, to United Society. Now, USPG is back, but this time with an important difference: the new full-version of its name is United Society Partners in the Gospel.

Rachel Parry, USPG's director for global relations, explained: "We have listened to our supporters and our partners around the world and recognised that there is a lot of love for the original USPG name. In particular, while the gospel has always been at the heart of our work, there was a desire to see that word back into our name.

"At the same time, we wanted to acknowledge how mission has changed through the centuries, and so we've employed the term 'Partners in the Gospel' to recognise our shared way of working with the world church."

The new name went down well with visitors to the USPG marquee at Greenbelt.

Pope Francis holds private meeting with Facebook founder

Pope Francis met with Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg on Monday as the Holy Father continued courting the global tech-giants.

Zuckerberg along with his wife Priscilla Chan had a private audience with the pontiff in the Vatican. The couple, who have promised to donate 99 per cent of their net worth over the course of their lifetime, discussed how to use communication technologies to alleviate poverty with the pope, according to a statement from the Holy See.

Zuckerberg also took the opportunity to give the Pope a drone as a gift.

A self-declared computer "dinosaur", Pope Francis has met with a number of world leaders in technology. In January he held two private meetings, one with Apple's CEO Tim Cook and another with Eric Schmidt, the chairman of Google's parent company, Alphabet.

Despite saying he does not own a computer himself, the pope has described the internet as a

"gift from God" because of the "immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity". For the first time the Vatican under his leadership has run a digital-first communications strategy. He is hailed as the most influential tweeter among world leaders and launched the first ever papal Instagram account in March, quickly accumulating more than three million followers.

News briefs

+++ Irish missionary priest ordained Bishop of Mzuzu -Tipperary-born Fr John Ryan was ordained Bishop of Mzuzu at St Peter's Cathedral on Saturday in a ceremony attended by Malawi's President, Professor Peter Mutharika. During the celebrations, President Mutharika paid tribute to the Irish Kiltegan missionary as "a man of simplicity and humility". Originally from Holy Cross in Co Tipperary, Bishop Ryan joined the Kiltegan order in 1970 and was ordained in 1978. Malawi was his first and only posting and he has ministered there since 1978. He has been involved in pastoral work but also in teaching mathematics at the University of Mzuzu, having completed his MA and PhD at University College Cork. The co-

consecrators at Saturday's ceremony were Bishop Dr Martin Mtumbuka of the Karonga Diocese, Archbishops Ziyaye of Lilongwe Archdiocese and Msusa of Blantyre Archdiocese, and Archbishop Julio Murat, the Papal Nuncio to Malawi.

+++ Meath and Kildare ordination - Simon Scott will be ordained Deacon on Wednesday 7th September 2016 in St Patrick's Cathedral, Trim at 8.00pm. Simon will serve his internship with Canon Lynda Peilow in Edenderry Union. The guest preacher will be Rev Arthur Young, Rector of Kill o' the Grange. Simon hails from Kill o' the Grange parish. Talking of his faith journey he says "I came to faith in my teens and was blessed to be nurtured to faith by so many over the years". Before answering what he describes as "a persistent sense of calling to pursue ordained ministry" he studied horticulture in University College Dublin and ran his own garden maintenance business. Simon is looking forward to ministering with Canon Lynda Peilow and to getting to know the community of Edenderry Union of parishes.

+++ Dublin and Glendalough MU Festival - Archbishop Michael Jackson will preside at the

annual Mothers' Union Diocesan Festival Service in St Nicholas' Church, Dunlavin, on Thursday September 15 at 8.00 pm. MU members from throughout Dublin and Glendalough are invited to attend. The preacher will be the Rector, the Revd Neal O'Raw.

+++ Meath and Kildare Fun Walk raises money for foot surgeries - There was good weather for the Diocesan Fun Walk, in aid of 'Good for the Sole' which took place on Saturday August 27 over a beautiful 10km walk around Punchestown Race Course. It was followed by a picnic in the grounds of St. David's National School, Naas. All money raised will pay for foot surgeries for leprosy sufferers. Rev William Steacy and his wife Roberta did the hard work in planning such a worthwhile event.

+++ Tributes in US to inspirational Irish priest - An Irish missionary priest who was known as "an iconic figure in Tampa Bay's history" in the US passed away last week. Former Derry Gaelic footballer, Mgr Laurence E. Higgins, died on 24 August. He was the pastor at St Lawrence for 49 years, the longest serving priest in the diocese, giving a length of service that was "unheard of"

according to Bishop Robert Lynch of the Diocese of St Petersburg. “If ever there was an iconic figure in Tampa’s history, it’s Mgr Higgins,” Mayor Bob Buckhorn, who was married by the Monsignor told the Tampa Bay Times. “He has been a mentor, spiritual leader and confidant to tens of thousands of Catholics and non-Catholics.” The son of John and Philomena Higgins, Mgr Higgins was the third of eight children — five girls and three boys — all born on a Co Derry farm. Larry Higgins grew up 39 miles southwest of Belfast in Magherafelt. His father farmed, exported seeds and worked as a government administrator.

+++ New C of I assistant librarian - Bryan Whelan will commence work on 12 September as Assistant Librarian at the RCB Library. Bryan holds a BA in Biblical and Theological Studies from Trinity College, and an MA in Library and Information Studies from University College Dublin. He has been working in libraries since 2011, completing projects on digital libraries, social media, web design, and information literacy, and with detailed knowledge of library management systems. He comes to the RCB Library from the Norma Smurfit Library at the National College of Ireland, where his

responsibilities included serial management, implementing the library's first use of user-testing a new website, and online cataloguing. His previous work experience includes the Library and Archives of the Royal Dublin Society in Ballsbridge, Dublin, and also retail management in a branch of the book company Waterstone's.

+++ Vatican leak cleric imprisoned - A Spanish monsignor found guilty of leaking confidential documents about the Vatican's financial reform has begun serving his 18-month prison sentence at the Vatican. Mgr Lucio Vallejo Balda, secretary of the Prefecture for the Economic Affairs of the Holy See, was found guilty of stealing and passing on documents to Italian journalists

Gianluigi Nuzzi and Emiliano Fittipaldi in a court ruling in July. He was subsequently allowed limited freedom of movement within the confines of Vatican City State.

However, he was formally arrested on August 22 and placed in a prison cell to begin his sentence. In accordance with Vatican law, the prosecution had 40 days to contest the sentence, which had been considerably reduced from its original request.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

West Belfast De La Salle College faces independent review of child safeguarding

Belfast Live - <http://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/belfast-news/de-la-salle-college-faces-11817677>

Glandore church being restored to former glory

Southern Star Newspaper

At a fundraising screening of War of the Buttons in Christ Church, Glandore were, ... At the time it served a local **Church of Ireland** population of 53.

<http://www.southernstar.ie/news/roundup/articles/2016/08/30/4125245-glandore-church-being-restored-to-former-glory/>

Myriad hues of emulative culture

Gulf Today

... park with a number of attractive places like Primate's Palace, formerly the home of Archbishops of the **Church of Ireland** from 1770 until the 1970s.

<http://gulftoday.ae/portal/ac6eff54-1b45-4881-bc49-1b213592bd2b.aspx>

Funeral of former tánaiste Peter Barry held in Cork

Irish Times

He told the hundreds of mourners at St Michael's Church in Blackrock, Cork about ... The **Church of Ireland** Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton was also in ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/funeral-of-former-t%C3%A1naiste-peter-barry-held-in-cork-1.2772036>

Why opposition to gay marriage will fail

[NEWS.com.au](http://www.news.com.au)

"I'm a Catholic, my uncle is a priest, my mother is a religion teacher and the **choir** mistress, and ... The experience in **Ireland**, where last September voters said yes to ... This is coalition of conservative churches," he told [news.com.au](http://www.news.com.au).

<http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/gay-marriage/coordinated-religious-campaign-against-samesex-marriage-failed-in-ireland-and-will-fail-in-australia-campaigners-say/news-story/1db89a630651711e7370bad5807e54d1>

Tel

Reports that analysis of this year's A-level and GCSE results, faith and church schools are among top-performing comprehensive schools. The article notes that 81 per cent of C of E schools were judged good or outstanding by Ofsted compared with 77 per cent of all non-faith schools.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2016/08/29/faith-schools-are-beacons-of-intellectual-rigour/>

Christian Today (Sat)/Pink News

Reports the comments of the Archbishop of Canterbury at the Greenbelt Festival in Northamptonshire. Archbishop Justin spoke about how his own failings make him angry in the interview conducted by the 'vicar of Gogglebox', the Revd Kate Bottley in front of hundreds of festival-goers. Article quotes Archbishop, saying there is only way to overcome self-doubts, "and that's prayer and the Bible - it's being part of the family of Christ...with all kinds of problems and issues and you've got a role in that family." *Pink News* focuses on comments made about the LGBT community. Archbishop Justin admitted being "constantly consumed with horror" at the way in which the Church has treated LGBT people.

<http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2016/08/29/archbishop-of-canterbury-we-must-embrace-people-who-think-gays-are-deeply-wrong/>

Times/Ind/Guard/Mail/Christian Today/Exp/ Premier

Reports the formation of an 'embryonic' group of parish leaders in the C of E which may form a "shadow synod" over conflicting views on issues such as same-sex marriage. Representatives from parishes across three dioceses, Rochester,

Canterbury and Chichester, have scheduled a meeting to lay the foundations of a new, more conservative group. The Revd Peter Sanlon, Vicar of St Mark's Church in Tunbridge Wells is quoted.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/church-faces-split-after-conservatives-reject-liberal-stance-m760qbxm>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/church-of-england-gay-marriage-split-shadow-synod-christianity-religion-a7215156.html>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/29/leading-vicar-warns-church-of-england-could-split-over-homosexuality>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3763336/Church-England-faces-split-parishes-discuss-stance-homosexuality.html>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/704828/church-of-england-verge-splitting-rev-dr-peter-sanlon>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Church-of-England-facing-new-split-threat-over-homosexuality>

Blogs

Law and Religion: Round up 28th August

<http://www.lawandreligionuk.com/2016/08/28/law-and-religion-round-up-28th-august/>

C of E Communications: Chaplain reflects on Rio 2016

<http://cofecomms.tumblr.com/post/149502235362/it-was-great-to-see-gods-word-at-work>

Think Theology: Can we be saved without the church?

[http://thinktheology.co.uk/blog/article/can we be saved without the church](http://thinktheology.co.uk/blog/article/can-we-be-saved-without-the-church)

Law and Religion UK: Exhumation and reburial of ashes

<http://www.lawandreligionuk.com/2016/08/26/exhumation-and-reburial-of-ashes-in-germany/>

Apples of Gold: Book Review

<http://www.pickingapplesofgold.com/the-fragment-book-review/>

The Wee Flea: Jesus' SWOT analysis of the church

<https://theweeflea.com/2016/08/26/7289/>

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