



Trócaire says thanks for support for East African appeal

Catholic overseas aid agency Trócaire has thanked parishioners throughout the country for supporting their collection last weekend in aid of the crisis in East Africa.

The Irish Bishops' Conference had called for a collection to respond to the 25 million people who face food shortages and starvation in Somalia, South Sudan, Kenya and Ethiopia. Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, said the situation is critical, and urged support for the collection from parishioners.

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“With the failure of successive rains and a prolonged drought having taken hold of the region, just surviving has now become the main challenge facing people in large parts of East Africa,” he said.

Speaking ahead of the collection, he said that “Millions of people in the region are facing starvation. The crops have failed and animals are dying because of a lack of grazing and water. The large number of people affected may shock us, but we must realise that behind these stark numbers are real people: mothers and fathers unable to provide for their hungry children.

“The Catholic Church in Ireland is already responding to this crisis through Trócaire. However, needs are so enormous that we will hold special collections across the country. All money collected will go directly to Trócaire’s humanitarian relief work in East Africa. Bishops are asking clergy and parishioners to respond to this terrible tragedy with generosity.”

Thanking the public for the response to the collection, Trócaire Director Éamonn Meehan said: “Our health centres and feeding programmes are saving lives but we urgently need to scale-up our response. Last weekend’s collection will enable us to reach even more

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people with life-saving aid. The support of the Catholic Church in Ireland will make a significant contribution to saving lives in East Africa over the coming weeks.”

Bishop William Crean, Bishop of Cloyne and chairperson of Trócaire, said the collection will greatly help Trócaire to reach even more people with life-saving aid. “We have been providing emergency food aid, water and healthcare to affected communities – quite literally life-support for affected people,” he said.

“Trócaire’s health centres in Somalia are treating approximately 19,000 people each month for malnutrition and associated illnesses. With the support of parishioners here at home in the coming weeks, many tens of thousands more people will receive help.

“For example, over 13,000 children in Kenya will receive supplementary high-energy food, new boreholes will be provided for communities, many more people will receive monthly food rations and schools will be supplied with water.”

He added that “Globally, this crisis has received very little attention. Appeals for aid are under-funded. For example, the UN has received just 37% of the funding it needs to respond to the crisis in Somalia. The world is distracted by the

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actions of a handful of powerful politicians, while in East Africa millions suffer in silence. It is unacceptable for so many to go hungry.”

Strabane church group returns from Peru

The Rector of the Parish of Camus-Juxta-Mourne (Strabane), Rev Mark Lennox, found himself in a Peruvian jail recently – thankfully as a pastor rather than as a prisoner. It happened while Rev Lennox was leading a group of parishioners from Strabane on a two-week mission trip to the Peruvian capital, Lima.

The Tyrone parish has developed a close relationship with the pastor and congregation of San Pedro Church, in Lima. A group from Strabane were there two years ago to carry out improvement work to the church and this summer’s mission team picked up where their predecessors left off. They painted San Pedro Church inside and out. They visited local schools, families and clergy. And they also distributed knitted clothes and toys, and gifts which had been made or donated by people back home, including football shirts from O’Neill’s.

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One school they visited, Holy Trinity, had already benefitted from Strabane Rotary Club's Christmas Appeal in 2015. As a result of the generosity of people in Strabane and Lurgan Rotary, the school has been able to install a Computer Suite in one of its classrooms.

On one morning, as the Strabane volunteers were painting San Pedro's, a woman with a small child called by to give them a bag of fruit as a 'thank you' for the work they were doing to her Church. The Tyrone group were joined for a few days on the trip by Bishop Ken Clarke, who is the Mission Director of SAMS UK and Ireland, and his grandson, Mikey.

The team made a couple of visits to a Juvenile Detention Centre where Rev Lennox had a chance to talk to both staff and inmates about Jesus and to present them with the Gospel. The Rector and his mother also acted as godparents to a young Peruvian boy who was baptised during the visit. The Strabane parishioners are due back home in Ireland early this week.

Ordination in Kilrea parish, Derry

The ordination to the priesthood of Rev Malachy Gallagher (33) took place on Sunday past (30 July) in the Diocese of Derry. Kilrea is the parish where Father Gallagher's family lives. Father

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Gallagher is the son of Colum and Teresa Gallagher and brother of Lisa and Gerard. He is qualified as a speech therapist from University of Ulster. He spent time as a seminarian for the Diocese of Derry in Saint Malachy's Seminary, Belfast, and at the Pontifical Irish College, Rome. Father Gallagher then spent some years in formation with Divine World Missionaries in Chicago and Taiwan. He speaks Mandarin Chinese. Father Gallagher returned to the Irish College as a student for the diocese and has spent the last year as a Deacon in the Parish of Templemore in Derry City. In his homily, Bishop McKeown said, "It is profoundly counter-cultural when someone is not afraid of commitment and is deeply in love with the Lord who calls them to walk forward in trust ... Your greatest asset as a priest will not be your theology qualifications but that Christ-like heart which people see in you."

See -

[Homily of Bishop Donal McKeown for the Ordination Mass of Rev Malachy Gallagher](#)
[DavidM](#)

Maghera Praise Service concludes weekend of fundraising

Members of the United Parishes of St Lurach's, Maghera, and Killelagh (Co. Derry), were treated

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by their rector to a few impromptu lines from the Boney M. hit ‘Rivers of Babylon’ on Sunday morning as they celebrated the end of a weekend of fundraising activities.

The parishioners gathered in the Rectory Grounds in Maghera for a Praise Service, which was held in a marquee erected specially for the occasion. The praise was led by the Eden Accordion Concert Group and by the Rector, Rev Terence Kerr. Soloist Emma Ford sang two hymns during the service, accompanied by Victor Brownlow on the accordion. Readings were performed by the rector’s wife, Carol Kerr, Cllr Anne Ford and parish reader Pearl Moore.

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The Rectory Grounds were the focus for the weekend activities, which included a garden fete and vintage car rally on Saturday. The country and western artist, Ritchie Remo, was a special guest at the fete, while the Derry City manager Kenny Shiels – a Maghera parishioner – went into goals for a novelty penalty kick competition.

During Sunday's service, Rev Kerr said there had been a few "tetchy" moments the previous day, which he put down to the pressure of organising the event, and he apologised to anyone he had fallen out with on Saturday – "that's probably about three quarters of you". The Rector thanked the congregation and the wider community for their support and generosity over the weekend.

Bishop blesses Passchendaele memorial stones

A new memorial to the Welsh soldiers killed or injured at Passchendaele was blessed by the Church's Senior Bishop at the service marking the centenary of the WW1 battle.

Seven stones, showing the cap badges of the five Welsh Regiments and two Welsh Divisions, will be unveiled during the Welsh National Service of Remembrance at the Welsh Memorial

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in Flanders in Langemark, Belgium, yesterday (July 31).

They will be blessed by the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, John Davies, at the end of the service, which will be attended by the Prince of Wales, First Minister, Carwyn Jones, and other Welsh political party leaders. The Mayor of Langemark and the Minister-President of Flanders will also be present.

The stones were donated by a quarry in Pontypridd which also gave the larger stones for the Cromlech memorial – the 9ft dragon sculpture unveiled in 2014.

The service will honour the 3,000 Welshmen who died or were injured in the Third Battle of Ypres

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(Passchendale) which began 100 years ago and lasted 103 days.

Irish priest's peace building and conflict resolution programme expands in Africa

A programme which builds peace and fosters reconciliation in areas of conflict, which was devised by an Irish priest, is to expand to a number of countries in Africa following its success in northern Kenya.

In 2009 Fr Patrick Devine SMA founded the Shalom Centre for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation. It has now trained over 9,600 community leaders and village elders as peacemakers.

The model used by the centre is based on extensive research into areas of conflict and the issues that drive conflict.

It works through key community opinion shapers such as elders, women, youth and influential chiefs.

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The process brings about a collectively reached common understanding of both the history and definition of a conflict's source, while trust and co-operation are built to reach solutions.

Now, Fr Devine's model is to be established in other parts of Africa, starting with Côte d'Ivoire, Tanzania and the Central African Republic, with further plans to establish centres in Ethiopia, South Sudan, Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Fr Devine is a member of the Society of African Missions, which he joined in 1979.

The missionary has been short-listed for this year's Tipperary International Peace Prize and is also due to deliver the 2017 Dermot Earley Memorial Lecture in NUI Maynooth on 23 November. In 2013 the International Caring Award was presented to him in Washington by Colin Powell.

Since ordination in 1988, Fr Devine has spent almost 30 years in Kenya and Tanzania. In 2009 he founded the Shalom Centre to try to deal with the conflict in the Ilemi Triangle.

The instability in the area had resulted in state neglect and a lack of adequate healthcare and schools. Conflict resolution, he believes, is

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essential for social development and reconciliation.

The Co. Roscommon-born missionary has said of the human desire for peace: “I have never met any community or any parents who didn’t want a better future for their children.”

The centre, which is based in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, chose the name Shalom because “the root meaning is peace with justice and harmony holistically integrated. The root of Shalom is the same as the root of Salam in Islam. Those have much stronger conceptual understandings of peace and development than the English word ‘peace’, which is often just the absence of violence.”

Originally from Frenchpark in Co. Roscommon, the 56-year-old studied for a BA in Sociology, History and Philosophy; a BD in Theology; a Diploma in Mission Studies and an MA in Peace Studies and International Relations. His MA thesis focused on the Turkana Dassenach conflict and its causes and consequences. The area he studied is one where Ethiopian, Kenyan and South Sudanese claims converge.

He began his missionary life in a remote area of western Tanzania, where his work focused on enabling religious and social values to take root,

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constructing schools, medical institutions, women and children development centres, water projects and income-generating initiatives.

Episcopal ordination in Raphoe

The Episcopal Ordination of Monsignor Alexander Aloysius (Alan) McGuckian SJ as Bishop of Raphoe will take place at Mass on the Feast of the Transfiguration on Sunday 6 August 2017 at 3.00pm in the Cathedral of Saints Eunan and Columba, Letterkenny, Co Donegal in the Diocese of Raphoe

Archbishop says some Brexit decisions should be made 'off the political table'

The chances of negotiating Brexit by the UK's planned exit date of March 2019 is "infinitesimally small" unless politicians work together, the Archbishop of Canterbury has said.

The Most Rev Justin Welby renewed calls for a cross-party commission to negotiate Britain's departure from the European Union, as he said major decisions should be taken "off the political table".

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The Archbishop, who sits in the House of Lords, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "There are literally thousands of separate agreements to come to.

"If each one of those has to be argued as a point of confidence on the floor of the House of Commons, the chance of getting this done in what's now roughly 18 months is infinitesimally small.

"There has to be the political leadership that says we have major questions that are political, huge political decisions - the obvious one is the single market and customs union, but there are thousands of other decisions that can be made.

"Can the politicians not put at the front of their minds the needs of the United Kingdom to come out with a functional, working system for Brexit,

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and agree that certain things that, as it were, 'off the political table' and will be decided separately in an expert commission, or commission of senior politicians led by someone that is trusted in the political world?"

Meanwhile, Downing Street dismissed the demand for an expert commission and insisted the Government was committed to the two-year Brexit timetable.

The Prime Minister's official spokesman said: "We are committed to, and are, consulting widely on the issues of Brexit but there are no plans in relation to a commission."

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