



Irish President Michael D Higgins was speaking at an event in Cork commemorating Michael Collins

Ireland must not forget outrages against Protestants, President Higgins

The Republic of Ireland's President has said it is important to remember "outrages" committed

against Protestants during the nation's struggle for independence, the News Letter reports.

Michael D Higgins' remarks appeared in a transcript of a speech prepared for an annual event on Sunday honouring rebel figure Michael Collins. It was circulated to the press before his appearance at the Beal na mBláth annual commemoration in Co Cork. Collins was a veteran of the Easter Rising, and Mr Higgins praised his "organisational genius", noting that in 1916 – when the British forces were deeply engaged in World War One – he had "become quite convinced of the necessity of seizing the weak moment of the British Empire as an opportunity for a physical force movement to strike for freedom". He went on to speak of Collins contribution as a leader of the Irish forces during the War of Independence from 1919 until 1921, when the island was partitioned – leading to further conflict and violence during the years of the Irish Civil War. Among the violence of the era were a series of attacks around the towns of Bandon, Clonakilty and Dunmanway in Co Cork in April 1922, when the IRA killed 13 Protestants.

The bloodshed had been the subject of an RTE documentary in 2009, when the broadcaster said

that hundreds if not thousands of Protestants fled in terror as a result of the apparently sectarian onslaught. The president said Irish people “need to display courage and honesty as we seek to speak the truth of the period”.

This includes an appreciation of the “bewilderment” and “dismay” of RIC officers who were targeted by fellow Irishmen during the War for Independence, for example. He added: “We will be required to face, too, the ruthlessness of many executions performed by the IRA, the mistakes that inevitably happened in killings of purported informers, the executions of Republican prisoners during the Civil War, and the outrages perpetrated during both wars against Protestant people, some of whom were attacked regardless of their actual attitude towards the struggles under way.” Mr Higgins said that whilst it was important to recognise that “the independence we have today was achieved through a War of Independence”, it was “also important to acknowledge that the recognition that had been given to those unionists seeking a separate status in the north-east corner of the island”. He said Collins had accepted partition, and added: “Few today would challenge the

wisdom of his conscious decision ‘not to coerce the north-east’.”

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/higgins-ireland-must-not-forget-outrages-against-protestants-1-7537179>

Abuse victim slams church for allowing paedophile access to kids

Former choir boy Kerry Lawless today places the iconic St Patrick’s Cathedral right at the epicentre of a child abuse scandal that is sure to rock the Church of Ireland to its core, Kerry Lawless writes in Sunday World/

The ex-pupil of St Patrick’s Grammar School has bravely waived his anonymity to reveal how Church authorities were informed that volunteer Pat O’Brien was a paedophile – but continued to allow him work with young children at the Cathedral for nearly two decades.

Kerry was only eight years old when he was first abused by O’Brien after the young boy accepted a lift to choir practice. He was given a handful of coins and told to keep their secret.

In 1987, he told his parents and Gardaí of the abuse and an investigation was launched. O'Brien pleaded guilty and received a two-year suspended sentence.

However, he continued to volunteer at St Patrick's Cathedral, where he had access to countless other children despite the Church authorities being informed of his record.

O'Brien, who is suspected of orchestrating one of the most-prolific campaigns of child abuse ever in Ireland, may have committed more than 1,000 offences over four decades.

He sexually molested children in the Cathedral, on a boat on the Shannon, as well as in hotel rooms, laneways, his upmarket Knocklyon home, a shed on the northside of the capital and at locations in Mayo, Limerick, Wexford and Laois.

"I was one of the boys that he interfered with, from the age of eight, when I was in the choir. When I was 15 I told my parents what had happened to me and there was a social worker involved and I went to the Gardaí.

"I was the first person to report him and he admitted it all. He went to court and was

convicted and given a two-year suspended sentence.

“My parents informed St Patrick’s Cathedral. The Dean at the time was Victor Griffin. They told him what had happened to me and that Pat had pleaded guilty and was convicted and sentenced,” said the community worker.

“Years later, I found out that they had done nothing about him and he was still working in St Patrick’s Cathedral. I couldn’t believe it. He had admitted he abused me and they had let him continue to work in the Church and have access to other children.

O’Brien was taken into custody two weeks ago after pleading guilty to sexually abusing 14 separate victims. The new charges came following an investigation that is believed to involve the largest amount of offences ever reported against an individual in this country.

The softly-spoken retired engineer – who paid his victims for their silence – is due for sentence hearing in October, where details from three vast books of evidence against him will be heard. He is currently in Arbour Hill Prison.

Kerry (44), was a pupil of St Patrick's Grammar School and a member of the famous Cathedral choir when he first met O'Brien.

"I lived in Drimnagh, where he was living at the time, and I used to get the bus to school – so he would offer me a lift. In my case, it happened in a laneway off Meath Street when he would park up his car. He always gave me money and said it was our secret.

"I was so young, I couldn't understand what was happening and it went on for a few years until I was about 12 and I suppose I realised what was happening and I called a halt to it.

"I told my parents when I was about 15. They went to the Gardaí and they went to the Cathedral. O'Brien admitted to everything, but he tried to get me to drop the case.

"He wrote letters to my parents and me which I still have. In one, he asked me to drop the case as he was worried about his mother's health."

In the letter dated April 8, 1988, O'Brien wrote:
"As you can imagine this is causing me great concern and I know it is probably only what I deserve. My biggest worry is my mother's health.

I know that the outcome, should you proceed, will be damaging to her. The action you are persisting with will, no doubt, cause her extreme problems and hardship.

“I can assure you I am totally contrite for what happened and I can assure you that it will never re-occur.”

Kerry went ahead with his case despite the pleas from O’Brien, in the hopes that if he secured a conviction against his abuser then no other child would have to endure what he did.

Despite his supposed remorse and promises that he would never re-offend, O’Brien was back to his old ways within a short period of time.

Kerry finished his education and moved to the U.S. in the years after the court case, but when he returned to Ireland in 2004 he was stunned to find that O’Brien was still working at St Patrick’s Cathedral.

“I tracked him down and met up with him myself. I went to the Cathedral and spoke to the Dean who was there. The Dean then admitted that they had been made aware of O’Brien’s past in

more recent years too. So it was hard to understand,” he said.

“The last communication I had from them was a letter to say that the Board members were distressed to learn that a member of the Church choir had been abused, but that O’Brien was not a clergyman, so basically it wasn’t their problem.

“I am not involved in any on-going civil proceedings against St Patrick’s Cathedral, but I think it is disgraceful that they could have allowed O’Brien to have access to children there.”

<https://www.sundayworld.com/news/abuse-victim-slams-church-for-allowing-paedo-access-to-kids>

Bishops were told not to apologise to abuse victims

Survivors of child sexual abuse have accused the Church of England of “acting like Pontius Pilate”, as a confidential document revealed that bishops were explicitly instructed only to give partial apologies – if at all – to victims to avoid

being sued, John Bingham writes in the Daily Telegraph.

Legal advice marked “strictly confidential” and circulated among the most senior bishops told them to “express regret” only using wording approved by lawyers, PR advisers and insurers.

The guidance, written in 2007 and replaced last year, also warned bishops to be wary of meeting victims and only ever to do so after legal advice. It warned bishops of the “unintended effect of accepting legal liability” for sexual abuse within their diocese and told them to avoid “inadvertently” conceding guilt.

The paper, seen by *The Daily Telegraph* and confirmed as genuine, advised bishops to use “careful drafting” to “effectively apologise” without enabling victims to get compensation.

Survivors said it showed there was a culture of denial, dishonesty and “blanking” victims in ways that had heightened their pain and failed to tackle the roots of the abuse crisis.

It follows a critical independent review of the Church’s handling of sadistic abuse by Garth Moore, a priest and canon lawyer, in the

Seventies. It highlighted how a teenager – known as Joe – revealed his ordeal to several leading clerics, of which three were later ordained as bishops, who then claimed not to remember anything.

The report singled out the way in which the Bishop of Durham, the Rt Rev Paul Butler, the Church's then head of safeguarding, cut all contact with Joe after he began legal action, following advice from insurers – something the report condemned as “reckless”.

Meanwhile, Lambeth Palace brushed off around 17 requests for a meeting with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, without any “meaningful” reply, it shows.

Joe said the document “made total sense” in light of his experience.

“The approach to survivors is often a corporate model and this document supports that – it shows a church led by lawyers and insurers. You get the impression that these people are really their masters,” he said. “The Church will say ‘our hands are tied’, but they are paying the people who are tying their hands. They should say ‘we

need to stop this nonsense’, but they wash their hands like Pontius Pilate.”

A Church of England spokesman said: “The Church of England published new guidance in 2015 emphasising that: ‘The pastoral response to alleged victims and survivors is of top priority, and needs to be separated as far as possible from the management processes for the situation, and from legal and insurance responses.’ That superseded all previous advice.”

In memoirs, ex Pope Benedict says Vatican ‘gay lobby’ tried to wield power

Former Pope Benedict says in his memoirs that no-one pressured him to resign but alleges that a “gay lobby” in the Vatican had tried to influence decisions, a leading Italian newspaper reported on Friday.

The book, called “The Last Conversations”, is the first time in history that a former pope judges his own pontificate after it is over. It is due to be published on Sept. 9.

Citing health reasons, Benedict in 2013 became the first pope in six centuries to resign. He promised to remain “hidden to the world” and has been living in a former convent in the Vatican gardens.

Italy’s *Corriere della Sera* daily, which has acquired the Italian newspaper rights for excerpts and has access to the book, ran a long article on Friday summarizing its key points.

In the book, Benedict says that he came to know of the presence of a “gay lobby” made up of four or five people who were seeking to influence Vatican decisions. The article says Benedict says he managed to “break up this power group”.

Benedict resigned following a turbulent papacy that included the so-call “Vatileaks” case, in which his butler leaked some of his personal letters and other documents that alleged corruption and a power struggle in the Vatican.

Italian media at the time reported that a faction of prelates who wanted to discredit Benedict and pressure him to resign was behind the leaks.

News briefs

+++ Creation Time resources - Creation Time will be celebrated in the Christian churches of the world from 1 September to 4 October. The theme this year is 'Followers of Jesus, Caring for Creation'. Eco-Congregation Ireland has prepared some resources for Irish churches to use in worship during Creation Time 2016. ECI is offering these suggestions but churches and faith communities are free to produce their own or adapt these to suit their tradition or context. ECI resources are available on the Eco-Congregation Ireland website here: <http://ecocongregationireland.com/archives/5784>. Eco-Congregation Scotland has published material for use by congregations during Creation Time 2016. The material comes from an ecumenical writing group, with contributors from the Church of Scotland, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the United Reformed Church. It follows this year's theme emphasising the readings from the Gospel of Luke which appear in the Revised Common Lectionary in September. The materials can be found at this link: <http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/creation-time/>.

+++ Musical garden supports Movice parish -

It was a case of in with the old and in with the new as members and friends of Movice, Donagh, Culdaff and Cloncha Parish gathered in Shroove, on Saturday, for the annual Musical Open Garden event, hosted by Margot Caldwell. The event offered an opportunity to meet the Reverend Suzanne Cousins, who will be installed as Bishop's Curate in the parish after she is ordained priest on September 4th. Two of the Rev Cousins' predecessors in Movice – Canon Bill McNee and Rev Terence Kerr – also travelled to Shroove for Saturday's gathering. There was none of the dismal showers forecast for the afternoon, prompting one visitor from Bready in County Tyrone to assert confidently 'sure God is Church of Ireland'. The woman was among the scores of people who arrived to see Ms Caldwell's stunningly beautiful garden. Foxrock has taken almost 40 years to develop and is listed in the Donegal Garden Trail. Overlooking Shroove lighthouse and across to Benevenagh, it has featured in newspapers and magazines. Visitors were entertained by the Northern Lights Choir and Movice Gospel Choir, who performed together on the garden's lower tier, while on the upper tier cream teas were served and there were plant and cake stalls. The

Rev Cousins thanked those who supported the event and, in particular, Margot Caldwell for generously hosting it. The proceeds this year will go to the Greencastle Church Heating Fund.

+++ Clogher clerical changes - Bishop Liam MacDaid, Bishop of Clogher has announced 14 clerical appointments for the diocese of Clogher which will take effect from the weekend of 2 – 4 September 2016. See - <http://www.catholicbishops.ie/2016/08/19/bishop-macdaid-announces-clerical-changes-for-the-diocese-of-clogher/>

+++ Hope has wings - The exciting story of MAF's last 70 years, Hope Has Wings, is now available as a free audio book. Author Stuart King has seen it all happen. As co-founder of MAF in post-war London, he made the first MAF flight into uncharted territory in Africa. Later, as General Director of MAF UK, he led the imaginative service which now uses the latest light aircraft to bring life-saving help to isolated communities. The book invites you to travel with Stuart to the world's remotest areas – overcoming mountains, swamps, deserts and jungles in small aircraft – often in extremely hazardous conditions. It's an adventure of faith – terrifying and thrilling all at once! With accounts of God's constant goodness, guidance and

answers to prayer, you'll be encouraged, excited and uplifted by the story.

Visit www.maf-uk.org/premier to get your free download.

+++ Church of England clergy defiance - A dozen Church of England clergy are to reveal that they have defied the Archbishop of Canterbury by marrying their gay partners. They will go public in an open letter in which they will also urge the church to permit blessings for same-sex weddings. Half of the signatories had already declared themselves to be in a same-sex marriage. Doubling the number threatens the fragile truce on an issue that has divided the church since same-sex marriages were allowed in England and Wales in March 2014.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Response to Bobby Sands film could be shown at Stormont

Irish News

Arlene Foster has expressed support for film responding to 66 Days

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/2016/08/22/news/response-to-sands-documentary-could-be-shown-at-stormont-661027/?>

Finance minister silent on Nama coaching scandal

Irish News

Sinn Féin minister faces calls to step aside while controversy is investigated

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/2016/08/22/news/still-no-answers-from-finance-minister-on-coaching-scandal-661343/?>

'Brexit being used to make land-grab for north' - Leo Varadkar

Irish News

Fine Gael minister says he foresees a united Ireland in the future

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/2016/08/22/news/brexit-being-used-to-make-land-grab-for-north-says-leo-varadkar-661953/?>

News Letter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/beware-a-brexit-based-land-grab-for-ni-says-varadkar-1-7537618>

PFI schools built in Scotland 'owned by offshore firms'

BBC News

More than 200 schools built in Scotland under private finance schemes are at least partially owned by offshore investment funds, BBC Scotland finds.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-37135611>

Guardian, Independent, Pink News, Attitude

Report that Several gay ministers will write to church leaders to say they are already in same-sex marriage and want official position reconsidered

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/aug/21/gay-anglican-clergy-to-defy-churchs-official-stance-on-same-sex-marriage>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/gay-church-ministers-defy-same-sex-marriage-ban-anglicans-lgbt-a7202781.html>

<http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2016/08/21/a-dozen-gay-priest-to-reveal-they-have-secretly-married-to-defy-the-church-of-england/>

<http://attitude.co.uk/gay-clergy-to-go-against-churchs-rules-on-same-sex-marriage/>

Telegraph, Express, Mirror

Various reports of calls for Mo Farah to be knighted include reference to tweet by the Archbishop of York calling of his followers to spread the word.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/08/21/i-want-a-knighthood-says-mo-farah-as-he-suggests-he-deserves-a-g/>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/702477/sir-mo-farah-knighthood-double-double-team-gb-best-olympics-ever-rio-2016>

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/mo-farah-admits-knighthood-would-8680222#ICID=nsm>

Obituary

Guardian - The Rev Roly Bain

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2016/aug/21/the-rev-roly-bain-obituary>

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