



***Canon Horace McKinley, Orla Carroll (Bord Fáilte), Minister Paschal Donohoe and Andrew Smith at the launch of the Discovery Space in St Patrick's Cathedral.***

## **Technology helps bring St Patrick's Cathedral to life**

St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin has opened a new 'Discovery Space' in its south transept

which gives an interactive, high tech insight to the 800 year old building and its history.

The 55 inch touch screen table allows users to explore the cathedral's history and interior including its monuments, characters and stained glass windows as well as hidden areas of the building. The audio visual area includes videos and there are also facilities for presentations to be made to small groups.

It's been an important religious site for over a millennium and a half, but St Patrick's Cathedral in [Dublin](#) has been firmly thrust into the technological era with the introduction of this new interactive Discovery Space for tourists and visitors.

Officially launched by Minister for Tourism [Paschal Donohoe](#) on Wednesday, the space, located in the building's south transept, features a large touchscreen table and iPads which offer pictures, audio and information on the cathedral's layout, history and heritage.

The initiative is designed to bring a more interactive and immersive element to the visitor experience.

More importantly, Canon Horace McKinley hopes it will see more people come through the front door, and that they will also stay for longer.

“Last year nearly half a million tourists and schoolchildren paid a visit to St Patrick’s Cathedral, with an average visit lasting 23 minutes,” said Canon McKinley, who welcomed the Minister in the absence of Dean [Victor Stacey](#).

“We hope that this fantastic new interactive resource will make the cathedral even more accessible to those interested in our rich cultural heritage, encouraging them to stay longer and allowing them to learn in a more modern and interesting way.”

Director of Strategic Development with Fáilte Ireland, Orla Carroll, said that St Patrick’s Cathedral was a crucial part of the ‘Dubline’ tourist trail. She said that the interactive area was what Fáilte Ireland was all about. “We commend the board and those at the cathedral who had the vision to make this iconic place even more accessible,” she added.

Minister Donohoe emphasised the magnitude and importance of the work being carried out at St Patrick’s Cathedral. “With a building of such magnificence it would be easy to sit back and

say 'we are already so successful'. But everyone involved with the cathedral has looked at ways to make it more relevant and accessible," he said.

"This project is an example of what integration is. There is the integration of past and present... The recycled furniture which has been used in the cathedral for hundreds of years is integrated with this technology which is new and cutting edge. A sacred space and place of worship is integrated with a place of discovery. This space offers something that is contemporary and ancient and will appeal to young minds," he added.

In an attempt to engage younger visitors, the Discovery Boxes - built using recycled wood from the cathedral's disused pews - contain games which are complemented by a jigsaw of one of the stained glass windows and brass rubbings of some of the designs on the surrounding walls and pillars.

"As opposed to going around looking at plaques or following a plan, it allows for a much more in-depth experience for the visitor," he added.

"I think it's particularly attractive because we live in this age, particularly where a younger generation love interactive screens. This is a very

contemporary and relevant model for the times we live in.”

The canon was keen to praise the work of St Patrick’s own dedicated education officer [Andrew Smith](#) in helping to make the Discovery Space a reality, and its installation is the latest in a multi-phase initiative costing €250,000 which was co-funded by [Fáilte Ireland](#).

Branding the addition as an “exceptional” facility, Mr Donohoe said the new interactive element helps bring the 800-year-old city centre building to life.

“In recent years surveys were conducted that indicated that while the building itself was a massive draw, visitors were keen to learn more about the history of the place and the role it has played in Dublin throughout the years.

“I have no doubt that these new facilities will see tourists and locals visiting St Patrick’s in even greater numbers across the remainder of the summer and in the years to come.”

Video at -

<http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/heritage/technology-helps-bring-st-patrick-s-cathedral-to-life-1.2307666>

## **Presbyterian and Catholic Churches want a free vote on same-sex marriage in Northern Ireland**

Northern Ireland's two largest churches have called for politicians to be allowed a free vote when same-sex marriage is next debated at Stormont.

The Presbyterian and Catholic churches have both said that the party whips should be removed on the issue, allowing politicians to vote freely without influence.

The largest party in Northern Ireland, the DUP, has so far not allowed it's members a free vote on same-sex marriage.

[BBC News](#) quoted the the DUP's chief whip Peter Weir saying: "Members of the assembly have voted against the introduction of same-sex marriage on four separate occasions.

"The DUP is opposed to the redefinition of marriage and it is a matter for other parties to explain their own stance on the issue."

Despite the Catholic church and the Presbyterian church being against same-sex marriage they believe that a free vote is better for democracy.

Father Tim Bartlett said: "These things should be a free vote, as that is more democratic and is more transparent for the electorate."

While the Reverend Norman Halimton from the Presbyterian church said: "We would be very supportive of a vote based on conscience, because conscience matters in a democratic and pluralist society.

"There has to be a place for dissenting and minority voices."

No response has been given to the church's calls for a free vote from the SDLP or Sinn Fein.

SEE - CNI COMMENT, Aug 6

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-33793787>

**Become a Facebook Friend of CNI**  
**Click on logo at CNI Home page**

## **Reminiscence Exhibition at Belfast Methodist care home**

Residents at Belfast Central Mission's Kirk House care home in east Belfast are looking forward to a Reminiscence Exhibition being held this weekend. The exhibition is the outcome of a partnership between one of the residents, Sammy Gordon, and Susan Headley, a local volunteer with an interest in reminiscence therapy.

The exhibition will feature photos and memorabilia inspired by the reminiscence work at Kirk House. Most of the residents were born in the 1920s or 30s, so their fondest memories come from the 1950s – an era when life was increasingly positive after the hardships of the Second World War.

The exhibition will take place between 10am – 4pm on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> August at Kirk House, 110 Kings Road, Belfast. Entry is free but donations are welcome in aid of the Kirk House Garden Fund, which aims to improve the outdoor space for residents. For more information contact Kirk House on: 028 9040 2938 or visit their website <http://www.kirkhousecarehome.co.uk/>





After training with the Reminiscence Network NI Susan had contacted Kirk House to volunteer her services when a local expert recommended it as a care home which might be interested in exploring what the technique has to offer. Susan has helped facilitate a Reminiscence Group for residents to look back over their lives and share their memories.

Susan said, *“Everyone has a story to tell. Reminiscence gives people the sense of being valued, of saying, ‘I am someone who’s had a life’ not just an old person sitting in a chair.”*

Resident Sammy added, *“The stories in Kirk House are unbelievable. There are residents*

*here who've lived all over the world, in India and Africa, working as doctors and missionaries. The project has got us all talking to each other more. After the exhibition is over we'll definitely keep the Reminiscence Group going; Susan has worked so hard on the project, she deserves a medal!"*

By making links between a person's past, present and future, reminiscence therapy is recognised as having numerous benefits; it is enjoyable, helps form social relationships and gives people a feeling of self-worth.

Faith Gibson, President of Reminiscence Network NI said, *"Through reminiscence – the sharing of memories through our personal life experience, with all their similarities and differences – we discover ourselves anew and encounter other people with enlarged understanding."*

## **Dean's Tribute to Canon Robert Reed, Precentor of St Patrick's Cathedral**

The Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, the Very Revd Victor Stacey, has paid tribute to the



Cathedral's Precentor, the Revd Canon Robert Reed, who died on Tuesday August 4.

The Dean said: "The Revd Canon Robert Reed, who has died following a short illness, has had close associations with Saint Patrick's Cathedral, over almost thirty years. A native of the USA, he was a geography teacher and house master at Wesley College, when he was

[churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

ordained to the Non-stipendiary Ministry in 1987. He rose through the ranks of Minor Canon, Succentor and Treasurer before becoming Precentor in 2001. He was well fitted to this post because of his gifts in music and liturgy. Since retiring from his school post in 2012, he was even more available, taking an active part in both Cathedral Schools. We shall miss his joyful and at times calming presence and sympathise with his wife Ida, his brother and sister, and many friends at this sad time”.

The Funeral Service will take place in St Patrick's Cathedral on Monday August 10 at 11.00 am and will be followed by cremation at Mount Jerome.

## **Pope urges true welcome for divorced and remarried**

Pope Francis has said that the Church must foster a true welcome for the divorced and remarried and their families.

Resuming his Wednesday General Audiences following the summer holiday, the Pope said the Church must always show her pastoral care for those in such situations, especially the children.

In his catechesis on the family, the Pontiff said “The Church knows well that such a situation contradicts the Christian Sacrament.”

However, he added the Church, as a Mother, always seeks the good and salvation of all her children.

Pope Francis noted that the Church in recent decades has developed a greater awareness of the need to be welcoming toward the divorced and re-married.

He emphasised that they are still part of the Church – they are not excommunicated, and should not be treated as such, but rather must be encouraged, with their families, to participate in the Church’s life: through prayer, listening to the Word of God, the Christian education of their children, and service to the poor.

He recalled the words of Pope Benedict XVI, who called for careful discernment and wise pastoral accompaniment, while recognising that there are no “simple solutions” to the difficulties wounded families face.

The Church, Pope Francis said, should imitate the Good Shepherd, welcoming all her children as a mother who is willing to give her life for them.

“Each one of us can do our part by having the attitude of the Good Shepherd, Who knows every one of His sheep, and excludes no one from His infinite love.”

The issue of Communion for the divorced and remarried is likely to be one of the main issues discussed at the Synod on the Family in October.

See also -

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/no-easy-solution-for-divorced-and-remarried-says-pope-1.2307880>

## **New Church of England leadership training already showing 'first fruits'**

The delivery of new training programmes for senior leaders in the Church of England is already bearing fruit, according to the senior bishop overseeing the programme.

Writing in the first of a series of blogs reflecting on Leadership and Development training, the Rt Revd Stephen Conway, Bishop of Ely, who chairs the Development and Appointments

Group of the House of Bishops, said that feedback from those having attended the courses "has been extremely positive and we feel blessed for the fruits it is already bearing".

The first leadership programme for cathedral deans and leaders of greater churches held in March at Judge Business School in Cambridge, included remarks by one participant who observed that it had been "by a country mile, the most impressive course I have under taken in over 30 years of ordained ministry". Another said, "Overall this has been an outstanding week, both in content and shape. Of course, there has been much value in conversations, etc., but the stand-out feature has been the sessions, with speakers of very high quality, genuinely addressing core issues for this very specific audience".

As a result of the positive feedback, a repeat of the programme next year has been requested for those unable to attend in March, whilst seminars on some of the key themes will be run in due course for members of the cathedral teams.

The new modular development programmes for bishops have also attracted encouraging feedback, Bishop Stephen said, with 18 bishops gathering at Leicester's Cathedral Centre earlier

this year for the first module with one bishop commenting that the first module was "probably the best piece of in-service training I've had since I was a Team Vicar in the 1980s".

The first meeting of the new Learning Community in July, to help prepare those who might take on wider responsibilities in the future, has also received generous feedback with one participant reflecting on how the training would have an immediate impact on their parish ministry: "The models and insights offered were very helpful, but grounded in practice and in the reality of church, and the balance of presentation, reflection and group work was just right in my view... I haven't been so enthused and inspired for a long time".

*Read the full text of Bishop Stephen's blog at <http://cofecomms.tumblr.com/post/125847173475/first-fruits>.*

## Media digest

**Irish Independent  
Church offered 'unsuitable'  
accommodation for new school, says  
Educate Together**



Since 2011, eight schools have opened in "divestment" areas and only one school - a **Church of Ireland** school - has actually transferred patronage.

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/education/church-offered-unsuitable-accommodation-for-new-school-says-educate-together-31430948.html>

## **Irish Independent Baptism rule for schools to stay, says Church**

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin has defended Catholic schools' right to prioritise children who are baptised.

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/baptism-rule-for-schools-to-stay-says-church-31428581.html>

## **BBC News/Irish News/Belfast Telegraph 'Satanic Islam' preacher James McConnell says prosecution a waste of money**

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-33800704>

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2015/08/05/news/-satanic-islam-preacher-james-mcconnell-says-prosecution-a-waste-of-money-214653/>

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/satanic-islam-sermon-preacher-prosecution-is-a-waste-of-money-31429489.html>

## **Tel/ITV**

Report that churches have responded to Government pressure to relax Sunday trading laws saying it is as much about protecting Sunday league football or the family Sunday lunch as worship services. It states an alliance of faith groups, unions and small retailers is lining up to oppose plans for the changes in Sunday trading. The Church of England, in a statement, said its reasons for opposing the plans were as much about the benefit to society as any theological arguments. The former Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali is also quoted from an article (*link below*) in the *Telegraph* in which he writes against the changes.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/11785898/Church-keep-Sunday-special-for-the-sake-of-family-friends-and-football.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/shopping-and-consumer-news/11785203/Sunday-shopping-risks-depriving-us-of-something-precious.html>

<http://www.itv.com/news/2015-08-05/church-urged-not-to-oppose-extended-sunday-shopping/>

## **BBC**

Report that burial space in cemeteries in Cornwall could run out in 20 years, according to

a council report. Cornwall Council has measured capacity in response to concerns burial space "will be overtaken by demand in some areas within a few years". It states some areas have already run out of space with families having to take up plots in neighbouring districts. The local authority is expecting the death rate to rise sharply as "baby-boomers" reach the end of their lives.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-cornwall-33756570>

### **Times/Mail/ibtimes**

Report that the Pope has told Roman Catholics to welcome those who have divorced and remarried outside the church, talking to an audience of 7,000 pilgrims and tourists at the Vatican yesterday. It states the Pope's attempts to find a more compassionate response to the needs of divorced and gay Catholics met fierce opposition from conservative clerics at last autumn's synod on the family.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/europe/article4518347.ece>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3186268/Divorced-people-remarry-church-not-treated-like-outcasts-declares-Pope.html?>

[ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](#)

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/the-pope/11785375/Stop-shunning-divorced-Catholics-Pope-Francis-tells-his-flock.html](#)

[http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/pope-francis-says-divorced-remarried-catholics-still-part-church-1514288](#)

## **Mail**

Article on how seven Christians have been detained in China accused of embezzlement and disrupting social order after taking parts in protests against the state-sanctioned removal of crosses from churches. Pastor Bao Guohua, his wife Xing Wenxiang and five members of Holy Love Christian Church staff are understood to be held by police in Jinhua, in the east of Zhejiang province. Church officials have denied the allegations against the group, saying they had been targeted simply for taking part in demonstrations against the removal of the cross from the church.

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3185859/Seven-Christians-detained-China-taking-protests-against-government-tearing-crosses-churches-humiliating-campaign-against-Christianity.html#ixzz3i0etTMK4](#)

August 7