

# Church News Ireland

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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site



# Image of the day

## NI Scout Network's Good Turn for Habitat Cambodia

Hear directly from



Zoe, who is currently in Phnom Penh, as part of the NI Scout Network team, supporting Habitat's long-term partner programme with Habitat Cambodia.

“It’s great to see the team working together so well to make such a difference. We enjoyed talking with the homeowners, finding out about their lives, and telling them a



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little about Northern Ireland.”

The team has been working hard this week, currently they are finishing the floor boards in the enclosed room on stilts and have already completed the sand fill and wall border of the ground floor. Want to be the first to hear about global opportunities with Habitat in 2026? Sign up here: [www.tfaforms.com/5190094](http://www.tfaforms.com/5190094)



**News**  
**Dean**  
**gets**







## Christian Aid's 'humble hero' award

**This month's 'humble hero' award goes to The Very Rev Paul Draper, Rector of Lismore Union in County Waterford and Dean of St Carthage's Cathedral - Lismore.**

He completed a 70k in May – by running, cycling and swimming, despite a neck injury. Dean Paul's challenge raised €500 for our Christian Aid Week appeal.

Hopefully this gorgeous landscape will make you want to cycle along the Waterford Greenway for Christian Aid

## Light the Fire – Hill of Slane 2025



**A busload of pilgrims from the Diocese of Raphoe travelled to the Hill of Slane for Light the Fire 2025.**

The sun shone down as a great number of pilgrims gathered from all over Ireland to celebrate Holy Mass and



Eucharistic Healing on this historic site where St Patrick first fanned the flames of faith in Ireland over 1,500 years ago.

The day included prayer, music,







testimonies, and talks — with Archbishop Eamon Martin, Deacon John Taaffe, Michael Murphy speaking on Ven. Matt Talbot, and more. Holy Mass was concelebrated by Archbishop Martin and several priests from around Ireland.

Singing was beautiful, and prayers were offered for Dana, who was unable to attend due to illness.

Thank you to Mary T. Sweeney for the photographs

## **Princess Anne praised for 'significant contribution' to UK-Ireland relations**

**Irish President Michael D Higgins praised the “significant contribution” the Princess Royal has made**

**to the relationship between the UK and Ireland, during a meeting at his official residence in Dublin.**

Princess Anne visited Aras an Uachtarain yesterday in what was described as “a courtesy call”.

She met President Higgins and his wife, Sabina, ahead of attending the official opening day of the 150th Dublin Horse Show at the Royal Dublin Society (RDS).

The Princess Royal, wearing a mint-green coat and navy pencil skirt and sporting a horse badge on her lapel, said the weather was warmer than she had expected.

She told Mr Higgins it was “very kind” of him to invite her to sign the visitors' book. After asking where on the page she should place her signature, she said she did not want to “waste an entire page”. But Sabina told the princess: “You deserve a whole page.”

The royal joked with President Higgins saying that he had been in the official residence “a long time”, to which he responded: “Indeed, it has been 14 years.”

“You spend all your time here?” she asked.

Sabina responded: “All our time.”

This is expected to be President Higgins' final engagement with the royal family before he leaves office.

In a statement following their meeting, Mr Higgins said: “It was a pleasure to renew my conversations with Her Royal



Highness Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, and to recognise the significant contribution which she has made over so many years to the relationship between our two countries.

“I was also pleased to recognise the contribution which the Princess Royal has made to equestrian sports over the years as well as to related learning and therapy services.

## **Pope Leo's unannounced visit to Children's Hospital in Rome**

**On Monday evening, Pope Leo XIV made an unannounced visit to Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital in Rome to comfort the family of Ignacio, a 15-year-old boy from Spain who remains in critical condition due to complications from lymphoma.**

Ignacio had traveled to Rome for the Jubilee with the Neocatechumenal Way but was rushed to intensive care shortly after his arrival. His parents, Pedro Pablo and Carmen Gloria, along with his siblings, told the Pope that they have been praying day and night for a miracle.

The Pope stayed with them for half an hour, prayed the Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Glory Be, and reminded them that “we are made for Heaven,” urging them to trust in God's will. The family, overwhelmed, said his presence brought unexpected peace.

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Before leaving, Pope Leo visited other children in the Oncology ward and greeted the hospital staff, offering them a quiet moment of encouragement in the face of suffering.

## **VJ Day commemoration at National Memorial Arboretum to be broadcast live on BBC One**

**On 15 August, the Royal British Legion will host a National Commemorative Event with the UK Government at the National Memorial Arboretum to mark the 80th anniversary of VJ Day.**

It will feature 400 Armed Forces personnel, military bands, a Red Arrows flypast, and historic aircraft.

The event will be broadcast live on BBC One from 11:30am to 1pm, and will also be available to view on a large screen within the grounds of the Arboretum for members of the public.

At midday, you can also pause with the nation for a two-minute silence to honour the end of the Second World War.

Learn more: [spklr.io/VJDay80-FB](https://spklr.io/VJDay80-FB)

## **Education**



## **History-making performance by BRA's talented gymnast winning Ireland's first-ever gymnastics gold medal**

**Belfast Royal Academy is incredibly proud to celebrate the outstanding achievement of Lower Sixth pupil, Chester Enríquez, who shone on the international stage at the European Youth Olympic Festival in Skopje, North Macedonia last week.**



Chester made history by winning Ireland's first-ever gymnastics gold medal — and the country's first gold in the vault at these Games.

Qualifying for the vault final in third place, Chester delivered a flawless routine, earning a score of 13.599 to secure the top spot on the podium.

After his win, a proud Chester said:

*“It was surreal, an experience I’ll never forget for the rest of my life being the starting point of my career, coming home with a gold medal and a bronze medal, I could have asked for more, really.*

*I can’t even express how I feel in the world because I’m that ecstatic and that I’m just so proud of myself and our team for what we’ve come out here and done. And I’m so thankful there’s so many people who have supported me along my journey up to this point in time. It’s unbelievable.”*

Chester has consistently demonstrated exceptional dedication, balancing a demanding training schedule with academic life — all while remaining modest about his incredible accomplishments.

Congratulations to Chester and his teammates. We are excited to see what the future holds for this remarkable young athlete.

## **Queens University research on Great Irish Famine on human height**

**Our experts have been examining the impact of the Great Irish Famine on human height and have found some very surprising results.**

Their research discovered that survivors in the regions hardest-hit by the Famine did not display the expected





stunting in height usually associated with malnutrition and disease.

Instead they found that survivors grew to be as tall, and in some cases significantly taller, than individuals born before or after the Famine.

Read on here to learn more ➡ [ow.ly/eSzI50WAXjL](https://ow.ly/eSzI50WAXjL)

## Unemployed and ready for a fresh start? Step Into Hospitality

**If you're 18 or over and currently unemployed, this could be the opportunity that changes everything.**

Join us at our brand-new, state-of-the-art campus in Ballymena for a **5-week fully funded Hospitality Academy**, where you'll get hands-on experience in everything from barista skills and customer service to cooking and front-of-house roles.

Learn directly from industry experts, meet guest speakers from top hospitality venues, and work towards two recognised Level 2 qualifications in Food Hygiene and Customer Service. This exciting programme, funded by the Gallaher Trust and delivered in collaboration with the NI Hospitality School at Galgorm Resort & Spa, also includes site visits, real-world work experience, and the chance to explore job opportunities with local employers.

Start Date: Monday 8th September

Location: NEW Ballymena Campus

Time: Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm

Ready to sign up? Contact Donna McCullough at [donna.mccullough@nrc.ac.uk](mailto:donna.mccullough@nrc.ac.uk) or 07790 884567

Don't miss your chance to turn your passion into a career!  
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## Cathedral Calls

### Heritage Week at St Patrick's

**There are four fantastic early evening recitals this year during Heritage Week beginning with Cathedral Organist David Leigh performing music by**



## **Mendelssohn, Reubke & Liszt on the Cathedral's mighty Willis Organ.**

His performance is given in memory of his former teacher, Nicolas Kynaston, universally admired English organist, who died in March of this year.

The programme includes his own arrangement of Liszt's piano piece, *Funérailles*, and the Mendelssohn/W T Best transcription and Reubke works were frequently included in his recital programmes.

Saturday 16 August at 6.30pm

Admission free pre-booking strongly advised, links in Cathedral web.



SAINT PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL | DUBLIN

# Music in Heritage Week



## THE MIGHTY WILLIS ORGAN

David Leigh, Cathedral Organist

Saturday 16 August | 6.30pm

Music by Reubke, Mendelssohn & Liszt

## MUSIC FOR VOICE & PIANO

Sarah Thursfield, mezzo & David O'Shea, piano

Wednesday 20 August | 6.30pm

Music by Wagner, Bach & Hughes



## MUSIC FOR SAX & PIANO

Victoria Green, sax & Stuart Nicholson, piano

Friday 22 August | 6.30pm

Music by Gershwin, John Williams & Piazzolla

## and finally, something for the *young at heart*....

Stuart Nicholson, organ & Morgan Crowley, narrator

Saturday 23 August | 6.30pm

Sergei Prokofiev | *PETER & THE WOLF*

plus music from *HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON*,  
& *FANTASTIC BESATS AND WHERE TO FIND THEM*



ADMISSION FREE | VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO BOOK YOUR SEATS

[www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/heritage25](http://www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/heritage25)



## Crafty bags fundraiser for Lisburn Cathedral Hall

### **Bags of inspiration in crafty fundraiser.**

Two members of Lisburn Cathedral are using their crafting skills to produce hand-made bags in various sizes which they are selling to raise funds for the renovation of the Cathedral Hall.

## Clergy and ministry

### Westport praying for their missionary kidnapped in Haiti

**The parish priest of a Catholic missionary who has been kidnapped in Haiti has confirmed that efforts are underway to secure her release.**

**Gena Heraty** was among nine people abducted from the orphanage where she was working near Port-au-Prince on Sunday.

Fr. John Kenny from Westport Parish in County Mayo told Premier News that “negotiations are in a very delicate

situation and we're all conscious that whatever efforts are being made are intense."

He added: "I know through the European diplomats out there, that the state of government in the local area is in disarray, and there's so much vying for leadership and authority in the community there, it's difficult to know how they're managing and who they're negotiating with. But I know that the orphanage she works with in the charity she works with, have been contacted."

Ms. Heraty, who has worked in Haiti for decades, was kidnapped after the Sainte-Hélène orphanage was stormed by gang members. Fr. Kenny said she had fallen in love with Haiti and stayed there after going out on a short-term project in 1993.

After that, she had "found her other family in the community there, with the children," he added.

"She's not one to seek the spotlight for herself. Any visits home have always been in connection with promoting her work and generating support and fundraising for the orphanage. The circumstances are very poverty stricken and there's children abandoned, not because parents don't want to keep their children, but because they just cannot. So people like Gena and others have been a God-send in that area to support those who are in such dire need."

Since they heard the news on Monday, Fr. Kenny said the community in Westport Parish has gathered together to pray: "We're very conscious at the moment that with



negotiations ongoing, it's difficult for any of us to intervene in any other way except through prayer.

“Yesterday at Mass I mentioned how one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is courage, and certainly, courage is one of the things she needs and the people with her at this time, and courage leading to hope. And our hope is that this will be resolved and what we can do as a community, her family, her friends, and all the people back home is to pray that this will be resolved, and that this will come to a positive outcome.

“It’s incomprehensible why this goes on, that there's so much evil in people, the evil of just not loving our neighbour and respecting life.”

## **Ordained Local Minister for the Taughboyne Parishes in East Donegal**



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**The Bishop of Derry & Raphoe, Rt Rev'd Andrew Forster, has announced the appointment of Rev'd Sean McClafferty as Ordained Local Minister for the Taughboyne Group of Parishes in East Donegal.**

For the last two years, Rev'd McClafferty has served as Deacon Assistant in the Ardstraw Parish Group. In June he was priested at a service in St Eunan's Cathedral in Raphoe. He will be well known to many across our United Dioceses as a member of Diocesan Council and of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland, as well as in his role as Chaplain to Letterkenny University Hospital.

Rev'd McClafferty will be formally welcomed to the Taughboyne Group at a special Service in All Saint's Parish Church, Newtowncunningham on Friday 5th September at 8pm.

## Events



## Poetry at Edinburgh Sacred Arts Festival

**Join us for outstanding poetry events this August starring familiar voices and brand new talent.**

**Sunday 10th August** 3pm St John's Episcopal Church  
Edinburgh

Poets Grahame Davies, Rowan Williams and composer Paul Mealor explore Welsh religious poetry marking 25 years since the death of R. S. Thomas.

**Wednesday 13th August** 1.15pm Canongate Kirk - The Kirk of Holyroodhouse and Edinburgh Castle Poets of the future! The Young Religious Poets Competition winners will be announced at a special event with poets Christine De Luca and Robert Crawford.

**Friday 15th August** at 3pm St Vincent's Chapel The making of the 'Scottish Psalter'. Celebrating 350 years with poets and composers, committees and kings; precentors, printers, and pioneers.

Visit <https://www.edinburghsacredartsfestival.org/> for tickets for all events.

## Heritage

### Remembering John Mason Neale

**John Mason Neale (24 January 1818 – 6 August 1866)** was an English Anglican priest, scholar and hymnwriter. He worked and wrote on a wide range of holy Christian texts, including obscure medieval hymns, both Western and Eastern. Among his most famous hymns is the 1853 Good King Wenceslas, set on Boxing Day.





Neale was strongly high church in his sympathies, and had to endure a good deal of opposition, including a fourteen years' inhibition by his bishop. Neale translated the Eastern liturgies into English, and wrote a mystical and devotional commentary on the Psalms.

However, he is

best known as a hymnwriter and, especially, translator, having enriched English hymnody with many ancient and mediaeval hymns translated from Latin and Greek. More than anyone else, he made English-speaking congregations aware of the centuries-old tradition of Latin, Greek, Russian, and Syrian hymns.

The 1875 edition of the Hymns Ancient and Modern contains 58 of his translated hymns; The English Hymnal

(1906) contains 63 of his translated hymns and six original hymns by Neale.

His translations include:

"All Glory, Laud and Honour"

"A Great and Mighty Wonder"

"O Blest Creator of the Light"

"O come, O come, Emmanuel"

"Of the Father's Heart Begotten"

"Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle"

"To Thee Before the Close of Day"

"Ye Sons and Daughters of the King"

Since Neale died on 6 August 1866, the Feast of the Transfiguration, he is commemorated by the Anglican churches on the following day, 7 August. Neale is honored in the Church of England and in the Episcopal Church that day.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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# Church News Ireland

[www.churchnewsireland.org](http://www.churchnewsireland.org)

**Link in Monday through Saturday from  
early morning**

**Please recommend to your friends**