



Laois-born Dr Bridget Mary Meehan (4th from right) presided over a religious service in Dublin on Sunday.

Female “Catholic bishop” holds service in Dublin

An Irish-born member of a breakaway Catholic group which welcomes female and lesbian priests presided over a religious service in Dublin on Sunday, The Irish Times reports...

Dr [Bridget Mary Meehan](#), who is originally from [Rathdowney](#) in Co Laois and is now based in

Florida, has the position of bishop within the Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests.

She holds weekly services with parishioners at a Christian church in the city of [Sarasota](#), and says she responded to an invitation from a faith community of “reform-minded Catholics” to celebrate the Eucharist at a community centre in [Rialto](#).

Her organisation has ordained around 230 female members around the world, and she wants the orthodox [Catholic Church](#) to accept women as well as gay and transgender individuals into the clergy.

“I’m going to celebrate an inclusive Roman Catholic liturgy just like everybody has in their churches in [Ireland](#). I’m going to celebrate that with a local community here of renewed, reform-minded Catholics who are interested in justice and equality for women in the church,” she said at the weekend.

Dr Meehan said her services are attended by a diverse congregation rather than just like-minded women, but added that there was no attempt made to persuade Catholic authorities to allow the celebration be held in a consecrated church.

“We thought why bother causing a problem with the hierarchy because they’re not ready for it,” she told *The Irish Times*.

Her movement has been officially excommunicated by the Catholic Church since its inception in 2002, when it was claimed a male bishop privately ordained a number of female bishops on the Danube river, and is generally prohibited from holding services on church property.

Dr Meehan says that among a number of women she has ordained, she has also ordained two male priests, one of whom was gay.

She contends that women formed an integral part of the clergy in the early Christian Church and that some of Jesus’ own apostles were female. The Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests does not impose a strict policy of celibacy, unlike its orthodox equivalent. More at -

http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/female-catholic-bishop-holds-service-in-dublin-1.2748122?utm_medium=twitter&utm_source=dlvr.it

Mary McAleese to address Daniel O'Connell summer school

Former President of Ireland Mary McAleese has been selected to deliver this year's annual 'Daniel O'Connell Lecture' at this year's summer school held in the Irish politician's honour in Co Kerry later this month.

Mrs McAleese, who has been completing a doctorate in canon law and has a long-standing interest in the life and legacy of O'Connell – particularly his fight for Catholic Emancipation and the right of Catholic MPs to sit in Westminster – will also be interviewed by Frank Lewis and will take part in a question and answer session afterwards.

The annual summer school takes place over Friday and Saturday 26-27 August in Derrynane and Cahersiveen in Co Kerry.

Speaking about the forthcoming event, director of the school, UCD Professor Maurice Bric told the Kerryman newspaper, "Unlike some of the other summer schools, the Daniel O'Connell School does not have a specific theme. Instead, we offer



a mix of lectures on local, county, national and international history.”

“Of course, we will also have a section on the life and times of O’Connell himself and how he continues to influence the Ireland in which we live today. I am sure that Mary McAleese will also refer to this in her keynote address.”

Other contributors this year include Irish Examiner journalist Michael Clifford, who will speak about his grand-uncle Tom Clifford who fought in the Irish Citizen Army.

Rhona Richman Kenneally of Concordia University in Montreal, Canada will speak on the
churchnewsireland@gmail.com

impact of rural electrification on the design of Irish homes, especially in rural Ireland.

A section on the life of O'Connell himself, including a lecture on the way he was treated by the press at the time, will be given by John Horgan who was the first president of the Press Council.

Maureen Murphy will talk about a visit from a lady called Askenath Nicholson to South Kerry in 1847 during the height of the Famine.

Given the year that is in it South Kerry's role in the 1916 Rising will also be discussed.

The year's Daniel O'Connell Summer School will officially be opened by former Justice Minister and Ceann Comhairle John O'Donoghue at Cahersiveen library on 26 August.

Australia suspends funding for World Vision after claims of channelling funds to Hamas

Australia is suspending funding for the Christian relief charity World Vision's operations in the Palestinian Territories following claims by Israel

that the charity's Gaza representative channelled millions of dollars to Hamas.

Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) called the allegations "deeply troubling" and said in a statement that it was "urgently seeking more information from World Vision and the Israeli authorities."

"We are suspending the provision of further funding to World Vision for programs in the Palestinian Territories until the investigation is complete," the statement said.

Australia has paid World Vision approximately A \$5.7 million (£3.31 million) over the past three financial years for the provision of aid in the Palestinian Territories, a DFAT spokesman said.

World Vision is the world's largest evangelical Christian charity and has operated in Israel-Palestine for more than 40 years.

The organisation said that it was "shocked" at the allegations from Israel. "Based on the information available to us at this time, we have no reason to believe that the allegations are true," it said. A Hamas spokesman denied that the group had any connection to El Halabi.

Mohammad El Halabi, World Vision's manager of operations in Gaza, was arrested by Israel on June 15 while crossing the border into the enclave, which is under the de facto rule of Hamas, which is on the Israeli and US terrorism blacklists.

A senior Israeli security official said on Thursday that El Halabi, who has run the group's Gaza operations since 2010, had been under extended surveillance and had confessed to siphoning off some \$7.2 million a year to Hamas.

According to the Israeli newspaper [Haaretz](#), the Shin Bet (one of Israel's security services) is accusing El Halabi of being a member of Hamas' armed wing, Izzedin al-Qassam, and of having infiltrated World Vision.

Shin Bet also alleged that \$80,000 worth of donations from British people have been diverted to pay for Hamas-related activities.

There was confusion and mixed reports over the nature of Israeli accusations about British money being used by World Vision.

A UK Government spokesperson stressed to “Christian Today” that the Department for

International Development (DFID) has not provided any funds to World Vision since the Israel-Gaza war of 2014.

DFID has a centrally-managed Programme Partnership Arrangement with World Vision UK. However, this does not include the Palestinian Territories. Following the 2014 conflict, DFID provided a £2m contribution the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), alongside contributions from the UK public, to a consortium of NGOS to provide vital humanitarian assistance in Gaza. World Vision were included as part of the NGO consortium.

A UK Government spokesperson said: "We are in touch with the Israeli authorities to establish the full details of the allegations against this individual and would not hesitate to act if wrongdoing involving UK government funding became apparent and was proven." Gaza's Palestinian Christian population is ancient but tiny, at around 1,200 people out of a total of 1.8 million.

Cathedral and choral

+++ Castletownshend Festival of Church Music - On Thursday evening in

Castletownshend, pianist, Therese Fahy, will play Debussy's Preludes as part of the 36th St Barrahane's Festival of Church Music.

+++ Summer Music at Sandford - On Friday pianist, Carmel Comiskey, will be the lunchtime recitalist in the Summer Music at Sandford series in Sandford parish church

+++ It is Stanford time again - This year the Stanford Festival is in Dublin.
7 to 9th October. Details on website
StanfordDublin2016

News briefs

+++ Insight from Belfast Street Pastors - One team of 5 out last night (Saturday) and also an observer. 155 bottles lifted 23 pairs of flip flops given out. The observer couldn't believe how people randomly came up to us to shake our hands and thank us for what we do. On a more serious note bouncers from a club asked us to help with two girls who were "out of it". It seems that their drinks were spiked. One of them had fallen down the stairs. We sat with them while an ambulance was called. We put the girl who had

fallen into the recovery position. We had to wrestle with the other girl to help her to keep calm until the police and ambulance came. We received thanks from the police. Over all just another night doing what God has called us to do
- Help Listen and Care

+++ "Letters from the Front" - will be presented by Sam and [Joan McCready](#), together with the Brass Quintet from the Ulster Orchestra, Sat. 12 August, St. Patrick's Church, Ballymacarrett--part of the brilliant EastSide Arts Festival.

+++ Two new Redemptorists at Clonard -
Clonard Monastery in Belfast hosted a dual celebration on July 30 when Mark McMullan and Ryan Holovlasky professed their first vows as Redemptorists. Mark is from Belfast and joined the order's formation programme in 2013 after gaining experience in the voluntary sector while Ryan is from South Africa and joined in 2012, leaving a career in travel and tourism. Both of the new Redemptorists will now travel to Chicago to join the formation community there and undertake theology studies ahead of missionary brotherhood for Mark and missionary priesthood for Ryan. For further information on vocations to

the Redemptorists, contact Fr Noel Kehoe at Clonard at noel.kehoe@redemptorists.ie

+++ Celebrating 150 years of St Joseph's Carrickmacross - Celebrations were held in Monaghan yesterday to mark the anniversary of the parish church of St Joseph's in Carrickmacross. A Mass of thanksgiving in the evening was led by the Bishop of Clogher, Dr Liam MacDaid, in honour of the one hundred and fifty years of worship and prayer St Joseph's has held.

The foundation stone of St Joseph's church, Carrickmacross was laid by Bishop Charles McNally of Clogher on 3 July 1861 and it was dedicated to the service of God on Sunday 22 April 1866 by the then Bishop of Clogher, James Donnelly. The preacher on that occasion was Dean Michael Kiernan of Dundalk who was later appointed Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All-Ireland (1867-1869). The church was dedicated under the invocation of St Joseph by special indult from the Holy See. St Joseph's replaced another church located nearby, St Mary's, which was dedicated in 1786 and served as parish church for eighty years. St Joseph's is described as 'a noble Gothic structure' designed

by the famous architect of that form, JJ McCarthy (1817-1882). He was an associate of the renowned English architect Augustus Welby Pugin and a close friend of the Monaghan-born Young Irishman, journalist and politician Charles Gavan Duffy.

+++ New Zealand church welcomes forced adoptions enquiry - The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia had admitted its involvement in forced adoptions in the 20th Century. Archbishop Philip Richardson, who, as one of the church's three primates, has responsibility for the Tikanga Pakeha – the part of the Church representing the descendants of European settlers – has welcomed calls for an official inquiry and said that the church is ready to open its record books. In 2013, the Australian government apologised after a Senate investigation found that as many as 250,000 women had their babies removed between the 1950s and 70s. In the same year the film Philomena documented the widespread forced removal of babies from unmarried mothers in Ireland.

+++ Eight apps to help your church - If you've got a smartphone, you've probably downloaded a

few apps, either games to waste some time or something a little more productive! There are apps for everything now, including a few that might be of use to your church. To save yourself sifting through the hundreds of thousands of apps on the market, Tallie Proud, the Digital Media Officer for the Church of England's Archbishops' Council, has selected a few which will help your church be creative, work together and save you time. All of them work on both Apple and Android phones and are free to use. See -

<http://www.anglicannews.org/features/2016/08/eight-apps-that-can-help-your-church.aspx>

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Only Muslim leaders can reach those who kill in name of Allah

Alf McCreary in Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/alf-mccreary/only-muslim-leaders-can-reach-those-who-kill-in-name-of-allah-34942284.html>

Hero of 1924 Games a role model for Christians today

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/alf-mccreary/thought-for-the-weekend-hero-of-1924-games-a-role-model-for-christians-today-34942215.html>

The "strange occurrences" that turned Knock into a place of pilgrimage

The Journal

A new documentary examines what life is like in Knock today and the legacy of the apparition.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/documentary-knock-apparitions-2899758-Aug2016/>

Irish archbishop moves seminarians from 'gay culture' at St. Patrick's

Catholic World Report

Dublin, **Ireland**, Aug 6, 2016 / 03:02 am (CNA/EWTN

News). ... Priests – which aims at, among other things, “a redesigning of Ministry in the **Church**, ...

[http://www.catholicworldreport.com/NewsBriefs/](http://www.catholicworldreport.com/NewsBriefs/Default.aspx?rssGuid=irish-archbishop-moves-seminarians-from-gay-culture-at-st-patricks-24537/)

[Default.aspx?rssGuid=irish-archbishop-moves-seminarians-from-gay-culture-at-st-patricks-24537/](http://www.catholicworldreport.com/NewsBriefs/Default.aspx?rssGuid=irish-archbishop-moves-seminarians-from-gay-culture-at-st-patricks-24537/)

Diarmuid Martin remains a maverick among the clergy

Irish Times

The truth is he is a maverick among the **Irish** bishops.

Outside Catholic clerical circles he is probably the most widely respected **church** leader in ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/diarmuid-martin-remains-a-maverick-among-the-clergy-1.2746903>

[Maynooth's gay cloister an 'open secret in church'](#) - Irish Independent

[Maynooth seminary 'a place of psychological abuse'](#) - Irish Times

[Crisis in Maynooth: Growing disquiet about scandal won't just go away](#) - Irish Independent

Trainee priest at Maynooth describes atmosphere at college as "poisonous"

The Journal

Another trainee has said that in his experience there is a culture of “keep your head down” at the training college.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/maynooth-atmosphere-grindr-poisonous-2911475-Aug2016/>

Belfast Pride Parade 'bringing Northern Ireland forward'

Irish Times

Businesses, trade unions, equality campaigners, **religious** groups and political parties were among those marching on Saturday. Many called for ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/belfast-pride-parade-bringing-northern-ireland-forward-1.2747999>

Bomb-proof Dungiven police station bought by Church

BBC News

More than half of Northern Ireland's police stations have been sold off in the past decade, and one site has been

August 8

bought by a Presbyterian Church, reports Enda McClafferty.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-36984605>

Minister calls for abortion to be more widely available

Irish Independent

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/health/minister-calls-for-abortion-to-be-more-widely-available-34940219>.

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