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CNI



## **Bishop ends week-long Mass services on double-decker**

Bishop John Keenan, Bishop of Paisley, celebrated Mass on a double-decker bus, in Paisley on Saturday.

The special bus ended its week-long tour of central Scotland at the cenotaph, Paisley Cross with a Mass at 2pm.

The bus tour was the brainchild of the 'Friends of Divine Mercy Scotland'.

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Organiser of the initiative, Helen Border said: “Inspired by the call from Pope Francis to ‘Go out to the people and take the Church to them’ we’ve decided to do just that, with a church on wheels.”

The bus has visited Paisley, Coatbridge, Greenock, Barrhead and Glasgow during the week.

Bishop John said: “This is a fantastic initiative and a wonderful example of evangelisation, which takes the church out into the world.

“I hope this venture will be the first of many similar initiatives which offer people a route back to a relationship with God.”

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## **Kilkeel's Hope in Africa initiative changes lives**



### **Gift from Kenya with Many Hopes co-founder Thomas Keown from Kilkeel**

A very special young Kenyan woman has been visiting Northern Ireland and Kilkeel Parish for the first time.

22 year old Gift has been representing the charity Many Hopes, an organisation with a big vision – to raise a generation of children who will

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lead with justice and fairness and defeat the causes of extreme poverty in Kenya.

Many Hopes co-founder Thomas Keown (pictured with Gift), grew up in Christ Church Kilkeel and his parents Dave and Jean are very active both in the parish and as Many Hopes supporters.

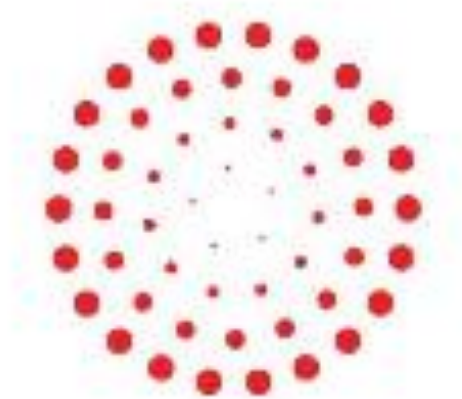
Indeed Gift embodies the charity. As a child, her circumstances were the trigger for the creation of the Mudzini Kwetu Girls' Homes near Mombasa. She was the first of many Kenyan children that Many Hopes has rescued, educated and advocated for.

Gift has been meeting people and sharing her story in church and at a fundraising Afternoon/ Evening tea in Christ Church Halls.

## **Gift's story**

Gift was six years old when her mother died from AIDS. She never knew her father and was left to raise her infant brother alone. While begging for food on the streets of Mombasa her brother died as she carried him on her back. She didn't know he was dead and continued begging for several hours until some street boys found her and told her.

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# MANY HOPES

imagine you can

Not knowing what to do, the boys contacted Anthony Mulongo, a journalist who had befriended and fed them on the dumpsites where they lived.

When the streetboys told him of Gift, he took her into his house, hired a lady to look after her, and paid for her to attend school. She effectively became his daughter.

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Now, 16 years later, having been raised in one of the family units at Many Hopes and given an education, Gift is studying Human Resources at a college north of Nairobi.

How marvellous for parishioners and supporters to finally meet the girl they have only seen in pictures.  
Hope made flesh.

[Read an earlier interview with Thomas Keown here.](#) [Latest](#)

Many Hopes can now give a home to both boys and girls and will shortly open an international school. In terms of advocacy, the charity is part of several long-term civil cases that will have national impact and affect children all over the country. There are also plans for a Young Justice Centre.

[Read their 2016 Annual Report here.](#)

## **Future lies in tapping into spirit of God, says Irish Jesuit trailblazer Bishop of Raphoe**

“It is an amazing privilege to be asked to be the centre of unity for a local Church,” says

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CatholicIreland founder, Fr Alan McGuckian SJ in advance of episcopal ordination yesterday.

The founder of [www.catholicireland.net](http://www.catholicireland.net) was ordained Bishop of Raphoe on Sunday (6 August 2017). Speaking in advance of his ordination, Fr Alan McGuckian SJ, who is Ireland's first Jesuit bishop, said that he had heard rumours some time ago of his appointment, but there was a "big element of surprise and some shock" when the phone call came inviting him to visit the papal nunciature.

While Jesuits are not "naturally bishops" said Fr McGuckian, he believed he would in time "relish" being one. "I will grow to relish it! I am not going to run ahead of myself but I think it is an amazing privilege to be asked to be the centre of unity for a local Church – in my case the Church of Raphoe."

He said he has no immediate plans for his new diocese. "The plan for the diocese needs to be a plan that is hatched and born in the diocese of Raphoe, so any plan I have will be genuinely, and it is not a cliché, to get to know the priests and the people and listen to them as well as talk to them."

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Having worked for the past six years with the Living Church project of the diocese of Down and Connor, the Jesuit is used to listening. In fact, the project began in 2011 with a Listening Process that aimed to hear the hopes and fears of priests, religious and laity in the 87 parishes of the diocese. Arising from this came the publication of the 'Living Church Report' in 2012



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and the establishment of the Living Church Office to implement the recommendations of the report.

“In parishes all across the diocese people have come forward, becoming part of parish councils or initiatives arising out of parish pastoral councils, and there is a growing sense of co-responsibility between clergy and lay people,” said Fr McGuckian.

“Many people will put their hands on their hearts and admit that it’s new and it’s not easy,” he admitted. “It’s not easy for priests and it’s not easy for people, but I have seen it happening in parishes all across Down and Connor and I think there is a real movement of the Spirit going on there.”

He called on those who are critical of the project to get involved. “If you’re not involved or if you find it difficult to get involved, you’re not going to be in touch with that spirit,” he said.

Fr Alan McGuckian, one of six children to Brian and Pauline McGuckian in Cloughmills, Co. Antrim (both deceased), entered the Jesuits in 1972 aged nineteen, following in the footsteps of two older brothers, Bernard and Michael. He had done a year at university, and though he was strongly advised to finish his degree, Fr

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McGuckian said he had “great clarity that this was something that I was meant to do with my life and for that reason I acted on it with a certain urgency.”

While his brothers were an influence on him, he absolutely did not follow them into the Jesuits “as part of a family tradition”. He told [catholicireland.net](http://catholicireland.net) that he felt “this really strong call”.

After ordination, Fr McGuckian worked in Clongowes Wood College in Kildare and spent a period of time working in India and the Philippines. On his return in the late 1990s, he went to work as the Director of the Jesuit Communications Centre.

Contemplating the burgeoning advance in technology, the native Irish speaker turned his eyes to the internet and with others set up [www.sacredspace.ie](http://www.sacredspace.ie), a website that taught people how to pray online using an Ignatian technique. The website is now available in 23 languages, reaching millions of people, and has spawned the very popular annual prayer book: *Sacred Space – The Prayer Book*.

“We were taken by surprise at how rich and valuable a thing it was and that set me thinking that there should be a wider, more universal way,

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more national way of capitalising on this new technology that seemed so very new to us at the time.”

They experimented with a website aimed at helping young people who were getting married – [www.gettingmarried.ie](http://www.gettingmarried.ie) – and this led to the idea of “an Irish Catholic web portal” – [www.catholicireland.net](http://www.catholicireland.net). Fr McGuckian felt the site had to be unashamedly ‘Catholic’ and ‘Irish’ even at a time when this label was unpopular.

While Fr McGuckian SJ has not been involved with [catholicireland.net](http://catholicireland.net) for some years, he supports it and is delighted it has remained and progressed. “It is lovely to see something enduring and continuing to be of help to people in many different ways,” he said.

The Jesuit believes the Church will grow through patience and through tapping into the spirit of God. “Business seems to be able to plug into the energies that are near enough the surface and I think that is not the way it is with the Church. I think the energies of the Church are deeper and they may take time. That’s not saying, ‘Let’s do nothing at all’, but I think that it is part of the answer – that the energies are deeper and we need to be more steady and

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surefooted and maybe perhaps be happy to be patient and move slowly.”

## **Newtownards Community Church's cycle tour birthday celebration**

A team from Glen Community Church plans to complete a 50 mile sponsored cycle as part of the church's third birthday celebrations later this month.

Church Leader Stephen Doherty will be at the head of the small peloton intent on finishing the *The Tour D'Ards* around the coastal route of the Ards Peninsula.

“This truly takes me way out of my comfort zone, quite literally!” says Stephen. “I haven't been on a bicycle for many years, and I've never undertaken such an ambitious challenge personally.

“I am probably one of the most unfit characters to take this on, but in support of the sustainability of our Church Plant, I'm willing to step up and step out.”

Glen Community Church is based on the Glen estate, Newtownards, an area of the town which

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has been recognised as a Small Pocket of Deprivation.

They would love your support

The church plant has been growing over the last three years, not only in numbers, but through initiatives (including Alpha) which grow disciples.

In addition to the worship services, Bible study and Alpha, Glen Community Church creatively serves and engages the local community through events and groups for all ages. Currently over 70 children and young people connect with the church through clubs and programmes whilst a good range of ages attends the weekly community drop-in lunch and breakfast groups.

To continue building community, the church arranges camping trips, outings and events to bring people together under the foundational pillars of: Love Jesus; Love People; Love Life.

The sponsored cycle will take place on Saturday 26th August and is an opportunity to donate and contribute towards the future of Glen Community Church. See Just Giving page [www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/stephen-doherty](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/stephen-doherty).

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## **Beauty spots improve mental health, church insurer says**

The UK's leading church insurer has discovered that a third of us find our national parks and Areas of Outstanding National Beauty 'irreplaceable'.

In their national poll of 2,000 UK adults, Ecclesiastical learned that national parks and areas of outstanding natural beauty are not only the UK's favourite places to visit, they are key to the nation's mental wellbeing.

This comes after it was announced that the Lake District National Park (pictured) has been awarded UNESCO World Heritage status, mainly for its beauty and its role in inspiring artists and writers.

More than a quarter of those polled said that what makes a place irreplaceable to them is that it improves their mood (28%). This was the single most important factor, above spending time with their family there (22%) and its beauty (18%).

Angus Roy, Director of Education and Heritage at Ecclesiastical, said: "This research provides a

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fascinating insight into the places that the UK would be lost without. There's a clear message that beautiful places and spaces - whether natural treasures or historic buildings - are irreplaceable. We are privileged to play a part in protecting them."

Last month, it was announced that the Lake District National Park has been awarded UNESCO World Heritage status, mainly for its beauty and its role in inspiring artists and writers.

Angus Roy commenting on how the national parks could actually improve our wellbeing said, "It's dangerous to underestimate the benefit we can get from these facilities that we have and if we don't use them, unfortunately history has shown that we will lose them.

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"I just implore people to take the effort and take the time because one day we'll turn around and there might not be so much heritage available to us as there was once before."

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