

C of E bishops agree next steps towards women bishops

A press release following this week's meeting of the C of E House of Bishops includes this paragraph. "As part of their discussion on Women in the Episcopate, the House heard from members of the steering committee on women bishops on suggestions for the next steps in the process.

"The House agreed the text of a draft declaration and regulations for a mandatory disputes resolution procedure for debate at General Synod in February 2014. The House also agreed to begin at the February Synod the process for rescinding the 1993 Act of Synod so that all the elements of the new package could be agreed by the synod in July 2014."

The full press release follows -

The House of Bishops of the Church of England met for two days in York on December 9 and December 10. This meeting was the first at which 8 women regional representatives attended the meeting as participant observers with the same rights as Provincial Episcopal Visitors.

Over its meeting the House covered a wide range of business including discussion of women in the episcopate, the Pilling report, the approval of experimental liturgy for Baptism, changes to legislative approaches on Safeguarding and discussion of the Anglican-Methodist covenant.

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*The call of St Andrew -
Malin Presbyterian Church,
County Donegal*

resolution procedure for debate at General Synod in February 2014. The House also agreed to begin at the February Synod the process for rescinding the 1993 Act of Synod so that all the elements of the new package could be agreed by the synod in July 2014.

The House discussed and approved proposals for a new governance framework to enable the Church to develop a strategic vision for safeguarding. The House also approved proposed recommendations for legislative changes on safeguarding to be brought to General Synod.

Sir Joseph Pilling attended the House to introduce a discussion on ways to address the recently published report on Human Sexuality, a paper commissioned by the House of Bishops as a report to the House.

Following the mandate from the General Synod in 2011, the House also discussed and gave its support for the experimental use of new additional liturgy for the

Baptism of infants and young children. The new texts will be made available for use in January 2014 until April 2014 and will be discussed again by the House during its meeting in May.

The House also received updates on a range of work being undertaken in areas of ministerial education, training and clergy discipline.

Discipleship and Ministry are focus of bishop's Lenten courses

The focus of the Bishop of Connor's Lenten courses for 2014 will be Discipleship and Ministry.

Two seminars will be delivered during March and the first week in April in three venues – Bushmills Parish Centre, Jordanstown Parish Centre, and Christ Church, Lisburn.

Announcing the course details, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy said: "As a Church, we have often talked about everyone having a ministry and, indeed, it is present in our baptismal liturgy.

"However, it is something that is difficult to implement and it is becoming more difficult to get volunteers in an increasingly busy and demanding lifestyle for many.

"In the Lent course, I will be focusing on what it means to be a disciple in our present culture and how we might continue



Members of the Mothers Union in Grahamstown South Africa take part in the 16 day programme for action against gender based violence

to grow in faith as individuals and as communities.

"I will also be reflecting on how discipleship leads us to ministry and how every disciple has a ministry within the body of Christ, what this might mean and how we can seek to develop the ministry of all."

A booking form can be downloaded [here](#).

Discipleship -

Tuesday 4th March
Bushmills
Parish Centre
Monday 10th
March Jordanstown
Parish Centre
Tuesday 18th
March Christ
Church, Lisburn
(church)

Ministry -

Tuesday 25th
March Bushmills
Parish Centre
Tuesday 1st April
Jordanstown Parish
Centre
Monday 7th April Christ Church, Lisburn
(church)

All Lenten courses will commence at 7.30pm.

A booking form can be downloaded at-

<http://www.connordiocese.org.uk/index.cfm>

Galway 'Celtic Tiger' hotel becomes parish church

A vibrant and growing parish in the Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora has secured a permanent

parish church on the site of a former hotel.

Irish Catholic - Following eight years of utilising a local sports hall for weekly Masses, the Good Shepherd parish in the east of Galway City hosted Bishop Martin Drennan last Sunday for the celebration of the first Mass in its new church, just in time for the Christmas period.



The interior of the Good Shepherd church.

The former hotel in the parish, originally the preferred accommodation for race-goers attending the nearby Ballybrit course is now set to be a full parish community centre in an area that has seen a massive increase in Catholic residents since the year 2000.

The building's function room has been set aside and consecrated as a church, leaving the remainder of the building available for a host of parish projects.

Cooperation

A spokesman for the parish told The Irish Catholic that the Good Shepherd church represented not only the cooperation between the Galway diocese and the city

council, both of which made loans and grants available to secure and refurbish the hotel for church use, “but the tireless efforts of the parishioners too, who not donated thousands of euro but who also worked on a totally voluntary basis since August to get the building ready”.



From an area originally comprising 100 houses, the Good Shepherd parish has seen major growth and is now home to over 7,000 people, made up of some 40 nationalities who migrated to Ireland during the Celtic Tiger years and have since made Galway their permanent home.

Fr Martin Glynn, parish priest of the Good Shepherd, said of the inaugural Mass: “It was an absolutely marvellous occasion and a fabulous moment for the community.”

Archbishop of York Youth Trust Offers Nelson Mandela Lesson Resource Pack free

The Archbishop of York Youth Trust has offered its Nelson Mandela lesson resource pack free to all schools as featured in the Young Leaders Award.

The Young Leaders Award is an innovative educational resource which encourages young people to engage with their local communities, serve others and make a difference. As a part of the Key Stage 3 resources, the students study the life of

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Nelson Mandela exploring how his faith and leadership have led him to change our world for the better.

Dan Finn, Director of the Archbishop of York Youth Trust said: “We currently have over 15,000 young people involved in our Young Leaders Awards and I know that the students have been inspired by Nelson Mandela’s leadership as they have studied his life. As a result we’ve seen huge numbers of social action projects take place across the north of England as the students have been empowered to “be the change they want to see”. In the words of Mandela himself; “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”, and through our Awards we are seeing young people, schools and communities changed for the better”.

For more information on the Young Leaders Award please visit www.abyyt.com/young-leaders-award

To download the free Nelson Mandela Lesson Resource Pack please visit <http://www.archbishopofyorkyouthtrust.co.uk/news/2013/12/06/archbishop-york-youth-trust-offers-schools-free-nelson-mandela-lesson-pack/>



Meet a Cathedral WOOFYT

*What's this curious
contraption in St
Patrick's Cathedral,
Dublin?*

*It the WOOFYT - the
cathedral's newest
educational instrument
for teaching people
about the inner
workings of a pipe
organ.*





If the choice of Person of Year helps spread the message of the Gospel - a message of God's love for everyone - he will certainly be happy about that"

Papal spokesman "In his nine months in office, he has placed himself at the very centre of the central conversations of

our time: about wealth and poverty, fairness and justice, transparency, modernity, globalisation, the role of women, the nature of marriage, the temptations of power," Ms Gibbs wrote.

Pope Francis has been named Person of the Year by Time magazine

During his nine months in office, the Pope had pulled "the papacy out of the palace and into the streets", managing editor Nancy Gibbs said.

If the choice of Person of Year helps spread the message of the Gospel - a message of God's love for everyone - he will certainly be happy about that

Vatican spokesman Federico Lombardi said it was "a positive sign" that one of the international media's most prestigious recognitions had been given to "a person who

"Rarely has a new player on the world stage captured so much attention so quickly - young and old, faithful and cynical," she added.

NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden was runner-up.

Jorge Mario Bergoglio, the then cardinal archbishop of Buenos Aires, was made Pope last March. He named himself Francis after a 12th Century Italian saint who turned his back on an aristocratic lifestyle to work with the poor.

Since then, he has eschewed some of the more regal trappings of high office, made headlines by washing the feet of prisoners, and is planning some major reforms to the Church.

proclaims.. spiritual, religious and moral values and speaks out forcefully in favour of peace and greater justice".

"The Holy Father is not looking to become famous or to receive honours," said Mr Lombardi. "But if the choice of Person of Year helps spread the message of the Gospel - a message of God's love for everyone - he will certainly be happy about that."

This is the third time a Pope has received the recognition from Time magazine. John Paul II was selected in 1994 and John XXIII was chosen in 1962. Besides Mr Snowden, this year's other finalists were US gay rights activist Edith Windsor, US Senator Ted Cruz of Texas and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.



Hereford Cathedral choirboys sing carols for the Princess Royal

Princess Anne pictured here meeting members of Hereford Cathedral Choir at a special service of remembrance and carols at the Royal Military Chapel in London. The service opened with an act of remembrance and the laying of a wreath at the chapel's memorial to the Special Air Service.

St Patrick's live online this Sunday

This Sunday, December 15, service will be streamed from St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin

A service of Choral Eucharist sung by the Boys and Gentlemen of the Cathedral Choir at 11.15am with music by Ives (Missa Brevis), McKie (We wait for thy loving kindness) & Tallis (O sacrum convivium). Also at 3.15pm for this year's Carols for All service at 3.15pm - come

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sing many of your favourite Carols with the Cathedral Choir. Both services will be streamed live via the Cathedral website. <http://www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/live-screening.aspx>

Minister O'Dowd asked to release border school survey

The NI minister for education has been challenged to produce the results of a survey of pupils who cross the border to go to school.

Maggie Taggart of BBC NI News reported - The research was carried out more than a year ago.

The results were expected to be released at a North-South Ministerial Council meeting in February 2013, but that did not happen.

Education Minister John O'Dowd said the council must first consider the survey and authorise publication.

Figures from the Departments of Education, north and south, show that 275 children from the border counties in the Republic of Ireland travel to secondary schools in Northern Ireland.

However, only a quarter of that number travel from Northern Ireland to schools in the Republic of Ireland.

Cost

Most of those who cross the border are secondary school pupils, but 132 primary school pupils also travel to the north from the south.

The DUP's education spokesman Mervyn Storey said there is a high cost to the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and he wants to know if the Republic of Ireland's government is being paid for teaching the pupils who cross the border for their education.

The Department of Education in Dublin said no money changes hands because EU rules entitle children from one region to free education in another.

Mr Storey said he believed the survey was being suppressed because it did not show the results that Mr O'Dowd was expecting...

.... Carol Sloan sends her son Gareth on the half hour journey from County Monaghan to a secondary school in Newtownhamilton, County Armagh.

"The Northern Ireland system suits Gareth better, with modular GCSEs which he can do at 16, rather than a one-off Leaving Certificate when he is older," she said.

'Quality'

Sharon Flynn's two daughters could have gone to school in Dundalk, County Louth, but instead they attend St Joseph's High School in Crossmaglen, County Armagh.

"The education system is much better than in the Republic," she said.

"The junior certificate is not worth much so I prefer the British system of GCSEs. I am hoping both girls do A-levels and go on to university," Ms Flynn added.

Breda Sheeran's son Ryan is head boy at St Joseph's.

The 19-year-old suffers from dyslexia.

When he was starting secondary school, his mother was concerned he would not get enough support in the Republic and she chose to travel to Northern Ireland.

There is an added bonus for parents from the Republic of Ireland - their children get textbooks free, which could cost hundreds of euros if their children were to study south of the border.

The parents I spoke to said the quality of the education their children received was more important than any financial considerations.

More at -

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-25323574>



A group from Rathcoole Parish recently visited the Belfast Synagogue

Prayer for Today

Holy God,
you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son,
and to care for those who are our companions,
not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love.
Seeking to be true friends of all,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the church and the world. Amen.