



CNI

Pupils suspended from C of I Dublin secondary school

The Garda and child and family agency Tusla are investigating an alleged incident at a major Dublin boarding school, following a claim that a 13-year-old boy was sexually assaulted in a dormitory with a hockey stick by eight other pupils, Patsy McGarry writes in the Irish Times.

The incident is alleged to have taken place late last Thursday night at the 450-year-old Church of Ireland-governed King's Hospital secondary school in Palmerstown.

However, it was not reported to the Garda, Tusla, or the Church of Ireland authorities until Tuesday.

Dr Ken Fennelly, secretary to the Church of Ireland Board of Education, who said he had not been told of the allegations until he was informed of them on Tuesday by *The Irish Times*, said

Tusla and An Garda Síochána had begun investigations.

The eight pupils will remain suspended until investigations are completed, said Mr Fennelly. However, the 13-year-old alleged victim will remain on in school, with the agreement of his parents. The school board will also meet.

Following a series of questions over two days to the school, its principal, [John Rafter](#) yesterday confirmed Tusla's investigation: "No further statement will be made by the school at this time," he said.

The school's 24-strong board of governors includes the Church of Ireland's primate Archbishop [Richard Clarke](#); the Archbishop of Dublin [Michael Jackson](#), as well as Bishop of Meath and [Kildare Pat Storey](#). None was available for comment as the church's bishops are currently on retreat.

Under child protection rules, people with knowledge of child abuse or neglect are expected to lodge reports "without delay" to the authorities, while reports should be made directly to the gardaí if a child remains at immediate risk of danger.

In February 2008, King's Hospital and Swim Ireland agreed to pay substantial damages after a 10-year dispute to 13 female victims of convicted sex abuser Derry O'Rourke, who had been employed by the school as a swimming coach.

Under the settlement, 12 of the victims each received six-figure payments and costs against the school, while the remaining victim got a lesser sum. They had claimed the school was vicariously liable for O'Rourke's actions.

They claimed O'Rourke was employed by the school as its swimming coach and pool manager, but that he was allowed to remain despite complaints having being made about him to the school on several occasions from 1973.

Bishops' statement regarding alleged incident at King's Hospital School

From Archbishop Richard Clarke, Archbishop Michael Jackson and Bishop Pat Storey:

Following news of an alleged sexual assault at the King's Hospital School in today's Irish Times, churchnewsireland@gmail.com

we express our sincere concern and offer our thoughts and prayers for the child and family at the centre of this incident.

We trust that the process of investigation by the statutory authorities will bring about a just outcome, and we also pray for the wellbeing of the pupils and staff of the school at this difficult time.

Clonard Mercy Tent ‘a great success’ with Christmas shoppers

The ‘Mercy Tent’ initiative held by priests and volunteers from Clonard Monastery in Belfast has been hailed “a great success” following high demand and positive feedback from visitors, Paul Keenan writes in The Irish Catholic.

Entering the hustle and bustle of Christmas shopping at the Kennedy Shopping Centre, Clonard set up its tent for two days, November 18 and 19, inviting shoppers to avail of the Sacrament of Confession or merely a ‘time-out’, and met with a warm response from all.



People queue at the Clonard ‘Mercy Tent’ in the Kennedy Centre

Speaking after the event, Fr Noel Kehoe, Rector of Clonard told *The Irish Catholic*: “We could never have imagined the impact such an event would have. There were queues formed on Saturday morning when we arrived, the word had got out and people were ready to avail of the service we were offering.” Adding that the Mercy Tent was an instant draw for those familiar with Clonard, Fr Kehoe said also “we were very privileged to meet people across the weekend who have been away from the sacrament for decades”.

Sarah Kenwright of the Clonard Mission Team said the event had gone so well that at one point

an ‘emergency’ call to Clonard for an extra priest had to be made as volunteers, “working as a great team”, hastily borrowed extra chairs from the Kennedy food court to accommodate waiting visitors.

“It was very uplifting to hear people say that they haven’t been to Church in a while but the Mercy Tent allowed them to experience something of the Church in an environment that was familiar to them,” she explained.

Sarah confirmed that Clonard has subsequently received a number of requests for the Mercy Tent initiative to be re-run again before Christmas. And she expressed the thanks of all at Clonard for the help afforded by the management at the Kennedy Centre: “We can’t thank them enough for their openness and cooperation over the weekend and in the run up to this event.”

Brendan Dineen, Director of Youth Ministry at Clonard said the event had brought out a real spirit of teamwork between all.

“All of the ministries worked together to create a very open and welcoming atmosphere,” he said, noting, “the young people in the Kennedy Centre

were being approached by peers which made the Mercy Tent more accessible to that generation. It was a great day, a great experience.”

Summing up the success of the Mercy Tent, Fr Kehoe said: “This initiative is a reminder how there is a whole world outside of the church building and that the message of plentiful redemption can bring healing and hope.”

Exhibition on Irish Presbyterian care of children

The Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland is hosting an exhibition from The Presbyterian Children’s Society (formerly known as The Presbyterian Orphan Society and then The Presbyterian Orphan and Children’s Society).

The exhibition tells the history of the Society and draws on personal stories from the archives to illustrate the work of the Society through the years. It also shows that the need to alleviate poverty is as necessary today as when the Society was formed 150 years ago and that the same Christian principles still apply.



The exhibition may be viewed at 26 College Green during the [Library's normal opening times](#) from Thursday, 1 December 2016 to Thursday, 2 March 2017.

MPs call for Parliament to congratulate Pope Francis on his 80th birthday

A cross-party group of MPs has tabled a motion calling for the House of Commons to congratulate Pope Francis on his 80th birthday.

The motion was tabled by Labour MP Robert Flello and has been signed by nine MPs so far.

The signatories include Christopher Stephens of the SNP, two Conservatives, Edward Leigh and Peter Bottomley, and six MPs from the Labour party.

The motion reads: “That this House congratulates His Holiness Pope Francis on his 80th birthday; recognises his spiritual leadership of over 1.2 billion Catholics worldwide; commends his leading contribution to tackling climate change, promoting sustainable development, welcoming refugees, building peace, encouraging prison reform, protecting religious freedom, and advancing global abolition of the death penalty; and wishes him well for his continued pontificate.”

Pope Francis will turn 80 on December 17.

Moderator urges people to join him on wonderful Advent journey

People are being encouraged to join the Moderator of the General Assembly on a “wonderful Advent journey”

Right Rev Dr Russell Barr extended the invitation in [the first specially created video produced for the Church of Scotland which has been released online today](#).

Each of the thought provoking, often hard-hitting, films feature ministers, trainee ministers,



Dr Barr checks the train timetable at Glasgow Queen Street rail station

probationers, a deacon and youth workers from across the country who reflect on a word that symbolises the true meaning of Christmas.

The tone of the 25 films ranges from the joyful to the spiritual and are aimed at helping people seeking to find the true festive spirit amid the "rampant commercialism" which now dominates the weeks of Advent.

The first video featuring Dr Barr, which was recorded in Glasgow's Queen Street train station, focuses on the word "Journey".

He said: “Two thousand plus years ago a young woman set out on a journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem but there was no train for Mary.

“Did she walk or ride a donkey the 98 miles, the Bible doesn’t say.

“What it does say is Mary was heavily pregnant and when she arrived she gave birth in a stable because there was no room at the inn.

“Advent is about a journey, a journey of discovery, a journey towards birth and new life so come on get your ticket and join me on this wonderful Advent journey.” Half of the daily messages, which are also inspiring and uplifting, have been recorded by women and follow on from the Church’s successful Advent campaign last year which saw 24 short videos viewed more than 180,000 times.

Welsh cathedral premiere for film about LGBT+ people in church

A film about the experiences of LGBT+ people in church will be premiered at a cathedral in December.

All One In Christ was made by members of Changing Attitude Cymru through the Iris Prize Outreach scheme. It will be shown at St Asaph Cathedral on December 6 at 7pm.

The film is part of a mini Iris Prize film festival called Telling Our Stories, featuring people's stories from across the world. It was made in response to an invitation from the bishops for church groups to get involved with the Iris Prize Outreach scheme. The Bishop of St Asaph, Gregory Cameron, will be part of a panel discussion following the premiere. The event is free and open to all. More information

The Iris Prize, the world's largest LGBT short film prize, was awarded a Big Lottery Fund grant of £247,462 in 2015/16 to launch and run a project called Iris in the Community. The project works to build tolerance and understanding of Wales' LGBT communities, promoting equality and diversity alongside community cohesion.

New Head of Media to the Archbishop of Canterbury

Lambeth Palace yesterday announced the appointment of Ruth Mawhinney as Head of

Media to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Ruth is currently editor of Christian Today.

This is a new role which will oversee day-to-day contact with the media and provide the Archbishop with regular advice and guidance. The Archbishop's communications team at Lambeth, led by Director of Communications Ailsa Anderson, remains a total of three people.

Ruth started her career on the Baptist Times before becoming deputy editor and then editor of Christianity Magazine. She has also advised charities such as Home for Good, Youthscape and Just Love on communications.

She will take up her new role at the end of January.

Mail on Sunday journalist Jonathan Petre, who was originally offered this position, decided to withdraw due to personal family reasons.

News briefs

+++ Ecumenical focus on Jerusalem at Dublin service - The Archbishop of Jerusalem, the Most

Revd Suheil Dawani, his wife, Shafeeqa and his Chaplain, Canon David Longe, are currently visiting Dublin & Glendalough. One of the highlights of the week will be an ecumenical service in Christ Church Cathedral at 5.00 pm on Saturday December 3. Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church of the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland will attend and both he and Archbishop Suheil will give reflections. This service is also supported by Dublin Council of Churches. The service will be followed by walk to Khachkar, a memorial to those who died in the Armenian Genocide which started in 1915, in the cathedral grounds.

+++ Evangelicals welcome Pope - The Evangelical Alliance in Northern Ireland (EANI) has welcomed news that Pope Francis might visit the province in 2018. EANI's public policy officer David Smyth said he wanted to extend a "warm and sincere welcome to the Pope" and hoped that such a welcome would be shown "by the whole community". "Sometimes we can be concerned that by showing warmth or generosity that that can be misunderstood as endorsing everything someone stands for," he said. "Maybe we need to be bolder in our welcome."

+++ New gates at Belfast Cathedral - The Friends of Belfast Cathedral have generously funded the replacement of the original gates to the Great West Doors which they gifted to St Anne's many years ago. The new gates mean that the glass doors can be left exposed, allowing visitors to look all the way down the length of the Cathedral. The Dean of Belfast, the Very Rev John Mann, described the original gates. "They were of an old-fashioned, concertina design, such as one saw on old lifts," he explained. "They became tatty and misshapen and were removed about five years ago. The newly designed gates are a great improvement and are set to complement the railings at the front of the cathedral on each side." Dean Mann said the gates would have a minor security role, but their chief function is to allow the glass doors to be exposed for good sighting down the length of St Anne's, while discouraging visitors from entering that way due to the practical problems of having the glass doors repeatedly opened and shut throughout the day.

**News links to reports on faith,
politics and education**

My father, the priest: Daughter of Catholic cleric tells her remarkable story

Irish News

In November 1998 Fr Arty McAnerney stood before his parishioners in Co Tyrone and told them he had fathered a child

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/2016/12/01/news/my-father-the-priest-daughter-of-catholic-cleric-tells-her-remarkable-story-812670/>

School performance link to Brexit vote, says Ofsted boss

BBC News

Bad schools contributed to a feeling of being ignored revealed in the Brexit vote, the Ofsted boss says.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-38155858>

Muslim families sending children to GB Catholic schools

BBC News

More than 20,000 pupils in Catholic schools are Muslims, new figures have revealed.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-38157812>

'Radicalisation' fears if schools halt new religion course

Irish Independent

"That is the beginning of radicalisation," he told the **Irish Independent**. ... and Muslim children in State schools are separated from others for **religious** ...

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/education/radicalisation-fears-if-schools-halt-new-religion-course-35256052.html>

BBC/Tel/Times

Reports that the UK faces further “division and despair” after Brexit if any new settlement is based primarily on economic considerations rather than the needs of people, the Archbishop of Canterbury argues. Any attempt to renegotiate Britain’s place in the world based on “calculations of dubious material advantage” will fail to resolve the problems the country faces, Archbishop Justin says. The warning comes in his new book, *Dethroning Mammon*, written as a Lent meditation. The book warns that wealth and GDP growth are often seen as ends in themselves, rather than a means of improving life for disadvantaged people.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-38157626>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/12/01/archbishop-canterbury-warns-division-despair-brexit-plan-based/>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/may-defends-right-of-christians-to-speak-up-about-faith-z5jj3tmgr>

Times/Tel/Ind/Exp/Mail/Christian Today

Reports that Christians should not be afraid of speaking "freely" about their faith and about Christmas at work and in public places, Theresa May has said. The Prime Minister said people should be able to celebrate Christmas as she endorsed a report by the Lawyers Christian Fellowship which said that Christianity should be "celebrated, not denigrated". Mrs May's intervention came after David Isaac, chairman of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, said bosses should let staff celebrate Christmas and not fear offending other faiths.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/may-defends-right-of-christians-to-speak-up-about-faith-z5jj3tmgr>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/30/christians-should-not-fear-speaking-faith-work-public-places/>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/738532/christians-theresa-may-christmas-festive-beliefs-fiona-bruce-prime-minister>

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3988330/Theresa-stands-Christmas-PM-says-Christians-feel-free-celebrate-discuss-beliefs-without-fear.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3988330/Theresa-stands-Christmas-PM-says-Christians-feel-free-celebrate-discuss-beliefs-without-fear.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3988330/Theresa-stands-Christmas-PM-says-Christians-feel-free-celebrate-discuss-beliefs-without-fear.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

Tel/Mail/Christian Today

Articles on a report by the think tank Respublica, published yesterday, which says that Christians and followers of other faiths should have new protections enshrined in law to enable them to 'reasonably' opt out of tasks at work which go against their beliefs. The think tank urges ministers to introduce a Bill of Rights in the Queen's Speech to introduce 'reasonable accommodation' to protect religious believers at work.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/30/enshrine-new-conscience-clause-christians-bill-rights-ministers/>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3984412/Religious-freedoms-erosion-endangers-faith-communities-help-common-good.html>

Tel/Mail/Exp/Star

Reports that the Samworth Church Academy in Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, has claimed the traditional system of pupils raising their hands to answer questions is out-dated. In a letter to parents, principal Barry Found wrote: "We find that the same hands are going up and as such the teaching does not challenge and support the learning of all." The Express reports criticism of

the decision from some parents and the spokeswomen for the NUT.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/30/school-bans-pupils-putting-hands-answer-questions-classroom/>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3986156/Secondary-school-BANS-pupils-raising-hands-class-doesn-t-challenge-support-learning-all.html>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/738528/Pupils-BANNED-raising-hands-Samworth-Church-Academy-Nottinghamshire-Barry-Found>

<http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/566520/School-ban-pupils-hands-up-education-learning-Samworth-Church-Academy-Barry-Found>