

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Belfast's Good Samaritans

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Belfast's Good Samaritans Service

Representatives of 126 charities gathered at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, on Sunday February 5 for the annual Good Samaritans Service and the distribution of £130,000 raised by the 2022 Black Santa Sit-out.

They came from all over Northern Ireland to give thanks for the work they do collectively and to thank those who so generously donated to the Dean of Belfast's Christmas appeal.



The service acknowledged each recipient, who in turn acknowledged the work of the other groups and organisations being supported by the appeal.



In his words of welcome, Black Santa, the Very Rev Stephen Forde, Dean of Belfast, paid tribute to the Canons of the Cathedral and clergy and Cathedral staff without whom, he said, ‘there would be no Good Samaritans service and we would not be giving away £130,000 today.’ He also thanked sponsors Price Waterhouse Cooper for the work they do promoting the appeal online.

“But this service is not about us,” Dean Forde told the congregation. “It is about you. It is an opportunity for us all to celebrate the work that every one of the 126 charities here today carries out across our community. You are the people with the passion, the care and the self-giving dedication.

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“Thank you for who you are, for all that you do, and for all the care that you give.”

The charities awarded funding work in different fields: Serving refugee communities; serving communities in financial need; serving the community; and working internationally. They were read aloud, with regular pauses for applause and acknowledgement of the work each of the charities carries out and the difference they make.

“The Good Samaritans Service” to acknowledge the groups receiving donations commenced in 2003 and was inspired by the principal stained glass window behind the altar which depicts the biblical account of the Good Samaritan.

People and places

Dedication service for Lisburn Air Cadets Squadron

Last Sunday was ATC Sunday on the actual date of the formation of the Air Training Corps (5th Feb 1941).

817 Squadron ATC decided to use the formation of this wonderful organisation to

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dedicate their new Sqn Banner, the first of its kind in Northern Ireland, and to give thanks for the formation of the ATC.

The Squadron Padre, Rev Jason Kernohan, Rector of All Saints' Eglantine officiated at the service of thanksgiving for the ATC and the dedication of the banner along with guests, their Sqn President His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Antrim Mr David McCorkell (Photo left) and his wife Sue and LLT Cadet Miller, Councillor John Palmer of Downshire West and his wife Councillor Jenny Palmer, representatives of Lisburn Branch



Royal British Legion and Sqn Ldr Wilson , Deputy Officer Commanding Northern Ireland Wing Royal Air Force Air Cadets.

Parents and families were also in attendance to make for a great afternoon on this historic day for not just the ATC but 817.

Also present was Chris Hodges, Wing Commander RAFAC - OC N Ireland Wing RAFAC Commandant Air Cadets RFCA NI Royal Air Force Air Cadets Scotland & Northern Ireland Region Royal Air Force Air Cadets RAF Northern Ireland.

Eglantine Parish has historic links to the RAF being close by a former wartime air base.

This is reflected in the stained glass windows of the church and by the Commonwealth War Graves in the churchyard.

Rector returns to Cork

The Reverend Dr William Olhausen, who is currently Incumbent of St Matthias' Church, Killiney, in the Diocese of Dublin, has been nominated to the Bishop of Cork, by the Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocesan Committee of Patronage, to be the new Incumbent of Douglas Union of Parishes with Frankfield, in the Diocese of Cork.

Expressing his delight at the nomination and making the appointment, the Bishop of Cork, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, said:

I am delighted that the Reverend Dr William Olhausen is returning to Cork and that he has accepted this position. William served here before in Carrigrohane Union of Parishes and we all very much valued his ministry and friendship at that time in this Diocese. He and his wife Tanya, and their family, were a blessing to us all when they were last here, so it is exciting that William and Tanya will now be returning to live and work among us in Cork.

I've no doubt that Douglas Union of Parishes with Frankfield, the most populous of the parishes in Cork, Cloyne and Ross, will continue to flourish under William's leadership, and that we, in the Diocese, will be greatly enriched also by his many and considerable gifts.

Speaking about his appointment, William said

I am delighted to have been invited to be the next Incumbent of the Douglas Union of Parishes with Frankfield. I am conscious of the rich history of the life and witness of the parish and am excited to be joining the journey in this new season. At the same time, Tanya and I will be very sad to be leaving our church family here in Killiney.



We are very grateful to God for the 12 years we have enjoyed in Dublin.

Having trained for ordination at Wycliffe Hall in Oxford (1995-1998), William served his first curacy at Greyfriars Church in Reading (Diocese of Oxford). He went on to serve as Associate Vicar at Holy Trinity Church in Cambridge (Diocese of Ely). He served his first incumbency in Cork's Carrigrohane Union of Parishes from 2004-2008. From

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2008-2011 he was chaplain to Monkton Combe School in Bath.

Since 2011 William has been Incumbent of St Matthias' Church, Killiney, in the Diocese of Dublin. He serves the Diocese of Dublin and the wider Church of Ireland in several capacities, and since 2015 he has been theological adviser to the Archbishop of Dublin. William was called to the Bar of England and Wales in 1993 as a member of Middle Temple and he was awarded a PhD in biblical hermeneutics from Liverpool University in 2007. He is married to Tanya, and they have three adult children.

News reports

Christian Aid launches emergency appeal for Turkey and Syria

International development charity, Christian Aid, has launched an emergency appeal to help people impacted by the devastating earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria today [Monday, 6 February 2023].

It has been reported that many thousands of men, women and children have died and many more are injured. Many homes, buildings, roads and energy infrastructure have been hit by the widespread devastation.

Christian Aid already works with local partners in Northwest Syria. As the area is being hit by a cold winter front, Christiana Aid is funding winter kits to people seeking

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shelter. These kits include plastic sheeting, mattresses, blankets, and heating materials.

Patrick Watt, CEO of Christian Aid, said:

“The scenes from this disaster are heartbreaking. And even before this devastating earthquake, we knew over four million people needed aid in Northwest Syria alone.

“We are hopeful that the British public will show the same spirit of solidarity and compassion that we saw in the aftermath of the invasion of Ukraine a year ago.

“Every prayer, every gift, every action brings hope to people hit by disaster. By joining us, you can help people in need rebuild their lives.”

The appeal page can be found here.

[<https://give.christianaid.org.uk/donate/CAM-004766>]

Another American Anglican seminary discontinues full-time residential study

For the second time in three months, an Episcopal seminary has announced plans to discontinue its program of full-time residential study in favour of an online hybrid model that is accessible to a broader range of potential students.

Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP), the only Episcopal seminary on the West Coast, announced January 31 that it will no longer admit new residential students, and

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will end the residential program when the class of 2025 graduates. This follows a November 29, 2022 announcement that General Theological Seminary (GTS) in New York will no longer admit new residential students, and will continue to grant GTS degrees as essentially a subsidiary of Virginia Theological Seminary, the largest and most affluent Episcopal seminary.

CDSP is a subsidiary of a far wealthier institution: Trinity Church Wall Street, with \$10 billion in assets thanks to a 1696 land grant of real estate in what came to be known as Lower Manhattan. In 2019, Trinity reached across the country to acquire the Berkeley, California-based CDSP. The Rev. Phillip A. Jackson, rector of Trinity and a CDSP alumnus, also chairs the CDSP board of trustees (which consists of the vestry of Trinity Wall Street). In announcing the change in educational model, Jackson said, “While there certainly is a continuing need for residential education, CDSP’s core strength lies in its already successful hybrid learning model.”

“This decision also reflects a recognition of what the data have been showing us for years,” said the Rev. John F. Dwyer, vice president and chief operating officer at CDSP, as quoted in the news release. “Applications for our residential programs have steadily declined and are approaching unsustainable levels. On the other hand, our hybrid M.Div. and hybrid Anglican studies programs have seen full enrollment and increasing demand.” The school has been developing online and hybrid programming for nearly a decade, a process that was accelerated by the pandemic, Dwyer said through a spokesman.

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Enrollment in the fall semester of 2022 was 66 students totaling 49 full-time equivalents — almost exactly flat with the prior year. Data tables from the Association of Theological Schools for the past 20 years show a peak enrollment in 2004-2005 of 122, or 94 full-time equivalents.

Current residential students will be able to remain on campus to complete their master of divinity degrees, and will also have the option of transferring to another seminary or shifting to CDSP's hybrid model.

Under the new model, CDSP expects to admit 12 to 15 students per year for a primarily online program lasting four years, compared with the traditional three-year residential model. Students will have intensive in-person sessions in Berkeley and in New York City. The seminary will “pause” enrollment in its master of theological studies (MTS) and certificate of theological studies programs, although students already in those programs will be able to complete them. Generally speaking, M.Div. degrees train seminarians for ordination, while the shorter theological studies programs are designed for lay vocations.

Criminalisation of homosexuality is 'an injustice', say Church leaders

Pope Francis, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the Church of Scotland General Assembly have condemned the criminalisation of homosexuality at the end of their historic peace pilgrimage to South Sudan.



During a press conference on the return flight, the Pope said it was a "sin" and "injustice" to criminalise homosexuals, and that they "should not be marginalised".

He was asked to elaborate on his comments in an Associated Press interview last month in which he said that homosexuality was a sin but "not a crime".

Speaking to reporters on the flight home from South Sudan yesterday, the Pope said that the criminalisation of homosexuality, with the death penalty in some places, is "an issue that must not be allowed to pass by".

"This is not right. People with homosexual tendencies are children of God, God loves them, God accompanies them," he said.

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"It is true that some are in this state because of various unwanted situations, but to condemn such people is a sin; to criminalize people with homosexual tendencies is an injustice."

Archbishop Justin Welby and Moderator, Dr Iain Greenshields, also joined the press conference onboard the flight.

The Archbishop echoed the Pope's comments and referred to a debate taking place in the Church of England General Synod this week about controversial plans to permit blessings for same-sex couples.

"It may not have entirely escaped your notice that, in the Church of England, we've been talking about this 'just a little' recently, including a good deal of debate in Parliament and all kinds of things," he said.

"I want to say I wish I had spoken as eloquently and clearly as the Pope. I entirely agree with every word he said there."

The Archbishop said that the Church of England and Anglican Communion had passed resolutions condemning the criminalisation of homosexuality but that "it has not really changed many people's mind".

He continued, "Over the next four days in the General Synod of the Church of England, this is our main topic of discussion, and I shall certainly quote the Holy Father. He said it beautifully and accurately."

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Rev Greenshields added, "There is nowhere in my reading of the four Gospels where I see Jesus turning anyone away. There is nowhere in the four Gospels where I see anything other than Jesus expressing love to whoever he meets.

"And as Christians, that's the only expression that we can possibly give to any human being in any circumstances."

In the media

Declan's Way - Ancient pilgrim trail is Ireland's answer to the Spanish Camino - Irish Examiner

Linking Cashel with Ardmore, this trail follows the route taken by St Declan on his way to meet St Patrick, John G O'Dwyer writes.

Imagine if you can, celebrating Ireland's national holiday not in March, but in summer. It's hard to visualise the occasion with barbecues and beach parties, isn't it?

Yet, it could have happened, because July 24 commemorates an Irish saint whose credentials are comparable to those of St Patrick. Regarded by many historians as having predated our national apostle as the first Christian missionary in Ireland, St Declan of Ardmore is, nevertheless, virtually unknown outside his native Waterford.

The murky world of medieval Church politics has much to answer for here. It allowed the deeply venerated saint of the Déise region, Co Waterford to fade from the public consciousness when the northern Church rose to prominence. History was then adroitly rewritten to suit the needs of the time. Patrick, the first Bishop of Armagh, was promulgated above Declan and others as the first and single-handed evangeliser of the Irish people.

Now Waterford's patron saint is to reclaim his inheritance. An ancient pilgrim trail that he footed is being walked again as a richly symbolic journey. Meandering through captivating terrain in Tipperary and Waterford, the newly revitalised St Declan's Way commemorates the saint's excursion from his monastery at Ardmore to the royal seat at Cashel.

He was drawn to Cashel by the arrival in Ireland of a British-born evangelist who was also preaching the gospel. Who would become the leading apostle of the Irish? To sort this out, tradition has Declan travelling from Ardmore to Cashel to meet Patrick. Here, it was agreed that the Waterford saint would have unchallenged authority over his native Deise, but Patrick would become the higher-profile primate of all Ireland.

But now Waterford's patron saint is set to rise from relative obscurity to reclaim his pilgrim his inheritance. A fully upgraded, 115km walking route commemorating his historic journey to Cashel was re-opened recently.

Linking Cashel with Ardmore, it follows the route taken by Declan on his way to meet Patrick. This means that Ireland now has a pilgrim trail that is comparable to the distance

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walked by most pilgrims visiting the Spanish Camino of St James. And it comes without the penitential experience of passing through an airport.

St Declan's Way has been completed by speedy walkers in three days, while many hikers finish in five. For a really rewarding experience, however, you need time to savour the variety of landscapes many antiquities and captivating views along the way. And to really relax into the simplicity, mindfulness and reflection that goes with pilgrim walking, I would suggest a more leisurely 6-day outing in the coming spring or summer:

Stage 1 – Cashel to Cahir, 21Km

From the iconic Rock of Cashel, you pass a ruined Dominican Abbey and the magnificent Georgian, Church of Ireland Cathedral before following quiet roads to the ancient monastic site at Lough Kent. Here, the route continues south before dog-legging west to reach historic Cahir and your first overnight.

Stage 2 – Cahir to Goatenbridge, 18Km

It is a magnificent start today, as you follow the River Suir south past the ramparts of the great Butler Castle at Cahir and continue to reach the ornamental bridge leading to the Swiss Cottage — a fine example of a 19th-century cottage orné. Then, it is on through the picturesque village of Ardfinnan, where a monastery was established in the 6th century by St Finnian. Finally, you pass medieval Lady's Abbey before crossing the River Tar and ending nearby Goatenbridge.

Stage 3 — Goatenbridge to Mount Melleray Abbey, 20Km

Today is the highlight of your walk: the Knocmealdown Mountains crossing. After a steady upward ascent on benign paths, you reach a large tower constructed to honour republican leader Liam Lynch, who was shot here during the Civil War. Then, it is over a pass known locally as the Crois for a great sweeping descent to the mountainside Cistercian Abbey at Mount Melleray, which makes for an unforgettable overnight.

Stage 4 — Mount Melleray to Cappoquin, 17Km

This morning, it is country lanes and grassy roads leading you past the breathtaking castle, owned by the Duke of Devonshire. Beyond is the magnificent heritage town of Lismore. This was founded as a monastery in the 7th century by St Carthage, and is well worth taking an hour or two to explore. Leave Lismore, by way of Lady Louisa's walk. Continue south of the River Blackwater to reach Cappoquin by crossing an elegant bridge for your overnight stay.

Stage 5 — Cappoquin to Aglish, 15km

Today you head south and pass through the spectacular Hindu Gothic gateway and bridge leading to Dromana House. This was originally built to welcome the popular local lord, Francis Villiers Stuart, on his return from honeymoon in Brighton. Afterwards, rustic lanes and tiny roads convey you to the deeply rural village of Aglish.

Stage 6 — Aglish to Ardmore, 24km

The final stage of your pilgrimage leads by Geosh and Mount Stuart, before picking up the lovely and sylvan, St Declan's Road. This carries you over the River Licky to a crossing of the busy M25 at Grange. Now, it is but a short ramble through fields and back roads to finish spectacularly along the great sweeping beach that leads into Ardmore and your journey's end.

There is a guided walk along all five stages of St Declan's Way, organised by the Knockmealdown Active volunteer group for March and April. Booking [here](#).

Further information on completing the route at stdeclansway.ie

John G O'Dwyer's guidebook to the Irish Pilgrim Paths is available from bookshops and gillbooks.ie

Courtesy The Irish Examiner January 31, 2023

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Union College Open Evening - BA Honours in theology

Union College, Belfast says - We are looking forward to hosting our next Open Evening on Thursday, 23rd February,

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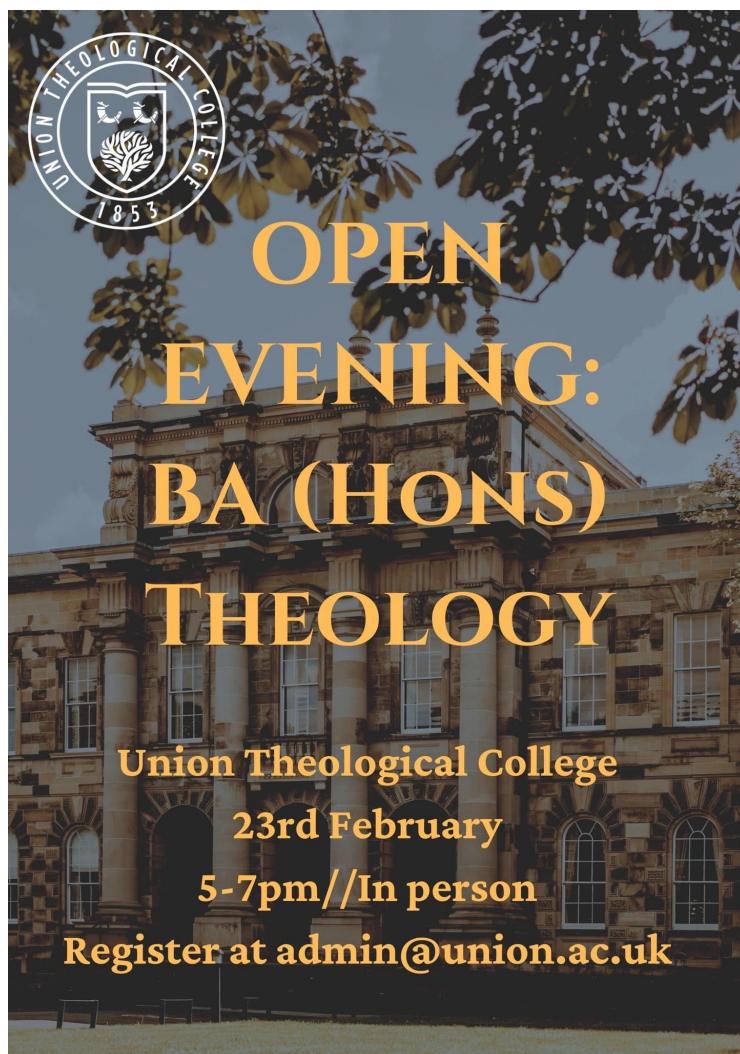
2023 from 5-7pm. This is an opportunity for anyone interested in exploring a theology degree to come and visit the College, meet current students, staff and faculty, have a tour of the building, and find out more about the undergraduate degree programme. Teachers, family members, and friends are also welcome.

Our new BA Hons Theology degree at Union Theological

College has got off to a great start. The first cohort of students have just started into their second semester, and we are delighted with their progress and enriched by their contribution to College life.

The degree programme, validated and awarded by St. Mary's University, Twickenham, welcomes students from all backgrounds, and from any faith and none, to study Christian theology. There is no subject specific requirement for this course, but it may be of particular interest to Religious Studies AS and A-level students.

Visitors are welcome to drop in at any point during the evening. There will be a short presentation about the BA



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programme at 5.30 and 6.30 in the Chapel, and opportunity for Q&A. Refreshments will be provided in the dining hall.

More details about the degree can be found on our website <https://www.union.ac.uk/programmes/ba-hons-theology-ba>.

Application is made directly to the College. The application process is open, and applications should be submitted by 31st August 2023.

Please register for the evening at admin@union.ac.uk or via the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/open-evening-for-ba-hons-theology-tickets-533735506267>

Ending Homelessness and mental health

Patricia and Sean are the voice of experience within the Simon Community's report on Mental Health and Homelessness in partnership with Depaul Ireland - Ending Homelessness. They share their stories about dealing with mental health and homelessness here in Northern Ireland. Former Simon Community client Sean states, "If you get the right help at the right time for your mental health, you mightn't become homeless and might be able to work on your problems and resolve your issues." Click the link below to download the full report: <https://simoncommunity.org/homelessness/knowledge-hub/mental-health-homelessness>

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Choral opportunities for young artists

Irish Doctors Choir is offering young artists the opportunity to follow soloists Eamonn Mulhall and Doreen Curran as they learn, rehearse and perform their roles of Samson (tenor) and Micah (alto) in Handel's oratorio, Samson. Workshops to include coaching and rehearsing with the possibility of minor roles and understudying. The performance will be accompanied by the world class French baroque ensemble, Pulcinella, led by cellist Ophélie Gaillard and conducted by Brian MacKay. Contact for more details irishdoctorschoir@gmail.com

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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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

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