

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Clonard Church

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Clonard Church

Clonard Monastery is sited between the Falls Road and the Shankill Road in Belfast. It is the base of the Order of Redemptorists - a congregation of priests and brothers who live in community in order to preach the Good News of plentiful redemption.

The Order was founded in 1732 in a village called Scala on the Amalfi Coast, Southern Italy by St. Alphonsus Maria de Liguori. He was shocked by the material and spiritual neglect of the local people, and so resolved to minister to them and other 'most abandoned souls.'

From these humble beginnings, the Redemptorists spread throughout Europe to every continent. Today more than 5,000 Redemptorists minister in nearly 80 countries worldwide.

In Ireland, the Redemptorists came first to Limerick in 1852. Other foundations soon followed in Dundalk (1874) and Clonard (1896). Today, Irish Redemptorists minister in Limerick, Dundalk, Belfast, Galway, Dublin and Cork, as well as overseas in Brazil, the Philippines, Mozambique, Rome, and Siberia.

The Belfast monastery is known for at least two emphases. The Community's cross—community role focussing on



reconciliation, and its annual novenas which for some time have included clergy from other churches as speakers.

The Church

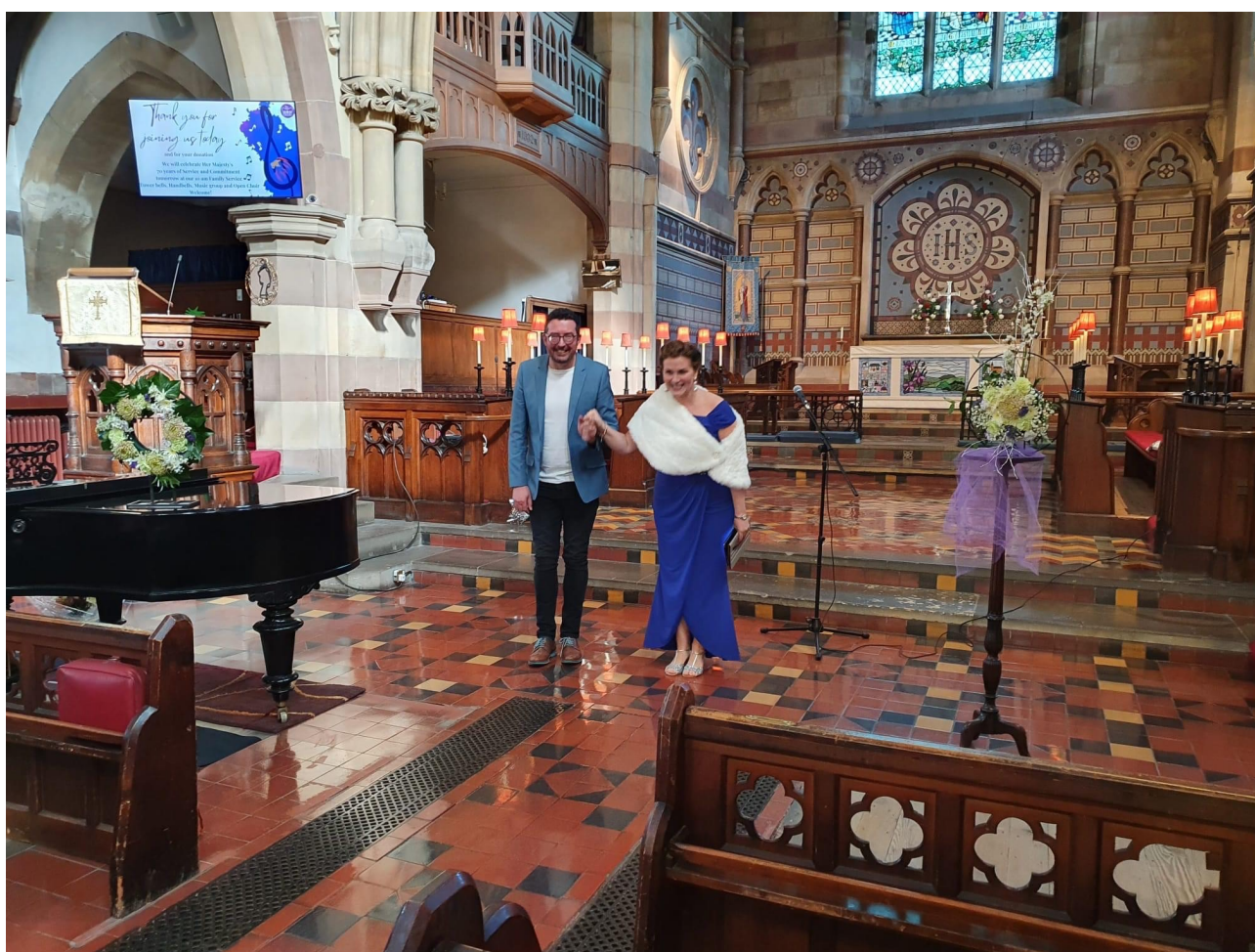
Clonard church, or the Church of the Most Holy Redeemer, as it is officially known, was opened with October 1, 1911. Over one hundred years

later, the Church is both a physical and spiritual landmark for countless people in West Belfast and further afield. It truly is “teach an phobail”, ‘the people’s house”, a place of welcome, a place of reflection, a place to rest in the loving embrace of God. This is echoed not only in the liturgical life of the building but in its architecture and rich imagery.

The current building replaced a temporary structure on the site known locally as the Tin church. The tin church served the Redemptorists and the community until the opening of the new church. The new church was designed by architect J.J. McDonnell. The building contract was given to the

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Naughton brothers, Ambrose and Daniel, of Randalstown. They agreed to build the church in two years for £20,000. In the event it took three years at a cost of £32,000. The church is designed in early French Gothic style. It consists of a nave and aisles, a semi-circular apse and side chapels. Underneath the sanctuary is the crypt. Light is one of the most attractive qualities to Clonard church, which is created by the large rose window. The rose window is 22 feet in diameter.



Save the date for **St Mark's Dundela's Classics Concert** on **Friday 24th Feb** at 7.30 pm! Mezzo soprano Marion Jordan and pianist Darren Day return to St Mark's for a concert of classic songs from stage and screen including Puccini, Leonard Cohen and Frank Sinatra. Tickets are £10, including interval refreshments, and are available from the Parish Office office.dundela@gmail.com or on the door. Doors open 7.00 pm.

People and places



Dublin parish's Partnership Link with Rwanda

On Sunday last Rev Roger Thompson of Church Mission Society Ireland was preaching at St. Matthias' Church Ballybrack parish, Dublin, giving updates from their Partnership Link Diocese of Shyogwe, Rwanda.

He thanked the parishioners for their longstanding support for St Matthias Gahogo, sharing a video greeting from Bishop Jered Kalimba, plus footage of the Gahogo children singing in their newly re-furbished Children's Room.

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He also talked about the Diocesan Youth Evangelism programme, including their vision for Boys' and Girls' Brigade groups to conduct outreach through contemporary music bands.



St Brigid's Day was celebrated this year with a bank holiday, and the launch of the Brigid 1500 initiative recently took place in St Brigid's Cathedral, Kildare, with Bishop Pat Storey, Rev'd Philip McKinley, and representatives of Kildare County Council and local schools.

Growing Healthy Clergy in Connor

The first of three Clergy Gatherings in Connor Diocese took place in All Saints' Parish Centre, Antrim, on Thursday evening, February 2.



Organised by the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev George Davison, the theme was 'Growing Healthy Clergy,' and around 60 clergy from across the diocese were in attendance.

The evening began with a short act of worship, followed by some thoughts from the Bishop.

After a break for tea and coffee, there was time for discussion and feedback.

This series of gatherings follows the Connor Clergy Conference held last November, when Bishop George shared his initial thoughts around 'Growing Health Parishes' as a vision for Connor Diocese.

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Meeting once a term, Bishop George said, would help build the sense of being a clergy 'team' and give opportunities for mutual encouragement and support in the diocese.



At the conference, it was agreed that the gatherings would rotate around Connor's three archdeaconries and holding them in the evening would allow non stipendiary and Ordained Local Ministers who are in other employment to easier join in.

News reports

Evangelical church suspends diocesan payments over C of E's same-sex blessing proposals

All Souls Church, Langham Place has suspended payments to the Diocese of London over the Church of England's proposals to bless same-sex couples.

The PCC of the former church of late evangelical leader John Stott expressed "concern and sadness" over the proposals in a letter to the Bishop of London.

The central London church said that the proposals "abandon confidence in the goodness and authority of God's Word" and "move the Church of England away from her historic formularies, which are foundational to our life together in London, England and as part of the global Anglican Communion"

The prayers of blessing were proposed by the bishops in response to the Living in Love and Faith process, and are being debated at the Church of England General Synod in London.

In her presentation to Synod on Monday, the Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, claimed that the proposals offer a pastoral response to same-sex couples "without changing the Church's doctrine of holy matrimony".

In their letter, the PCC said that the proposals "undermine the Biblical call to discipleship" and "devalue the difficult road" that many Anglicans have gone down by abstaining from sex outside of marriage.

They go on to state that the prayers as currently drafted leave the church in "a very difficult position with regard to episcopal oversight".

"As drafted, the prayers of Love and Faith now teach every sexually active unmarried couple that repentance is not needed," the letter, published on Anglican Ink, reads.

"If believed, this denies people the joy of stepping away from those things God has called sinful and into new life with him. We cannot participate in such a departure from biblical Christianity."

Christians support survivors of devastating Turkey earthquake

Christian development agencies are appealing for prayer and donations to provide support and practical assistance to people impacted by a devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria that has killed over 9,000 people.

Rescuers have been working round the clock to dig survivors from the rubble since the 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck in the early hours of Monday.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has declared a three-month state of emergency in the worst affected provinces. He is to visit Kahramanmaras, Hatay and Pazarcik later.

Christian Aid, Tearfund and CAFOD are among the development agencies that have launched emergency appeals for Turkey and Syria, where local partners are already on the ground.

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 north-west 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."

Catholic development agency CAFOD said, "For Syrians, this is yet another devastating crisis they need to face.

"Even before the earthquake, the situation in the region was already bad with 80% of people living in poverty. The results

of the conflict are still felt today with a collapsing economy and millions who have been forced to leave their homes.

"The people of Syria and neighbouring countries continue to need your donations and prayers."

Tearfund said: "Every minute counts in the desperate race to help people affected by Monday's deadly earthquake. The church is rising up to respond – and you can make a difference right now."

Christian Aid has produced this prayer for Turkey and Syria:

God of time and space, we cry to you for your children - our neighbours - in southern Turkey and northern Syria, following the earthquake that has devastated hundreds of lives. Only they and you know what it is like to experience such trauma in the middle of the night.

We give thanks for the aid that is already being given and for the promises of help that have been made by many nations.

Comfort, we pray,
those who are trapped in collapsed buildings;
those who have lost loved ones;
those who wait for news and
those digging through rubble to save others.

Grant the gift of hope so that those caught between life and death know that you are with them and that others are ready to support them as they seek a future that overshadows the experiences of today.

We ask this in the Name of Jesus, who endured so much for love of them. Amen

Church to consider ‘human composting’

The Church of England could consider “human composting” at Christian funerals to help meet net zero targets.

C of E Bishops are considering establishing a consultation group to assess the “theological considerations” of alternative means of body disposal.

Only burial and cremation are currently available in the UK. However, environmentally friendly alternatives such as human composting – in which microbes are used to convert bodies into compost – and resomation – or “water cremation”, where the body is dissolved – are growing in popularity elsewhere.

In 2020, the General Synod, the Church’s legislative body, voted to set a target of carbon neutrality by 2030. In a written question to the Synod ahead of this month’s conference, which began yesterday and runs until Thursday, the Revd Canon Andrew Dotchin, the Synod’s representative on the churches’ funerals group, asked if the Church had any “theological objections” to either resomation or human composting.

Replying on behalf of the Chair of the House of Bishops, the Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave, suggested Canon Dotchin could help to organise “a small

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consultation ... to look at this question in more detail and with ecumenical input”.

There is no law against resomation in the UK, but no water firm has so far granted permission for its drains to be used to dispose of human remains.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Saint Patrick's Camino Downpatrick

Running from
29th April – 16th
Sept, from
£45.00

St Patrick's
Pilgrim Walk
Downpatrick is
one of our epic
adventures.
Discover the
amazing story of
Saint Patrick on this guided walk. View experiences below
to see all our Camino experiences. Photo - St Patrick's
Centre, Downpatrick.



<https://www.saintpatrickcentre.com/experience-downpatrick-camino>

Brighter Communities fund

The December Brighter Communities winner was HUG (Helping You Grieve). HUG offers support, friendship and understanding to men and women who have lost their partners through bereavement.

The funding will be used to facilitate sessions for members to come together to try new experiences. Group activities and outings will be used as a means to build users' confidence whilst simultaneously bringing people together and helping to develop new social connections.

The Brighter Communities fund is designed to help and support local community groups, both large and small. Apply today at

www.powerni.co.uk/community/brighter-communities.

Diocese of York's new six-part Rhythm of Life is launched

Based around six actions that Jesus asked us to do, York's diocesan Rhythm of Life invites every individual and every community to adopt these patterns of holy living to abide in Christ and become more like him.

Click here to find out more: bit.ly/rhythmoflifelaunch

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Perspective



Archbishop of Canterbury's speech in Living in Love and Faith debate

The Archbishop of Canterbury's speech in Living in Love and Faith debate at General Synod on Wednesday 8th February 2023 in full:

We are not divided but we disagree, and that is very painful. And I will use again the words close to those I used to the Bishops gathered at the Lambeth Conference on a very similar debate.

For some, to question the inherited teaching damages witness and is sinful: you point out that in many provinces across the Anglican Communion any change might make

the church a victim of derision, contempt and even attack for being part of what is called the 'gay church'. For we are often seen as the Mother Church.

For others, you have not arrived easily at the conclusion that we need to change. You are not careless about scripture. You do not reject Christ and His authority. But to question this change makes the church here and abroad a victim of derision, contempt, and even attack for being part of the perceived 'homophobic church'.

Listening and loving is about what has been brought forward by the House of Bishops. It has been consulted extensively with the primates and many others in the Anglican Communion. What we are seeking is what we understand from the Spirit is right, not what is convenient or easy. There are no convenient or easy ways forward.

What we have in this conversation and the decision we make today, is at its heart the chance publicly to witness to Christ in the most difficult, distinctive and radical way – to disagree passionately and yet to be clear that we uphold our need for one another, and for the world, to come to the knowledge of being loved by God in Christ.

Let me be clear on this point, we do that by saying to the world: unity in Jesus Christ is our common identity, and difference must be worked out within that identity. And we are told by Christ himself that such unity reveals Christ in the world; we heard that in the New Testament Lectionary reading for Morning Prayer today.

Even things that are so important and so painful for us, are not as important as the essential-ness of others. That is our witness to a world that throws others away, excludes them, divides in the face of disagreement, that sides with its own echo chamber. This is the counter-cultural decision.

In 1 Corinthians 12, we read about the need we have for other people. The eye cannot say to the hand 'I have no need of you'. We need everyone in the body of Christ, if we are to be genuine ambassadors of reconciliation. We need the Communion, we need all Christians, for we are a Church catholic.

I know there is fear of a slippery slope, of what may or may not happen at some point in the future, but let us not give in to the fear of a future which we can neither predict nor control. Fear leads us to do the wrong things - trying to secure the future for God tomorrow, rather than trusting the Holy Spirit today.

I have just been in Westminster Hall hearing President Zelensky, who knows well what it means for the world to change overnight. And who knows here what will come to us over the next few years, not least from there.

Each of us will answer to God at the judgement for our decisions on this matter. We are personally responsible. I am supporting these resources, not I think because I am controlled by culture but because of scripture, tradition and reason evidenced in the vast work done over the last six years so ably by so many.

I may be wrong, of course I may, but I cannot duck the issue any more than anyone else here. I ask each member of Synod to vote with their Spirit-inspired consciences, scripturally and spiritually guided, and not because groups or lobbies or outsiders have told you to. I have heard them over the last two weeks in Parliament, and been told exactly what to do. I am not doing any of it.

Pope Francis - sorry to drop the name, I am terribly conscious of it - Pope Francis talked about LGBTQI+ people in his press conference on the plane coming back from South Sudan on Sunday. I quote him exactly: "I am not talking about groups, but about people."

So let us decide as we each conclude the Lord desires. Above all, let us debate remembering that all Christians are indispensable members of God's church, all Christians, and whatever our views or theirs will remain so. And let us show that in how we speak, and let us show that in how we decide, and that we are above all the church that demonstrates the call of God to people whom he desires to know and love.

Poem for today

Sonnet 73 by William Shakespeare

That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,

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Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day,
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by-and-by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire
Consum'd with that which it was nourish'd by.
This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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