



Rt Rev Dr Angus Morrison, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland will make history today when he addresses the General Synod of the Church of England - See report in this issue CNI

Easter Day 2016 worship disrupted by Irish state's no consultation ban on Dublin city centre traffic

The Church of Ireland clergy of parishes in Dublin's city centre have met the Archbishop of Dublin to discuss difficulties they foresee on

Easter Day 2016 along with opportunities to provide worship for their parishioners on that day. In order to make possible commemorations marking the centenary of the 1916 Rising, the State has decided that no vehicular traffic will be allowed into the city centre from 6.00 am on Easter Day and has confirmed that this will be the case. Clergy of city centre parishes have been informed that there will be no ready access to their churches on that morning and the Garda Síochána have requested that the front gates of Christ Church Cathedral remain locked for the day.

This decision was made without consultation with the Dioceses and there is a considerable sense of disappointment and sadness at this but the Church's priority now is to find a way of offering worship on the most significant day in the Christian calendar. The archbishop and clergy most affected by this in the parishes of the diocese in the city centre recognise the logistical difficulties in catering for between 350,000 and 500,000 visitors to the city on the day. They are also acutely aware of the health and safety issues involved in accessing the churches and the diocesan cathedral where Easter Day worship normally occurs when such large crowds are expected to be on the streets of the city to view the parade. The archbishop

and clergy of the inner city communities have sought to find an accommodation which facilitates the primary provision of public worship and does not cause offence or undue difficulty to the organisers of the historic parade.

The diocesan cathedral and six parishes are located within the cordon which will be in place from 6.00 am until 8.00 pm on Easter Day to facilitate and secure the smooth running of the parade. In light of the fact that the majority of people who worship in the city centre churches do not today live within the traditional parish boundaries, the unanimous decision of the meeting was that churches which are accessible on the morning of Easter Day elsewhere in the suburbs (outside the cordon) will invite the clergy and congregations from those churches that are not accessible as a result of the restrictions to join them for worship. This process has already begun. Sandford Parish Church (Ranelagh) has invited the choir and congregation of Christ Church Cathedral to join them.

Parishioners may choose to attend services in these churches with their clergy or go to a church near them. In order to avoid a break in the witness of each church it is hoped that a member of the clergy may say The Office in his or her church on Easter Day.

Other arrangements for worship during Holy Week across the city centre churches, including the Easter Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter at Christ Church Cathedral on Easter Eve, will remain in place as usual.

Archbishop Michael Jackson would normally worship in Christ Church Cathedral on Easter Morning. “People will, understandably, be upset not to be able to worship in their parish churches on Easter Sunday. We are making this decision with regret but in recognition of the fact that people for whom we have a duty of care will find it very difficult to gain access to city centre churches on Easter Day. I look forward to celebrating Easter with the congregations of Christ Church Cathedral and Sandford Parish Church on Easter Morning. After that I intend to take up the invitation of the Government to attend the Ceremony of Commemoration at the GPO on what is a very significant day in the history of the State,” he said.

Arrangements for worship for all affected parishes have yet to be completed. The choir and congregation of St Ann’s and St Stephen’s will be invited to worship at St Philip’s, Milltown. The congregation of St George’s and St

Thomas's Church on Cathal Brugha Street will join the congregation in North Strand. St Catherine's Church on Donore Avenue and All Saints' in Grangegorman are just inside the cordon and therefore it is envisaged that services will take place there on Easter Morning while the congregations of the other churches in their groups, St Audoen's on Cornmarket and St Werburgh's and St Michan's, will travel to them.

There will be an Easter Vigil in St Ann's, Dawson Street, on Easter Eve at 6.00 pm with the full choir. Arrangements will be made to have the car park at the rear of the church open.

1916, Easter Rising presentations in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin

The Church of Ireland Historical Centenaries Working Group will mark the centenary of the Easter Rising with an evening of engaging presentations by leading Irish historians in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, this Wednesday (17th February 2016). The First Minister of Northern Ireland, Arlene Foster MLA, has indicated that she plans to attend.

Entitled 'A state of chassis – Ordinary People in Extraordinary Circumstances in Dublin in 1916',

the event will start at 7.30pm. It will be chaired by historian and broadcaster Dr John Bowman and will feature Dr Fearghal McGarry (Queen's University Belfast) and Dr Jason McElligott (Marsh's Library, Dublin) as well as including an opportunity for discussion and questions from the floor.

Dr Fearghal McGarry will set the Easter Rising in context and also focus on what new sources and research tell us about the experience of rank-and-file rebels and ordinary Dubliners during Easter Week, including a discussion of Church of Ireland experiences.

Dr Jason McElligott, Keeper of the famous Archbishop Marsh's Library, Dublin, will speak on the theme of: 'Tales from The Other Side: the experience of curating a 1916 exhibition which may cause offence'. Dr McElligott will display a number of objects which bring the events of Easter Week to life and examine the experience of a number of men and women hitherto unknown to history.

Admission will be free and refreshments provided. It would be helpful if those wishing to attend would indicate in advance by emailing: peter.cheney@ireland.anglican.org

1916, Gilnahirk churches commemorative event for schools

In this year of important centenaries, the Gilnahirk Churches have organised a commemorative event in conjunction with Our Lady and St Patrick's College to take place on Friday 11 March 2016.

Young people from the schools in the East Belfast Education Partnership will look together at the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme and share their different perspectives.

The schools participating are: Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Campbell College, Bloomfield Collegiate, Strathearn School, Grosvenor Grammar, Lagan College, Ashfield Girls and Ashfield Boys.

Professor Laurence Kirkpatrick, from Union Theological College (Systematic Theology and History) will be the main speaker and clergy and church leaders from the Gilnahirk Churches will also participate. These include Revd Nigel Kirkpatrick (St Dorothea's) and Susan Macfarland (Branial Community Church).

The Sisters pop up café will raise awareness of nuns

A new pop up café is to open its doors on 25 February aimed at developing awareness among young women of the role that Irish Sisters play in society.

‘The Sister’s Café’ is being run in conjunction with Vocations Ireland.

It hopes to open up conversations between Irish nuns and women between 20 and 35 who may be interested in learning more about spirituality and the role that Sisters play in modern day Irish communities.

Congregations from eight female religious orders including the Medical Missionaries of Mary, Franciscan Missionaries of Divine Motherhood, the Dominicans, Salesians, Daughters of Charity, Marie Reparatrice Sisters, and St Joseph of Cluny Sisters will be there to meet, greet and share conversation.

There will also be the opportunity to learn more about vocations and the meaningful role that a Sister can play in assisting the more vulnerable in society.

Commenting on the venture, Dominican Sr Edel Murphy said, “The Sister Café will be a social place where women can get a real sense of the impact we make and what faith can bring to the broader community.”

“We are aware that many people don’t have an understanding of our work – this gives us an opportunity to share what our life is really like. Women who are interested in education, health, society and parish work will get a first hand insight into the life as a sister.”

Director of Vocations Ireland Margaret Cartwright added, “Young women regularly approach us about potential vocations and yet there is no open forum which enables them to really explore their options. We believe our little café will allow women to get to know our lifestyle a lot better.”

The Sister Café opens on the evening of 25 February in the Dominican Adult Education Centre, Merrion Avenue in Blackrock, Co Dublin.

Speakers at the inaugural Café include Srs Carmel Ryan, Deirdre Twomey and Julie Buckley.

For more information:
www.vocationsireland.com

Down & Dromore diocese says thank you to youth and children's workers

The diocese recently held its first *Essentials Dinner* to say a huge 'Thank you' to all of the wonderful and very talented people who work tirelessly in its churches with children and young people.

There was a great buzz as 60 people gathered to celebrate and eat together as guests of the Down and Dromore Youth, Children and Families department.

A drinks and canapé reception welcomed the guests into the parish centre at Belvoir, before a splendid three course meal was served at beautifully set tables in the main hall which was bedecked with lights.

Bishop Harold Miller and his wife Liz thanked the mixture of paid workers and volunteers and encouraged them to stay engaged in the work of introducing young people to Jesus. Liz Miller, sharing how faith was passed down to her through the generations of her own family,

reminded everyone of the vital importance of their ministry in the lives of children and young people.

The evening, which ended with a rather raucous table quiz, was a great success and the plan is to make it an annual event.

Church of Scotland Moderator to make history by addressing C of E General Synod

Rt Rev Dr Angus Morrison, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, will make history today, Tuesday, by addressing the General Synod of the Church of England. It is believed to be the first time a serving Moderator has been invited to speak at the Synod, and is certainly the first time in living memory.

The Synod itself is set to create history as it considers the proposed Columba Declaration, which would be the first formal agreement between the Church of Scotland and the Church of England. Dr Morrison will speak to the General Synod this afternoon around 2:30 pm.

During their visit to London, Dr Morrison and Mrs Marion Morrison will be staying at Lambeth Palace with the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and Mrs Caroline Welby.

Dr Morrison said: "I feel it a real honour to be invited as Moderator to address the General Synod. Through the historic Columba Declaration we are proposing to commit ourselves to growing further in communion and to strengthening our partnership in mission.

"By formally recognising the long ecumenical partnership between our churches, I believe we will advance our shared mission of spreading the Christian message of the Gospels.

"It will be a great pleasure to stay at Lambeth Palace and both Marion and I are looking forward to renewing our relationship with Archbishop Justin and Mrs Welby. I hold Archbishop Justin in the highest esteem both as a person and for his leadership at the Church of England during these very challenging times."

Six years in the making, the Columba Declaration builds on ecumenical work underway for more than a decade. The proposed agreement lays out a path forward for closer cooperation between the two "national" churches. The 15-page Declaration focuses on

shared Christian beliefs and emphasises the importance of continuing to nurture relationships with other Christian denominations, especially the Scottish Episcopal Church and the United Reformed Church.

The Bishop of Chester will propose that the Synod accepts the Columba Declaration. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland will discuss the proposed agreement in May.

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry speaks on Primates' statement

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in America, Michael Curry, has given a detailed response to the statement about the Episcopal Church issued at last month's Primates Meeting. Bishop Curry was answering questions at a Newsmakers event at the National Press Club in Washington DC last week when he was asked for clarification about the consequences of the statement for the Episcopal Church.

“Firstly, the Primates understood clearly that we as the Episcopal Church are committed to the Anglican Communion but we are equally committed to being a House of Prayer for all people,” he said. “And as I said to [the Primates

in Canterbury], we believe in full inclusion and marriage equality . . . not as a social programme but we believe in it because the outstretched arms of Jesus on the cross are really about welcoming and embracing us all and that we are all the children of God, created in God's image and likeness. And I believe that that's what love bids us do.

“So that is where we are coming from and I shared that with them and I also said: ‘but that means we also love you, those of you who disagree with us and with me. . . You are my brothers and I do love you. And we're not changing so there shouldn't be an expectation that in the next three years the Episcopal Church will. . . We are not going to change our position. This is who we are. And yet we are not going to change our love, our affection and our commitment to you as well.’

“So the decision that came out of that was with that clear awareness. And my sense . . . is that the overwhelming majority of the Primates voted the vote that they did as a way of saying ‘We disagree with you. We can't support your decision because we believe you have changed core doctrine and we disagree with that.’

“But they did not vote to vote us off the island. And you need to know that. They did not do that, and could have.

“And so I think that was a moderated response that expressed displeasure but that recognised that we are still an Anglican family and are committed to that. Now, how that plays out over the next . . . I have no idea. But that’s what was really going on and most of my conversations with fellow Primates . . . were in that direction.

“I think that is . . . potentially an adult and mature response. Where that will lead us on to down the road, I don’t know. But there was clarity on our part both about who we are as a church and our love and commitment to the Communion. And there was clarity on their part that they disagree with us but they did not vote us off the island.”

He described the consequences put forward by the Primates as “surgical”, saying: “The limits are very specific and focused. They have to do with ambassadorial functions and direct leadership functions. They don’t deal with other things.

“This is the position: because we differ on a core doctrine, it would not be seen as appropriate for us to represent the Anglican Communion in

ecumenical / interfaith leadership / ambassadorial relationships. Okay, that's fair.

“And because we disagree on core doctrine they are asking that we not cast our votes on matters of doctrine and polity – not about our life together and a whole bunch of other things that get considered. It was a very specific, almost surgical approach, that expresses displeasure and that tries to find a mediated way of expressing that displeasure in a way that was real but that didn't go too far.”

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Diocese of Texas removes roadblock to marriage equality

The Revd Canon Susan Russell is reporting on her personal blog, *An Inch at a Time*, that the Diocese of Texas, led by its bishop, the Rt Revd Andy Doyle, has voted in favour of removing Canon 43 from the diocesan canons. Canon 43 defined marriage as solely being between a man and a woman. The vote to remove Canon 43 was 499 delegates in favour and 144 delegates opposed.

The Revd Russell quotes from Bishop Doyle's address to the convention;

In his address to the diocese, Bishop Doyle noted that Canon 43 “has not kept anyone dissatisfied with TEC from leaving” and “what it has done is keep talented clergy from other parts of the country from coming to the Diocese of Texas.” He also noted “this is not a vote for marriage or against marriage. This is a vote for mission.” “*Deep in the Heart of Texas*” marriage equality has taken a giant step forward!

You may read Susan’s original blogpost at [An Inch at a Time](#).

Trio abused by Brendan Smyth seek permission to sue Bishop

Irish Times - If information about Smyth had been disclosed by the church, assaults would have been avoided counsel claims

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/trio-abused-by-brendan-smyth-seek-permission-to-sue-bishop-1.2535441>

Mail/Times/Metro/Pink News/Premier/ITV

Further reports on the reaction to a tweet posted by the CofE (@c_of_e) offering prayers for Richard Dawkins (and his family) who has suffered a stroke. Reports highlight that some tweets complained that the CofE was 'trolling' Dawkins as he is an atheist. A blog by [the Revd Arun Arora](#) director of communications for the Archbishops' Council, stresses it was genuine and talks about the importance of prayer.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3446628/Church-England-accused-TROLLING-stroke-hit-atheist-author-Richard-Dawkins-ask-believers-pray-him.html>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/article4690644.ece>

<http://metro.co.uk/2016/02/14/the-church-of-england-said-its-praying-for-richard-dawkins-no-one-is-sure-if-its-trolling-5680948/>

<http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2016/02/14/church-of-england-accused-of-trolling-atheist-dawkins-with-prayer-tweet/>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/Church/Church-of-England-defends-Dawkins-prayer-tweet>

<http://www.itv.com/news/2016-02-14/church-of-england-defends-genuine-tweet-sending-prayers-to-the-god-delusion-author-richard-dawkins/>

Ind Catholic News

Further coverage of the St Anselm Community based at Lambeth Palace, a group of 36 young people who have been living together as part of a quasi-monastic community since September 2015. They come from many different Christian denominations, from around the globe. Applications to join the Community as a residential member in September 2016 are open until the end of February.

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news.php?viewStory=29423>

Brighton & Hove Argus

Reports that a church building named after the former Bishop of chichester, George Bell has been renamed 4 Canon Lane, Brighton. A spokeswoman confirmed that the plaque bearing Bell's name had been removed and tourist signs directing visitors to George Bell House are in the process of being replaced.

http://www.theargus.co.uk/news/14275688.Church_building_to_be_renamed_after_Bishop_George_Bell_affair/?ref=rss

BBC

Letters from the late Pope John Paul II to a friend, Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka written over a 32 year period, have come to light. Anna-Teresa sold her collection of letters and photographs to the National Library of Poland in 2008. These have been kept away from public view until now. The letters form the material for an edition of BBC1s *Panorama*, to be screened this evening.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-35552997>

Mirror

Reports that the sitcom *The Vicar of Dibley* could make a return. Dawn French who played the Revd Geraldine Granger in the series which ran between 1994 and 2007, said a spin-off version could see her character promoted to a Bishop.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/tv/tv-news/vicar-dibley-set-tv-comeback-7371605#ICID=nsn>

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