



# CNI

## **Bishops Daly and Mehaffey to be granted the freedom of Derry city**

The race is on to grant the freedom of the city to two retired bishops - one Protestant, one Catholic - before Derry City Council ceases to exist at the end of March.

Belfast Telegraph - There was an all-party agreement to rush through an SDLP proposal to bestow the city's highest honour on Catholic Bishop Edward Daly and Church of Ireland Bishop James Mehaffey.

It will be one of the council's last acts before the new Derry and Strabane super council takes over on April 1.

John Boyle, who proposed the move, said: "Given their undoubted commitment to religious and civic life in our city over the past decades the SDLP believe that the two bishops would be extremely worthy recipients of this honour."

Bishop Daly was famously photographed on Bloody Sunday escorting the dying Jackie Duddy through the streets, waving a bloodied white handkerchief. He became Bishop of Derry two years later and remained there until his retirement aged 75.

Bishop Mehaffey was appointed Bishop of Derry and Raphoe in 1980 and remained as head of the Church of Ireland in the city until his retirement in 2002. He forged a close bond with his Catholic counterpart and was a strong advocate for Ulster University's Magee campus.

## **Irish Presbyterian Church calls for reasonable accommodation in matters of conscience**

The Presbyterian Church's Council for Church in Society – the body responsible for looking at matters of public policy – has issued a 22 point document which it states reflects the current thinking by the Church on the issues raised by the consultation and Mr Givan's Bill before the Northern Ireland Assembly.

Speaking on behalf of the Council, the Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Rev. Trevor Gribben, said that at the heart of its submission was an implicit emphasis on individual human dignity, the importance of upholding the right to freedom of conscience, and crucially the need for appropriate balance and reasonable accommodation, which, at present is absent from the law.

“The right of private conscience is one of high significance within the ethos of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. In our submission we clearly state that the Church is ‘fully supportive of having legislation that upholds the core Christian principle that all people are created with equal value and worth, and therefore no one should be treated as a second-class citizen.’ We also state that ‘we uphold the importance of freedom of conscience, which is, at its core, about distinguishing between what is morally right and morally wrong, and one’s ability to act in

accordance with those judgements,””  
Trevor Gribben said.

“At the same time, the Church also recognises that many people throughout society, people of faith and of no faith, believe that the current law does not appropriately value the role of conscience and the freedom to manifest one’s beliefs in the public square,” he said.

With this in mind, the Church would like to see the concept of ‘reasonable accommodation’ developed in law with the aim of achieving a better way of enabling people to manifest their beliefs in the public arena, whilst offering protection from discrimination. The submission document states that examples from other jurisdictions, like Canada, could help to formulate a template for legislative change.

Mr Gribben continued, “The Bill has facilitated an important discussion around a clash of different world views and the

expression of the those views in a diverse, pluralist and democratic society. In our submission we talk about achieving ‘an informed and gracious discussion about these matters’, which we appreciate has been difficult. Nevertheless, we believe that this needs to be done and we hope that this consultation is perhaps the beginning of a public dialogue and not the end of the current discussion.”

“While recognising that significantly more work has to be done on the exact nature and wording of any proposed change to the law, a point recognised by even the sponsor of the consultation; as a Church we support the general objective of the proposals in seeking to further develop the concept of reasonable accommodation within our legal framework. Those political parties, and others, who feel that the specific proposals in the consultation are not the way to proceed, have an obligation to suggest alternative ways to enable a reasonable accommodation on the issue

of freedom of conscience in the public square,” he concluded.

See also -

Presbyterian Church backs conscience clause

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/presbyterian-church-backs-conscience-clause-1-6601260>

Presbyterian Church stops short of endorsing but supports principle of “conscience” bill, calls for reasonable accommodation &

debate [sluggerotoole.com/2015/02/25/presbyterian-church-supports-principle-of-but-stops-short-of-endorsing-conscience-bill-calls-for-reasonable-accommodation-debate](http://sluggerotoole.com/2015/02/25/presbyterian-church-supports-principle-of-but-stops-short-of-endorsing-conscience-bill-calls-for-reasonable-accommodation-debate)

Ashers Bakery and gay marriage: Why it's not just a piece of cake

[www.christiantoday.com/article/the.gay.cake.and.the.conscience.clause.whose.rights.should.win/48859.htm](http://www.christiantoday.com/article/the.gay.cake.and.the.conscience.clause.whose.rights.should.win/48859.htm)

Text of PCI document here -

[www.presbyterianireland.org/getmedia/f7223d90-94ef-4dd0-9b0c-d09827d326cf/20150225-Freedom-of-Conscience.pdf.aspx](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/getmedia/f7223d90-94ef-4dd0-9b0c-d09827d326cf/20150225-Freedom-of-Conscience.pdf.aspx)

Why as a Christian I disagree with the Conscience Clause.

[paulrobinsonwrites.com/2015/02/11/why-as-a-christian-i-disagree-with-the-conscience-clause](http://paulrobinsonwrites.com/2015/02/11/why-as-a-christian-i-disagree-with-the-conscience-clause)

## **Adoption agency: 'We don't answer to Catholic Church'**

Body reiterates its independence after DUP drags it into gay adoption row

Liam Clarke in Belfast Telegraph - The boss of Northern Ireland's only independent adoption agency has vowed to go it alone rather than close if the Catholic Church withdraws its funds in the gay adoption row.

She also said that the agency was willing to place children with same-sex couples now that the law permits it to do so.

Rosemary Hurl, the chief executive of Family Care Adoption Services (FCAS), said: "We are not a Catholic agency and to put that out is very alarming. The bishops are aware of this. We are not their adoption agency and we are not closing."

The agency has recently received a new contract from the Health Board and a £1m grant from the Big Lottery fund as well as other donations. Ms Hurl was reacting to a meeting involving the DUP and Bishop Noel Treanor, who represented the Catholic hierarchy, in Stormont on Tuesday.

Afterwards the DUP in particular raised the issue of the "Catholic Adoption Agency" and gave it its full support.

The party was seeking the support of the Catholic Church for a Bill being proposed by Paul Givan to allow people to refuse to provide goods and services which offend religious beliefs. The Catholic delegation expressed support for the principle, giving same-sex adoption as an example of something that could close the agency. However, it reserved a final judgment until the end of the consultation period and Bishop Treanor warned that any change to the law would have to be carefully defined, to prevent it from leading to "spurious claims of religious conscience".

Fr Tim Bartlett, who took part in the delegation as Bishop Treanor's aide, insisted the agency could close and said it would be a matter for the board to decide.

"It is in danger of closure," he stated.

"It is a Catholic-funded adoption agency, they have to leave the Catholic premises they are in now. If they apply Catholic teaching and don't provide adoption to same-sex couples, then the State will withdraw its funding.



"The Church has told them we will continue to fund them for 12 months while they decide as a board and a society what they want to do."

Ms Hurl denied anything of the sort was on the agenda, warning that such rumours could put off clients.

More at -

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/adoption-agency-we-dont-answer-to-catholic-church-31022936.html>

## **Just 16% of Belfast Catholics go to Mass, says diocese survey**

Only one in five Catholics is regularly attending Sunday Mass in the Down and Connor Diocese, a new report has revealed.

Belfast Telegraph - And attendance at Mass in the greater Belfast area has been recorded as low as 16% of all Catholics who live in the area, according to the diocesan report.

Figures from an audit taken last year in Down and Connor, the second largest diocese on the island, showed that based on the 2011 census figures of a potential 356,585 Catholics, only

72,818 were recorded as attending weekly Mass over a two-week period when the count was taken.

The findings also show a situation of an aging church population against the backdrop of an aging priest population.

There were 27 priests aged under 50 in 2014 and 54 aged between 51 and 65, while a third of all Mass-goers were aged 61 and over.

The report further estimates that by 2019, 104 priests will be aged under 75.

A spokesman for the diocese said that the situation of a declining church population and serving priests were just two of the issues that will be considered during a consultation process announced by Bishop Noel Treanor as the Catholic Church seeks to restructure its local administration to meet changing needs,

The beginning of the consultation process involving the laity was announced last Sunday at churches throughout the diocese as to how best to organise over the coming years.

The Diocese of Down and Connor Creating Pastoral Communities Consultation document gives detailed breakdown on the attendance

numbers per church, as well as the type of parishioner who is keeping up their faithful obligation.

Women were more likely to attend Mass than men - 56% to 46% - and while the numbers of weddings and funerals stayed basically the same from 2012-13, baptisms in 2013 were down to 4,961 from 5,354 in 2012.

More at -

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/just-16-of-belfast-catholics-go-to-mass-says-diocese-survey-31022946.html>

## **'We have to climate change-proof society,' Prof John Sweeney at inter-church climate justice event**

It is imperative that steps are taken to “climate-proof” society, Prof John Sweeney of NUI Maynooth said at a recent inter-church climate justice event held in Letterkenny Regional Cultural Centre, Donegal.

The event, which drew a crowd of more than 80 people from different churches, was co-hosted by Eco-Congregation Ireland and Raphoe Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Group.

Prof Sweeney, who is widely recognised as Ireland's leading climate scientist, said the clock was ticking when it came to climate change: "We have to climate change-proof society for the years ahead," he said. "It won't cost the earth to do it; it will cost the earth not to do it."

He said that many parts of the developing world were already experiencing climate change and that the people already suffering from the consequences of climate change were those who have least contributed to carbon emissions. He said it was vital that Ireland came to terms with its contribution to carbon emissions, given that we produce more greenhouse gases than the 400 million poorest people on earth.

Describing as "crucial" the COP21 climate talks that will take place in Paris in December, Prof Sweeney said he hoped an inclusive global agreement would be made at that event: "A global agreement to halt the rise of greenhouse gas emissions sometime in the next decade is essential to avoid dangerous climate change," he said. "Limiting climate change will require substantial and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions."

Following the event, Prof Sweeney said: "I greatly enjoyed the experience and was particularly pleased to learn of the 'on the ground' efforts being made by so many members of the two organisations. They are perhaps the pioneers of this century although they may not be appreciated for some time by the general public."

Canon Stewart Wright, Rector of Conwal and a member of Raphoe Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Group, said: "It is now confirmed that the current generation of children will pay a very heavy price for our lack of care for the environment. The church that claims to value creation will gain great credibility for implementing eco-congregation criteria at parish, diocesan and national level. The event in Letterkenny was just the catalyst our churches need."

## **Quiz fan instituted as rector**

The Revd Ian Linton has been instituted as rector of Omagh. Taking part in the service were - Canon Robert Clarke (Rural Dean), Right Revd Ken Clarke (former Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh) who preached, Revd Lorraine Capper (curate of the parish), Venerable Robert Miller (Archdeacon of Derry), and Canon David Crooks

(Diocesan Registrar). Mr Linton had been rector of Drumcliffe Parish and Archdeacon of Elphin and Ardagh diocese.

In referring to the new Rector, Bishop Clarke highlighted Revd Ian's visiting, preaching and ability to relate to anyone as the qualities which made him an excellent choice. The Revd Linton served a curacy in St Macartin's Cathedral Enniskillen before moving to Drumcliffe Parish. He is an avid fan of TV quiz shows and has appeared on Channel 5's 'Brainteaser', 'The Weakest Link', and most recently 'Countdown' where he had two wins. Married with two children, he succeeds Revd William Seale who moved to Kells Parish in October 2014.

## **Canon Musgrave: Esteemed clergyman was honoured for work in the community**

Canon James Robert Lord (Jim) Musgrave, who has died at 94, was a full-time Church of Ireland clergyman for 54 years and a founder member of the Samaritans in Belfast. He was involved in pastoral work with the Army Air Corps and was awarded an MBE in 1997 for his work in the community at large.

Belfast Telegraph - Canon Musgrave was born and raised in Tumna, Co Leitrim, and was educated at King's Hospital College School, Dublin, and then at Trinity College. In his youth he had a pet pig that followed him everywhere, but it had to be sold to help pay for his education when, under the influence of his mother, he made up his mind to go into the Church.

After ordination Jim came to Belfast to serve as a deacon in St Andrew's Parish Church in Sandy Row and from 1946 to 1951 was senior curate in the parish of Derriaghy. Incumbencies followed in Duneane and Ballyscullion (1951-54), St Stephen's, Belfast (1954-64) and Magheragall (1964-85). He became Bishop's Curate of Killead and Gartree, where he stayed until his retirement in 1998.

Canon Musgrave took a year away from his ministry to care for his ill wife Kitty, who died in 1986 at 66 after nearly 28 years of marriage.

His funeral service was taken in St Mark's, Ballymacash, by Canon George Irwin, who described the late Canon as a man of high moral virtue.

"His skill in conversation enabled him to defuse many a potentially fraught situation with a few well-chosen words," he added.

St Mark's was filled for the service, with Bishop Alan Abernethy among clergy in the congregation. Canon Musgrave's only son, Stephen, paid a tribute to his father.

## **U2 band members pay respects to 'travelling pastor'**

U2 joined around 100 mourners at the funeral of their 'travelling pastor' Jack Heaslip, who was remembered as a man who "made a lasting impression on so many people in so many ways".

Irish Independent - The 71-year-old clergyman passed away at his home over the weekend after a prolonged battle with motor neuron disease. The Church of Ireland pastor travelled the world with U2, having first met the members while working as a guidance counsellor at the secondary school they attended, Mount Temple.

The group's frontman Bono was accompanied by his wife Ali Hewson to the service at St Mary's Church, Howth yesterday.



Rev Kevin Brew described how Rev Heaslip would not have wanted the funeral to focus on himself.

The congregation, including U2 members Larry Mullen, Adam Clayton and the Edge listened as Bono read from Isaiah 61. The band's former manager Paul McGuinness, Bono's close friend Guggi and the group's soundman Joe O'Herlihy were also in attendance.

As the service concluded, Mr Heaslip's coffin was carried from the church to a round of applause.

## **Alexander McCall Smith book signing for church's homeless shelter**

Bestselling crime writer Alexander McCall Smith will be talking and signing his books at a special charity event at St Giles' Cathedral to help raise money for a homeless person's shelter in the Cowgate run by CrossReach, the Church of Scotland's social care provider.

Copies of his books will be on sale and the Edinburgh Bookshop who are providing them is donating a portion of the proceeds to Cunningham House, a short-stay hostel for

homeless people, at the event on Friday night at 7.30pm at St Giles' Cathedral.

The No.1 Ladies' Detective Agency author said: 'Homelessness is one of the most difficult and distressing issues our society faces. Those of us who have a roof over our heads can barely imagine what it is like to be without a home - yet that is what many people face. I am only too happy to be able to support this cause.'

Mr McCall Smith will be in conversation with David Robinson, literary editor of The Scotsman newspaper, after which he will autograph copies of novels. The theme of the conversation is Friendship, Places and People.

The event organised by the St Giles's Neighbourhood Group will be raising funds for Cunningham House to allow the hostel to buy acoustic curtain to help the residents get a better night's sleep by preventing the sound from revellers from reaching them.

Simon Bolam of the St Giles' Neighbourhood Group said: 'We are immensely grateful to Alexander McCall Smith for giving up his time to be with us on Friday night and to the Edinburgh Bookshop as well to help us raise money to help give the men a good night's sleep at Cunningham House.'

The hostel has 23 rooms, 20 for men and three for women. It provides a safe, supportive environment where people staying get three meals a day. Cunningham House is a dry house meaning alcohol and drugs are not allowed on the premises.

## **Media Digest**

### **Irish Times**

Census figures raise concerns of ethnic segregation in schools. The high concentration of immigrant children in a comparatively small number of primary schools has led to warnings about segregation developing in the education system. Four out of five children from immigrant backgrounds were concentrated in 23 per cent of the State's primary schools, the annual school census for 2013-14 shows. In 20 schools, more than two-thirds of pupils were recorded as being of a non-Irish background.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/census-figures-raise-concerns-of-ethnic-segregation-in-schools-1.2114559>

### **Irish Times**

Richard Dawkins: Children need to be 'protected' from religion. Children need to be "protected" from religious indoctrination in

schools, biologist and atheist campaigner [Richard Dawkins](#) has said, backing a campaign by Atheist Ireland to overhaul our education system. Speaking to *The Irish Times* in advance of a public talk at [Trinity College Dublin](#) on Tuesday evening, Prof Dawkins said: “There is a balancing act and you have to balance the rights of parents and the rights of children and I think the balance has swung too far towards parents... “Children do need to be protected so that they can have a proper education and not be indoctrinated in whatever religion their parents happen to have been brought up in.”

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/richard-dawkins-children-need-to-be-protected-from-religion-1.2116281>

### **Belfast Telegraph**

Liam Clarke writes - Time will tell if DUP-Catholic Church 'alliance' is vote winner... As the DUP casts around for a way to grow, it is hoping that socially conservative, observant Catholics may eventually swing behind it.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/debateni/blogs/liam-clarke/time-will-tell-if-dupcatholic-church-alliance-is-vote-winner-31022572.html>

### **Guard/Telegraph**

Cliff Richard investigation increasing in size, says police chief. The police investigation into allegations that Cliff Richard was involved in a sex crime involving a boy has expanded to look at more than one allegation, it has emerged. The chief constable of South Yorkshire police, David Crompton, in a letter published on Wednesday, revealed detectives were involved in a growing inquiry into allegations against the singer, who denies all wrongdoing.

[www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/feb/25/sir-cliff-richard-investigation-increasing-in-size-says-police-chief](http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/feb/25/sir-cliff-richard-investigation-increasing-in-size-says-police-chief)

[www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/11435266/Sir-Cliff-Richard-sex-abuse-investigation-involves-more-than-one-allegation.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/11435266/Sir-Cliff-Richard-sex-abuse-investigation-involves-more-than-one-allegation.html)

### **Tel/ Christian Today**

Report that King's College London is facing accusations of censoring debate amid plans to remove a prominent photograph of the former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey because of his opposition to gay marriage. It states the university said the plans follow calls from student activists for the former archbishop to be removed after he was quoted as saying that same-sex relationships should not be "put on the same level" as heterosexual unions.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11434880/Kings-College-London-facing-censorship-claims-amid-Lord-Carey-gay-marriage-row.html>

Former ABC Lord Carey's opposition to gay marriage may see him dropped from university gallery

[www.christiantoday.com/article/former.abc.lord.careys.opposition.to.gay.marriage.may.see.him.dropped.from.university.gallery/48853.htm](http://www.christiantoday.com/article/former.abc.lord.careys.opposition.to.gay.marriage.may.see.him.dropped.from.university.gallery/48853.htm)

## **FT**

Article looking at the HSBC tax avoidance scandal asking why companies employing many decent people fall into disgrace. It states the tax evasion scheme happened largely under the leadership of Stephen Green, now Lord Green, an ordained Church of England priest and author of a book called *Good Value: Reflections on Money, Morality and an Uncertain World*.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/1aa07928-bb75-11e4-aa71-00144feab7de.html#axzz3Sde2E1EH>

## **Mail/Ind**

Further reports that the kidnapping of nearly 100 Assyrian Christians by Islamic State militants in Syria has prompted nearly 1,000 families to flee villages in the northeastern province of Hasakeh. Independent quotes Habib Afram, President of the Syriac League in Lebanon,

warning the latest assault puts the Christian population further in jeopardy.

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-2968702/](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-2968702/Christians-flee-jihadists-Syria-kidnappings.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[Christians-flee-jihadists-Syria-kidnappings.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-2968702/Christians-flee-jihadists-Syria-kidnappings.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-2968702/Christians-flee-jihadists-Syria-kidnappings.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-militants-kidnap-150-assyrians-as-activists-warn-attack-could-mark-end-of-christian-presence-in-middle-east-10068650.html)

[isis-militants-kidnap-150-assyrians-as-activists-warn-](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-militants-kidnap-150-assyrians-as-activists-warn-attack-could-mark-end-of-christian-presence-in-middle-east-10068650.html)

[attack-could-mark-end-of-christian-presence-in-middle-](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-militants-kidnap-150-assyrians-as-activists-warn-attack-could-mark-end-of-christian-presence-in-middle-east-10068650.html)

[east-10068650.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/isis-militants-kidnap-150-assyrians-as-activists-warn-attack-could-mark-end-of-christian-presence-in-middle-east-10068650.html)

## **BBC**

Report that a proposal to allow Guernsey residents to opt out of paying for the upkeep of the island's 10 parish churches has been rejected. It states Islanders pay for the maintenance of the churches, churchyards, glebe land and rectories through parish rates.

The churches and churchyards remain the property of the Church of England.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-guernsey-31620849>

## **Mirror**

Reports on photos taken of model Josie Cunningham praying at St Mary's Church, Woodkirk, in West Yorkshire. The Reverend Amanda Barraclough is quoted saying the church is available to anyone who wants to pray, but says she would be disappointed if "the motivation was more commercial than spiritual."

[churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/3am/celebrity-news/vicars-fury-after-josie-cunningham-5229708>

## **Mail**

Story of a woman personally affected by the House of Lords decision to pass legislation to allow the creation of IVF embryos using DNA from three different people to stop life-threatening diseases being passed on to a new generation.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/anyone-who-objects-three-parent-5232252>

## **Mail**

Further report that a book which helped change the course of English history, part of the evidence Henry VIII and his lawyers gathered in the 1530s to help win an annulment from Catherine of Aragon and ultimately to break with Rome, has turned up on the shelves of a National Trust mansion in Cornwall.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/history/560466/Wolf-Hall-text-used-Henry-VIII-divorce-Catherine-of-Aragon-found>