



IFA & Methodist Mission's NI Street League Football Relaunch

NI Ireland Street League has been relaunched as Street Soccer NI. The relaunch event took place at Skainos on the Newtownards Road and was attended by the Lord Mayor of Belfast Nichola Mallon who took time out to chat to the players about the project and their experiences. Nichola has been a consistent supporter of the project

and it meant a lot to the team that she attended and spoke so passionately about homelessness.

Street Soccer NI uses football to create change in some of the most marginalised communities, including the homeless. It runs football leagues, coaching sessions, education and training programmes, and provides volunteer opportunities. Participants include people who are homeless or have been homeless, people with mental health issues, addiction issues, refugees and asylum seekers, and other disadvantaged groups. The charity uses football as a hook to support positive change in players' lives, develop role models and leaders, and create better communities.

Each year Street Soccer NI selects the NI team for the Homeless World Cup, puts them through a training programme, and brings the team to compete in the event. The Homeless World Cup gives opportunities to people who have experienced homelessness a chance to use the power of football to re-energise their lives. Teams from over 65 countries compete in the international football event, which has been running now for the last 11 years.

In October 2014 Team NI competed in the Homeless World Cup in Santiago Chile. The

players trained hard for the event and it paid off when they won the Accion Totale Cup in an exciting final against Denmark! All players from the team are now living in their own homes and several have completed their coaching badges with the IFA and are now role models for others. Padraig McKissock was Northern Ireland's top scorer and he has now been signed by Bangor FC! This year the competition takes place in Amsterdam. With the help of supporters, volunteers, staff and players another team will travel to compete in the competition.

Last year's team Captain Brendan Kingsmore said: *"Football brings me a different level of happiness. I care more about my life thanks to football. I literally owe my life to football"*.

Irish FA Director of Football Development, Michael Boyd, who is a Coach Mentor for Street League said: *"The Homeless World Cup is a celebration of all our hard work with partners such as the East Belfast Mission over the last four years providing football, health and education opportunities for some of the most marginalised men in Northern Ireland. NI Street League is making history, with the participants acting as strong ambassadors for smashing the stigma of homelessness."*

Street Soccer NI is a project of the Irish Football Association and East Belfast Mission.

Larne Churches Provide Civic Lead

Churches in Larne have come together to provide a civic lead in promoting local services and encouraging local commerce.

Members of the congregations of local Churches in Larne have united to support the development of a new initiative based in the Larne Market Auction House during Wednesday mornings. The initiative being piloted from January to Easter seeks to;

- Provide a point for local information.
- Provide help and advice.
- Promote local events and activities.
- Support a venue for demonstrations including arts, crafts, cookery.....
- Offer support and friendship.
- Be an access point to other support agencies.
- Be a practical demonstration of faith.

The volunteer staff will be available from 10.00 to 12.00 providing support and information, working with a range of locally based community and statutory agencies.

Daily events include history talks, advice services, art and craft demos and lunch time reflection provided by local clergy.

The project is in partnership with Larne Community Development Project and supported by the Irish Churches Peace Project.

More info at <http://churchinthemarketplacelarne.com/index.html>

Balmoral First for Methodist Circuit

The Lisburn and Dromore Circuit Executive has been successful in securing a Stand at the forthcoming Balmoral Show which will take place again this year at Balmoral Park on the Maze site from 13 - 15 May.

Plans are well underway and the arrangements are being coordinated by a Task Group comprising of representatives from across the Circuit.

Under the direction of Ken Anderson (Trinity) the group will be creating an environment in which

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visitors to the Show can call in for a coffee and chat and be informed about the work of the Methodist Church in the area.



Material will be available to showcase the different Societies on the Lisburn and Dromore Circuit in a positive way as well as offering devotional literature. When visiting the Balmoral Show call and say hello.

The Dining Room Celebrates First Year of Serving the Community

The Dining Room was officially one year old on February 24. The outreach project of Christ Church, Dun Laoghaire is celebrating its first



The Revd Ása Bjork Ólafsdottir, Cllr Patricia Steward, Tony McCarthy (volunteer) and Deputy Mary Mitchell O'Connor.

anniversary all this week with many visitors coming to the parish hall to see what developments have taken place over the past 12 months.

The project is supported by teams of volunteers from all walks of life who provide a hot home cooked lunch to homeless people, the elderly and those experiencing food poverty and The Dining Room was the brainchild of the Vicar of Christ Church, Dun Laoghaire, the Revd Ása Bjork Ólafsdottir who is delighted with the way the first year has gone. “What a year it has been, lots of new friends, lots of interesting food, healthier patrons, and a true sense of the community working together,” she commented.

She paid tribute to all the volunteers and all who donate food to the project. They have seen people blossom in the Dining Room and some people who had been patrons have become volunteers.

Yesterday, as the celebrations got underway, Archbishop Michael Jackson dropped in for lunch. Also present were local public representatives including Cllrs Patricia Stewart and Mary Fayne and Deputy Mary Mitchell O’Connor.

Cllr Stewart outlined plans for a new premises for a community café in Dun Laoghaire which would be open daily and for longer hours. The parish hall can only accommodate the Dining Room for three lunchtimes each week.

The need for such a facility was identified by the local policing forums some time ago, the councillor stated. Ása, who is now a member of the policing forum, also saw the need for somewhere for people to go and set about establishing the Dining Room. She plans to retain a presence with the new venture and ensure that the ethos that has been nurtured at the Dining Room is maintained.

The Dining Room is open for lunch between 12.00 noon and 2.00 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. All are welcome to drop in.

Corrymeela 50th anniversary service in Coventry Cathedral

Commenting on the service a spokesperson said - As part of our 50th anniversary celebrations we would love you to come and join us for the 10.30am Eucharist at Coventry Cathedral on Sunday March 22nd 2015.

Corrymeela Community Leader Pádraig Ó Tuama will be the preacher and other community members will take part in the service.

We are grateful to the Coventry Cathedral for their gracious welcome and also their hospitality afterwards when a lunch will be provided (£5 per head). The lunch will be an opportunity to eat

together, for friendship and conversation. Pádraig and other community members will also be able to share details of some of our exciting new programmes and give details on other events happening later in our 50th anniversary year.

If you would like to join us for lunch please download a [Booking form](#) and return it to

"March 22nd Service", 2 Ash Grove, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 8UT (enclosing £5 per person for the cost of lunch - cheques should be made payable to the Corrymeela Community.)

Closing date for Booking form is Friday, March 13th 2015.

We very much hope that many of Corrymeela's friends and supporters will be able to join us for what will be a very exciting occasion and look forward to hearing from you.

<http://www.corrymeela.org/events/coventry-cathedral-service/>

Portlaoise Solemn Novena marks parish church's 50 years

YouTube singing priest sensation, Fr Ray Kelly and the renowned composer and singer, Fr Liam

Lawton, will be among the guests participating at the Portlaoise Solemn Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help this year.

Bishop Denis Nulty of Kildare & Leighlin will celebrate the concluding Mass of the nine day novena.

Other speakers will relate their experiences dealing with addiction and battling with cancer.

There will be four Masses every day for nine days in the parish church and a school novena Mass at noon.

The Sacrament of Penance will be available on one particular day when priests will make themselves available from 6am to 12 midnight.

“The Novena is a traditional catholic format for praying. It lends itself very well into the season of Lent where we would notice a massive increase of people involved in certain practices to [help] grow [their] faith and renew their own faith commitment,” Fr Paddy Byrne told Catholicireland.net.

“We are also focusing on the Lent penance exercises. We are very conscious of what the Holy Father is asking us to do in terms of providing opportunities for people to avail of this

very important sacrament. We have invited priests to come on Friday 6 March,” he said.

This year’s novena is special because it coincides with the 50th anniversary of the parish church of Sts Peter and Paul, which according to Fr Byrne, is “iconic in the life of the people of Portlaoise”.

It can facilitate large numbers for parish worship and there ‘a great sense of ownership’ by the people of Portlaoise.

On Monday 2 March, the Novena Mass at midnight will be a celebration for couples who were married in the church over the last 50 years and all are welcome.

Also this year the parish will see a change to the popular novena, with nine consecutive days this year instead of the nine weeks of previous years.

John Bruton, former Taoiseach is a speaker as is Brenda Drumm, who is well known for her work with in Catholic Communications, but who will speak about her own personal battle against cancer. Robert Parker will speak about his experience of recovery from addiction.

“He is giving a great testimony of hope,” said Fr Paddy Byrne. “It is important to have speakers

who will not just talk the talk but walk the walk as well.”

TV and radio personality, Hector O’hEochagain returns this year and local rapper Wally O’Loughlin will also put in an appearance.

The parish has issued the invitation to for people to come and “give thanks for a faith community that is dynamic, alive and very active”.

At the time of going to print and several days before the Novena began, some 5,000 petitions for prayers had already been handed in.

The Novena runs from Saturday 28 February to Sunday 8 March.

See: www.portlaoiseparish.ie

Celebrity Organ Recital in St Patrick’s Cathedral

Internationally renowned concert organist, David Briggs, will give an organ recital in St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin, on Friday March 13 at 6.30 pm.

David is an internationally renowned organist whose performances are acclaimed for their musicality, virtuosity, and ability to excite and engage audiences of all ages. He is Artist-in-

Residence at St James Cathedral, Toronto and Organist Emeritus of Gloucester Cathedral, UK. The programme included Bach and Mahler as well as David's own arrangements of The Sorcerer's Apprentice and Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloe* and a Symphonic Improvisation on Irish Themes.

The recital will be preceded by a service of Choral Evensong sung by the Boys and Gentlemen of the Cathedral Choir including the setting written for Saint Patrick's by David Briggs at 5.30 pm. The concert will be followed by a wine reception in the Lady Chapel. Admission is free and more details are available on www.stpatrickscathedral.ie

Fr Tony Flannery at the ACI Meeting in Belfast – Can the Catholic Church Survive in Ireland?

On Saturday 21 February Fr Tony Flannery spoke at a meeting of the [Association of Catholics in Ireland \(ACI\)](#) at the Duncairn Centre for Culture and Arts in Belfast.

Gladys Ganiel - Flannery's topics were "The urgent reforms needed in the Catholic Church,

and where Pope Francis stands on them” and “Reflections on the growth of the Catholic reform movement around the world; its strengths and weaknesses”. ([Audio from the event is on the ACI website.](#))

More than 60 people from Belfast, Bangor, Ballymoney, Ballymena, Larne, Coleraine, Armagh, Carrickfergus, Donegal, Mayo, New York and Cyprus attended the event.

Flannery, a Redemptorist, has been put out of ministry by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith over articles he wrote for the Redemptorist magazine *Reality*, which dealt with women priests and teachings on contraception and homosexuality.

In an interview with William Scholes in the *Irish News* in advance of the event, Flannery said:

What they objected to in particular was that I suggested– and we have to remember that this was in the middle of the clerical sex abuse crisis – that the priesthood as we have it now is not as Jesus intended it to be.”

In his interview with Scholes, Flannery had linked reforms to the very survival of the Catholic Church in Ireland:

“In Ireland in 10 to 15 years’ time there will be very few priests left. Without priests you won’t have the Mass, and the Mass is central to the life of the Christian, so something has to be done about that. ... It is clear now that the notion of confining priesthood to male celibate people does not work anymore. That has to be changed. Priesthood has to be opened to married people – initially to married men, and then gradually also, women. That has to happen if the Church is to survive.”

ACI officer Martin Murray summarised some of the points from Flannery’s talks in [a report on the ACI website](#):

<http://www.acireland.ie/fr-tony-flannery-at-the-2nd-meeting-of-the-aci-in-belfast-21st-feb-2015-recorded/>

<http://www.gladysganiel.com/irish-catholic-church/fr-tony-flannery-at-the-aci-meeting-in-belfast-can-the-catholic-church-survive-in-ireland/>

Freedom of the City to be given to two former church leaders

A proposal to confer the Freedom of Derry on two former church leaders has been passed by the outgoing members of Derry City Council.

Derry Journal - The suggestion by the SDLP was passed at a meeting of the Council's elected representatives at the Guildhall.



Retired Bishop of Derry Edward Daly (right) with Bishop James Mehaffey.

A meeting to to formalise the conferral of the honour on both men will be held soon. Derry City Council will cease to exist at the beginning of April under the Review of Public Administration and will merge with neighbouring Strabane to become Derry City and Strabane District Council.

The move was proposed by SDLP Councillor, John Boyle.

Mr Boyle said: “On behalf of the SDLP I asked that Derry City Council consider conferring the honour of Freedom of the City on the two former Bishops as soon as is practicably possible and that a Special Council meeting be arranged to consider the proposal. It is my understanding that the formalities of the process can be put in place relatively quickly and that Derry City Council can accord the distinction as one of the last official acts in its history. We believe that this would be a fitting tribute to both men, if that were to be the case.”

“Given their undoubted commitment to religious and civic life in our city over the past decades the SDLP believe that two Bishops would be extremely worthy recipients of this honour. Bishop Daly and Mehaffey are admired throughout Derry. Their contribution to many aspects of life in our city and their unfailing belief in peace building and reconciliation over the years has been immense. It is both right and proper that they be recognised in this way.”

Growing a Food Justice Movement in Scotland

Food justice and how to prevent people going hungry in Scotland will be discussed at a conference organised by the Church of Scotland and partner agencies on Saturday 28 February at the Pearce Institute, Govan Road, Glasgow.

The number of individuals and families relying on food banks and other forms of emergency food aid has increased, the impact of welfare reform is being strongly felt by those affected and food prices have risen with the most impact on the poorest in society.

The conference organised by the Church of Scotland's Church and Society Council, Faith in Community Scotland and the Centre for Human Ecology, seeks to explore food poverty and to create a movement eliminating it.

Rachel Gray, from the STOP movement in Canada, will speak about how Canadians have worked on alternatives, to resist food banks being accepted as a normal part of civilised society.

Key areas to be discussed include:
Food banks are an important response to the crisis, and volunteers working in them are making an outstanding contribution to their

communities. How did the need for food banks increase so dramatically and how can we avoid normalising emergency food aid as voluntary safety net?

Communities and individuals who are at risk of food poverty are well-placed to lead their own responses to it and are experts in their own experience. Could community-led responses be a key part of increasing food security: initiatives such as local food hubs, community shops, food co-operatives and community gardens and allotments?

How can we move from meeting immediate needs to campaigning to change the systems that create these needs, towards food justice, in which the human right to food and health is combined with sustainable food production, education and employment? Are there good examples of how to achieve this?

Our food system is not sustainable, with unhealthy food widely advertised and consumed leading to costly public health problems. How can we make the transition to an ecologically and socially just food system?

Media digest

Belfast Telegraph/BBC

Self-harm brings 35 to casualty every day, says report

There were more than 12,000 attendances at hospital emergency departments in Northern Ireland in the past financial year for self-harm and suicidal thought. More than 35 people are attending Northern Ireland emergency departments every day because of self-harm or suicidal thoughts, new research has revealed. The influx is being fed by images of self-harm which are regularly being shared on social media in the belief that physical pain helps young people cope with emotional pain, campaigners warned.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/health/selfharm-brings-35-to-casualty-every-day-says-report-31025796.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-31652977>

News Letter

Sinn Fein's contradictory approach to two unions: the UK and EU -

The more productive parts of the United Kingdom subsidises Northern Ireland to the tune of £9.6 billion a year to maintain our standards of

living and keep our economy afloat. When the housing bubble burst in Northern Ireland, the Block Grant shielded us from complete economic collapse. Yet Sinn Fein, so blinded by its ideological and narrow republicanism, refuses to recognise this reality and argues for Northern Ireland to be freed from the 'evil Brits' and the 'price of the Union' and join the Republic of Ireland. In effect Sinn Fein wants us to leave a fiscal and political union, from which we do very well, to join a Eurozone union which is punishing Greece, Portugal and the Republic of Ireland for being economically weaker than Germany. And to top it all off, Sinn Fein would fight to achieve an economic and political settlement in Europe much like the one they would have just left in the United Kingdom.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/sinn-fein-s-contradictory-approach-to-two-unions-the-uk-and-eu-1-6603821>

News Letter

Top Orangeman: SF must earn respect for Irish language

A leading Orangeman has said Sinn Fein's attitude towards the Irish language is serving to alienate unionists and increase division.

Speaking in Enniskillen on Thursday night, Dr David Hume said the onus was on the republican party to earn respect for the language rather

than forcing it on to people. Dr Hume, the director of services of the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland, told the annual dinner of the Enniskillen District LOL that unionists remain sceptical of Sinn Fein's motives in promoting new Irish language legislation.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/top-orangeman-sf-must-earn-respect-for-irish-language-1-6604191>

Guard & Mail

Reports that Westminster Abbey has won planning permission to add its first new tower in almost 300 years, which will create public access to a museum of treasures and curiosities housed in the triforium, the church's attic gallery. The dean, Dr John Hall is quoted.

<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/feb/26/westminster-abbey-wins-permission-add-first-new-tower-300-years>

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2970605/We-extending-Westminster-Abbey-add-19million-Gothic-tower-new-building-270-years.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2970605/We-extending-Westminster-Abbey-add-19million-Gothic-tower-new-building-270-years.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2970605/We-extending-Westminster-Abbey-add-19million-Gothic-tower-new-building-270-years.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

Mail

Item claiming that the Bishop of London, Richard Chartres, described an opponent of women bishops is having to decide who will be the next Bishop of Kensington from an all-female shortlist. It states frontrunners include Lucy

Winkett, Rector of St James's Piccadilly and Rachel Treweek, Archdeacon of Hackney.

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2969591/EPHRAIM-HARDCASTLE-Jack-Straw-s-indiscretion-cost-membership-Queen-s-elite-Order-Garter.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490

Mirror/IBTimes/Mail/Times/Sun

Articles on terrorist Jihadi John, unmasked as Londoner Mohammed Emwazi , says he was the only Muslim pupil in his class at St Mary Magdalene Church of England Primary School in Maida Vale, west London.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/jihadi-john-revealed-mohammed-emwazi-5240388>

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/jihadi-john-isis-executioner-was-polite-football-crazy-teenager-like-any-other-1489685>

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-2971253/British-media-unmask-killer-Jihadi-John-schoolboy-photograph.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/crime/article4366971.ece>

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/6348061/IS-executioner-Jihadi-John-Mohammad-Emwazi-angelic-school-photo-revealed-EXCLUSIVE-PICS.html>

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/6348061/IS-executioner-Jihadi-John-Mohammad-Emwazi-angelic-school-photo-revealed-EXCLUSIVE-PICS.html>

Guard

Article looking at discussions on scientific developments and the fears over 'three-parent babies'. It says scientists have questioned why

religious leaders should be granted any special status in pronouncing on ethical questions, but says the most thoughtful of them often turn out to have a subtle and humane moral sensibility of the kind that a questing faith can require.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/feb/26/science-plays-god-three-parent-babies-sceptics>

Mirror

Report on theft of a handbag from a 90-year-old's woman as she prayed at an Ash Wednesday service at St Nicholas' Church in Hounslow, west London. It states that police say the thief pounced after the woman had left her handbag on the floor while she approached the altar.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/thief-steals-90-year-old-womans-handbag-5235504>

Times

Further report that King's College, London, is said to be considering removing an image of the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey from its Strand facade because of his opposition to gay marriage.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-2971220/SEBASTIAN-SHAKESPEARE-Smart-Bank-boss-Carney-finds-new-home.html#ixzz3SvDGqZlz>

Times

Article on a social network that joins people across the world in prayer has attracted more than 33 million posts. It states the Instapray smartphone app lets its users request prayers, pray for others and chat with fellow members online. The app is used mainly by Christians but it is open to all faiths.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/technology/article4366642.ece>

Obituary

Tel

Obituary report on the Very Reverend John Treadgold, who has died aged 83, was Dean of Chichester from 1989 to 2001 and before that spent eight years as a Canon of St George's Chapel, Windsor, and Chaplain of Windsor Great Park. His wife Hazel was the Worldwide President of the Mothers' Union.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/11437610/The-Very-Reverend-John-Treadgold-obituary.html>