

**Image of the day - St Alban's Cathedral**

## **Abp Martin: 'We must ensure children and their mothers feel wanted and loved'**

**Ireland's Catholic leader, Archbishop Eamon Martin unreservedly apologizes to the survivors of Women and Baby homes in the country following a new report.**

The Primate of All Ireland, and Archbishop of Armagh, Eamon Martin has welcomed a report by an Irish Commission of Inquiry into Mother and Baby Homes in the country.

### **Report's findings**

The report released on Tuesday found that from the 1920's to the 1990's thousands of infants died in these homes mainly run by the Catholic Church.

It also found an “appalling” mortality rate as a result of harsh living conditions.

The report, which covered 18 homes where pregnant unmarried women were sent, revealed that 9,000 children died – a mortality rate of 15%.

Many children were also taken from their mothers and adopted both in Ireland and overseas.

Irish Prime Minister Micheál Martin was due to make a formal apology on behalf of the State to survivors in parliament yesterday (Wednesday) for what he described as "a dark, difficult and shameful chapter of very recent Irish history."



## Impact on survivors

In his statement, the Archbishop of Armagh, Eamon Martin unreservedly apologized to the survivors and all those, he said, “who are personally impacted by the realities it uncovers.”

He added, “I accept that the Church was clearly part of that culture in which people were frequently stigmatized, judged and rejected.”

“Although it may be distressing,” he said, “it is important that all of us spend time in the coming days reflecting on this Report which touches on the personal story and experience of many families in Ireland.” Above all, the Archbishop stressed, “we must continue to find ways of reaching out to



those whose personal testimonies are central to this Report.”

Archbishop Martin went on to say, “The Commission’s Report helps to further open to the light what was for many years a hidden part of our shared history and it exposes the culture of isolation, secrecy and social ostracizing which faced ‘unmarried mothers’ and their children in this country.”

The Report highlighted that many are still learning about their personal stories and searching for family members. Addressing this point, Archbishop Martin said, “The rights of all survivors to access personal information about themselves should be fully respected and I again urge the State to ensure that any remaining obstacles to information and tracing should be overcome.”

He also appealed for people to come forward who have further information about burial places.

“All burial grounds should be identified and appropriately marked so that the deceased and their families will be recognized and never be forgotten.”

Lessons for future generations

This Report, the Archbishop said, “will hopefully speak not just to our past but will also have lessons for today and for future generations.” He also underlined that “as Church, State and wider society we must ensure together that, in the Ireland of today, all children and their mothers feel wanted, welcomed and loved.”

**Meanwhile, the former Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin has said the church and religious orders involved in Mother and Baby homes should “ask for forgiveness” of survivors.**

He also said that the Taoiseach discussing the church and religious orders contributing towards financial redress for survivors is the “best way forward”.

He said saying sorry was “very easy” but “asking for forgiveness” puts the survivors in charge.

“To beg pardon and to say look, to the survivors, ‘you're in charge’. We have to listen to what they would want for us, as they say, to ask their forgiveness, and to open yourself to the shock of having to do that.

“You can bump into a person on the street and say sorry, and you move on,” he said.

When asked about the church contributing towards financial redress for victims, he said that this is the best way forward.

“I heard the Taoiseach saying that he's going to discuss the matter and I think that's the best way forward,” he said on RTÉ’s Drivetime.

“I think I think that there's going to be an interdepartmental commission. I think that these are better done now in setting out the programme than then trying to come back into it.”

January 14, 2021

The former Archbishop said that it was wrong that the “situation” was allowed to continue within Mother and Baby homes.

“Let's listen to what the survivors have said to the tribunal and listen to that.

“What went wrong within my church that allowed such a situation to continue. Church run institutions should be places where people experience the warm embrace of Jesus Christ, particularly vulnerable people, not harshness, judgmentalism and disrespect.”

He said that “those involved” betrayed vulnerable women.

“Those involved, have to say it very clearly, they betrayed vulnerable women, they betrayed themselves from their calling, and they betrayed the carrying message of Jesus Christ.

“They just have to say that should not have happened. And there's no half way of interpreting reality to try and justify that,” he added.

## **AQE test still on, and 'further clarity' promised by AQE**

The NI Exam body AQE has confirmed it is still planning to hold its single rescheduled transfer test next month — and gave an assurance that “further clarity” will be provided.

January 14, 2021

The exam body continued: “We do understand the frustration of schools, parents and the children around this highly complex matter and give our assurance that further clarity will be provided at the very earliest possible opportunity, following ongoing discussions with our stakeholder partners”.

Earlier the exam body called on the Bishop of Derry to retract his comments that the transfer test process had become “big business”.

Bishop Donal McKeown had warned that financial gain “should not dominate the conversation” around the test process.

AQE — the Association for Quality Education — has



**Connemara**

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Page 7

cancelled three tests due to be held this month, with the PPTC — the assessor for the Catholic sector — also cancelling its exams for this year. However, AQE later announced plans to hold a single rescheduled test on February 27.

AQE charges parents wanting grammar school places for their children £55 to sit the exams. The PPTC does not charge.

**Bishop McKeown told the BBC's Sunday Politics Northern Ireland programme: “AQE would have about 9,000 pupils applying this year. That's half a million pounds coming in to run a business. And let's say you work on the assumption that parents are spending maybe £250 on tutoring [for their children] — there's another £2.5m.**

“We're not just talking about making educational changes — we are talking about a business. When business becomes a major element in educational decisions I think we've lost the point.”

The directors of AQE told BBC NI that Bishop McKeown's comments were “highly defamatory” and that his “statement completely lacked accuracy and was pejorative in tone”. “AQE Limited does not engage in 'business', in the normally accepted meaning of that word. It does not carry on its activities with a view to making a profit.

“It is a company limited by guarantee and so does not have shareholders and hence pays no dividends. The members



of its board of directors are not remunerated and perform their roles voluntarily.

“The fees which it charges to parents do not cover the costs which AQE Limited incurs in producing and administering the Common Entrance Assessment; the shortfall is made up by the schools which use the Common Entrance Assessment.

“In light thereof AQE Limited would call upon the bishop to retract the statement which he made on January 10, 2021, and to issue an appropriate apology to AQE Limited.”

Bishop McKeown said he did not wish to respond to AQE's statement.

## **USA: Reaction of two prominent Republican Episcopalians**

Former Missouri senator John Danforth and former Secretary of State Colin Powell, both Episcopalians, have expressed their revulsion at the insurrection at the Capitol last Wednesday. Both men are or until today were Republicans. Danforth is also a retired priest in the Episcopal Church.

Last week, Danforth told the Kansas City Star that promoting the career of Senator Josh Hawley (R-Missouri) was “the biggest mistake of my life.” Along with Senator Ted Cruz, Hawley led objections to the certification of the election of president-elect Joe Biden. Hawley, Cruz and



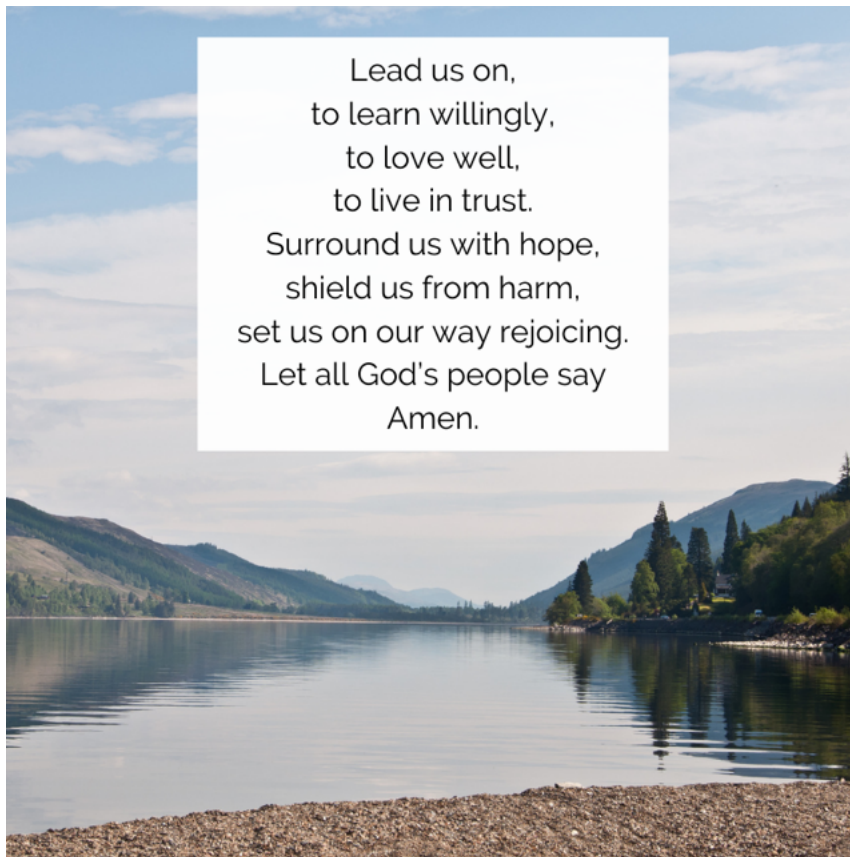
Trump are named most prominently as the political figures inciting the violence of last week.

Former Missouri Sen. John Danforth spent years promoting Josh Hawley as the future of the Republican Party, a “once-in-a-generation” candidate destined to contend for the presidency, perhaps in 2024.

But a day after the riot at the U.S. Capitol left four people dead, Danforth blamed his former protégé for sparking the insurrection.

“I thought he was special. And I did my best to encourage people to support him both for attorney general and later the U.S. Senate and it was the biggest mistake I’ve ever made in my life,” he said Thursday. “I don’t know if he was always like this and good at covering it up or if it happened. I just don’t know.”

Danforth has not cut his ties with the Republican party.



Lead us on,  
to learn willingly,  
to love well,  
to live in trust.  
Surround us with hope,  
shield us from harm,  
set us on our way rejoicing.  
Let all God's people say  
Amen.

But Colin Powell on Sunday said he no longer considers himself a Republican. Republicans, he said, support Trump's behaviour.

"They did, and that's why I can no longer call myself a fellow Republican. I'm not a fellow of

anything right now. I'm just a citizen who has voted Republican, voted Democrat throughout my entire career. And right now I'm just watching my country and not concerned with parties," he told CNN's Fareed Zakaria on "GPS."

The first Black secretary of state and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has long criticised Trump and voted for President-elect Joe Biden in the 2020 election after voting against Trump in 2016. He has criticised Republicans for not condemning Trump in the past and admonished them on Sunday for putting political interests ahead of the interests of Americans.

"They should have known better, but they were so taken by their political standing and how none of them wanted to put themselves at political risk. They would not stand up and tell



January 14, 2021

the truth or stand up and criticise him or criticise others,” Powell told Zakaria. “And that’s what we need. We need people who will speak the truth, who remember that they are here for our fellow citizens. They are here for our country. They are not here simply to be re-elected again.”

## The Long Read



**Bethany Home: ‘No exception’ to high rates of infant mortality in Protestant-run institution.**

**Jack Horgan-Jones writes in The Irish Times**

Matron believed children of unmarried mothers ‘tended to be weak and prone to illness’, commission finds

Across 49 years, the Protestant-run Bethany Home admitted 1,584 women and 1,376 children.





The deaths of five women and 262 children are associated with the institution, with the infant mortality rate in 1943 running at 62.1 per cent. Of the child deaths, 61 per cent occurred between 1937 and 1947.

Burial records were located for 235 Bethany children, with all but four buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery in Harold's Cross, Dublin.

The commission found that Bethany was “no exception” to the high rates of infant mortality seen in all mother and baby homes until the late 1940s. Women admitted aged from 13 to 62 years, with the highest numbers admitted in the 1930s and 1940s.

January 14, 2021

First located at Blackhall Place before relocating to Orwell Road in 1933, Bethany Home was formed after the closure of two Protestant charities - the Dublin Midnight Mission and Female Refuge, and the Dublin Prison Gate Mission.

[[] <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/bethany-home-no-exception-to-high-rates-of-infant-mortality-in-protestant-run-institution-1.4456513> ]

## **Opinion - The Tories have betrayed Northern Ireland - Lady Kate Hoey**

**The Tories have betrayed Northern Ireland.**

**Step by step, the Province is moving further away from the rest of the UK thanks to the Brexit deal, Lady Kate Hoey writes in the Daily Telegraph**

Is it time for the Conservative and Unionist Party to admit that the “and Unionist” no longer applies? Northern Ireland has been abandoned post-Brexit. The Secretary of State, Brandon Lewis, who has repeatedly stated that there is no trade border down the Irish Sea, puts in mind the joke about the Emperor with no clothes. Disappointment among Unionists at the involvement of Michael Gove, once seen as the standard bearer for friends of the Union, is turning to anger. It is apparent that he has not guarded their interests. The constitutional position of Northern Ireland has changed despite not a single citizen having a say.

The 44 per cent of people in Northern Ireland who voted for Brexit voted for the UK to leave, as it stated on the ballot paper, not for some of the UK to leave and certainly not to find the Province left to the diktats of Brussels. Even among Remainers, most did not want economic and societal barriers within their own country: the UK. Bluntly, the Northern Ireland Protocol signed as part of the Withdrawal Agreement has shown that, when it suits the Government, Northern Ireland can be sacrificed.

Under Annex 2 of the Protocol, Northern Ireland is bound to more than 300 EU directives and regulations that can be changed by the Commission at any time without anyone in Northern Ireland having any say. The only government with a right to influence these directives is the Irish Republic as an EU member.

Then we have the dire situation at the ports. There is a major economic barrier in the Irish Sea which each day sees more lorries being held up as they have the wrong documents. Many Britain-based firms are refusing to send goods to Northern Ireland at all because of the paperwork and expense. So it is really becoming a “place apart”.

Then there are the extra rules being exposed every day. At the weekend, it was announced that anyone moving home from, say, London to Belfast will have to have a special customs permit before the removal company can do the job, and anyone bringing in more than 10,000 euros will have to declare it.

Dogs are included on the list of animals that will require a rabies injection before being allowed into Northern Ireland



from Great Britain. Given that puppies cannot get these vaccinations until they are 12 weeks old and then cannot travel for 21 days, they can't be transferred to Northern Ireland until they are at least 15 weeks old.

This puts the volunteer puppy-raisers for Guide Dogs in an impossible position because these puppies are normally placed in homes from eight weeks old. A pet passport will be required for all dogs coming into Northern Ireland, even if their owner is on holiday.

The second-hand car market is badly hit. Cars purchased in England by dealers will be liable for tax on the whole price rather than just the profit when sold. Meanwhile, the ban on live animal exports will not apply to Northern Ireland. Duty free will be allowed when flying from Dublin to London, but not from Belfast to Spain.



These are just a few examples of the way, drip by drip, Northern Ireland is being separated from the rest of the UK. This is happening under a Conservative and Unionist government.

Many were fearful of a Corbyn-led government, citing his support for the IRA. Yet there is no way he would have dared countenance this betrayal. If he had tried, there would have been no louder howls of outrage than from a Tory opposition. Yet a Tory government caved in to an Irish government which, in turn, was loyal to the EU. A border between Northern Ireland and a foreign country – the Republic of Ireland – was unthinkable, but it was acceptable to put one between the Province and Great Britain.

I would like to think the Prime Minister did not understand that what he had agreed in 2019 was a betrayal of Northern Ireland's place in the UK. But he now has to admit he got it wrong. Article 16 of the Protocol stipulates that if it leads "to serious economic, societal or environmental difficulties that are liable to persist, or to diversion of trade, the EU or UK may unilaterally take appropriate safeguard measures".

Every Tory should ask themselves: what has a law-abiding Northern Ireland citizen done to deserve being treated differently from their fellow citizens in the rest of the country? Why did years of terrorist violence against them, and the threat of its return, matter more than their votes? Why is the Conservative and Unionist Party only Unionist when it is in opposition?

Follow Kate Hoey on Twitter @CatharineHoey; read more at [telegraph.co.uk/opinion](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion)

## News briefs

**Archbishop's tribute to Bishop Roy Warke** - The Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin, Bishop of Glendalough, and Primate of Ireland, has paid tribute to the Rt Revd Roy Warke, formerly Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross who died earlier this week. Archbishop Jackson said - 'The death this morning of Bishop Roy Warke, so soon after the death of his wife Mrs Eileen Warke, is a source of great sadness to everyone who knew them. Bishop Warke served in the Diocese of Down and Dromore, in the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough, and as bishop in the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross. In retirement, he and Eileen lived happily in Naas, County Kildare, for many years, mid-way between their daughters Jane and Ruth. We remember with gratitude everything that Bishop Warke gave with such generosity of spirit to the life of the Church of God and of the Church of Ireland. We mourn his loss along with all members of his family.'

**Arklow Institution** - The Service of Institution of the Revd Arthur Barrett as Incumbent of Arklow, Inch and Kilbride will take place in St Saviour's Church, Arklow, on Friday January 15 2021 at 7.30pm.

Due to pandemic restrictions, attendance at the service will be strictly limited. It will be livestreamed by East Coast Video Productions on their Facebook page here:  
[www.facebook.com/eastcoastvideo](https://www.facebook.com/eastcoastvideo)



The service will be conducted by the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, and the sermon will be delivered remotely by the Very Revd Arfon Williams, Dean of Elphin and Ardagh.

**Service from St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick** - RTÉ will broadcast a Service led by the Very Revd Niall Sloane, Dean of Limerick, on Sunday, 24th January, at 2.15pm on the RTÉ News Channel. The preacher will be the Dean's Vicar, the Revd Bernie Daly.

**Three arrested for Covid-19 breach in Waterford while 'broadcasting Mass'** - Three men were arrested on Sunday afternoon for breaching Covid guidelines while "broadcasting Mass" outside the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity in Waterford City.

January 14, 2021

Gardaí were patrolling the area of Barronstrand Street when they observed a vehicle parked a distance away from four males standing together outside the church.

According to gardaí, it was believed that the men had travelled over 5km without a reasonable excuse.

They had in their possession two amplifiers and appeared to be broadcasting Mass.

Gardaí approached the men and attempted to explain that they were in breach of the Covid-19 guidelines.

One of the men complied with gardaí and gave his details. He was warned and given a direction.

However, three other men present refused to provide their names and addresses despite the information being formally demanded of them.

They also could not give a reasonable explanation as to why they were gathering on the street so they were arrested and conveyed to Waterford Garda Station.

Their details were soon confirmed and after being charged with section 41 of the Health Act 1947, they were released from custody with files to be forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Report courtesy the Orosh Examiner January 11, 2021



## Pointers for prayer

Prolonged restrictions and times of isolation can lead to a loss of confidence in venturing out and interacting with others. We pray for all who are experiencing this and ask God to help us gently reach out with encouragement and understanding.

We pray for those who have lost jobs in the last months and are now seeking new employment. May their confidence in their abilities stay strong and may unexpected doors open for them to new opportunities for work.

The COVID19 pandemic has wreaked havoc in the lives and livelihoods of so many. We pray today for God to give us the means to help rebuild hope and confidence in people, through practical help as well as emotional and spiritual support.

Today we pray for the USA. We pray for stable democracy and an end to divisions in the USA as a new president is inaugurated this month.

Today we pray for teachers and students. As the new term starts, schools have faced a lack of clarity over reopening which has made it more difficult to plan appropriate education for students and has left teachers and support staff without clear guidance.

Today we pray for disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. As Iran have accelerated their nuclear programme and with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

about to come into force, we pray for constructive relationships between nations.

Today we pray for COP26. The global climate conference, rescheduled from 2020, will be taking place in Glasgow in 2021. We pray for ambition and action from world leaders on climate change, and pray that those already affected by climate chaos would be kept safe.

## Speaking to the Soul

The Lord had said to Abram, “Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you.”

Genesis 12:1 NLT

I wonder what your life looks like at the moment. I would guess that for many of us there are plenty of aspects of our lives that suit us really well. Life isn’t perfect, and we can easily come up with some suggested improvements, but the thought of it all changing completely would come as quite a shock. Well, if that’s true for us, imagine how much greater the challenge would have been for Abram. We would be able to reach for our computers and find out information about the wider world, but not Abram! God was taking him away from the security of his home and leading him on the most incredible adventure into a land of which he knew nothing.

And there’s another interesting detail. Abram is 75. There’s nothing wrong with being 75 but most people would

consider that it is hardly the time of life when you are expecting to go on a daring adventure! One would assume that that would be left to much younger people. But that's not how God works. Living the life of faith is one long adventure and, whatever your age, you need to be ready for change because that's how God works.

The writer to the Hebrews uses the example of Abram as an illustration of faith. He reflects that Abram went out "not knowing where he was going". By any normal standard that sounds extremely foolish. Leaving home without having a clue about the destination sounds ridiculous. But Abram was a man of faith and he knew that following God's will was the wisest possible course of action. Abram was willing to head out into the unknown together with his family and cattle for the simple reason that he trusted God. And the truth is that thousands of years later God works in exactly the same way today. He may ask you to do something which appears completely crazy by human standards, but if he is truly calling you then it will always be the best way.

## QUESTION

Are you willing to go on an adventure with God?

## PRAYER

Loving Father, thank you that you still call people to live by faith today. Help me to be willing to go on an adventure with you. Amen.



