



**Image of the Day - Washington Cathedral  
Remembrance of covid victims, eve of Inauguration**



## **Double honour for Clogher Parish musician**

**Catherine Irwin, Organist and Director of Music at Rossary Parish in Clogher Diocese has received two honours recently.**

In the New Year Honours Catherine was awarded an MBE for her services to Girl Guiding, and more recently she has been appointed High Sheriff for Co Fermanagh for 2021.

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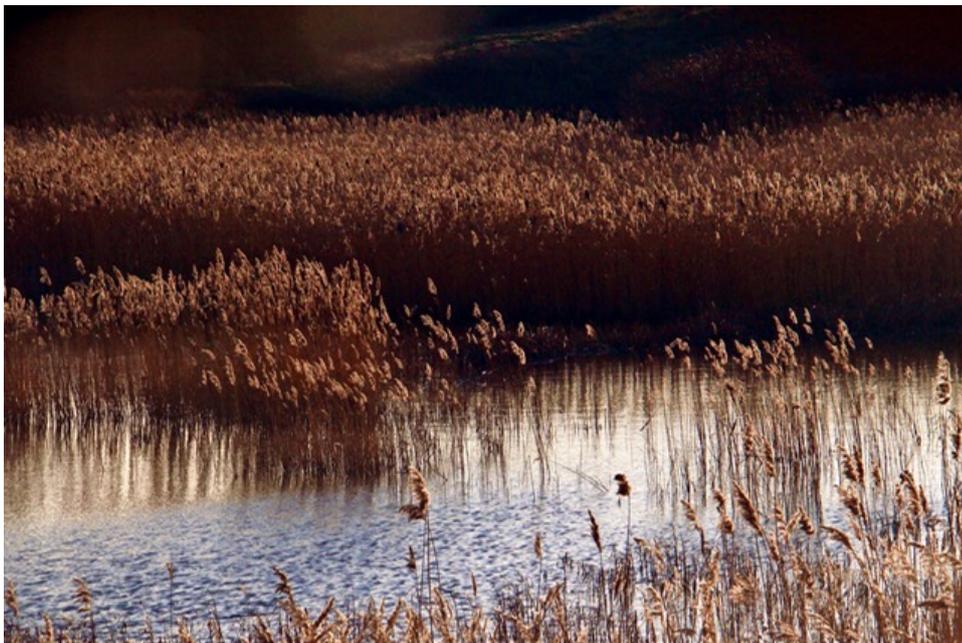
Many will know of Catherine's extensive and distinguished voluntary work with Girl Guiding in Northern Ireland and also in recent years as Chair of the Trustees of Girl Guiding in London. Her friends in Rossary are delighted for her and extended their congratulations and best wishes for what should be an exciting year.

## **Monsignor Ambrose Macaulay Memorial Lecture**

**The Ambrose Macaulay Memorial Lecture will take place on Zoom on Tuesday 2nd February, at 7pm**

The topic is "Partition and the Creation of the Northern Ireland State 1912-22"

The well-known historian and broadcaster, Dr Eamon Phoenix, will deliver a Memorial Lecture to honour the life and learning of priest, university chaplain and church historian, Monsignor Ambrose Macaulay. The Lecture will be



delivered in collaboration with Anne Donnelly of NI Screen and is co-hosted by the Catholic Chaplaincy at Queen's University and St

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Brigid's Parish Belfast. This online event will take place on Tuesday 2nd February, at 7pm.

To attend, email [qubcc@downandconnor.org](mailto:qubcc@downandconnor.org) for Zoom details.

## **Albert Smallwood's life of service to help the poor**

**Albert Smallwoods knew poverty and hardship as a child. His father was often unable to work due to illness, so the family had to scrape by on just a few pounds a week.**

In the years since then, Albert has raised hundreds of thousands to end poverty and save lives in the world's poorest countries. Now aged 83, he has pledged to leave a gift in his Will to Christian Aid, reports the Derry Journal.

The Derry man is a lifelong humanitarian, a leading Church of Ireland layman and a stalwart supporter of Christian Aid. His life of service to his church and to more than 40 charities was recognised with the award of an MBE. In fact, Albert has received so many plaudits and awards that his wife has dedicated an entire bedroom of their home to display them. But his early years were tough:

“My father, Joseph drove a horse and cart, delivering goods from the railway station to shops and offices. His asthma meant that he couldn't work for many months at a time and often we wouldn't even have the money to buy coal. My mother, Elizabeth looked after the home and family. She

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was very house proud. But she suffered illness for many years and died when she was just 53. I was the third of four children – I'm the only one left.

“We lived in a small house on the Dungiven Road without electricity or running water. There was no bathroom, just an outside toilet. I was born two years before the outbreak of the Second World War and I remember the blackouts and the food rationing. An air-raid shelter was built immediately outside our front door, so close that it blocked our light and we lived in near-darkness. Times were hard then.”

Albert began his career as an apprentice engineer at the Londonderry Electric Light Station aged 15, before moving to Coolkeeragh Power Station where he was engineer-in-charge from 1970 until his early retirement in 1994. But it was his decades of unpaid work for the Church of Ireland, Christian Aid and dozens of other charities that earned him an MBE in 1992 and saw him named 'Pensioner of the Year' a decade later. He has also been made a Knight of the Order of St John and in 2005, he was among eight people from Northern Ireland selected to attend a special reception at Buckingham Palace to mark UK Year of the Volunteer.

A member of Glendermott Church of Ireland near Altnagelvin Hospital, Albert recently completed 50 years' service in a variety of positions in his parish. His Christian faith and his compassion for those living in extreme poverty led him to become involved with Bishops' Appeal – the Church of Ireland's world development committee which raises funds to support the work of Christian Aid and other agencies. For 40 years, he sat on the board of Bishops' Appeal, raising funds throughout the Derry and Raphoe



**Albert and his wife Vivian, seated. Back row, l-r, son-in-law Ray Davies and daughter Nicola; daughter Gillian and son-in-law Stuart Tanfield. Front row l-r, grandchildren Megan (8), Erin (6), Charlotte (11) and Matthew (9).**

diocese and travelling by train to board meetings in Dublin. And he's proud of his staying power:

During those years, Albert persuaded churches in the Derry and Raphoe diocese to support the Bishops' Appeal:

"I used to ring them up and make a nuisance of myself. By the time I'd finished, 100% of the churches were contributing to Bishops' Appeal."

He recalls two fundraising campaigns in particular: “We raised £60,000 for projects in Kenya but then we set ourselves a target to raise £100,000 to buy mosquito nets for Nigeria. I doubted we would ever reach that target because the £60,000 for Kenya had been a real struggle but [former Bishop of Derry and Raphoe] Ken Good told me to have faith. In fact, we raised £117,000. Those mosquito nets help to prevent malaria and saved countless lives. I had faith.”

Between 1990 and 1998, Albert also helped to govern Christian Aid Ireland, serving the maximum eight-year term on its board. In 2007, he visited Christian Aid projects in India, an experience that has stayed with him since: “I couldn’t believe the poverty. There were no toilets, no



## **Southwell Minster**

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running water. Children without clothes or food. Women carrying basins of cement on their heads. You have to see the conditions there to believe them. It was really shocking.”

On his return home, Albert spoke in churches throughout the Derry and Raphoe diocese and gave interviews to radio stations and newspapers, inspiring others to support Christian Aid’s work.

So, why has he decided to leave a gift in his Will to Christian Aid? “I want to carry on my life’s work after I’m gone.”

Albert has been married to Vivian since 1974. The couple have two daughters, Gillian and Nicola and four grandchildren. What do his family think about his decision to leave a gift in his Will? “They’re all for it”, he says simply. And then unprompted, he offers this reflection:

“I’ve really enjoyed my life. I’m grateful because when I was 19, I had rheumatic fever and a heart murmur. My GP said he doubted I would see 50. I’m now in my 80s, so I feel very blessed.”

Deborah Doherty, Christian Aid Ireland’s former Head of Supporter Engagement knows Albert well: “He is a man of great integrity and honesty, and a man of his word.

“If he agreed to take on a role, he would complete it to the very best of his ability. There was no such thing as attending two meetings out of four; Albert would attend every meeting, even during the Troubles and despite having to travel home late at night - whether or not there was snow on the Glenshane Pass. I never once saw him lose his temper or

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raise his voice. He is a very reliable person and a very generous person.”

But Albert saves his last words for his wife of 46 years: “I want to acknowledge that the work I’ve done to support charities and my church wouldn’t have been possible without the kindness and support of my wife, Vivian. She’s been my rock throughout and to her I express my heartfelt thanks.”

Courtesy - The Derry Journal 18.01.2021

## **Tributes paid to Anglican Communion’s Green bishop**

**The Rt. Rev. Ellinah Wamukoya, who as the VI Bishop of Swaziland was the first woman to be consecrated as an Anglican bishop in Africa, died on January 19 from COVID-19. She was 69**

Her death was announced by Archbishop Thabo Makgoba of Cape Town, Primate of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

Bishop Ellinah, known around the world for her advocacy on environmental issues, was admitted to hospital late last week and put on Oxygen therapy.

The Dean of Clogher, the Very Revd Kenneth Hall, has expressed his shock and sadness following the news of the death of the Right Revd Ellinah Wamukoya, the Bishop of the Diocese of Swaziland.

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Bishop Ellinah was the first female Bishop elected in the Anglican Church in South Africa and was the first female bishop to preach in the Diocese of Clogher during her visit to St Macartin's Cathedral, Enniskillen, in January 2015.

Dean Hall has extended his deepest and heartfelt sympathy to her family and to the Diocese of Swaziland in the small Southern African country which was renamed eSwatini in 2018.

Parishes in Clogher Diocese have had strong links with Swaziland with both Enniskillen Cathedral Parish and Rossorry Parish supporting the work of the charity United Society, which had a special interest in mission work in Swaziland. Bishop Ellinah's visit to Ireland was hosted by the charity.

"In her Diocese, the Province of Southern Africa and the Anglican Communion, Bishop Ellinah was widely known for her advocacy of the integrity of creation," said Archbishop Thabo Makgoba, primate of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa.

"She was truly the Green Bishop of the Anglican Communion, leading her young people and the diocese into dedicating themselves to address climate change as a Christian service," said the Rt. Rev. Alan Scarfe, Bishop of Iowa, which has a companion relationship with the Diocese of Swaziland. "Other ministry goals that she steadfastly sought to hold the diocese to during her time included gender equality, the care for orphans, the most vulnerable among the Swazi population, and the encouragement of the diocese's capacity to develop its own economic resources,



such as expanding agriculture, or building hostels for students.”

Bishop Wamukoya was elected in 2012 as Bishop of Swaziland in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, 20 years after the province first allowed women to become priests. The Diocese of Swaziland encompasses the country that has been known as Eswatini since changing its name in 2018. Eswatini is a bit

larger than the state of Connecticut, and is bordered on three sides by South Africa and by Mozambique on the east.

In 2016, the BBC named Bishop Wamukoya one of the 100 most influential and inspirational women in the world.

## **Takeaway Christmas Lunch success in Derryvolgie**

**Pandemic restrictions may have made it impossible for Derryvolgie Parish to put on its traditional sit down Christmas lunch in St Columba’s Church in December.**

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But Derryvolgie's hospitality team, led by Margaret and Lynn Perry, came up with an innovative alternative plan. Having got together an army of helpers,



preparations were soon underway to provide a Takeaway Christmas Lunch. Jobs were allocated and a couple of days were spent in preparing turkeys, hams, potatoes, desserts and all the other trimmings.

It was a great encouragement when the take-up rate of people receiving a lunch was up some 50 per cent on recent years.

The rector, the Rev James Boyd, said: “In the present situation, churches need to be creative in how they set about serving their members. In a very practical way, the Takeaway Lunch illustrated people prepared to use their skills in cooking, packaging, and making deliveries, all in aid of a section of our parishioners and the wider community.”

He added that a ‘great sense of camaraderie’ made the Christmas Takeaway the success it was.

## **Trailblazer Eileen reflects on her service to the Church of Ireland**

**Few Douglas people had any inkling of the Rev. Eileen Cremin's trail-blazing history when she took up a position as Curate Assistant in the local Church of Ireland Parish in 2001.**

There were so few black people around Douglas that Eileen got used to being stared at. Little did anyone realise that she had made history by becoming the first ever British black woman to be ordained a Deacon in the Church of England in 1988, Mary Hassett writes in EchoLive.ie

“There was a lot of media coverage when I was ordained a Deacon.

"When I was ordained a priest in 1994 I even had a French film crew follow me from my home in Hackney in East London to St Paul's Cathedral”, said Eileen, who lives in Kildorrery, North Cork.

If Eileen had been a male Deacon it would have just taken a further year to be ordained a priest. It took six years and a change in Church of England legislation before Eileen could be ordained.

The first ordination of women in the Church of England took place in March, 1994, in Bristol. London ordained its first women priests on April 16/17, 1994, in St Paul's Cathedral.



Eileen was one of only two black women to be ordained over the two days.

When she moved to Douglas after ministering in the London Diocese, Eileen had great fun explaining to people how a black woman from London of Caribbean descent could have a name that was pure Cork.

It turns out that Eileen was named after an Irish friend of her Antiguan-born mother. Her surname changed from Lake to Cremin when she married her husband Tom, who grew up on Monastery Road near St Francis College in Rochestown.

“The people in the Douglas Union of Parishes were lovely. I still miss them even now,” Eileen admits.

She and Tom moved into the Rectory in Fermoy in 2006 when she was appointed Rector of one of the largest group of parishes in the county. Eileen was conscious of being one

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of the first black people in Fermoy but the town gradually became more multi-cultural.

“I had to get used to milking times and small town living,” laughs Eileen.

Meeting people and ministering to their spiritual needs brought her great fulfillment. Sadly, Eileen had to retire prematurely as Rector in 2018 due to ongoing back problems which leave her in a lot of pain.

Tom recently retired from his position as Head of the Emergency Shelter and Housing Services with Cork Simon Community.

Eileen is delighted that she and Tom will now have more time to spend together in their Kildorrery home. You can hear the smile in her voice every time she talks about her beloved husband. They met when Eileen was working as a Church of England Chaplain in the Hackney Hospital where she was born. At the time Tom was a Catholic priest who did chaplaincy work in the hospital, visiting patients with mental health difficulties. Tom subsequently left the priesthood and a relationship blossomed between the couple which led to their marriage in 1997.

Tom went on to work with the mental health charity Mind in Camden while Eileen was involved in Parish ministry in Kilburn.

Eileen and Tom always enjoyed their frequent trips to Ireland. In addition, Tom was anxious to spend more time with his mother following his father's death. When Eileen



**Rev. Eileen Cremin celebrating her ordination as a Church of England priest in 1994.**

successfully applied for the job of Curate Assistant in Douglas Parish, the time seemed right to make the move.

“When I came here I started to feel a great affinity with Irish people in terms of colonization.

"I hadn't realised that the British had come in and taken over in Ireland the same way they had done in Antigua and across the Caribbean. It makes it feel a bit awkward sometimes that I'm British," Eileen acknowledges.

Although Eileen had a generally positive experience growing up in Hackney, once when she was aged eight a group of white children called her the N-word and set their dog on her.

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“My Antiguan-born parents felt powerless when I told them about it. They had sort of resigned themselves to it, that this was what happens,” Eileen points out.

From a young age, she had wanted to be a doctor. Sadly, Eileen’s mother, Laurel, died when she was only 17. Eileen became the breadwinner in the house as her father, Basil, was in poor health.

“My vocation started from working with young people on a voluntary basis. I got confirmed when I was aged 20 as I wasn’t interested in doing so at 13. The idea of the vocation came gradually,” says Eileen.

“I have come full circle really, from wanting to be a doctor to ending up as a priest caring for people in spiritual ways.”

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Curtesy of EchoLive.ie, 20/01/2021

## **Church of England will push firms to prioritise diversity**

**The Church of England has threatened to disrupt the shareholder meetings of companies it funds if they fail to increase the ethnic diversity of their leadership teams.**

Letters will start going out next month listing its demands to some companies in the fund's investment portfolio, according to The Guardian.

The Church Commissioners was founded in 1948 and exists to "support the work and mission" of the Church of England, according to its website. It is accountable to Parliament, the General Synod and the Charity Commission.

"We manage an £8.7 billion investment fund in a responsible and ethical way, using the money we make from our investments to contribute towards the cost of mission projects, dioceses in low-income areas, bishops, cathedrals, and pensions," it states.

In 2019, the commissioners gave £117.6 million to the Church of England.

Bess Joffe, the commissioners' new head of responsible management, told The Guardian the fund would cast protest votes at annual shareholder meetings if companies did not comply with its demands. "I think you'll see some vote impact as early as 2021. But of course it's not going to be taking companies off guard – we will be communicating our expectations in the next four to six weeks," she said.

The commissioners previously voted against companies which had poor environmental policies and no female board members, including Prudential's board, because of its "unacceptably low" number of female members.

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Companies among the fund's investments include Facebook, Tesco and pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca, as well as London's Hyde Park Estate.

Ms Joffe said: "Ethnic diversity has not been a priority in any real way for companies. They have to play their part in improving the lives of people who have been disenfranchised and left behind and who are going to suffer [disproportionately] as a result of Covid."

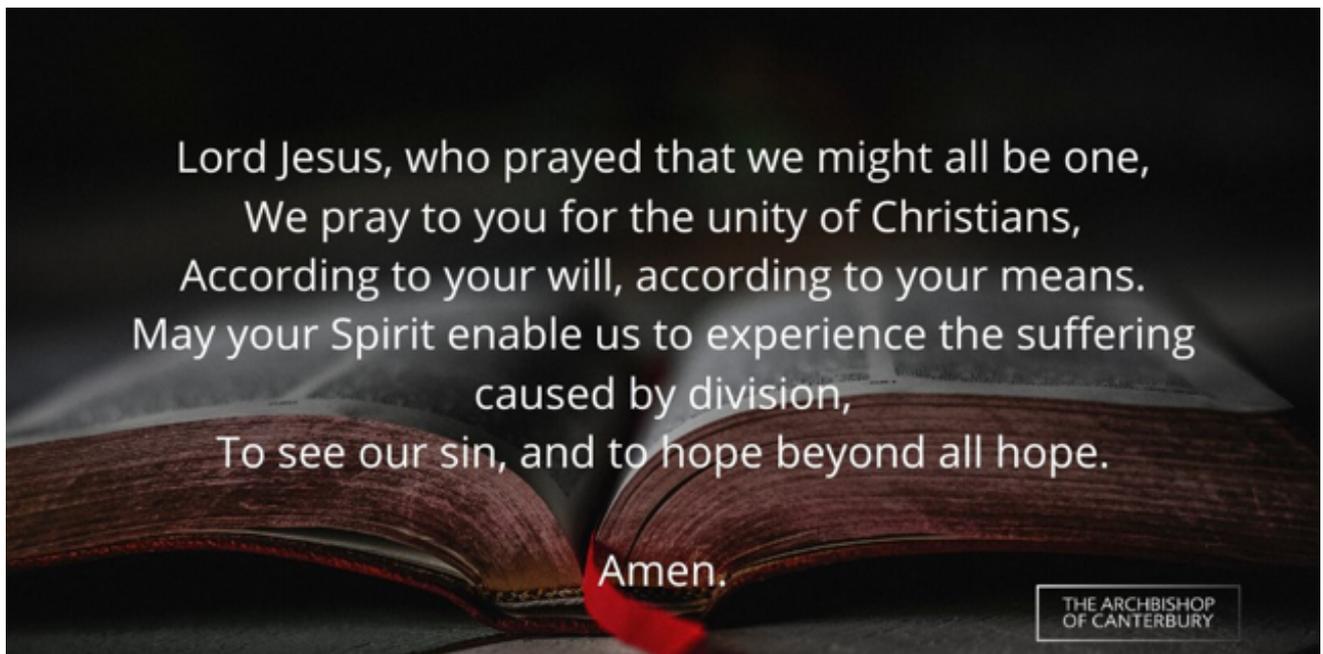
She added that there was a desire for boards of directors, management teams and "pipelines of talent" to "look like the communities in which they exist".

Ms Joffe joined the commissioners in August 2020 after previously holding positions at Lloyds Banking Group and Goldman Sachs.

Upon joining the group, she said: "I am proud to be joining the Church Commissioners at this exciting time. Real change is starting to be seen thanks to the efforts of responsible investors and I am pleased to be joining a proactive organisation which recognises the challenges facing our world."

## **Pointers for prayer**

In this week of prayer for Christian Unity with its theme of "abiding in Christ" we're more aware than ever of the importance of working together to serve the world. We pray for God to unite us together in his love.



Let's remember and thank God today for friends and connections with different church traditions, and pray that we'll fully embrace and enjoy the richness of diversity that we all bring to worship and service.

In this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we pray all Christians may come together in prayer and action against all injustice and oppression so we may bring hope and healing to our world

We pray today for God's help as we unite across denominations to bring hope and practical care to those in need, and ask that any differences and misunderstandings will be overcome through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Today we pray for Uganda. Last week, elections were held after dozens of people were killed in the run up to voting day, and violence has been at an unprecedented level. We pray for stability in Uganda and safety for those taking part in democratic processes

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Today we pray for those facing food insecurity globally. Coronavirus, conflict and cuts to UN funding are increasing the risks of food insecurity and malnutrition in 2021, in particular in South Sudan.

An increase in domestic abuse has been an unwanted consequence of the global pandemic. We pray for all who have suffered that they will have help to rebuild their confidence in their self-worth and practical ways to move forward in life.

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.

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 week.

## **Speaking to the Soul**

“I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

Genesis 12:2-3 NLT

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Never forget this! God is in the business of blessing people! That's what he loves to do and that's what Abram was just about to discover. At a time of life when most people would be seeking to take things more slowly, God calls him to be the father of a nation. Nothing suggests that this is remotely likely. One practical problem was that Abram and his wife Sarai had no children, but with God around that wasn't going to be a major difficulty.

In life we face many challenges but God doesn't want them to have the last word. Amidst the bumps and difficulties of life God's desire is to bless us so that, in turn, we can bless other people. I love seeing that in action. I can think of many friends over the years who have had to face significant problems in life. I think of friends like Richard, Sandra and Tim all of whom had severe life limiting disabilities. They could have spent their lives moaning about the challenges that they had to face every single day. But instead they chose to thank God for his blessings and then generously to pass them on to others.

Abram and Sarai could easily have reflected on their age and childlessness and spent the rest of their lives stuck at home being miserable. But instead they chose to trust God and head off on an incredible adventure in which God's amazing words of blessing would come true. Whatever you do today remember that before anything else God wants to bless you and help you to be a blessing.

## QUESTION

In what ways has God blessed your life, and in what ways can you pass on his blessing?

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## PRAYER

Dear Lord, help me to become increasingly generous in passing on your blessings to others. Amen.

