

# Church News Ireland

---



**Image of the day – Open concern by Rory**

## **Image for today - Open concern by Rory**

### **News -**

Bishop of Missouri visits Cork, Cloyne and Ross  
Special Day – and a first - at the Presbyterian Church's  
Union College  
Archbishop of York attacks assisted dying Bill, insisting  
'authority over death belongs to God alone'

### **Education -**

Principal who guided Enniskillen High School in aftermath of  
the town's war memorial bombing

### **Cathedral Calls -**

The Limerick-Killaloe Camino  
St Peter's Cathedral summer singing school

### **Clergy and ministry -**

Rector for Arklow, Inch and Kilbride  
Down and Connor seek Youth Minister for Duneane, Antrim  
and Randalstown

### **Events -**

Causeway Speciality Market Coleraine today  
Introducing Hearty Hike  
AWARE NI River Rush Raft Race  
Get freezing for a reason  
Archdiocese of Dublin - Pilgrim Pockets of Hope

### **Heritage -**

The 107th Brigade

### **Speaking to the soul -**

Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

## Image of the day

### Open concern by Rory

Golf star Rory McIlroy has stepped in to cover the funeral expenses and provide compensation for the emotional and financial damages to the victims' family in the recent central Texas flash floods.

## News

### Bishop of Missouri visits Cork, Cloyne and Ross





**The Right Rev. Dr Deon K. Johnson, Bishop of Missouri arrived in the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross last Wednesday to spend part of his sabbatical in Schull, County Cork where, as guests of the Diocese, he will continue to write his book.**

On Thursday, 10th July 2025, Bishop Johnson was welcomed by members of the Diocese, clergy and laity, for lunch at Garryduff Sports Centre, and he later gave a talk about his work in the Diocese of Missouri.

Bishop and Mrs Colton met the Bishop at Lambeth 2022 where, as guests of the Archbishop of Canterbury at lunch at Lambeth Palace, they found they were seated together. They kept in touch and met up in St Louis, Missouri later that year.

July 14, 2025

Bishop Colton said: “Bishop Deon had so many insights and practical experience of parish renewal and growth, particularly in the area of children and family ministry which I was also encouraging Cork, Cloyne and Ross to focus on, that I said to him 'you must come over and talk to us about these things.' I am thrilled he did come and spoke to us in such an inspirational and challenging way.”



Originally from a small village on the Caribbean Island of Barbados, Deon Kevin Johnson was consecrated as the 11th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri on June 13, 2020, at Christ Church Cathedral in St. Louis. The Episcopal Diocese of Missouri is an inclusive community of faith, made up of nearly 10,000 people in 41+ churches and missions in eastern and central Missouri, a Diocese similar in population size to Cork, Cloyne and Ross.

On Sunday, 13th July, Bishop Deon preached at Compline at St Brendan the Navigator, Crookhaven.



## Special Day – and a first - at the Presbyterian Church's Union College

**As students celebrate their achievements with family and friends at various summer graduation ceremonies this month, along with Queen's University, Belfast, Ulster University, and many across the island, Union Theological College (UTC) also acknowledged the achievements of its students.**

For the first time, however, this also included those graduating with the new BA (Hons) in Theology.

The Graduation Service took place at Fitzroy Presbyterian Church a short distance from the College, at the heart of Belfast's Queen's Quarter. Along with the 11 students graduating with their BA degree in Theology, a further 17

postgraduates received their Master of Arts in Theology, Master of Divinity and a Master of Theology. A Postgraduate Diploma in Reformed Theology was also awarded.

For over 170 years the College has been providing theological education and equipping ministers for the Christian church. As an educational institution at the heart of the work and witness of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) it is also PCI's principal body for pre-ordination training of its ministers.

While many students come to Union to train for a specific form of ministry or mission, many come with no vocational aspirations, wanting to study theology out of academic interest, or to deepen their faith. The student body itself is made up of men and women from across the UK, Ireland, Europe, and America – though not exclusively.

Speaking after the graduation ceremony, Reverend Professor Michael McClenahan, who is Principal of Union Theological College, said that it was a special day. "The Graduation Service is the highlight of the academic year for students, Faculty and staff at the College. It is also a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the commitment and academic achievements of our undergraduate and postgraduate students, and at the same time, an important opportunity to give thanks to God for his faithfulness to our college community," Professor McClenahan said.

"This year's graduation service marked a number of significant milestones for our College and demonstrated the growing breadth and range of courses that we offer at undergraduate and postgraduate level. This is why we



**Rev Professor Michael McClenahan (left), Principal of Union Theological College in Belfast with Professor Anthony McClaran (right), Vice Chancellor of St Mary's University, Twickenham after this summer's College graduation ceremony, which included the colleges first cohort who graduated in a BA (Hons) in Theology, which is validated and awarded by St Mary's.**

offered specific thanks to God for the ongoing development of our undergraduate BA (Hons) pathway, as we celebrated the first graduating cohort from our collaboration with St Mary's University, Twickenham, in London. It was a genuine pleasure to have their Vice Chancellor, Professor Anthony McClaran, with us to present the awards."

With initial plans having been knocked back by the Covid pandemic, the first graduating cohort for the BA in Theology didn't begin their studies until the autumn of 2022. The course itself is designed and taught by the College, while validated and awarded by St Mary's. In his address Professor McClenahan reminded those graduating that the College had been in the business of undergraduate theological education since the 1920s, but thanked St Mary's for the 'thoroughly professional way' that staff had worked with the College "to develop a programme that is appropriate for a Reformed theological institution that is seeking to engaged faithfully and critically with the Christian intellectual tradition and the culture in which we find ourselves today."

Congratulating those specifically graduating with the BA in Theology, Professor McClenahan said, "You joined us in 2022 as the first cohort on a new programme. No one had gone before you, no one had said they liked the modules, no one had ever graduated and no one had ever been employed a result of studying on this degree pathway. You and your parents trusted us and we want to say thank you. You were and are the answer to our prayers."

Also speaking at the Graduation Service, St Mary's Vice Chancellor, Professor Anthony McClaran said that the

graduation was a ‘significant milestone’ and how they were “...the pioneering cohort, the first fruits of a much-valued collaboration between St Mary’s and Union Theological College.”

The Vice Chancellor continued, “The launch of our partnership in 2022 reflected a shared commitment to Christian values in higher education and the recognition of the place of faith in scholarship. As a Catholic university, St Mary’s is committed to reaching out to the wider Christian community and we are proud to partner with Union Theological College...”

This year also marked another ‘significant milestone’ with the first larger cohort to graduate from Union’s MA in Theology. This has been offered in collaboration with The BibleMesh Institute, which has seen considerable development and growth at the College, with 14 graduating with the MA this year. Dr Dennis Greeson, the Dean of the BibleMesh Institute and programme coordinator for the MA in Theology, was also at the graduation.

During the Graduation Service, the call to worship was given by Rev Peter Gamble, Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly and Cillian McNamara, President of the Ministerial Student’s Council read Romans 12:1-21. Former Moderator, Very Reverend Dr David Bruce preached on the latter and spoke about how God guides his followers and what a Christian approach to work looked like. The hymn sung was ‘Lord of the Church’, while Dr Olwyn Mark, lecturer in Practical Theology, led the prayers of Adoration and Confession. Four students for PCI’s ordained ministry

also received certificates to mark the completion of their academic pathways to ordination.

## **Archbishop of York attacks assisted dying Bill, insisting ‘authority over death belongs to God alone’**

**The Archbishop of York has said that “authority over death belongs to God alone” as he criticised the Assisted Dying Bill.**

In his opening address to the General Synod, the Church of England’s legislative body, the Most Rev Stephen Cottrell said that the Church must withstand popular opinion that risks making assisted dying a reality.

He warned that legalising assisted dying would change forever the contract between doctor and patient, “pressurising the vulnerable, and assuming an authority over death that belongs to God alone”.

His comments come as assisted dying is set to be legalised in England and Wales following a House of Commons vote last month. The Archbishop warned the Church of England needed people who were “formed spiritually and theologically” so that they could “teach, declare and defend the Christian narrative in an increasingly fractious, confused, vulnerable and sometimes hostile world”.

He added: “It is that compelling narrative of what it means to be human – and in all our glorious diversity, made in the image of God, and living Jesus shaped lives – that will

enable us to withstand and even turn back those utilitarian tides of opinion that risk making, for instance, assisted dying, a reality in our national life.”

Last month, MPs voted 314 to 291 in favour of allowing adults with a terminal illness and fewer than six months left to live to receive medical assistance to end their lives. Opponents of the Bill said the vote was “on a knife-edge” but the legislation was voted through by a majority of 23.

The controversial legislation, which means assisted dying is set to be available to eligible patients by 2029, was passed by the Commons despite opposition from the Royal Colleges of Physicians, Psychiatrists and Pathologists.

The Archbishop also thanked Dame Sarah Mullaly, the Bishop of London, and other Lords Spiritual for their “principled and persistent opposition”.

Dame Sarah replied: “It is likely that we will include seeking to address both the substance of the amendment... and the process by which it was introduced in the House of Commons.”

She added she is in contact with other bishops, peers and individuals “that have a common concern about the detrimental impact of this Bill for society”.

## Education

## **Principal who guided Enniskillen High School in aftermath of the town's war memorial bombing**

**Vic Outram, the former principal who guided Enniskillen High School through the harrowing aftermath of the Enniskillen bombing, has died surrounded by his family on Thursday morning - The Impartial Reporter carried this report**

Mr. Outram was a formidable educator and leader, remembered for his strength, compassion, and the profound impact he had on generations of pupils at Enniskillen High School, which is now known as Devenish College.

In a 2017 interview with The Impartial Reporter, he reflected on the sombre Monday morning assembly on November 9, 1987, the day after the IRA bombing in Enniskillen that claimed 11 lives and injured a 63 others.

He described a haunting scene: pupils arrived on crutches, some with bruised faces, others wearing neck braces. Many, along with their teachers, quietly wiped away tears. Yet amid the grief, there was unity, courage, and resilience.

Pupils and teachers stood side by side united in grief and in song. "Make me a channel of your peace," they cried. "Where there's despair in life let me bring hope, where there is darkness, only light."

The bombing had left principal Ronnie Hill in a coma, vice principal Graham Ross' 15-year-old son Stephen seriously

injured and many current and former pupils and their parents suffering from bereavement and injury.

Mr. Outram, who stood in as vice principal, said: “The main focus was to lend support to the children.” He went home from school that previous Friday as a geography teacher and vice principal returned that day as acting principal, charged with having to steer the school through a most turbulent time.

Before the morning assembly Mr. Outram, then 40 years old, met the staff who were still reeling from the news and together they agreed to “keep things as normal as possible under the circumstances.”

“It was a terrible tragedy,” he told The Impartial Reporter.

“The main focus was to lend support to the children.”

There wasn’t a word when Mr. Outram took to the podium as 600 pupils looked to him for answers.

“I outlined to the children what I knew of the injuries sustained by pupils and parents, they w

Several fake bomb warnings were phoned into the school in the months following the attack. Each time the police had to be called and the building evacuated.

The week that followed the bomb was particularly difficult for the school as dozens of reporters from national newspapers and television networks arrived.

“One of the biggest problems we faced was the press,” said Mr. Outram.

“I am not talking about the local press, I am talking about national dailies and television. They were extremely demanding, intrusive and had no thought for what we had to do.

“We made a decision with the staff to keep the press out, they weren’t helping,” he said.

Mr. Outram was concerned that the bomb “would harm the relationship within the community” but was touched by the support he received from many people of different backgrounds and many schools in the area.

He recalled with a mixture of sadness and pride, the day when the school community came together as one.

“It was such a sad event and we were if you’d like to use the expression flying by the seat of our pants, hoping against hope that we were coping under the circumstances.

“And while we may not have got everything right I think, by and large, we did get through a difficult time,” he said.

## Cathedral Calls

### The Limerick-Killaloe Camino

**The Limerick-Killaloe Camino is a pilgrimage route connecting Saint Mary’s Cathedral in Limerick to Saint**

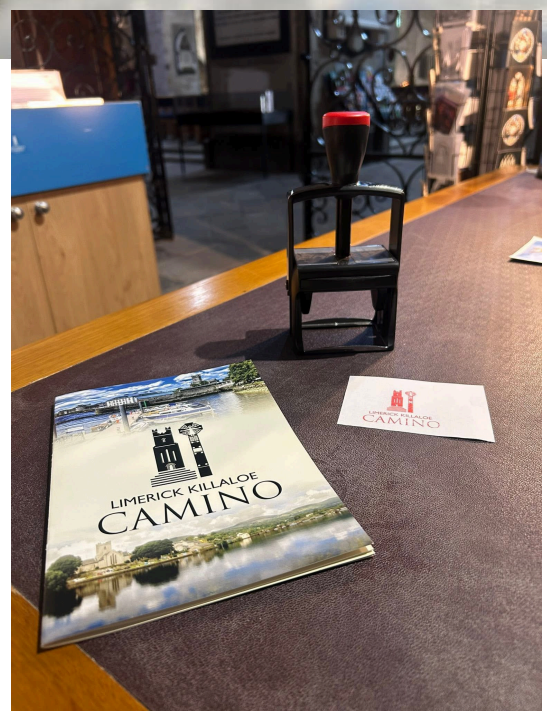
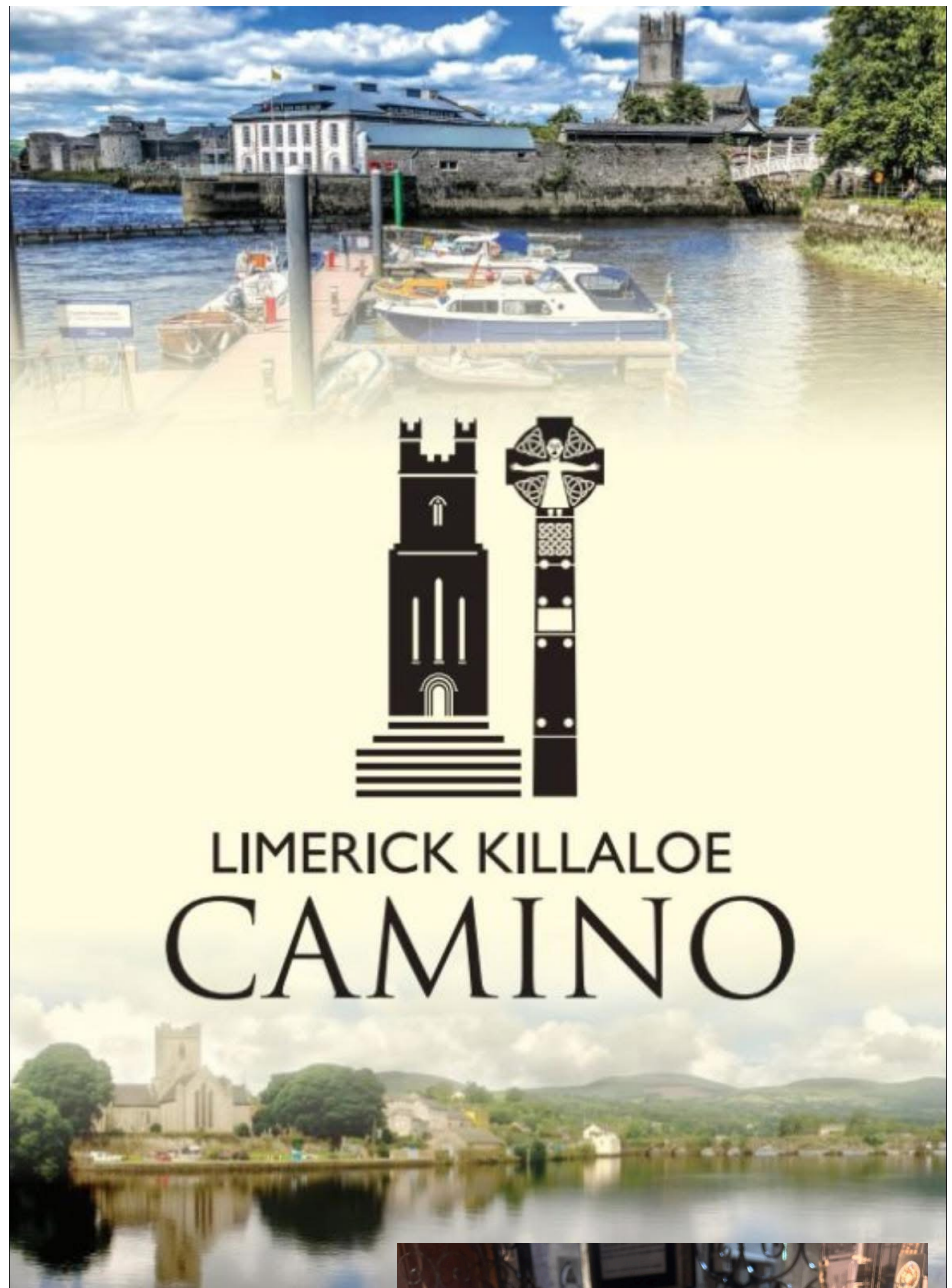
July 14, 2025

**Flannan's  
Cathedral in  
Killaloe,  
following a  
peaceful and  
scenic portion  
of the Lough  
Derg Way.**

This beautiful  
trail leads  
pilgrims  
through  
riverside paths,  
historic sites  
and tranquil  
countryside.

📖 Pilgrim  
booklets are  
available to  
purchase at  
Saint Mary's  
Cathedral, where you can also  
receive your first stamp as you  
begin your journey.

Come and experience the peace,  
heritage and inspiration of the  
Limerick-Killaloe Camino.



## St Peter's Cathedral summer singing school

**'It's just a wonderful opportunity for young people to meet, to make music and to come together during these five special days.'**

St Peter's Cathedral's summer singing school has brought together 60 young people aged 8-18 from across Belfast for their annual five-day course.

Director of Music James McConnell said participants learn harmony, build confidence in stage presence and solo singing, culminating in a showcase concert at the cathedral.

## Clergy and ministry

### Rector for Arklow, Inch and Kilbride

**The Revd Alistair Doyle has been appointed as the new Rector of the Arklow, Inch, and Kilbride group of parishes in the Diocese of Glendalough.**

Alistair is currently Curate Assistant in the Galway Group of parishes, serving in St Nicholas' Collegiate Church, Galway and representing the Church of Ireland in the University of Galway. The announcement was made in both parishes on the morning of Sunday July 6.

Alistair is married to Cecilia, together they have five grown up children, and Toby who is still in secondary school. Prior

July 14, 2025

to training for ministry, Alistair worked as a manager for McDonald's Hamburger Restaurants, was a Human Resource Manager for the



Supermarket chain ASDA, and ran a small distribution business with his brother.

He was ordained to the diaconate in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin in 2020, following which he served as Deacon Intern in Kilternan Parish. He was appointed to Galway in 2020 to serve as Deacon and subsequently as Curate Assistant. Alistair serves the Diocese of Tuam, Limerick, and Killaloe as a Member of the Church of Ireland Interfaith Working Group, Pioneer Ministry Advocate and Tuam Diocese General Synod Representative.

Alistair's faith was fostered in his home parish of St Matthias' Church, Kiliney–Ballybrack, where he began his lay ministry as a Sunday Club leader, then leading Messy Church for five years. He was also a Diocesan Lay Reader, serving the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough as the Archbishop's representative on the Dublin Council of Churches and as a Lay General Synod Representative.

Alistair says: “I have had a fruitful and joyful ministry in Galway and will be forever grateful for the careful guidance and support of the Very Revd Lynda Peilow. I have been blessed by the love and companionship of the wonderful people of and in the West of Ireland, parishioners, colleagues, friends, tourists, and pilgrims, they all have touched my heart, and I hold them in mine. As they say in Galway, you may leave Galway, but it will never leave you.

“God is always full of surprises, from the beautiful sunrises of the East coast to the magnificent sunsets of the West coast, and back again! Cecilia, Toby, and I are delighted to be embarking on this new adventure among the people of Arklow, Inch, and Kilbride, the warm welcome and enthusiastic reception we have received has filled us with eager anticipation for what lies ahead.”

**St John**  
Ambulance



# AVOID MELTING POINT

Drink plenty of water, stay covered up, apply sun cream and seek shade.

To learn more about staying safe in the sun go to  
**[sja.org.uk/firstaid](https://sja.org.uk/firstaid)**

#hottestdayoftheyear



## **Down and Connor seek Youth Minister for Duneane, Antrim and Randalstown**

**The Down and Connor Diocesan Trust are seeking to recruit into this exciting new role of ‘Youth Minister’, to work across the Family of Parishes, comprising Duneane, Antrim and Randalstown.**

We are looking for a person with a passion for deepening the faith of young people, who will focus on the personal, social and spiritual development of young people across this Family of Parishes.

This will be someone who can inspire them and help them to fulfil their full potential in the life of the church. Someone who can initiate and implement new outreach ideas to connect with young people and draw them into a journey of faith.

For more information see diocesan web site.

## **Events**

### **Causeway Speciality Market Coleraine today**

**If you're coming to Portrush for The Open why not call into Causeway Speciality Market Coleraine on Monday 14th and see what local Artisans have to offer.**

July 14, 2025

Open 9am - 4pm at the town hall, Coleraine just 10 minutes from Portrush and Portstewart

## Introducing Hearty Hike

### **Join us for a brand new challenge and Take Big Steps for Little Hearts**

Led by fully qualified instructors, this guided hike is open to individuals, families, and groups, no experience needed, just a team spirit and a love for the outdoors.

Every step you take will directly help us continue to deliver vital support to children and young people living with congenital heart disease across NI.



Date: Sunday 28th September 2025, 10am



Location: Slieve Donard, Mourne Mountains



Early Bird Price: £22 (until 31st July), £30 thereafter



Click the link to sign up!

[www.Childrensheartbeattrust.enthuse.com](http://www.Childrensheartbeattrust.enthuse.com)

## **AWARE NI River Rush Raft Race**

**Get ready to paddle, plunge, and make a powerful splash.**

Join us for the River Rush Raft Race on Saturday, 13 September 2025, on the beautiful River Foyle!

July 14, 2025

To mark World Suicide Prevention Day, AWARE NI and Foyle Search and Rescue are teaming up for a fantastic, fun-filled team challenge — all to raise vital funds for mental health support and rescue services in Derry/Londonderry.

Build your team. Build your raft. And make a splash for mental health!

SIGN UP TODAY: [aware-ni.org/river-rush](https://aware-ni.org/river-rush)

## Get freezing for a reason

**Take the plunge at our Sea Dip Challenge, have fun, and raise vital funds for autistic people and their families.**



Sunday 7th September 2025



Crawfordsburn Beach



Registration 10.30am | Dip 11am

Registration: £12.50 per person

Sponsorship target: £75 per person.

Join us at Crawfordsburn Beach on Sunday 7th September 2025, and take the plunge at our Sea Dip Challenge.

Whether you dip a toe or dive right in, you can have fun, and raise vital funds for autistic people and their families. Come with your friends, family, work colleagues or even on your own and we can brave the icy waters together.

Whether you dip a toe or dive right in, you're helping make waves for a great cause.

July 14, 2025

Register today, <https://autismni.org/get-involved/fundraising/fundraising-events/seadip>

## Archdiocese of Dublin - Pilgrim Pockets of Hope

# Pockets of Hope PILGRIMAGE SEASON 2025

“Hope Does not Disappoint”

Our Pilgrim season is from July 13th to August 15<sup>th</sup>

Stamp your route across the 4 churches

Journey yourself or bring a group.



Archdiocese of Dublin  
Ard Decise Átha Cliath

### Pilgrim Route:

1. St. Andrew's Church, Westland Row
2. Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, City Quay
3. Our Lady of Lourdes, Sean McDermott Street
4. St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral, Marlborough Street

Pray, Reflect and Hope



Email: [pocketsofhope2025@gmail.com](mailto:pocketsofhope2025@gmail.com) for more

This project on Pockets of Hope is created by Fr. Alan Hilliard and  
Designed by Mary-Aoife Ong

# Heritage

## The 107th Brigade

**On 12th July 1916, General Nugent saw the battalions of the 107th Brigade march into Blaringhem.**

The sun was shining on the old Flemish village, officers and men wore orange ribbons and marigolds to mark the day. The band played 'king Williams March'.

The least practiced eye could tell that to these men confidence was returning, that the worst of the horror that they had endured had been shaken from their shoulders, they marched like victors as was their right.

Cyril Falls - History of the 36th (Ulster) Division.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

---

## Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

# Church News Ireland

[www.churchnewsireland.org](http://www.churchnewsireland.org)

**Link in Monday through Saturday from  
early morning**

**Please recommend to your friends**