

Church News Ireland



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Image of the day

Blessed are the peacemakers

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God'. Matthew 5: 9. Westminster Abbey

News



Finaghy Choir sings in Newcastle and Durham Cathedrals



Simon Neill , director of music at St Polycarp's Parish Church , Finaghy had a very busy but rewarding week when the choir undertook a tour which also involved singing Evensong at Durham Cathedral.

“What an amazing place to be and for many it had the additional bonus of being the filming site for Harry Potter and allowed some to tour the university and see the Magna Carta”, Simon commented. This service is presently available on YouTube. The Finaghy choir thanked the vergers and clergy “for their unbelievably warm welcome and kind help”.

They had the pleasure of being accompanied by the DoM at Newcastle Cathedral ...



“This was a tour to remember for so many reasons, from the friendships made, the sublime singing, the dedication of each member and their families, the chance to sing in two cathedrals, and the fun had!”

The choristers include pupils from Inchmarlo (RBAI prep), Methodist College, Victoria College and VCB Prep, and St Malachy’s

Bishop of Missouri preaches at popular late-evening compline in Crookhaven

Last Sunday, 13th July 2025, Bishop Deon Johnson was the preacher for the popular Compline Service at St

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Brendan's Church, Crookhaven. Bishop Johnson is currently a guest of the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, and is spending part of his sabbatical in Schull.



The most southerly chapel in Ireland, St Brendan's Church in Crookhaven, resumed its late-evening service of Compline every Sunday in July and August. The services will begin at 8.30pm and the small stone chapel, which was built in 1717, welcomes all denominations and anyone who is on holidays or visiting West Cork. Following is the list of guest preacher for each upcoming service in 2025:

July 20th: the Very Rev. Cliff Jeffers (Dean of Ross)

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July 27th: the Rev. Damien O'Cathain (Rector of Castlepollard & Oldcastle Union)



August 3rd: Baroness Julia Neuberger (Member of the House of Lords and retired senior Rabbi of the West London Synagogue)

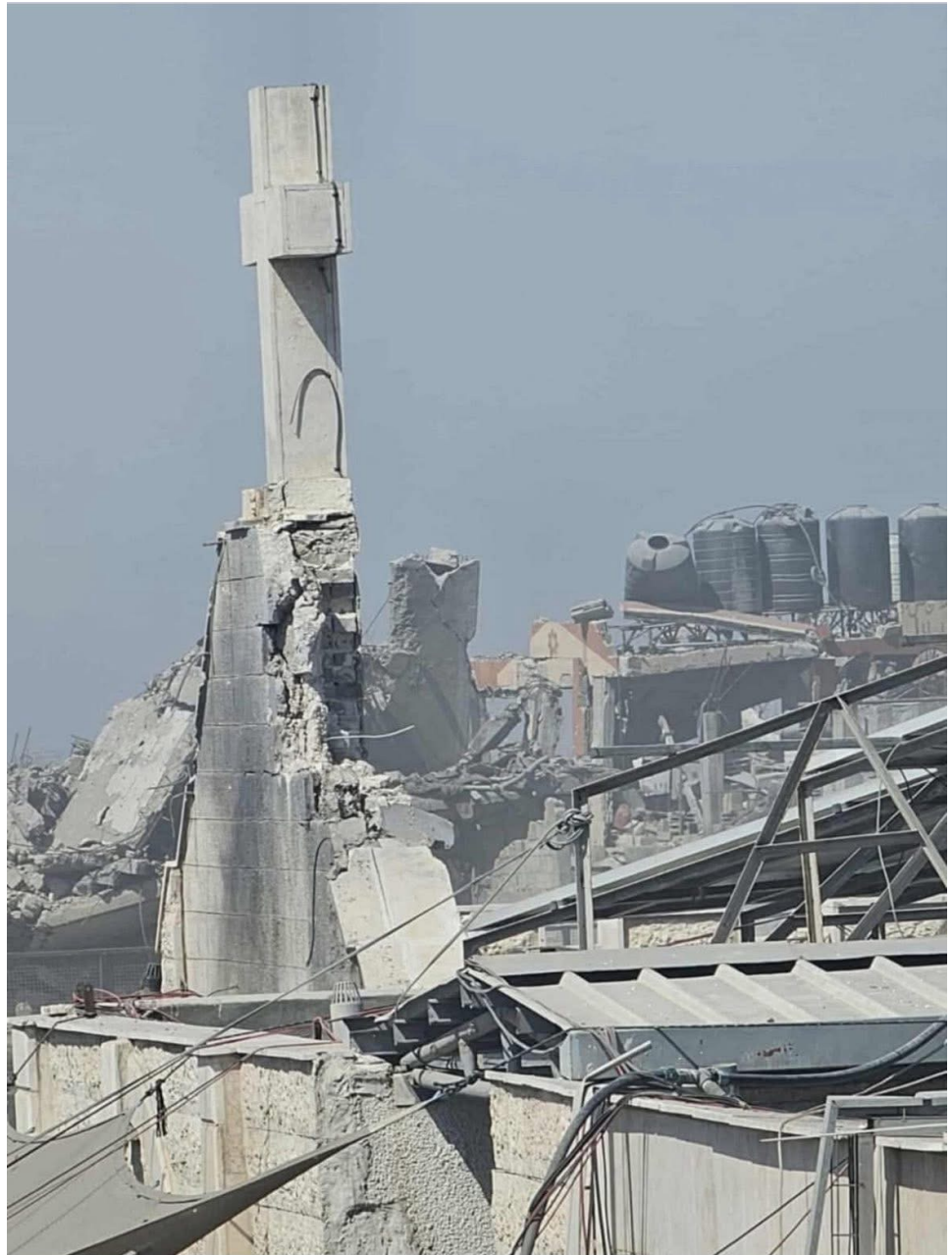
August 10th: the Rev. Canon Denis McCarthy (Bandon Union)

August 17th: the Very Revd. Chris Peters (Retired Dean of Ross)

August 24th: the Rev. Gary Philbrick (Vicar, St Paul's, Weston-super-Mare)

Israeli strike on Gaza's only Catholic church kills three

Three people have been killed in an Israeli strike on Gaza's only Catholic church, according to church officials.



Several other people, including the parish priest, were injured.

The Catholic charity Caritas Jerusalem said the parish's 60-year-old caretaker and an 84-year-old woman receiving psycho-social support inside a Caritas tent in the church compound were among those killed in the attack.



Fr Gabriel Romanelli received an injury to his leg in the attack

The Israeli military said it is aware of the incident and is investigating.

Parish priest Fr Gabriel Romanelli, who was close to the late Pope Francis, was also injured.

The church compound was sheltering both Christians and Muslims, including a number of children with disabilities, according to Fadel Naem, acting director of Al-Ahli Hospital, which received the dead and people injured.

The Israeli military said it “makes every feasible effort to mitigate harm to civilians and civilian structures, including religious sites, and regrets any damage caused to them”.

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Israel accuses Hamas militants of operating from civilian areas.

In a rare move, the Israeli Foreign Ministry posted an apology on social media: "Israel expresses deep sorrow over the damage to the Holy Family Church in Gaza City and over any civilian casualty."

Italian premier Giorgia Meloni blamed Israel for the strike on the church.

"The attacks on the civilian population that Israel has been demonstrating for months are unacceptable. No military action can justify such an attitude," she said.

The church is just a stone's throw from Al-Ahli Hospital, Mr Naem said, noting that the area around both the church and the hospital has been repeatedly struck for over a week.



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The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which also has a church in Gaza that previously sustained damage from Israeli strikes, said the Holy Family Church was sheltering 600 displaced people.

Belfast appeal for Gaza Church

The only Catholic Church in Gaza, was hit by IDF Missiles earlier. Two people died and the priest, Fr Romanelli, an Argentinian friend of the late Pope Francis was injured.

Canon Rogan, at Carryduff Parish a few weeks ago raised around £30,000 for this Gaza Parish. Further help for the parish would be greatly appreciated.

A large amount has already been sent to Cardinal Pizzabella Patriarch of Jerusalem by Canon Rogan so that donations can be directly sent to the Parish in Gaza in their very dangerous situation.

If you donate anything it will go directly to that Parish via the Cardinal in Jerusalem.

PLEASE MARK DONATION "GAZA"

Ref Gaza

Sort 93-83-94

Acc 07188126

Diocese of Down and Connor Drumbo and Carryduff
AIB



Letter to The Episcopal Church membership from Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe on crisis in Gaza

Dear people of God: Yesterday, Archbishop Hosam Naoum of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East gave a powerful address to the Church of England’s annual Synod in York about the situation in Gaza and the Holy Land.

He spoke of the horrifying humanitarian conditions that the war in Gaza has created, including the continued bombing of hospitals, a desperate lack of medical supplies, and a food distribution system that he likened to the dystopian novel “The Hunger Games.”



The River Bann home of Coleraine rowing club

In his address, Archbishop Hosam asked for our help, saying, “Where the church is wounded and constrained, we need the wider body of Christ to help us, to be the church in brutal and damaging times.”

Here are some ways that we in The Episcopal Church can respond to his call for help:

As Christians committed to peace and reconciliation, we can stand with our siblings in Christ in the Holy Land as they continue their ministry of presence and resilience in the midst of inhumane conditions. We join Archbishop Hosam in his call for the Israeli military to end the bombing of hospitals and the siege of Gaza; for the restoration of humanitarian

aid to the people of Gaza under United Nations supervision; and for Israel and Hamas to release all unjustly detained people and hostages.

We can also call for Israel to end its targeting of civilians in Gaza. I particularly grieve the death of Dr. Ahmad Attallah Qandil, a surgeon at the Diocese of Jerusalem's Al Ahli Hospital, who was killed by a drone strike as he left the hospital after his shift last Friday. He is one of hundreds of medical workers who have been arrested, detained, or killed in Gaza during this war.

Conditions in the West Bank are also deteriorating, and we join the Council of Patriarchs and Heads of Churches of Jerusalem in expressing grief and outrage at the recent attack on Taybeh, the last all-Christian village in the West Bank. Extremist Israeli settlers destroyed crops and olive groves, damaged historic buildings and water systems, and attempted to burn its ancient Byzantine cemetery and fifth-century Church of St. George.

Archbishop Hosam and the Diocese of Jerusalem are committed not only to providing Christian hope in the midst of the current hopelessness, but also to creating conditions that will bring about a lasting peace between the Israeli and Palestinian people. Because U.S. policy plays an outsized role in this conflict, we Episcopalians in the United States have a particular responsibility to support this work by advocating to our government to support a permanent ceasefire and a solution that provides a just and enduring peace. Most of all, we must decry in the strongest possible terms any U.S. or Israeli proposal for ethnic cleansing or the removal of Palestinians from Gaza or the West Bank.

Our Office of Government Relations helps us make our voices heard in Washington, D.C., ensuring that we can speak as Christians guided not by any political party, but by the redemptive love of the Risen Christ. You can find more information and tools for advocacy on the church's website.

As we pray for the peace of Jerusalem, we can also support the Diocese of Jerusalem as it continues its ministry of peacebuilding and reconciliation and prepares for the rebuilding of its ministries after the war. As I have done several times, I invite you to join me in making a generous donation to the Good Friday Offering or the American Friends of the Diocese of Jerusalem, both of which provide urgently needed funds for the ministries of the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

In his address, Archbishop Hosam, who is from the Israeli city of Nazareth, called us to join his church in fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah that Jesus proclaimed in the synagogue there:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. (Luke 4:18-19)
May we answer this call through our support for God's
people in the Holy Land.

The Most Rev. Sean Rowe, Presiding Bishop
The Episcopal Church

Cathedral Calls

**Begin your
Camino
Journey
here at
Saint
Mary's
Cathedral**

**Are you
planning to
walk the
Camino de
Santiago? Start
your journey at
the Saint James Chapel in Saint Mary's Cathedral,
Limerick.**



As one of the apostles of Jesus, Saint James the Greater is the namesake of the Camino de Santiago – also known as the Way of Saint James.

Pilgrims are warmly invited to visit the Saint James Chapel to pray, reflect, and receive the first official stamp.

A poster for the 'Light the Fire' event. The title 'Light the Fire' is in large, white, cursive font at the top. Below it, 'August 3rd 2025 Hill of Slane' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. Three circular portraits of Dana, Archbishop Eamon Martin, and Deacon John Taaffe are shown. Below the portraits, a list of activities is provided in yellow boxes: '12pm - 1pm Gathering', '1pm Welcome by Fr. Richard Matthews PP', '1.15 Rosary', '1.45pm Michael Murphy on Ven. Matt Talbot', '2pm Holy Mass', '3pm Eucharist Healing', and '4.30pm Depart for home'. At the bottom, the website 'lightthefire.ie' and email 'info@lightthefire.ie' are listed. A circular logo for 'JUBILEE 2025 PILGRIMS OF HOPE' is also present. On the right side, there is a full-length illustration of a saint in green and blue robes, holding a staff. At the bottom right, the text 'Come back to life' is partially visible.

Light the Fire
August 3rd 2025 Hill of Slane

Dana
Archbishop Eamon Martin
Deacon John Taaffe

12pm - 1pm Gathering
1pm Welcome by Fr. Richard Matthews PP
1.15 Rosary
1.45pm Michael Murphy on Ven. Matt Talbot
2pm Holy Mass
3pm Eucharist Healing
4.30pm Depart for home

Website: lightthefire.ie
Email: info@lightthefire.ie

• Please bring a fold up stool •

JUBILEE 2025 PILGRIMS OF HOPE

Come back to life

Light the Fire 2025

Hill of Slane, Ireland. August 3rd, 2025, 12pm - 4:30pm
- Join for a powerful day of faith, healing, and community celebration at this year's Light the Fire celebration.

Mass will be celebrated by Archbishop Eamon Martin and the day will feature Dana, Deacon John Taaffe and Michael Murphy who will speak on Venerable Matt Talbot

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Full schedule & info at: lightthefire.ie

Contact: info@lightthefire.ie

Don't forget to bring a fold-up stool!

Diocesan Lay Reader licensed in St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork



The Very Rev. Nigel Dunne, Dean of Cork, Dr Christopher Ashley, newly licensed Diocesan Lay Reader, the Right Rev. Dr Paul Colton, Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, and the Ven. Andrew Orr, Archdeacon of Cork, Cloyne and Ross.

On Sunday, 13th July 2025, during Evensong in St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork, the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, Dr Paul Colton, licensed Dr Christopher Ashley as Reader to serve in the diocese. Chris has completed a courses approved by the House of Bishops and was presented to the Bishop by the Ven. Andrew Orr, Archdeacon of Cork, Cloyne and Ross. Chris was joined for

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the occasion by his wife, the Rev. Elise Hanley, and clergy and lay people from across the Dioceses.

Events

Active Retirement Meath style

Trim and Ashbourne Union in Meath diocese Active Retirement Group had a wonderful visit to the Abbey Blooms Botanical Gardens & Café in Multyfarnham recently.



It was a day filled with beautiful flowers, great conversation and plenty of sunshine. “Many thanks to everyone who joined us and made the outing so enjoyable.

“Stay tuned for details of our next adventure on 7 August 2025”

Clergy and ministry

The Rev Canon Donald Gray, Speaker's Chaplain who also modernised the Book of Common Prayer

He was convinced that the pattern of worship should be more closely related to that of the early Christian centuries

The Reverend Canon Donald Gray, who has died aged 94, was Rector of St Margaret's, Westminster, and Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons from 1987 to 1998, having previously spent 13 years as Rector of Liverpool; he was also a Chaplain to Queen Elizabeth II.

The pastoral emphasis of the early years of his ministry stood him in good stead during his time as Speaker's Chaplain; when he was Rector of Liverpool he also took the chance to develop his interest in liturgical matters, and he became one of the Church of England's leading scholars in this field.

As a member of the Liturgical Commission from 1968 to 1986, Gray was one of the architects of the Alternative Service Book 1980. His pastoral concerns led him to believe that the Book of Common Prayer no longer met the needs of lively parishes, and his study of liturgical history convinced him that the pattern of the church's worship should be more closely related to that of the early Christian centuries.

His book *Earth and Altar* (1986), based on a doctoral thesis, occasioned some surprise by suggesting that the origins of the Parish Communion movement in the Church of England owed more to Christian socialism than to liturgical developments in Roman Catholic France and Belgium. Although technically correct, the book was criticised on the grounds that it failed to take account of continental influences on the Church of England during the 1950s and 1960s.

Gray found himself in a difficult position when he became Rector of St Margaret's, Westminster, and was confronted by a congregation that was firmly wedded to the Book of Common Prayer and hostile to change in its form of worship. He dealt with this issue by developing further the link between St Margaret's and Westminster Abbey, reduced the role of the Church Council and then used the authority of the Dean and Chapter to impose a new order in which a Sung Eucharist replaced Mattins and the Alternative Service Book the 1662 Book of Common Prayer.

Inevitably, this alienated many members of the congregation, including the churchwardens, and his failure to appear in St Margaret's every Sunday also caused dismay. But he weathered the storm and, with the aid of new faces and an increasing number of tourists, rebuilt the congregation on what he regarded as liturgically correct lines. Memorial services, the number of which increased considerably during his time at St Margaret's, were not, however, subjected to change.

Gray also continued the work of his predecessor Trevor Beeson, who, before becoming Dean of Winchester and

clerical obituarist of The Daily Telegraph, had developed the role of the Speaker's Chaplain from a largely ceremonial position to that of a broad pastoral concern for the MPs and the large staff of the House of Commons. An affable man of Lancastrian wit, Gray had been well equipped for this task by his long years as a Territorial Army chaplain.

Donald Clifford Gray was born in Manchester on July 21 1930, the son of Henry Gray and his wife Constance. He attended Newton Heath Technical High School and, having felt drawn to Holy Orders, went to King's College, London, to read theology. He completed his training at St Boniface College, Warminster, and from 1956 to 1960 was a curate at St Mary's Church, Leigh, in Lancashire. In 1958 he was commissioned into the Territorial Army, being awarded the TD in 1970.

He then became Vicar of nearby St Peter's Church, Westleigh, where he remained until 1967, and this was followed by seven years as Vicar of All Saints' Church, Elton, in Bury. He had become a proctor in the Convocation of York in 1964, and in 1968 was appointed to the Liturgical Commission as a non-specialist priest who had an imaginative interest in worship and who, in a time of liturgical reform, could be relied on to speak up for the parishes.

Gray's leadership gifts were recognised in 1974 when he became Rector of Liverpool Parish Church and in the following year Rural Dean of Liverpool. Although he was not himself a particularly good preacher, he recognised the importance of the pulpit and during Lent distinguished

preachers were invited from all parts of Britain to share in the daily lunchtime services.

Gray also began chaplaincy work in the city centre stores and became a well-known Liverpool figure. He was made an Honorary Canon of Liverpool Cathedral in 1982 and in the same year was appointed a Chaplain to the Queen, serving until 1998.

At this stage liturgy was becoming increasingly important to him. He was a member of the Joint Liturgical Group, concerned with co-ordinating work in this field in all the non-Roman Catholic churches, and served as its secretary, then as its chairman. He was also chairman of the Society for Liturgical Study, and treasurer, then chairman, of Societas Liturgica. Time was found for research for a Liverpool MPhil in 1980 and a Manchester PhD in 1985.

By now it was necessary for Gray to be released from parochial responsibilities and his appointment as a Canon of Westminster in 1987 was timely. He supported the recently appointed Dean of Westminster, Michael Mayne, in reforming the Abbey's liturgical arrangements, continued to write and lecture, and greatly enjoyed his association with the House of Commons. On retiring, as Canon Emeritus, in 1998, he was appointed CBE for a greatly appreciated contribution to the life of the House.

His generously illustrated Chaplain to Mr Speaker (1991) contained a valuable history of this unique office, and a biography, Ronald Jasper: His Life, Work and the ASB (1997), placed on record its subject's massive contribution to liturgical reform. Gray also contributed to several volumes

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of essays on liturgy, and his fellow liturgists published a Festschrift in his honour in 1995. In 2000 he published a collection of Royal prayers, All Majesty and Power, and a biography of Percy Dearmer, author of The Parson's Handbook, editor of The English Hymnal and Songs of Praise, and campaigner for the ordination of women.

Donald Gray was also chair of the Christian Evidence Society (1992-2001), and on the eve of the millennium oversaw the distribution of more than 10,000 copies of a leaflet entitled "Whose Birthday Is It Anyway?" He also had a long-standing involvement in the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

He married, in 1955, Joyce Jackson, who died in 2010; they had a son and two daughters.

The Reverend Canon Donald Gray, born July 21 1930, died July 4 2025

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

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

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