

# Church News Ireland

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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site



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## Image of the day

### Dukes in the Mournes

17 Explorer Scouts from RBAI successfully completed their Silver Duke of Edinburgh's Award Qualifying Expeditions



recently in the Mourne Mountains.

They managed being self-sufficient for 3 days in unfamiliar, wild terrain which was a terrific feat of endurance, teamwork and positive mental attitudes. They navigated, camped and cooked impressively as well.

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Congratulations boys, onwards and upwards. QV - Quarere verum

## News



### A Giant step at Queens Chaplaincy

**The Catholic Chaplaincy writes - “We’re delighted to share some wonderful news. Our Chaplaincy Director, Shannon, recently announced her engagement to David Goodwin, ice hockey player with the Belfast Giants.**

“David is also a valued part of our chaplaincy community, especially through his leadership of our men’s group. We wish them every blessing as they prepare for this next step in their journey together.”



## Large congregation at family service for Fahan and Buncrana

**A large congregation of adults and younger people from the grouped parishes of St Mura's (Fahan) and Christ Church, Buncrana attended a family service in St Mura's on Sunday the 29th June, which was led by Rev'd Canon David Ferry.**

After lovely music, prayers and a thought provoking sermon on how to use our ears better for God's service,



refreshments – including tea, buns and ice cream – were enjoyed by all.

**St Peter's  
Belfast  
125th  
anniversary  
of  
dedication  
and  
patronal  
festival**

**Thank you to**





**everyone who came to St Peter's on Sunday 29th June to celebrate our dedication and patronal festival.**

Our celebrant and preacher was Bishop of Connor Rt Rev George Davison. Serving alongside him were the Rector, our Parish Readers (David, Dora, and Robert), and our Associate Minister, the Rev'd Andrew Irwin. Our choir was

conducted by Choir Master Robert Thompson, and our guest organist was Tristan Russher. Our Churchwardens





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were Margaret McKenna Black and Sandra Hutchman (deputising for Daphne McClements).

Thank you to all involved either at the front or the back of the church, or indeed behind the scenes - especially our Parish Administrator, Anne Cromie, for producing the orders of service.

Following the service in church, we moved next door to the Lansdowne Hotel for lunch. A cake, made by Judith Cowan, was cut by the Bishop and Daphne McClements. It was a memorable occasion in which we were reminded of how much God has entrusted to us, and we now look forward to the next 125 years!







## Somme fallen remembered at County Antrim Ceremony

Those who fought in the Battle of the Somme in 1916 were commemorated on Sunday 29 June, at the County Antrim War Memorial at Knockagh Hill.





The commemoration brought together representatives from the Navy, Army and Air Force, as well as Councils, service organisations and community groups at the event, which was organised by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council on behalf of County Antrim Councils.

This year's commemoration marked the 109th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, which lasted from July to

November 1916 with terrible loss including many soldiers from County Antrim serving in various regiments, but mainly in the 36th Ulster Division.

## **Faith thrives in community, not isolation USPG Conference**

**The Rt Revd Dr Vicentia, Bishop of Lesotho, opens the We Believe, We Belong? USPG Conference 2025 with a simple message: faith thrives in community, not isolation.**

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Inspired by the South African philosophy Ubuntu: “I am because we are.” and Ephesians 4:16, Bishop Vicentia encouraged us that the Church grows stronger when every part is welcomed. Diocese of Lesotho - Anglican Church of Southern Africa. Follow @USPGglobal for all the latest!

## **Irish co-founder of Holy Family Mission presented to Pope Leo at Jubilee of Priests event in Rome**





## **Hundreds of Priests and people involved in priestly formation and Vocations took part in a gathering at the Conciliazione Auditorium in Rome on June 26th.**

The title for the Conference was "Joyful Priests: 'I have called you friends'", referring to Jesus' union with his disciples in the Gospel of St. John. This event was organised by the Dicastery for the Clergy as part of the Jubilee of Priests.

Ireland was represented at this international event through the work of Holy Family Mission in n. Maura Murphy, one of the founders of Holy Family Mission, had the honour of addressing those in attendance. She spoke of their experiences in forming young adults and in particular the best practices they had seen bear fruit with young people and vocational accompaniment. Maura had the great honour of meeting Pope Leo and sharing briefly of the mission of Holy Family Mission. His face lit up when she mentioned Vocations to religious life and he said that their mission to young people "is at the heart of the Church".

The Holy Father spoke to all Priests gathered at this Conference and said that the happiness of a priest reflects his friendship with Christ. "We are not perfect, but we are Christ's friends, brothers to one another and sons of his gentle Mother Mary, and that is enough for us." "This friendship with Christ is the spiritual foundation of ordained ministry, the meaning of our celibacy and the energy of the ecclesial service to which we dedicate our lives," he said. "It sustains us in times of trial and enables us to renew each day the 'yes' uttered at the beginning of our vocation."

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Holy Family Mission is a Catholic residential faith formation programme for young people aged 18-30 years. Throughout their time at HFM the young person receives formation that deepens their daily prayer life, grows their gifts and heart for service and experience regular mission to schools and parishes across Ireland. The young adults live in community for the academic year and the purpose of the programme is to equip them for life long mission and witness.

Holy Family Mission has walked with 104 young adults through their residential programme since its establishment in October 2016. On average 1 in 10 alumni have gone on to priestly or religious formation.

## Education

### BRA's last day of seven on the Camino de Santiago

The last day of walking for the Belfast Royal Academy's students on this year's Camino de Santiago and another long tough day in the blistering





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**heat - 29km in distance and 875m of height gain, all completed in 36 degrees celsius from Villafranca del Bierzo to O'Cebreiro.**

Knowing the scale of the challenge that lay before them, the BRA peregrinos set off early at 6.15am and by 8.30am had already covered 10km and enjoyed a hearty breakfast of bacon and cheese baguettes. By 12 noon, the peregrinos had walked 20km and arrived in Ruitelán for lunch, prior to commencing the herculean task of climbing 875m in less than 3 hours. By 4pm, every single BRA peregrino had made it to the top of the mountain and seen the promised land around



O'Cebreiro, despite the steep inclines, unforgiving rock paths, and relentless heat and sunshine. Perched high in the Galician mountains, O'Cebreiro is truly a place that captures the essence of the



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Camino de Santiago.

The pupils are raising money for Northern Ireland Hospice, Macmillan Cancer Support and @AWARE NI, and would appreciate any donations through the following link:  
<https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/Q3S6WVOR>

## Positive movements for two East Belfast schools



**Elmgrove to host Greenwood House AC expansion and new special school for Orangefield site**

David Brooks MLA writes - Great news for Greenwood House Assessment Centre who I know have been working tirelessly to

secure a new site to enhance the experience of their pupils in more appropriate facilities.



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Congratulations to Principal, Lorraine Thompson, and her team who do such a wonderful job for the children and families they serve. I was pleased to



have the Education Minister along to visit the school last year, alongside Gavin Robinson, to see their work and I am delighted this move has been possible, meaning the school will take pupils up to Primary 7 reportedly commencing in 2026 following refurbishment of Elmgrove.

Also very positive news that having previously announced that East Belfast would get a new special school that the Orangefield High School site has been confirmed as the location.

I hope and trust these measures will go some way to easing the pressure around places for SEN education moving forward, and recognising the current pressures will mean that in the relatively short, medium and longer term we see ever improving access to places that are optimal for each child with Special Educational Needs.

Read more

BBC News - Van Morrison's former primary to become a special school

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cm2z58g81neo>

Cllr Ruth Brooks Cllr. Sammy Douglas Cllr Davy Douglas  
Councillor Bradley Ferguson Cllr. James Lawlor Councillor  
Andrew McCormick Democratic Unionist Party

## **A St Dominic's doctor in Artificial Intelligence and its Moral Compass**

**St Dominic's - We are proud to congratulate Dr. Andrea Rainey, who presented her research at a prestigious conference in Oxford University, set in the beautiful surroundings of Harris Manchester College, over the weekend.**

Dr. Rainey's presentation, 'Artificial Intelligence and its Moral Compass – Educating Young Minds About the Ethical Principles of EdTech', drew on a year-long action research project rooted in practice at St Dominic's.

Her work was exceptionally well received and highlighted the innovative and forward-thinking approach to digital skills education taking place in our school.

Well done, Dr. Rainey — we look forward to the next stage of this exciting project!

## **Cathedral Calls**

## **St Oliver Plunkett anniversaries in Armagh**





**Yesterday was the Feast Day of St Oliver Plunkett, this is a special year as we mark 400 years since his birth and 50 years since his**

## **Canonisation**

A special Mass was offered at 10am in the Cathedral.

The Cathedral posted - (Yesterday) The Gospel of the Calming of the storm fell on the Feast of St Oliver Plunkett, Co-patron of our diocese and a man who lived through the storms of persecution, violence and division in his time.

Like St. Oliver we too live in a world that feels politically, spiritually and socially fractured. Conflict, fear and mistrust



can make us cry out “Lord, we are going down!” like the disciples.

But we must always remember that Jesus is still in the boat. He does not abandon us in chaos but speaks peace into the storm.

St Oliver also remained faithful amid injustice and unrest in his time. He lived and died with courage, speaking truth with mercy in a time of deep division.

As we face the storms of our age may we draw hope from the calm Christ brings and strength from the witness of St Oliver Plunkett.

### **Prayer to St. Oliver Plunkett**

Glorious Martyr, Oliver, who willingly  
gave your life for your faith,  
help us also to be strong in faith.  
May we be loyal like you  
to the See of Peter.  
By your intercession and example  
may all hatred and bitterness  
be banished from the hearts  
of Irish men and women.  
May the peace of Christ reign  
in our hearts,  
as it did in your heart,  
even at the moment of your death.  
Pray for us and for Ireland. Amen.



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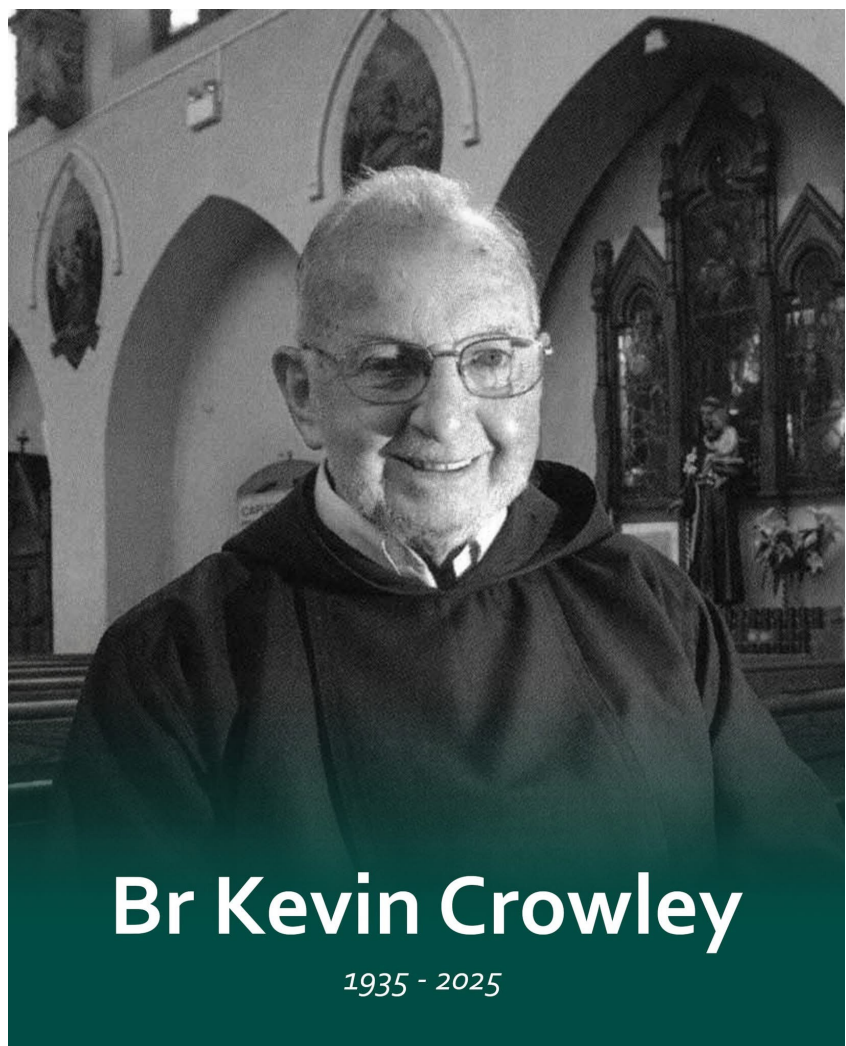
## Clergy and ministry

### Tribute to Brother Kevin Crowley by the President of Ireland

**May I join with all those who have expressed such sadness on learning of the death of Brother Kevin Crowley.**

Through his support and respect for those most in need, Brother Kevin made an invaluable contribution to the people of Dublin city.

The Capuchin Day Centre on Church Street, founded by Brother Kevin in 1969, has gone on to provide essential services to the homeless population of the city for nearly 60 years. The hot meals, food parcels, clothing, showers, family services, and medical and dental services have not just extended care



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of the most vulnerable, but has been exemplary in showing a fundamental respect for the dignity of each person and allowed so many of those who have availed of the services to rebuild their lives.

It was extremely appropriate that Pope Francis visited Brother Kevin and the Capuchin Day Centre during his visit to Ireland in 2018 and met with those present and volunteers.

I was deeply honoured to meet with Brother Kevin on many occasions throughout the years and to share in his company. Brother Kevin was a warm, caring, yet fearless man, who dedicated his life to living his Christian faith in dedication to those most in need.

Brother Kevin leaves a wonderful legacy to all those whose lives to which he made such a difference.

Sabina and I will miss his messages, which continued after his move to Cork.

May I express my deepest condolences to Brother Kevin's family, to all of his fellow Capuchins, and to all of his many friends and colleagues across the country.

Síocháin síoraí do a anam lách uasal.”

## **St Paul's & St Barnabas and Hope Counselling**





**At St Paul's & St Barnabas in Belfast, we are proud to partner with Hope Counselling to offer a free and confidential service for those struggling with low mood, anxiety, addiction recovery, bereavement, trauma, and more.**

With growing referrals from across the city—GPs, addiction services, churches, and community projects—Hope continues to provide weekly 50-minute sessions that give people the space to speak, process, and heal. As one client shared: “It’s been a very useful experience... I feel I can discuss issues more freely.” Our qualified team, including counsellor Alan MacIntosh, is here to help. You are not alone. For more info, visit [www.spbbelfast.church/hope](http://www.spbbelfast.church/hope) or scan the QR code. Find hope today.

## Events

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# Holiday Bible Club St Comgall's Church, Rathcoole

☀️ HOLIDAY BIBLE CLUB ☀️

The Fruits of The Spirit

Monday 28th July - Friday 1st August 2025

Holiday Bible Club this summer at  
St Comgall's Church, Rathcoole,  
Coolderry Gardens.

from 6.30pm to 8pm 🌙

We would love to see your children there for Bible activities, songs, games, and Bible stories, all suitable for children ages 5-11.

Registration open on the first evening of  
Monday 28th July from 6 - 6.30pm.  
Children must be registered to attend.

Galatian's Ch 5 Vs 22-23: But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control.

☀️ Holiday Bible Club 🌙



Monday 28th July - Friday 1st August



6.30pm - 8pm



Ages 5 - 11



Registration Monday 28th July from 6pm



St. Comgall's Church, Rathcoole,





Coolderry Gardens

## **Bric-à-brac sale at Church of the Holy Spirit, Mossley**

**Our bric-à-brac sale continues this Saturday from 8.30am until 12 noon in the Parish Centre.**

It's the first Saturday in July but our keen bakers aren't ready just yet for their summer holidays! So why not come along and support them - cakes, breads and all kinds of tasty treats will be on sale. Please do come along. You'd be very welcome.

## **Translink Bus Service: Enniskillen to the Marble Arch Caves**

1 July - 31 August

📍 Departs Enniskillen Bus Station at 11.45am (arrives at the Marble Arch Caves at 12.10pm)

📍 Returns from the Marble Arch Caves at 4.30pm (arrives at Enniskillen Bus Station at 4.55pm)

💰 £5.40 for adults (16+), £2.70 for children (5-15), free for children under 4. Family of 6 unlimited day travel ticket £24.00.

Note: No service on Monday 14 July (Bank Holiday).

- Guided Cave Tours: 10am – 5pm daily (60-75 minutes). Show your bus ticket for a 15% discount.
- Cuilcagh Boardwalk Trail: A 10-minute walk from the caves, the trail takes 2-3 hours to complete.
- Marble Arch Caves Cafe: Open 10am – 5pm daily. Show your bus ticket for a 10% discount.

Enjoy your visit! For more information visit <https://bit.ly/43IlxDw>

## Perspective

**England and Lions rugby star Maro Itoje speaks about the role of his Christian faith**



## **England and Lions rugby star Maro Itoje has spoken about the role of his Christian faith as he prepared to lead the squad on their tour to Australia this summer.**

The Saracens player has said that in recent years, his faith has moved from the background to the centre of his life.

Once a self-described “lukewarm Christian”, Itoje said he now prioritises living by biblical values. “I was probably someone who went to church but was not really living the principles or values of it that deeply, but I have always been a believer,” he told BBC Sport.

Itoje, who’s also captain for the English national team and the British & Irish Lions, said his leadership in the sport is rooted in his relationship with God. “The humility that I have tried to embody throughout my life definitely comes from knowing that everything I have has been a gift, not by my own doing, but by the guy upstairs,” he said.

That relationship continues to shape his daily habits. While on tour, he intends to maintain his routine of Bible reading, prayer, and regular Bible studies.

“I try to have a daily amount of time that I spend, whether that is reading the Bible or praying, ideally both,” he said. “I also try and do Bible study once or twice a week at least. I’m going to try and maintain the system I have over in Australia, with Zoom and WhatsApp video calls.”

The 30-year-old said his faith also gives him perspective in the face of the unpredictability of elite sport.

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“You have to just stay as consistent as possible through your actions and hope, through it all, you end up in the place you are supposed to be,” he said.

As he reflected on his journey to leadership, Itoje said: “God’s timing is always the best time.”

When he was unveiled as Lions captain earlier this year, he revealed he had missed Bible study to attend the event. And when he was named England captain in January, one of the first people he told was his pastor.

## Heritage

### So you think you know John Wesley?

Have a go at the John Wesley Quiz posted by United Methodist Communications

[\[https://www.umc.org/en/content/are-you-smarter-than-the-average-united-methodist-john-wesley-edition\]](https://www.umc.org/en/content/are-you-smarter-than-the-average-united-methodist-john-wesley-edition)

## Poem for today

### From the Somme

**by Leslie Coulson (killed in action 1916)**

In other days I sang of simple things,  
Of summer dawn, and summer noon and night,  
The dewy grass, the dew wet fairy rings,  
The larks long golden flight.



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Deep in the forest I made melody  
While squirrels cracked their hazel nuts on high,  
Or I would cross the wet sand to the sea  
And sing to sea and sky.

When came the silvered silence of the night  
I stole to casements over scented lawns,  
And softly sang of love and love's delight  
To mute white marble fauns.

Oft in the tavern parlour I would sing  
Of morning sun upon the mountain vine,  
And, calling for a chorus, sweep the string  
In praise of good red wine.

I played with all the toys the gods provide,  
I sang my songs and made glad holiday  
Now I have cast my broken toys aside  
And flung my lute away.

A singer once, I now am fain to weep,  
Within my soul I feel strange music swell,  
Vast chants of tragedy too deep - too deep  
For my poor lips to tell.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# 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)

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

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