



**Image of the day -
Daddy has moved to a new parish**

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Front page photo - Family support for the the Rev Graham Hare recently instituted rector of The Parishes of Drumragh with Mountfield in Derry Diocese.

Reports

High Court hears landmark Down's syndrome discrimination case

A landmark legal challenge against the government over discriminatory abortion laws is being heard at the High Court.

The case has been brought by Heidi Crowter, a 26-year-old Coventry woman who has Down's syndrome, and Máire Lea-Wilson from Brentford, West London, whose 2-year-old son Aidan has Down's syndrome.

In England, Wales and Scotland, there is a general 24-week limit for abortions, but in cases of disability, including Down's syndrome, cleft lip and club foot, they are allowed up to birth.

Figures from the Department of Health & Social Care show that across England and Wales, there were 3,183 disability-selective abortions in 2019. Of these, 656 followed a prenatal diagnosis of Down's syndrome.

Crowter says current abortion laws are discriminatory towards disabled people.

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The case will be heard at the High Court over a two-day hearing, starting on Tuesday.

Crowter said: "The law says that babies shouldn't be aborted up to birth, but if a baby is found to have Down's syndrome, it can be aborted up until birth. This is the current law in the UK and I think it's not fair.

"People like me are considered to be 'seriously handicapped', but I think using that phrase for a clause in abortion law is so out of date.

"The United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recently said that the United Kingdom should change its abortion law to make sure that people like me aren't singled out because of our disabilities but the Government hasn't changed the law.

"So, last year, me and other members of the Down's syndrome community set out to get rid of the clause in the law, and now our case will soon be heard in the High Court.

"I hope we win. People shouldn't be treated differently because of their disabilities, it's downright discrimination."

Ms Lea-Wilson, 33, said: "I have two sons that I love and value equally, but the law does not value them equally. This is wrong and so we want to try and change that.

"My motivation for taking this joint legal action with Heidi has always been simple. As a mother, I will do all that I can to ensure the fair and equitable treatment of my son, Aidan.

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"Throughout the last year since joining the case, it has become ever increasingly clear to me that Section 1(1)d of the Abortion Act, which differentiates the time limit for abortion, sets the tone for discrimination against people with Down's syndrome which starts before they are born and continues throughout their life with devastating consequences."

Lynn Murray, spokesperson for Don't Screen Us Out, which is supporting the case, said: "By stating that disability is grounds for termination, section 1(1)(d) of the Abortion Act, promotes inequality.

"The provision in the Abortion Act harks back to a time when we thought it was better for people with disabilities not to be part of our society. We're a far more progressive society now, we realise that diversity is healthy, and all of our laws should reflect that."

Last restrictions on communal worship in England to be lifted

All remaining restrictions on communal worship are set to be lifted come July 19, Boris Johnson has confirmed.

It means an end at last to the hugely unpopular ban on congregational singing in church which has been challenged over the last few months by church leaders.

Outlining the changes in the Commons, the Prime Minister said, "There will be no limits on the number of people who

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can attend life events like weddings and funerals, and there will be no restrictions on communal worship or singing."

With most restrictions lifting, 'Freedom Day' will see all businesses open, a return to the office, and an end to the legal requirement to wear face masks.

But Johnson cautioned people not to get "demob happy" as concerns remain about soaring Covid cases and the possibility of new variants emerging further down the road.

Commenting on the announcement, the Bishop of London, Sarah Mullally, also struck a note of caution as she paid tribute to the personal sacrifices many have made during the pandemic.

"The vaccination programme has been an answer to prayer but, while it has transformed the outlook of the pandemic, it has not eliminated all risk," she said.

"So it is right, as the Prime Minister has said, that we all must exercise personal responsibility and carefully manage the risks from Covid-19.

"As Christians, called to love our neighbour as ourselves, we must also exercise collective responsibility and continue to take appropriate precautions to protect others.

"Over the past 18 months we have mourned the tens of thousands who have died from Covid-19.

"We have also all made sacrifices and seen previously unimaginable changes to our way of life as we sought to

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protect one another and especially those who are most vulnerable.

"In churches that has meant unprecedented restrictions on the way we practise our faith itself, affecting our ability to meet together, to sing together and to celebrate the sacraments together, all of which are at the heart of our worship.

"We have also seen particular restrictions on the way we marked major events in our lives through baptisms, weddings and funerals; sadly many were denied the basic comforts of sharing moments of joy and pain with others.

"I've been inspired by the way churches have risen to the challenge, finding new ways of gathering to worship God, reach out and serve their neighbours in these difficult times. I have been deeply moved by the extraordinary efforts of those working on the front line in our NHS and social care.

"And I would also like to highlight the sacrifices, often overlooked, made by children and young people to protect us all for so long during such a formative time in their lives.

"I am also mindful of those whose lives have been radically changed by the effects of long covid. We will await the new Government advice for places of worship and adapt our guidance to churches accordingly."



140 Nigerian Baptist students kidnapped in Kaduna

Most of the 180 students at a Christian boarding school in Kaduna state were kidnapped early Monday morning, Nigerian sources told Morning Star News (MSN).

Shooting wildly, the armed assailants breached the walls of Bethel Baptist High School in Maraban Rido, on the outskirts of the city of Kaduna at about 2 a.m. on Monday (July 5) and took the students in the school hostel away at gunpoint, area residents said.

Efforts were still underway to determine exactly how many students were abducted. A teacher reportedly said 140 students were kidnapped while 25 students escaped, but area residents living close to the school said 179 children were abducted of which only 15 escaped.

Established by the Bethel Baptist Church in Kaduna, a member church of the Nigerian Baptist Convention (NBC), the school was attacked after the kidnappers overcame some security personnel, sources said. It was the latest in an increasing series of attacks on schools and colleges in northern Nigeria this year.

“It is another sad moment as Fulani bandits/gunmen attacked Bethel Baptist,” area resident Christopher Kantoma told MSN in a text message. “They kidnapped all the students of the boarding school, but only 15 of them escaped from their captors.”

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Joseph Hayab, a Baptist minister and Kaduna state chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), said his son was among those who narrowly escaped. Many of the students remain unaccounted for, and efforts were still underway to determine the total number of students missing, he said.

“The armed bandits kidnapped many students; right now I’m speechless,” Hayab told MSN. “The school is an educational ministry of my church. This is a very, very sad situation ...”

People and places



Three new canons at St Patrick's

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The reverends, Katharine Poulton, Malcolm Kingston and Kenny Hall were installed in St Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday past. With Mr Kingston's appointment to the Chapter, both Clerical Honorary Secretaries of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland are now canons of St Patrick's Cathedral Dublin, and it is quite a few years since that has happened. Photo above - The new canons with Very Rev Dr William Morton, Dean of St Patrick's.

More vocations from Queen's University Chaplaincy



Congratulations to QUB alumnus, John O'Laverty, who was ordained Deacon at the Venerable English College's summer residence, Villa Palazzola, outside Rome on

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Sunday. The Chaplaincy at Queen's has pledged to keep Deacon John in its prayers as he prepares for ordination to priesthood for Down and Connor Diocese in the coming year.

Deacon John (left) is pictured with his fellow ordinands and Archbishop Paul Tighe.

Saint Colmcille and an Irish Camino

Led by the Bishop of Raphoe, Alan McGuckian SJ, a group is following in the footsteps of Saint Colmcille in Donegal, Ireland. It's a promotional walk for the 280km Slí Cholmcille, that they hope will become the Irish 'Camino.' This year marks the 1,500 anniversary of the birth of the saint who founded more than 60 churches and monasteries across Ireland and helped spread Christianity throughout Scotland. The group was invited for a meal in the home of Daniel O'Donnell and his wife Majella.

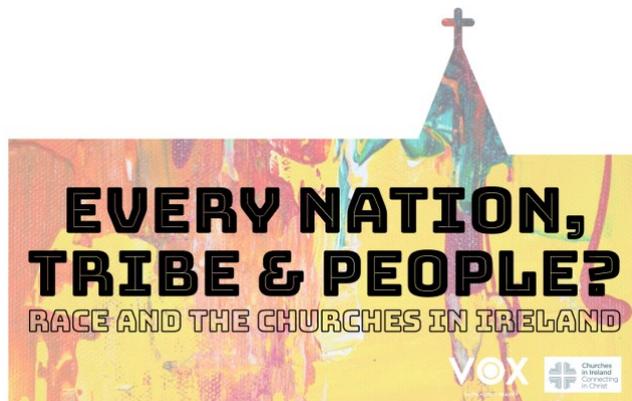
Rector resigns over C of I attitude to LGBT

A C of I rector has resigned alleging that the church is not open to the needs of LGBT people.

The Belfast Telegraph account is available at -

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/northern-ireland-minister-resigns-from-his-church-over-lgbt-oppression-40619943.html>

Books, broadcasts, resources, and Webinars



Churches in Ireland survey on race

“We’re live now with our in–depth survey, an all–island research project led by Irish Churches and Vox_ie, with the support of EANNnews and TearfundIreland on race and the churches on the island of Ireland. Take the survey here: surveymonkey.com/r/DNYNF5Q. Please share!

Share in Derry and Raphoe’s Holiday Bible Club

“Hello and welcome to Day 1 of the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe’s Holiday Bible Club. All this week, we’re inviting children in our Diocese to ‘Meet Moe’. Each day, from Monday to Friday, we’ll post a video here on the Derry and Raphoe Facebook page, as well as on our website – derryandraphoe.org

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We'll have activities for you to enjoy, as we look at the story of Moses from the Book of Exodus. We hope you'll have lots of fun as we learn about one of Christianity's greatest prophets.

The links to the crafts for Monday are:

Moses in basket - <https://craftingthewordofgod.com/2013/03/19/moses-birth/>

Moses in the water - <https://craftingthewordofgod.com/2016/03/19/moses-in-the-river/>

Moses in basket - <https://www.jesus-without-language.net/miriam-exodus-2-play/>

Supporting Activities: if you would like an alternative to craft or an additional activity have a look at these suggestions:

Colouring Page - <https://whatsinthebible.com/activity-library/baby-moses/>

Maze - <https://craftingthewordofgod.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/moses-in-the-river-puzzle.pdf>

Crossword - https://sermons4kids.com/baby_by_the_river_crossword.htm?fromSermonId=16

WCC Prayer resources

“Pray with us for people and churches in #Kenya and #Tanzania:

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Dear Lord,

We thank you for the gift of peace. It's a gift that only you can give.

Lord, we are living in great turmoil... “

oikoumene.org/resources/pray...

Sharing the Good News

Issue number 66 of Sharing the Good News, the Catholic Church in Ireland's monthly magazine for dioceses and parishes, has just been published.

The June 2021 issue features articles on this year's Reek Pilgrimage on Croagh Patrick which will take place over four days each week in July;

Bishop Denis Nulty's welcome for Pope Francis' message to Grandparents and the Elderly;

Pope Francis' appointment of Father Ger Nash as Bishop of Ferns; the Irish Church Music Association Summer School moving online this year; Bishop Michael Router highlighting the Towards Healing counselling service for survivors; Archbishop Dermot Farrell on responding to God's call; and, the bishops expression of thanks for 550 submissions received for Synodal Pathway

Sharing the Good News Issue 66 June 2021 to view/download the current issue.

[<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2021/06/25/issue-66-of-sharing-the-good-news-newsletter-is-now-available/>]

Opinion - Doctors forget they are plumbers - Alice Thomas Ellis

From Lessons From the Archives in the Catholic Herald

The highly praised novelist, “Homelife” columnist for The Spectator, The Oldie, and The Catholic Herald, creator of cookbooks, and Duckworth’s fiction editor, Alice Thomas Ellis was both a smoker and a contrarian. Here, writing in 1993, she writes as both. She expresses skepticism about the expertise of doctors some will feel relevant at the moment.

Cat Among the Pigeons collects some of her Catholic Herald columns. Serpent On the Rock reflects sharply on modern Catholicism. Her novels won several awards, The 27th Kingdom being shortlisted for the Booker Prize. A trilogy of novels published together as The Summer House was made into a movie. Under her married name Anna Haycraft, she wrote cookbooks. Her autobiography, of sorts, appeared as A Welsh Childhood. One of her best known lines, characteristic, is “There is no reciprocity. Men love women. Women love children. Children love hamsters. Hamsters don’t love anyone”.

The article appeared as “A sense of perspective or a lot of hot air?” in the 11 June 1993 issue.

At this time, Dr Forster says that people should guard against colds, and above all, against the contagion of typhus and other fevers, which are apt to prevail in the early spring. “Smoking tobacco,” he observes, “is a very salutary practice in general, as well as being a preventative against infection

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in particular. The best tobacco is the Turkey, the Persian and what is called Dutch canaster. Smoking is a custom which should be recommended in the cottages of the poor. and in the great populous towns liable to contagion”.

This was written about 1826 and the message I get from it is that doctors are not to be trusted. Half the time they don't know what they're talking about and the rest of the time they're bullying us.

Today we have doctors who are proposing that inveterate smokers should not be treated for illness which they have brought on themselves from persisting in the habit, while other doctors are still suggesting that smoking protects the body from certain afflictions: colitis, schizophrenia and alzheimer's for instance, if my memory serves me right. (It may not, for I've been cutting down recently and this undoubtedly has a deleterious effect on the concentration).

Many people have already inquired indignantly whether the first group of doctors would refuse to treat people for other self-inflicted ailments. What about the bibulous, the promiscuous, and those who don't look before crossing the road? I won't ask this question myself, since it leads down bizarre pathways and you think you're going mad. What would happen if midwives turned their backs on those in childbirth, maintaining that the lady should have known better than to get herself in this condition?

The trouble is that doctors tend to forget that they are basically plumbers and they put on airs and play God.

I have been told that it was an old Chinese custom to pay the doctor only so long as those of whose health he had charge stayed well. If they fell ill the medical practitioner was

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either dismissed or put to death. (I won't be able to remember which until I've had another cigarette.) It also raises further questions. How did the Chinese doctor, who must have lived in a constant state of nervous tension, prevail upon his patients to abstain from harmful practices?

Did he rely on them accepting his advice and strictures or did he follow them round, leaping out of the bamboo thicket crying "don't do that"?

The modern doctor admittedly has to live with the threat of litigation but will only suffer if he makes a positive error. not if his consulting rooms are full of sick people upon whom he relies to make a living.

It all comes down to the regrettable human urge to lay the blame somewhere.

The ailing smoker might sue the tobacco company, saying it's all its fault. The doctor may blame the patient saying it's all his fault. The family or the patient might well say it's all the fault of the doctor for refusing h help and sue him. In the end everyone's miserable except the lawyer. Now I've bought of lawyers I feel more kindly disposed Inwards doctors.

There is something surely sick about a society in which recriminations and the acquisition of large sums of money play such a part. Still I don't suppose it was much better in 1826. If everyone had listened to the doctor there must have been a terrible fug.



Pointers for prayer

Grant, O Lord, we beseech thee,
that the course of this world
may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance,
that thy Church may joyfully serve thee
in all godly quietness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Guardian of the weak,
through the teachings of your prophets
you have claimed our cities, towns, and homes
as temples of your presence and citadels of your justice.
Turn the places we live into strongholds of your grace,
that the most vulnerable
as well as the most powerful among us
may find peace in the security
that comes in the strong name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

God of grace and powerful weakness,
at times your projects were ignored, rejected, belittled, and
unwelcome.

Trusting that we, too, are called to be prophets,
fill us with your Spirit,
and support us by your gentle hands,
that we may persevere in speaking your word
and living our faith. Amen.

O God,
sustain us in the complexity of our humanity
as you sustained David--
playing the harp of youth,

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throwing stones at giant problems,
loving our friends beyond wisdom,
dancing worship,
mourning children,
breaking our hearts in psalms, and
longing for warmth in our old bones. Amen.

Friend in Christ,
God invites us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers
as dear to us as our own needs.
Loving our neighbours as ourselves,
we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions
on behalf of the church and the world.

Hear our prayers, God of power,
and through the ministry of your Son
free us from the grip of the tomb,
that we may desire you as the fullness of life
and proclaim your saving deeds to all the world. Amen.

As you heard the prayer of Isaac and Rebekah, O God,
and guided them in the way of your love,
so listen now to those who call upon you.
Move us to praise your gracious will,
for in Christ Jesus you have saved us from the deeds of
death
and opened for us the hidden ways of your love.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord God, friend of those in need,
your Son Jesus has untied our burdens
and healed our spirits.
We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened,
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those seeking healing,
those in need within the church and the world.
Hear our prayers
that we may love you with our whole being
and willingly share the concerns of our neighbours. Amen.

Creator God,
you call us to love and serve you
with body, mind, and spirit
through loving your creation
and our sisters and brothers.
Open our hearts in compassion
and receive these petitions
on behalf of the needs of the church and the world.
Holy One,
hear our prayers and make us faithful stewards
of the fragile bounty of this earth
so that we may be entrusted with the riches of heaven.
Amen.

We praise your abiding guidance, O God,
for you sent us Jesus, our Teacher and Messiah,
to model for us the way of love for the whole universe.
We offer these prayers of love
on behalf of ourselves and our neighbours,
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures.
Loving God,
open our ears to hear your word
and draw us closer to you,
that the whole world may be one with you
as you are one with us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Speaking to the Soul

God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.

Matthew 5:8 NLT

If you have any gold or silver you will know that it is vital that the metal is free from all impurity. If it is even slightly impure it will be worth only a fraction of the value of the pure metal. Here Jesus is saying that the same rule applies to our spiritual lives. We need to be single-minded, keeping our eyes fixed on his Kingdom and not allowing ourselves to be distracted by any lesser objective. It reminds us of Psalm 24 where we learn that the people who were welcomed to worship God in the temple were those who had “clean hands and a pure heart”.

For most of us this will make uncomfortable reading. We can easily understand the desirability of having pure hearts, but we know that our lives are a long way away from that. Even our best efforts can very easily be spoilt by unhelpful motives. When we give generously to help others, we will often feel personal pleasure and pride at what we have given. In fulfilling our roles in our churches it is easy to focus far too much attention on the love and gratitude that we gain from our service. Even in preaching the word of God there is always the danger of self-satisfaction at having preached a wonderful sermon. One day after John Bunyan had just finished preaching a sermon someone came up and told him that he had preached well. He apparently replied, “The devil already told me that as I was coming down the pulpit steps.”

Honesty compels us all to admit that we are a long way away from living lives of complete purity. Much as we might long to live a life of single-minded commitment to God we know that we are easily distracted. However, I don't believe that Jesus' words should depress us. As we read the beatitudes we are being shown the beauty and desirability of living a life in complete conformity to God's will. Inspired by this "gold standard" he then urges us to walk in his footsteps relying completely on his forgiveness and the power of his Spirit.

QUESTION

What would help you to live more single-mindedly for God?

PRAYER

Lord God, I confess that I easily get distracted from following your will. I praise you for your forgiveness and for the renewing power of your Spirit. Am

