

Church News Ireland



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Image of the day

Reopening of The Menin Gate Memorial

HRH Princess Anne, The Princess Royal and Sir Timothy Laurence were welcomed by Princess Claire of Belgium at Cloth Hall in Ypres, Belgium where they attended the reopening of Menin Gate Memorial, July 7, 2025.



The Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing is a war memorial in Ypres, Belgium, dedicated to the more than 54,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers who were killed in the Ypres Salient of World War I and whose graves are unknown.

During the event The Princess Royal also laid a posy of flowers by the grave of Prince Maurice of Battenberg, son of Princess Beatrice of the UK and grandson of HM Queen

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Victoria who was killed in action at Zonnebeke in the Ypres Salient in late October 1914.

Read more about the Menin Gate Memorial:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menin_Gate

Shared from History & Lives of the British Royals
<https://www.facebook.com/History-Lives-of-the-British-Royals-122845112442353/>

News



Midlands Prison Visitor Centre thanks Mothers Union



Mothers' Union received the email below from the Visitor Centre in the Midlands' Prison.

On behalf of the Midlands Visitor Centre I would like to thank the Mothers Union for providing us with two bean bags and

Sensory Bubble tube which has been a great success with the children, especially those who need extra support.

We support over one thousand families who visit a family member in Midlands Prison.

Claudia Kidd and Linda Ward came last Thursday and brought bags for inmates who need a bag when they are

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released. Many leave with a clear plastic bag and this gives them some dignity when walking to the bus or train station.

Thank you so much.

We really appreciate all the Mothers Union have done and continue to support us to make our centre a place of friendliness and support.

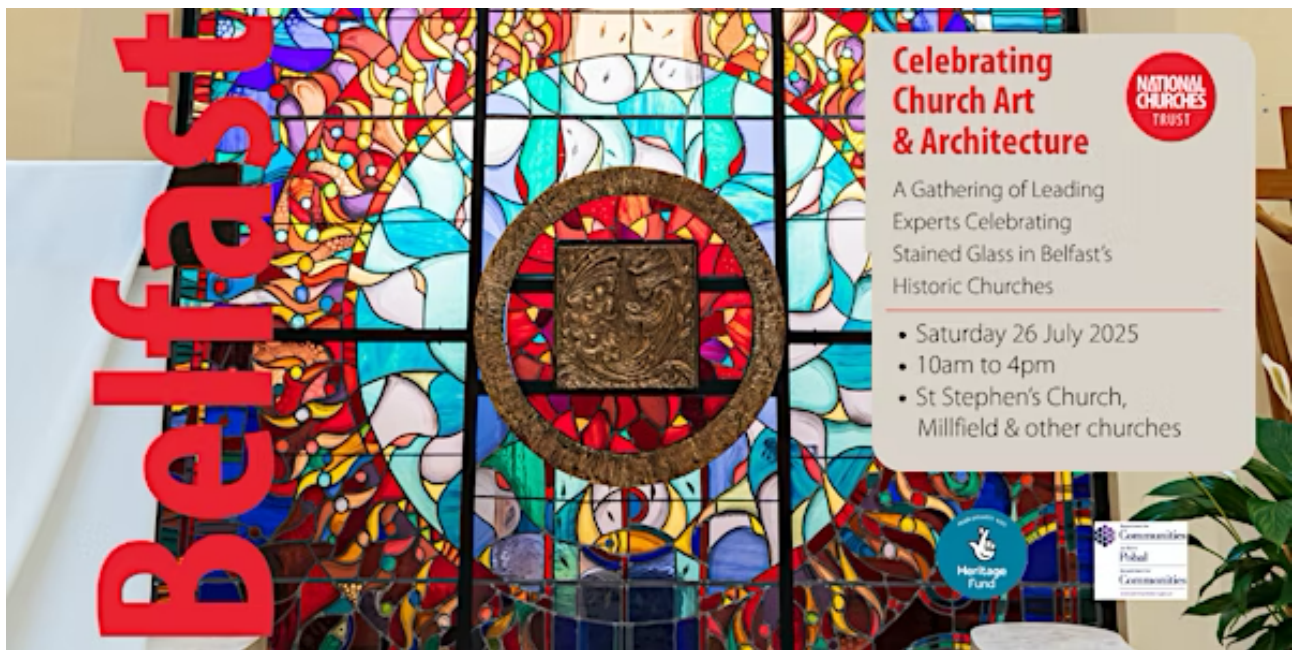
Stained Glass Sunday

The upcoming Celebration of Stained Glass Art and Architecture in Belfast on Saturday 26 July invites participants to critically engage with stained glass as a living, evolving art form.

While deeply develop as a contemporary medium, reflecting present-day narratives. Churches, often perceived solely as relics of the past, are revealed here as dynamic cultural spaces where light, material, and meaning intersect.

Finola Finlay, one of our featured speakers has co-authored the widely respected Roaringwater Journal with her late husband, Robert Harris. A prominent voice in the study of stained glass, she is currently authoring a study on the stained glass artists George Walsh and his father George Stephen Walsh.

At this event, Finola will present an in-depth exploration of the stained-glass scheme at Holy Family Parish, Limestone Road, Belfast a contemporary church completed in 2007 by architect Eamon Hedderman. The church showcases



George Walsh's vibrant luminous glassworks, including a large screen enclosing a bronze tabernacle, also crafted by the artist.

The art within this sacred space is deeply cognisant of the legacy it reflects and the context it inhabits. The imagery is charged with meaning, from the depiction of barbed wire, evoking division and conflict to symbols of opposing tribes, echoing fractured histories. Perhaps most striking of all are the contemporary Stations of the Cross by artist Laura O'Hagan, which convey a profound sense of emotional rawness.

Connecting people to place, this event will be further enriched by the presence of artist George Walsh, who will travel from Dublin to join us. George will offer unique insights into his creative process, sharing the stories, symbolism, and techniques behind his work.

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Through the Treasure Ireland project, we aim to deepen public engagement with these often-overlooked buildings, revealing them not only as places of worship, but as vibrant spaces where architecture, art, and traditional craft continue to thrive.

This is a free Treasure Ireland event from #NationalChurchesTrust. Made possible by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, with thanks to National Lottery players. Also supported by the Historic Environment Division at the Department for Communities.

Register here: <https://lnkd.in/eNzQ8NCd>

Commons leader rules out end to parliamentary prayers

Humanists UK has criticised the decision, arguing the practice is outdated and unfair to MPs who don't share the Anglican faith.

The Leader of the House of Commons has ruled out any move to scrap daily prayers before Parliament begins its business, saying the institution remains “attached to the Church of England, and that’s sort of important”.

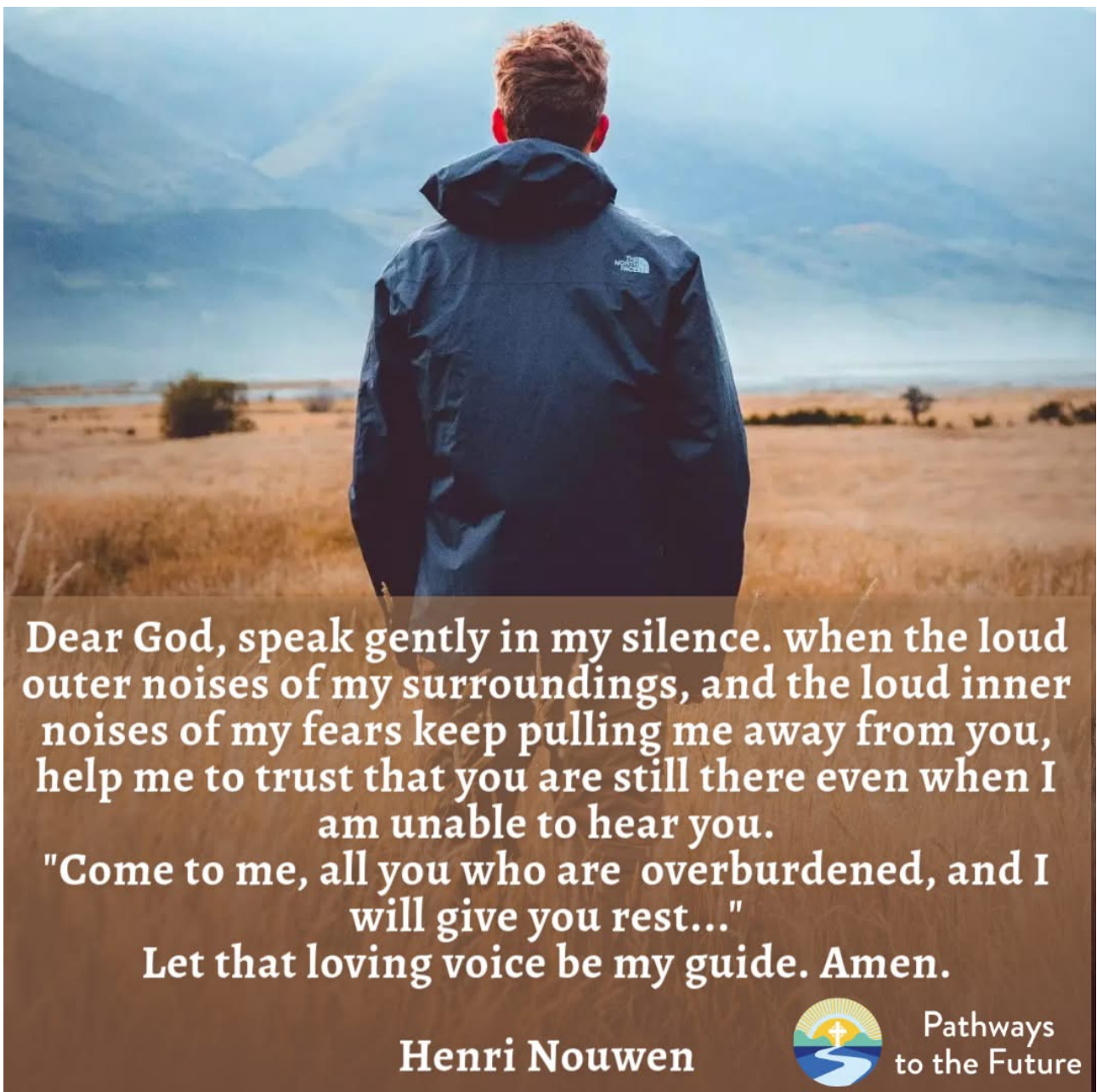
Humanists UK argues that the tradition allows MPs who attend prayers to reserve their seats for the rest of the day, giving them an advantage on busy days like the Prime Minister’s Questions. Humanists UK says this leaves others at a “democratic disadvantage”.

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While Lucy Powell MP pointed to a secular seat reservation alternative for MPs on committees, Humanists UK says this doesn't help MPs without committee meetings.

The group highlighted that other European countries with established churches do not run daily prayers in this way, noting that Scotland instead offers a multi-faith "time for reflection".

Richy Thompson, Director of Public Affairs and Policy at Humanists UK, said: "Every MP should have the same right



Dear God, speak gently in my silence. when the loud outer noises of my surroundings, and the loud inner noises of my fears keep pulling me away from you, help me to trust that you are still there even when I am unable to hear you.

"Come to me, all you who are overburdened, and I will give you rest..."

Let that loving voice be my guide. Amen.

Henri Nouwen



Pathways
to the Future

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to access seats in the House of Commons regardless of their religion or belief... it is fundamental for the Modernisation Committee to review the practice of prayers at the start of parliamentary business, and we urge them to do so.”



Flying puffin for new Bishop of Crediton at Exeter Cathedral

The Right Revd Moira Astin has been officially welcomed as the new Bishop of Crediton during a Service of Installation at Exeter Cathedral.

The installation, a tradition which sees a bishop formally placed in their stall in the cathedral's quire, was attended by fellow bishops, archdeacons, and clergy and church members from across Devon.

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It was the first opportunity for Bishop Moira to don her bishop's mitre – which was embroidered with swirling coastal scenes and a flying puffin, honouring her love of seabirds and the Devonshire coast. The design also reflected her passion for music, with choral notes stitched into the scene.

Bishop Moira preached her inaugural sermon, drawing on the story of Moses and the burning bush, and John 17:20-26. Reflecting on the importance of names, she said: “The names of God in the Bible show us something of what God is like. God's very essence is relationship... we believe in the God who is love.”

During the ceremony, two young people presented Bishop Moira with prayers written for her new ministry. The Bishop of Exeter invited her to make vows to guide the diocese in its vision: to grow in prayer, make new disciples, and serve the people of Devon with joy.

Following the service, Bishop Moira was welcomed into the College of Canons of Exeter Cathedral and presented with a cake decorated with a puffin, marking the start of her new ministry.

Pope to celebrate new Care of Creation Mass

On Wednesday, 9 July , 2025, Pope Leo XIV will celebrate the first 'Mass for the Care of Creation', with a new formulary of the Roman Missal, produced by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development

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and the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

The Pope will celebrate this private Mass during his holiday with the staff of the 'Borgo Laudato Si' ('Laudato Si Village'), an educational center located in the Papal residence in Castel Gandolfo.



With this new formulary "the Church is offering liturgical, spiritual and communal support for the care we all need to exercise of nature, our common home. Such service is indeed a great act of faith, hope and charity", Cardinal Michael Czerny, Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development said during the press conference. This Mass dedicated to taking care of creation "calls us to be faithful stewards of what God has entrusted to us - not only in daily choices and public policies, but also in our prayer, our worship, and our way of living in the world."

In the Roman Missal there are 49 different Masses and prayers for various needs and occasions. Of these, 17 are dedicated to civil needs and this new liturgical text will now become a part of this category. An official decree by the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, approved by Pope Leo XIV and dated June 8, was also released, marking the addition of the formulary to the Roman Missal.

This liturgical text was developed in collaboration with several Vatican dicasteries and was strongly inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*, which this year celebrates the 10th anniversary of its publication. The release of the formulary also falls on the year of the 35th anniversary of St John Paul II's 1990 message for the World Day of Peace, titled 'Peace with God the Creator, Peace with all of Creation.'

"'The Mass for the Care for Creation' takes up some of the main positions contained in *Laudato Si'* and expresses them in the form of a prayer within the theological framework that the encyclical revives", Archbishop Vittorio Francesco Viola, secretary of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, explained during the press conference. The texts that make up the formulary for this Mass "are a good antidote" against reading *Laudato Si'* as concerned with a "false or superficial ecology", which is "far removed from that 'integral ecology' amply described and promoted in the encyclical". In fact, he described Francis' encyclical as an "eco-social" text, rather than just "ecological".

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"Creation is not an added theme but is always already present in the Catholic liturgy", as the Eucharist "joins heaven and earth, it embraces and penetrates all creation" and in it "we bless God for the bread and wine we receive", Cardinal Czerny said. This Mass can now "increase our gratitude" and also "invites us to respond with care and love" to the issues of today.

Education

Strabane Academy Exodus Team in Romania



The team have settled in well to our launch programme in sunny Sutor.



Our travels all went smoothly and we arrived safely at lunchtime. On our first day we enjoyed games, times of Bible study and teaching and a camp fire. Our day culminated in erecting our own shelters for ‘bush camping’ last night. The girls were very pleased with their engineering skills...the boys stole a marquee (there is some debate over whose shelter was better). After an early start this morning we have enjoyed a relaxed morning and are gearing up for games this afternoon. Everyone is doing really well.

Stranmillis digital plus

In addition to graduating with their B.Ed. (Hons) degree, last week, these students were celebrating receiving additional qualifications in Google Educator Level 1 and



2, Google Educator ‘Read and Write’ and their ‘Mastering the Digital Classroom Certificate’.

This was the first cohort of Initial Teacher Education Graduates who have undertaken these additional courses through the Centre for Digital Innovation in Technology (CDIT). CDIT is a collaborative framework between Belfast Metropolitan College, Stranmillis University College, and Queens University Belfast and industry partners to create a shared centre to advance digital innovation and technology through a skills-based approach.

Irene Bell, Head of our Post Primary Programme said 'It is exciting to have this first cohort going into our classrooms with advanced skills which they will share with their colleagues and the children they teach' Congrats to all!

Campbell College SEAG reminder

Just a reminder that registration is now open for children in Primary 6 intending to sit the SEAG examinations in November 2025.

Campbell College is proud to act as a test centre and welcomes both boys and girls to register with us. Our aim is to make the experience as smooth and comfortable as possible for both children and parents on the day.

Find out more and register here: <https://bit.ly/3TCVOYT>
Should you have any questions, please get in touch.

Cathedral Calls

Commissioning of new mural at Waterford Cathedral

Official Commissioning of the Mural of Our Lady of Waterford Saturday July 12th at 12:30pm at the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity.

All are warmly invited to join Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan as he blesses the recently completed mural of Our Lady of Waterford this Saturday July 12th at 12:30pm, immediately following 12 noon Mass at the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity, Barronstrand Street, Waterford City.

All Welcome

The image of Our Lady of Waterford has a remarkable and storied history, dating back to the Dominican Abbey founded in 1226. Even through the darkness of persecution, the people of Waterford held fast to their devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

The new mural at the Cathedral, commissioned by Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan and painted by artist Marie-Jeanne Jacob, stands as a testament to centuries of enduring devotion — a reminder that Our Lady of Waterford continues to watch over her people. The mural has been painted on the side of the former PTSB bank building which is next door to the Cathedral.

Clergy and ministry

Appointment of Dean of Elphin and Ardagh

Canon Ruth West has been appointed Dean of Elphin and Ardagh by Bishop Ferran Glenfield. Canon Ruth will be instituted in October and will also take up the position of Rector of the Sligo Cathedral Group.

Canon Ruth shared this exciting news with her current parishioners last weekend, and while her departure from Co Fermanagh will be keenly felt, her appointment represents a well-deserved recognition of her exceptional ministry and leadership qualities.

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Originally from Co Down, Canon Ruth's journey in ordained ministry began with her curacy in Waterford, where she first demonstrated the skills and insight that would become hallmarks of her service. Following her curacy, she served as rector in Inver, Co Donegal, before beginning her current incumbency in Florencecourt in 2017.

During her time in Florencecourt, Canon Ruth has been a beloved and respected figure, known for her deep commitment to her parishioners and her wider contribution to the life of the diocese. Her ministry has been characterised by a genuine care for people, a gift for preaching, and an ability to connect with all kinds.

**Lord, this new day,
If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely.
If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly.
If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently.**



Those who have worked alongside Canon Ruth will not be surprised by her continuing rise within the church. Her drive, dedication, and considerable talents have been evident throughout her ministry. As the Psalms remind us, “The Lord will fulfil his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever” (Psalm 138:8), and we see God’s hand at work in Ruth’s calling to this new position. The position of Dean of Elphin and Ardagh carries significant responsibility, involving oversight of a large geographical area. As Rector of the Sligo Cathedral Group, she will also have the opportunity to lead worship in some of our loveliest buildings.

Ballylesson seeks a Community Youth Pastor

Ballylesson.church is looking for an experienced, dedicated and passionate Community Youth Pastor to join our team!

Do you have a passion for seeing young people come to faith and grow in their relationship with Jesus? Do you have a heart for equipping young people to fulfil God's purpose as followers of Him? Do you have the ability to reach out to all ages in our community?

Then we’d love you to apply to be our Community Youth Pastor and join our Kingdom adventure in Ballylesson church.



**WE ARE
HIRING**

Community Youth Pastor

£26-£30K*

REQUEST AN APPLICATION
PACK
from
rector@ballylesson.church

*This is a full-time post 37.5hrs a week (Part-Time hours may be considered) with a competitive salary of £26-£30k based on experience.

Give Rev Mervyn a call (07808481669) for more info or email rector@ballylesson.church for the criteria and application.

Applications close at 4pm on Monday 14th July 2025. Have a nosey at who we are...

<https://youtu.be/eB97KiyKxKk?si=Wp3pdXnvSeyTaD0y>

Poem for today

Football Field - Evening

by John Alexander Ross McKellar

Cross bars and posts, the echo of distant bells,
The cool and friendly scent of whispering turf;
And in the air a little wind that tells
Of moonlit waves beyond a murmuring surf.

The glittering blue and verdant afternoon
Has locked up all its colours, leaving dearth,
Deserted, underneath a careless moon,
The glory has departed from this earth.

The goals stand up on their appointed lines,
But all their worth has faded with the sun;
Unchallenged now I cross their strict confines;
The ball is gone, the game is lost and won.

I walk again where once I came to grief,
Crashing to earth, yet holding fast the ball,
Symbol of yet another True Belief,
The last but surely not the least of all:

To strain and struggle to the end of strength;
To lean on skill, not ask a gift of chance,
To win, or lose, and recognize at length
The game the thing; the rest, a circumstance.

And now the teams are vanished from the field,
But still an echo of their presence clings;

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The moon discovers what the day concealed,
The gracefulness and grief of passing things.

Until the moon, that looked on Stonehenge ground
Before the stones, will rise and sink and set
Above this field, where also will be found
The relics of a mystery men forget.

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

Church News Ireland

www.churchnewsireland.org

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

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