



**Image of the day - St Patrick's Cathedral Dublin,
Celestory windows restored**

Armagh Cathedral support for Dementia NI National Volunteers' Week

Local dementia charity, Dementia NI, is celebrating National Volunteers' Week from 1st -7th June 2021. The Charity, which has groups established across Northern Ireland, has recently recruited volunteers to support the running of newly established Empower and Support groups in the Armagh, Banbridge and Newry areas, to support local people living with dementia.

Davie McElhinney, a Member of Dementia NI, who lives with a diagnosis of dementia says "Dementia NI volunteers are such an important part of the Charity. During Volunteers Week we would like to thank them for all the hard work and support they give to the Members and Staff. We could not function as well without them".

Dementia NI was founded in 2015, by five people who had been diagnosed with dementia. The Charity is a member-led organization, specifically for people living with a dementia diagnosis, who want to raise awareness of the condition and challenge the stigma around a dementia diagnosis, as well as ensure that the voice of people living with Dementia is heard.

Since its inception, Dementia NI has continued to grow, establishing Empower and Support groups throughout Northern Ireland. The Armagh Empower and Support group is the most recently established group. Its launch would not have been possible without the hard work of Dementia NI



Front row: Davey McElhinney, Dementia NI Empowerment Group member, Dean Shane Forster, and Hazel Haworth, Dementia NI's Empowerment Officer. Back row: Local Dementia NI volunteers Carol Conlin, Barbara Campbell and Corrine Hamilton. Missing from the photograph was Betty Beamish. Photograph: Ian Maginess

volunteers and the generosity of St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh, in supplying the premises.

Speaking before the photo call, the Very Revd Shane Forster, Dean of Armagh, said, "One of the many things we have learned during the pandemic is the importance of community and human contact. We have all, at one level or another, missed face to face conversations and the opportunity of meeting with friends.

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“At the Cathedral, we are delighted to be able to offer a safe space and a warm welcome in our Music Hall to the members of The Armagh Empower and Support Group.

“The volunteers have been doing some wonderful work online in support of those living with dementia in our local community and we very much look forward to real time meetings in the future. Dementia NI volunteers provide an invaluable support network, friendship, and a listening ear to those who are facing numerous challenges at different stages in their journey with dementia.”

At present, much of Dementia NI activities are carried out virtually and, in this regard, the Charity’s volunteers remain invaluable at supporting the smooth running of the organization and remain a vital link to those living with dementia to remain connected. Dementia NI continues to run its Empower and Support Groups on a weekly basis (currently online), alongside other activities and research projects.

Membership with Dementia NI is available to anyone living with a mild to moderate dementia diagnosis. If you or someone you know has recently received a



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diagnosis of dementia and are interested in finding out more about how Dementia NI can help support you on your journey, please go to www.dementiani.org or phone 028 9693 1555 for more information.

President, Bishops and Ambassadors set to mark St. Colmcille's 1500th anniversary

Organisations across Derry and Donegal are gearing up for the Feast Day of St. Colmcille on June 9 – a date that is all the more special given this historic year is the 1500th anniversary of the Saint's birth, The Derry Journal reports.

Celebrations kick off with the 2021 American Conference for Irish Studies (ACIS) on 2-5 June 2021, broadcast live from Ulster University's Magee campus, where academics and historians from across the globe will bring Colmcille's rich academic legacy to life.

Some of the live streamed sessions will be available to the public at www.acis2021.com including a keynote address by Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland on Thursday, June 3 at 5pm as well as addresses by the Irish and UK ambassadors to the US on Saturday, June 5.

St. Columba's Day: Colmcille in his own words - 'This is why I love Derry...for its host of white angels from one end to the other'

As part of the conference, a special programme 'Slí Colmcille' presented by Lónra Leitir Ceanainn in

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conjunction with Letterkenny Regional Cultural Centre will premiere live on Friday, June 4 at 8pm on www.facebook.com/LIONRALC with music and poetry, history and storytelling from a host of wonderful guests across Ireland and Scotland.

On Sunday, June 6, 2021, the Saint's birth place in Gartan, Donegal will be celebrated in two special services. Mass will be broadcast live on RTÉ One at 11.00am to celebrate both Corpus Christi and the 1500th anniversary, with celebrant Fr. Michael McKeever joined by parishioners from St Colmcille's Church, Glendowan.

A Church of Ireland Service of Holy Communion in St Columba's Church, Gartan in Church Hill at 12.30pm will celebrate the international heritage of Columba and can be viewed live at www.facebook.com/StColumbaGartan or later at www.youtube.com/channel/UCCunnIIJgF9K_Rcz0-Vm2-Q/

Courtesy The Derry Journal, 01.06.2021

Whitehead Presbyterian Minister to leave over same-sex couples rule

A Presbyterian minister in County Antrim is to step down over the church's decision to deny same-sex couples full membership, Robbie Meredith writes for BBC News NI

Rev Ian Carton, of Whitehead Presbyterian, is thought to be the first minister to leave over the move.

In 2018, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) decided to deny full membership to anyone in a same-sex relationship.

Rev Carton said it was "excluding people we'd like to welcome".

In an address to his congregation on Sunday, he said: "The decisions taken by our denomination mean that they can never belong."

At their general assembly in Belfast in 2018, the PCI adopted a new policy denying full membership to anyone in a same-sex relationship.

It also meant their children could no longer be baptised.

The PCI also decided to cut its ceremonial ties to the Church of Scotland due to its more liberal attitude to same-sex relationships.

Rev Carton has been the minister at Whitehead Presbyterian for about 14 years.

He told his congregation he had asked to be released from his ministry as he was "far from comfortable with the current direction that the Presbyterian Church seems to be going in".

He said he and his wife had found the church's position "painful and hard".

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"To our mind, it seems to be excluding people we'd like to welcome," he said.

"I am informing you that I intend to ask the Presbytery of Carrickfergus to release me from my charge as minister of Whitehead on the 30 September this year.

"I wanted you to hear from me first and not after I have made the request.

"I just have found it incredibly difficult."

Rev Carton said his wife, June, decided in October that she did not "feel comfortable" coming to a Presbyterian church any more.

"She felt if it was a church that was saying to anybody that you're not welcome, that you're not invited on the basis of gender, on the basis of your sexual orientation, that wasn't a place that she could be," he said.

"I've tried to keep going. But it's become a bit like trying to ride two horses at the same time that are going in two different directions."

In an often emotional address, Rev Carton said he had prayed and read, and studied the stories of Moses, Joshua, Jeremiah and David from the Old Testament.

"It's a call to leave the church of my birth, the church that I've grown up in," he said.

"What I hear is God calling me, calling me to those who certainly feel cast out, who feel rejected, who feel unloved.

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"The decisions taken by our denomination mean that they can never belong."
'Privilege of my life'

He said God was telling him to be strong and courageous but he and his family had "no idea what our next steps are going to be".

He said being minister of Whitehead had been "the great privilege of my life".

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland said it was aware Rev Carton had indicated he would be seeking to leave his role.

"When that point comes, we would want to wish Ian well for the future and thank him for the service he has given, particularly to our congregation in Whitehead over these past years," a spokesperson said.

In 2019, following the decision taken by the general assembly in Belfast, the PCI dismissed an elder at Christ



Church
Sandymount for
being in a same-
sex marriage.

Courtesy BBC NI
News 01.06.2021.
Further links at -
[[[https://
www.bbc.co.uk/
news/uk-northern-
ireland-57311211](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-57311211)]

Legal action threat over conversion therapy ban

The Christian Institute has written to the Stormont Executive vowing to judicially review its planned conversion therapy legislation if it outlaws “the wrong kind of prayer”, The Belfast Telegraph reports.

Lawyers have been instructed to prepare for legal action if the Executive includes prayer as part of the proposed ban, although the evangelical pressure group has said it does not oppose protecting people from “harmful pseudo-medical practices”.

The Department for Communities said work has started to inform the drafting of new legislation to end the “cruel and inhumane” practice, and added all steps would be taken to ensure any new law is robust.

In April MLAs passed a motion calling for the ban of gay conversion therapy “in all its forms” by 59 votes to 24. A DUP amendment stating “legitimate religious activities” must be protected was rejected.

Leading QC Jason Coppel has said widening the ban to include prayer, preaching, pastoral work and parenting would breach the rights of Christians and criminalise the expression of religious beliefs.

In a letter to Communities Minister Deirdre Hargey, Mr Coppel said evangelism, church membership, baptism,

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communion and even private prayer could all fall foul of a conversion therapy law.

The barrister said conversion therapy bans would also breach the right of parents not to support a child's gender transition.

He said it is unlikely the proposed legislation could proceed on the basis that all those with “non-heteronormative sexual orientations or gender identities are vulnerable to the extent that any questioning of the truth or legitimacy of those sexual orientations or gender identities must be prohibited”.

The law protects Christian beliefs on sexuality under the European Convention on Human Rights and the “imposition of criminal sanctions for the expression of religious beliefs to others” would be “difficult to justify”, he added.

Simon Calvert, deputy director for public affairs at The Christian Institute, said: “The CI is not opposed to banning conversion therapy if that means protecting people from dangerous medical practices. But the founder of the Ban Conversion Therapy campaign group is on record as saying 'spiritual guidance is really just religious speak for conversion therapy' and claims 'the pernicious power of prayer must be dealt with'.

“Our lawyers have made clear [we] are prepared to seek judicial review if it caves into demands to widen the ban to include the ordinary activities of churches. [We] are confident a court would find it to be a breach of human rights law.”

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The Department for Communities said: “Officials are working with stakeholders and colleagues in other departments and jurisdictions to learn from experience and to consider where there are gaps in the law and what powers we already have to end this practice.

“This process takes time and all necessary steps will be taken to ensure that any legislation would be fit for purpose and sufficiently robust.”

The Ban Conversion Therapy campaign group has been asked for a response.

Courtesy The Belfast Telegraph 01.06.2021

People and places

Royal Hillsborough

The village of Hillsborough in County Down has been granted royal status and will become ‘Royal Hillsborough’ later in 2021, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Brandon Lewis MP has announced. This is a historic day for Hillsborough, for Northern Ireland and for the UK. “As a Council, we are delighted that our application has been successful.” - Mayor of Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council, UUP Cllr Nicholas Trimble

C of I exhibition marks the 100th anniversary of Partition

The RCB Library's second exhibition to mark the 100th anniversary of Partition is the June Archive of the Month.

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Prof Brian M Walker analyses the lead up and foundation of Northern Ireland in June 1921

<https://bit.ly/3uzvBL7>



Ready to tackle the Climate Crisis?

Join Christian Aid as a Climate Campaign Organiser! Between the #G7 and #COP26 you'll build power for change in your local church or community and be a catalyst for action as we pursue climate justice.

Sign up now: <http://caid.org.uk/Organisers>

Parish CD raises €4,000 for Trocaire

Congratulations to Rev. Thady O'Connor from the parish of Castleisland in Kerry who supported this year's Lent Campaign by making a music CD and raising over €4,000 Trocaire's our work with developing communities. Good support for this fantastic initiative in the Kerry Diocese.

Eat at the East Belfast Mission

“Our Refresh Café is open for sit in & takeaway from 9am-2:30pm! Why not try one of our new delicious Milkshakes (Strawberry, Banana, Chocolate or Twix) Made with Ice-cream- £2.00 add cream £2.50. For full menu including Breakfast & Lunch- <http://ow.ly/1TW750CgjS2>

What a wonderful world - Satchmo

A grandson of slaves, a boy was born in a poor neighborhood of New Orleans known as the "Back of Town." His father abandoned the family when the child was an infant. His mother became a prostitute and the boy and his sister had to live with their grandmother.

Early in life he proved to be gifted for music and with three other kids he sang in the streets of New Orleans. His first gains were coins that were thrown to them.

A Jewish family, Karnofsky, who had emigrated from Lithuania to the USA, had pity for the 7-year-old boy and brought him into their home. Initially giving 'work' in the house, to feed this hungry child. There he remained and slept in this Jewish family's home where, for one of the first times in his life, he was treated with kindness and tenderness.

When he went to bed, Mrs. Karnovsky sang him a Russian lullaby that he would sing with her. Later, he learned to sing and play several Russian and Jewish songs. Over time, this boy became like an adopted son of this family.

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The Karnofskys gave him money to buy his first musical instrument, as was the custom in the Jewish families. They sincerely admired his musical talent. Later, when he became a professional musician and composer, he used Jewish melodies in some of his compositions.

The young black boy grew up and wrote a book about this Jewish family who had adopted him in 1907. In memory of this family, and until the end of his life, he wore a Star of David and said that in this family he had learned "how to live real life and determination."

You might recognize his name. This little boy was called Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong. Louis Armstrong proudly spoke fluent Yiddish and "Satchmo" is Yiddish for "big cheeks, a nickname some say was given to him by Mrs. Karnofsky!

Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars

Worship from Coleraine Methodist Church

Morning Worship from Coleraine Methodist Church for Sunday 30th May 2021 with Jim Archer. youtu.be/tqms5J-Ei6c

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The C of E Digital Labs Conference is back June 11/12

In the past year, churches have radically adopted new digital skills. As restrictions lift, we have an opportunity to reflect on



what we've learnt and the role digital will play in the years ahead.

How does digital fit into the mission of our church?

What are sustainable strategies for onsite and online worship?

As a small church, how can I use my time and money most effectively?

How can digital help us to be more inclusive?

How can we use digital to evangelise to our local community?

[[] <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/digital-labs/digital-labs-conference>]

Media review

Three conditions must be fulfilled for a Catholic marriage to be valid

The Irish Times

One of Ireland's leading canon lawyers has explained how a valid marriage in the Catholic Church's tradition must meet three requirements. Rev Prof Michael Mullaney, President at Ireland's national seminary, St Patrick's College Maynooth, said the couple party to such a marriage "must have capacity (ie the requisite freedom and knowledge to give such matrimonial consent), be free from any impediment in canon law and marry according to canonical form."

[[] <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/canon-law-means-you-can-check-out-but-you-can-never-leave-catholic-church-1.4580343>]

A lesson from the 1920s on how to solve an Irish housing crisis

RTE.ie

Analysis: over 170 houses were built in Dublin's East Wall by housing pioneer Reverend David Hall and the St Barnabas Public Utility Society. A hiatus in construction work, rapid price inflation, affordability issues and ongoing concerns around quality are conditions which can give rise to a housing crisis. However, this is not a description of recent concerns, but the situation in 1918 when the impacts of war, rebellion, and a longstanding slum crisis faced Dublin's citizens.

[[] <https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2021/0531/1225008-ireland-housing-1920s-reverend-david-hall-st-barnabas-public-utility-society/>]

Newcastle cyclists launch new Cathedrals Cycle Route which takes in 2000 miles nationwide

ChronicleLive

A new Cathedrals Cycle Route links every Church of England cathedral, with individual legs between cathedrals varying in length to suit all abilities.

[[] <https://www.chroniclelive.co.uk/news/history/newcastle-cyclists-cathedral-durham-bike-20678770>]

Twelfth of July celebrations

Belfast Newsletter

In an announcement on Tuesday, the Grand Orange Lodge of Ireland said that parades will take place on the 331st anniversary of King William's victory at the Battle of the Boyne. However, with the pandemic not yet finished, Grand Master Edward Stevenson said that the Twelfth would still be different than a normal year. The plan is for more localised parades with members parading close to their homes, before a return to a more normal Twelfth in 2022. So far for the Twelfth, there have been 34 applications to the Parades Commission for marches, and the details can be found here.

[[] <https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/people/these-are-the-34-applications-to-the-parades-commission-to-march-on-july-12-2021-3257167>]

Pointers for prayer

Your hand is upon your people, O God,
to guide and protect them through the ages.



Keep in your service
those you have called and anointed,
that the powers of this world may not overwhelm us, but
that, secure in your love,
we may carry out your will
in the face of all adversity. Amen.

O God our ruler and shepherd, you anointed Jesus
as the king and servant of your people. Make us attentive to
your word, that we may accept your reign over us and serve
you alone. Amen.

Friends 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.

Intercessions

....

Hear our prayers, God of power,
and through the ministry of your Son

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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.

...

Intercessions

....

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,
those seeking healing,
those in need within the church and the world.

...Intercessions....

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. Amen

Speaking to the Soul

A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need.

Acts 2:43-45 NLT

In his Pentecost day sermon Peter referred to the fact that in his earthly life Jesus did “powerful miracles, wonders and signs” (verse 22). Now the apostles, empowered by the Holy Spirit, are able to continue Jesus’ ministry as they performed miraculous signs and wonders. It was an amazing time and it’s no wonder that there was a deep sense of awe as people saw God working in power.

At the same time the fledgling Christian community adopted a new way of looking at their possessions. They shared all that they owned in order to be able to support one another. This was all done voluntarily and shows the depth of commitment that they had for one another. It has never been a rule that Christians must pool all their money, property and possessions, but loving God inevitably causes us to look at all resources with new eyes. Our possessions have been given to us by God and he calls us to be good stewards of them. One day we will have to give an account of the way in which we have used our resources. On the face of it this might sound very restricting, but it is actually

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the complete opposite. Possessions can so easily dominate our lives and become our master.

The materialistic society in which we live continually tries to peddle the lie that we will find life and fulfilment through possessing more and more things. But the truth is that the only way to find such life and liberty is through recognising that everything we possess has come from God's hands, and is to be used to give glory to him. When we build up our own resources for our own selfish use, we are creating something that will last for a short while and then disappear. But when we use our possessions to strengthen God's kingdom we are building for eternity.

QUESTION

How good a steward are you of the resources that God has given you?

PRAYER

Loving God, thank you for everything that you have given me. Help me to use it all to your glory. Amen

