



Sura 19, which recounts the story of Jesus' conception, was recited to the congregation at the Epiphany service.

Evangelical bishop condemns Muslim scripture reading at Epiphany in Glasgow cathedral

Christians are familiar with the Bible texts that detail the conception and birth of Jesus to His mother, the Virgin Mary. But they are not so used to hearing the Muslim

version of the story read out in church. And especially not on Epiphany, which celebrates the incarnation of God as His son Jesus - a doctrine denied by Muslims.

Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, a leading evangelical Christian in Britain, has now condemned the reading at a service at the Scottish Episcopal Church's Glasgow Cathedral last Friday, reports Christian Today

The congregation at St Mary's cathedral heard the Muslim version of the Virgin Mary's conception of Jesus, from the Koran's Sura 19, sung by Madinah Javed. The passage explains how Mary gave birth after an angel told her God would give her a child.

Muslims believe Jesus was a prophet, and that He was a precursor to Mohammed rather than the Son of God.

Sura 19 states that Mary was "ashamed" after she gave birth, and that the infant

Jesus miraculously spoke to her from his crib and claimed he was "a servant of God".

It denies Jesus was the Son of God.

A post on the cathedral's Facebook page describes the service as a "wonderful event".

It says: "The congregation was also reminded during the service that it is not only Christians who give honour to Jesus. We were joined by friends from two local Muslim communities." The post also shares a video of the recitation.

Javed, a law student in Glasgow, said it was "an honour" to recite the Qur'an in the cathedral. She said she had met "such a lovely and kind-hearted community, alhamdulillah".

But Nazir-Ali, former Bishop of Rochester condemned the reading and called for discipline against those involved.

"The authorities of the Scottish Episcopal Church should immediately repudiate this ill-advised invitation," he said in a statement.

He also called for the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, to publicly distance the Church of England and the wider Anglican Communion from the event.

" Christians should know what their fellow citizens believe and this can include reading the Qur'an for themselves, whether in the original or in translation. This is not, however, the same thing as having it read in Church in the context of public worship," he said.

"It is particularly insensitive to have this passage read in Church on the Feast of the Epiphany when we celebrate not only Christ's manifestation to the gentiles but also his baptism and the divine declaration, 'you are my beloved son in whom I am well pleased'."

Woman Priest Becomes Youngest Chaplain To The Queen

The Queen has appointed a young woman priest who serves as a Canon at Worcester Cathedral as her newest chaplain, it was announced yesterday.

Rev Georgina Byrne, 44, will be the youngest of 34 honorary chaplains to the Queen. She will in her new role preach occasionally in the Chapel Royal in St James' Palace, London, alongside her duties as residentiary canon at Worcester Cathedral.

"I feel extremely privileged to have been honoured in this way," Byrne said of her appointment. "The letter from Buckingham Palace arrived, like a very special gift, just before Christmas and I've been smiling ever since."

The Bishop of Worcester, Dr John Inge, said: "Canon Georgina Byrne is an outstanding priest and I am delighted that this has been recognised by Her Majesty the Queen. The great honour bestowed on her is good news for us at the



Revd Georgina Byrne of Worcester Cathedral

Cathedral and in the Diocese: we can all bask in reflected glory."

The Dean of Worcester, the Very Rev Peter Atkinson, said: "All at Worcester Cathedral will be

delighted by the news of this honour for a popular and respected member of the cathedral community."

Queen Elizabeth II is known for her strong Christian faith, and has spoken publicly of how it has helped her in her royal duties.

Women's ministry has come a long way in the Church in Wales over the past 20 years, said the Archbishop of Wales at a service celebrating the anniversary of the ordination of the first women priests.

Church in Wales celebrates 20th anniversary of women's ordination as priests

All six of Wales' cathedrals held services on Saturday, January 7, to mark the 20th anniversary, which came just two weeks ahead of another milestone in women's ministry in Wales – the consecration of the first woman bishop, Canon Joanna Penberthy, as Bishop of St Davids Diocese, on January 21.



Dean Kathy Jones presides at Bangor Cathedral

Dr Barry Morgan joined in the celebrations at Llandaff Cathedral which took place at the same time as the services at Brecon, Newport, St Davids, St Asaph and Bangor. Many of those taking part in all the services were among the 61 women ordained on the same day in the cathedrals on January 11 1997. Their names featured in a logo designed for the anniversary.

The Archbishop, who as Bishop of Bangor in 1997 ordained those from that diocese then, said, "This has been a fantastic celebration. It was a great day 20 years ago and it was a great

day today. In just two weeks, of course, we will be consecrating the first woman bishop in Wales so the Church has come an enormously long way and I am really, really pleased.”

Dr Morgan, who will retire at the end of January, added, “I never expected to consecrate the first woman bishop so to be able to do that, as well as to attend this service, means I will retire on a high.”

Canon Jenny Wigley, Rector of Radyr, who preached at the service at Llandaff on Saturday, said, “Today has been a joyous day with such a lovely atmosphere. We feel excited about all that has happened in the church over the past 20 years and also really hopeful about the future – it’s a new dawn for us with the consecration of the first woman bishop.

“My challenge today is for all women in the church – not just those who are ordained – to take more responsibility and to feel confident to do new things.”

The idea for a simultaneous celebration was first put forward by the St Deiniol’s Group, an informal group of senior lay and ordained women from across the Church in Wales, whose

members in each diocese have been involved in the planning.

Peggy Jackson, Archdeacon of Llandaff, who convenes the group, said, "The Church in Wales has every reason to celebrate and be grateful for the ministry of these first women priests. They have brought rich and diverse gifts into the sacramental life of the Church, and have inspired many women since to offer themselves for public ministry. They have enabled the Church to represent, and therefore serve more effectively, the people of every community in Wales."

Details of the cathedral services which took place on January 7 were as follows:
Llandaff (preacher: Canon Jenny Wigley); Bangor (preacher, Enid Morgan); Newport (Bishop Dominic Walker); St Asaph (the Bishop of Gloucester, Rachel Treweek); Brecon (preacher, Canon Carol Wardman); St Davids (Canon Joanna Penberthy).

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‘I don’t like travelling, but papal visits encourage seeds of hope,’ says Pope



Pope Francis steps off a plane. He made his comments in a book on his pilgrimages as Pontiff

Pope Francis has confessed that he really doesn't like to travel. But the Pontiff added in the interview published on Sunday in La Stampa daily that because of his position he feels he must go on trips to “encourage the seeds of hope.”

The interview is part of a series of reflections in a book being published this week in Italian titled *In Viaggio* (On a Trip), about Francis's pilgrimages since becoming Pontiff in 2013 to Asia, North and South America and Africa. In Europe, he has made quick trips to Lesbos, Greece, and Lampedusa, Sicily, places hosting migrants rescued at sea.

He said that he told his security detail from the start that he'd refuse closed, bulletproof Popemobiles because he'll only travel if he can have human contact.

News briefs

+++ Armagh organ recital change of date -

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the next recital in the Theo Saunders Memorial Organ Recital Series will be given by David O'Shea in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh on Sunday 19 February 2017 at 4.15pm and not as previously advertised.

+++ St. Catherine's Church, Dublin - We are delighted to announce that Rev. Eoghan Heaslip has been appointed as our new Minister-in-Charge. Eoghan and his wife Becky, with their 3 children, will be joining us in the first week of

February. We are all very excited for what God has in store for us in 2017! Facebook post.

+++ Organist and Choir Director at Cedma's Parish, Larne - Applicants are invited for the position of Organist and Choir Director at Cedma's Parish, Larne, Diocese of Connor. Two Services per Sunday. Full details and application forms can be obtained from: The Venerable SB Forde, The Rectory, 8 Lower Cairncastle Road, Larne, BT40 1PQ . Phone: 028 28272788. Email: stephenforde@btinternet.com or by email from stcedmas@btconnect.com. Closing date: 5pm Friday 3rd February 2017

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

How students at Irish universities are buying unprescribed 'study drugs' to deal with exams

The Journal

"Once I sat in the library for 13 hours straight and didn't even take a break. I did my thesis in one whole night."

<http://www.thejournal.ie/irish-students-study-drugs-dark-web-3173290-Jan2017/>

Christian Today

Reports that Oak Hill College has announced the sudden death of its Principal, Revd Dr Michael Ovey. In a statement, the college said: "It is with profound shock and sadness that we announce the sudden and unexpected death of our Principal, the Revd Dr Mike Ovey, at the age of 58." The article notes that Revd Dr Ovey joined Oak Hill in 1998 and became the College's Principal in 2007. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, spoke of his sadness on hearing the news, and requested prayers for Revd Dr Ovey's family, friends and the college. He tweeted: "So sad to hear of the death of Mike Ovey of Oak Hill College. Please pray for family & friends and for the College. Great loss to church."

BBC/Times/Ind/Tel/Mail

Reports that the Queen has made her first public appearance of 2017 after a heavy cold affected her during the festive season. She attended the morning church service at St Mary Magdalene in Sandringham, Norfolk, yesterday.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-38546484>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/recovering-queen-gets-a-warm-welcome-5b6x059zx>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/queen-makes-first-public-appearance-after-serious-health-concerns-a7516016.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/08/queen-appears-public-first-time-month-suffering-heavy-cold/>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4098956/Hooray-Majesty-Queen-wins-battle-heavy-cold-attend-church-MONTH-seen-public.html>

Sun

Reports that a British scientist believes he has come up with a far more accurate representation of what Jesus actually could have looked like.

Richard Neave, a retired medical artist from the University of Manchester, first released the image in 2015 – but the depiction has recently returned to prominence online.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/living/2562259/scientist-shocks-the-internet-with-depiction-of-what-jesus-really-would-have-looked-like/>

Times/Mail

Further coverage that a piece of fabric will become one of the star attractions at Hampton Court Palace after it was identified as the only surviving piece of clothing worn by Elizabeth I. The country's leading experts on royal

garments have spent the past year piecing together clues about the provenance of the embroidered textile, which had been cut up and used for hundreds of years as an altar cloth in a Herefordshire parish church. The cloth was first discovered hanging on a wall in the 13th-century church of St Faith, Bacton, last year.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/elizabeth-i-skirt-found-in-church-6c5pmhdc0>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4099778/Elizabeth-s-long-lost-SKIRT-goes-display-humble-13th-century-English-church.html>

Premier

Further coverage of churches across the country are set to be rigged up with broadband satellites to help boost the UK's internet. The C of E has offered the use of its 16,000 buildings to help the government meet its target of bringing superfast broadband to 95 per cent of the country. Digital and culture minister Matt Hancock will meet with the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, Martin Seeley, later this month to further discuss the plans.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Churches-to-help-government-meet-broadband-targets>

Obituary

Guardian: The Revd Dr Una Kroll. Doctor, feminist, nun and campaigner who fought for the ordination of women.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/08/the-rev-dr-una-kroll-obituary>

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