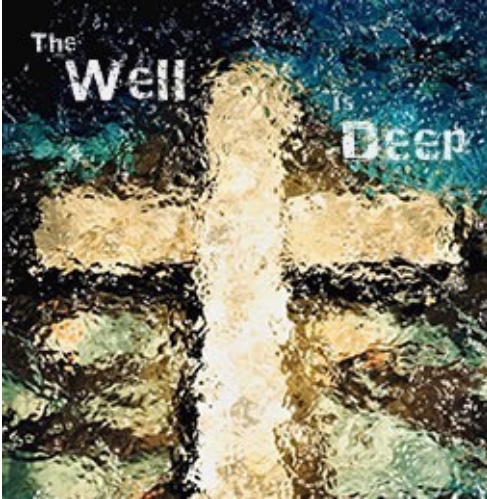




Hundreds of people attended a Mass in solidarity with the people of France which took place at the Pro-Cathedral in Dublin on Tuesday evening.

Inaugural service for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Dublin

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2015 takes place from January 18 to 25. The theme chosen for this year is *Jesus said to her: 'Give me to drink' (Jn 4:7).*



A range of resources are available for worship, group discussion and private reflection. Web link at end of this report

Resources for this year have been prepared by the National Council of Christian Churches of Brazil at the invitation of two bodies that co-sponsor the Week of Prayer – the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches. Local resources for Ireland are adapted by Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Parishes and communities of various denominations throughout Ireland will come together during the week for ecumenical services and reflections. Dublin Council of Churches has compiled a leaflet giving an outline of events taking place in Dublin and Glendalough.

The inaugural service takes place in St Bartholomew's Church of Ireland Church on Clyde Road, Dublin 4, on Sunday January 18 at 3.00 pm. It will be attended by Church leaders of a number of Christian denominations. Organised by Dublin Council of Churches with local congregations, the preacher will be Fr Damien McNeice, Master of Ceremonies to Archbishop Diarmuid Martin and chairperson of Dublin Council of Churches.

Resources for prayer at -
<http://www.ctbi.org.uk/682/>

Interdenominational Service in Irish in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin

An Interdenominational Service in the Irish language will be held in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, on Friday, 23 January 2015 at 8pm, organised by Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise and Pobal an Aifrin. This year the theme is *The Well is Deep*.

This service, a tradition for over 40 years, will celebrate Church Unity Week, with hymns, prayers and readings. Hymns will be sung by the

choir of Gaelscoil na Cille, Co. Meath. A consort of Christ Church Cathedral choir will sing canticles and an anthem.

Clergy from various churches will be present, and Rev. Ian Coulter will preach this year.

Representative of the Lord Mayor will be present also. Refreshments will be available in the medieval cathedral crypt after the service.



***Dáithí Ó Maolchoille,
Chairman of Cumann
Gaelach na hEaglaise***

Dáithí Ó Maolchoille, said, “When we planned the first service back in 1971 we had no idea that it would be still going strong 45 years later. We very much appreciate the tremendous support we have received over the years. It is our privilege to be involved in this

service. We extend a warm welcome to all to attend this service on Friday evening”.

There are regular bilingual services in Christ Church Cathedral each month. The first Bilingual Evening will be on 25 January at 3.30pm. Everyone welcome (particularly anyone wishing to help, readers, etc.).

Further information: Caroline Nolan, Irish Development Officer, gaeleaglais@gmail.com
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www.gaeleaglais.ie www.facebook.com/gaeleaglais

Archbishop Eamon Martin meets NI Justice Minister David Ford over abortion laws

The leader of the Catholic Church in Ireland has met David Ford to discuss proposals for amendments to two aspects of Northern Ireland abortion law.

The Department of Justice is consulting on if abortion should be made legal in cases of "lethal

foetal abnormality" and pregnancy as a result of rape.



Archbishop Martin said the church remained against any change to the existing abortion laws

Archbishop Eamon Martin met the justice minister along with a delegation of Catholic priests and lay people.

He said the church remained against any change to the existing abortion laws.

Archbishop Martin said the delegation "expressed very sincere and strongly held views about the right to life of a mother and her unborn child".

Ms Katherine Bready, a member of the delegation and crisis-pregnancy counsellor said: "It is simply frightening that this document from the Minister would even consider it an option that a terminally ill child would receive no intervention after it is born. That is simply inhumane and shows a total disregard for the dignity of the child as well as the mental health of the mother. It is just frightening and totally unacceptable. There is also a very real danger that use of terms such as 'lethal' and 'incompatible with life' will unduly frighten mothers and leave them feeling under increasing pressure to agree to an abortion they would not otherwise have, and which they may later deeply regret."

Archbishop Martin revealed that during the meeting he took a call on speaker-phone from a mother whose child had been diagnosed with a terminal illness during pregnancy and who was angry that the Minister's proposals to change the law denied the humanity and right to life and care of her child.

Mr Ford said the meeting had been useful and had given the opportunity to "perhaps correct some misconceptions".

He said the consultation was about "two very narrow areas of legislation".

The Catholic delegation which met with Minister for Justice David Ford, in Stormont today, comprised: Archbishop Eamon Martin, Father Timothy Bartlett, Father Michael McGinnity, Doctor Nicola Brady, Ms Katherine Bready and Mr Kevin Denvir

Cork marks 150th anniversary of Boole - father of the information age

2015 marks the bicentenary of the birth of George Boole. Boole has been described as the 'father of the information age.' He was a largely self-taught mathematician, born in Lincoln, but who was appointed in 1849 as the first Professor of Mathematics at what is now University College, Cork.

Boole died in Cork in 1864 and is buried in the churchyard of Saint Michael's Church, Blackrock, Cork. UCC have kindly restored the headstone of his grave.



Some of the staff from the mathematics and computer science departments at UCC joined the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Mary Shields, and the President of UCC, Dr Michael Murphy, at Boole's grave in the Churchyard. Also present were Deirdre Clune, M.E.P. and Commodore Hugh Tully of the Irish Naval Service.

The 150th anniversary of his death on 8th December was marked last month by a special Evensong sung by the Clerks Choral in Saint Michael's Church organised by the rector, Archdeacon Adrian Wilkinson and Professor Desmond MacHale (Boole's biographer). Also present were the Bishop, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, and the President of U.C.C., Dr

Michael Murphy as well as academics from the mathematics and computer science departments.

The preacher was Canon Dr Mark Hucknall, Chancellor of Lincoln Cathedral, who is both a scientist and a theologian.

Most significantly, at the end of the Service, Scott, a pupil from the parish school, was presented with a Raspberry Pi Computer, by the Head of the Computer Science Department at U.C.C., Professor Barry O'Sullivan. Scott was representing all the pupils of the school, as each of them has been given a Raspberry Pi computer by U.C.C, Computer Science Department to mark the anniversary.

For God's sake don't swear - Bishop

A bishop has asked people not to use the name of Jesus Christ as a form of foul language.

Irish Examiner - The bishop of Raphoe in Co Donegal, Philip Boyce, urged people to treat the name with respect, and he urged people to bow

their heads when pronouncing the name of Jesus.

“It is sad to hear the name of Jesus being used carelessly and unheedingly, at times as a curse instead of a blessing, in uncultured and rough language.



“It is offensive in public, and if used over the airwaves in a reckless manner, a person would have to apologise.”

Bishop Boyce made his comments in his pastoral letter to parishioners. He said for many people today, the taking of the Lord’s name has merely become a habit which many do not know they are even uttering.

“For some people it becomes a habit, so that they no longer notice that they are taking the name of Jesus in vain. And, yet, they are not completely unaware of the words they use, for if a priest happens to come into the company, you could hear them say ‘Excuse the language, Father’. But it is with the Lord himself they should excuse themselves and from him ask pardon.

“The words and the names we use are important. We honour a person if we use his name with respect. To say that bad language is only words, and that they mean nothing, is not true. The disrespectful use of a name dishonours another person. Furthermore, we shall honour each other if we learn to honour God, for we are made in his image and likeness.”

He urged people to treat the name with respect.

“The name of Jesus is held in veneration by all who believe in Christ. We bow our head reverently when it is pronounced.

“It becomes a prayer keeping us in contact with our Lord and God, and deepening our friendship with Christ, our Saviour.”

No new Irish cardinal until at least 2019



Ireland is unlikely to see the appointment of a new cardinal until at least 2019. However, changed patterns under Pope Francis could put the tradition of the Archbishop of Armagh being a cardinal in jeopardy.

Irish Catholic - Pope Francis named his second batch of cardinals at the weekend, including 15 under the age of 80 and therefore eligible to vote in a Papal election.

The Pope also appointed five so-called 'honourary' cardinals who are over the age of 80 and therefore, ineligible to elect a future Pontiff.

While Armagh's Cardinal Seán Brady retired in August last year, he continues to be a cardinal-elect and eligible to serve on bodies of the Roman Curia until his 80th birthday in 2019. While retired Archbishop of Dublin Cardinal Desmond Connell, who turns 89 in March, is no longer eligible to vote, he remains an active member of the College of Cardinals.

It was always considered unlikely that the Pope would choose either Archbishop Eamon Martin in Armagh or Archbishop Diarmuid Martin in Dublin in this consistory since it would be unprecedented for such a small country to have two voting cardinals.

However, Pope Francis has appointed a number of new cardinals from dioceses that have not previously had a 'red hat' indicating that the Pontiff may be moving away from the tradition of the cardinalate being automatically associated with a particular see.

Ireland did briefly have three cardinals from Dr Brady's appointment in 2007 until the death of Dr Cahal Daly in 2009. However, only Cardinal

Brady was under 80 and therefore eligible to vote in a conclave.

It is now considered likely that Ireland will not see the appointment of a new cardinal until at least 2019 when Dr Brady turns 80. At this point, Diarmuid Martin will be 74 and a year from retirement as Archbishop of Dublin, and Archbishop Martin in Armagh will be 58 years old and therefore considered a likely candidate in the Pope continues the tradition of the Primate of All-Ireland being a cardinal.

With the exception of Cardinal Paul Cullen, who as Archbishop of Dublin was appointed a cardinal in 1866, all Irish cardinals have been archbishops of Armagh until Desmond Connell's elevation to the College of Cardinals in 2001. The red hat returned to Armagh in 2007, fuelling speculation that the Holy See may consider rotating the cardinalate between Armagh and Dublin in the future.

Stornoway community project celebrates success after royal opening

A bold new Church of Scotland community project in Lewis is already operating near full

capacity just six months after it opened its doors. The Shed at Martins Memorial Church in Stornoway received a royal visit from Prince Edward the Earl of Wessex and his wife Sophie, the Countess of Wessex, during the General Assembly last May.



Rev Tommy McNeil with The Earl and Countess of Wessex at Martin's Memorial Church last May.

The royal seal of approval has been followed with the enthusiastic support of the local community since The Shed got up and running. Separate initiatives helping young families and teenagers, as well as addiction support services, have been established. They've enjoyed such

rapid growth the main problem has quickly become the need for more space.

Their success could help other churches identify new opportunities to connect and serve their own communities.

"We were convinced there was a need for something like The Shed in Stornoway," says the minister Rev Tommy McNeil. "I strongly felt God was calling us to build bridges with our community. We had just completed the total refurbishment of our main sanctuary, but I knew we could do more and with wonderful support from our congregation we were able to raise the necessary finance to turn this dream into a reality."

The Shed is working in partnership with local agencies to provide services the Congregation identified Stornoway was lacking. The mother and toddler group has quickly become so oversubscribed it has been moved into the main church hall. Youth activities, particularly a much needed after school club on a Friday lunchtime, have also grown rapidly thanks both to word of mouth and social media. 'We post on Facebook about almost also the activities we run here,'

says The Shed's project manager Murdo McIver. "I counted our last 15 posts have received 12000 views. That's incredible given the population of our island. Everyone is talking about The Shed, and they want to find out more about what is going on here. It's fantastic."

It is the provision of social services that provide the most exciting prospects for future growth at The Shed. "When we first told people we were going to do this for the community with no hidden agenda I could sense some folk were thinking 'aye, right'", says Tommy. "But now we've been open for 6 months, people can see we meant what we said. They are not going to come in here and get hit over the head with a bible. We are here to meet people wherever they are in life, whatever challenges they are facing, and we want to let them know that we care about them and through experiencing what we do they may come to understand how precious they are to God".

With a new youth worker, Kathryn 'Goongie' Macleod, coming on board, the team at The Shed are confident the new year will see them expand the range of services on offer to the community. They are in active talks with local

agencies to expand the drug and alcohol addiction support.

Tommy believes this is a vital aspect of the congregation's mission. "I think many churches feel challenged by the sense of a growing distance between them and their community. But I feel we are living in days of profound opportunity, where communities, families and individuals are struggling, relationships are suffering, there's unemployment, financial worries and all these issues. One of the phrases that's driven our vision and work is 'we wanted to move from being a one day a week service church, to being a seven day a week serving church. The Shed enables us to do that!'"

Putting that plan into action needn't require a large financial outlay, or even significant direct support towards maintaining the services. Tommy says "I would just encourage people to look at their communities and ask the question, what could we do to help people? You might not need a purpose built new facility. If you look to partner with local agencies and contact them offering the right facilities (church halls, etc) you can form partnerships and benefit from their resources and expertise. I think communities throughout

Scotland would welcome this, and it's up to us to show the gospel as well as preach the gospel."

Christian Aid welcomes Labour leader Ed Miliband's concern for acute global poverty and climate change

Christian Aid yesterday welcomed Labour leader Ed Miliband's acknowledgement of 2015 as a crucial year in the battle against acute global poverty and climate change.

Speaking to an audience of young people at Queen's Park Community School, London, Mr Miliband highlighted the importance of two global conferences taking place later this year.

A United Nations summit in September must agree the successors to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), aimed at tackling global poverty, which finish their term at the end of the year.

And in December, a meeting of parties to the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris will endeavour to reach international

agreement on capping carbon emissions with the aim of keeping the global temperature rise below 2°C.

“I know tackling climate change, global poverty and inequality are not as fashionable as they once were. But I also know they are more important than ever,” said Mr Miliband.

Plans agreed at the two conferences will affect everyone worldwide,’ he added, “especially everyone in your generation because they will help determine the world you will live in.”

The MDGs are expected to be succeeded by a set of Sustainable Development Goals which Mr Miliband emphasised must include a standalone goal on tackling climate change.

His comments came the same day as the launch of the action/2015 campaign, a global initiative supported by Christian Aid to build public pressure for ambitious outcomes from the summits.

Laura Taylor, Christian Aid’s head of advocacy, said: “We are very pleased to hear Mr Miliband stepping out of election mode to address the

wider world and the global problems we face.
What is at stake transcends party politics.

“This year is absolutely crucial for reshaping the global framework for ending poverty, tackling inequality and stopping climate change.

“Great strides have been made against extreme poverty in recent years, but more must be agreed in New York to improve the living standards of the world’s poorest people, and tackle growing inequality.

“On climate - there is no greater threat to the world’s poor than severe climate disruption, and no greater opportunity to get the world back on course that this year’s summit in Paris.”

Pre-publication press reaction to Archbishop of York’s book on British society

The print media publicised and reacted to a book *On Rock or Sand?* Written by the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, which is to be published next week.

The book, which has contributions from experts in economic, political, social and religious disciplines, including a chapter from Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is described as an attack on the Government.

The *Independent* says both Archbishops of Canterbury and York accuse the Coalition of abandoning Britain's poorest people, saying "rampant consumerism and individualism" have dominated politics since the 1980s. They say Justin Welby, writes that "entire towns and regions" are now "trapped in an apparently inescapable economic downward spiral" that has been made worse by the Government's austerity policies.

The *Telegraph* says the Archbishops warn politicians against selling a "lie" that economic growth is the answer to Britain's social problems.

Ind/Mail/Tel/Times/Spectator

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/anglican-archbishops-accuse-coalition-of-abandoning-poor-amid-culture-of-selfishness-9978980.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-2910987/Families-trapped-inequality.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11344889/Archbishop-of-York-Dr-John-Sentamu-income-inequality-is-the-biggest-problem-in-Britain.html>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/article4323907.ece>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11344744/Church-of-Englands-pre-election-blast-revives-memories-of-Faith-in-the-City.html>

Spectator

An interview with the Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu on issues in the book including immigration, poverty and persecution. He says he wanted to edit the book after being struck by 'absolute poverty' in his diocese. Report is headlined 'Why politicians are like men arguing at a urinal'.

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/features/9415152/archbishop-john-sentamu-on-why-politicians-are-like-men-arguing-at-a-urinal/>

Tel

Article looking back on a timeline on the issues where the Archbishops of the Church of England have been critical of the Coalition government from June 2011 through to April 2014.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11345041/Timeline-Church-attacks-on-the-state.html>

Eve Standard/Ind

Reports that the Archbishop of Canterbury has spoken out in support of the Evening Standard's Homeless Veterans appeal, saying people "must not forget" servicemen and women who have

fallen on hard times. They state Justin Welby paid tribute to the courage and sacrifice displayed by members of the armed forces and said he "wholeheartedly" backs the appeal, which is raising money for two military charities.

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/archbishop-of-canterbury-we-should-not-forget-our-homeless-veterans-9977335.html>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/campaigns/homeless-veterans/homeless-veterans-appeal-archbishop-of-canterbury-gives-his-wholehearted-support-9978320.html>