

January 18, 2022

**CNI**  
CHURCH  
NEWS  
IRELAND



**Image of the day - the Bar Mouth of the River Bann  
County Londonderry**

## Overview

### **+Image of the day**

Belfast Cathedral with the largest Celtic Cross in Ireland

### **+People and places**

Blue Christmas Service - Magheralin

Carols by Car Light in Enniscorthy

Christmas Festival this weekend – Carrigrohane, Blarney, Ballincollig & Inniscarra

Walk of Light 2021 – Video available to watch now

The Dream Café connects at Ballymena

### **+Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books**

Resources for Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2022

### **+News Reports**

M&S Christmas jumper becomes ‘new uniform’ for female clergy

Anglican Communion Science Commission meets for the first time

### **+Press review**

Links to seven reports

### **+Poem for today**

In Drear Nighted December by John Keats

## People and places



### **Adventure day for Connor youth at Shane's Castle**

**It was cold and mucky, but young people from across Connor Diocese had a fantastic experience when they visited Escarmouche Action Park at Shane's Castle on January 15.**

The event was organised by Christina Baillie, Diocesan Youth Officer, and Connor Youth Council in place of the



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annual residential which had been scheduled for Castlewellan Castle, but had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Christina Baillie, Diocesan Youth Officer, prepares to welcome young people from across the diocese for the adventure day at Shane's Castle.

Christina was determined that the Connor Takes the Castle event should still be based in the solid walls of a Castle, and the Escarmouche Action Park, Antrim, proved the perfect venue.

Groups of young people came from All Saints', Antrim; St Michaels, Belfast; Drummaul; the United Parish of Ballynure and Ballyeaston; St Columba's, Derryvolgie; St Nicholas', Carrickfergus and Lisburn Cathedral.

Activities included laser tag, an assault course, tug of war and Connect 4 basketball. As it was a Saturday in the middle of January, it was chilly outside, and everyone was thankful for hot drinks and chips for lunch.

Christina said: "It was fantastic to see so many parishes come together for this event. In particular, I loved seeing connections being made between young people and leaders, and everyone having fun!

"The young people were fantastic at the various activities and really challenged themselves. We were disappointed to cancel the residential weekend, but delighted that we could still get together in a safe way."

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Christina said the Youth Council looked forward to organising more diocesan youth events in the coming months.

## Boys Brigade is back

# BB IS BACK!



FACE TO FACE WORK IS PERMITTED  
IN NORTHERN IRELAND FROM 1ST OCTOBER 2020

**Stronger | Safer | Together**



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## Appointment in Dublin

**Canon Leonard Ruddock has been appointed the new Rector of Irishtown and Donnybrook in the Diocese of Dublin.**





Canon Ruddock is currently Rector of the Blessington Union of Parishes in the Diocese of Glendalough.

Having been interested in ministry for many years, Leonard was ordained for the Non Stipendiary Ministry (now Self-Supporting Ministry) in 1994. He combined ministry with his career in retail in Roscrea, County Tipperary.

In 2005 he transferred to full time ministry. He served his Curacy in Stillorgan and Blackrock parishes. Since 2008 he has been the Rector of Blessington Union of Parishes.

“I have greatly enjoyed my ministry in Blessington Union of Parishes. While leaving will be difficult, I am looking forward

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to ministry in Irishtown and Donnybrook Union of Parishes. I pray God will bless us as a family and all the parishioners in both the parish I leave and the parish we go to," Leonard said.

He added: "Throughout my ministry I have always been supported by my wife Hazel. We have two children, Gary and Amanda. I would ask that the parishioners of both parishes keep Hazel and I in their prayers please as we prepare to move".

Leonard succeeds the Revd John Marchant who retired last year.



## **Appointment in Down & Dromore**

Bishop of Down & Dromore, Rt Revd D McClay, has appointed Revd Karen Salmon as Bishop's Curate to the Grouped Parishes of Magherally and Annaclone in Dromore Diocese.



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Karen was ordained in 2018 and is currently Curate Assistant in Willowfield Parish. Prior to ordination training she spent 20 years in Ethiopia as a Crosslinks Mission Partner.

A date for the service of introduction will be announced in due course.

## Andrew Furlong

Family notice in The Irish Times

FURLONG, Andrew (Andy) of Dalkey, Co Dublin. Beloved son of the late Professor E.J. Furlong and the late Elizabeth Furlong. Dearly loved brother of Margaret Fleming, Raphaela Heaslip, Valerie Furlong-Jam and Timothy. Treasured and much loved and loving uncle and great-uncle. Andrew will be sadly missed by his brothers-in-law Peter, Michael and Habib, his nieces, nephews, extended family and a wide circle of friends and neighbours. Died peacefully in the presence of his family at Our Lady's Hospice, Harold's Cross on Thursday 13th January 2022. The family wish to express their sincere gratitude to all the Doctors, Nurses and Staff at the Blackrock and Harold's Cross Hospices who took such great care of Andrew and for their kindness and compassion. Reposing at Nichols Funeral Home, Lombard Street East, Dublin 2 on Wednesday (January 19) from 3 pm to 4.30 pm. Social distancing applies and face-masks must be worn. A private cremation will take place on Thursday (January 20). No flowers please. For those who would have liked to come to the funeral, it may be viewed on the following link: <https://www.mountjerome.ie/victorian-chapel-service/> starting at

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4pm. It is hoped that a Thanksgiving to celebrate Andrew's life can be arranged at a later date when Covid omicron concerns reduce to the extent that allow for gatherings with hugs and handshaking and with family and friends comfortable and safe to attend.

## Media News

### Answers sought to fifty year mystery of statues 'missing' from Limerick church

Limerick Leader - Fifty years ago two sculptures of The Annunciation descended from the outside of a Limerick church and have never been seen again.

The figures were made especially for Our Lady of the Rosary Church on the Ennis Road, which opened in December 1950. It is known for its architectural quality and ecclesiastical art.

One of many famed artists commissioned was the late Ian Stuart – regarded as the finest Irish sculptor of his generation. His own story is fascinating as he is a grandson of Maud Gonne MacBride and son of author Francis Stuart. Nazi spy Hermann Görtz found shelter in their family home in Wicklow.

[[] <https://www.limerickleader.ie/news/home/719371/answers-sought-to-fifty-year-mystery-of-statues-missing-from-limerick-church.html> ]

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## **Peace-loving and silent, the Quakers still get things done**

Independent.ie. By Sarah Carey - Organised religion has, understandably, a rather bad name. It's hard to find one unsullied by persecution, discrimination and oppression. Yet religion flourishes. Many people need faith, discipline, community and ritual in their lives. Apart from the objectively positive contributions religious institutions have made to society, religious practice is strongly associated with well-being and healthy ageing. But it seems almost impossible to find a faith without institutional infestation of humanity's many failings.

Almost. There's one lurking quietly in our midst, with a history free from shame or cruelty. One we all know for only good reasons, but with a membership so tiny its outsize impact on the western world is simply extraordinary: the Quakers, or the Religious Society of Friends. Paid access at

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[[ <https://www.independent.ie/opinion/comment/peace-loving-and-silent-the-quakers-still-get-things-done-41242027.html> ]]

## **Tuam: Truth about mother and baby homes is 'inextricably linked with the grave sites'**

Irish Post - There has been a mixed response to a new law giving Irish adoptees and their relatives automatic access to their birth records.



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The Birth Information and Tracing Bill, announced by Government on Wednesday, and currently making its way through the dáil, will establish a free tracing service for adoptees and their relatives.

In theory, the service will provide unrestrained access to birth certificates, medical records, and other information pertaining to an adoptee's formative years. But it's not as simple as that. For a start, not all files are accessible.

[[] <https://www.irishpost.com/news/tuam-truth-about-mother-and-baby-homes-is-inextricably-linked-with-the-grave-sites-228146> ]

## **Why an Irish-born priest encouraged a celibate Josephite marriage**

Irish Central - An Irish priest encouraged a married couple living in 1960s Texas to become celibate and sleep in separate beds to avoid living in mortal sin.

Geoff Leavenworth, a journalist and author from Texas, recently penned an essay in the New York Times detailing how his parents entered into a Josephite marriage on the counsel of Irish-born priest Fr. Patrick O'Brien.

A Josephite marriage, or chaste marriage, is based on the union between Joseph and the Virgin Mary, with married couples refraining from sex for religious reasons.

## News Reports

### **Parliament must stop Bill eroding our right to speak out against poverty, Christian Aid warns**

**Speaking ahead of the House of Lords debating the Police Crime and Sentencing Bill yesterday [Monday 17 January], Christian Aid has warned Parliament must "stop new restrictions on peaceful protest."**

Alongside a coalition of organisations and campaigners, international development agency Christian Aid protested outside the Home Office yesterday [Monday 17 January].

The coalition is supported by almost 800,000 people who have signed petitions against the Bill.

Pete Moorey, Head of Campaigns & UK Advocacy at Christian Aid, said:

"From campaigning for climate justice to calling for action on food poverty in the UK, churches and people of faith are often at the forefront of movements for change.

"To tackle extreme poverty and the injustices that cause it, we must be able to speak truth to power. But this law puts this under threat.

"It is vital that the Government hears voices of protest and demands for justice, but instead it is giving the police wide

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ranging powers that restrict our rights to speak out against poverty.

"Parliament still has time to stop new restrictions on peaceful protest that will have serious consequences for faith communities right across the country."

## **I'm lazy and conflict-averse,' admits Pope Francis**

**Pope Francis admits to being "lazy" and conflict averse in a new Netflix docuseries in which the man at the centre of a major effort to reform the Catholic Church claims he doesn't like having to impose his authority.**

"If you ask me if I am a fighter, I'll reply: 'No, I'm lazy'. By nature I am more of a lazy person than a fighter. If I can avoid a fight, I avoid it," he said in *Stories of a Generation*, which is released today.

The 85-year-old said he finds it "very difficult" to mete out justice and hand out punishments, because it is like a "fight" where there are "winners and losers."

"I don't like it, but there is no life without fighting. It is something that we have inside. To survive, we have to fight."

During his nearly nine years in charge of the world's 1.3 billion Catholics, Francis has hardly lacked resolve or shied away from confrontation, usually with the arch-conservative minority resisting his relatively liberal approach.



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The Pope wants the Catholic Church to focus on social justice, poverty, migrants and climate change, to be flexible towards those who do not comply with its teachings - notably on abortion, divorce and homosexuality - and to worry less about rules and regulations.

This year, he again antagonised church traditionalists by reintroducing restrictions to the old Latin Mass, which his predecessor Benedict XVI had relaxed in 2007.

In a traditional pre-Christmas speech, delivered on Thursday, Francis doubled down on his enemies, lashing out at cardinals and bishops who “rigidly” hide behind Catholic Church traditions rather than seek out the neediest with humility.

In the Netflix docuseries, which consists of 18 interviews with elderly figures including Martin Scorsese and Dame Dr Jane Goodall DBE, the Pope mused about his passions, including tango and poetry.

“Tango is a melody that evokes nostalgia and hope,” he said of the national dance of his native Argentina. He also recalled writing poems as a young man, but, he added, “I would tear them up afterwards because I didn’t like them.”

In a separate interview with Italian newspapers La Repubblica and La Stampa, Francis said he was doing well after spending more than 10 days in hospital in July for colon surgery, his most serious known health problem since becoming pope in 2013.

“I am not a kid any more, but I’m fine,” he said.

## Perspective

### Contrasting images at different levels of society in the UK by Billy Kennedy

#### **Churches closed, while those in power partied**

Many church and faith people in Northern Ireland, and, indeed, in other parts of the United Kingdom, will have been looking aghast this week at the serious breaches of covid pandemic protocol in the higher echelons of government at Westminster when lock-down restrictions prevented them from attending their places of worship.

The May 20, 2020 party in the garden of 10 Downing Street in London attended by Prime Minister Boris Johnson and his senior staff happened at a time when churches across the nation were closed for services and prayerful contemplation.

In retrospect, we should be reminded that from March 18, 2020 the instruction, both from Her Majesty's government in London and the devolved legislatures in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, was that all congregational organisations and activities connected with churches, including Sunday worship, should cease until further notice. .

In June that year, the Northern Ireland Executive said it was looking at easing restrictions, which could lead to the re-opening of churches. This meant that Sunday July 5 would be the first Sunday churches could gather in person since they last did on Sunday March 15.

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Later, in the light of advice that Northern Ireland church leaders and other faith leaders received from the Northern Ireland chief medical officer Dr Michael McBride and the chief scientific advisor Professor Ian Young, regarding the worsening Coronavirus situation in January 2021, the churches were compelled to advise their flocks that all in-person Sunday gatherings for worship, along with church gatherings, would cease once more. This meant that churches were closed again from Sunday January 10 and did not re-open until Easter Sunday of that year.

The church closures in the first period (March-July 2020) came by legislative decree from the Stormont Executive, but the 2021 closures were voluntarily decided upon by an inter-church forum, set up largely through the influence of former DUP First Minister Arlene Foster, a regular Church of Ireland attendee.

A damning feature of church closures in Northern Ireland due to the pandemic was that one could enter an off-licence to purchase alcohol, but worshippers were not allowed into their buildings for services and prayer sessions.

Churches in England, Scotland and Wales experienced much the same closure fate as denominations in Northern Ireland, but, clearly in the light of deliberate breaches that have now emerged within the corridors of power in London, no empathy or consideration was shown to a highly significant section of the UK population who were denied a most fundamental and engaging aspect of their lives - the right to worship in churches of their choosing.



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In information now brought to light, an organised and frivolous "bring your own booze" party in the garden of 10 Downing Street and other social shenanigans that went on under the watch of our culpable and shambolic Prime Minister contrasted sharply with the unprecedented and unedifying spectacle of church doors being locked to worshippers across the nation at the time.

The moral compass (a standard set of values and objectives that guide a person with regard to ethical behaviour and decision) of those responsible for these breaches evidently count for nothing and the central administration which binds our great British nation together has been irresponsibly and unnecessarily placed into disarray.

Government oversight of our cherished institutions most certainly deserves better leadership than what we are getting on the values and objectives that guide our nation. Our Prime Minister must look at his own moral compass and carefully reflect.

+Strangford DUP MP Jim Shannon, in a highly emotional contribution in the House of Commons on Tuesday about the grief he had personally experienced during the pandemic lock-down from the death of his mother-in-law, illustrated the feelings of so many millions of people who were forced to obey the official strictures placed on them by government because of the pandemic. Jim, a faithful member of Newtownards Baptist church, plays a leading part with other MPs from various parties at Westminster on matters of the Christian faith, both at UK domestic and global levels and he maintains an ever-present role in the parliamentary debates.. .

## Poem for today

### Winter Memories by Henry David Thoreau

Within the circuit of this plodding life  
There enter moments of an azure hue,  
Untarnished fair as is the violet  
Or anemone, when the spring stew them  
By some meandering rivulet, which make  
The best philosophy untrue that aims  
But to console man for his grievences.  
I have remembered when the winter came,  
High in my chamber in the frosty nights,  
When in the still light of the cheerful moon,  
On the every twig and rail and jutting spout,  
The icy spears were adding to their length  
Against the arrows of the coming sun,  
How in the shimmering noon of winter past  
Some unrecorded beam slanted across  
The upland pastures where the Johnwort grew;  
Or heard, amid the verdure of my mind,  
The bee's long smothered hum, on the blue flag  
Loitering amidst the mead; or busy rill,  
Which now through all its course stands still and dumb  
Its own memorial, - purling at its play  
Along the slopes, and through the meadows next,  
Until its youthful sound was hushed at last  
In the staid current of the lowland stream;

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Or seen the furrows shine but late upturned,  
And where the fieldfare followed in the rear,  
When all the fields around lay bound and hoar  
Beneath a thick integument of snow.  
So by God's cheap economy made rich  
To go upon my winter's task again.

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