



Filipino Christian women resource Women's World Day of Prayer

Women's World Day of Prayer takes place on Friday March 3 2017. This is a worldwide Ecumenical organisation whose purpose is to promote prayer and understanding amongst women. Its motto is "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action"

The theme for this year, chosen by the women of the Philippines, is 'Am I being unfair to you'.

Filipino Christian women of all denominations have come together to compile the 2017 service which reflects the many problems which have plagued this nation through time. It has suffered greatly over the years from disasters, injustices, poverty and forced migration. Yet the peoples trust and faith in God and His justice has not faltered. This strength of faith is reflected throughout the liturgy. It is a lesson for our Western society to bear in mind.

On Friday March 3, a wave of prayer will begin at the break of dawn on the International Date Line and conclude at sunset on the date line 24 hours later. Over 180 countries will take part

representing all continents. If you would like to organise a group of friends or a group within your community to share in this wonderful day of solidarity with the people of the Philippines, then contact Linda Smithers tel. 018131380 or lindamsmithers@gmail.com. Linda will supply you with booklets and necessary posters.

A beautiful service for Primary school children is also available. This has proven to be very popular in recent years as it is interactive and very child orientated

It is not essential to use church premises and to have a large gathering. A small intimate group within a home or small meeting room can be very inspiring. As there are two wonderful Bible studies included, this provides an interesting platform for sharing and growing friendships.

The 'Action' element of the day follows, to identify suitable areas of need within the Philippines (2017) and within our own community. Considerable donations are directed towards those areas of need each year. As an example, recent donations have been made to the Syrian Refugee problem and Homelessness in Ireland.

Please do not hesitate to contact either Linda or Jean Kenny tel. 0469054117 for further information.

Other important dates:– Dublin and surrounding area preparation meeting is on Saturday January 21 at 10.00 am sharp in The Wesley Centre, Leeson Park . All are welcome to attend. A Women's World Day of Prayer service will be televised on Sunday February 5 at 11.00 am on RTE 1.

NI Election: 'Offer compromise and build bridges', Archbishop Martin urges Northern Irish politicians

In an open letter to politicians, the Archbishop of Armagh has advised government leaders to work together to maintain the peace in Northern Ireland.

Archbishop Eamon Martin's letter was released after a snap election was called in Northern Ireland on Monday.

The current government collapsed after Sinn Fein formally announced it wouldn't replace Martin McGuinness who resigned as deputy first

minister last Monday over concerns about the Democratic Unionist Party leader Arlene Foster's handling of an energy scheme scandal. The pair held a joint office so McGuinness's resignation meant that Foster automatically lost her job.

In the letter, Archbishop Martin, who is Primate of All Ireland, called on politicians to make wise decisions going forward.

He wrote: "Consider carefully your responsibility and noble vocation to work for the common good. The premature collapse of our political institutions so soon after the last election is a serious matter for all of us and cannot be taken lightly.

"The sense I am picking up from people on the ground is that it risks further disillusionment with the political process. We understand that it takes courage and generosity to stand for public office. But it also brings a trusted responsibility for leadership and integrity which can never be taken for granted."

He added that the country needs to be able to trust politicians from all political parties to move forward with the peace process.

“We have all learned through bitter experience that wrong is never all on one side – too many families among us still grieve the losses, or nurse the wounds of sectarianism and hatred. We do not want that for our children and grandchildren,” the Archbishop wrote.

Archbishop Martin said that the rest of the world sees Northern Ireland as a “sign of hope that peace can be achieved” and that politicians must do all they can to maintain it.

He said: “Continue to work to sustain the painstaking progress which many of you and your predecessors helped to deliver. Help to bring us further along the road to lasting peace, a shared future and prosperity for all.

“Do not resort to predictable, wearisome slogans or denigrating, divisive language. Like many in the community, the churches are available to assist you in any way. We will certainly pray for you in the coming weeks.”

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Reformation Anniversary: Statement from the archbishops of Canterbury and York

Ahead of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2017, which started yesterday, January 18, the archbishops of Canterbury and York issued a joint statement on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby and Archbishop of York John Sentamu said:
“This year, churches around the world will be marking the great significance of the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation in Europe, dated from Martin Luther’s 95 Theses protesting against the practice of indulgences, on 31 October 1517 at Wittenberg. The Church of England will be participating in various ways, including sharing in events with Protestant church partners from Continental Europe.

“The Reformation was a process of both renewal and division amongst Christians in Europe. In this Reformation Anniversary year, many Christians will want to give thanks for the great blessings they have received to which the Reformation



The Archbishop of Canterbury the Most Rev Justin Welby (right) and the Archbishop of York Dr John Sentamu

directly contributed. Amongst much else these would include clear proclamation of the gospel of grace, the availability of the Bible to all in their own language and the recognition of the calling of lay people to serve God in the world and in the church.

“Many will also remember the lasting damage done five centuries ago to the unity of the Church, in defiance of the clear command of Jesus Christ to unity in love. Those turbulent years saw Christian people pitted against each other, such that many suffered persecution and

even death at the hands of others claiming to know the same Lord. A legacy of mistrust and competition would then accompany the astonishing global spread of Christianity in the centuries that followed. All this leaves us much to ponder.

“Remembering the Reformation should bring us back to what the Reformers wanted to put at the centre of every person’s life, which is a simple trust in Jesus Christ. This year is a time to renew our faith in Christ and in Him alone. With this confidence we shall then be ready to ask hard questions about those things in our lives and the life of our churches that get in the way of sharing and celebrating faith in Him.

“Remembering the Reformation should also lead us to repent of our part in perpetuating divisions. Such repentance needs to be linked to action aimed at reaching out to other churches and strengthening relationships with them. This anniversary year will provide many opportunities to do just that, beginning with this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

“We therefore call on all Christians to seek to be renewed and united in the truth of the gospel of

Christ through our participation in the Reformation Anniversary, to repent of divisions, and, held together in Him, to be a blessing to the world in obedience to Jesus Christ.”

For further information about the Church of England’s participation in the Reformation Anniversary, please see the Council for Christian Unity’s [dedicated web page](#) on the Church of England website. This includes links to websites hosted by the Council of Lutheran Churches in Great Britain, the Evangelical Church of Germany (EKD) and the Lutheran World Federation that also provide extensive information and resources.

See also News links below.

Free Monks’ Tours of Dublin Cathedral for diocesan schools

As part of Christ Church Cathedral’s celebrations for Dublin & Glendalough 800, the cathedral is launching a new ‘Monks Tour’ which will be free to children aged seven to 10 from all diocesan schools.



The tour is set in 1266 and classes will be led around the cathedral by a guide who is their prior. They'll have the chance to dress up in monks' habits and learn all about how monks lived at Christ Church; what they ate, what they wore and what they did every day. It is hoped that the tour will be a fun way to engage schools with another side of the cathedral's history and spiritual life.

The tours are launching from the beginning of March and will run from Monday to Wednesday

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

throughout 2017. Pre booking is essential but there will be no cost to any diocesan schools.

To book your class in please contact the cathedral's education officer, Ruth Kenny, at ruth@christchurch.ie.

Mothers' Union breakfast meeting on empowering busy women

Mothers' Union in Dublin & Glendalough is holding a breakfast meeting in the Springfield Hotel, Leixlip, on Saturday February 18 from 9.30 am to 11.30 am. The theme this year is 'Life, Career and Style' and Anna Keely will speak about empowering busy women, enabling them to achieve their dreams while juggling life.

Anna Keely is a successful business entrepreneur who has worked with some of Ireland's most successful brands as a business and training consultant including Budget Travel, Peter Mark and the Irish Independent. In June 2014 she became principal of the prestigious Bronwyn Conroy Beauty School.

Tickets, at €8, can be booked by emailing the MU diocesan treasurer, Jean Denner, at treasurermudg@gmail.com and sending a

'Life, Career & Style'

Empowering busy women, enabling them to achieve their dreams while juggling life - Anna Keely

Springfield Hotel, Leixlip
Saturday 18th February 2017
9.30am – 11.30am



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Tickets €8

*Please send your details to Diocesan Treasurer: treasurerumdj@gmail.com
Mrs. Jean Denner, 19 Ferrycarrig Park, Coolock, Dublin 17*

together with a crossed cheque, made payable to Mothers' Union Dublin & Glendalough.

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School Choir of the Year competition at Belfast Cathedral

The St Anne Trust, in conjunction with St Anne's Cathedral, is launching its first ever cross community School Choir of the Year competition to be held in May.

The competition will be open to primary schools in the greater Belfast area with sections for Junior Choirs, Senior Choirs and Special School Choirs.

Mr Joe Watson of The St Anne Trust, said: "St Anne's Cathedral Choir School Project presently works with three schools in north Belfast. This competition will allow us to expand beyond these schools and will give us an opportunity us to reach schools across the whole of Belfast, crossing social, religious and economic divides."

A number of primary schools were represented at an Information Day about the competition organised by The Trust, and since then there have been many expressions of interest.

The junior and senior choirs' competition will take place on Wednesday May 10, with the event for choirs from special schools held the following morning, all in the impressive surroundings of St Anne's Cathedral.

Joe said: "This is the first time we have done this, and we are starting small with the competition open to primary and special schools only, but we hope to expand it to secondary level schools next year and perhaps even open it to adult choirs."

There will be places for 14 junior and senior choirs on May 10. Each choir will be asked to sing two pieces of the choir's own choice and one communal piece which all choirs will sing together on the day.

Entry forms will be available at the end of January, and anyone interested in receiving a form should contact Roseann Hughes at St Anne's Cathedral on 028 9032 8332 or email admin@belfastcathedral.org.

Methodist Church's Cliff College in new partnership with the Bible Reading Fellowship

Cliff College, Sheffield, one of the training colleges used and supported by the Methodist Church, has announced a new partnership with the Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF).

The BRF is a leading ministry organisation in the

United Kingdom, best known for its support, resourcing and enabling of the Messy Church initiative.

The two organisations hope to develop important training resources for the Church and lay leaders, with a particular focus on sharing the Christian message.

The partners have previously worked together in providing courses and resources, and this new announcement solidifies the relationship, enabling further work to be done.

Upcoming projects will include newly developed certificate programmes in Bible Engagement, and guest speakers from the BRF speaking at the annual Cliff Festival, in May.

The Revd Dr Stephen Skuce, Acting Principal of Cliff College and Director of Scholarship Research and Innovation for the Methodist Church, said: "We are really pleased that Cliff College is in partnership with the BRF.

"In recent years, the BRF has helped us to develop excellent materials and programmes, such as those for Messy Church, Who Let the

Dads Out? and The Gift of Years.

"These tools have been key in contemporary evangelism in the Church and solidifying our link together will help us to develop further resources and opportunities for mission."

Richard Fisher, Chief Executive of the Bible Reading Fellowship, said: "This [partnership] is a natural extension of the work we already do. We are excited at the prospect of being able to teach, train and impact more people through Cliff's expanding ministry and mission-focused courses."

+Cliff College is a theological college with an evangelical and mission focus. Historically a Methodist Lay Training college, Cliff College continues to have strong ties with the Methodist Church, and today offers training to both lay and ordained from diverse denominational backgrounds.

For more information, visit:

www.cliffcollege.ac.uk

+The Bible Reading Fellowship is an inter-denomination charity with a passion to see lives and communities transformed through

developing creative programmes, initiatives and resources.

For more information, visit: www.brf.org.uk

News briefs

+++ Mothers' Union enrolment in Radio Ulster service from Antrim - Sunday morning's BBC Radio Ulster service at 10.15am (January 22) will be broadcast from All Saints' Parish Church in Antrim. The service to be conducted by the rector, The Ven. Dr. Stephen McBride, will include the branch Mothers' Union enrolment.

+++ Programme download for Belfast's 4 Corners Festival - The organisers say, "We are very excited about this years Festival Programme - dare we say it's the best yet! We are also conscious of the unexpected context, with our festival happening in the middle of campaigning for a snap Assembly Election. At such a time as this we will be talking about reconciliation and respect and hope. Our prayer is that reconciliation can filter up to Stormont rather than wait for it to filter down from the hill. Join us in calling for a respectful campaign that recognises that all are made in the image of God, that all of

our people are important and that all deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. "Copy of programme at :

<http://4cornersfestival.com/wp-content/uploads/4-Corners-Festival-2017-Programme-copy.pdf>

+++ Summer Madness Main Stage speaker -

Summer Madness have announced that Matt Chandler will be included in the line up of mainstage speakers for this years festival from 30th June – 4th July. Matt is the lead teaching pastor of the Village Church and president of the Acts 29 network. Watch the video below as Matt shares his heart for this years festival. Super Early Bird tickets are available now until March 1st. Tickets + Info: <http://www.summermadness.co.uk/festival/>

+++ Minister in Charge of St Catherine's

Church - The Revd Eoghan Heaslip has been appointed Minister in Charge of St Catherine's Church, Thomas Street, Dublin. A Service of Introduction, at which the Archbishop will preside, will take place in St Catherine's on Sunday January 29 at 7.00 pm. Eoghan grew up in Skerries before moving to Westport in County Mayo when his father was appointed Rector there in the late 1980s. He and his wife Becky

have been married since 1996 and the couple have three children, Rachel (17), Abigail (14) and Evelyn (11). Having worked in Canada and Dublin, Eoghan went to train for ministry in St Mellitus College in the Diocese of London. He was ordained a Deacon in June 2011 and Priested in 2012. He served his curacy in All Saints Worcester in the Diocese of Worcester. Eoghan and his family moved back from the UK in 2014 to plant ICON community, a new expression of the Anglican church in Dublin which is focused on reaching those who are outside the church.

+++ C of I welcome for Disability Bill - The Church of Ireland's Working Group on Disability is pleased to note that the Department of Justice and Equality (Republic of Ireland) has presented the Disability (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2016 to the Oireachtas. The primary purpose of the Bill is to address the remaining legislative barriers to Ireland's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Working Group welcomes this Bill as the final hurdle to ratification of the UN Convention and is pleased that the Irish Government is

fulfilling its commitment following the signing of this Convention in 2007.

More information on the Disability (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2016 is available from the Department of Justice and Equality (Republic of Ireland): www.justice.ie

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Unwedded bliss: Today marks twenty years since the first divorce was granted in Ireland

Newstalk 106-108 fm

"The **Church of Ireland** teaching is for the total commitment and the lifelong marriage relationship", he said. "However, it is so obvious in recent years ...

<http://www.newstalk.com/Unwedded-bliss--twenty-years-since-the-divorce-was-granted-in-Ireland-whats-changed>

Guard/BBC/Int Business Times

Reports that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have released a statement in which they recognised the Reformation "as a process of

both renewal and division amongst Christians in Europe" (see above). The Archbishops recalled "the lasting damage done five centuries ago to the unity of the Church, in defiance of the clear command of Jesus Christ to unity in love. Those turbulent years saw Christian people pitted against each other, such that many suffered persecution and even death at the hands of others claiming to know the same Lord. A legacy of mistrust and competition would then accompany the astonishing global spread of Christianity in the centuries that followed," the statement read.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/17/church-of-england-archbishops-call-on-christians-repent-reformation-split>
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-38654259>
<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/church-england-archbishops-call-repentance-lasting-damage-reformation-1601628>

C of E archbishops call on Christians to repent for Reformation split

The Guardian

Five hundred years after the Reformation, the religious revolution that swept across Europe, the leaders of the Church of England - itself created in the ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/17/church-of-england-archbishops-call-on-christians-repent-reformation-split>

Will the Church of England apologize for Reformation-era violence?

Patheos (blog)

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/catholicnews/2017/01/will-the-church-of-england-apologize-for-reformation-era-violence/>

Church of England expresses remorse for violence and persecution of Catholics during Reformation

The Tablet

<http://www.thetablet.co.uk/news/6615/0/church-of-england-expresses-remorse-for-violence-and-persecution-of-catholics-during-reformation>

BBC/ITV/Mail/Mirror/Christian Today/ Birmingham Mail/Premier

Reports that hundreds have paid their respects to Jill Saward, the campaigner against sexual violence, who died earlier this month aged 51 years old. Ms Saward's funeral service yesterday saw family members and friends unite in grief at Lichfield Cathedral. A tribute to her 'live saving' work, made at the funeral service by her twin sister, Sue Lancaster, is widely reported. On Monday, Ms Saward's widower Gavin Drake

wrote on his blog, "I am aching. Jilly and I are Christians and even though I know that she is now with our Lord and Saviour; the pain of her death is very strong."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-38652016>

<http://www.itv.com/news/2017-01-17/jill-sawards-twin-sister-pays-emotional-tribute-at-her-funeral/>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4128006/Husband-Jill-Saward-pays-tribute-ahead-funeral-today.html>

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/ealing-vicarage-rape-victim-jill-9639912#ICID=nsm>

<http://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/jill-saward-funeral-hundreds-mourners-12464475#ICID=nsm>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Jilly-is-with-our-Lord-now-says-Christian-Campaigner-s-husband-in-moving-funeral-tribute>

BBC

Report that Very Revd Martin Thrower, 55, Rector of Hadleigh, Layham and Shelley in Suffolk, has pleaded not guilty to two charges of voyeurism, at a hearing in Norwich Crown Court. He was bailed to return to the court for trial on June 14.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-38652337>

Christian Today

Reports that the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams has defended the right of Christians to protest when crosses are removed from public places in a new book, *God with us*, on the meaning of the cross and resurrection.

Exp

Further coverage that one of the Queen's chaplains has criticised St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Glasgow over a Koran reading during an Epiphany service.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/755473/Queen-chaplain-Scottish-cathedral-Koran-apologise-Christianity-religion-muslims>