



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin's hopes for World Meeting of Families 2018 as Pope Francis meets with Irish bishops today

In a video interview ahead of Pope Francis' meeting with the Irish bishops this morning (Friday, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop

of Dublin and President of World Meeting of Families 2018 (WMOF2018), encouraged people to pray that Pope Francis will come to Ireland for the WMOF in August 2018.

Archbishop Martin said, “Pope Francis has said now to so many people that he wants to come, that we can be sure that this is his intention. Pope Francis told me there’s something about the message of the synod, there’s something about the difficulties Ireland has gone through, that offers him an opportunity to say things that he wants to say about the family, not just to Ireland but to other parts of the world.”

Archbishop Martin revealed that his own biggest hope for the event is that it will be an occasion to renew confidence in the family. He said, “Their life within their own four walls is a really genuine Christian vocation which is vital in today’s society and vital for the building up of Ireland and of our culture. Families around the world have experienced difficulties. No one is more aware than Pope Francis of the difficulties that families encounter.”

“This will be an event, a message, for all families.” Archbishop Martin concluded.



See the full interview with Archbishop Martin on worldmeeting2018.ie.

- The World Meeting of Families will take place in Dublin from 22 to 26 August 2018.
- Pope Francis chose Dublin to host the World Meeting of Families 2018 and gave it the theme: “The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World”.
- The World Meeting of Families takes place every three years: the most recent took place in Philadelphia in September 2015.
- The event will involve three key moments. Firstly, from the 22 to 24 August, a three-

day Congress for all that will entail a joyful and reflective programme of workshops, talks and discussions; an engaging and exciting programme for young people as well as faith and fun activities for children. This will be followed by a Festival of Families on Saturday 25 August, comprising a special concert style event within a prayerful and joyful atmosphere, in which personal stories of faith will be shared by families representing the five continents of the world. WMOF 2018 will close with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration on Sunday 26 August, that will gather thousands of people from Ireland and all over the world. The World Meeting will also include exhibitions, cultural events and musical performances, events around Ireland, gestures of solidarity with those in need, celebrations and much more.

- To help prepare for WMOF2018, a programme of pre-catechesis will be offered to parishes and families based largely on the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (*The Joy of Love*), encouraging reflection on different aspects of being family in the Church and in the world today.

- The members of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference are currently undertaking their *Ad Limina Apostolorum* visit to Rome – or “to the threshold of the Apostles”. The *Ad Limina* normally occurs every five years and its purpose is to strengthen the bishops' communion with the universal Church and with the successor of Saint Peter, Pope Francis.

Pope Francis: Martin Luther wanted to ‘renew the Church, not divide her’

Pope Francis has told Lutheran pilgrims from Finland that Martin Luther's intention 500 years ago “was to renew the Church, not divide Her”. The Pope was speaking to a delegation of pilgrims led by the Lutheran Archbishop Kari Makinen of Turku. Their annual visit takes place during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

In his address, Pope recalled his visit to Sweden last October marking 500 years since the start of the Reformation, saying it was a “significant step” that “gave us courage” for the ecumenical journey ahead.



Pope Francis greets the Rev Jens-Martin Kruse of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Rome during his general audience in Paul VI hall at the Vatican this week

“This joint commemoration of the Reformation was important on both the human and theological-spiritual levels,” he said.

“After 50 years of official ecumenical dialogue between Catholics and Lutherans, we have succeeded in clearly articulating points of view which today we agree on. For this we are grateful.”

“At the same time we keep alive in our hearts sincere contrition for our faults,” the Pope said. “In this spirit, we recalled in Lund that the

intention of Martin Luther 500 years ago was to renew the Church, not divide Her.

“The gathering there gave us the courage and strength, in our Lord Jesus Christ, to look ahead to the ecumenical journey that we are called to walk together,” he said.

The Pope concluded his address by thanking Archbishop Makinen for having brought his grandchildren to the audience. “We need the simplicity of children: they will show us the path that leads to Jesus Christ,” he said.

The theme of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which runs until next Wednesday, is “Reconciliation – The Love of Christ Compels Us”.

The [materials for the week](#), published by the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, say that, after 50 years of dialogue, “Catholics are now able to hear Luther’s challenge for the Church of today, recognising him as a ‘witness to the Gospel’”.

Germany’s Catholic bishops [praised Luther](#) as a “Gospel witness and teacher of the faith” in a document released last year.

Christian Unity Week joint message from presidents of European Church conferences

The following is a joint message of the presidents of the Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE) and the Conference of European Churches on the occasion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2017. His Eminence Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco, Archbishop of Genoa is the president of CCEE and the Rt Rev. Christopher Hill KCVO, DD is the president of CEC.

They write -

The love of Christ compels us (2 Corinthians 5:14)! Great truth is contained in this short verse from Saint Paul's letter to the Corinthians that inspired this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The history of Christianity in Europe is marked by sorrowful periods of division, mutual condemnation, and even violence. As a number of churches prepare to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the beginnings of the Protestant Reformation, we are reminded anew of our difficult past. Recalling these events and

confronting our history is a precious opportunity to renew our commitment to the healing of wounds and overcoming divisions. We turn to Christ, who reconciles all people and all creation to God, to guide us in this work. In humble gratitude for this gift, we work for reconciliation through both word and deed.

Today we must also celebrate how we have grown in learning to work together and cultivating meaningful theological dialogue. The Council of European Bishops' Conference and the Conference of European Churches have enjoyed 45 years of collaboration through its Joint Committee, and on other issues of common concern. Also the shared suffering and joy of the world brings us together. Our solidarity with Roma people, our commitment to ecological justice, and prayers for unity within the Body of Christ is strengthened through this relationship.

The multiple crises facing Europe and its neighbours bind us still more closely together. War and conflict, political uncertainty, migration and ecological challenges, material and spiritual poverty touch all lives in Europe and beyond. Along with these crises comes hope. Together we can bear witness to the reconciling love of

Christ through the safeguarding of Creation, solidarity with the poor, and protecting the dignity of all God's people.

Through dialogue we will deepen our understanding of one another. Through common witness and action we will build bridges. Through prayer we will learn to recognise the Holy Spirit at work. The way forward can not always be clear or easy, but we always recall in our heart the truth that "the love of Christ compels us."

Edinburgh University's first ever Campus Minister

Rev Dr Liam Fraser was ordained and inducted into the "exciting, groundbreaking" new role at the University of Edinburgh during a service at St Giles Cathedral in the capital.

The 30-year-old said he was really looking forward to challenging widespread skepticism and indifference toward the Christian faith among the 50,000 people strong university community.

Dr Fraser plans to engage with students in pubs,

cafes, libraries, the chaplaincy centre and in the corridors of the hallowed institution.

The married father of two joked that he might bear a passing resemblance to actor David Tennant's Dr Who in his trademark tweed jacket, albeit with a dog collar.

Dr Fraser said his job involved supporting young Christians who, far from home, have come to doubt their faith and become estranged from the Church of Scotland.



Rev Dr Liam Fraser

The minister, who was temporarily paralyzed and suffered a brain haemorrhage after contracting a condition called Aplastic Anemia - an illness

similar to leukemia- at the age of three, said he hoped to equip people for service in God's Kingdom.

Dr Fraser, who was born and raised in Edinburgh, said the Campus Ministry will be producing apologetic resources to show the rationality of the Christian faith, offering courses on prayer, discernment and providing opportunities for worship and service to the local community.

He added that he would also be encouraging reflection on what role universities and the Church can play in creating a better world.

Dr Fraser, husband to Samantha and father to Theo, 2, and Sebastian, 6-months, started training for the ministry in 2011 and recently completed his probation at Greyfriars Kirk in Edinburgh.

"I applied for the Campus Ministry job because I felt, for many years, that God was calling me to preach the Gospel not to a church congregation, but to those who have never heard his Word, nor have any interest in it," he said.

"I felt that I was being called to the coal-face of mission, coming face to face with the widespread indifference and skepticism toward the Christian faith that is so evident in 21st century Scotland, and trying to show that there was more love, goodness, and freedom in Christianity than many people realize."

Dr Fraser - who is based at the Greyfriars' Charteris Centre in the midst of many student flats - said that while the parish will always be the foundation of the Church, society was no longer constrained by geographical boundaries, but by confines of thought, feeling, and culture.

He added that the aims of the Campus Ministry post, which has been funded by the Kirk's Presbytery of Edinburgh for an initial three years, were simple but very significant.

Dr Fraser, whose ordination service was on Tuesday night, said: "I feel called to reach those people who yearn, and long, and strive for something more, but are not sure what that something more is, who ask themselves from time to time: "is this it?"

"I hope to enlarge the imaginations of students and staff, and make the Christian faith a credible and attractive possibility once again.

"I know the university well having spent 11 years there and I taught a course on Atheism at New College for a semester."

Dr Fraser has degrees in Law, Divinity, a Masters of Theology, and a Doctorate from the University of Edinburgh, and worked as a Verger (caretaker and cleaner) at the Robin Chapel in Craigmillar, Edinburgh and as a shelf stacker at Sainsbury's and the organic food chain, Earthy, while he was studying.

Second Cathedral embroiled In Muslim prayer controversy

Gloucester Cathedral has provoked controversy by hosting an event featuring the Islamic call to prayer, as well as Buddhist chanting, Rasta drumming, and a Pagan rock band in an event just days after a Scottish cathedral was criticised by hosting Muslim prayers denying the divinity of Jesus Christ.

The 'Faith' exhibition by artist Russell Haine, held inside the Christian monument, features 37 portraits of individuals from different belief systems, including Zoroastrians, Druids, Witches, Pagans, and Baha'i, as well as all the major world religions.

The Islamic call to prayer — which states that Muhammed is Allah's prophet, a teaching incompatible with Christianity — was performed at the launch of the exhibition, by local Imam Hassan of Masjid-e-Noor Mosque.

Reverend Ruth Fitter, vicar of St. Paul and Stephen Church, who helped arrange the event, said the call was "absolutely beautiful" and encouraged Christians to embrace all religions rather than spread the gospel in any way.

"We live in a world that is becoming more and more polarised by people who claim to have the truth. No one has any proof of God – that's what faith is about," she [told](#) *Gloucestershire Live*.

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Opus Dei prepare for process to choose new prelate

The three-step process to elect a new prelate for Opus Dei, the predominantly lay organisation, will begin on January 21 with a consultation involving more than three dozen women leaders.

The 38 women members of the Central Advisory will be asked to submit a list with the name or names of those priests in the Opus Dei electoral congress they believe are best suited for the position of prelate.

Opus Dei is a personal prelature, which in some ways is like a diocese without territorial boundaries. St John Paul II named as bishops the two prelates elected after the death of St Josemaria Escriva: first Blessed Alvaro del Portillo and then Bishop Javier Echevarria.

Bishop Echevarria, who was elected in 1994, [died in Rome on December 12, 2016.](#)

Opus Dei has about 92,600 members worldwide; 57 per cent are women and 43 percent are men, according to the Opus Dei press office. The



Bishop Javier Echevarria, the late leader of Opus Dei who died in December, greeting Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes

majority of members — some 70 per cent — are married. The 2,083 priests who are incardinated in Opus Dei represent about 2.25 percent of the membership.

According to the Opus Dei statutes, the prelate must be a priest who is at least 40 years old, a member of the congress of electors, has been part of the prelature for at least 10 years and has been a priest for at least five years. His nomination as a bishop is customary, but not obligatory.

Currently 94 priests, from 45 countries, meet the requirements, the press office said.

The actual election occurs within the electoral congress, which is made up only of men. Some of the 156 congress members, both priests and laymen, participate because of the office they hold while others were elected to represent different regions of Opus Dei membership.

The electoral congress is scheduled to begin on January 23.

Manuel Sanchez, the press spokesman, told Catholic News Service on January 17 that while canon law would not prevent women from taking a direct part in the election, the current Vatican-approved statutes of Opus Dei limit the voting to male members.

However, he said, if the women's Central Advisory group settled on just one or two names, "it would be an indication too strong to ignore" since women are the majority of members.

After the work of the Central Advisory and the vote of the electoral congress, Opus Dei submits the name of the elected prelate to the Pope for

approval. The process should be complete by January 26, Sanchez said.

News briefs

+++ Clogher Service of Installation - Sunday 22nd January – Installation of Archdeacon Brian Harper, installation of Canon Geoffrey Bridle and admittance of Canon Kyle Hanlon at 7.00pm in St Macartan's Cathedral, Clogher.

+++ RTE 1 Church Unity service from Waterford - A service to mark the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation period, led by the Very Revd Maria Jansson, Dean of Waterford, will be broadcast on RTÉ1 on Sunday, 22 January, at 11am. The service was devised by the World Council of Churches on the theme of 'Reconciliation: The Love of Christ Compels Us', based on 2 Corinthians 5: 14–20, and will feature the choir from Christ Church Cathedral, Waterford, along with the Waterford Male Voice Choir, the Slav Orthodox Choir and the Choir of Newtown School. Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Methodists, and members of the Orthodox, Redeemed Christian Church of God,

and Quaker communities, will be take part in the service.

+++ Episcopal Church recalls Martin Luther King -

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry invoked the prophet Isaiah and Robert Fulghum's, "Everything I Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten," charming and challenging a packed Jan. 15 celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday in Los Angeles, to move forward in tough times is by seeking "ancient wisdom ... tried and true and tested." Curry spurred hundreds of Episcopalians and Lutherans at the historic joint celebration to laughter, applause, cheers and a standing ovation. He echoed Isaiah's theme "Look to the rock" (51:1-2) with his characteristic energetic, extemporaneous and whooping preaching style, attributed to the influence of his grandmother, "a dyed-in-the-wool, rock-rib Baptist."

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Relaxation of subject demands on NI schools
News Letter

DUP Education Minister Peter Weir has relaxed demanding targets for schools to share resources that were imposed by Sinn Fein.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/dup-minister-relaxes-sf-class-sharing-targets-1-7777756>

Dr Andrew Crawford, ex special adviser to Arlene Foster, has resigned

Press Association

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/politicalnews/2017/01/19/news/rhi-arlene-foster-s-ex-special-adviser-dr-andrew-crawford-resigns-894180/>

Catholic Church does not care for former priests

Belfast Telegraph

'To see a man of 77 say he's lonely because he was once a priest is so sad... but the Church doesn't give a damn'

http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/to-see-a-man-of-77-say-hes-lonely-because-he-was-once-a-priest-is-so-sad-but-the-church-doesnt-give-a-damn-35378704.html?utm_source=ipad_share&utm_medium=ipad_app&utm_campaign=clickbacks

Active Gay Irish Seminarian Shipped Off to Rome by Dublin Archbishop

Church Militant

Active Gay **Irish** Seminarian Shipped Off to Rome by Dublin Archbishop... the **Irish**

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

Independent, who's accused of sexually assaulting a middle-aged man in 2015 on **church** property in Dublin. ... The **Irish** Independent related on Saturday, January 14, that Abp. Martin and the gardai ...

<http://www.churchmilitant.com/news/article/irish-seminarian-accused-of-homosexual-activity-transferred-to-rome>

NI historic abuse report due today

Irish News - Northern Ireland's public inquiry into child abuse at residential homes run by churches and the state will be judged on the extent to which it delivers truth and justice, campaigners said. The Historical Institutional Abuse (HIA) inquiry is due to publish its report on Friday.

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2017/01/19/news/historic-child-abuse-inquiry-will-be-judged-on-truth-it-delivers--894011/>

Christian Today

Further coverage 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".

Jewish News

Further coverage of the Archbishop of Canterbury's recent visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Archbishop Justin toured the site as part of an Anglican delegation last week, as temperatures dipped to -14C. Reflecting on the cold experienced by both his party and the camp's inmates, he wrote on [Facebook](#): "We had layers and layers of clothing, hats, gloves, scarves, yet it worked through and we were cold to the core. They wore the equivalent of pyjamas and clogs." <http://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/archbishop-of-canterbury-visits-auschwitz/>

Northern Echo/Malton Gazette

Reports on the Archbishop of York embarking on his mission to all 21 deaneries in the Diocese of York over weekends throughout 2017 and 2018. He started in the deanery of North Ryedale. The article focuses on his visit to the Star Inn at Harome near Helmsley, a Michelin-starred restaurant.

[http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/15031506.The Archbishop of York gets busy in the kitchen/?ref=rss](http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/15031506.The-Archbishop-of-York-gets-busy-in-the-kitchen/?ref=rss)

[http://www.gazetteherald.co.uk/news/15026319.Archbishop cooks up a storm in Ryedale/?ref=rss](http://www.gazetteherald.co.uk/news/15026319.Archbishop-cooks-up-a-storm-in-Ryedale/?ref=rss)

BBC

Reports that Bishop James Jones, the former Bishop of Liverpool, who was a key figure in the campaign to uncover the truth about the Hillsborough disaster is to receive the Freedom of Liverpool. Bishop James, who chaired the Hillsborough Independent Panel, will be honoured later at a ceremony in the city. He was made Knight Commander last year for his services to the Hillsborough Inquiry.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-38664766>

Times/Guard/Christian Today

Reports on the publication of a briefing paper on shale gas and fracking from the Mission and Public Affairs Council and the Environment Working Group of the Church of England. The paper assesses shale gas and fracking as they relate to local communities, the environment, UK energy policy and the UK's commitment to carbon reduction targets under the COP21 agreement. It uses a range of recent information but notes that 'perhaps the most important source' is the independent Committee on Climate Change's July 2016 report on fracking, which called a wide range of highly qualified independent experts to give evidence on

greenhouse gas emissions from fracking and the impact on carbon budgets.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/fracking-is-acceptable-says-church-x6qps72lz>

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jan/18/church-england-groups-praise-fracking-way-cut-carbon-emissions>

Guard

Reports that only two Syrian refugee families have been resettled under the government's community refugee sponsorship scheme, six months after it was unveiled by the Home Secretary and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The scheme allows community groups to directly sponsor a refugee family.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jan/18/uk-community-refugee-scheme-has-resettled-only-two-syrian-families>