



A man waves an Israeli flag during the Israeli prime minister's visit to the kosher supermarket in Paris where hostages were killed European Jewish leaders, backed by a host of former EU heads of state and government, are to call for pan-European legislation outlawing antisemitism. See Media digest this issue.

Distinguished musicians recognised by the Royal College of Organists

Three eminent musicians are to be awarded the RCO Medal, the Royal College of Organists' highest honour.

Professor Edward Higginbottom, former director of music at New College, Oxford, receives the Medal in recognition of his distinguished achievements in choral conducting and organ- and choral-related scholarship; the renowned organ professor Dr Ludger Lohmann for his distinguished achievements in organ playing, teaching and scholarship; and Canon Dr Nicholas Thistlethwaite, in recognition of his distinguished achievement in organ scholarship, specifically his research on the history of organ building in the UK.

The RCO Medals will be presented at the College's Conferment of Diplomas at Southwark Cathedral on 14 March this year.

The RCO Medal was first awarded in 2012 and recognises distinguished achievement in one or more of the following areas relating to organ and choral music: performance, teaching, scholarship, composition, organ building, conducting, administration, and philanthropy; it is also available to recognise specific service to the College.

Full report in the March/April 2015 issue of Choir & Organ.

Ireland's Nobel Peace Prize-winner and leading climate scientist to speak at Letterkenny climate justice event

Emeritus Professor John Sweeney of NUI Maynooth will address the topic, 'Climate Change: the clock is ticking' at an inter-church event in Letterkenny on Friday 13th February at 7.30pm.

The event, which will be open to members of the public, will be co-hosted by Eco-Congregation Ireland (ECI) and Raphoe Justice and Peace Group, in the Regional Cultural Centre.

Prof Sweeney is currently leading a research programme into the impacts of climate change in Ireland and into the production of climate scenarios for Ireland for mid and end century. As one of the contributing authors and a review editor of the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

January 28

(IPCC), Prof Sweeney shared, with several hundred other climatologists, the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize.



Nobel Peace Prize–winner will talk about the impacts of climate change here & overseas

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

Page 4

‘Time is running out for taking decisive action to avoid dangerous climate change,’ he says. ‘In Ireland political paralysis and vested interests are preventing us from meeting our agreed international obligations. As individuals and a society, our ethical responsibilities demand we take seriously what is generally agreed to be the major problem of the 21st century. As preparations continue for what will be a crucial UN meeting in Paris in December, it is clear that a radical change in our approach is required if we are not to condemn the next generation to a seriously damaged planet.’

Encouraging people in the North–West to attend this event, ECI chairperson, the Ven Andrew Orr, said: ‘We are delighted that renowned climate scientist Prof John Sweeney is addressing this event. He will remind us all that the time is running out for us to address the most pressing environmental issue of our time, and that neither the British nor Irish governments appear to be serious about tackling our carbon footprint. Christians should be at the forefront of environmental concern, because we believe that this is God’s world and we are expected to take care of his creation. I hope as many people as

possible will be able to attend this important and inspiring event.’

Following Prof Sweeney’s talk, members of two eco–congregations will give short presentations about the steps they have taken to ‘green’ their churches. All are welcome to this event.

Suggested donation: €10.

Clogher walks with Pope Francis in preparation for October Synod on the Family

Bishop Liam MacDaid, Bishop of Clogher, has invited priests and parishioners of the diocese to take part in a diocesan-wide discussion in advance of the Synod on the Family in the Vatican in October on the theme ‘The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and Contemporary World’.

In a letter to the priests and people of the diocese Bishop MacDaid invites the faithful to walk with Pope Francis saying: “Pope Francis has encouraged us to be honest and frank as we walk with him and he has stated his wish to hear and listen carefully to all voices, even those who

might consider themselves to be on or beyond the threshold of faith. He has stated his wish to hear the voices of young married couples sharing their experiences of joys and sorrows and helping us to learn from both. Pope Francis is inviting us, in a fuller way than many previous generations, to help him and all Church leaders in “the task of formulating the pastoral responses to the real situation of family life around the world” as it was expressed at last year’s Extraordinary Synod.” Bishop MacDaid asks, “How could we turn our backs to such a respectful and gracious invitation?”

In his letter Bishop MacDaid outlines the timeline for the discussions in the Diocese of Clogher, and introduces a new eight-person steering committee as well as a revision of Pastoral Areas from fourteen to seven to facilitate a speedier pace of work.

Bishop Liam MacDaid is Chair of the Bishops’ Council for Marriage and the Family. The Diocese of Clogher includes County Monaghan, most of County Fermanagh and portions of Counties Tyrone, Donegal, Louth and Cavan.

The Diocese has a Catholic population of 84,384,
85 churches and 37 parishes.

Down in the Arctic



The cathedral is in the top third of this photo of Iqaluit from the air, near the centre.

Bishop Harold Miller of Down and Dromore is currently visiting the Diocese of the Arctic. He writes “I’m having a wonderful visit with Bishop Darren and Karen McCartney in Iqaluit. The Cathedral for the Diocese of the Arctic is here, built in the shape of an igloo, after the previous cathedral was burnt down.

“I preached at three services on Sunday and presided at Holy Communion. The town has about 8000 inhabitants, largely Anglican. Finding new clergy is a challenge especially in far-flung villages. Please pray for Darren in his work as suffragan bishop. Yesterday was his 42nd birthday.”

Catholic Primate wants to see end of entrance exams for Catholic schools



Archbishop Eamon Martin has said no young person should be turned away from a Catholic school based on the results of an entrance exam.

Patsy McGarry in Irish Times - No young person should be turned away from a Catholic school based on the results of an entrance exam, the

Catholic primate Archbishop [Eamon Martin](#) has said. Such schools are called to serve all, he said.

In a homily marking Catholic Schools Week Archbishop Eamon Martin said “in this day and age no young person should be turned away from a Catholic school on the basis of their mark in an entrance test at the age of 10 or 11.”

Catholic schools “are called to serve all pupils and especially the poor and most disadvantaged of society. We must always be on the lookout for those who are being left behind or neglected in any way in our Catholic education system,” he said.

“The holy founders and foundresses of our Catholic schools were clearly inspired by a preferential option for the marginalised and poor.

“As Catholic schools, called to serve, we must always be alert to the inequalities in our educational system system where too many of our young people, particularly the socially disadvantaged, leave without meaningful qualifications or opportunities; where the responsibility for children from the most deprived backgrounds, minority ethnic communities or for

those with the greatest educational needs seems to fall unevenly on the shoulders of only some of our post-primary schools,” he said.

“Too many of our young people are not making the transition to education, employment or training beyond the age of 16 and are ending up marginalised and often forgotten by the system. These are problems that concern us all. These are problems to be shared and tackled by all of us,” he said.

In a homily at St Malachy’s Church on Irish Street in Armagh he said he was “pleased” that “academic selection will no longer be used as an entrance criterion for schools in the city of Armagh.”

It meant “that 24 of the 27 post primary schools in the Archdiocese do not select pupils for admission by ability. I would like to work closely with the Boards of Governors of the three remaining grammar schools in the Archdiocese to encourage and help them find a way of ending academic selection in the near future.”

Meanwhile a [Church of Ireland](#) study into small Irish primary schools will be launched in Dublin on Tuesday evening.

Its research will focus on the communities, cultures, benefits and challenges of small primary schools in the Republic of [Ireland](#) and will be carried out between

January and July 2015. It will identify the strengths and challenges facing small primary schools in the Republic.

In 2013, 29 per cent of all primary schools in the state had four or fewer teachers and catered for 7.4 per cent of all primary school pupils in the state. Altogether 195 primary schools in the Republic are under Church of Ireland, Methodist, Presbyterian and [Society of Friends](#) patronage.

Such small schools are common in the Scandinavian countries, [Scotland](#), [England](#), [Germany](#), [Switzerland](#), the [Netherlands](#), [Austria](#) and the [Czech Republic](#) as well as [Canada](#) and [Australia](#). Over 30 per cent of all primary schools in [Finland](#) have between two and four teachers while 30 per cent of all primary schools in rural England have 100 pupils or less. Research in these schools in England has shown they have a positive social climate, impact positively on pupil learning outcomes and offer models of community that larger schools can emulate. Policy in England supports small schools.

Also - Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/northern-ireland/primates-plea-to-three-catholic-grammar-schools-to-end-selection-now-30939624.html>

CNI - the daily online church news magazine - please recommend to your friends

Self-Care for Pastoral Carers: A Specialist Workshop

Mirabilis Health is offering a new course “Self-Care for Pastoral Carers: A Specialist Workshop” for those involved in ministry and pastoral care.

This interactive course is designed especially for Ministers/Priests/Pastors/Pastoral Carers and will comprise the following sessions:

- Understanding, recognising and managing stress.
- Exploring the implications of mental/physical well-being and good pastoral care.
- Revisiting that Christian response: the interface between faith and self-care.

Trainers: Rev. Dr. Scott Peddie, Dr. Volodimir Bezulowsky (Psychiatrist) & Dr. Paul Miller (Consultant Psychiatrist and Psychogeriatrician)

Date: Thursday 26th February 2015 from 1-5pm (tea/coffee/biscuits available from 12.30pm).

Venue: Mirabilis Health, Holywood House, Holywood, BT18 9HF. Cost: £45 per person (includes refreshments)

Other courses that will be made available in the forthcoming year in our pastoral care series include: dementia, eating disorders, trauma, meaning-centred pastoral care and suicide awareness (You Must Ask).

Booking and further information e-mail
scottpeddie@sky.com

Cursing cleric wins driving ban appeal case

A judge has overturned a driving ban against a speeding and foul-mouthed cleric, but told him "even God would tell you slow down".

Irish Independent - Church of Ireland rector Canon Bob Hanna (68) yesterday successfully appealed a six-month driving ban.

In the district court last month, Judge Patrick Durcan banned Canon Hanna from driving after describing his conduct as "despicable" when he was stopped by Garda Lisa McDonagh on April 17 last year. He was doing 135km in a 100km

zone at Bunratty on the main dual-carriageway linking Ennis to Limerick.



At Ennis Circuit Court yesterday, State solicitor, Martin Linnane said Canon Hanna "was extremely abusive and aggressive in his behaviour towards Garda McDonagh".

"He shouted at Garda McDonagh: 'I'm late for a communion service at one o'clock. What are you doing? What are you stopping me for?'," said Mr Linnane.

"He then stated 'Chase me if you want, I'm leaving'. Canon Hanna was then informed of his speed and he said 'I don't give a f**k. I'm late. It

is religious week. I hope that you are victimising everyone else'."

The rector had four previous motoring convictions and had been fined €100 for speeding in January 2014.

In evidence, Canon Hanna - who arrived at court by bicycle yesterday - told Judge Tom O'Donnell: "I feel a little hard done by this."

Canon Hanna admitted his language "wasn't temperate" and was "impolite and ungracious to a lady".

He said: "I was under huge stress in Holy Week.

" didn't give the lady garda much time, but I gave her all the information that she needed. I just felt at the time that she wasn't understanding of my position."

He later sent a letter of apology to Garda McDonagh.

Judge O'Donnell said he was satisfied to remove the disqualification "given the abject apology and letter given to the garda". He reduced the fine from €500 to €250 and told Canon Hanna "even

God would tell you slow down on that particular road".

Church of Scotland saddened by minister's departure



The Acting Principal Clerk, Rev Dr George Whyte, has said The Church of Scotland is saddened by Rev Andrew McMillan's decision to leave his charge in Inverness

The Acting Principal Clerk, Rev Dr George Whyte, has issued the following response to the departure of Rev Andrew McMillan from the Church of Scotland.

"The Church of Scotland is saddened by Rev Andrew McMillan's decision to leave his charge in Inverness. Arrangements are already in place to support the congregation at Dalneigh and Bona.

"The Church of Scotland has engaged in a careful theological debate on the subject of ministers in civil partnerships and the overture on this issue will be debated at the General Assembly in May. It would be wrong to pre-judge the outcome of that debate.

"At present, from the 800 ministers within the Church, 18 have chosen to leave over this issue. In many cases these congregations have enjoyed a renewal in commitment and energy. In two weeks, the congregation at Stornoway High Church will welcome their new minister. This has been made possible by the new unity of purpose the members have experienced since they themselves went through a painful split.

"The Church of Scotland is a national Church, and is engaged in wide ranging debate on matters both practical and spiritual relevant to the life of our nation. It is implausible and indeed untrue that the Church proposes to remove

Christian worship from state schools. The Church will not shrink from its responsibilities to carry out God's work in a way which brings his spirit and message into the lives of its members and wider society."

Tribute - Legal brain and devoted Presbyterian James Tweed

James Scott Tweed kept a deliberately low profile, but was among the most accomplished legal figures of his time. The devoted Presbyterian was buried last month after succumbing to Parkinson's disease.

He had been born at the family farm in Ballycoose on August 20, 1926, to parents Campbell and Lavinia Tweed.

He was a pupil of Cairncastle Primary School and later Coleraine Academical Institution, before studying at law Trinity College, Dublin – both at Bachelor and then Masters levels.

He went on to work at law firm O'Rourke, McDonald and Tweed where he remained until 1977, when he was sworn in as a resident magistrate.

He was assigned to Belfast Juvenile Court in 1979.

Outside his legal work he was a very active Rotarian, and among his other roles were as past captain and vice-president of Larne Rugby Club, honorary life member of Muckamore Tennis club, and worshipful master of Cairncastle freemasons lodge.

He was also an elder of Cairncastle Presbyterian Church and had sat on committees within the Irish Presbyterian church as a whole.

He was described by his family as a traditionalist Presbyterian, and “very much a family man”.

More at -

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/obituary-legal-brain-and-devoted-presbyterian-james-tweed-1-6540438>

Revd Jan Taylor

Revd Jan Taylor, who died suddenly a few days ago, was one of three brothers who grew up in St Jude’s Ballynafeigh. Mark is rector of Whitehead (Connor Diocese) and Guy died in a swimming

accident as a young man. Jan served as curate in St Simon's and as Rector of St Paul's, Belfast prior to joining the RAF as a chaplain.

The funeral is in Gilnahirk Presbyterian Church at noon today, Wednesday 28 January, with refreshments afterwards in St. Dorothea's Hall. There will be a private cremation later in the day.

Archbishop of Canterbury continues to speak against stark inequality

Gross inequality is a “great challenge for our world,” Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby warned. On a visit to the USA, he spoke more forcefully on the issue than perhaps he has ever done before.

Ekklesia - He gave a talk at a Trinity Institute conference in New York on 'Creating the Common Good' and preached at Trinity Wall Street, an Episcopal (Anglican) church in the heart of a major financial district.

At the conference, he suggested that “at the heart of the Genesis story of the creation of human beings is the essential nature of the human being, both male and female, existing to

know God intimately and to walk intimately with God. There is an equality of worship, in adoration of the presence of God; there is an equality of revelling and feasting in fellowship with God in the Garden. Equality is a gift in creation.”

He drew attention to “a commonality of status, and the absence of great riches” in the Exodus story, the laws which “prevented the indefinite accumulation of land and slaves” and prophets’ denunciations of inequality. There was ambivalence about wealth, he said; it could be seen as a blessing, but there was also “a hesitation about, a fear about its consequences.”

The archbishop also spoke of how, in the Acts of the Apostles, part of the New Testament, Christians shared what they had, and examined other New Testament teachings on equality, stating, “The Eucharist in its thanksgiving includes thanksgiving for the new community in which needs are met, poverty ended and the just rule of God is seen. And James hits hard at the wealthy who don’t share their wealth and at the business people who don’t depend on God.”

www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/21367&z=2HJJVRCTBEG9FRML

* The Archbishop of Canterbury's talk can be found on <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5481/archbishop-of-ca...>

* His homily is on <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5482/archbishop-of-ca...>

“Ecumenism of blood” - persecution is uniting Christians, Pope Francis

Pope Francis has said religious persecution is uniting Christians around the world – a development that the Pontiff went on to describe as an “ecumenism of blood”.

The Pope was speaking to members of a number of Christian Churches gathered in the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls on Sunday evening to celebrate Vespers and mark the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

“In this moment of prayer for unity, I would also like to remember our martyrs, the martyrs of today,” he said.

“They are witnesses to Jesus Christ, and they are persecuted and killed because they are

Christians. Those who persecute them make no distinction between the religious communities to which they belong. They are Christians and for that they are persecuted. This, brothers and sisters, is the ecumenism of blood.”

During his homily Pope Francis called on Christians to look to the example of Jesus Christ and work together to spread the Gospel in the modern world.

“(Jesus’s) example encourages us to seek a serene encounter with others. To understand one another, and to grow in charity and truth, we need to pause, to accept and listen to one another,” Francis said.

“In this way, we already begin to experience unity. Unity grows along the way; it never stands still. Unity happens when we walk together.” The Pontiff added that a “shared commitment to proclaiming the Gospel” would enable Christians to overcome “proselytism and competition”.

Media digest

JD Wetherspoon steps up plans to convert Belfast church into latest pub

Belfast Telegraph - The wheels are in motion for pub giant JD Wetherspoon's conversion of a former Methodist church in Belfast into its latest Northern Ireland bar.

Planning permission is being sought to refurbish the disused redbrick [property](#) on University Street, after the pub chain purchased the site in October last year.

The [plans](#) will see the grade-B listed building undergo numerous alterations.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/news/jd-wetherspoon-steps-up-plans-to-convert-church-into-latest-pub-30939216.html>

Pagan priest says statue theft a hate crime

Londonderry Sentinel - A full time pagan priest wants the theft of a statue of the Irish God of the Sea Manannán Mac Lír to be treated as a hate crime.

Patrick Carberry, who says he left his job as a chef to become a full time “Traditional Celtic Shamanic priest”, told the Sentinel that the theft of the statue was a religious hate crime committed against people of his faith.

After the spectacular statue was stolen from the viewing point at Gortmore on Binevenagh mountain, a wooden cross along with the words 'you shall have no other Gods before me' was found in its place.

<http://www.londonderrysentinel.co.uk/news/local-news/pagan-priest-says-statue-theft-a-hate-crime-1-6543319>

Bill to prevent sacking of gay teachers

Amendment to "discriminatory" Employment Equality Act proposed

Irish Independent - Stripping religious-run schools and hospitals of the ability to sack staff for being gay, divorced, or unmarried is the "best we can do without starting over", Equality Minister Aodhan O Riordain says.

A motion is underway to make amendments to Section 37 of the Employment Equality Act, which allows certain institutions the right to discriminate positively to protect their ethos, so that "no one will be forced to hide their private life over fears of going against their employers' religious ethos," he told independent.ie.

"As long as schools are run by particular denominations protected under the Constitution

we've just got to do the best we can when it comes to protecting people's rights to be who they are."

"Scrapping Section 37 totally would be a constitutional issue and that's not something the Government is a position to do. Amending it is the best option we have."

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/bill-to-prevent-sacking-of-gay-teachers-30938317.html>

[Jewish leaders call for Europe-wide legislation outlawing antisemitism](#)

European Jewish leaders, backed by a host of former EU heads of state and government, are to call for pan-European legislation outlawing antisemitism amid a [sense of siege and emergency](#) feeding talk of a mass exodus of Europe's oldest ethnic minority.

Guardian - A panel of four prestigious international experts on constitutional law backed by the European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation (ECTR) have spent three years consulting widely and drafting a 12-page document on "tolerance". They are lobbying to

have it converted into law in the 28 countries of the EU.

The proposal would outlaw antisemitism as well as criminalising a host of other activities deemed to be violating fundamental rights on specious religious, cultural, ethnic and gender grounds.

These would include [banning the burqa](#), [female genital mutilation](#), forced marriage, polygamy, denial of the Holocaust and genocide generally, criminalising xenophobia, and creating a new crime of “group libel” – public defamation of ethnic, cultural or religious groups. Women’s and gay rights would also be covered.

www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/25/jewish-leaders-europe-legislation-outlawing-antisemitism?CMP=tw_t_gu

Guard

Report that the Archbishop of York has called on David Cameron to intervene personally in the "tragic" case of a five-year-old girl whose Zimbabwean grandparents have been refused permission to travel to the UK to attend her funeral. Dr John Sentamu added his support to calls for the prime minister to reverse a Home Office decision that refused visas to the grandparents of Andrea Gada, who died after

being hit by a car near her home in Eastbourne, East Sussex, shortly before Christmas.

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/jan/26/archbishop-john-sentamu-andrea-gada-funeral>

BBC

Report stating an abuse survivor has said the findings of an inquiry into the handling of an allegation (in 2008) of abuse by a Jersey church warden should not be made public. It follows recent [calls for the report to be published](#) by the Jersey Deanery Synod. A spokesman representing the Bishop of Winchester, Tim Dakin, said: "We don't yet have a date for publication, as the Steel Report is currently continuing to be reviewed by legal and safeguarding experts."

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-jersey-30984736>

Eve Standard/Mirror

Reports that the Revd Simon Sayers, Rector of two churches in Hampshire - St James Church, Emsworth, and St Thomas a Becket, Warblington, has been suspended while police investigate allegations of a historic sexual assault in London. Parishioners were informed about the investigation by the Bishop of Portsmouth, the Rt Rev Christopher Foster, before services yesterday morning. A Metropolitan Police

spokesman said Rev Sayers had been arrested and bailed until a date in early April.

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/crime/rector-of-two-village-churches-suspended-as-police-investigate-historic-sexual-assault-in-islington-10004239.html>

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/simon-sayers-priest-arrested-suspicion-5047552>