



CNI



MPs will vote on whether to allow three parent babies on Tuesday February 3rd

Three parent baby law is 'irresponsible' says C of E ahead of vote - Irish cleric's advisory role

MPs will vote to amend the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 to allow three parent babies next week.

Telegraph - Introducing laws to allow three parent babies would be 'irresponsible' the Church of England has said ahead of a crucial vote in the House of Commons next week.

Next Tuesday, MPs will vote to amend the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 and legalise mitochondrial DNA transfer.

Until now the Anglican Church has withheld judgement on the issue, asking for more scientific evidence. But today it announced that it could not support the legislation.

The procedure, which was developed by British scientists, allows IVF clinics to replace an egg's defective mitochondrial DNA with healthy DNA from a female donor, to prevent children suffering debilitating conditions like muscular dystrophy.

It is controversial because it would result in babies having DNA from three people – and effectively, two mothers.

Dame Sally Davies, the government's Chief Medical Officer, has claimed the process is similar to 'changing a faulty car battery' however some scientists say that view is naïve because

mitochondrial DNA is responsible for much more than powering cells.

Although MPs will not be formally whipped ahead of Tuesday's debate because it is a vote of conscience, the Telegraph understands that the government has made it clear to members that they are expected to back the legislation.

However, at least 60 MPs are already opposed to the new legislation and Conservative MP Fiona Bruce is expected put down a motion calling for the vote to be delayed until there is more evidence.

The Church of England has said it is worried that the vote will take place before any peer-reviewed safety checks into the procedure have taken place.

Rev Dr Brendan McCarthy, the Church of England's national adviser on medical ethics, said: "The Archbishops Council, which monitors this issue, does not feel that there has been sufficient scientific study or informed consultation into the ethics, safety and efficacy of mitochondria transfer.

“Without a clearer picture of the role mitochondria play in the transfer of hereditary characteristics, the Church does not feel it would be responsible to change the law at this time.”

Sir Tony Baldry, the Second Church Estate Commissioner and the voice of the Anglican Church in the Commons added: “The house is going to in due course have to consider some difficult issues both about start of life and end of life.

“The Church of England accepts that embryo research is permissible if it’s undertaken to alleviate human suffering.

“But there are concerns that there has been insufficient scientific study or informed consultation into the ethics of mitochondria transfer, not least the role mitochondria play in the transfer of hereditary characteristics.”

If the new legislation is passed in the Commons next week it will be laid before the House of Lords on February 23rd. If successful, the first human trials could take place from October and the first babies born by Autumn 2016.

More at -

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/11377992/Three-parent-baby-law-is-irresponsible-says-Church-of-England-ahead-of-vote.html>

Statement from Revd Dr Brendan McCarthy on Mitochondrial replacement therapy

The Rev Dr Brendan McCarthy, the Church of England's national adviser on medical ethics, said: "The Church of England is aware of the complex ethical issues raised over the possibility of mitochondrial replacement therapy and the extensive scientific research that has been carried out in this field over the years.

"Changing the human germline represents an ethical watershed; it is right to be cautious, requiring a comprehensive debate and degree of consensus with regard to the ethics, safety and efficacy of these techniques before any change to the current provisions are made.

"We accept in certain circumstances that embryo research is permissible as long as it is undertaken to alleviate human suffering and embryos are treated with respect. We have great sympathy for families affected by mitochondrial

disease and are not opposed in principle to mitochondrial replacement.

"A wide number of questions remain to be answered before it would be wise to proceed. For example, the two proposed techniques involved in MRT are not ethically identical - little debate has been given to this. The Church has participated in the debate at every stage, making submissions to consultations run by the Nuffield Council on Bioethics, the HFEA and the Department of Health as well as participating in relevant seminars and workshops.

"Our view, however, remains that we believe that the law should not be changed until there has been further scientific study and informed debate into the ethics, safety and efficacy of mitochondrial replacement therapy."

Third Annual 'Retreat in the City' at Christ Church, Dublin

Christ Church Cathedral's annual Retreat in the City takes place from February 20 to 22. Now in its third year, the retreat is part of the Open Door Spirituality Programme at the cathedral.

The 2015 retreat will be led by Brother John SSF (pictured). John was born and raised in London. After gaining a degree in French he spent a couple of years on a church–planting team in Belgium before training for the Baptist ministry and serving in two pastorates in England. He has been Franciscan brother for 13 years.



Brother John SSF

Over the course of the weekend Br John will lead and inspire participants as they continue on their spiritual journeys. There will be six sessions over the weekend:

Hallowing time – about discipline/structure in prayer.

In my own skin – about solitude as opposed to loneliness, and becoming comfortable with ourselves.

The language of God – about silence.

Closer than a brother – about spiritual friendship/accompaniment.

Justice in the gate – about being outward-looking.

Beautiful vision – about openness to wonder.

Br John will also preach at the cathedral Eucharist on Sunday morning, which is part of the retreat programme.

The retreat will begin on Friday evening with registration from 6.00 pm, finishing at 9.15 pm. The Saturday programme on Saturday will begin at 9.00 am and finish at 5.30 pm. Sunday's programme will start at 9.00 am and continue until after lunch.

The retreat is non residential and costs only €80 which includes all retreat sessions, tea/coffee and lunch on Saturday and Sunday. For those travelling into the city there are a number of

reasonably priced hotels within easy walking distance from the cathedral.

To book and for further information email garth.bunting@cccdub.ie or phone +353 86 0386415

christchurchcathedral.ie/spirituality/retreat-in-the-city

Methodist East Belfast Mission housing prize nomination



The NI Street League, one of East Belfast Mission's Hosford House projects, has been nominated for the prestigious Chartered Institute of Housing's 2015 Housing Awards.

The NI Street League has been shortlisted in the Best Housing Story category. This award celebrates contributions that have made a real difference to the life of a tenant or a community.

Some of the best stories in housing never hit the headlines. They are stories of direct, life-changing impact on the lives of individuals.

Finalists can be chosen by the general public at <http://www.cih.org/ni/awards/vote>

The NI Street League NI Street League was developed as a way to help the most marginalised in society develop the skills to enable them to reintegrate and break the cycle of homelessness.

NI Street League is a charity working with homeless individuals who fall outside statutory engagement. It goes the extra mile to change lives. Their chances of finding and sustaining a long term tenancy are low and they are in danger of existing problems, e.g. addiction, worsening due to the circumstances in which they find themselves.

Football is used as a means to engage with this vulnerable group and to help individuals break out of homelessness by designing education /

training and volunteering packages to address issues relating to their marginalisation and social exclusion.

The NI Street League works with local hostels and other projects throughout the country to reach around 40-60 young men on a weekly basis. Street League partners the 'Homeless World Cup' which provides a tournament each year in a different country. Players from the league are selected every year to go to the world cup to represent their country.

[Download further information on NI Street League](#)

New Crosslinks Ireland Team Leader

Revd David Luckman has been appointed to the post of Crosslinks Ireland Team Leader, a position he will take up on 2 February 2015.

Since his ordination in June 2000 David has served in churches in Counties Fermanagh and Armagh and most recently in the Diocese of Down and Dromore providing ministry to vacant parishes.

“I am absolutely delighted to have been appointed as Crosslinks Ireland Team Leader. BCMS/Crosslinks is a mission agency whose primary focus is to tell people about Jesus Christ through the teaching of God’s word in the power of the Holy Spirit. So I am really looking forward to partnering with and serving local churches and individuals as they seek to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord to the nations.”

David is married to Sarah and they have two daughters, Rachel and Hannah.

Bishop of Down authors Holy Week and Easter worship resources

Two new worship resources for Holy Week will be launched at the Down and Dromore Clergy Quiet Day on Shrove Tuesday, 17 February.

Bishop Harold Miller has written a worship guide for Holy Week and Easter Day called *Week of All Weeks* and compiled a prayer book of the same name to be read and used alongside it.

“Holy Week and Easter are the most important days in the Christian year and tell the key story of

our salvation, yet it has long troubled me why they don't have the impact in our churches that they should have," says Bishop Harold.

**TWO WORSHIP RESOURCES
FOR HOLY WEEK
AND EASTER DAY**

WEEK OF ALL WEEKS
A WORSHIP GUIDE
FOR HOLY WEEK
AND EASTER DAY
By Harold Miller

WEEK OF ALL WEEKS
A PRAYER BOOK
FOR HOLY WEEK
AND EASTER DAY
Compiled by Harold Miller

Discount on
orders of 10
or more

**A WORSHIP GUIDE FOR
HOLY WEEK AND EASTER DAY**
By Harold Miller **£5 each (€6)**

COMPANION PRAYER BOOK
Compiled by Harold Miller **£4 each (€5)**

Available from 17th February 2015
Visit www.thebookwell.co.uk Email: info@thebookwell.co.uk

“The main reason for writing *Week of all Weeks* is to enable worship leaders and groups to think through how their celebration of these days might most powerfully and effectively tell the story. Celebrated well and thoughtfully, this week can lead the people of God into the deep joy and privilege of their salvation. I hope that the guide and the accompanying prayer book will be widely used in my own diocese and beyond.”

Week of All Weeks has been some years in gestation and has had the support and interest of the Church of Ireland Liturgical Advisory Committee and Church of Ireland Publishing. The Literature Committee has given a grant to aid publication.

Both books will be available from The Book Well (www.thebookwell.co.uk) after the launch on 17 February and there will be discounts available for bulk orders.

Week of All Weeks: A Worship Guide for Holy Week and Easter Day £5 (€6) each

Week of All Weeks: A Prayer Book for Holy Week and Easter Day £4 (€5) each

Faith of their fathers - Catholic education in Northern Ireland - Economist comment

It was one of those improbable internet sensations. A routine report on local television about the hardships of going to school in freezing weather became a global hit after millions of users were baffled and charmed by the [thick rural accent](#) of a teenager from a County Derry village who declared: "Oh God, you wouldn't be long getting frostbit ..."

Economist - As it soon emerged, Ruairi McSorley is no simple country bumpkin. He is a pupil at an academically superb Catholic grammar school, Lumen Christi, in the city of Derry (or Londonderry, as Protestants still prefer to say). As I [write](#) in this week's print edition, these schools are a remarkable success story, and testimony to the ongoing influence of the church at a time Irish Catholicism as a whole is weathering some severe storms.

Lumen Christi is one of half a dozen Catholic secondary schools in Northern Ireland whose results place them near the top of British league

tables. Such schools have their critics; some regard them as “grade factories” which will push children into relatively easy subjects and neglect their development as all-rounders. But they certainly do give plenty of children from modest homes or remote places a leg-up. Ruairi’s rural brogue wouldn’t be out of place in the Lumen playground, and nor would a working-class urban accent.

It’s still not enough, say the local Catholic bishops. In recent public statements, the hierarchy has renewed calls for schools like Lumen Christi to open their doors to children of all abilities. “Catholic schools are called to serve all pupils and especially the poor and most disadvantaged of society,” declared Archbishop Eamon Martin, the Irish primate, a few days ago. “We must always be on the lookout for those who are being left behind or neglected in any way by our Catholic education system.”

What lies behind all this egalitarian talk? Well, it may be perfectly sincere. But to critics, it amounts to a strategy for retaining influence over all classes of a society that is certainly not immune to the inroads of secularism. In the Republic of Ireland, the church has seen a

vertiginous decline in its prestige thanks to scandals over cruelty to children, and the cover-up of these ills by priest-ridden politicians. The church's social and moral influence has probably held up a bit better in the north, where Catholics still feel they must fight their collective corner in a divided society. But Northern Ireland is no longer a conservative place; in both Belfast and Derry, only a minority of children are born to conventionally married parents. The church has to think of clever ways of keeping its stock high.

For decades, Catholic schools were seen as one of the collective assets of an embattled community. But arguments over education in Northern Ireland are going to get fiercer as the total budget shrinks. Advocates of "integrated" schools - where the intake and curriculum are self-consciously balanced - complain of being sabotaged by the church. A church spokesman recently returned the complaint by saying a Catholic teacher-training college was being starved of funds by politicians with a pro-integration agenda.

But as of now, the cause of "integration" has a long way to go. Only about 8% of children go to mixed Protestant-Catholic schools. For the

foreseeable future, kids like Ruairi will be taught the rosary as rigorously as they are taught everything else.

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/erasmus/2015/01/catholic-education-northern-ireland>

Sinn Fein's biased approach to schools - Kate Hoey MP comments

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/kate-hoey-sinn-fein-s-biased-approach-to-schools-1-6551717>

Unionists slam DENI for naming 'test coaching' primary schools

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/unionists-slam-deni-for-naming-test-coaching-primary-schools-1-6551594>

Released for mission, growing the rural church

The challenges of rural ministry are addressed in a new report aimed at releasing the energies of clergy and lay people for mission in the countryside.

The study *Released for Mission, Growing the Rural Church*, to be debated by the General Synod next month, makes a series of

recommendations including locally accessible training and development for lay people and clergy working in multi-church groups.

A review needs to be carried out urgently to examine how to simplify legal governance structures of multi-church groups, the report recommends.

Multi-church groups would also benefit from improving systems to take care of administrative tasks, financial accounting, and building and churchyard management on behalf of the whole group.

More ecumenical partnership should also be encouraged, opening up the possibility of new initiatives that might not be possible for a single denomination, the report adds.

Mission and growth are more likely to flourish in rural multi-church groups where time and space is created for this, the report notes, and where the ministry of lay people is supported.

Nearly two-thirds or 65%, of Church of England churches - 10,199 - are in rural areas and almost all work in groups.

The study, from the Rural Affairs Group of the General Synod, drew on interviews with 47 clergy and lay people from 35 rural church groupings in six dioceses in the autumn of 2010 and spring 2011. Data was also analysed from parish returns, and the 2011 Census. The research project was led by the Church of England's National Rural Officer, Canon Dr Jill Hopkinson.

James Bell, Bishop of Knaresborough, and chair of the Rural Affairs Group of the General Synod, writing in the foreword to the report, described the recommendations as "practical and achievable."

"A Christian presence in every community is more than a strap-line - it is the heart of English Anglicanism. It is the expression of our obligation, as the church for all the people of the nation, to leave no community untouched by the gospel of Jesus Christ, lived out among the people of every place," he said.

"Ministry and mission in the rural church is highly demanding of energy and imagination. Growth is being realised but much needs to be done."

Dr Hopkinson said: "*Released for Mission* highlights the enormous amount of high quality work being carried out by rural churches, including fresh expressions of Church, seekers courses, children's activities, much needed facilities for local communities and support for those who are isolated.

"The report shows that mission and growth are more likely to flourish in rural multi-church groups where time and space is enabled for it to take place and where the ministry of lay people is enabled and equipped.

"This research is a starting point, it is not a simple solution to all the problems of rural ministry. Further work urgently needs to be done to continue to identify and share existing good practice in all areas of the life of rural churches and to ensure that the recommendations made in *Released for Mission* are implemented quickly."

Dr Hopkinson added that the Rural Affairs Group looks forward to working with the Arthur Rank Centre, the churches' centre for rural mission and ministry, and ecumenical partners to achieve its aims.

'Mass mobs' come to the rescue of New York churches suffering from dwindling attendance



New Yorkers on Sunday past flocked to hear Mass in a Roman Catholic Church that has been scheduled for closing by the Archdiocese of New York because of dwindling attendance.

Rev. Bartholomew Daly told the New York Times that, on Sunday afternoon, the Our Lady of Peace Church in Manhattan was so "packed" that some churchgoers even had to stand just to hear Mass.

Our Lady of Peace is one of the churches that will be affected by the Archdiocese's reorganisation efforts to create 55 new parishes in New York in response to weakening attendance and thinning of finances to maintain the parishes.

The reorganisation, the New York Times reported last month, will result to the closing of 112 churches including Our Lady of Peace.

Despite the declaration from the Archdiocese of the finality of the decision, parishioners engaged in a passionate campaign to keep the Our Lady of Peace and other struggling churches from being closed. Parishioners established an online election to pick churches that will benefit from what they referred to as "Mass mobs" – large groups of people who will attend Mass en masse in the selected church.

The Our Lady of Peace became the first recipient of the online election.

"What the archdiocese wants to see is more vibrant parishes," a parish leader told the Times after Mass was celebrated. "How can you be a more vibrant parish than this one?"

For his part, Rev. Daly thanked the attendees for coming to hear Mass in Our Lady of Peace. "We hope that your presence here today will strengthen us and make it possible for us to continue as Our Lady of Peace," he told the Mass mob.

He also told them that God might have something else in store for them.

"We dread any kind of change, but maybe God has something marvelous for us, something we cannot see now. God is a God of surprises, and he gives us what we don't always expect," Rev. Daly concluded.

Media digest

Mail

Report that David Cameron told BBC Radio Manchester in an interview yesterday, he didn't agree with some of the things the Church of England said and had painted a picture that 'everything in the North is somehow going in the wrong direction'. It says the Prime Minister described the views as 'outdated' and 'condescending', referring to a recent article by the Archbishop of Canterbury in which he said

'entire cities are being cast aside and left to their own devices'. Mr Cameron said some cities like Manchester had seen something of a revival in recent years.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2932309/Cameron-attacks-Welby-talking-North-Prime-Minister-describes-Archbishop-s-comments-condescending-outdated.html#ixzz3QHLD0STw>

Guard

Andrew Brown comments on the Archbishop's blog on tweeting and touching and says at a time when the Church of England has just managed to unite around [women clergy](#), and is facing future struggles over the acceptance of [gay clergy](#), the warning about not tweeting in anger seemed like a yearning for discipline and coherence.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jan/29/justin-welby-twitter-sermon-discipline-church-archbishop-of-canterbury>

BBC/Tel/ITV/Eve

Report that the Diocese of Guildford is investigating allegations that the Rev Stephen Sizer, vicar of Christ Church, in Virginia Waters, Surrey posted a link to an article on Facebook blaming Israel for the 9/11 attacks in the US, entitled '9/11 Israel did it'. The Bishop of Dorking,

Ian Brackley, said the Diocese was taking "immediate steps" to investigate and is also in touch with the Board of Deputies of British Jews. A spokesman said it was a matter of a matter of "deep sorrow and shame" that the posts appeared in the same week as the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-31052648>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11378475/Vicar-investigated-over-911-Israel-did-it-posting.html>

<http://www.itv.com/news/2015-01-29/vicar-faces-investigation-after-blaming-israel-for-911-attacks/>

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/vicar-investigated-after-posting-article-on-facebook-which-linked-israel-to-911-attacks-10012271.html>

Times

Opinion article saying it's good news that Bishop Libby Lane isn't so concerned about her appearance that she has had a mole on her face removed. It states the pressure to look good seems only to increase, especially for women and Libby Lane shows us a higher and better way.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/columnists/article4338876.ece>

Mail/Ind/Tel/Times

Reports that the Church of England has said it would be irresponsible to rush through a law that

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

would allow babies with three parents to be born. They state MPs are due to vote on an amendment to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 2008 next week that would allow the replacement of an egg's defective mitochondrial DNA with healthy DNA from a female donor. This would prevent children from inheriting conditions such as muscular dystrophy.

However the Church of England said it felt that more research needed to be done.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2932282/Church-England-calls-delay-three-parent-babies-claiming-irresponsible-rush-laws.html#ixzz3QHQDGpSI>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/church-of-england-says-more-research-is-needed-on-threeparent-babies-10012381.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/science/11377992/Three-parent-baby-law-is-irresponsible-says-Church-of-England-ahead-of-vote.html>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4339264.ece>

FT

Report that [Royal Dutch Shell](#) has bowed to [shareholder pressure](#) to be more open about how it is tackling climate change - on the same day it said it would press ahead with plans to drill in the Arctic. It states Shell's board has agreed to support a resolution filed by [the Church of England](#) and more than 150 other investors

urging it to explain how it is managing its greenhouse gas emissions and investing in low-carbon energy.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/097b3be8-a7d8-11e4-97a6-00144feab7de.html?siteedition=intl#axzz3QHeLLlI3>

BBC

Article on how blasphemy laws are being challenged in a new global campaign launched by a coalition of humanist organisations. The International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) says that, in the wake of the Charlie Hebdo attacks in France, the time is right for countries to abolish laws that protect religious sensibilities.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-31047401>

Tel

Report that Boris Johnson has said it would be "pretentious" to suggest that he is a "serious practicing Christian" even though he "thinks about religion a lot". It states Mr Johnson has previously compared his faith to the radio reception of Magic FM in the Chilterns.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/conservative/11378107/Boris-Johnson-I-am-not-a-serious-practicing-Christian.html>

Guardian

January 31

Report on the growth of 'hipster' evangelical churches in the area around San Francisco, California,

<http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jan/29/hipster-churches-silicon-valley-evangelical-new-home>