



## Bishop of Cashel reflects on his past 10 years

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n a New Year's Letter to parishioners in Cashel, Ferns and Ossory, Bishop Michael Burrowes looks back over his past ten years of ministry, talks about what challenges him, wearies him and what gives him joy and highlights the value of simple steadfastness in the midst of rapid change.

Bishop Michael writes - "Dear Friends, Some months ago, for the first time in my ordained life, I

reached the point where I could look back across a decade spent in the same context of ministry and remind myself of the things that were both inspiring me and troubling me ten years previously. It is a useful method by which to take stock, to assess progress, to identify mistakes and, just occasionally, to acknowledge frustration.

“So as we begin 2017, I pulled down the magazine for January 2007 – for, like many other readers, I keep all the back numbers safely. Not for the first time, I was struck by the rate of change through which we have lived. Six of the thirty-two incumbents in office then are now serving in the same parish. Both archdeacons and all six deans have changed. The editorship of the magazine is in different hands. Beyond this diocese, the province of Dublin has a different archbishop and just three other bishops of the Church of Ireland are now in the same dioceses as they occupied in early 2007. Of the fifteen other Anglican bishops of the so-called Celtic fringe (Wales, Scotland and Man), only two remain in office since those times and one of these, the archbishop of Wales, is just about to retire. Back in our own diocese, there have been seventeen appointments of new principals in

primary schools since the start of 2007, and two new principals in Kilkenny College. I could go on and on ...

“But where one notices change most is of course in one’s own house. In the early days of 2007, having spent my initial months in temporary accommodation, I became the first tenant of the new episcopal residence in Troysgate, Kilkenny. All seemed so very new then ... Yet the other day a heating engineer told me that ‘the system is beginning to get old’! It is lovely to be able to reflect on the large number of visitors from the diocese and beyond who have passed through the archway at Troysgate over the years ... A rich variety of all sorts and conditions of people. When I moved in, my eldest son was beginning transition year and the youngest of our four children was not yet at primary school. Now only the youngest remains in residence, and at present two of the other three live outside Ireland. Sometimes I become a little wistful about how noisy this large house used to be.

Feel greater urgency about aspects of stewardship now

“And of course I myself am more than a decade older. One never knows what may lie just around

the corner, but I like to assume I am approaching the commencement of the final quarter of what might be termed my 'active' ministry. When I was first ordained in 1987, I had neither computer, answering machine or mobile phone. The future seemed to stretch ahead almost eternally with all its challenges and possibilities. Now I feel perhaps a greater urgency about aspects of the stewardship for which I will one day have to give account, and I occasionally feel wearied by the capacity of the church to allow itself to be so frequently distracted from its main task of embodying and proclaiming the Kingdom. On the other hand, there is the joy of feeling the diocese is a place one knows fairly well ... No navigational aids are required to reach the remotest church and every single church vestry seems almost a familiar place.

We recall what really matters – simple steadfastness

“Any human being could I suppose muse like this about their life, their job, their family. But the value of such occasional apparent self – indulgence is that it recalls us to what really matters in life, to the things that provide anchors amidst the turbulence caused by all the change.

We all need the challenge and the excitement that change certainly brings, we need some measure of stimulus to bring colour to our lives, but there is a danger too that change becomes an end in itself, almost an addiction, occasionally an idol. I am one of those who often claims to relish change, but when it beguiles me too much I meditate on the words of the preacher at my ordination as priest very nearly thirty years ago when he reminded me that the quality in ministry that really transforms the world is not so much obsessive change management as simple steadfastness. He drew my attention to words from Acts which describe what was essential to the early Christian communities ... 'They continued steadfast in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers... And the Lord added to their number daily...'. If that was the recipe for fruitful mission in the turbulent environment faced by the early church, we would do well to absorb it anew as we head into the challenges of 2017.

"Some things of course thankfully remain largely the same. In my letter in January 2007 I was writing about my hopes for those who would be confirmed that year, there was much emphasis in the magazine on ensuring the church provided a

safe environment for children, a multiplicity of youth-related events were mentioned, the diocese was carrying the bereaved and the sick on its heart in care and prayer. In short, and especially with the advantage of hindsight, there was plenty of evidence of genuine and tangible steadfastness in ministry and discipleship. One dares to hope that those who peruse this issue in January 2027 will, despite the constant cares and distractions of life, draw the same conclusion about what are our priorities today.

Thinking of the bereaved

“We think indeed of those who have been in recent times ill or bereaved in our midst, including a number in our various rectories. The cover of the January 2007 issue featured Canon Mark Hayden. He and his family have been much in our thoughts as they cope with the unexpected death of his father in the pre-Christmas weeks.

“So Stay Steadfast in 17.”

## **Death of last Spiritan from Irish Province to minister in Nigeria**

The funeral of the last Spiritan from the Irish province to serve in Nigeria took place on



***Fr Paddy Foley CSSP seated front row second from right.***

Thursday 5 January in Dublin. Ninety-year-old missionary Fr Paddy Foley returned to Kimmage Manor in 2014 where he passed away earlier this week. He was buried in Blessington, Co Wicklow where he grew up after the family had moved from Dunlavin.

Paddy Foley joined the Spiritans when he was 19 years old and took up his appointment in the Archdiocese of Onitsha in 1955, a year after his ordination.

Apart from a short time in pastoral work in New York during the Nigerian Civil (Biafran) War and a subsequent period of studies in Nova Scotia in

the 1970s, he spent almost all his 60 years of priesthood in Nigeria.

Initially assigned to a teaching role in the Archdiocese of Onitsha, he was later appointed principal of the new St Patrick's Secondary School in Obollo Eke.

Fr Paddy later did pastoral work in the Diocese of Enugu. When he moved to the Diocese of Makurdi, he took on the role of co-ordinator for Justice and Peace. He was based in Abwa Rural Training Centre for more than 40 years. His brother Fr Gerry Foley, also a Spiritan, has served in Uganda in East Africa since 1957.

The Spiritan mission to Nigeria developed in modern times from the efforts of missionaries from the area of Alsace in France in 1885, led by Fr Joseph Lutz. From the early 1900s, Irish Spiritans expanded this mission under the direction of Bishop Joseph Shanahan.

The foundation of what became the Province of Nigeria was laid with the establishment of the Holy Ghost Juniorate Ihiala in 1952. The Holy Ghost Novitiate Awomama was erected in 1958.



However, most Irish missionaries departed at the end of the civil war in 1970 and their work was continued by Nigerian Spiritans as the Province of Nigeria-East was formally established from 1976.

It was Irish Spiritan Fr Tony Byrne who initiated the Joint Church Aid (JCA) airlift during the Biafran war. From 1967 until 1970, JCA kept millions of people in the small breakaway West African state alive, refusing to allow starvation to be used as a weapon of war.

JCA flew 5,314 extremely dangerous missions, carrying 60,000 tons of humanitarian aid and saving millions of lives. The starting point for their flights was the former Portuguese colony Sao Tomé, which was less than an hour from the destination. The JCA airlift lost 25 pilots and crew to the guns and bombs of the Nigerian forces who were intent on enforcing the Biafran blockade.

The Nigerian military government of the day refused steadfastly to allow relief flights or any other form of humanitarian aid into Biafra. Thirteen of the amateur pilots – many of them priests – lost their lives during a mission that was officially illegal, but had the blessings of the

Pope. But despite JCA's best efforts, it is estimated some two million Biafrans starved to death.

## **Thanksgiving for Hazel Treadgold former Central President of Mothers' Union**

Mothers' Union received the sad news just before Christmas of the passing of Hazel Treadgold who was Central President of our organisation from 1983 – 1988. She passed away peacefully at home on Monday 19th December 2016, surrounded by her loving family. We extend our prayerful support and heartfelt sympathies to her son Marcus, daughter Joanna and their families as they mourn Hazel's passing.

Current Worldwide President Lynne Tembey said "I was very sorry to hear of Hazel's passing and extend to her family our deep sorrow, love and sympathy at this time. Hazel was an inspirational lady, she travelled to many parts of the world on behalf of Mothers' Union, she was a great encourager. Before becoming Central President she was Central Young Families Chairperson, as "family" was very important to her. Hazel was fun

to be around, and a real bubbly character. She was also on the working group which helped with the planning of the 1988 Lambeth Wives Conference. I pray that members will remember with love and great affection Hazel's leadership, faithfulness and commitment to Mothers' Union, and especially remember Marcus, Joanna and their families at this time. I pray that Hazel may she rest in peace eternal and rise in glory"

A private funeral service took place on Friday 30th December. There is to be a Thanksgiving Service to celebrate Hazel's life which is to be held in Chichester Cathedral on Friday 27th January 2017 at 3pm, members, wearing their badges if possible, and friends are welcome to attend.

## **Connor's new resources for youth and children's groups**

Connor Youth Officer Christina Baillie has produced new resources to benefit groups who gather with both children and young people.

The Ripple Plus resources, which can be downloaded [here](#), should be used alongside Children's Officer Jill Hamilton's Ripple

resources, and have been created for anyone working with smaller groups of mixed aged children, for example.

Christina said: "The resources are a few ideas which could help the youth think more about the truths being taught to the children."

<http://connor.anglican.org/children-youth/youth/engage-connor-youth/>

## News briefs

**+++ Plough Sunday service** - An annual service of prayers for the farming year and the blessing of the plough will take place on Plough Sunday, 8th January 2017 in Mountrath Church at 7 p.m. The Reverend Alec Purser, Rector of Stradbally, will preach at the service. The collection will be for [\*Embrace Farm\*](#) to support them in their work with families affected by farming accidents. The Reverend Canon Ian Poulton, Rector of Clonenagh, invites parishioners to bring friends and neighbours along to what is always a well-attended service.

**+++ Armagh parish sitout** - The church warden of Acton Parish Mr. Kenneth Morton supported by local groups undertook a 24 hour sit-out at the

front of the Parish church in Poyntzpass from 8pm on Friday 23rd December until 8pm on Christmas Eve 2016. The funds raised will be divided between the Southern Area Hospice & Acton Parish Church Restoration Fund.

**+++ Honour for cathedral stalwart** - The Parish Administrator of Saint Columb's Cathedral, Robert McGonigle, says he is 'absolutely thrilled' to have been recognised by the Queen in the New Year Honours. Mr McGonigle was awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) 'for services to Built Heritage and Tourism in Londonderry'. 'I was involved in the restoration of the Cathedral around 2008/09 when I helped out in my spare time,' he told the Belfast Telegraph, 'and watching it be restored to its former glories was fantastic.' Robert has been Treasurer for 19 years and Parish Administrator for the last three years. 'It is a part-time job, but I don't regard it as work,' he told the newspaper. 'It is a labour of love and is something I hope to keep doing.' Among those who have been paying tribute to Robert - and been celebrating his award - are his wife Linda, daughter Lucy, and sons Simon and Ben. Ben said: "There is categorically no one more deserving of such a reward for voluntary service to an organisation over such a long period of

time. Always working night and day, tirelessly in the background, never looking for any recognition – now you have finally got what you so richly deserve.” Writing on Facebook, a proud Linda wrote: "As a family we are all very proud of Robert, as a husband, father and grandfather. We are also very pleased that so many people have sent their congratulations both on public media and through private messages, acknowledging all of Robert's hard work, his dedication and also his character."

## **News links to reports on faith, politics and education**

### **Plan for charity shops to lose rates exemption in Northern Ireland**

Belfast Telegraph

Nearly half of voluntary sector leaders support a proposal to make charity shops pay rates, according to a report today. Charity shops have been 100% exempt from business rates - but since the economic downturn, growth in their presence on high streets have prompted calls for change.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/news/plan-for-charity-shops-to-lose-rates-exemption-in-northern-ireland-35344859.html>

## **INTO teachers begin industrial action over pay dispute**

BBC News

Members of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) are set to begin industrial action over pay.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-38523598>

## **Holy well tree mysteriously stripped bare**

Belfast Telegraph

Holy well tree adorned with hundreds of prayer rags is mysteriously stripped bare

[http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/holy-well-tree-adorned-with-hundreds-of-prayer-rags-is-mysteriously-stripped-bare-35344948.html?utm\\_source=ipad\\_share&utm\\_medium=ipad\\_app&utm\\_campaign=clickbacks](http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/holy-well-tree-adorned-with-hundreds-of-prayer-rags-is-mysteriously-stripped-bare-35344948.html?utm_source=ipad_share&utm_medium=ipad_app&utm_campaign=clickbacks)

## **BBC/Guard/Ind/Tel/Sun/Mail/Star/Times Sky/ITV**

News reports, analysis and tributes following the death on Thursday aged 51 of Jill Saward. Ms Saward became a tireless campaigner to change the way the legal system treats victims of sexual violence after she was repeatedly raped by burglars during a violent break-in at her father's vicarage in Ealing, west London, in 1986. Ms Saward, who was 21 at the time of the sexual assaults, became the first rape victim in the UK to waive her anonymity. Those paying tribute to Ms Saward include the Attorney General, Jeremy

Wright QC, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, who described Ms Saward as 'heroic and remarkable' and broadcaster Nicky Campbell who said Ms Saward had been a 'hero of our times'.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-38522714>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-38516389>

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jan/05/jill-saward-campaigner-ealing-vicarage-rape-dies-at-51>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/jill-saward-rape-ealing-rape-victim-anonymity-dead-vicarage-campaigner-a7512136.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/05/heroic-remarkable-victims-campaigner-jill-saward-dies-51/>

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2544371/jill-saward-ealing-vicarage-rape-victim/>

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4091558/Rape-victim-Jill-Saward-waive-right-anonymity-attacked-father-s-vicarage-died-brain-haemorrhage-aged-51.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4091558/Rape-victim-Jill-Saward-waive-right-anonymity-attacked-father-s-vicarage-died-brain-haemorrhage-aged-51.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4091558/Rape-victim-Jill-Saward-waive-right-anonymity-attacked-father-s-vicarage-died-brain-haemorrhage-aged-51.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

<http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/575664/Vicarage-rape-Jill-Saward-first-woman-to-waive-sex-abuse-anonymity-Ealing-London>



<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/ealing-rape-survivor-jill-saward-dies-at-51-373zxlnn0>  
<http://news.sky.com/story/ealing-vicarage-rape-victim-jill-saward-dies-aged-51-10718916>  
<http://www.itv.com/news/2017-01-05/sexual-violence-campaigner-jill-saward-dies-aged-51/>

### Christian Today

Reports that the Archbishop of York has repeated his call for a return to a 'buy British' mindset for the food that we eat. Dr Sentamu, who last year undertook a six month prayer pilgrimage through towns, villages and farms across his diocese, says he has become aware of how much farming is changing in an article for the January edition of the British Farmer and Grower

### York Press

Reviews the Archbishop of York's latest book Agape: Love Stories. Launched last month in York, the book is a collection of 22 personal stories about overcoming doubt and loss or finding meaning or fulfilment through forgiveness or working for the good of others.

### **Guard**

Reports that the C of E is considering candidates for its third most senior position, the Bishop of

London, amid speculation that a woman may be appointed. Rt Rev Richard Chartres, who has held the post since 1996, will step down at the end of February.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/05/church-of-england-next-bishop-of-london-prospect-of-female-appointment>

### **Tel/Exp/Christian Today**

Reports that some theology students have been warned they may see distressing images while studying the crucifixion of Jesus. The University of Glasgow, part of the elite Russell Group, has introduced the warnings to its theology students studying Creation to Apocalypse:

Introduction to the Bible (Level 1). In one lecture about Jesus, it warned students it "contains graphic scenes of the crucifixion" adding that it would be flagged up to students beforehand.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/05/crucifixion-maybe-distressing-theology-students-warned/>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/750549/universities-students-soft-distressing-content-subject-course-crucifixion>

### **Mirror/Birmingham Mail**

Reports that a court hearing has been told that a man was tasered and arrested by police at the 12th century St Peter and St Paul Church in Kingsbury, Staffs, after he attacked them with figures from the nativity scene.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/drunk-tasered-12th-century-church-9570304#ICID=nsm>  
<http://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/drunken-man-tasered-church-after-12408389#ICID=nsm>

## **Premier**

Reports that St Richard's C of E Primary School in Ham was performing its nativity on the eve of Epiphany after almost a third of its children were struck with norovirus before they were due to perform last month.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Better-late-than-never-for-school-nativity-after-virus-outbreak>

## **Guard**

Giles Fraser writes: A man recently broke into my church. Good on him, I say

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2017/jan/05/a-man-recently-broke-into-my-church-good-on-him-i-say>

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