



Blessing the Boats

Fr Tom Dalton PP The Riverchapel and the Rev. Robert Stotesbury, Assistant Priest for the Ardamine Church of Ireland Union of Churches, with crew members of the local RNLI Inshore Lifeboat at the annual Blessing of the Boats ceremony in Courtown Harbour, Wexford. Photo: Glen Deacon.

C of I rector close to Turkey's coup

Revd Willie Nixon, rector of Drumbeg is holidaying in Turkey with his family and has written in the Belfast News Letter of their experience of the recent coup and its overthrow.

They are staying in Turunc on the Turkish Mediterranean coast, north of the Greek island of Rhodes and in the next bay to Marmaris where President Erdogan was holidaying.



Rev Wille Nixon, Rector of Drumbeg, with, from left, daughters Alice and Anna, wife Caroline and son Sam at their villa pool in Turunc, Turkey, following the failed military coup at the weekend

They heard gunfire and 2 bombs go off there early on Saturday morning and found themselves unable to safely leave the resort.

Revd Willie said: “We were thankful this happened on Friday night and not Wednesday night when we were in a hotel in Istanbul after missing our connecting flight to Dalaman.

“The hotel was just three miles from Ataturk airport – we missed the action by 48 hours. Time to thank God!”

He continued: “We are staying in Turkey for now, waiting for sister-in-law and mother and father-in-law to arrive next Thursday. Had they not been coming we may well have already been home. Psalm 46 keeps us strong.”

News Letter report at -

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/vicar-we-love-turkey-but-our-next-holiday-will-be-in-western-europe-1-7483524>

Eight Irish Dominican priests ordained

“I see kairos moments written in moments like these,” St Lucia’s Archbishop Robert Rivas OP

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said of the ordination of eight new Irish Dominican priests in the year marking eight centuries since the foundation of the Order of Preachers.

The Trinidadian archbishop, who had studied in the Irish province in the 1960s, said the ordination on Saturday July 9 in Dublin's St Saviour's Church was one of those moments, "when the Spirit breaks through among us and reminds us that the Church is part of the work of the Spirit and the Spirit is alive".

Maintaining that "our Church needs to experience these happy moments lest we lose faith in ourselves and in our God" he said that great events such as the largest ordination of Irish Dominicans in 43 years "happen to remind us that God is not abandoning us".

While the Irish Church can fairly be described as going a "dry season" with a shortage of vocations, he pointed out that such periods can be "a time of cleansing and purification" which can leave us as better people, having had much of our pride and excesses removed.

In the meantime, though, he said, "it's obvious that the Church was happy today", and said: "I'm glad that I was invited to come to be with the

province for this special occasion of ordaining eight Dominicans after such a long time.”

If there was a certain symmetry in the Irish province gaining eight new priests on the order’s eighth centenary, there was a personal resonance for Fr Philip McShane OP, who had been responsible for leading the formation of the new priests in their first days in the order.

The priests are Fr Daragh McNally, Fr Conor McDonough, Fr Eoin Casey, Fr Kevin O’Reilly, Fr Pat Desmond, Fr Ronan Connolly, Fr Damian Polly, and Fr David McGovern.

Former C of I rector among Canadian bishops dissenting from same sex marriage vote

The Rt Rev Darren McCartney, a former C of I rector in Down & Dromore is one of seven Canadian bishops who have stated that the Canadian General Synod “erred grievously” in its approval, on July 12, of a resolution allowing same-sex marriages. In a [statement](#) released Friday, July 15, the bishops said they “publicly dissent” from the decision, which, they add,

“imperils our full communion within the Anglican Church of Canada and with Anglicans throughout the world.”

The statement, a copy of which was sent to the Canadian national magazine, *The Anglican Journal*, also called on the primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, and Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby “to seek ways to guarantee our place within the Anglican Church of Canada and the Anglican Communion.”

Hiltz was not available for comment when contacted by the Anglican Journal.

The statement was signed by Bishop Stephen Andrews, of the Diocese of Algoma; Bishop David Parsons, of the Diocese of the Arctic, and Suffragan Bishop Darren McCartney, also of the Diocese of the Arctic; Bishop Fraser Lawton, of the Diocese of Athabasca; Bishop William Anderson, of the Diocese of Caledonia; Bishop Michael Hawkins, of the Diocese of Saskatchewan; and Bishop Larry Robertson, of the Diocese of Yukon.

Twenty-six bishops, or 68.4%, voted in favor of the motion to change the church’s marriage

canon to allow for same-sex marriages, and 12 voted against.

In an interview with the *Anglican Journal*, Lawton said the bishops were concerned that “there may be a relearning of how we relate to one another, and that some things that were always givens may not be so now.”

Asked to specify what he meant by this, Lawton replied, “I don’t think at this point we can say much more than that. I think there will be a time of thinking deeply what the relationships are between perhaps Anglicans within Canada — bishops, dioceses, individuals — and it’s an unknown at this point what that will look like.”

In their statement, the bishops reaffirm their commitment to the Anglican Church of Canada, as well as to the Church Catholic and the Anglican Communion. They also reaffirm their commitment to “the scriptural, traditional and catholic definition of marriage as the lifelong union of one man and one woman as set out in both the Book of Common Prayer and the Book of Alternative Services.”

The bishops declare that they “absolutely condemn homophobic prejudice and violence

wherever it occurs, offer pastoral care and loving service to all irrespective of sexual orientation, and reject criminal sanctions against same-sex attracted people.”

The statement begins with a declaration that “the entire process, beginning with the hasty vote in 2013 and concluding with the vote and miscount (*at the recent Synod*), has been flawed and inflicted terrible hurt and damage on all involved.”

Shrine dedicated to John Paul II in Poland finished just in time for World Youth Day

After eight years of construction, the shrine dedicated to Pope John Paul II in Krakow is finished in time for the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who will venture to Poland later this July.

A statue of the late pope stands in the center, outside the church, welcoming all those to the Holy Door of Mercy with his famous words above the main door, "Have no fear! Open wide the door to Christ!"

Inside, the sanctuary is beautifully adorned with paintings and gold-trimmed mosaics representing the life of John Paul II and Gospel parables.

The idea for the center was proposed by Cardinal Stanisaw Dziwisch, the private secretary of John Paul II. He wanted to have a space built to remember the life of the Polish Pope in his home country, in the place where a young Karol Wojtya worked during World War II as a factory worker.

As a result, there are various relics and memorabilia from the late saint, including an ampulla with his blood and one of his papal cassocks.

The John Paul II Shrine is not only limited to the Shrine, but includes the John Paul II Institute, outdoor Stations of the Cross, a volunteer center, a hotel and a pilgrim house, a retreat center, an amphitheatre, a rehabilitation centre, and a meditation and recreational park.

The two-level church is a glimpse into the life of the late pope and a way to experience a closeness to the saint like never before.

Archbishop Welby welcomes refugee community sponsorship scheme

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has welcomed a new UK-government scheme to allow community groups in the country to directly sponsor a refugee family. Archbishop Welby said the scheme would allow churches and other civil society groups “to provide sanctuary to those fleeing war-torn places.”



Archbishop Justin Welby joined the British Home Secretary Amber Rudd for the launch of the Full Community Sponsorship scheme.

The Full Community Sponsorship scheme was launched today by the UK's senior home affairs minister, Home Secretary Amber Rudd, and Archbishop Justin Welby at Lambeth Palace. The scheme will enable charities, faith groups, churches and businesses to take on the role of supporting resettled refugees in the UK.

"The Full Community Sponsorship Scheme presents churches and other civil society groups with the opportunity to provide sanctuary to those fleeing war-torn places," Archbishop Welby said. "Refugees, like all people, are treasured human beings made in the image of God who deserve safety, freedom and the opportunity to flourish.

"It is an enormous privilege to welcome a family to live in a cottage in the grounds of Lambeth Palace. I am hugely grateful to the Home Office and Lambeth Council for their tireless work and support in enabling this to happen."

Bishop of London to step down after more than 20 years at the helm

The Bishop of London Richard Chartres has announced that he is to retire next year, after a

long and distinguished career at the heart of the Church of England and the British establishment.

Chartres, who has overseen a remarkable renaissance of the London diocese with flourishing churches across all three main traditions of evangelical, liberal and Anglo-Catholic, has written to clergy and parishes announcing that his last public engagement will be Candlemas at St Paul's Cathedral on 2 February 2017, a few months before his 70th birthday.

Chartres, who is Dean of the Chapel Royal and has become a close friend of all the senior members of the Royal family, has primarily been a figure of unity in a Church divided over the last two decades by women's ordination and the issue of sexuality.

Although a supporter of women's ministry, his dignified restraint from ordaining women priests himself, possibly in aid of preserving that unity, might have cost him translation to the top job at Canterbury during either of the last two vacancies when many senior church people had hoped to witness his elevation.



He was also a dedicated and expert ambassador for the Eastern Orthodox churches in this country and in Eastern Europe. His familiarity with the eastern rite and love of the ornate flourishing of the best in liturgy and ritual could easily at times have led him to being mistaken for one of their number.

His exceptional presence and wonderful preaching, rich in tone and content, won disciples for Christ and his Church throughout the diocese and beyond.

While it was apparent to observers that he did not care much for the machinations of General

Synod, his gift for delegating meant that even lovers of arcane ecclesiastical bureaucracy flourished under his watch. And although not an evangelical, it is partly thanks to his thoughtful pastoral oversight that Holy Trinity Brompton in Knightsbridge and its evangelistic child, the Alpha Course, have become the worldwide mission phenomena that they have.

Appointed in 1995, he had previously left his academic career as a divinity professor to serve as Bishop of Stepney for three years.

Chartres said: "It has been a privilege and a delight to serve in the Diocese of London as priest and bishop for well over thirty years. I have seen confidence return and church life revive."

The recent progress report on Capital Vision 2020 is an "eloquent testimony" to a renewed confidence in the gospel, more strenuous compassion and more extensive service of our neighbours in the most diverse city on earth, he added. The diocese is also financially healthy for the 10th year running.

He leaves more than 200 candidates for the priesthood training in the London centre of St Mellitus College alone.

He said he had tried to follow the example of St Augustine who said: "For you I am a bishop but with you I am a Christian". He added: "In this spirit I hope you will forgive my many shortcomings in office."

News briefs

+++ Gambling cleric to leave ministry - A Scottish Catholic priest serving a ten month jail sentence for embezzling £100,000 of church money to fund an alleged gambling problem has apparently asked that Pope Francis allow him to quit the clergy. Fr Graeme Bell was parish priest of Our Lady Star of the Sea church, known locally as St Mary's, in Saltcoats before being convicted of stealing from the Ayrshire parish between March and May 2015 after admitting to an online gambling problem. The local bishop, William Nolan, has visited the congregation and informed parishioners that Bell has asked to leave the priesthood, a process known as laicisation.

+++ Indian Christians step up caste protests - Churches throughout India are stepping up protests against the country's discriminatory

caste system which disadvantages Dalit Christians and Muslims.

+++ The United Nations' 21st International Aids Conference - got underway Monday as some 18,000 delegates from 183 countries gathered in Durban, South Africa. Before it began, faith-based groups from around the world held a pre-conference meeting to discuss their approach. UNAids say that the conference "is set to emphasise the need to build partnerships, promote community mobilization to hold leaders accountable and ensure that HIV is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

+++ African peace force for South Sudan - The BBC reports that African Union leaders have approved plans to deploy a regional protection force to South Sudan which will have a more robust mandate than the UN peace force currently there. "African troops are ready to engage in very difficult situations," the AU Peace and Security Commissioner Smail Chergui said at a summit in Rwanda's capital, Kigali, AFP reports. He added: The UN doesn't have the mandate to impose peace." A 12,000-strong UN force has failed to stem violence between forces

loyal to President Salva Kiir and his rival, Vice-President Riek Machar. At least 300 people were killed and tens of thousands left homeless in the latest fights which broke out earlier this month.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

One Dublin house, one week, 1,200 children

Irish Times

Challenge of Ireland's poor children

<http://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/health-family/one-dublin-house-one-week-1-200-children-1.2717965>

Irish Catholic Church 'trying to dump' sex abuse priests on State

Irish Times

Two of America's leading Catholic child protection advocates have strongly opposed suggestions by the **church** that care of laicised priests convicted ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/irish-catholic-church-trying-to-dump-sex-abuse-priests-on-state-1.2725444>

Guard

Report on the work of St Mark's Stoke-on-Trent and its vicar, Revd Sally Smith, welcoming Muslim asylum seekers to their church. Article notes that the white faces who used to make up the congregation of this tiny church in a deprived

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area of Stoke have been replaced by an eclectic mix of Iranians, Syrians, Iraqis, Bangladeshis and Eritreans "My biggest challenge has been the attitude of some of the people within the church," says Sally. "I have had a lot of opposition. Criticism, negative attitudes and trying to undermine the work that we are doing - that's from the white British congregation." The article comments that the story is a microcosm of what is happening across churches in Europe where a growing number of Muslim refugees are converting to Christianity.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/18/this-is-what-im-meant-to-be-doing-the-vicar-welcoming-muslims-to-church>

Christian Today

Further report that a lawyer is calling for Lord Carey to be investigated following the release of files by police under Freedom of Information, which include detailed CofE internal reviews of the Ball case. The files show that Ball was allowed to return to ministry in various forms after being cautioned in 1993 for gross indecency despite the Church knowing about other survivors who had come forward. A spokesman for Lord Carey declined to comment but said the former archbishop was co-operating fully with an

independent review of the Ball case ordered by the current Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

Christian Today

Report on the appointment of the new national leader of *New Wine*, an evangelical network of churches in the UK. Paul Harcourt, previously New Wine's regional director for London and East and vicar of All Saints Woodford Wells, will take up the position on October 1. Article notes that Rev Mark Bailey stepped down from the role earlier this year and was later suspended from ministry for two years by the Bishop of Gloucester, Rachel Treweek.

Eve Stand

Reports on the Breakfast Club, a weekday event set up by the charity *Magic Breakfast* to provide morning meals for primary school children who would otherwise not have the chance to eat it. *Magic Breakfast* organises breakfast for 23,500 students at 480 partner schools across England; 380 more are on the waiting list. The article focuses on the Breakfast Club at St Matthias C of E Primary School in Stoke Newington.
<http://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/foodanddrink/a-morning-with-magic-breakfast-the-charity->

making-sure-london-school-children-arent-too-hungry-to-a3298136.html

Christian Today

Reports on the *Songs of Praise* programme shot in Boston, Lincolnshire, the town which recorded the highest proportion of "leave" votes in the country in the EU referendum. Residents have been "bewildered" and "overwhelmed" by the number of immigrants the BBC's programme was told this week. Boston is home to a large Eastern European population, which has boosted attendance at St Mary's Roman Catholic Church, but the congregations meet separately and St Mary's now holds three Masses in Polish and two in English every weekend.

Christian Today

Report that the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams has spoken out, in his capacity as chair of Christian Aid, against the recent eruption of violence in South Sudan. He said he was praying for peace in the country, where 300 lives have been lost and thousands displaced from their homes in the capital, Juba. "It is - as so often - the poorest and most vulnerable who bear the brunt of the violence,

who have lost lives, loved ones and homes," he said.

Horticultural Week

Report that the C of E is taking stock of its trees. Two free churchyard trees conferences supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund are being held this autumn in Liverpool and London. David Shreeve, Environmental Adviser to the Archbishops' Council says churchyards might have yews, ash, chestnuts, elms and oaks that could provide secrets to fighting pests and diseases. "Churchyards may be the Noah's Ark for trees," he says.

<http://www.hortweek.com/church-england-takes-stock-its-trees/plant-health/article/1402613>

Comment

Times: The vicar's daughter must watch her moral compass. Rachel Sylvester points out that Theresa May's political philosophy is imbued with her Christian faith, although she has already made a host of enemies.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-vicars-daughter-must-watch-her-moral-compass-xvmdgqt8j>

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