



## **Primate leads 20km pilgrimage in Rome for peace and reconciliation**

The Primate of All Ireland, Archbishop Eamon Martin, has begun a 20km pilgrimage for peace and reconciliation in Rome.

Before departing on Monday, Archbishop Martin explained that the pilgrim walk was about thanking God “for the huge steps that have been taken in Ireland towards peace and

reconciliation” one hundred years on from the Rising.

However, with “pervasive crime, gangland killings and the continued threat of paramilitary violence, with poverty and increased homelessness north and south, we recognise that much still needs to be done to create a culture of life and prosperity for all the people of Ireland,” he said.

Most of the forty pilgrims on the St Oliver Jubilee Year of Mercy Pilgrimage to Rome are from the Archdiocese of Armagh.

Some are from Meath, which was the diocese of St Oliver’s birth, and a number are from Lamspringe in Germany, location of the oldest shrine of St Oliver, where bone relics of the martyred Archbishop of Armagh have been venerated since 1684.

The pilgrimage continues until Thursday 17 June.

Yesterday, Tuesday 14 June, the pilgrims completed the Pilgrim Walk of the Seven Churches in Rome, as referred to by St Oliver Plunkett in his letters.

Assembling for Morning Prayer in St Peter's Square, pilgrims will proceed to walk the 20km route, visiting seven basilicas, and entering through the Holy Doors of Mercy at the four major basilicas of St Peter, St John Lateran, St Paul outside the Walls and St Mary Major.

The prayer intention for the pilgrim walk will be 'Peace and Reconciliation through the intercession of St Oliver Plunkett'.

The pilgrims will invoke God's loving mercy for Ireland, for the continent of Europe and for the world.

"At this time the world needs our prayers and we will be conscious on our pilgrim walk of how much the world needs to see the face of God's mercy," Archbishop Martin commented.

He added that the work of mercy is needed today more than ever, "especially in the face of mass hunger, injustice, wars, discrimination and violence in so many parts of the world".

"Remembering my predecessor, St Oliver Plunkett, I will also be praying for Christians who are persecuted around the world today."

Tommy Burns from Drogheda, who is organiser of the pilgrimage and author of a recent

biography of St Oliver Plunkett said, “2016 marks the centenary of the Battle of the Somme and we will also remember the horrific loss of life of the youth of Europe at that time.”

“While Europe may seem at peace today, Ukraine tells a different story. I sometimes think that the Continent suffers from a collective loss of memory, as many people seem to have forgotten the important treasures of its Christian heritage.”

“We are beset with shocking acts of terrorism, and Europe has difficulty in accepting its humanitarian responsibilities towards the many refugees on its borders. Why can we not welcome the many gifts which migrants can bring to our communities?” Mr Burns asked.

## **Armagh Diocese Annual Hospice Sunday passes £42,000**

The Church of Ireland Diocese of Armagh at its Diocesan Synod in November 2014 agreed that an Annual Hospice Sunday be established and be observed by all Church of Ireland Parishes throughout the Diocese of Armagh.



***The Archbishop of Armagh pictured with Rev. Matthew Hagan (Diocese of Armagh Annual Hospice Sunday Co-Ordinator) and Mrs. Jane Leighton (Armagh Diocesan Secretary) as they make cheque presentations to the Southern Area Hospice Newry; The Northern Ireland Hospice, Belfast including the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice and The Foyle Hospice, Londonderry.***

The Annual Hospice Sunday appeal is co-ordinated each year by the Reverend Matthew Hagan, rector of Tynan, Aghavilly and Middletown group of parishes in Co. Armagh. Reverend Hagan is the representative for all Hospices throughout Northern Ireland on the UK

wide Board of the Association of Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplains.

Hospice Sunday began in 2014 and takes place on the first Sunday in November each year and to date including Gift Aid the money raised in 2014 (£20,000.00) and 2015 (£22,000.00) has reached a total of £42,000.00. The money has now been distributed to the following Hospices: The Southern Area Hospice, Newry; The Northern Ireland Hospice, Belfast (which includes the Northern Ireland Children's Hospice) and The Foyle Hospice, Londonderry. Therefore depending on where the parish or parishes are within the Diocese of Armagh the money raised by each parish throughout the Diocese of Armagh has been given to their local Hospice.

Rev. Hagan commented: "All hospices throughout Northern Ireland depend greatly on the support of the public when it comes to raising much needed funding for their hospice on an annual basis. I am extremely pleased at the magnificent amount of money that has been raised for hospice care in Northern Ireland through the generosity of the parishioners throughout the Diocese of Armagh and I encourage other Dioceses in the Church of Ireland to set up a similar initiative to support the wonderful hospice care afforded to those people

in our communities who need this high level of care.

“I can assure the many parishioners in the Diocese of Armagh that their generosity will undoubtedly benefit the excellent level of patient care in local Hospices. My sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to the Hospice Sunday appeal.”

## **Gay marriage here to stay, says Anglican bishop**

An Anglican bishop has pointed out that nothing bad happened in the UK after the introduction of same-sex marriage two years ago and that the Church of England is slowly accepting the concept. Delivering a keynote speech at the ‘Queering Paradigms’ conference on Sunday evening, the Rt Rev Alan Wilson used the Bible and the teachings of Christ to challenge the discrimination and fears held by many Christians about same-sex unions. He said that with around 1.4 billion people in the world now having access to gay marriage, the “toothpaste wasn’t going back in the tube”.

Rev. Wilson said it was merely a matter of time before the controversy surrounding gay and

transgender unions would turn to acceptance everywhere, even in his church.

Speaking about the concept of 'queer theory', an academic area challenging traditional concepts of binary genders and other ideas around sexuality, he described it as a daring and rebellious form of thinking about who we are and assumptions about fixed gender.

Although the conference was an academic gathering, Wilson delivered a speech that went to the heart of prejudices surrounding same-sex unions. He challenged the idea that the church has to be against same-sex unions and pointed out that Jesus himself challenged many norms of the time, even the concept of family, which many believe is fundamental to Christianity.

Given the lack of reference in the Bible to same-sex relationships and none at all about women, he also suggested that the concept of a patriarchal family had more to do with culture and society than Christianity and maintained that prejudiced viewpoints had nothing to do with God.

Full report at -  
<https://caymannewsservice.com/2016/06/gay-marriage-here-to-stay-says-bishop/>

[churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)



## Cathedral, choral and musical

In the Queen's Birthday Honours **Brian Hunter, Director of Music at St Molua's Parish Church, Stormont**, has been made MBE for services to music in Northern Ireland. His interest in music was nurtured at school (RBAI) and at Belfast Cathedral where he was a chorister with Captain Charles Brennan. He acted as Director of Music at the cathedral in 2002/2003 during which time HM Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh visited for a service of thanksgiving marking Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee. He has previously held posts at Bangor Abbey and Holywood Parish.

Brian has had a long and distinguished musical career. He was director of Canticle, a group which became well known for its television appearances and in the 1990s he formed a new singing group Pavanne. In 1995 he became Director of the acclaimed chamber choir Renaissance. A versatile musician, he can perform as bass, countertenor, accompanist or conductor. His sensitive musicianship and interpretive flair blend happily and have often resulted in notable performances by himself as a

soloist or by choirs under his direction. He currently sings with the Priory Singers, Melisma and Musicus Amicos.

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Reminder - there is less than 4 weeks remaining to submit entries for the Composers' Competition which marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wood (Closing Date - Friday 8 July 2016). This is a not to be missed opportunity for composers as the winning work will be broadcast on BBC Radio 3's Choral Evensong under the direction of Dr David Hill.

Full details are available at:

<http://www.charleswoodsummerschool.org/.../celebrating-wood-.../>

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It was with an eye on the past, present and future, that pupils of four West Glendalough national schools gathered in St Mary's Church in Blessington on Friday last (June 10). The annual **West Glendalough Children's Choral Festival** was hosted this year by Blessington No 1 School and the service was influenced by the centenary commemorations of the 1916 Rising. The annual festival brings together pupils from Blessington No 1 School, Jonathan Swift NS in Dunlavin,



Athy Model School and Donoughmore NS for a service and sports day.

During the service pupils read the Blessington No 1 School Proclamation which was written as part of the school's commemoration of 1916. In their proclamation, the children commit to reimagining their hopes and dreams for the future, aspiring to have a society in which all people have a home, are equal before the law and entitled to good quality healthcare and community facilities.

They express the importance of the elderly who built the past and the children who will build the future and state that it is the responsibility of all citizens to work to provide services and facilities for those who are less fortunate. They vow to protect the country by respecting the environment and pledge to remain peaceful.

While vowing to hold sacred the heritage and culture of Ireland, they also commit to continue to embrace different cultures and welcome new people.

The service, which was led by the Revd Leonard Ruddock, also included a performance by Blessington No 1 School Choir of a piece they sang in Collins Barracks on Easter Sunday 2016 as part of RTE's live broadcast of *One Hundred Years a Nation*.

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Following up on the recent success of their Easter family workshops, the education department at **St Patrick's Cathedral Dublin** has announced a **new programme of family friendly events** that will be held in the cathedral on Tuesdays throughout July and August. Experienced education facilitators from around the world will introduce families to new crafts and experiences, ranging from [book binding](#) to [tile making](#) and [manuscript illumination](#) to [felt tapestries](#). For those looking for something other than arts and crafts there is on offer a [musical workshop](#). A particularly special workshop, [Cathedrals, Castles & Knights](#) will take place on Tuesday 12th July which will see the cathedral linking up with the education

department from Dublin Castle with participants spending the morning in the Cathedral designing their own model cathedrals, followed up by an afternoon in Dublin Castle.

## News briefs

On June 13th, the Bishop of Down and Connor, the **Most Reverend Noel Treanor**, celebrated the 40th anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood. May God bless him with many years of good health and strength as he shepherds God's People in the Diocese. Ad multos annos, Bishop Noel.

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**St Matthew's Church in Irishtown** will hold a special evening of prayer and reflection for those from Irishtown, Ringsend and Sandymount who lost their lives in **World War One** on the eve of the centenary of the start of the Battle of the Somme. The evening of reflection begins at 7.30 pm on June 30.

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**St Nicholas Parish Church, Lisburn Road, Belfast**, is currently hosting a **travelling**

**exhibition on the Lord's Prayer.** It was created by the Rev Lynne Gibson and members of the Pilgrim Course at Saint Mark's, Dundela. There are seven interactive stations on the prayer journey. The church will be open each lunch time from 12.30 until 2pm and people are invited to come and make a personal prayer pilgrimage. The exhibition will continue until June 22.

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The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Ken Good, has appointed two **new Canons to the Chapters of St Eunan's and St Columb's Cathedrals.** The Rector of St Augustine's, the **Rev Malcolm Ferry**, has been appointed to the Chapter of St Columb's Cathedral, Londonderry, succeeding the Rev Canon David Creighton who retired recently. And the Rector of Drumholm, Kilbarron and Rossnowlagh, the **Rev Brian Russell**, has been appointed to the Chapter of St Eunan's Cathedral, Raphoe. He succeeds the Rev Canon John Deane, who also retired recently.

Canons are non-residential members of the Cathedral Chapter (the ruling body of the Cathedral) and are appointed by the Bishop in recognition of their contribution in ministry to the work of the Diocese. The Installation of the Rev

Malcolm Ferry will take place in St Columb's Cathedral at 8 o'clock on Thursday the 8th of September, which is the Feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A date has still to be finalised for the Rev Brian Russell's Installation in St Eunan's Cathedral.

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The Anglican mission agency **Mission to Seafarers** has launched a Corporate Partnerships Portfolio with suggestions for how the maritime industry can deliver on corporate social responsibility. The document also describes how the mission, and more widely the shipping community, can provide practical support for seafarers' welfare projects around the world. The [32-page document](#) details key areas that are vital for the operations carried out by the mission, corporate social responsibility, its network of branches, corporate partnership, and the support it receives and employee engagement. As well as these, the Corporate Partnerships Portfolio offers a comprehensive guide to the work of the mission and lists a number of sponsorship and corporate partnership opportunities.

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

### **Half of Irish people don't want Travellers to have ethnic status**

The Journal

<http://www.thejournal.ie/traveller-ethnicity-opinion-poll-2815067-Jun2016/>

### **BBC/Tel/Ind/Exp/Mail/Mirror/Metro/Christian Today**

Reports that vigils were held across the UK in memory of the 49 people killed in the shooting at a gay nightclub in Orlando. Meanwhile the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have issued a joint statement calling on Christians to "speak out in support of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) people" and said it is an "absolute call" on Christian discipleship to support persecuted gay people around the world (see above).

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-36520754>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/13/vigil-held-in-old-compton-street-soho-for-victims-of-orlando-sho/>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/orlando-shooting-thousands-gather-in-soho-s-old-compton-street-for-vigil-remembering-49-victims-of-a7080316.html>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/679519/Islamic-State-London-terrorism-Orlando-ISIS-Jeremy-Corbyn-Soho-Old-Compton-Street>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3639624/World-unites-tribute-victims-Orlando-nightclub-massacre-thousands-gather-cities-globe-vigils-remember-49-died.html>



<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/orlando-gay-nightclub-shooting-victims-8183793#ICID=nsm>  
<http://metro.co.uk/2016/06/13/love-conquers-hate-thousands-stand-united-with-orlando-victims-in-london-vigil-5942420/>

### **Investments and Pensions Europe**

Reports that the failure of a shareholder resolution on climate strategy at the ExxonMobil AGM illustrates the need for institutional investors, especially large US asset managers, to become willing to challenge company management, the head of responsible investment at the Church Commissioners has said. Speaking at a conference at the London Stock Exchange, Edward Mason said that the outcome of the shareholder resolution, in comparison with successful resolutions lodged with BP and Shell by the *Aiming for A* coalition last year illustrates the "need for a cultural shift".  
<http://www.ipe.com/news/esg/exxon-climate-vote-failure-underscores-need-for-cultural-shift-by-investors/10013754.article>

### **Tel**

Reports that a church-going teenager was "crucified" by four workmates in a catalogue of bullying which included being attacked with a lit aerosol because of his religious beliefs, a court heard. Four men are on trial accused of religiously aggravated attacks on their work colleague, which they allegedly dismissed as "banter". The case continues.  
[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/13/christian-teenager-strapped-to-crucifix-and-burnt-with-lit-aeros/?utm\\_source=dlvr.it&utm\\_medium=twitters](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/13/christian-teenager-strapped-to-crucifix-and-burnt-with-lit-aeros/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitters)

### **Exp/Christian Today**

Further coverage that an increase in the number of Muslims converting to Christianity in the UK could be because they want to be granted asylum in the country. The Dean of Liverpool, Peter Wilcox is quoted.  
<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/679386/Muslims-converting-Christianity-Britain-immigration-loophole>

### **Tel (Mon)**

Reports that the C of E's 10,000 local churchyards have been likened to an extra national park and that the Church is drawing up plans for a nationwide census of trees in its care as part of a drive to open up ancient churchyards for more community use. David Shreeve, the C of E's national environment adviser, who is quoted.  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/13/how-churchyards-could-be-englands-noahs-arks/>

### **Comment**

Guardian: Editorial on homophobia. To fix it we must face it.  
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jun/13/the-guardian-view-on-homophobia-after-orlando-to-fix-it-we-must-first-face-it>

**Christian Today:** There's only one answer to the people who peddle hate.

**Metro:** Orlando shooting: Why we need to recognise it as a homophobic attack.  
<http://metro.co.uk/2016/06/13/orlando-shooting-why-we-need-to-recognise-it-as-a-homophobic-attack-5941223/>

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