
Waves of fallout in the C of E report on abuse

On a visit to Dublin a few years ago, our Irish hosts advised clergy in the group not to be seen on the streets wearing clerical collars, writes John Martin on 'The Living Church' web site yesterday

The shocking running story of child abuse by Irish priests was at its zenith. Not only had it shaken the Roman Catholic Church to its core. It manifested in open hostility directed toward clergy of all varieties, as well as a wholesale drop in church attendance. Priests described being spat on and subject to tirades.

Sexual abuse by religious leaders leaves a trail of destruction and shakes an already fragile public trust in the Church. In the last couple of years, the Church of England has beefed up its child-protection policies. Getting heads around official requirements is a challenge for parish

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office-holders, schools, and religious communities alike. One new stipulation our parish has needed to face is that persons who share the same house, even though they are not related, may not be alone together with children or frail elderly folk.

Abuse of Faith, an 84-page report by a panel led by Dame Moira Gibb, probes why it was that for almost 20 years the former Bishop of Gloucester, Peter Ball, got away with abusing boys and vulnerable young men, despite his proclivities being known. Ball was imprisoned in 2015 for sexual abuse. The tone is refreshingly candid and forthright. It accuses the Church of England of “collusion and cover-ups.” It depicts a Church more concerned with its reputation than the welfare of survivors. One abuse survivor, Neil Todd, committed suicide.

The Ball brothers, Peter and Michael (Bishop of Truro 1990 to 1997), dressed as monks after founding their own order, the Community of the Glorious Ascension. Peter Ball had connections with elite schools and always had boys and young men living with him. He advocated rolling in the snow and praying while naked, which he spuriously claimed as Franciscan practices. An inner circle would take showers with him, massage him, and take beatings from him.

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Lord Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury when allegations against Ball arose in 1993, is singled out for stinging criticism. He failed to enter Ball on “the List,” an official file held at Lambeth Palace of clergy unfit for office. The current Archbishop of Canterbury asked him to stand aside as honorary assistant bishop in the Diocese of Oxford, and Bishop Carey complied.

Ball is revealed in the report as a highly manipulative personality. He claimed to have the support of the Prince of Wales and other “great and good” figures. The report says there is no record of support by the Prince. With his twin brother, he wrote hundreds of letters in a campaign to have sanctions against him lifted. He even tried to cast doubt on the validity of his resignation as Bishop of Gloucester, secured when he received an official police caution.

The report states that whenever Ball won a concession from Lord Carey after appeals to allow him to engage in limited ministry, he was soon exceeding its terms and pushing for more concessions. The report reveals that Ball seemed unable to comprehend that there was anything wrong with his abusive actions.

And the saga shows how susceptible vulnerable young people can be, particularly where an

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abuser occupies an office such as a bishop. Lessons have been learned, but as Dame Moira Gibb makes clear, the Church of England needs to do more. Not least, she says, is to work more vigilantly to safeguard frail elderly persons. Vigilance in safeguarding is something for every worshiper, not just professionals, the report says. Dame Moira recommends that senior church leaders meet with survivors so they can tell their stories.

How Lord Carey became so entangled with the Ball case is a mystery. Clearly Ball's unremitting campaigning was a factor, although as the report states, Lord Carey had help and advice available to him. He is implacably opposed to homosexual practices by Christian leaders, which perhaps indicates a blind spot regarding Peter Ball.

At various stages across the years I knew Lord Carey well. I observed that as a Christian leader he always wanted to look for good in people and believe good about them. More than once during his time as archbishop this was exploited.

Irish confirmation in Paris

Bishop Michael Smith celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation for five members of the Irish

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community in Paris. The ceremony took place on Sunday 25 June, in the chapel of the Irish College in Paris.



Bishop Smith and Father Dwayne Gavin with Confirmation candidates Grace Alexander, Andre Gillotin, Samir Amriou, David Audebert and Evelyn Delaney

The candidates for Confirmation were prepared by Father Dwayne Gavin, a priest of the Diocese of Meath, whose ministry in Paris began in September 2013 and comes to an end this summer. Father Gavin will be succeeded on 1 September as chaplain in the Irish College by

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Monsignor Hugh Connolly, formerly President of Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth.



Father William Coleman, Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason and Bishop Michael Smith

During the ceremony, Bishop Smith paid tribute to the faith and pastoral life of the Irish community in Paris, where terrorism and fear have been a particular reality in recent years.

Speaking afterwards, Father Gavin described the work of chaplaincy in France. Father Gavin said, "It has been a great blessing to serve the Irish community in Paris for the past four years.

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There is a thriving faith community here, comprising young families, students, academics and long standing Irish residents of Paris and the surrounding area. We also regularly welcome Irish people visiting the city for work or holiday purposes. The work of the Irish chaplaincy includes the celebration of the Eucharist, preparation for the Sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion, Confirmation and Marriage, pastoral visits to Irish people in prison and in hospitals as well as the accompaniment of those bereaved while in Paris.

Earlier in the week, Her Excellency Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason hosted a dinner at the Embassy of Ireland to France in honour of Bishop Smith and his companions, Father William Coleman, Parish Priest of Rochfortbridge, Co Westmeath, and Father Brendan Ludlow who is the Meath diocesan education secretary.

Queen's Birthday Honours for Connor parishioners

Three members of the C of I in Connor diocese have been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. Mr Jim Perry and Mr Roy Totten

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each receive an MBE, and Mrs Margaret Brown has been awarded a BEM.

Jim Perry, a member of St Patrick's Parish, Ballymena, and Connor Diocesan Lay Reader, was awarded his Honour for Services to the Community in Ballymena.

He is Chair of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and Chair of Ulster Supported Employment Ltd and an active member of Ballymena Rotary Club. He has also served on the Board of Governors of five local schools and has been involved in the 'Ahoghill in Bloom' team since its foundation 10 years ago. The village was last year awarded the Champion of Champions title in the prestigious Britain in Bloom competition for the UK and Ireland.

Jim is vice chairman of the Board of Ballymena Business Centre, and was recently appointed to the JTI Gallaher Trust, a £5 million legacy fund set up by the tobacco manufacturer in the wake of the closure of its Ballymena plant to support re-employment opportunities in the area.

Last year, he was appointed Her Majesty's High Sheriff for the County of Antrim. He has recently been appointed Clerk to the Lieutenancy of Co Antrim.

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A lifelong member of St Patrick's, Jim was a bellringer for a number of years until he was appointed a Diocesan Lay Reader in 1985. Since then, he has conducted more than 1,000 services across the diocese. Jim also sits on the Permanent Commission for the Archdeaconry of Dalriada.

He said he was delighted to receive this Honour. "It is in recognition of services to my home town. I am very proud to come from Ballymena, it is a great place," he said.

Roy Totten, a member of Glenavy Parish, was awarded an MBE for services to the Community in Northern Ireland. Roy was managing director of an engineering company before retirement, and has worked with many voluntary and community organisations over the years.

He was involved in youth work in his parish and ran youth camps for many years. He served on the Church of Ireland Youth Council and was chairman of the Summer Madness youth festival for 10 years.

Roy's desire to help others led to his involvement in the counselling organisation Christian Guidelines, where he was a board member and eventually chairman.

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He has served on the General Synod and Standing Committee of the Church of Ireland for many years and is a member of the Governing Council of the Church of Ireland Training College and Chairman of the Priorities Fund.

Roy is a member of Connor Diocesan Council and serves on St Anne's Cathedral Board where he chairs the Outreach and Charitable Work sub-committee.

He was chairman of Church Army UK and Ireland for 10 years. "My chairmanship of Church Army was a time of challenge and a time of great reward," Roy said. "I had the privilege of helping to support Church Army personnel who were working with people on the edge of society and I was personally challenged by seeing how they shared the love of God in actions and words."

Roy also chaired the Church Army International Council for three years and is now an honorary Vice-President of Church Army.

He has a great love of sailing, is a past Vice-Commodore of Carrickfergus Sailing Club and is now a director of the Royal Yachting Association Northern Ireland.

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Commenting on his award, Roy said: “It is a privilege to be able to help and encourage others and I would like to thank all those who work alongside me in doing this. It is a great honour to receive an MBE.”

Margaret Brown, organist with the Parishes of Ramoan and Culfeighrin, Ballycastle, has been awarded a BEM for Services to Music.

She has been involved in music all her life and still works with a number of choirs in the north Antrim area. Margaret was congratulated by her rector, the Rev David Ferguson, and members of the parish choir after the announcement of her award.

New rector for Aghalee

The Revd Paul McAdam was instituted as rector of Aghalee on 22 June. Paul has come to Down and Dromore from the Diocese of Armagh, where he has spent most of his 24 years in ordained ministry.

Bishop Harold Miller instituted the new incumbent and Paul’s good friend and ministry colleague, the Revd Canon Barry Paine, rector of

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Ballinderry, Tamlaght & Ardboe, gave the address.

Paul, 51, was born and grew up in Glengormley, Co Antrim. His faith was nurtured in Carnmoney Parish under the ministry of Revd Eric Jones, Archdeacon (later Bishop) William McCappin and Canon Noel Jackson.

After leaving Ballyclare High School, Paul went on to Queen's University where he studied maths and computer science.

As a young man he was actively involved in the youth-work of CMS Ireland and, after graduation, served as a mission partner in Uganda teaching Maths at Ntare School, Mbarara (1988–90).

After ordination (1993), Paul served as curate in Drumglass Parish, Dungannon (1993–96), and then as rector of Dungiven & Bovevagh (1996–2002). For the last 15 years Paul has been rector of Loughgall & Grange (Armagh); and, since 2013, rural dean of Tynan. He is married to Joanne and they have one son, Cameron, who has just completed his A-levels.

Paul says: “It has been a real privilege to serve God as rector of Loughgall & Grange for the last

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15 years and it will be hard for us to say our farewells to everyone. We have very much appreciated the friendship, help and support we received.

“We are also very much looking forward to working with all the parishioners of Aghalee, as we discover more of what it means to be God’s family in the church, worshipping and serving Him together.

“We’ve been made so welcome by those we’ve already met – and we’re excited about the new possibilities of working together to extend God’s kingdom in the local community around Aghalee. Please pray for us as we step out in faith on this new adventure.”

Thousands of volunteers invited to join for the World Meeting of Families in 2018

The World Meeting of Families has invited thousands of volunteers to join them for the once-in-a-generation event. At least three thousand volunteers are needed to assist with the planning and organising of the ninth World Meeting of Families event which Pope Francis

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asked Archbishop Diarmuid Martin to host in Dublin in 2018. This six-day festival of faith will take place from 21 to 26 August next year with the theme: “The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World”.

In addition to the volunteer recruitment drive, a ‘Host a Pilgrim/Family’ programme has also been launched with the aim of hosting pilgrims in family-homes based in and around Dublin.

Launching the recruitment drive and host family programme, the WMOF’s Secretary General Father Timothy Bartlett said, “On behalf of the World Meeting of Families 2018 I encourage any individual or group who has an interest in

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supporting this joyful and faith-filled event to become involved and join as a volunteer. I have no doubt that it will be a rewarding and memorable experience for anyone who takes part, as well as a unique opportunity to contribute to one of the biggest events to take place in Ireland next year. We are a welcoming nation and people who will offer a warm welcome to the many families who are expected to join us from across the world for this incredible event, are now invited to apply to join as a volunteer.”

Father Bartlett continued, “We are inviting women and men with a variety of gifts, skills and talents to help us. Volunteers will be needed in a variety of roles such as acting as event ambassadors, stewards, ushers, meeting and greeting guests, offering hospitality, supporting media communications and providing information, music, liturgy, medical services, pastoral support, language translation, administration, transport, photographic services, and in logistics.”

Father Bartlett concluded, “Most importantly of all we are looking for people with a welcoming, positive and flexible attitude, who can work as part of a team to assist the thousands of pilgrims

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who will come to participate in the World Meeting of Families in 2018.”

The World Meeting of Families is hosted in a different location every three years; the most recent being Philadelphia in September 2015 which was attended by Pope Francis. Whilst WMOF2018 will include exhibitions, cultural events and musical performances, events around the city, gestures of solidarity, it will comprise four key events:

Firstly, a National Opening of World Meeting of Families will take place simultaneously in the twenty-six dioceses on the island of Ireland; Secondly, from 21 to 24 August, a three-day Congress will entail a joyful and reflective programme of workshops, talks and discussions centred on the theme: “The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World”. The Congress will also offer an engaging programme for young people to include faith and fun activities for children.

Thirdly, a Festival of Families which will be held on Saturday 25 August 2018. This will involve a cultural concert within a prayerful and joyful atmosphere, during which personal stories of

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faith will be shared by families, each representing the five continents.

Fourthly, Holy Mass for WMOF2018. A solemn Eucharistic Celebration on Sunday 26 August will involve thousands of pilgrims from Ireland and around the world.

Volunteering for the World Meeting of Families

To apply to become a WMOF2018 volunteer, whether to start with helping with the preparations in the run up to the event and/or during the five days of the event, please visit www.worldmeeting2018.ie/volunteer. Becoming a volunteer will include a formal online volunteer application, a training programme, as well as Garda vetting and screening process in line with WMOF2018 safeguarding policies. Volunteers must be resident in Ireland, over 18 years of age and respectful of the Catholic ethos of the event. Volunteers will also assist at related preparatory events which will take place around the country.

Host A Pilgrim/Family Programme

A tradition of hosting pilgrims has grown around the World Meeting of Families over the years. Individuals and families from countries such as

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Peru, Ecuador, the Philippines, Bangladesh face significant costs if they wish to attend the World Meeting of Families in Ireland. These countries have had an Irish missionary presence in the past and some continue to do so today. World Meeting of Families 2018 is now actively seeking offers to provide accommodation for overseas pilgrims in family homes based in Dublin and in the greater Dublin area, and particularly in locations which are close to direct bus or rail links to the city centre. Applicants interested in hosting pilgrim, or a family, in their home, are invited to email volunteer@worldmeeting2018.ie and please insert "Host a Family" in the subject field.

For more on the World Meeting of Families 2018 see www.worldmeeting2018.ie.

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