



CNI

Irish Presbyterians break link with Scots Assembly

In a break with a long-held tradition, the Presbyterian General Assembly on Thursday night voted 99-84 not to send its Moderator, the Rev Dr Ian McNie, to next year's General Assembly of the Church of Scotland as a fraternal guest.

The move is seen as a protest against the Scottish church's decision to recognise gay ministers within that church.

Presbyterian Assembly restates stance on same-sex relationships

On Thursday it was reported to the Assembly that following the recent marriage referendum in the Republic of Ireland, at the request of a number of southern Ministers, the Moderator's Advisory Committee met at the end of May to discuss the concerns that they had around issues that had

presented themselves following the result of the referendum.

The Moderator's Advisory Committee, which advises the Moderator and the Clerk on matters of sensitivity for the Church, invited Ministers from the Republic of Ireland to take part in the meeting.

The Committee heard from representatives of the southern Presbyteries regarding their deep sense of unease and concern. As a result, the Committee identified two immediate and presenting issues; namely the need to make unambiguously clear the position of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland with regard to what Ministers cannot do in this area and the need to set up a focused task group to look at the issue of the Church's ongoing involvement in the solemnisation or registration of marriage.

In submitting the resolutions and proposing their adoption, the Convener of the Moderator's Advisory Committee, Rev. Trevor Gribben (who is also Clerk of the General Assembly) said that it was very rare for the General Assembly to be asked to 'direct'.

“This General Assembly needs to make 100% clear that whatever the civil law might be when eventually enacted in the Republic of Ireland, or even if there are changes to the civil law here in Northern Ireland, Presbyterian Ministers cannot take part in marriages, services of blessing, or assist in leading such services for same sex couples.

“That means the Church has taken a principled stand that for religious and confessional reasons, and based on our biblical understanding of what the Scriptures teach us in this area, we cannot in conscience have anything to do with these matters.”

During the debate, Ministers from congregations in Dublin, Dun Laoghaire, Westmeath and Kilkenny spoke alongside Ministers from Northern Ireland, who also contributed.

During the debate, Rev Trevor Gribben stated that, “Our Church has to be a place that welcomes people who struggle with same sex attraction, who are living in all kinds of relationships that the Bible says are sinful, heterosexual and homosexual...we have to be the Church Christ wants us to be.”

The Assembly passed two resolutions from the Moderator's Advisory Committee that stated 'recognising that the Presbyterian Church in Ireland affirms the biblical position of marriage as being exclusively between one man and one woman, the General Assembly direct:

that Ministers and Licentiates of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland shall not conduct, nor assist in leading, services of marriage for same sex couples and that Presbyterian Church in Ireland premises shall not be used by others for such services;

that Ministers and Licentiates of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland shall not conduct, nor assist in leading, services of blessing, or any similar services, for same sex couples involved in either a civil partnership or civil marriage and that Presbyterian Church in Ireland premises shall not be used by any others for such services.'

A second resolution, which was also passed, directed that a Task Group be appointed to consider all of the issues surrounding the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's ongoing involvement in the solemnising of marriage in the Republic of Ireland, along with how this may

relate to Northern Ireland. The Task Group will bring a full report, through the General Council of the Church, to the 2016 General Assembly.

A third resolution was passed that recognised the need for the Church to teach clearly the biblical understanding of marriage and family. It directed the Council for Congregational Life and Witness to give priority to resourcing congregations for this task. Ian Paisley indirectly responsible for killings during Troubles, says flautist Sir James Galway

Ian Paisley indirectly responsible for killings during Troubles, says flautist Sir James Galway

World-renowned flautist Sir James Galway has launched a remarkable broadside on the late former First Minister Ian Paisley asking if he was "indirectly responsible for killing" by planting "thoughts of violence" in people's minds during the Troubles.

Belfast Telegraph - Belfast-born Sir James was speaking on the BBC Stephen Nolan show on Friday morning when he was questioned about



***James Galway: Ian Paisley Sr indirectly
"responsible" for killings in Northern Ireland***

how to resolve the legacy of the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

The 75-year-old said the problems stemmed from segregated education and that there may not have been so many problems if schools in Northern Ireland had been mixed.

When asked if there would be less conflict if people were less religious - Sir James launched a broadside on former First Minister Ian Paisley.

He said: "Let's talk about Ian Paisley, he was a religious leader how many people do you think he was responsible for killing indirectly? By

planting the thoughts of violence and no surrender in the heads of people who had no more sense."

When asked if he thought Mr Paisley was responsible he said: "I'm sure he was because he wasn't exactly preaching let's all live together was he?"

When challenged with the steps Lord Bannside took at the end of his political career by sitting down with Sinn Fein's Martin McGuinness he said "maybe he didn't have a choice."

"I never admired Paisley ever, because I think he was on paper a man of God but in reality I don't think he was. I mean how could you justify setting one side against another?"

He added: "It's not for me to judge."

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/ian-paisley-indirectly-responsible-for-killings-during-troubles-says-flautist-sir-james-galway-31279882.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-33020329>

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Cleric calls for north-south split of C of I on gay marriage

An openly gay Church of Ireland minister has called for a split between north and south due to “seismic differences of theological understanding” separating the two regions.

In response to the Republic’s referendum on same-sex marriage, Portadown-born Rev Tom Gordon, the Dean of Leighlin in Co Carlow, said the ‘yes’ vote has resulted in a crisis within the church.

The Rev Gordon caused considerable controversy in 2011 when he entered into a civil partnership – leading the General Synod to set up a select committee to consider matters of sexuality.

Writing in the latest edition of the Church of Ireland Gazette, he said a “reality check” could emerge and added: “If the Church of Ireland in the Republic is to survive, it may be time for us to reflect on the seismic differences which now exist between the church’s southern and northern constituencies.”

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/regional/cleric-calls-for-north-south-split-on-gay-marriage-1-6781763>

<http://www.portadowntimes.co.uk/news/local-news/gay-portadown-minister-calls-for-church-split-1-6782311>

New book by Ballymena's Parish priest

Leading priest Fr Paddy Delargy speaks to Martin O'Brien of the Irish Catholic about the 'essential mission' of being a Catholic.

With a Catholic population of more than 8,000 souls the parish of Kirkinriola in predominantly unionist Ballymena is one of the largest parishes in Down & Connor and one of the most vibrant.

The parish's most famous member is *The Irish Catholic* columnist Baroness Nuala O'Loan.

And the Parish Priest is Fr Paddy Delargy (67) a son of the Glens of Antrim, former hurling county minor, educationalist and lover of Latin and Greek whom I have heard described as "one of the best bishops the diocese has never had".



He was brought up in Cushendun, one of a family of 10, three of whom died in infancy from Rhesus incompatibility, a blood disorder.

“Only years later did I appreciate the extent of the cross that was for my parents,” he recalls.

After primary school he proceeded to St MacNissi's College, Garron Tower where after spells at Queen's University and the Gregorian in Rome and a lengthy stint as a lecturer in St Mary's College, Belfast, he would return as President for 13 years until 2002 when he became Parish Priest in St Colmcille's in east Belfast before moving to Ballymena in 2009.

The Ballymena parish directory tells you that there are 49 active parish groups spanning the alphabet from the altar servers to the youth club with everything from the Marian Movement, the Mother' Prayers Group, the Order of Malta and the Knights of St Columbanus catching the eye in an impressive list.

My visit to Ballymena to meet Fr Delargy was prompted by the recent arrival of a beautifully illustrated book written by him in which he has struck an innovative way of getting parishioners to engage with some of the most challenging pastoral and moral and ethical issues of the day.

In *Hold your Head up High and other stories* (Shanway Press) Fr Delargy has penned nearly 20 parables distilled from the many thousands of conversations he has had in his 42 years as a priest, chaplain and teacher.

The title 'Hold your Head up High' are the passionate and evocative words of an elderly dying nun bewildered and distressed by the child abuse scandals that have rocked her order and the Church, to her nephew, a young Catholic priest setting out on his vocation, in one of the most tenderly written stories in the book.

Fr Delargy explained that those words were inspired by the passage in the Gospel “when you see things begin to happen, stand erect and lift up your heads, for your deliverance is drawing near” (Lk 21-28).

He tackles a good range of issues including care for the dying, IVF, celibacy, the role of women in the Church and the legacy of the Troubles and teases his parishioners with references to characters or an amalgam of persons they might think they recognise.

“The fictional stories and dramatised discussions in this book present religious and laity alike trying to come to terms with controversial aspects of twenty-first century living,” writes Fr Delargy.

What shines through in the book and in conversation is this priest’s deep faith, his firm adherence to traditional teaching combined with a healthy readiness to acknowledge and respect diverse views from within the rich and dynamic mix who find space under the overarching umbrella that is the Roman Catholic Church.

In a discussion on homosexuality in the book, for example, one of his characters, a priest whom he calls Fr Brendan, calls for “an effort to truly

understand all points of view". "The Church must be open to the world and listen with empathy."...

.... He is already working on a second book based on *The Joy of the Gospel* in which ten parishioners will set out "how they live the love of God in various different situations" and is clearly proud of "how ordinary people do extraordinary things in my parish".

Long before Fr Delargy arrived, for several years in the mid-Nineties the disgraceful protests by loyalist extremists outside Our Lady's Church in Harryville off the Larne Road in Ballymena - demolished in 2013 on health and safety grounds - made headlines around the world.

As recently as 2010 it was still being frequently targeted with paint and various missiles.

Fr Delargy points to the decision of the DUP controlled Ballymena Council in 2013 to confer the Freedom of the Borough on its most famous native, Catholic movie star, Liam Neeson, as an important development signifying happier times.

“That wouldn’t have happened in the past,” he said. The DUP had opposed such an honour in 2000.

During the ceremony Fr Delargy made a point of going over to sit beside and have a chat with the late Rev Ian Paisley and his wife.

He recalls Paisley saying “‘I’m surprised you coming beside me’ and I said ‘why?’ and he replied ‘because you are a Roman Catholic priest and I thought you wouldn’t want to sit beside Ian Paisley in Ballymena.’”

They went on to have a good conversation which included a feisty discussion about Paul’s Letter to the Galatians.

Fr Delargy remarks that while the apparent thaw in the political temperature at local level is welcome inter-church relations in the town are “not as friendly as they should be and that is not down to any lack of desire on the Catholic side”.

One imagines that his starting point for any significant inter-Church dialogue might be one of his most favourite lines: “The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus.”

More at: <http://irishcatholic.ie/article/backbone-ballymena#sthash.QyXGvnPf.dpuf>

Magna Carta exhibition opens at Christ Church, Dublin

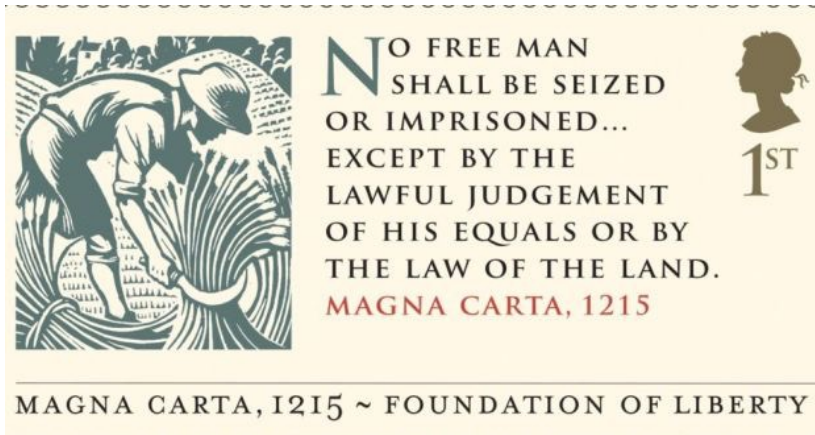
An exhibition containing a 14th century copy of the *Magna Carta* was opened in Dublin's [Christ Church](#) Cathedral on Thursday evening by the British ambassador to [Ireland](#), [Dominick Chilcott](#).

Irish Times - One of the most important legal documents in history, the *Magna Carta* established the principle that everyone, including a monarch, is subject to the law and guaranteed all subjects the right to a free trial.

Such principles were extracted from King John of [England](#) (1199 to 1216) by barons who rebelled against his rule. He signed it 800 years ago on June 15th, 1215.

Its foundation principles are contained in the 1791 American Bill of Rights and the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), drawn up after the second World War.

The Christ Church copy will be displayed for the very first time in this exhibition.



Black Book

Dating from the 14th century, it is contained in the cathedral's *Liber Niger* or Black Book, a collection of documents created by the Canons of Christ Church, and will be centrepiece of the interactive exhibition in the crypt.

The first country outside England to receive the *Magna Carta* was Ireland. In February 1217 it was sent to Dublin and became fundamental to the English common law tradition in Ireland, which survives to this day.

The original *Magna Carta* has close links with Christ Church and Dublin.

Then Archbishop of Dublin, Henry of London, was one of King John's most trusted officials. He

was elected Archbishop of Dublin in 1212 and the following year became Viceroy of Ireland.

He was present at Runnymede in England during the negotiations between King John and the barons which preceded the signing of the Magna Carta, and his name appears on it as the second named witness, after [Stephen Langton](#), Archbishop of [Canterbury](#).

Further details at christchurchcathedral.ie

Discovery Gospel Choir in Down Cathedral

Discovery Gospel Choir is a 30 member inter-cultural choir based in Dublin. They have performed with Sinead O'Connor, Foy Vance, Nizlopi, Celtic Woman, Liam O Maonlai and many others.

The choir was formed in 2004 in St George's Church in central Dublin as part of the Church of Ireland's 5 year Discovery Project – an initiative to welcome migrants and encourage social integration in Ireland.

Now a professional, inter-denominational choir, it is directed by Roisin Dexter and partially



supported by The Church of Ireland and Dublin City Council.

Come and hear the choir at Down Cathedral, English Street, Downpatrick, BT30 6AB. Sunday 14 June at 3.30 pm. Free for under 18s and a minimum contribution of £5.00 from adults.

Local talent for series final recital at Armagh Cathedral

The current recital series will come to an end on Sunday 14 June 2015 at 4.15pm in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh. Music will be provided by some of the younger musicians of the Cathedral Choir, by Dr Stephen Timpany,

Acting Master of the Choristers, and by Revd Dr Peter Thompson, the Cathedral's Assistant Organist.

The programme will include vocal solos by two young men of the Choir, baritone Kevin Donaldson and tenor Adam Reaney, and by two members of the boys' choir, Jack McDonald and James Spence, both of whom won their respective classes at Portadown Music Festival this year. There will also be choral pieces from the boys' choir, which will include Handel's 'Largo' and Bach's 'Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring', and instrumental items from some of the choristers.

Stephen Timpany and Peter Thompson will play one piece each on the Cathedral organ. Stephen will play 'Crown Imperial' by William Walton, while Peter will play 'March on a theme by Handel' by Alexandre Guilmant.

The Dean of Armagh, the Very Revd Gregory Dunstan, said, "At the end of a year in which we have welcomed many distinguished organists to the Cathedral, we are going to showcase the gifts of our own musicians. It is our own choir and organists who sustain the worship of the Cathedral, week in and week out, through the year. The choir is also there to foster the

musicianship of its members, and we look forward to hearing the fruit of their work.”

As with all the recitals in this series, admission is free, with a retiring collection towards the further endowment of the Cathedral Choir through the Archbishop's Choir Fund. To date, donations in this series have raised over £2,600.

Cork quiet day

Clergy, readers and lay pastoral assistants from Cork, Cloyne and Ross gathered recently in the Church of St Edmund in the scenic setting of Coolkelure, near Dunmanway, County Cork for a Quiet Day recently.

The former Bishop of Tuam, Bishop Richard Henderson guided the day with reflections about the Book of Jonah: a parable for our life and times. The day was organised by the parish and its rector, the Reverend Cliff Jeffers, as a thank-offering to the Diocese in this 150th anniversary year of the consecration of Saint Edmund's Church.

Archbishop 'delighted' to be christening Princess Charlotte

The Archbishop of Canterbury will christen Princess Charlotte on Sunday 5th July at St Mary Magdalene Church, Sandringham.

Archbishop Justin Welby said:

“I am delighted to be invited to conduct the baptism of HRH Princess Charlotte. It will be an extraordinary honour and privilege to help welcome the Princess into the family of the church. Along with her parents and all her family, I look forward to joining in this joyful day of celebration and thanksgiving.”

Primus pays tribute to Charles Kennedy

The Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church said -

“The death of Charles Kennedy is a sad loss for the world of politics, for Scotland and for the wider world of UK politics. Friends and political opponents unite to speak of his integrity, his charm and his ability to communicate beyond the world of politics. Many will remember his principled opposition to the Iraq War and the dignity with which he withstood opposition. As the Psalmist said, ‘ I am for peace: but when I

‘speak, they are for war.’ He gave unsparing and dedicated public service at a cost to his own well-being. May he rest in peace.”

UK Anglicans are in serious decline, say researchers

THE decline in the proportion of British people who identify as Anglican has accelerated in the past decade, new analysis from NatCen statisticians suggests.

Church Times - The proportion who say they are Anglican in the British Social Attitudes survey has fallen from 40 per cent in 1983 to 17 per cent in 2014. In the past decade, the proportion has fallen by two-fifths: from 28 per cent in 2004.

The researchers say that the survey results suggest that the number of Anglicans has fallen by as many as 4.5 million over the past ten years, from about 13 million to 8.5 million.

The biggest group remains those who say they have no religion: 49 per cent, up from 43 per cent in 2004 and 31 per cent in 1983.

Other Christian denominations have remained stable over the past 30 years. Roman Catholics make up eight per cent of the sample, down

from ten per cent in 1983. The "Other Christian" sector has remained static at 17 per cent.

The proportion who identify as Muslim has grown from about 0.5 per cent in 1983 to five per cent in 2014.

The 2014 survey consisted of 2878 interviews with a "representative, random sample of adults in Britain". Naomi Jones, head of social attitudes at NatCen Social Research, said: "One explanation for this might be that the numbers of Catholic and non-Christian people in Britain may have been supplemented by migrants with strong religious beliefs.

"Another explanation could be that, in the past, religion played a more prominent role in people's identity. We know from recent NatCen research that people are less likely than in previous years to see being Christian as an important component of being British.

"Therefore, fewer British people may feel that the Church of England is an important part of their identity nowadays."

A C of E spokesperson said: "The comprehensive 2011 Census showed that almost 60 per cent of people in the UK identified as Christian. The Church of England continues to

be an active presence in every community, supporting foodbanks, debt-advice centres, clubs for children and young people, and many more activities along with regular Christian worship.

"The Church is currently consulting on a process of both renewal and reform led by the Archbishops which seeks to join in with the work of God in growing his Church."

<http://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2015/5-june/news/uk/uk-anglicans-are-in-serious-decline-say-researchers>

Fighting in South Sudan forces stop on aid distribution

Increased fighting in South Sudan's Unity State has forced a Christian Aid partner in the area to stop temporarily giving aid to those in desperate need. There are reports of targeted attacks on civilians, rapes and child abduction as the conflict heats up once more.

People are fleeing their homes again and moving into swampland to escape the violence. They are compelled to eat wild food and drink dirty swamp water. The risk of disease, malaria and malnutrition is high.

Relief agencies fear that distributions of emergency supplies may simply bring the people out of the swamps and make them vulnerable to attack, and are working desperately to find a way of getting supplies through. Airdrops to safe locations are one option under consideration.

Christian Aid's partner working in Unity State is planning its response to deliver emergency life-saving assistance as soon as is possible.

It will distribute mosquito nets, plastic sheeting for shelter and water purification tablets, along with fishing nets. Vegetable seeds and tools will also be provided to those able to cultivate land.

A new report from Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (the international standard for classifying food security) shows an increase in the number of people facing severe food insecurity from 2.5 million people in January to March this year to around 4.6 million people from May onwards.

The deteriorating economy is affecting people countrywide, with a recent statement from the South Sudan Council of Churches highlighting the concerns of the church leaders around the

hardship this will trigger and demanding an end to this senseless conflict.

The fighting has meant production of food in the north is dwindling and trade routes have been disrupted. Cultivation in Greater Upper Nile is down 80 per cent this year.

The UN has warned there will be hyperinflation in the coming months – already a plate of food that would normally cost five South Sudanese Pounds (SSP) is now up to 20SSP.

Jolly Kemigabo, Christian Aid country manager in South Sudan, said: “The situation here is now critical. The fighting is directly affecting certain areas in the north but it is also having an impact throughout the country. Household food stocks have run out, cultivation is down and our currency has lost value so now people are spending 80 per cent or more of their income on food.

“It seems the world has ignored South Sudan for 18 months but with no sign of an end to the conflict, we desperately need more funding to respond to this humanitarian crisis”.

Media Digest

FIFA's Irish firm which sent millions to Zurich HQ

www.independent.ie/irish-news/exclusive-fifas-irish-firm-which-sent-millions-to-zurich-hq-31277396.html?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter&utm_campaign=Echobox&utm_term=Autofeed#link_time=1433413288

Schoolchildren should hear victims' stories, says Anne Travers

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/schoolchildren-should-hear-victims-stories-says-travers-1-6779086>

Thomas Ruttle funeral: 'Let our grief be a grief without bitterness'

Local Church of Ireland Minister Rev Keith Scott spoke of the "strange, even incomprehensible, and painful nature of the story of the events

<http://www.limerickleader.ie/news/community/strange-and-painful-events-led-to-death-of-thomas-ruttle-1-6780101>

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/thomas-ruttle-funeral-let-our-grief-be-a-grief-without-bitterness-334463.html>

Times

Report that more than 300 Hebridean worshippers in the Church of Scotland have held a special service to register their "strong"

disagreement with its new law on same-sex partnerships.

The Presbytery of Lewis said that it recognised the "shame and dismay" felt by worshippers and that it would strongly resist moves to permit the ordination of ministers in same-sex marriages.

The article states that the move came in the wake of a divided General Assembly. In contradictory votes last month, 800 commissioners from the national church supported a move that could soon allow the appointment of ministers in same-sex partnerships.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/scotland/article4461233.ece>

BBC

Article to mark the centenary on Saturday of "The Day World War One Came to Hull."

Includes photos of the effects the bombing had on the city and states "the inferno caused lead in the church's stained glass windows to melt, but the building survived."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-humber-32917351>

Times

Report that Oxford University's last all-male college is to admit women. St Benet's Hall will accept applications from women next year. The

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

article states that: "The trustees of the Benedictine institution had agreed in principle to the reform in 2013 but its enactment was delayed by the requirement of the resident monks to find a building separate from women."
<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/education/article4461241.ece>

Times

The Times Diary mentions a play taking part at the Donmar Warehouse looking back on the *Occupy* protest outside St Paul's in 2011.
<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/article4461049.ece>

BBC

A churchyard in Somerset has been "yarn-bombed" as part of "Yeovil in Bloom." Trees, benches, lamp posts and fencing at St John's in the town have been covered in a type of street art featuring knitted or crocheted items as well as pom poms. The chairman of the group said: "The Church grounds look wonderful with the addition of colour."
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-somerset-33008061>

BBC

A gargoyle which resembles the Star Wars character Yoda has been found in a ruined Norfolk church tower. The decorative water spout was found during work at St Margaret's Church, Hopton-on-Sea. The article states the gargoyles were used as building material on the inside of the church tower when it was rebuilt in the 13th or 14th century and it's the second such design to be found there.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-norfolk-33007182>

Eve Standard

The US actor and director Mark Wahlberg says his faith in God is the most important part of his life. The article says he earned himself the "bad boy of Hollywood" image after being arrested multiple times as a teenager and addicted to cocaine aged 15. He tells the paper: "I pray every day and try to go to church every day. My faith in God is what makes me a better man. I never would have been able to change my life and have the success and love that I have in my world today without my faith."

<http://www.standard.co.uk/showbiz/celebrity-news/entourage-actor-mark-wahlberg-says-his-faith-in-god-is-what-made-him-a-better-man-10296831.html>