



***Rev. Jerome and Mrs Mary Munyangaju have returned to Ireland, their adopted homeland, to reconnect with family and promote their ministry with elderly homeless people in Kigali, Rwanda. See News Briefs.***

## **Presbyterian Church seeks to build a vision for society**

At the General Assembly the presentation by the Presbyterian Church's Council for Church in [churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

Society focused on dealing with the past and building the Church's vision for society. Introducing the session, Council Convener, Very Rev. Dr. Norman Hamilton said, "I can assure you that this next hour is going to be both immensely uplifting, but also immensely challenging."

Designed to encourage the Assembly to think about what it means to honour Christ in the Public Square and to build a vision for our society, the presentation also considered why and how the Church should play its part in dealing with the past and fostering reconciliation, as it witnesses for Christ in the public square.

Members of the General Assembly heard deeply personal contributions from Northern Ireland's first Victims Commissioner, Bertha McDougal, whose husband, a part-time police officer in the Royal Ulster Constabulary, was murdered in Belfast in 1981 and Rev. John Hutchinson, who spoke about his time in prison before becoming a Presbyterian minister.

Rev. John Hutchinson spoke of how he was drawn into a paramilitary organisation in the late 1960s, early 1970s. He was arrested for being a paramilitary, but on the third night in his cell, "I

felt my world had caved in around me, but somewhere in the midst of it all I remember there was a God who loved people like me ...I knelt down on the ground and asked God to forgive me.” He is now in his 21st year of ministry as a Presbyterian Church.

Bertha McDougal spoke movingly about her “very personal story” around the night her husband was shot in 1981, the experiences that she felt, the emotions that she went through and how, while angry and sometimes confused, she never doubted her belief in God. “In the middle of this pain and chaos and tremendous anguish, I had a sense of God’s peace surrounding me,” she said.

Rev. Tony Davidson, Convener of the Dealing with the Past Task Group, then led a Q&A session with the two contributors. They touched on a number of areas including, what is at the heart of reconciliation, is it possible to have reconciliation without widespread acknowledgement of wrongdoing, where does forgiveness fit and what role, if any, do local congregations have in promoting reconciliation in their own area?

Speaking in response to one question on starting a dialogue, John Hutchinson said,

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“When we think about talking, the audience must be wider and we should look into our own hearts. Not everyone ends up pulling the trigger of a gun, but there are an awful lot of people who carry the same prejudices in their hearts and they need to talk together also. It is not an easy place, but that is where I think we need to start.”

At the close of the session, four readers representing a wide cross section of the Church read a revised version of the General Assembly’s 1994 Peace Vocation, entitled ‘[Vision for Society](#)’, which was later adopted by the General Assembly.

“This is a symbol of our desire that this statement will be both a stimulus for our engagement with wider society, as well as a powerful symbol that this is a calling of the whole church to a highly important aspect of Christian and biblical witness,” Dr. Hamilton said.

“I hope this will send a strong and positive message to political parties and others, that the Church is committed to playing its part in helping to build better relationships in civic life and in local communities.”

The Vision for Society statement -  
*WE, AS MEMBERS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH IN IRELAND,  
saved by grace  
and called by God to grace-filled relationships,  
in the power of the Holy Spirit  
as ambassadors of Christ's Kingdom  
in a broken and divided world;*

*BELIEVE that the Good News of Jesus Christ  
challenges and equips us  
to develop radically new attitudes and  
relationships  
with our neighbours throughout the whole of  
Ireland.*

*WE CONFESS our failure  
to live as Biblically faithful Christian peacemakers  
and to promote the counter culture of Jesus  
in a society where cultures clash.*

*ACCORDINGLY, WE AFFIRM Christian peace  
building  
to be part of Christian discipleship  
and reassert the Church's calling  
to pursue a peaceful and just society in our day.*

*WE SEEK a more reconciled community  
at peace with each other  
where friend and foe  
working together for the common good,*

*can experience healing  
and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Press comment -

Irish Times - Sectarianism is still the reality in the North, report claims

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/sectarianism-is-still-the-reality-in-the-north-report-claims-1.2675949>

## **Threats to north Belfast priest 'intolerable', Bishop Treanor**

Threats made to north Belfast priest Father Gary Donegan and other community workers in Ardoyne have been branded "intolerable" by Bishop of Down and Connor Noel Treanor.

He offered his support to them and urged those behind the threats to "leave behind the path of violence".

Bishop Treanor said: "To intimidate clergy, social and community workers and all those who are working tirelessly and peacefully in the service of their local community - especially those



***Bishop Noel Treanor, who has spoken out against the threats made to Father Gary Donegan.***

addressing pastoral and social concerns - is a weak and cowardly act on the part of those who themselves are threatened by the prospect and reality of peace, reconciliation and the rule of law.

"I would ask those who have issued these threats to stop and think.

"I ask them to leave behind the path of violence which will ultimately achieve nothing for the citizens of this country, nor for themselves.

"I ask them to engage in dialogue in order to resolve all problems, to offer hope for their communities and neighbourhoods and to build a

shared future for all the people of Northern Ireland.”

He added: “The sign of true leadership is to be found in resolving conflict, not in issuing threats. It is to be found in working together to address together the needs of the weak.”

## **Major Assembly on Presbytery planned for Irish Presbyterians**

At the General Assembly this week, Very Rev. Dr. Rob Craig, Convenor of the Church’s General Council reported on a number of Task Groups, including the Engagement and Consultations Task Group. This Task Group has been engaged in some significant study, seeking to understand how Presbytery can be more meaningfully engaged with both its minsters and congregations.

Dr. Craig said, “If I were to summarise this report in my own words it might be this, ‘Who needs Presbytery?’ Given that a ‘congregational spirit’ seems to be abroad within our denomination, our presbyteries may be having a bit of an identity crisis in trying to relate meaningfully to congregations and vice versa.”



The Assembly also passed a resolution to 'encourage all congregations to pray for, and send delegates to, 'Everyday Disciples', the Residential General Assembly being held at Ulster University, Coleraine from Monday, 21st August to Thursday, 24th August 2017.'

The title and theme of the Assembly is 'Everyday Disciples', in recognition of the increasing necessity for followers of Jesus today to be equipped by the Church to be effective disciple-makers in their various spheres of everyday life. The two keynote speakers, Rev. Dr. Ray Ortland Jnr of Immanuel Church, Nashville and Rev. Randy Pope, of Perimeter Church, Atlanta will flesh out this theme with a fresh, but strongly biblical perspective.

It was reported that a number of workshops and seminars would feature in the four-day residential to explore different themes. Topics will include: 'Disciples the Jesus Way', 'Disciples in Family', 'Disciples who Think and Engage', 'Disciples across the World' and 'Disciples who really Care'.

I

nitially, the Residential Assembly will be open to ministers, elders, leaders and key personnel in

congregations, up to a maximum of three per congregation.

## **Archbishop Jackson highlights Care for Creation at Arklow Festival of Faith**

The Catholic Parish of Ss Mary and Peter in Arklow held a Festival of Faith last week as part of their celebrations of the Year of Mercy. Archbishop Michael Jackson was among the guest speakers who addressed issues of faith during the nine day event. Other visiting speakers included Dom Mark Patrick Hederman OSB, Abbot of Glenstal Abbey; and Fr Peter McVerry SJ.

Archbishop Jackson spoke on the theme of Care for Creation and said that we as Christians are responsible both to and for creation. He suggested that there was a danger in believing only that we are responsible for creation as humans has been “spectacularly unable to regulate our relationship with that creation”.

“We have tended to abstract it from us, and us from it, with runaway and destructive consequences of abuse and exploitation, of waste and rubbish. Not only is the creation a



finite resource that is running out of oxygen; the creation is the salvation of the world and the universe, as both combine to be the gift of God. The creation merits our commitment to fair distribution and careful replenishment. It too must live in a primary and a vital way: life-forming, life-giving, life-sharing, life-healing, life-renewing,” the Archbishop stated.

He also spoke about the connections between creation and humility, creation and justice, creation and our neighbour and creation in Christ.

The full text of the Archbishop's address is at -

<http://dublin.anglican.org/news/2016/06/Archbishop-Speaks-on-Care-for-Creation-at-Arklow-Festival-of-Faith>

## **Irish Methodists to link up with Kwazulu-Natal churches**

For two weeks in August eleven Irish Methodists will be travelling to South Africa to link up with two Methodist Churches in the Kwazulu-Natal province and the community projects connected to these churches: Phakamisa, one of MCI's partner projects and the Hillcrest Aids Centre, writes Rev Rowan Zeelie, team leader.

We will also visit one of our other overseas partners, the Land Church Programme, headed up by Mr Graham Philpott, a key note speaker at Global Vision 2015.

For a while now we have been engaging in two conversations in Irish Methodism with regards to



mission. We have been asking the question *“How do we become more missional at a local level within our own communities?”* and the second has been *“How do we move our relationship with our overseas partners away from a needs-based relationship to a relationship of equal partners where we both have something to offer and something to receive?”*

What we are discovering is that although we talk of ‘Home Mission’ and ‘Overseas Mission’, **God has given us only one mission.** This trip to South Africa seeks to endorse that understanding.

For this trip we have adopted the Zulu greeting “Sawubona” as our theme. Although it is a greeting, its literal translation is “I see you”. It is a recognition and acknowledgement that the person being greeted is important, is worth noticing. We are all created in the image of God and so every person has something to contribute.

For the past few conferences I have come away feeling encouraged and inspired as we have been challenged to “get our feet wet”, to “move out and join God at work in the world” and to consider ourselves “aliens in a strange land”. But as inspiring – and important – as these messages have been, we have struggled to interpret them at a local level. Often we find ourselves stuck on the most basic of questions “What do we do now?”

Having been born and grown up in South Africa, I have witnessed churches at work in their communities. Although I didn't grow up in a Methodist Church, only becoming a member in my twenties, my impression of Methodism in South Africa is an understanding that the church is in the geographic location for a purpose and that purpose is to serve the people around it. This makes sense when we consider that while Methodism was brought to South Africa by

British soldiers stationed at the Cape of Good Hope, it spread through missionaries and so from its very beginnings it has been missional in its focus.

They know what we are trying to learn and so it makes perfect sense for us to link up as partners and in a partnership relationship where, for a change, we are the ones in need. For centuries Methodist missionaries have been sent out into the world. This trip gives us the opportunity to learn what they have learnt, so that we can continue to send Methodists out into the world. But what we have discovered is that the world is right on our doorstep.

I am excited to be going back to my home country, although not to my home town. It will be strange to be going there as an Irish Methodist and, for the first time, as a British citizen (although I have also retained my South African citizenship because it is good to support the Springboks!). I am also looking forward to coming back so that we can “spread the word” across the Connexion, to encourage, inspire and offer practical help to our local churches as we begin to “transform our minds” in our understanding of what it means to be the church on this island.

## **Cleared priest warns bishops over anonymous accusations**

A priest who was falsely accused of sexual abuse and recently cleared his name after a six year battle has warned the Irish hierarchy that it needs to rethink its treatment of accused priests and its policy on anonymous accusations.

Fr Tim Hazelwood, parish priest of Killeagh in Cloyne diocese, has gone public on his ordeal in order to highlight concerns over a climate in the Church and society which presumes priests are guilty unless they prove their innocence.

In this week's issue of The Tablet, the 57 year old psychotherapist, who has been a priest for 34 years, said priests in Ireland need to establish a national union or some body which will lobby the bishops and the current safeguarding structures on their behalf to ensure that natural justice is not undermined.

He took a legal action to the High Court in Dublin against the man who anonymously accused him of abuse and the case resulted in the parish priest being vindicated.

“I have received a detailed signed retraction and admission that lies were told and a signed





***Fr Tim Hazelwood***

apology. My legal fees were paid and a generous donation was paid to my nominated charity, Aware.”

He said that while he has no understanding of the motives of his accuser, his concerns are mainly around the Church which he feels “cut me loose, hung me out to dry, disowned me and left me feeling very alone”.

Last week, he outlined his concerns to four bishops when the Association of Catholic Priests met with representatives of the Irish hierarchy.

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While he pays tribute to Bishop William Crean of Cloyne who stood by him and appointed him a parish priest three years ago, there are others in the institutional Church who treated him shabbily.

“I struggled between my desire to clear my name and the expectation to lie low and to say nothing, hoping that it will go away.”

Fr Hazelwood was never removed from ministry because his accuser remained anonymous.

However, had the man come forward, the priest believes his reputation and life would have been “destroyed” as he would have been stood down from ministry and would probably have been named in the media even ahead of an investigation and despite being innocent.

“As a priest, if you don’t have your good name – you are finished.”

According to Fr Hazelwood, though the accusation was anonymous, and the accuser did not come forward and the National Board for Safeguarding Children advised that no action should be taken, his diocese nevertheless informed the police and the Health Board, giving them his name.

“Canon 1717 says, ‘Care is to be taken that this investigation does not call into question anyone’s good name.’ My right to my good name and reputation was clearly disregarded,” he criticised.

Acknowledging that “Huge damage has been done by clerical sex abuse”, Fr Hazelwood said he believed that a majority of complaints are genuine.

“Today the issue remains current, allegations against ‘celebrities’ in England and in Ireland and the lid is being lifted on abuse within foster care. While these tragedies continue, natural justice nonetheless needs to be done for both accused and accuser.”

He asked if the accused person who is innocent is in fact presumed guilty until proven innocent?

“Does he have rights even to view his own file? Does he have a right to know that he has been accused, before his name is filed and passed on to authorities?”

According to Fr Hazelwood, he tried on three occasions to gain this information from the National Board but was “fobbed off”.

Fr Hazelwood took a civil case to the High Court in Dublin and his solicitor was Robert Dore, the solicitor who worked with the Association of Catholic Priests and Fr Kevin Reynolds after the former missionary was falsely accused in an RTÉ television documentary, 'Mission to Prey', of raping a Kenyan teenager and fathering a child.

"If as a priest you don't have your good name, you are finished," he warned.

He also contacted other priests to whom this had happened and said there was "uniformity in the way they were treated appallingly by the Church".

"They had no support, felt abandoned and had no pastoral care given. Everything is against you, you feel shame and you're destroyed – the temptation is to stay quiet."

Read the interview in The Tablet: <http://www.thetablet.co.uk/features/2/8464/guilty-until-proven-innocent>

## **Assembly preserves conservative stance on abortion**

In reviewing its position on abortion, the General Assembly this week reaffirmed its position, that ‘human life begins at conception and that from that moment the human embryo should be treated in a manner in accordance with full human dignity.’

Speaking at the Assembly, the Convener of the Council for Church in Society, Very Rev. Dr. Norman Hamilton said, “This is an incredibly painful and very real human subject that touches on so many fundamental issues, that it needs to be considered and discussed with the utmost sensitivity and compassion.

“With the experiences of women and their families who have lived through crisis pregnancies constantly in mind, a group of women and men drawn from across the denomination, including medical professionals and theologians, sought to discern the best of Biblical guidance and teaching on this complex issue.”

“While it has been a generation since the Church has discussed this, we felt that it was important that we reflected again, especially at this particular time, in light of the current public debate,” Dr. Hamilton said.

Recognising that the public debate had moved on, paper brought before the Assembly acknowledged the complexities involved in cases with children with life-limiting conditions and pregnancy resulting from sexual crime.

Professor Stephen Williams of the Church's Union Theological College in Belfast, who was a member of the Group said that, "Though the ethical issues surrounding abortion remain basically unchanged from a generation ago, the task of Biblical, theological and moral reflection is an ongoing one, and we have to be attentive to changing circumstances in medicine, law and society."

Summarising the report, Professor Williams said, "Our conclusions are based in our belief in the unique value of human life, which includes both mother and child. We argue that abortion is justified when pregnancy endangers the life of the mother. We are not convinced that abortion is justified on the basis that an unborn child has a life-limiting condition, though our paper does address the complexities of the condition of anencephaly. Recognising that rape is a heinous and violent violation of a woman's body, the Group believes that in cases of rape, it is consistent with, but not mandated by, the

Church's position to take steps to prevent the development of pregnancy up until implantation.

Dr. Hamilton added, "As a Church we want to align theology with deep compassion. We are well aware of the deep human tragedies that lie behind all crisis pregnancies. This is why we believe that the provision of readily accessible and appropriate care in the perinatal period for every woman, child and family should be a high priority for society, and are calling on the governments of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to ensure such provision."

Press comment -  
News Letter

A traditional, conservative stance on abortion has been endorsed by delegates at the Presbyterian Church's annual General Assembly – although some significant dissent has also been aired.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/dissent-voiced-as-church-affirms-abortion-stance-1-7420432>

## **New Vatican department for laity and family to open in September**

The new Vatican office for laity, family and life will begin functioning on September 1 and the separate pontifical councils for laity and for the

family will “cease their functions,” the Vatican announced.

Pope Francis has not named the new officers of the expanded office, but the statutes specify that it will be headed by a cardinal or a bishop, will have a secretary “who may be a layperson” and three undersecretaries who will be laypeople.

The Vatican published the statutes of the new office on June 4 and explained that the office would be responsible “for the promotion of the life and apostolate of the lay faithful, for the pastoral care of the family and its mission according to God’s plan and for the protection and support of human life.”

Each section — for the lay faithful, for the family and for life — will be led by an undersecretary, the press statement said.

The Pontifical Council for the Laity, currently headed by Cardinal Stanislaw Rylko, had been charged with overseeing the apostolate of the laity and “their participation in the life and mission of the Church,” both as individuals and through organisations and movements.



## Cathedral, choral and musical

The **Choristers of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin**, invite you to come and join them for their Summer Concert on Friday 10th June at 18.15. The programme includes some of the best loved choral and organ classics performed by one of the few remaining all boys choirs in Ireland. Admission is free, but there will be a retiring collection in aid of the Cathedral Choir School. Learn more here: <http://www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/event/hallelujah/>  
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**The Charles Wood Summer School** has announced a new and unique partnership with the St Albans International Organ Festival. This will lead to a chain of prestigious opportunities for NIIOC prize winners including, for the recipient of this year's Bach Prize, a recital at their 2017 Festival. CWSS states it looks forward to working closely with the St Albans team in the years to come. St Albans International Organ Festival Choir & Organ Royal College of Organists Charles Wood Festival of Music and Summer School Armagh  
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**The Charles Wood Ensemble** as part of the 150th Anniversary Wood Celebrations will perform This Joyful Eastertide: <https://youtu.be/B8Ogzf6z7jE>

## News briefs

### **Former Editor of The Church of Ireland**

**Gazette** - Canon Cecil Cooper, who was rector of Drumbeg and Editor of The Church of Ireland Gazette from 1982–2000 died on Monday 6 June. He was predeceased by his wife Olive. The funeral is today from St Mark's Church, Ballymacash, Lisburn.

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**Rev. Jerome and Mrs Mary Munyangaju** have returned to Ireland, their adopted homeland, to reconnect with family and promote their ministry with elderly homeless people in **Kigali, Rwanda**. Mary says they are blessed to have two countries to call home!

They will be in Ireland during the month of June and available to meet individuals or groups interested in Bird of Paradise Ministries. They greatly appreciate the support both financially and in prayer from many individuals and

churches and look forward to meeting up with as many as possible during this short visit.

The annual general meeting will be in Knockbreda on Monday 13 June when they will share news of their first year in Rwanda. Please contact Revd Bobbie Moore for more information or to arrange a meeting.

Email: [bobbiamoore1@gmail.com](mailto:bobbiamoore1@gmail.com)

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### **See House lunch for retired clergy in Derry -**

More than thirty retired clergy, wives and widows visited the See House, Derry, on Tuesday for a lunch hosted by Bishop Ken Good and his wife, Mary. The annual lunch is one of the most eagerly-anticipated occasions in the See House calendar, and provides an opportunity for those present to renew acquaintances and catch up with one another. Bishop Good said it also provided an opportunity to thank retired clergy, their spouses and widows for their years of outstanding service to the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe. Among those present, on Tuesday, were the redoubtable Dean Victor Griffin – who's now in his 90s – and Mrs Thelma Mehaffey, whose husband, Bishop James Mehaffey, is Bishop Good's immediate predecessor.

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

### Popularity of pilgrimages endure despite drop in Mass attendance

Irish Times

A remarkable feature of **religious** practice in Catholic **Ireland** today is that, while weekly Mass attendance is dropping, pilgrimages to Knock, Lough ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/popularity-of-pilgrimages-endure-despite-drop-in-mass-attendance-1.2675471>

### **BBC/Guard/Ind/FT/Exp/Mail/Mirror/Christian Today/Times/ITV**

Reports on comments made by the Archbishop of Canterbury yesterday in response to questions by the Home Affairs Select Committee. He criticised remarks made by UKIP leader Nigel Farage about sexual assaults by migrants as "legitimising racism". Archbishop Justin said that he condemned the remarks "without hesitation" adding "they were inexcusable pandering to people's worries and prejudices, that is giving legitimisation to racism".

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-eu-referendum-36471794>

<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/07/nigel-farage-helping-to-legitimise-racism-justin-welby-says>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/nigel-farage-archbishop-of-canterbury-justin-welby-immigration-eu-referendum-a7069726.html>

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3e11f234-2cc0-11e6-a18d-a96ab29e3c95.html?FTCamp=engage/CAP/webapp/Channel\\_Moreover//B2B#axzz4AxfAiWif](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3e11f234-2cc0-11e6-a18d-a96ab29e3c95.html?FTCamp=engage/CAP/webapp/Channel_Moreover//B2B#axzz4AxfAiWif)  
<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/677817/Farage-hits-back-Archbishop-of-Canterbury-legitimising-racism>  
[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3629540/Archbishop-slams-Farage-legitimising-racism-warning-Cologne-style-sex-attacks-Britain-unless-leave-EU.html?ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3629540/Archbishop-slams-Farage-legitimising-racism-warning-Cologne-style-sex-attacks-Britain-unless-leave-EU.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)  
<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/nigel-farage-destroyed-audience-member-8136256#ICID=nsm>  
<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/archbishop-attacks-farage-for-pandering-to-prejudices-0qf7cw03s>  
<http://www.itv.com/news/2016-06-07/nigel-farage-accused-of-legitimising-racism-by-archbishop-of-canterbury/>

### **Tel/Ind(Tues)/Christian Today/Premier**

Reports that the Archbishop of Canterbury will call for the "promotion of religious literacy" to be written as a specific duty into a new BBC charter in a speech tonight at the annual Sandford St Martin awards for religious broadcasting at Lambeth Palace. Articles also note that writing in the *Radio Times* this week Archbishop Justin has said that faith issues should be treated as seriously as sport and drama on television.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/06/07/bbc-should-put-religion-on-a-level-with-drama-and-sport---welby/>  
<https://inews.co.uk/essentials/news/uk/religion-treated-like-sport-tv-says-archbishop-canterbury/>  
<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Justin-Welby-religion-on-TV-needs-to-be-on-par-with-politics>

### **Times**

Report that the former Archbishop of York, Lord Hope, is under police investigation for a possible offence of misconduct in public office over his handling of the case of Robert Waddington, the late Dean of Manchester. A spokesman for North Yorkshire Police said, "The investigation is at an early stage and at this point in time it has not been determined whether any criminal offence has been committed." Article notes the current Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, set up an inquiry led by Judge Sally Cahill, into the case when it was brought to his attention and her report was published in 2014.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/former-archbishop-investigated-over-claims-of-sex-abuse-cover-up-jrb8h2cpl>

## **Mail**

Reports that a paper '[Thinking Afresh About Welfare](#)' (*see above*) prepared by Dr Malcolm Brown, Director of the Mission and Public Affairs Division (Archbishops' Council), has been endorsed by the May meeting of the House of Bishops. The *Mail* says the report shows the CofE was wrong about Margaret Thatcher and describes the paper as a "U-turn in the Church's longstanding left-wing attitude to poverty and the welfare state." (*See Comment below*).

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3630468/Finally-church-admits-wrong-Thatcher-Bishops-say-failed-moral-vision-former-PM-s-benefits-reforms.html>

## **Christian Today**

Further coverage that the Bishop of Durham Paul Butler, has signed a pro-EU letter compiled by business leaders in the north-east of England. He is the most senior Anglican figure to officially announce support for either

side. Article notes that Bishop Paul has made no statement but it is believed he will make a fuller intervention nearer the June 23 vote.

### **Guard/Christian Today/Premier**

Further coverage that refugees applying for asylum in the UK on the grounds of conversion to Christianity are being questioned on "Bible trivia" by immigration officials, according to MPs. The report, *Fleeing Persecution: Asylum claims in the UK on Religious Freedom Grounds* published on Tuesday by the all-party group and the Asylum Advocacy Group, said that the questions were "a very poor way of assessing a conversion asylum claim and result in wrong decisions and expensive appeals".

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jun/07/refugees-asylum-religious-grounds-quizzed-on-bible-trivia>  
<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Home-Office-urged-to-change-asylum-process-for-Christian-converts>

**Christian Today:** Is the Government's anti-extremist strategy targeting collage Christian Unions?

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