

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Armagh Cathedral and gardens

People and places



Composition for organ to premier at Commission for Victims and Survivors event

The Commission for Victims and Survivors in Northern Ireland is hosting an event in Belfast

Cathedral on April 6, which will include the premiere of a new organ piece. Photo above - Organ pipes at Belfast Cathedral

The Commission has partnered with the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition, now in its 10th year, to sponsor the organ piece, composed by Grace Evangeline Mason and formally dedicated on the sheet music to 'All those touched by Northern Ireland's Troubles.'

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The Northern Ireland Premiere will take place in St Anne's Cathedral at 3pm on Wednesday April 6.

The Commission is hoping the event will be an opportunity to highlight the generosity of faith-based organisations, and the valuable role that faith and grace can play in building hope, resilience, post traumatic growth and societal healing as a society transitions out of conflict

The event is supported by faith leaders from across the community.

The Commission intends for this musical composition to be known, available and offer a time of reflection to people with and without religious faiths, who wish to have a symbolic acknowledgement of their experiences.

You Did This For Me - Presbyterian Church insight on Ukraine

Kind permission has been given by the Reformed Church in Hungary for PCI to republish this article on its website...

For more than a week now, a man from Transcarpathia, Ukraine, who moved to Budapest with his family long before the war started, has been volunteering at the Western railway station of Budapest every day with the Hungarian Reformed Church Aid.

He and his wife had planned to return home for their retirement - now they don't know what the future will bring.



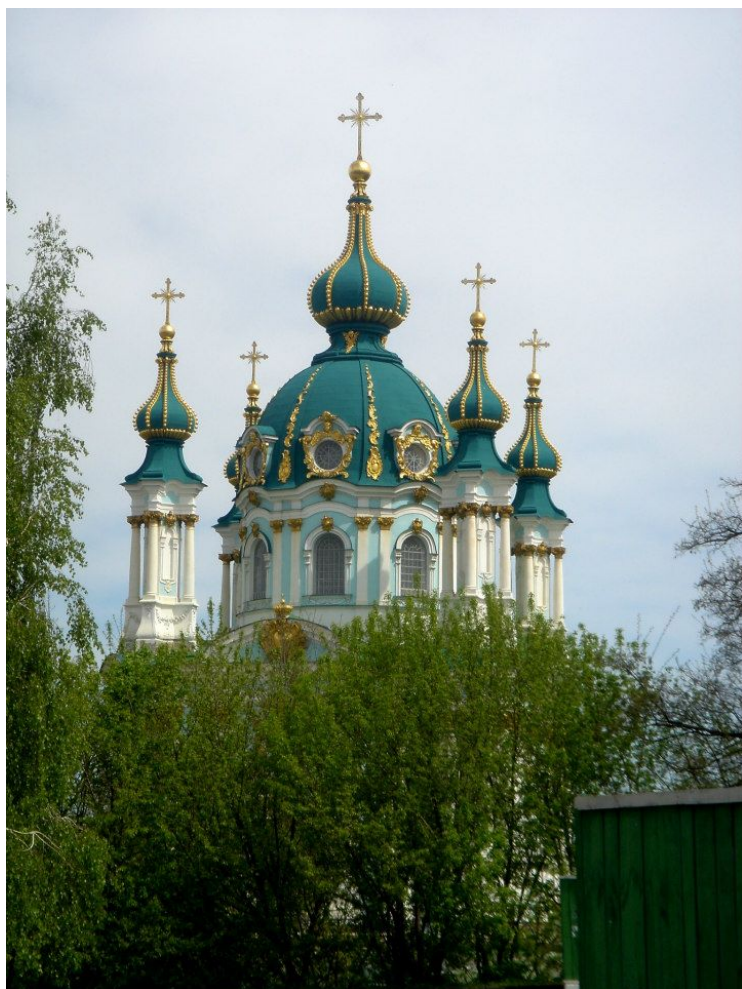
Their elderly parents and friends remained in the war-torn country. But they are turning worry into action. There are a lot of people at the railway station, many of them want to help...

Read the story in full here:

<https://www.presbyterianireland.org/Blog/March-2022/You-Did-This-For-Me.aspx>

You can donate to the Moderator's Appeal for Ukraine and find out more prayer points and information here bit.ly/pciUkraine

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Pope Francis to consecrate and entrust Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Today, Friday 25 March, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, Pope Francis will lead a ceremony of prayer in Saint Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, to consecrate and entrust Russia and

Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

In welcoming the Act of Consecration, Archbishop Eamon Martin invites the faithful and all people of goodwill to join with religious, clergy and bishops to pray for peace on this solemn occasion.

Archbishop Martin said, "The Catholic Church in Ireland will join wholeheartedly with Pope Francis to pray a solemn Act of Consecration of Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. In pastoral leadership, Pope Francis will unite the universal Church in prayer for peace and asks us to do so from our homes, churches, cathedrals, and Marian sanctuaries. Together, with the bishops of Ireland, I invite everyone to join in this powerful global act of prayerful

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solidarity for peace in the world, and especially between Russia and Ukraine.

“I wish to assure the Archbishops in Ukraine that the thoughts and prayers of the people of Ireland are with them, and their people, in the midst of the horrific turmoil impacting their country. It is heartening to hear that the clergy of Ukraine are continuing to celebrate Mass and the sacraments on the streets and in the bunkers and shelters, doing their best to bring to their fearful people the love and compassion of Christ.

“One reality of the terror in Ukraine is that we can never take peace for granted. The appalling scenes of suffering compel us to always work for peace, pray for peace and make sacrifices for peace.”

Archbishop Martin concluded, “I ask everyone to generously support the Special Collection for Ukraine which will take place at Masses across the country this weekend.”

See letter from Pope Francis in New Reports below

Support continues for Belfast Sitout for Ukraine

Over £40,000 has been collected so far for the Dean's Lent Sit-out for Ukraine.

The money collected so far will now be passed on to Habitat for Humanity and Christian Aid for immediate use working

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with local churches to support those who have fled to the neighbouring counties.

Please keep donating for the remaining three Wednesdays of Lent, whether personally, at your place of work or through your own fund raising. Donate in person any day to the Black Santa Barrel at the Cathedral's welcome desk, or donate on-line at www.belfastblacksanta.org



Unlocking the parish weekend

Members of the United Parish of Christ Church and St John, Ballyclare, headed to Kilbroney on the Co Down coast over the weekend of March 19/20.

The theme of the parish weekend was ‘Unlocking’. The rector, the Rev Jonny Campbell-Smyth said: “After two years of restrictions, we gathered to examine how God wants to unlock in us his desire for the Church and for us as his children.”



Guest speakers were Bishop Ken Clarke; Christina Baillie, Connor Diocesan Youth Officer; Victoria Jackson, Connor Children’s Ministry Development Officer, and John & Hannah McGrath.

Father Willie Doyle, World War I military chaplain, deserves sainthood cause, Irish group says

Father Willie Doyle, S.J. was an Irish priest whose heroic sacrifices as a military chaplain during World War I were much admired in the last century.

Now a lay group has launched with the goal of reviving his canonization cause and to spread awareness about the priest, Kevin J Jones writes.

“Willie Doyle is a very compelling figure,” Patrick Kenny, president of the Ireland-based Father Willie Doyle Association, said March 11. “His attractive personality, asnd his love for God and for others, shines through all of his

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writings, especially the diaries and letters he wrote during the war.”

“He is also a tremendously relevant figure for the Church today, especially in Ireland,” Kenny said. “By offering his life to save wounded Anglican soldiers he became an ecumenical martyr of charity and is an icon of reconciliation and unity in the midst of religious and political division. He explicitly offered his life to God in reparation for the sins of priests; this offering has a greater resonance with us now than it did at the time of his death.”

The Father Willie Doyle Association launched last week. It will publish materials about Doyle and organize events and talks to raise awareness about his life. It is working towards Doyle’s canonization, with the approval of the Irish Jesuit Province and the Bishop of Meath. It is a private association of the faithful under canon law.

Doyle was born March 3, 1873 in Dalkey in County Dublin. He was the youngest of seven children in a deeply devout family that made sure to care for their less fortunate neighbors. As a young boy, he would often bring food and money to poor neighbors and clean and paint their houses, according to his biography on the Doyle association website.

In 1891 he entered the Society of Jesus in County Meath. As a new priest at various assignments around Ireland, he focused on outreach towards workers and their families.

With the outbreak of World War I, he volunteered as a military chaplain for the 8th Battalion of the Royal Irish



Fusiliers of the 16th Irish Division of the British Army. He served from late 1915 through his death on Aug. 16, 1917 during the Battle of Passchendaele in Belgium. He died at the age of 44 while rescuing two Anglican soldiers from Ulster.

He was awarded the Military Cross for bravery at the Battle of the Somme and a divisional merit award for bravery during a poison gas attack. He was nominated for both the Distinguished Service Order and the Victoria Cross, the latter being the most prestigious military honor in the British armed forces.

Doyle's later bravery came despite a major nervous breakdown as a Jesuit novice when his novitiate building suffered a major fire.

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“Yet, 20 years later, he was admired by all who met him as a rock of courage in the trenches of World War I,” the Doyle association said. “His example is one of hope for many.”

The Willie Doyle Association said Doyle’s diaries show “the intensity of his prayer, his intense personal austerity, and his dogged pursuit of holiness.”

“His heroism on the field of battle was the fruit of that earlier daily pursuit of holiness in little things,” the association said.

Kenny, the Doyle association head, has edited the book “To Raise the Fallen: A selection of the war letters, prayers and spiritual writings of Fr. Willie Doyle, S.J.” It was published in Ireland by Veritas in 2017 and in the U.S. by Ignatius Press in 2018.

News reports

New Zealand Anglicans study Māori Anglican saints during Lent

This Lenten season, a weekly online prayer service is journeying through the 40 days of Lent in the company of a blessed array of Māori saints and influential ancestors in the Māori Anglican faith.

Each service will trace a different important tīpuna in the faith, particularly focused on the “second generation” of saintly figures, who, like the first week’s example, Rēnata

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Kawepō, were vital leaders in both the Māori Anglican Church and the wider world.

On March 8, the Rev. Zhane Tahau Whelan opened the series with a look at the extraordinary life and witness of his ancestor, the paramount chief and evangelist Rēnata Tama-ki-Hikurangi Kawepō of Ōmāhu in Heretaunga – Hawke's Bay.

Read the entire article here.

[https://www.anglicantaonga.org.nz/news/tikanga_maori/maorisaints_lent22]

Letter from Pope Francis on solemn Act of Consecration of humanity, and Russia and Ukraine in particular

Dear Brothers,

Nearly a month has passed since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine that is daily inflicting immense suffering upon its sorely tried people and threatening world peace. At this dark hour, the Church is urgently called to intercede before the Prince of Peace and to demonstrate her closeness to those directly affected by the conflict. I am grateful to the many people who have responded with great generosity to my appeals for prayer, fasting and charity.

Now, also in response to numerous requests by the People of God, I wish in a special way to entrust the nations at war to the Blessed Virgin Mary. As I announced yesterday at the conclusion of the Angelus prayer, on 25 March, the Solemnity of the Annunciation, I intend to carry out a solemn

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Act of
Consecration of
humanity, and
Russia and
Ukraine in
particular, to the
Immaculate
Heart of Mary.
Since it is fitting
that we should
invoke peace
with hearts
renewed by
God's
forgiveness, the
Act of
Consecration will
take place in the
context of a
Celebration of
Penance to be



held in Saint Peter's Basilica at 5:00 p.m., Rome time. The Act itself will take place about 6:30 p.m. This Act of Consecration is meant to be a gesture of the universal Church, which in this dramatic moment lifts up to God, through his Mother and ours, the cry of pain of all those who suffer and implore an end to the violence, and to entrust the future of our human family to the Queen of Peace. I ask you to join in this Act by inviting the priests, religious and faithful to assemble in their churches and places of prayer on 25 March, so that God's Holy People may raise a heartfelt and choral plea to Mary our Mother. I am sending you the text of

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the prayer of consecration, so that all of us can recite it throughout that day, in fraternal union.

I thank you for the attention you will give to this request and for your ready cooperation. With great affection, I bless you and the faithful entrusted to your pastoral care. May Jesus protect you and the Holy Virgin watch over you. I ask you, please, also to pray for me.

Fraternally, Francis. From Saint John Lateran, 21 March 2022



Sir Stephen Cleobury's memorial

In his address for Sir Stephen Cleobury's memorial, Professor Iain Fenlon quoted Plato, who wrote that music

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"gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything"; a remark with which Sir Stephen would certainly have agreed.

You can read Professor Fenlon's address here, along with the service paper: <https://bit.ly/36zwKfm>

And for more photos from the day, see [Instagram@KingsCollegeChoir](#).

In the media

Partygate hangover means Treasury staff watch speech sober

Daily Telegraph

Treasury staff cancelled their traditional drinking session while watching the Chancellor give his statement in the wake of the “partygate” scandal, The Daily Telegraph understands.

Employees abstained from consuming alcohol while Rishi Sunak addressed the House of Commons to deliver his mini-Budget on Wednesday. Sources at the Treasury denied reports that booze was banned by senior officials, saying that “no formal instruction” was given to staff but rather they decided not to indulge of their own accord.

It comes as the partygate saga – in which scores of Downing Street figures were accused of breaking lockdown rules – rumbles on, with Scotland Yard announcing this

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week that more than 100 questionnaires had been sent to those suspected of attending illegal gatherings.

Last month Sue Gray, a senior civil servant, published a 12-page “update” into the claims that revealed there was a gathering in the Prime Minister’s Downing Street flat. Scotland Yard is investigating 12 alleged gatherings across eight separate dates between May 20 2020 and April 16 last year.

This week, detectives began interviewing key witnesses in the partygate investigation, after some of those accused refused to accept fines.

Recipients of the legally binding documents are given seven days in which to respond and accept their guilt, or offer a “reasonable excuse” for their alleged actions.

700 Ukrainian students in Irish schools

RTE News

Around 700 Ukrainian students have been formally registered in Irish schools.

Minister for Education Norma Foley said it was very difficult to give a definitive number at this stage.

Schools are registering students as they arrive, she said, but that it may take "a number of days for that registration to take place".

<https://www.rte.ie/news/ireland/2022/0324/1288155-ireland-refugee/>

Brexit protocol

Belfast Telegraph

Northern Ireland set for 'problems and confusion' with UK and EU clash over state aid law, Government admits [<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/northern-ireland/northern-ireland-set-for-problems-and-confusion-over-a-clash-between-uk-and-eu-law-government-admits-41481692.html>]

EU citizens must apply for visa to cross Irish border

Daily Telegraph

Non-Irish EU citizens will have to apply online for US-style visa clearance before crossing the border into Northern Ireland from the Republic under new post-Brexit immigration rules.

Dublin criticised the new controls yesterday after MPs voted down an amendment by the House of Lords exempting Northern Ireland from the Nationality and Borders Bill on Tuesday.

Simon Coveney, Ireland's foreign minister, said: "This decision is regrettable and contrary to the approach that UK and Irish Governments have supported for many years to protect free movement on the island of Ireland for everyone."

The Bill requires EU citizens to apply for electronic travel authorisation (ETA) before entering the UK. The amendment

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was defeated by a majority of 298 MPs to 216 after a government challenge.

The Government said there would be no physical checks on the Irish border, which would be controversial because of the Brexit agreement to prevent them.

<http://digitaleditions.telegraph.co.uk/data/917/reader/reader.html?social#!preferred/0/package/917/pub/917/page/32/article/282865>

Sinn Fein MLA Emma Rogan absent for almost 60 committee meetings

Belfast Telegraph

A Sinn Fein MLA hasn't spoken in the Assembly, nor attended Stormont committees on which she sits, for over a year. She has missed 45 Justice Committee and 13 Audit Committee meetings.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/sinn-fein-mla-emma-rogan-absent-for-almost-60-committee-meetings-41481702.html>

Pilgrims in the Land of the Lord

The Irish Catholic

The first group of post-coronavirus pilgrims in the Holy Land received a warm welcome, writes Michael Kelly

It was with a certain sense of the unknown that 40 pilgrims set off from Dublin Airport late last month to make our way to the Holy Land. Regulations then in place (since thankfully dropped) meant we all required a Covid-19 test before

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leaving Ireland and another one on our arrival in Tel Aviv. Despite some apprehension, the process was extremely smooth and we were soon on our way to Nazareth – the childhood home of Jesus. As we arrived at our hotel, phones were already pinging with results from the tests carried out at the airport. All pilgrims were mercifully negative and the real pilgrimage could begin.

I've been to the Holy Land more than 20 times over the last 15 years, and I have never seen it so quiet. Covid-19 has crippled the pilgrimage landscape in the Holy Land and many in the pilgrimage community have had a hungry two years.

The plus side for our pilgrims, of course, was that all of the holy sites associated with Christ's life were quiet – almost eerily so. In the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, site of Jesus' tomb, pilgrims were privileged to spend intimate moments alone inside the tomb. The site of the crucifixion was also quiet and meant that rather than the usual split-second visit, our pilgrims were able to spend time meditating at this holiest of sites.

Poem for today

From - Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College by Thomas Gray

Ye distant spires, ye antique tow'rs,
That crown the wat'ry glade,
Where grateful Science still adores

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Her Henry's holy Shade;
And ye, that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowr's among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way.

Ah, happy hills, ah, pleasing shade,
Ah, fields belov'd in vain,
Where once my careless childhood stray'd,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales, that from ye blow,
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing,
My weary soul they seem to soothe,
And, redolent of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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