

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Westminster vertical

Image of the day

Westminster vertical

Pendant fan vault of Henry VII's chapel at Westminster Abbey, London

People and places

Reels and Wheels in Tamlaght O'Crilly

Get your cowboy hat on or shine up your vintage tractor for the annual May Festival, one of the biggest and best in Mid Ulster.

The village of Tamlaght O'Crilly is preparing for a day of music and vintage vehicles on Saturday 27th May, commencing at 12noon and hosted by Tamlaght O'Crilly Parish Vintage Group.

The annual May Festival and Vintage Rally is traditionally a day for all the family and this year is no exception, with an action packed programme planned.

Music throughout the day will be by Country Features, joined by award winning country singer Tony Kerr and the Ulster Scots Band. Tamlaght O'Crilly Pipe Band will be providing some Scottish reels followed by Sollus Scottish dancers.

May 12, 2023

Bring along your pet to the hotly contested pet show at 2:30pm. All pets welcome.

During the day there will be stalls, bee keeping, Hound and Seek dog shows, Corbally Fun Farm and pony rides, Car Boot Sale, fair ground games, barbecue, pancake making, Garvagh Museum display and lots more.



For those with an interest in Ferguson Tractors, Sam Neill from the Ferguson club will be doing a very informative talk in the vintage field at 2pm.

All vintage vehicles and engines will be welcome to join the vast display.

May 12, 2023

So whether you fancy a reel, seeing all the wheels on display or just a fun family day out, you can be sure to find it all in Tamlaght O'Crilly on Saturday 27th May.

Everyone Welcome

Enquiries to Jean 02825822481 or Mary 02879642197



Armagh Mothers Union Diocesan Festival

The service was held in Omagh Cathedral on Wed 10 May 2023,

Ann Anderson was commissioned as Vice President - Finance & Central Services.; Juliana Wade was commissioned as Vice President - Faith & Policy; Lynda Galway and Davina McAllister were commissioned as a new Diocesan Trustees.

The All Ireland Mothers' Union President June Butler was present at the Service.



Mothers' Union branch banners in Armagh Cathedral.



The Act of Commissioning



The first banner is up! Bicentenary Flower Festival 9-11th June at Church of Ireland, United Parishes of Malahide, Portmarnock & St. Doulagh's.

Former Moderator's book raises £3,500 for Friends of Cancer Centre

A Coleraine minister who wrote a book to raise funds for charity has brought in the fantastic total of £3,500.

Rev David Clarke collated a collection of his articles in the Ballymoney Times into a book entitled 'The Pieces of Myself'.

May 12, 2023

With a print run of 400 copies, which were all sold through local churches, £3,500 was raised and donated to 'Friends of the Cancer Centre'.



The Bandon Bakers

A huge clap for Bandon Grammar School's Christian Union group and their friends who held a bake sale on Monday to raise funds for the work of Christian Aid Ireland

These young people are baking the world a butter place.
Their hard work will sweeten the lives of others.
Muffin compares to kindness.
Let's hope they made a lot of dough.

Derry churches' Service of Celebration for the Coronation

Church leaders from the four main Christian denominations in the North West joined the Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart, in St Columb's Cathedral, on Wednesday evening, for a Service of Celebration for the Coronation of Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla.

The distinguished guests present included His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for the County Borough of Londonderry, Mr Ian Crowe MBE DL, and the Deputy Mayor of Derry City and Strabane, Cllr Angela Dobbins.





The sermon was preached by the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Andrew Forster who, only four days earlier, had been in Westminster Abbey for the Coronation Service. Bishop Andrew told the congregation that the Cathedral they were sitting in had been built almost 400 years earlier, during the reign of the first King Charles. The reign of King Charles III was, he said, "light years away" from the 17th century religious conflicts on this island.

"Now, in this Cathedral, built in the reign of Charles I, we come to celebrate and to pray for the reign of Charles III. And, as he begins his reign, these are certainly less violent times on these islands but, nevertheless, they're times of great challenge and times of division."

Bishop Andrew specified a number of these: the cost of living crisis, concern for our future, and challenges with how



government acted and behaved. And he said that division seemed to be the hallmark of modern day society.



"On the eve of her own Coronation, the Late Queen Elizabeth said this: 'Coronations are a declaration of our hope for the future.' Saturday's Service, in all its grandeur and pomp and majesty and splendour, I think shone a light of hope into days of challenge and days of division. It shone that light of hope in great clarity through some of the themes that were highlighted during the Service."

The heart of last Saturday's Coronation Service, Bishop Andrew said, was the call to the monarch - and, indeed, to every one of us - to be people of service, just as Jesus had been. King Charles had shown his devotion to service over many, many years. "That willingness of the King to lend Royal support and presence has lifted up and blessed many. He tells us that he has come not to be served, but to serve. Our greatest dignity, and even our greatest majesty, is found in service because it is in service that you and I are

May 12, 2023

most Christ-like. As we seek to serve, as we seek to help out, as we seek to put ourselves in the place of others and lift them up and support them we are at our most Christ-like. When we are prepared to serve, we put aside pride and self-interest, and we look to the needs of others, \[to] the greater good of society and the world around us. Saturday's



Service was a reminder of that, of the dignity of service, of the majesty of service, and a challenge not only to the King but to each one of us in a world of challenge and division."

The light of hope in the Service also shone brightly, Bishop Andrew suggested, because it was a celebration of the diversity of our nation."We saw young and old, the cultural diversity of these islands celebrated and on display. It celebrated the diversity that is actually a God-given gift. Whenever we open scripture, we find diversity everywhere. We find it in the very early days of the Church, whenever the



Church was born on the day of Pentecost, we hear about Parthians and Medes, Elamites, residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya beyond, in Cyrene, and visitors from Rome. It was the known world and yet it talks of difference, it talks of diversity and it celebrates diversity in the life of God. And in the very heart of God, we see diversity yet unity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit - three persons, yet one God. And we're told that in Christ there's no Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female. We could add to it today that in Christ there's no Protestant or Catholic. Diversity and the celebration of diversity shone a beautiful light of hope in that Service."

Bishop Andrew said the city of Derry-Londonderry was at its best when we celebrated or even cherished our diversity, when we valued and honoured the place of each other's



culture within our city. When we didn't do that, we were all diminished. "My hope is for a city where each of us, each of our cultures, each of our traditions are valued and cherished by all of us, as we share this place that we love so much. We are at our best when we are building relations rather than tearing them down. We are at our best when we pull people towards us rather than push them away."

The third sign of hope from Saturday's Coronation Service was the fact that it placed worship and reverence for Almighty God at the heart of all that happened. "In our increasingly secular world, where faith is often sidelined and often - let's be frank - looked down upon, I hope the Coronation showed us the colour, the texture, the grounding, the hope, the equipping, the blessing that faith alone brings to life, that will simply not be found in the desert of antipathy and scepticism. That faith in Christ can make all

the difference. That worship of Christ brought that sense of awesomeness to what we witnessed on Saturday. And that faith in Christ can make all the difference to you and to me."

This evening's Service in St Columb's Cathedral was led by the Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart, assisted by the Cathedral's Pastoral Assistant, Rev Canon John Merrick. The readings were delivered by the Bishop of Derry, Most Rev Dr Donal McKeown; the Moderator of Derry & Donegal Presbytery, Rev Gordon McCracken; and the Superintendent of the Northwest District of the Methodist Church, Rev Dr Stephen Skuce.

The Service was sung by The Cathedral Choir, The Cathedral Chamber Choir and The Cathedral Girls' Choir, directed and accompanied by the Organist and Master of the Choristers, Dr Derek Collins, and the Assistant Organist Nicky Morton.

French lay group travels to build crosses and restore faith in Ireland

A lay Catholic movement that restores Catholic monuments in France is in Ireland May 5–13 to build crosses with the hope of restoring faith in that country.

S.O.S. Calvaires CEO Alexandre Caillé, 26, told CNA a group will go to Croagh St. Patrick, a traditional Irish pilgrimage destination, and four other sites. "We're going to erect five Celtic crosses all over the country," he said.

S.O.S. Calvaires — which has grown exponentially in just two years — was founded in 1987. Its motto is “Stat crux dum volvitur orbis” — “The world turns while the Cross remains.” The group seeks to restore the artistic and religious heritage of France, much of which is deteriorating under natural causes but also due to vandalism and government neglect.

The group does not receive any government funding. Its stated purpose is “to strengthen the unity of Christians around the Cross and do apostolate by example.”

The effort in Ireland is just the beginning of the group’s international outreach. S.O.S. Calvaires has already built a traditional cross in Armenia and has received requests to work in Belgium. Caillé said branches are planned for America and the rest of Europe.

A native of France, Caillé learned English while bicycling in Ireland for several months several years ago and was struck by the challenges to the Catholic faith he saw there.

Another group member, who goes by the moniker “Titouann,” reflected on the political and religious divisions on the Emerald Isle: “I see this as a wonderful opportunity to seize this challenge in order to share our faith. In this country particularly impacted by religious wars, gathering around the cross is a sign of brotherhood given to the world.”

Restoring crosses in France

May 12, 2023

The French government holds title to nearly all Catholic monuments and places of worship in France but does not expend significant resources for upkeep despite calls for repair. However, permission must come from the government for restoration. According to the S.O.S. Calvaires website, 80% of church buildings of historical significance are in poor condition.

Courtesy of CNA. Report by Martin Barillas

In the media

Former senior Northern Ireland civil servant blasts UK Government's handling of Brexit

The UK Government's handling of Brexit has been blasted in terms of Northern Ireland's latest political crisis, Rebecca Black writes in the News Letter

The Stormont Assembly has been effectively collapsed for more than a year while the DUP refuses to take part until their concerns around the Northern Ireland Protocol are addressed.

Andrew McCormick, who formerly served as director general of international relations for the Executive Office, said there was “very, very inadequate” preparation ahead of Brexit.

He said by contrast the Irish Government had “thought through what they needed”, which he said showed in the way negotiations unfolded.

From the referendum result in 2016 there were several years of negotiations before the UK formally left the European Union, with the issue of how to handle the only land border with the EU in Ireland a particular sticking point.

Dr McCormick was secretary of a Stormont Executive sub committee dealing with Brexit issues from January 2020.

He said in the early meeting there were “some lively and substantive discussions”.

“But it was just too difficult an issue for the Northern Ireland institutions to deal with,” he told the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee on Wednesday.

“It was taking us into very sharp binary choices, on which it’s very, very hard to get resolution, and so the last few Executive committee meetings on Brexit that I was supporting lasted five minutes, because everyone had agreed there was no point having a discussion.

“It was just utterly dysfunctional, utterly hopeless, and fundamental responsibility for that lies with the misrepresentation of the nature of what was being agreed, especially from October 2019 onwards, when totally contradictory things were said by the Government, in Parliament and in documentation that was published. “There were directly contradictory statements made.

May 12, 2023

“No wonder there was confusion and dysfunctionality. No wonder nobody in business could prepare properly because this was absolutely ludicrous.

“This is all demonstrably clear if you analyse the facts, and go through the documentation, the contradictions are there. That’s why we are where we are.

Dr McCormick said there was a distortion of what the Brexit settlement meant, and what was within the bounds of possibility.

He also said Brexit is part of what contributed to the separation between the British and Irish governments from 2020, which was detrimental to Northern Ireland.

“When the two governments aren’t working together, aren’t encouraging the parties to make the institutions work, that’s deeply dysfunctional,” he said.

“I place a lot of heavy responsibility there, yes things could have been done differently by Northern Ireland politicians, but the context was created by this issue.”

News Letter 10 May 2023

Poem for today

Lines Written on a Seat on the Grand Canal, Dublin

by Patrick Kavanagh

'Erected to the memory of Mrs. Dermot O'Brien'

O commemorate me where there is water,
Canal water, preferably, so stilly
Greeny at the heart of summer. Brother
Commemorate me thus beautifully
Where by a lock niagarously roars
The falls for those who sit in the tremendous silence
Of mid-July. No one will speak in prose
Who finds his way to these Parnassian islands.
A swan goes by head low with many apologies,
Fantastic light looks through the eyes of bridges -
And look! a barge comes bringing from Athy
And other far-flung towns mythologies.
O commemorate me with no hero-courageous
Tomb - just a canal-bank seat for the passer-by

Church News Ireland

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