

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Sanctuary of St Patrick

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Sanctuary of St Patrick

Have you ever seen this unique island floating in the waters of Lough Derg?

The Sanctuary of St Patrick, also known simply as Lough Derg, is a popular site of pilgrimage in County Donegal. This striking site has seen over 2 million pilgrims in the past 150 years! This location still offers pilgrimage programmes but also facilitates school retreats and National and International Tours.

People and places

Ministry Apprenticeship Scheme coordinator appointed in Down & Dromore

We're delighted to announce the appointment of Janine Armstrong as the new FORGE Ministry Apprenticeship Scheme Coordinator. Janine will join the diocesan team on a part-time basis from the start of June and become full-time at the beginning of September.

Janine has been working in youth and family ministries for almost 15 years and is currently the Children and Family Ministries Coordinator at Shankill Parish. She brings a

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wealth of experience having served in church and parachurch ministries in Northern Ireland and overseas.



Janine (photo above) has a passion for investing in and developing young leaders and equipping churches to support and disciple families.

Having grown up on a farm at the foot of the Mourne, Janine studied art before stepping into full-time ministry. Since then, she has begun training as a counsellor while serving with organisations such as Youth For Christ, Love For Life, and New Wine, as well as several churches in Down and Dromore, Connor, and Canada.

Janine now lives in Waringstown with her husband, Stu, and their two kids, Ezra and Elah. She loves food, the mountains, and board games and is very excited at the prospect of supporting the next generation of ministry leaders in our diocese.

What is FORGE?

Launched in 2022, FORGE aims to enable young Christians to develop a strong and enduring faith through training and

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service in the church. It offers young disciples aged 18–25 the opportunity to explore Christian ministry, discover their gifts, learn new skills, and serve Jesus.

Applications for 2023–24 are open now. Find out more and apply at link on diocesan web site -

<https://www.downanddromore.org/training/forgeminiistry-apprenticeship-scheme>

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Presentation to Methodist Women's Treasurer

At the recent MWI General Executive in Thomas Street Portadown, a big 'thank you' was given to the MWI General Treasurer, Barbara Fennell, who, after over 9

years service looking after all monies, has decided to relax and enjoy more time with her family.

Barbara has been a dedicated Treasurer, with a genuine interest in keeping all monies correct and always able and willing to answer all our queries.



MWI All Ireland President, Olive Rowe, presented Barbara with a beautiful Belleek china lamp and wished her every Blessing. All members of MWI throughout the Connexion wish Barbara a long and happy retirement with much Love and Blessings.

Ulster members at Buckingham Palace for D of E Awards



**Three
members.
Of the
Ulster
regiment
of the
Church
Lads and
Church
Girls
Brigade
were at**

Buckingham Palace yesterday to received their Gold Awards.

Congratulations to Anna Parker, Andrew Burleigh and Samantha Todd

Also in attendance as Special Regional Guest was John Corbishley.



The Roe Valley Branch of the Royal Airforce Association marked its closure by presenting its standard for safekeeping to Canon Mayes in a short service in Christ Church, Limavady Parish Church. The Branch also laid a wreath at what is one of the most distinctive war memorials to RAF personnel

Insights on Methodist Covenant at C of I Synod

The 21st Anniversary of the Church of Ireland and Methodist Covenant was marked at General Synod

The Covenant between the Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church in Ireland is soon to celebrate its 21st birthday, members of Synod heard. Proposing the report of the Covenant Council, Canon Dr Maurice Elliott said that

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Covenant continued to celebrate a shared understanding in many aspects of faith, worship, heritage, ministry and governance.

The text of the Covenant mapped out ten different areas in which the two Churches were keen to explore further common life and mission, he said. Amongst others, these included prayer for each other, mutual welcome of sacramental ministry, shared resources, joint programmes in training, participation in governance and fuller sharing of ministries.

Dr Elliott said that over the years much work had been invested into trying to put substance on to this framework, and one prospective task now identified by the Council is that it may be timely to re-work the original document, not by altering the heads of agreement, but with a common declaration of newly identified priorities for ongoing convergence. He hoped that could be drafted in time for next year's Synod.

He highlighted the Bill on occasional interchangeability of ministry which was agreed by the Synod.

Looking ahead, he said that future aspects of the Council's work would involve deeper exploration of liturgical rites, the need for updated regulations under charities legislation for Local Covenant Partnerships (it is hoped that these can go to the Standing Committee with a view to bringing another Bill next year), and revision of the booklet, Guidelines for the Journey, first published in 2008.

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“In an overall sense, one of the principles which urgently needs to become more firmly established is that, by virtue of the Covenant, the relationship between our two Churches begins to move beyond simple ecumenism. The Council is determined to see the Covenant go forward with renewed vitality. We would respectfully suggest that, twenty–one years in, it ought to be becoming second–nature for us to think ‘covenant’ at every opportunity, and that we should be much more intentional about finding ways of substantiating the shared approach which we have come to enjoy,” Dr Elliott stated.

Speaking to the report, the Revd David Nixon, President of the Methodist Church, said that that while we should be thinking Covenant we should also think mission, think brother and sister. He said that there were many aspects of mission which could be done better together as brothers and sisters.

Church Army and Mental Health Awareness Week

This week is an opportunity to normalise conversations around mental health and provide recognition to those affected.

Church Army engages with issues of mental health every day - its Evangelists and Key Projects are working to help individuals and groups with a whole range of mental health problems, to show love and bring the hope of the gospel to their lives.

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In Gloucester, Emma Wilson is leading a café that enables anyone in the community who is lonely, struggling or feeling isolated to come, eat, and do some life together. Emma's hope is to enable them to grow in their self worth by breaking the dependency culture; through slow-cooker classes, a pay-as-you-can café, and employment opportunities.

In Selby, Amy Hayes hosts a group of women at her house for pancakes and coffee. They sit round, eat and catch up - providing a safe space for members to be accepted as they are. They share deep conversations about faith and life, and this gathering has become 'the thing to look forward to each week'. The positive impact on mental health through something so simple is profound.

In Wrexham, Jack Wright serves in a community where mental health issues are a prominent problem among young people. Jack runs a young men's hiking group, which gives them an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and improved mental clarity. Jack also offers 1-to-1 mentoring sessions for those who need it, where he provides a safe and judgement-free space.

These are just little snapshots of how Church Army is reaching out to countless individuals struggling with mental health issues - and it does so because love and hope is at the forefront of its caring and compassionate faith. This week, Church Army asks you to join us in prayer for all who are experiencing mental health issues.



Members of the Irish Defence Forces on pilgrimage at the Marian shrine of Lourdes.



Pipes and Drums accompany Members of the Irish Defence Forces on pilgrimage at the Marian shrine of Lourdes.



Marketplace learning with CSMI

Marketplace highlights women craft makers, admiring their skills and telling their stories. For an evening of crafting and discussing fair trade contact CMS Ireland on 028 9077 5020/01 497 0931 or email info@cmsireland.org



Churches losing ground through silence on rights Changing Attitudes Ireland stresses

At a Changing Attitudes Ireland event during the meeting of the General Synod Maria Jansson gave an incredible talk on the power of scapegoating in our society.

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She reviewed events from the Shoah to current European movements of hate. A major conclusion was that the churches are losing ground every minute they stay silent on the rights and inclusion of all minorities.



Chaplaincy contacts at Lourdes

RAF Chaplain-in-Chief meeting with a Ukrainian Air Defence chaplain and the parents of a fallen Ukrainian comrade at the International Military Pilgrimage, Lourdes

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News reports

Catholic, Evangelical and Baptist churches among more than 120 destroyed in India violence

Evangelical, Baptist, Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches are among more than 120 Christian places of worship which have been completely destroyed or burnt in a wave of violence across the Manipur district of India.

Responsible Christian news sources have a list confirming the number of churches - including those which have been demolished since the violence began on May 3rd. It's believed the total number of churches destroyed may be much higher.

The violence broke out in the northeastern state of Manipur during a protest march. Thousands of Christian tribal people were opposing a demand by the majority Hindu non-tribal group for the constitutionally defined status of a scheduled tribe, which can bring with it access to jobs and education.

Give peas a chance - Archbishop of Wales supports pea-growing effort for Christian Aid Week

Christian Aid week began on Sunday with the focus on providing farmers with hardier crops.



The charity says countries such as Malawi are paying the price for global crises with food, fuel and fertiliser doubling in price in the last 12 months.

Farmers are also seeing their harvests fail as climate

change brings increasingly erratic weather.

The Archbishop of Wales is among those urging people to take part in the week with prayers and donations to support people in Malawi.

Most Rev Andrew John said, “This Christian Aid Week is our chance to focus on our sisters and brothers in Malawi who are battling desperate poverty. I urge you to support their work in your donations and your prayers so their lives can be transformed. Please give generously to the Christian Aid appeal.”

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The interim head of Christian Aid Wales, the Revd Andrew Sully, will be addressing the congregations of Llandaff Cathedral about the charity's work. He said :

“I'm looking forward to these services and meeting our supporters. Christian Aid Week is a time of great joy and hope when we stand together with our global neighbours in a very focused way to tackle poverty.

“Farming is hugely symbolic because it helps us remember small things done together can grow to make bigger differences. We are hugely grateful to all our supporters for their amazing efforts; we couldn't do it without them.”

Christian Aid says more hardy crops include the super-resilient pigeon pea which enriches the soil for future harvests. Supporters of the week which runs until 20th May, are being invited to hold pea-themed events to raise money.

Ukraine's President exchanges gifts with Pope

Ukraine's President Zelensky has had an audience with the Pope during his visit to Rome.

Pope Francis gave the President a bronze sculpture representing an olive branch - Zelensky gave the Pope a work of art crafted from a bulletproof plate and a painting entitled “Loss” reflecting the deaths of children in the conflict.



During the meeting at the Apostolic Palace, they agreed on the requirement to continue providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine.

The Pope also highlighted the need for "gestures of humanity" towards the most fragile victims of the conflict.

Pope Francis assured the President of his constant prayers and President Zelensky said the visit was a 'great honour.'

A communique released by the Holy See press office said that following his meeting with the Pope, President Zelensky met Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States and International Organizations of the Secretariat of State :

"During the cordial talks with H.E. Archbishop Gallagher, the focus was first of all on the current war in Ukraine and the urgent concerns associated with it, particularly those of humanitarian nature, as well as on the need to continue

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efforts to achieve peace. The occasion was also propitious to discuss a number of bilateral issues, especially concerning the life of the Catholic Church in the country."

Poem for today

The Owl and The Pussycat by Edward Lear

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money,
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
'O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are!
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!'

Pussy said to the Owl, 'You elegant fowl!'
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O let us be married! too long have we tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?'
They sailed away, for a year and a day,
To the land where the Bong-tree grows,
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood
With a ring in the end of his nose,
His nose,

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His nose,
With a ring at the end of his nose.

‘Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling
Your ring?’ Said the Piggy, ‘I will.’
So they took it away, and were married next day
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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