

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – St Colman's, Dunmurry

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Image of the day

St Colman's Parish Church, Dunmurry

The story of St Colman states that he retreated to the west of Ireland after losing the debate over the date of Easter at the Synod of Whitby. He almost drowned crossing the river Lagan which is near to the Church in Dunmurry. Colman created an altar at which he thanked God for his survival. St Colman's was a daughter church of Drumbeg parish and in time the clergy and Select Vestry of Dunmurry were given the bishop's charge of providing worship in the new housing areas of Seymour Hill and Conway. They did so and in time a new church hall and later a new church was erected. This was dedicated to St Hilda the Abbess of Whitby Abbey who had supported St Colman during the Synod.

People and places

Trendy clerics do Marathon walk for Bishops' Appeal

Well done to Rev Elizabeth Hanna and Rev Mellissa Jeffers in their very trendy t-shirts, who took part in the Belfast



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Marathon 8 mile walk to raise funds for Bishops' Appeal. Their particular project of choice is supporting Christian Aid in their work with communities in Honduras. Funds raised will help families who live in the dry corridor become more resilient to climate change through new agricultural practices, rain water harvesting and drip irrigation and improved nutrition. Bishops' Appeal said - Thank you both for your support and for the excellent profile raising!

St. Columba's College Dublin remembers contribution of past students in WW1



The Warden Mark Boobbyer and Karen Hennessey St. Columba's College Dublin, lay Wreath at Menin Gate Ypres



Kevin O' Morochoe (son of the late Maj Gen David O'Morchoe) and David Gibson-Brabazon, Midlands President of the RBL Ireland, at the Menin Gate Memorial Ypres. St.Columba's College group at Francis Ledwidge's memorial Ypres





Tuam and Limerick enthronements continue

Bishop Michael Burrows, was enthroned last week at St Flannan's Cathedral, Killaloe by the Very Revd Rod Smyth. Photographs from the special evening by kind courtesy of Deborah Dudgeon.

Coffee Morning & Quilt Exhibition



Saturday 7th May 2022,

10am — 2pm,

Molesworth

Presbyterian Church Hall,

(kindly granted)

Molesworth Street,

Cookstown.

**Come along for tea, coffee, tray bakes,
and an exhibition of quilts by Sandra Weir.**

Donations in support
of Exodus Team 42,
going to Budapest, Hungary.



EXODUS



The Armed Man

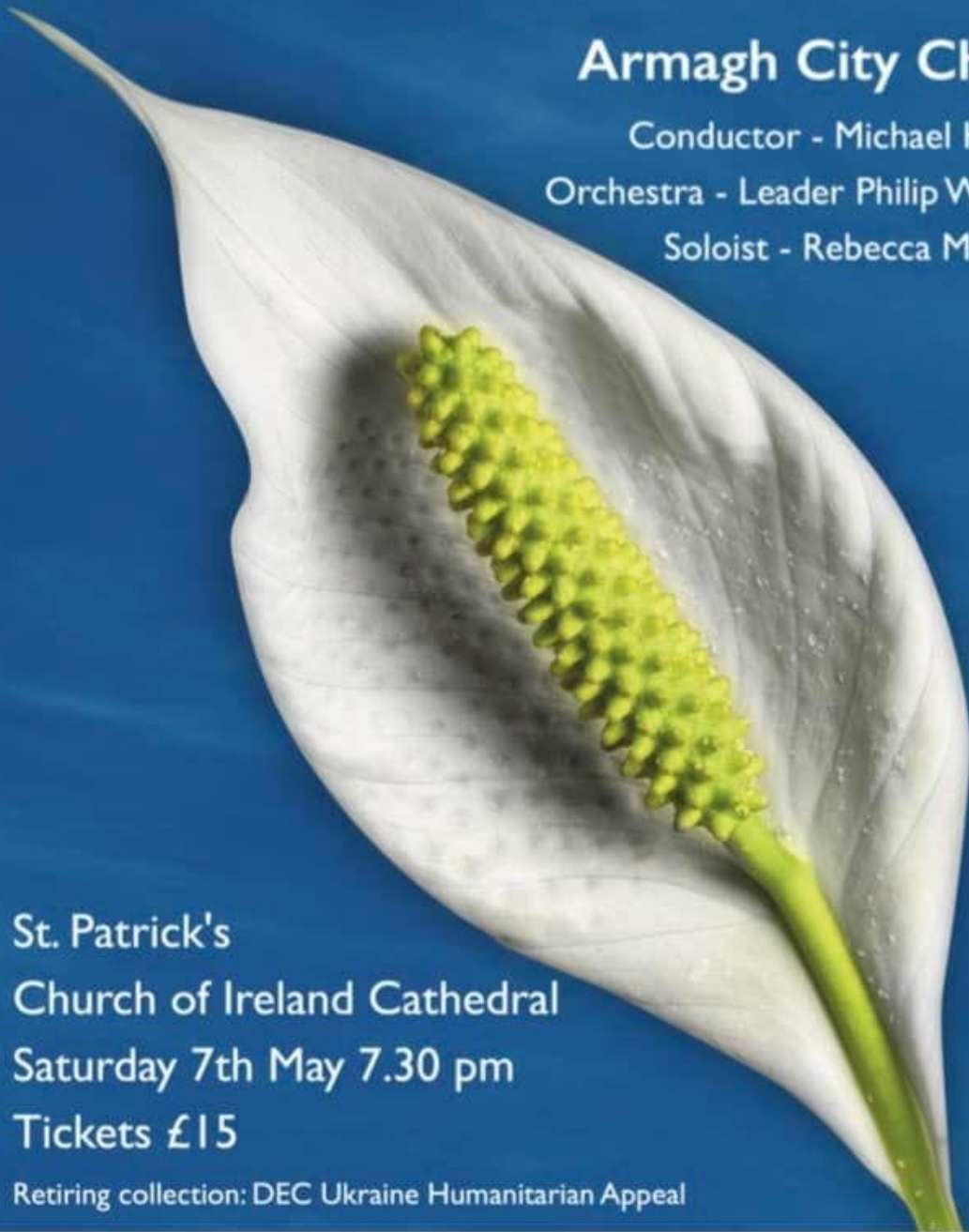
*A Mass for Peace
by Karl Jenkins*

Armagh City Choir

Conductor - Michael Harris

Orchestra - Leader Philip Walton

Soloist - Rebecca Murphy



St. Patrick's
Church of Ireland Cathedral
Saturday 7th May 7.30 pm
Tickets £15

Retiring collection: DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal

With the kind support of
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council



Could you help young people by inspiring them to believe in themselves and in God?

**Saintfield Parish
is hiring a**

**PART TIME
YOUTH WORKER**

Closing Date
May 13th 12.00 noon

Contact Chris for Job Spec
Chris.pollock3@btinternet.com
Or download from
www.saintfieldparish.com

New edition of centenaries reading list now available

The front cover is illustrated with a pillar box with the monogram of King George V, on Dublin's Westmoreland Street, and stamps over-printed with lettering for the Provisional Government and Irish Free State, thus representing continuity and change in that time.

An updated edition of *Divided States: Irish Independence and its Aftermath 1918–1923*, a reading list produced by the Church of Ireland's Historical Centenaries Working Group, has been published online. It sets out to guide all those who wish to study further an era in Irish history where, in both parts of the island, there are very different narratives and interpretations.

Divided States firstly covers the wider context of Irish history. It goes on to explore a number of more specialised topics:

- +nationalism and unionism, events in Ireland in the crucial decade of 1913–1923,
- +local studies, the Anglo–Irish Treaty, the Civil War, Partition and the development of Northern Ireland, the Southern Protestant community, and the role of women in the revolutionary era, alongside a number of personal perspectives.

It opens with a foreword by the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, the Most Revd John McDowell, and an introductory essay by his predecessor as Primate, the Rt Revd Dr Richard Clarke. The working group, which is

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chaired by the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Rt Revd Dr Paul Colton, is grateful to Mr George Woodman for his work in compiling and updating a representative selection of the historical literature of this period.

Divided States was first published in April 2019, and both the first edition and this new edition are available to read and download at www.ireland.anglican.org/divided-states

An election to pray for - Presbyterians encouraged

As Northern Ireland goes to the polls this Thursday (5 May), with a choice of over 200 candidates to fill the Northern Ireland Assembly's 90 seats, Presbyterians have been reminded of the responsibility of all citizens to vote and have been encouraged to prayerfully consider how to use their vote.

Congregations have also been urged to 'pray that those elected will serve with integrity, generosity of spirit and with a commitment to the common good.'

In a joint letter to all of its congregations in Northern Ireland, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI), Right Reverend Dr David Bruce, and the denomination's Clerk of the General Assembly, Rev Trevor Gribben, encouraged ministers to make time during services 'to pray for the candidates who are standing for election, those who will be working in the polling stations and count centres, and all those who will exercise their vote, especially those doing so for the first time.'

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The two senior Presbyterians also encouraged members ‘to pray that those elected will serve with integrity, generosity of spirit and with a commitment to the common good,’ and ‘to exercise their right to vote as informed citizens’. To assist in this the Moderator and Clerk pointed to a number of Christian organisations that have prepared helpful resources to inform decision-making in the run up to the election.

These included CARE NI’s website, which details party policies, voting records of candidates who were MLAs in the last Assembly and a list of all candidates. The Evangelical Alliance NI’s ‘Use your vote, use your voice’ resource, includes a number of questions on social and topical issues, which could be asked of a candidate while out canvassing.

The Moderator and the Clerk also made the point in their correspondence with ministers that, ‘While it can be tempting to disengage with the local political process we are reminded in Scripture that the “authorities that exist have been established by God” (Romans 13:2) and are encouraged to make petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving for all people, including all those in authority (1 Timothy 2:1-2).’

Speaking about the forthcoming election, Dr Bruce also said, “The Clerk and I concluded our letter by saying, ‘Casting a vote on polling day may, on the one hand, seem small and insignificant. On the other, it is a way of engaging and participating in the democratic process, and seeking the peace and prosperity of the places to which we have been called (Jeremiah 29:7).’”

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The Moderator went on to say, “Being able to vote and participate in an unfettered way in a democratic process is a precious right, something that is denied to so many across the world. While we can vote for different candidates in this ‘1,2,3...’ PR election, we can all pray the same prayer in hope that when the last transfers are made and the final MLA is declared, the common good will be served. It is also my prayer that those elected, from whatever party, will serve in that same spirit.”

News reports

Church of Scotland's drift towards same-sex marriage is 'very sad' - Christian Institute

The Christian Institute has called it a "very sad development" after most presbyteries in the Church of Scotland came out in support of same-sex weddings in its church buildings.

A report to the 2022 General Assembly shows that 29 presbyteries gave their backing to legislation which, if passed, will allow ministers to conduct marriage ceremonies for gay couples.

Twelve presbyteries voted against the draft legislation.

The report to the forthcoming General Assembly says that no minister will be forced to wed a gay couple or be involved in the arrangements.

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The legislation is to be debated at the General Assembly, taking place online and in Edinburgh from 21 to 26 May.

Under the proposals, ministers will be able to apply to the Principal Clerk's office to become a celebrant of same-sex weddings. An application would then be made to the Registrar General for Scotland on their behalf.

The legislation requires that in deciding whether to conduct a same-sex marriage ceremony, approved celebrants take account of the "peace and unity and pastoral needs of the congregation and any parish or other grouping of which it is a part".

If the legislation is passed, liturgy will be drawn up specifically for use in same-sex marriage ceremonies.

Responding to the news, The Christian Institute's Scotland Officer Nigel Kenny commented: "This is a very sad development in the life of the National Kirk, which has in its constitution a commitment to the Bible as the supreme authority in all matters of faith and practice.

"The Bible is crystal clear that true, God-honouring marriage is only between one man and one woman. Jesus' own teaching on this in Matthew 19 could not be clearer. But it seems that the majority of presbyteries are more interested in taking their cue from culture rather than Christ."

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In the media

Cost of living: 'It's becoming impossible' says Ballymena charity

A charity in Ballymena that works to tackle poverty has said the number of people needing its help has more than doubled.

The **Society of St Vincent de Paul** (SVP) said it was helping up to 80 households in the area every week. Before the pandemic, the charity said it received about 35 weekly referrals. SVP's northern regional president Mary Waide said levels of poverty in the town are rising.

"For people who are living on the margins and trying to keep their head above water, it is just becoming impossible," she said.

"Among those needing support are families who never needed help before.

"I would say nearly a majority are people who are working, where there is one parent working and they just have not enough money to make ends meet.

"We would help them with food vouchers, electricity, their gas and we would supply oil for them."

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'Big slice from the budget'

In the Ballykeel housing estate, **the Presbyterian Church** is also working to help people tackle the rising costs of living.

The church hosts a lunch club for older people once a month.

Minister Martin McNeely said: "Whenever times are difficult, communities - especially working-class communities - will pull together and support one another."

He said the prospect of rising energy prices was a concern.

"People are deliberately making choices about where they're going to spend their weekly or monthly budget," he said.

"Maybe instead of putting a tank of oil in, they're putting a half tank in."

John Maxwell from the **Christians Against Poverty** debt centre in the town said he expected more people will need help with rising bills in the coming months.

He said one client's gas bill had risen from £25 to £40 a week.

"That was before the current increases... obviously, out of a limited budget, that is a big slice, so people are going to struggle."

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Mr Maxwell said people usually turned to the charity for help having spent two years trying to address their debt themselves

"With the increase in bills and the fact the cost of living is rising so much, there's obviously going to be a lot more help needed."

Mr Maxwell said people from at least three different denominations were working with the town's debt centre to help with food banks, job clubs and life skills.

"We can help in various ways through emergency aid with food and heating and help towards electricity and gas."

Report by Maria McCann, BBC News NI North East Reporter. May 2, 2022

[<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-61221378?>]

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Pastoral care seminar

The Sanctuary in Faith stream of Places of Sanctuary Ireland is organising an online trauma-informed pastoral care seminar on Thursday May 19 from 4pm to 7pm.

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Refugees and asylum–seekers will have faced a range of traumas in their journeys of seeking sanctuary, traumas which clergy, pastoral workers and volunteers within faith communities may feel unequipped to recognise and uncertain how to respond.

This seminar is geared towards clergy, lay chaplains, lay pastoral workers, and volunteers who may have contact with refugees and asylum–seekers through links with direct provision centres in their local areas, community sponsorship initiatives, or those who are members of their worshipping communities.

Even in the context of informal or community activities, such as English conversation groups, cooking/craft projects, and befriending initiatives, trauma awareness can be helpful. All faith traditions are welcome to participate in the seminar.

The seminar will be led by Dr. Katie McQuillan, a counselling psychologist on the psychotherapy team in Spirasi. Alongside her private practice, she is also a post–doctoral research fellow in Trinity College. Her research focuses on promoting refugee and migrant children’s integration and well–being.

In addition, she has experience as a psychologist working across HSE public mental health services.

Please note the seminar is limited to 50 participants.

Registration is via Eventbrite here -

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/trauma-informed-pastoral-care-tickets-318078349907?>

Separately the HSE has an online resource on understanding trauma. It is available until May 6 by clicking here-

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/primarycare/socialinclusion/about-social-inclusion/news/hse-announces-new-training-understanding-trauma.html>

Guidance for churches responding to the crisis in Ukraine

The Representative Church Body, the Church of Ireland's central trustee body, has approved guidance for local churches seeking to accommodate refugees from Ukraine in both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland.

This is now available in the Parish Resources section of the Church of Ireland website.

Introducing the guidance, the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Revd John McDowell, and the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, write: "As part of the Church of Ireland's response to the deepening humanitarian crisis in the Ukraine, the Property Committee of the RCB has developed most helpful guidelines for members of the Church of Ireland who wish to respond either as individual clergy or as parishes to Ukrainian people who now find themselves in Ireland.

"While the document speaks for itself, one of the key elements in encouraging such outreach is the safety and

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well-being of all who participate in giving and receiving assistance in this time of human tragedy and devastation.

“We draw particular attention to the Emergency Approval Process which will speed up decision making in a situation where human need accelerates daily.

“We commend this timely initiative and encourage all members of the Church of Ireland to avail of opportunities to serve the needs of displaced persons from Ukraine in whatever ways are humanly possible.”

Poem for today

Carrickfergus by Louis MacNeice

I was born in Belfast between the mountain and the gantries
To the hooting of lost sirens and the clang of trams:
Thence to Smoky Carrick in County Antrim
Where the bottle-neck harbour collects the mud which jams

The little boats beneath the Norman castle,
The pier shining with lumps of crystal salt;
The Scotch Quarter was a line of residential houses
But the Irish Quarter was a slum for the blind and halt.

The brook ran yellow from the factory stinking of chlorine,
The yarn-milled called its funeral cry at noon;
Our lights looked over the Lough to the lights of Bangor
Under the peacock aura of a drowning moon.

The Norman walled this town against the country
To stop his ears to the yelping of his slave

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And built a church in the form of a cross but denoting
The List of Christ on the cross, in the angle of the nave.

I was the rector's son, born to the Anglican order,
Banned for ever from the candles of the Irish poor;
The Chichesters knelt in marble at the end of a transept
With ruffs about their necks, their portion sure.

The war came and a huge camp of soldiers
Grew from the ground in sight of our house with long
Dummies hanging from gibbets for bayonet practice
And the sentry's challenge echoing all day long.

I went to school in Dorset, the world of parents
Contracted into a puppet world of sons
Far from the mill girls, the smell of porter, the salt mines
And the soldiers with their guns.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at houstonmckelvey@mac.com
