

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Tyne Cot Cemetery

Image of the day – Tyne Cot Cemetery

Tyne Cot Cemetery is now the largest Commonwealth war cemetery in the world in terms of burials. At the suggestion of King George V, who visited the cemetery in 1922, the Cross of Sacrifice was placed on the original large pill-box. There are three other pill-boxes in the cemetery. The Cemetery is located 9 Kms north-east of Ieper/Ypres town. There are now 11,961 Commonwealth servicemen of the First World War buried or commemorated in Tyne Cot Cemetery. 8,373 of the burials are unidentified but there are special memorials to more than 80 casualties known or believed to be buried among them. Other special memorials commemorate 20 casualties whose graves were destroyed by shell fire. There are also 4 German burials, 3 being unidentified. The cemetery was designed by Sir Herbert Baker.

People and places

Annual Service for Cork LGBTI+ Awareness Week held in St Anne's Church, Shandon

Once again this year, St Anne's Church hosted its annual service for Cork LGBTI+ Awareness Week on Sunday 22nd May.

May 26, 2022

The service takes place around International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) each year.

The service was lead by Diocesan Reader Alan Howe and the Rev. Steven Foster of the North Tipperary Methodist Circuit and Amach le Dia gave the address.

Stephen Spillane, churchwarden at St Anne's Church, commented:

St Anne's was once again delighted to host our Annual Service for LGBTI+ Awareness Week. This year the address from Rev Steven Foster was timely and spoke about how the courage and partnership needed for us to be advocates for inclusion in the church. This is something we take very seriously in St Anne's and we firmly believe that whoever you are and where ever you are on your faith journey, you are welcome here.

Earlier that week, on Monday 16th May, Bishop Paul Colton joined the Lord Mayor of Cork, Councillor Colm Kelleher, at the launch of the annual Cork LGBT Awareness Week.

Student media award for Sligo Champion journalist for radio documentary about nuns

The Sligo Champion's Stephen Holland has scooped a student media award for a radio documentary about nuns.



The former student of NUIG took home the prestigious Radio Production of the Year-Arts & Features award at the National Student Media Award (SMEDIA) ceremony.

His half hour production, Nun Left Behind tells the story of what it means to be a nun in Ireland today through the lived experience of seven nuns exploring issues around vocational and charity work, religion and education, as well as sexual abuse scandals involving the Catholic Church.

Stephen says: “I was interested in the hold religion still has over Irish culture and wanted to talk to these women about how Irish society and culture has changed over the last number of decades.”

The award was judged and presented by 2FM’s Thomas Crosse who said: “I haven’t stopped thinking about this

podcast since I listened to it. It has intrigued me to a point where think a tv doc/series on it should be explored..”

Stephen made the documentary as part of his final dissertation for an MA in Journalism at NUI Galway that also included an extended written analysis of the media’s response to the “Tuam babies” scandal and its subsequent reporting.

“Ireland has always had a complicated relationship with religion, and I wanted to explore that through the real stories of these individual women,” he said.

“I spoke with seven nuns from across many different congregations, some who had been involved with missionary work in developing countries, some who devoted their life to education and teaching, as well as those who lived in enclosed orders set apart from what we think of as everyday life.”

“I found from speaking with these women that they were thoughtful, intelligent, and highly attuned to how perceptions of religious life may have changed over the last number of decades. You are going from a society where there was nothing more noble than devoting your life to religion to one where people are quite wary of it as a result of all the scandals that later came out,” he said.

“I also spoke with one much younger nun in an enclosed convent, she joined before she was 30 and had just made her solemn vows.

“She felt this was something had to do and despite some pushback from her family she persevered.

More at -

[[] <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/sligochampion/news/the-sligo-champions-stephen-holland-scoops-student-media-award-41679608.html>]

Cyclists complete 310km bike ride for Bro. Kevin

Cyclists gathered in Dublin on Saturday, May 13, to begin their 310km cycle to West Cork to raise funds for Bro. Kevin and the Capuchin Day Centre in Dublin.

Bro. Kevin met the cyclists and wished them well for the journey ahead, which they completed Sunday May 14, finishing in Clonakilty, Co. Cork, Bro. Kevin’s home town.

The Capuchin Day Centre said the cycle is an important part of their efforts to combat the challenge of the rising numbers of people who come to them for dinner each day.

Pray for Life Novena to celebrate and protect the gift of life

**“I hope the Pray for Life Novena will help people to celebrate and protect the gift of life and to be more conscious of the practical support that they can offer to women for whom pregnancy is experienced as a crisis.”
– Bishop Kevin Doran**



PRAY FOR LIFE
NOVENA
23-31 MAY
Feast of the Visitation

Join us at
www.prayforlife.ie

An Initiative of the Council for Life of the Irish
Catholic Bishops' Conference



Models used for illustrative purposes only. Shutterstockphoto.com/Rawpixel.com. All rights reserved. © 2022, Pray for Life Novena.

The Council for Life of the Irish Bishops' Conference has today launched a nine day Novena of Prayer for Life which will run from Monday 23 May until Tuesday 31 May (Feast of the Visitation).

The Pray for Life Novena and its associated website www.prayforlife.ie will give people an opportunity to be an active part of this new initiative to pray for the protection of human life and to build a culture of life.

Launching the Pray for Life Novena, Bishop Kevin Doran, chair of the Council for Life, said, “The Feast of the Visitation has particular significance when it comes to celebrating and giving thanks for the gift of human life. It is a moment of encounter between two women (Mary and Elizabeth), each of whom is unexpectedly pregnant. It is an encounter in which each woman is supported by the other in facing the challenges of pregnancy. It is a graced moment in which each woman acknowledges the child in her womb as a gift from God.

“The Council for Life, drawing on resources originally prepared by the US Bishops’ Conference, has developed an online Novena around the days leading up to the Feast of the Visitation. Every one of us has a right to life. The direct and intentional taking of human life at any stage is gravely wrong and can never be justified. We hope the Pray for Life Novena will help people to celebrate and protect the gift of life and to be more conscious of the practical support that they can offer to women for whom pregnancy is experienced as a crisis. We invite you to join people across Ireland during this last week of May to pray for the protection of human life.”

The Council for Life is inviting people to sign up on www.prayforlife.ie to receive the daily prayers and actions which will focus on themes such as expectant Mothers and Fathers, unborn Children, for those who defend life and for an end to abortion

News reports

German bishops' president 'disappointed' in Pope Francis



Bishop Georg Bätzing, chairman of the German bishops' conference, meets with Pope Francis at the Vatican, June 24, 2021.

Bishop Georg Bätzing of Limburg said he was concerned that Francis had adopted a “certain circular discussion culture”, Christa Pongratz-Lippitt reports in The Tablet.

Bishop Georg Bätzing of Limburg has said that while he still firmly believes in the Church's capacity for reform, he doubts

whether Pope Francis will be the person to carry out those reforms.

For this reason, he is “disappointed” in him, Batzing told Deutschlandfunk in a 26-page interview on 22 May.

Francis was doing what he could by setting the 2023 World Synod in motion where all the reform issues would be on the table, Bätzing admitted. “All groups, including LGBT groups, will be able to participate at the 2023 World Synod”, he said.

However, he was concerned that Francis had adopted a “certain circular discussion culture”.

Bätzing recalled that at the Amazon Synod, when priestly celibacy was being discussed, a majority of dioceses in the region had, under certain circumstances, been in favour of ordaining married men. In the final instance, Francis had decided not to take up the issue.

“Discussion of the issue has not, however, ceased and it will not cease just because the Pope didn’t take it up. Neither will there be less discussion of women’s ordination just because the Pope is of a different opinion. I’ve spoken to Pope Francis several times now and I know he has a decidedly different opinion [on these issues],” Bätzing said.

For this reason Bätzing did not foresee fundamental reforms on such issues as women’s ordination or priestly celibacy within the next five years. That meant that “those who only have their eyes on the priestly celibacy issue or on the question of women’s ordination are certainly in for a

disappointment. Neither of these issues will be resolved within the next five years.”

Bätzing was “firmly convinced” that present church teaching on homosexuality must be changed and that it would change in the foreseeable future as it was seen as discriminating against gays.

As for gay blessings, he would never discipline any priest who blessed a gay couple, but he had never done so himself. That was because, on the one hand, he felt obliged to obey the Pope and secondly because if he did, it would attract public attention. “And then attention would be concentrated on what I was doing and not on what the couple being blessed desired.”

This meant he himself was having to perform a balancing act between Church teaching and his own reading of the *sensus fidelium* (the intuitive beliefs of the body of the faithful). He claimed the two did not make a good fit.

“I’m proclaiming Church teaching – which is my duty – but at the same time I’m fully aware that this teaching is no longer accepted by the faithful. The *sensus fidelium* has gone further,” he claimed.

“That is something that we must take up theologically and it will lead to changes. That is what I am committed to. I am fully convinced that things will change.”

Bätzing also went into the Vatican’s relations with the German Church. The Reformation was still “firmly stuck in the Vatican’s bones”, he explained. Whenever the words

“German synodal path” or “together at the Lord’s table”, cropped up, certain Vatican officials immediately cried “Oh dear – the Reformation!” That had narrowed the view of many in Rome, Bätzing claimed.

The Tablet May 24, 2022

Innocent Victims United - Statement on Legacy

Kenny Donaldson, Spokesman for Innocent Victims United stated: "Our position has been consistent and unyielding, we stand by the rule of law, others have subverted the rule of law through their use of terrorism violence, leading on to the cover up and denial of crime and its' glorification and romanticisation and then there are others within Government who have been party to the overt but also covert bastardisation of our criminal justice system".

"We are in a very difficult place in 2022, not a single individual attached to The Provisional Republican Movement and who is onside with Sinn Fein's 'political' strategy has been prosecuted and successfully convicted for a pre-1998 criminal offence in the 24 years that have elapsed since that point. And those who allege wrongdoing by the UK State and members of its' security forces will also suggest a lack of justice and accountability".

"Against this backdrop we have always argued that if Accountability is delivered that justice and truth are linked outcomes. Any new legacy process must provide the means

for victims to feel empowered, to reclaim control and to hear accounts from perpetrators within a public facing process, privately derived desktop reports do not empower people, an ability to challenge, to ask questions is a legitimate requirement for those who have been subjected to injustices - this has been denied many, many victims".

"A new legacy process must not be about closing off ugly secrets for a range of protagonists to 'The Troubles,' it must not be about supporting the continuance of a denial culture, and the sponsoring of the lie that somehow there is going to be Reconciliation fostered between our people against this backdrop. We need accountability, we need an honest assessment of our Past; opting out can no longer be an option or we are storing up immense trouble for the current and future generations who inhabit this place".

"Over the coming days we will be having further engagement with the Secretary of State and his Officials, we are seeking further engagement with The Department of Foreign Affairs who along with the Irish State moreover must move beyond the positioning of onlooker. We will be presenting Evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Select committee, we will be engaging with local and national-based elected representatives. We cannot and will not acquiesce in any process which lacks integrity and which will fail to deliver better outcomes for victims and survivors - that's the real test for us where legacy and its' resolution is concerned," concluded Mr Donaldson.

Church News Ireland

Kirk's General Assembly endorses Saint Margaret Declaration

Commissioners at the 2022 General Assembly gave a ringing endorsement to an historic agreement between the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church in Scotland, proposing that it be named the Saint Margaret Declaration, after the 11th Century Scottish Queen venerated for her missionary Christian faith and her kindness and generosity to poor people.

The declaration of friendship offers 'a decisive and irrevocable statement of our friendship with one another, based on our shared faith in Christ.'

Already approved by the Bishops Conference of the Catholic Church in Scotland, the declaration is the culmination of more than 100 years of dialogue and emphasises the shared faith and common ground that unites the Churches.

Archbishop Leo Cushley accepted the name suggestion on behalf of the Scottish Catholic Bishop's Conference, saying he has always had a special admiration for Saint Margaret.

Rev Alexander Horsburgh, Convener of the Ecumenical Relations Committee told the General Assembly that friendship is a key Biblical concept for all followers of Jesus.

"Friendship is a very deep relationship, a relationship of conscious and deliberate choice, in which individuality is respected and there is room for disagreement, but a



Left-right: Rev Sandy Horsburgh, convener of the Church of Scotland's Ecumenical Relations Committee; Rt Rev Dr Iain Greenshields, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; Most Reverend Leo Cushley, Archbishop and Metropolitan of St Andrews and Edinburgh; Rev Dr George Whyte, Principal Clerk of the Church of Scotland; and Rev Dr John McPake, the Church of Scotland's ecumenical officer.

relationship in which we stand alongside one another, support one another, rejoice together and weep together, pray for and with each other, and do things together," he said.

"We are declaring a friendship which already exists, which has existed for a long time, and we want everyone to know about it and understand it. By saying out loud that the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church in Scotland are friends, we contribute to changing, not only the narrative of

our churches, but the narrative of our country too. There is no going back.

Archbishop Leo Cushley also addressed the Assembly bringing warm greetings and heartfelt prayers from his Church. The friendship has grown in parishes and between church members over 40 years of shared work and shared prayers, he said:

"The Declaration is also a consciously new approach to ecumenism, an attempt to re-imagine the path of Christian unity.

"Instead of listing our problems and points of friction or grievance, old or new, the Declaration chooses to focus on what we have in common, and to underline that we treasure and hold, together, so much that is inspiring, ancient and profound...

"Do I expect our two old institutions to be perfectly aligned and united any time soon? I suspect that may be a task for another generation. &Nevertheless, I believe that by acknowledging all the good that we hold in common, we can walk and pray together as friends, deepen our affective unity, and be a more authentic Christian witness in the land. The rest will come in God's good time."

In a conversation with Archbishop Cushley ahead of the General Assembly, Rt Rev Dr Iain Greenshields said:

"I grew up in a very divided Scottish society. I'm 68 years old and was a product of that divided society. I didn't understand why it was divided, but it was that society has changed

immensely over the last 50 - 60 years and I think this is indicative of not us catching up with society, but as affirming together something that is fundamentally important to us, to our faith together, and hopefully to Scottish society.

"I would want people in Scottish society to look at the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church and to take away one of those excuses I've often heard – 'well if you're agin one another, what's it all about? Well we're not. This is a Declaration of Friendship between us and I hope that that would say something powerful to the non-Christian constituency of Scottish society."

In the media

Northern Ireland MPs offer no support to Troubles reconciliation proposals

Belfast Telegraph

The principle of the legislation was backed in a Commons vote.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/northern-ireland-mps-offer-no-support-to-troubles-reconciliation-proposals-41685602.html>

Unionists criticise US delegate's comments that protocol row is 'manufactured'

DUP leader Jeffrey Donaldson and UUP leader Doug Beattie criticised Congressman Richard Neal's comments.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/unionists-criticise-us-delegates-comments-that-protocol-row-is-manufactured-41685563.html>

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Thy Kingdom Come endorsements

The Archbishop of Canterbury commented - “A joy to write this year’s Novena and Prayer Journal for Thy Kingdom Come.

“Join me in praying for our families, friends, communities, and countries to discover the love of God in Jesus Christ”.

The Moderator of the General Assembly, Lord Jim Wallace, has joined 11 other Scottish faith leaders encouraging Christians to take part in Thy Kingdom Come, the global prayer initiative which takes place from Ascension Day.

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/resources/new-2022>

The story of Ballymena’s Green Pastures mega church and its pastor, Jeff Wright

The BelTel podcast

Ballymena’s Green Pastures, a 1,600-seat capacity American style evangelical mega-church, is unique in Northern Ireland.

Founded by the charismatic Pastor Jeff Wright it has many hundreds of devoted members.

But recent years have seen controversies at Green Pastures – not least of which were massive financial contributions from the then struggling company – Wrightbus.

Ciarán Dunbar is joined by Sunday Life journalist Christopher Woodhouse and Belfast Telegraph journalist Andrew Madden to discuss the background to the story and its latest twists and turns.

[[] <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/podcasts/the-beltel/the-beltel-the-story-of-ballymenas-green-pastures-mega-church-and-its-pastor-jeff-wright-41681470.html>]

Book on liturgy by first Precentor of Coventry Cathedral brought to life

A Manx Radio podcast tells the story of a book written 60 years ago, but which remained in manuscript form and was never published, but now has been lovingly brought to new life by the author's three children, and is launched this week, to coincide with the diamond Jubilee of the present Coventry Cathedral.

The book's author is Rev'd Canon Joseph W. Poole who was the first Precentor of the new Cathedral with a special responsibility for planning services there. Considered by his peers to be 'one of the greatest liturgists in the Church of England in this century' his book is a record of some of the

May 26, 2022

complete services he created, plus numerous ideas on different themes, to enrich worship.

His deepest wish was that Coventry Cathedral services would speak to the people in style and language which would be familiar and relevant to them. Gill Poole - one of Canon Poole's three surviving children who worked together on the manuscript, talks about her Father and the ministry which was the inspiration for the book.

Link at -

[[] <https://www.manxradio.com/podcasts/at-your-service/episode/at-your-service-22-may-2022/>]

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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

