



**Image of the day
Portstewart Strand**

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Young singers encouraged to enter BBC Young Chorister of the Year competition



The organisers of this year's BBC Young Chorister of the Year 2021 title are looking for applicants.

Songs of Praise and Radio 2 have joined forces for the second year running to find the BBC Young Chorister of the Year 2021. Entries are now being accepted, so please pass on the details to any young singers you know who may be interested in taking part. The closing date is Monday 14th June 2021.

Singers aged 10-16 apply online by submitting two short films of themselves singing a Christmas carol or song and a sacred song such as a hymn, classical solo, spiritual, inspirational, gospel or worship song.

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From all the entries received five girls and five boys will be selected to go through to the radio and television competition in October to sing in front of an expert panel of judges. The Winner and Runner Up will each receive a trophy and the chance to feature on BBC Radio and the Winner will appear on Songs of Praise.

For more details of how to apply and to view the Terms and Conditions go to <https://bbc.in/3v9WVjL>

Time to tackle stigma of domestic abuse – Churches called to action

Churches can help break the silence around domestic abuse and coercive control and transform their local communities for those experiencing abuse.

This was one of the key messages from the first of a series of Conversations about Mission organised by Dublin and Glendalough Council for Mission.

Participants in this first online event were addressed by Jacqui Armstrong, Faith and Policy Coordinator with Mothers' Union, and Kelley Bermingham, Community Officer with St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. If you missed them, their contributions will be available to view online shortly.

Jacqui Armstrong highlighted global statistics around gender based violence which find that one in three women worldwide have experienced domestic or sexual abuse. In Ireland, she said, one in five women and one in seven men experience abuse. "We as a church can work to become a

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place of safety and support. We can be around that table tackling unjust structures,” she stated adding that in Ireland and Britain churches rarely spoke about domestic abuse and sermons rarely addressed the issue.

During Covid, Mothers’ Union has been working in the background and on the ground to provide support to those experiencing abuse. Support continues for projects in Uganda, Myanmar and DR Congo. In Ireland, Mothers’ Union members have been reaching out to local refuges. MU is currently lobbying politicians to raise awareness of the fact that when women and children leave home they effectively become homeless. They hope to support churches to take action and are partnering with Bishops’ Appeal and Tearfund to create a strategy.

“There is a need for action. It doesn’t have to be big – small can be effective. A simple support is to place a poster with details about the nearest refuge on the notice board in your church. Knowledge is understanding so it is important to keep up to date with issues surrounding domestic abuse,” she explained. Jacqui added that the Mothers’ Union ‘Souls of our Shoes’ exhibition is available on loan to any parish or community group and tells the stories of people who have experienced domestic abuse.

Kelley Bermingham spoke about CRiTiCall, an organisation which was set up in June 2020 to support people emerging from domestic violence by offering practical resources along with comfort and encouragement. Kelley is the Community Officer with St Patrick’s Cathedral and also works with the Iveagh Trust. At the beginning of lockdown she was working from home and began to think about how she could reach

Actions on Domestic Abuse

Break the silence: Your parish can help remove the stigma around domestic abuse and coercive control

★

Where to get help: information on refuges and helplines on church noticeboard

Start the conversation

- Use Mothers' Union resources
- Include in sermons and prayers
- Invite a guest speaker

Equip people to respond to a disclosure

★

Learn to Listen

Get training: Learn about the issues

★

Teach children about healthy relationships

Tackle the guilt and shame

Share

Made with infogram

out to the community from home. She teamed up with Edwina Dewart of Dublin City Volunteer Centre and connected with Safe Ireland to come up with Community Response Team Call – or CriTiCall.

They recognised that people leaving the family home due to domestic violence were rendered

homeless. During Covid refuges have had to shrink their services and they came up with a number of initiatives: they appealed to people to offer their second homes to those fleeing their own homes; they supply home starter packs and household essentials to those who need it; and they

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asked people to write letters of support with hundreds of letters arriving from around the world giving hope to those starting on their new journey.

Now there is a CriTiCall distribution hub on Cork Street and Celbridge Parish, where Kelley lives, also provides a space from which to distribute their packs and hampers. A team of volunteers helps pack up and manage the donations and Kelley paid tribute to An Garda Síochána for their support with distribution. The project has corporate support and also receives donations from far and wide.

Kelley issued participants with a challenge asking them to consider what one action they could take to support societal change in relation to the experience of domestic abuse. She said support was important but reminded people to ring 999 or 112 if they were in danger. “Don’t be afraid to make the call because there is nothing worse than silence around this,” she said, adding that the Safe Ireland website has a list of support services for men and women. She said it was very important to know where to refer someone to if they make a disclosure.

Participants said it was very difficult to engage with their local public representatives on the issue and Kelley recommended that parishes seek to join their local Public Participation Networks. This network allows local authorities connect with community groups around the country. Community groups register to join the PPN in their local authority area and can have a say in local government decisions which affect their communities. (<https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/b59ee9-community-network-groups/>)

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During the conversation on the topic a number of actions that parishes could take were suggested:

- Break the silence – ask your parish to help remove the stigma and silence around coercive control and domestic abuse.
- Put information about where to get help, including local refuges, on church notice boards.
- Use Mothers' Union resources to start the conversation.
- Consider including the issue of domestic abuse in sermons and prayers. Invite a guest speaker.
- Equip people in the parish to respond.
- Put a collection box for your local refuge in church (find out what the refuge needs first).
- Get training – learn about the issues surrounding domestic abuse.
- Learn to listen.
- Tackle the guilt and shame.
- Provide information for children and young people about healthy relationships.

The next Conversation about Mission is entitled 'Invisible Pain– how to reach those experiencing grief during Covid–

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19'. It will feature the Revd Lesley Robinson of the Dublin Bereavement Group and takes place on June 16 on Zoom.

Seattle cathedral projects names of George Floyd and others killed by police onto its façade



St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in Seattle, Washington, is projecting the names of George Floyd and others killed by police onto the side of its building.

St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in Seattle, Washington, marked the anniversary of George Floyd's murder by mourning his death and extending public awareness to Washingtonians killed by police, using its most visible asset: the façade of its Capitol Hill building.

From May 25 through June 8, Floyd's name and the names of more than 30 people killed by police in Washington will be projected onto the cathedral's western side, where they will be seen by thousands of drivers on Interstate 5. The names are projected for at least two hours after sunset each night, and are accompanied by the words "should still be alive today."

Among those names is Herbert Hightower Jr., who was killed in 2004 by Seattle police while apparently experiencing a mental health emergency. Hightower's mother, sister and other relatives came to see his name projected onto the cathedral on May 26, held a brief vigil and expressed gratitude that his name had not been forgotten, cathedral communications director Greg Bloch told Episcopal News Service.

"I was honored to greet the family of Herbert Hightower Jr. last evening, and listened to his mother and his brothers and sister speak fiercely of their desire for justice and their yearning to understand the circumstances of his death," the Very Rev. Steven Thomason, dean of the cathedral, told ENS. "They also were clearly moved by the sight of his name on the cathedral façade, which serves as a beacon of hope for the city and region.

"Not only did we 'say his name,' but their abiding love for him humanized his story for me, incarnationally, and I consider that a cherished gift. We are honored to participate in this project."

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The project is a collaboration with the ACLU of Washington and the Washington Coalition for Police Accountability. The cathedral and its partners hope to bring awareness to the dozens of people killed by police in Washington every year, many of whom died in circumstances similar to Floyd but never gained widespread attention. Police officers in Washington kill 40-50 people each year – disproportionately people of color, according to the ACLU.

The project includes a website that lists the names and the ACLU's description of how each person died. The names have been included with the consent of their families through the WCPA.

“Many who have never set foot inside the cathedral are familiar with St. Mark's as the big church on the hill that they drive past every day,” said the cathedral's press release. “It is good and right to be able to leverage our most prominent public asset, the building itself, to ‘say their names’ in such an extraordinarily visible way.”

People and places

MCI Presidential profile

Profile of the Methodist Church in Ireland's incoming President the Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu by his wife, the Rev Clodagh Yambasu

“We have lived in Ireland since 1995, when the rebel war in Sierra Leone, Sahr's home country, forced us to flee. On two occasions, Sahr was urged to return to become

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Presiding Bishop of the Methodist Conference there. He refused because it would have meant leaving the children and myself here.

“Thank God! God remembers everything and honours those who obey him – how they least expect it!”

The full profile is carried in the June issue of the Methodist Newsletter which is now available.



Shankill Parish Lurgan is top of the class

Shankill Parish Lurgan is ‘top of the class’ after launching a School Supplies Appeal to help local families who are under financial pressure.

They have invited parishioners to donate new school bags and school supplies which will be passed on to a number of local primary and secondary schools. The schools will share these items with families who would otherwise struggle to buy them for the September term.

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School bags, pencils cases, colouring pencils, HB pencils, rubbers, sharpeners, felt tips, 30cm rulers, pens, glue sticks, USB pens and geometry sets have been piling up! The church family have also been offered the chance to donate money.

The appeal has lasted a month and closes on 30 May. You can hear all about it below from Janine Armstrong, Shankill's Children and Families Coordinator - see link on Down & Dromore diocesan web site.

Professor of Ministry in Union College appointed

Rev David Leach has been appointed as Professor of Ministry in Union College. David will oversee the training pathways of ministry students, as well as teaching some subjects such as preaching. The Council for Training in Ministry requests prayer that the Lord will use David as he takes up his post in August, and pray for him and his family as their time in Union Road Magherafelt and Lecumpher comes to an end.

Church Leaders Group (Ireland) to meet

The Church Leaders Group (Ireland) will meet during the incoming week. These meetings have proved to be incredibly useful in discussing significant matters of mutual concern.

Burundi Chooses New Primate

The Rt. Rev. Sixbert Macumi, Bishop of Buye, has been elected as the fifth Archbishop and Primate of the Anglican

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Church of Burundi. Macumi, 53, will succeed Archbishop Martin Nyaboho, the church's primate since 2016, when he is installed on August 21.

Macumi is from Muyinga province in Northeastern Burundi, and answered a call to ministry when still a young man. He studied at the Theological Institute of Matana, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1996. He taught for several years at Buye's Bishop Barham Theological College and at All Saints Cathedral, and served as diocesan secretary from 1997-2000. He later pursued further theological studies at Uganda Christian University.

After his return to Buye, Macumi coordinated the diocesan department for evangelism and worked to expand the Boys' and Girls' Brigade across the province. In 2005, he was elected as the third Bishop of Burundi. Macumi is married to Clothilde Muhimpundu, a primary school teacher. They have three daughters.

The Diocese of Buye was the first to be established in the Anglican Church of Burundi, in 1965. An Anglican mission was established there by the Church Mission Society in 1936, as British and native missionaries moved into the area from neighboring Rwanda, under the influence of the East African Revival, which began at Gahini, an Anglican mission station in what was then the Belgian colony of Ruanda-Urundi in 1929.

The Anglican Church of Burundi has about 900,000 members, which is about 8 percent of the small nation's population. It became an independent province in 1992, and has continued to grow steadily.

The province is part of the Global South Anglicans network, but has been much more engaged in the Canterbury-based Instruments of Communion than its neighboring and historically linked provinces of Rwanda and Uganda. Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi, a former primate, served as chair of the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Unity, Faith, and Order in the 2010s. Some of the church's bishops, especially Seth Ndayirukiye, the Bishop of Matana, have advocated that the province strengthen its ties to the GAFCON Movement.

Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars

Digital despatches from PCI

Peter and Jayne Fleming PCI global mission workers partnering with the United Mission to Nepal provide their latest update.

You can watch other videos and download for use in church services, here:

www.presbyterianireland.org/digitaldispatches

Archbishop of Canterbury - How do faith and science work together?

What impact can they have on tackling the human cost of issues like climate change or poverty?

In part 2 of our Lambeth Conference film series 'Talking about Faith and Science' (filmed during March), scientists,

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bishops, church members and practitioners from the Anglican Communion share their reflections. Faith and science will be a big theme at the Lambeth Conference when it meets and is also the focus of a new Anglican Communion Science Commission which is being formed.

To watch this and other films on the Lambeth Conference web site visit: <https://www.lambethconference.org/resources/talking-about-faith-and-science/>

Media review

Poots stays tight-lipped on whether he'd accept Mass invite

Belfast Telegraph

A DUP spokesman told The Irish Catholic: “The DUP has worked with the Catholic Church on many issues from freedom of worship through to protecting ...

[[] <https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/poots-stays-tight-lipped-on-whether-hed-accept-mass-invite-40476556.html>]

Doug Beattie: Moving beyond the politics of identity

The Irish Times

they're happy with the status quo as long as Northern Ireland is succeeding.” Doug Beattie has “absolute respect” ...

[[] <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/doug-beattie-moving-beyond-the-politics-of-identity-1.4572993>]

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TV presenter ordered to pay £125000 damages to Arlene Foster

RTE.ie

In the tweet Dr Christian Jessen, best known for his Channel 4 TV show "Embarrassing Bodies", alleged that Ms Foster had been having an affair with ...

[[] <https://www.rte.ie/news/courts/2021/0527/1224224-arlene-foster/>]

National Maternity Hospital will be free from religious influence

Irish Examiner

"Home Building Finance Ireland was set up by Government to fund medium-sized builders to build and deliver mid-priced homes," he said. "The Minister ...

[[] <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-40298261.html>]

'I'm proud to be from Northern Ireland': reflections on a contested centenary

Guardian

[[] <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/may/02/proud-to-be-from-northern-ireland-reflections-on-a-contested-centenary>]

Education: Former sports stars back more integrated schooling

BBC News

"Let's just educate our kids and then they can do religious stuff at the ... and Ireland rugby star Andrew Trimble is as direct when talking to BBC News ...

[[] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-57262370>]

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Facebook accused of holding 'double standards' after lifting ban on Covid conspiracy theory, hours after Biden launched probe into idea

Irish Post

Facebook has lifted a ban on comments suggesting that Covid-19 was 'man-made' mere hours after Jo...

[[] <https://www.irishpost.com/news/facebook-accused-of-holding-double-standards-after-lifting-ban-on-covid-conspiracy-theory-hours-after-biden-launched-probe-into-idea-213514?utm>]

Worcester Cathedral sends out SOS after losing nearly £1000 a day during pandemic

Birmingham Live

Visitors pour thousands of pounds into the church's coffers through its gift shop, cafe and also through events. The Dean of Worcester, Peter Atkinson, ...

[[] <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/worcester-cathedral-sends-out-sos-20639848>]

Pointers for prayer

Holy God,
you spoke the world into being.
Pour your Spirit to the ends of the earth,
that your children may return from exile
as citizens of your commonwealth,
and our divisions may be healed
by your word of love and righteousness. Amen.

Empowering God,
you gave the church

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the abiding presence of your Holy Spirit.
Look upon your church today and hear our petitions.
... *Petitions...*

Grant that, gathered and directed by your Spirit,
we may confess Christ as Lord and combine our diverse
gifts with a singular passion to continue his mission in this
world
until we join in your eternal praise. Amen.



Creator Spirit and Giver of life,
make the dry, bleached bones of our lives
live and breathe and grow again
as you did of old.
Pour out your Spirit upon the whole creation.
Come in rushing wind and flashing fire
to turn the sin and sorrow within us
into faith, power, and delight. Amen.

Holy Spirit,
you poured yourself out on the people of the early church,
pour yourself out on us now.

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Holy Spirit you set their tongues on fire with languages so as to speak to one another in ways that could be understood.

Set our tongues on fire to speak in different languages and ways so others may hear the good news about Jesus.

Jesus, you said you had to go away so that the Holy Spirit, the advocate, the counsellor would come and it was so.

Come once again Holy Spirit as the advocate that we all need, as the counsellor we all need, and as the helper we all need.

Come Holy Spirit, fan your flames of love and empowerment, set us on fire for you once again. Bring life to each of our dry bones.

Amen

Speaking to the Soul

At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. They were completely amazed. “How can this be?” they exclaimed.

Acts 2:5-7 NLT

The arrival of the Holy Spirit caused a stir in Jerusalem. The city was packed with Jewish pilgrims from a huge area and they were eager to find out what was going on. What amazed them was that they were hearing God's name being praised in their own languages. Dr Luke provides us with a fascinating list of where the pilgrims had come from. To use their modern names they had come from, amongst other places, Rome, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt and other

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parts of North Africa. What a perfect moment for the Holy Spirit to be given. By the end of the day thousands of people would have heard the good news of Jesus for the first time. They were able to take the message back home and start drawing together Christian communities.

This was truly a 'kairos' moment. The word 'kairos' is a very special one in Greek. It is one of two words which translates the English word time. The other Greek word is 'chronos' which is a word that we know well from words like chronology. 'Chronos' is what I would call tick tock time! It's the time that we measure with our clocks and calendars. 'Kairos' is better translated by the word opportunity. The day of Pentecost was an amazing moment of supernatural opportunity. It was just one more day in the calendar viewed in one way but, from God's point of view, it was a turning point. Nothing would be the same after that day.

Writing to the Ephesians the apostle Paul comments, "Be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days." (Ephesians 5.15-16) As we thank God for the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, God calls us to grasp hold of today and to use every opportunity for serving him.

QUESTION

What are the special opportunities that God is giving to you at the moment?

PRAYER

Dear Lord, help me to grasp every opportunity you give me for serving you. Amen

