



Image of the day -

Tony plans to walk 100km in May for Cork Diocesan Burundi Maize Project

The Reverend Tony Murphy, an auxiliary minister in the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, was sent on his way on Friday 30th April with the goal of walking 100

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km in the month of May throughout the Diocese in aid of the Diocesan Project in Burundi. Ranking 185th out of 189 countries, Burundi is one of the poorest countries in the world.

Photo above - The Rev. Tony Murphy (centre) sets off from St Fin Barre's Cathedral. Pictured with Tony are, Andrew Coleman, Regional Fundraising Co-ordinator Christian Aid Ireland and Diocesan Bishops' Appeal Representative (left) and The Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross,

The Bishop, Dr Paul Colton, and Andrew Coleman of Christian Aid, who is also the Bishops' Appeal representative in the Diocese, waved Tony off from the forecourt of Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork.

Tony visited Burundi in 2019 to see the project first hand. Tony's goal in May is to walk 5 km in every parish of the Diocese, supported by socially distanced clergy and parishioners, to raise funds for and awareness of the the project.

Bishop Paul Colton said, "In the midst of our own challenging times it is all too easy to lose sight of the commitments we have to others beyond our own shores. In Cork, Cloyne and Ross people of all ages have embraced and supported our Maize Project in Burundi from its outset in 2017. We are now in the second phase and through the visits of Archbishop Martin Blaise Nyaboha to us in 2017 and the Reverend Tony Murphy's return visit in 2019, we all feel we know well what is needed from this important partnership.



The Rev. Tony Murphy was sponsored by the Diocese to visit the project in Burundi in 2019

“I congratulate Tony on this initiative to walk 100km in May to raise funds for the project and, equally important, awareness of it. I hope everyone will do their best to support him generously.”

Cork, Cloyne and Ross agreed to fund an agricultural development project in Burundi from 2017-2019 and then agreed to extend this support for a further 3 years from 2020-2022. The existing state of agriculture in Burundi has many problems, many of which existed in Ireland in the past. The farms are very small, the food is subsistence, the type of crop Cassava has low nutritional value, there is little access to finance to gain more land or improve the inputs. The project, in stages, which focuses on maize production, involves working with cooperatives, purchasing or renting

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land, training, providing storage, adding value by milling the maize into flour, expanding markets and, finally, obtaining 'seed certification' to a national standard so that it can be sold to other farmers and cooperatives.

You can support Tony's efforts by donating on Tony Murphy's 100km Walk for Burundi page, link at - <https://churchofirelandcork.com/>

Cameras roll: Charlize Theron movie begins filming at Belfast church

Filming of the new Netflix movie The School for Good and Evil is underway in north Belfast.

St Peter's Church of Ireland on the Antrim Road is being used as a location for the big budget production, which stars Charlize Theron, Michelle Yeoh, Laurence Fishburne and Kerry Washington.

Filming is also taking place at Belfast Harbour Studios for what will be its first film. The movie is directed by Paul Feig who is best known for his film Bridesmaids and the Ghostbusters remake. Most of the production will be shot in Northern Ireland.

Security is tight around the church and local star-spotters haven't glimpsed any big names so far. Trailers and lorries set up in the church grounds at the weekend. It is understood filming will take place there for another week or two.

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The School For Good and Evil is based on a best-selling series of young adult fantasy novels by Soman Chainani and follows a group of girls and boys who are taken to an institution and trained to become fairy tale-like heroes and villains.

Parts of north Belfast also featured in the current series of BBC1 police drama Line of Duty. Opening scenes in episode one, featuring an armed robbery, were filmed in the Sunningdale and Cavehill Road area.

Carlisle launch for contactless church donation scheme

More than 100 churches have been nominated to take part in a national donation project – which is set to be piloted in the Diocese of Carlisle.

Clergy and parochial church council (PCC) treasurers have this week been updated on the scheme, which will see about 115 Anglican churches receive a free contactless giving unit.

Monthly charges will not be charged for the first year, although a small commission will be deducted by the payments processor from each donation, with some units costing £10 per month after this time.

Most churches taking part will receive one of two units, subject to wi-fi availability and whether the unit will be left unattended in church.

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It is hoped the contactless units will be installed by late May, and the Church of England's National Giving team will support churches throughout the Carlisle-based pilot.

The National team has so far found that contactless donations are, on average, three times the value of cash donations, making this pilot an exciting opportunity for churches as they work towards fully reopening their buildings.

Mission Community Leadership teams have nominated the majority of churches, with just a few places left up for grabs.

C of E agrees to repatriate Benin Bronzes given as gifts

The Church of England will repatriate Benin Bronzes to Nigeria, despite the artworks being presented to a former Archbishop of Canterbury during a tour of the country.

Following the Black Lives Matter protests there have been renewed calls to return sculptures created for royalty in the Kingdom of Benin, present-day Nigeria, most of which were seized by British forces in 1897.

The Church owns two statues given to Archbishop Robert Runcie during an Easter visit to Nigeria in 1982 by the University of Nigeria, and by political leader Prof Ambrose F Alli on behalf of the nation's modern-day Benin region.

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Despite the artworks being gifts and not imperial loot, the Church has offered to “return the bronzes as a gesture of goodwill” following a request from campaigners for repatriation.

A statement from Lambeth Palace said: “We have recently been contacted by the Digital Benin project ... who inquired about our collection of gifts ... and if we had received any Benin kingdom objects as gifts over the years.

“We have two bronze busts, given to us by the Benin kingdom in 1982. [They] were not taken from Benin in 1897.

“We have offered for [them] to be included in the Digital Benin project and eventually, returned to our friends in Edo, Nigeria.”

The late Prof Alli gave one bust on behalf of the people he represented in Bendel State, encompassing the territory of the former Kingdom of Benin, and the other was given to Archbishop Runcie by the University of Nigeria in Nuskka. The churchman held office from 1980 to 1991, and died in 2000.

Talks are ongoing between the Church and officials in Nigeria, home to 18 million Anglicans, regarding the two statues being moved to the Edo Museum of West African Art, which is designed to house returned Benin Bronzes on its completion in 2025.

Prof Dan Hicks, author and expert on Benin Bronzes, said the Church’s decision “underlines the importance of

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transparency” over what artefacts institutions hold in their collections.

He added: “Lambeth Palace is just one of more than 150 collections worldwide that hold Benin Bronzes. There are dozens of others in the UK alone.

“We need to understand these collections and be open about what is held.”

The Edo museum could receive a number of these items from institutions in the UK, as regional museums not legally bound to retain objects have increasingly adopted a policy of repatriation following Black Lives Matter demonstrations.

Opinion - ‘I don't remember a time when distrust between unionism and the UK Government was as high as it is now’- Alex Kane

A perfect storm of discontent lies ahead...everyone needs to remain measure and calm.

I was particularly struck by three responses in the latest polling. Asked to consider the statement, “Northern Ireland has put its violent past behind it and any future political decisions will be made peacefully and democratically”, almost half of the respondents on both sides of the border disagreed. Think about that. A quarter-of-a-century after the peace process began in earnest and almost 50% believe it's

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unlikely political decisions can be made within peaceful, political parameters.

If you think that's depressing, consider the response to this statement: "The dispute over Northern Ireland's status remains unresolved and there is still a potential for violence in the future." Over three-quarters of the respondents, again on both sides of the border, agreed with it. But how, given the time, cash and effort poured into the peace process over 25 years, are we at a point where a hefty majority believe the use of violence is more likely than not when it comes to resolving the constitutional impasse? And people accuse me of pessimism. Let's consider the third response: "To what extent do you trust the following when it comes to managing the interests of Northern Ireland with respect to the Protocol." 63% distrust or distrust a lot the Executive (15% trusting or trusting a lot). 60% distrust or distrust a lot the Assembly (16% trusting or trusting a lot).

No real surprises, to be honest. Confidence in the Executive/Assembly hasn't been high for some time (predating the last three-year Reichenbach Fall hiatus) and tensions over Covid haven't improved things.

But I hold the view that if the centre isn't consensual and cohesive, then it's no surprise when there are political/societal tensions further on down.

The genuinely astonishing figure, though, is how we view the UK Government: 86% distrust or distrust it a lot. Only 5% trust it or trust it a lot. The Irish government, on the other hand, is distrusted/distrusted a lot by 48% (quite a few of

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whom are likely to be unionist); and trusted/trusted a lot by 34%.

What makes the UK Government figure astonishing is that the only explanation I can offer for the 5% trust/trust a lot level of support is that the vast majority of unionists don't trust it at all.

That's an awful lot of unionists — and I really do mean an awful lot — who don't trust the UK Government to manage the interests of Northern Ireland re the Protocol. Or, putting that another way, a vast majority of unionists (including those from a “small-u” unionist background) don't trust a British Government to protect or promote their interests during the greatest constitutional challenge to the Union in living memory.

These figures will overshadow and shape a collective unionist strategy over the next few months, making compromise or backtracking very difficult to pull off in the absence of Boris Johnson either scrapping the Protocol unilaterally, or somehow managing to persuade the EU to agree concessions (stopping short of ditching it altogether) which will please unionism.

The other thing to bear in mind is the next Assembly election is less than a year away, making it even more difficult for unionist reversals or u-turning.

The problem for Johnson and the EU is all of party-political unionism, along with loyalism and the Orange Order, is opposed to the very existence of the Protocol.

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You can sense their collective anger about being kicked around by Boris Johnson; bringing to mind the words of Lord Carson in the House of Lords in 1921: “Ulster has stuck too well to you, and you believe because she is loyal you can kick her as you like.”

I don't remember a time (and I'm into the Methuselah years of my career) when the level of distrust between unionism and a UK government was as high as it is right now: and these polling figures confirm.

There were previous moments of angst and anger (1972, 1974 and 1985 spring to mind), but unionists could take comfort in what was still their impressive electoral strength. That strength has diminished, which explains the scale of the present disconnect and fear. Comfort was also taken from the fact that the 1972, 1974 and 1985 “moments” were more about political damage and discomfort to unionism, rather than the present very specific and, some would argue, very palpable constitutional damage of the Protocol.

Can the trust be rebuilt? The simple answer is that it must be. The bedrock of Northern Ireland unionism is the Union and the link between Northern Ireland and Great Britain. Damage that — as many unionists now believe it has been — and Northern Ireland unionism, as well as the Union itself, is damaged.

The angst is being played out on the streets; in the Loyalist Communities Council withdrawal of support from the Good Friday Agreement; in the talk of stepping unionism away from the Assembly.

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All of this feeds into the response to the likelihood of renewed violence and the fear that peace and democracy will not be the route to further changes.

There has been an attempt to explain the figures against the present background of recent protests; yet, my gut instinct/pessimism tells me the figures would have been high anyway, because there is so little evidence supporting the presence of a deep-rooted confidence in our ability to “do” politics without resorting to the “old ways”.

The figures hint at a perfect storm for real trouble ahead. Everyone — and I do mean everyone — needs to remain measured and calm.

Alex Kane is a writer and political commentator
Belfast Telegraph 23.04.2021

Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars

Thy Kingdom Come prayer journal

The Archbishop of Canterbury has written this year’s prayer journal for Thy Kingdom Come with the hope that those reading it will be spiritually nourished and re-encounter afresh, the love of God. Who could you give a copy to and how you could be praying from 13 - 23 May for those who need the hope of the Gospel? To find out more visit:

[<https://www.thykingdomcome.global/>]

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Walking in the Spirit – trailer release

A trailer for Walking in the Spirit, an eight–part series featuring Bishop David McClay in conversation with Roly Heaney, a friend of many years.

Bishop David shares very personally and testifies to the work of the Holy Spirit in his life from his conversion as a young man. Roly roots the conversations in some brief thoughts from the scriptures.

The first film will be premiered at 7.00 pm on Thursday 13 May (Ascension) and the series released daily after that.

<https://www.downanddromore.org/news/2021/04/walking-in-the-spirit--trailer-release>

National Sports Sunday Sunday 16th May

It will be marked in Magheracross Parish Church, Ballinamallard by Archdeacon Brian Harper, Chaplain to Ballinamallard United Football Club. The National Sports Sunday theme is now in its fourth year. Resources available at the following link; <https://sportschaplaincy.org.uk/nationalsportssunday/resources/>

Lighten Our Darknes

Congratulations to The Youth Leaders of Lighten Our Darkness by Numbers for this fantastic production to highlight Global Destruction.

What is happening to God's Natural world is catastrophic. Scientists warn us the outlook is, frankly, dire. "Lighten Our

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Darkness By Numbers" is a faith based initiative in All Saints' Mullingar Parish, Westmeath , Ireland. We hope , with God's help to stop the destruction and to reset our moral compass.

To Get Involved - Email: lightenourdarkness68@gmail.com

All Saints' Mullingar - Dioceses of Meath and Kildare

<https://vimeo.com/541866011/e456d66f6f>

You can read more about Lighten our Darkness movement here.

<https://mullingarunionofparishes.net/index.php/lighten-our-darkness/>

St Mary's cathedral. Limerick, online lunchtime talks

St Mary's cathedral. Limerick, has announced a new series of free online lunchtime talks on the theme of '2021 Anniversaries'. The series will begin on Tuesday 11 May at 1.15pm when Dr Brian Murphy OSB from Glenstal Abbey will speak about 'Winnie Barrington, innocent victim of war'. On subsequent Tuesdays, Canon Patrick Comerford will talk about the Limerick scientist, John D. Bernal; architect, Maria Donoghue, will consider the work of the social reformer, Robert Owen; poet, Vivienne McKechnie will talk about John Keats; and Noreen Ellerker, Tourism Officer at Saint Mary's cathedral, will speak about the fashion designer, Coco Chanel.

Media review

Arlene's career as a juggler ends

RTE

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Tommy Gorman

[[] <https://www.rte.ie/news/analysis-and-comment/2021/0501/1213138-tommie-gorman/>]

'I am so, so fortunate that I am still here,' says Tommie Gorman

Irish Independent

[[] <https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/i-am-so-so-fortunate-that-i-am-still-here-says-tommie-gorman-40376729.html>]

Roger Casement statue unveiled and will stand in Dún Laoghaire

The Irish Times

Casement's undoing. Casement was born in Sandycove on September 1st, 1864, the youngest of four children to his Church of Ireland father, Roger snr, ...

[[] <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/environment/roger-casement-statue-unveiled-and-will-stand-in-d%C3%BAAn-laoghaire-1.4552664>]

Number of marriages last year down 53% compared with 2019

The Irish Times

In 2020 religious ceremonies accounted for half of all marriages. There were 3,295 Catholic marriage ceremonies and 114 Church of Ireland ...

[[] <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/number-of-marriages-down-53-last-year-under-covid-effect-1.4552271>]

Two Laois heritage projects share €100000

Laois Nationalist

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Lea Church of Ireland in Killenard and the former Presentation Convent on Church Avenue, Portlaoise, will each receive €50,000 under the 2021 ...

[[] <https://laois-nationalist.ie/2021/04/30/two-laois-heritage-projects-share-e100000/>]



Pointers for prayer

Mighty God, in whom we know the power of redemption, you stand among us in the shadows of our time.

As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life, uphold us with knowledge of the final morning when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son, we will share in his resurrection, redeemed and restored to the fullness of life and forever freed to be your people.

Amen.

Living God,
long ago, faithful women
proclaimed the good news
of Jesus' resurrection,

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and the world was changed forever.
Teach us to keep faith with them,
that our witness may be as bold,
our love as deep,
and our faith as true. Amen.

Creator of the universe,
you made the world in beauty,
and restore all things in glory
through the victory of Jesus Christ.

We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love,
and peace,
to the glory of your name. Amen.

O God, your Son remained with his disciples after his
resurrection,
teaching them to love all people as neighbours.
As his disciples in this age,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the universe
in which we are privileged to live
and our neighbours with whom we share it....

Petitions... concluding with:

Open our hearts to your power moving
around us and between us and within us,
until your glory is revealed in our love of both friend and
enemy,
in communities transformed by justice and compassion,
and in the healing of all that is broken. Amen.

Holy God,
you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son,

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and to care for those who are our companions,
not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love.
Seeking to be true friends of all,
we offer our prayers on behalf of the church and the world.

Petitions... concluding with:

Guide us in the path of discipleship,
so that, as you have blessed us,
we may be a blessing for others,
bringing the promise of the kingdom near
by our words and deeds. Amen.

Speaking to the Soul

I urge you to imitate me. That's why I have sent Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord. He will remind you of how I follow Christ Jesus, just as I teach in all the churches wherever I go.

1 Corinthians 4:16-17 NLT

The disciples learnt how to follow Jesus by looking at his example. They saw the way in which he responded to the constant demands of his ministry. They saw his kindness and patience and the way in which he welcomed every kind of person. They were often shocked by the things that he said and by the sort of people that he spent time with. Until now they had steered well clear of prostitutes, tax collectors and people with leprosy but Jesus always seemed to have time for them. As the disciples looked at Jesus, they learnt what it meant to be one of his followers.

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Paul wasn't around at the time of Jesus' ministry but he recognised the crucial importance of people learning by example, and he offers his life as one to be imitated. How else would people learn how to put Christian teaching into practice? In our verses today he tells the Corinthian church that he was sending his young friend Timothy to them so that he could remind them of Paul's example.

I suspect that we would all become rather coy at the thought of people copying our example. But the fact is that every day, as we live for Christ, we are being watched. People are looking at the way in which we respond to different situations. They see the way in which we face challenges and celebrate successes. There is no way in which we can hide away, so we need to ensure that every day we are setting a good example which is well worth following.

QUESTION

Who will be looking at your life today, and what example will you be setting?

PRAYER

Dear Lord, thank you for all the people who have set a good example for me to follow. Fill me with your Spirit so that I will live a life which will help others to follow you. Amen

