

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Pottery focus in Belleek parish

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Pottery focus in Belleek parish

On Sunday 28th May a Service of Dedication was held in Belleek Church, led by Rev Rebecca Guildea. The Potter's Wheel Window and a plaque was dedicated by the Bishop of Clogher, Rt Rev. Dr Ian Ellis.

The Rural Dean Canon Alan Irwin was also present. James Pye welcomed Canon Noel Regan who was responsible for the extension to the Church and a new East Window in 2009. The completion was marked with a Flower Festival, 14 years ago this month.



Canon Noel gave an account of the work which went on and how the whole community had worked so well together with



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the parishioners from within the group.

The design of the window recognised the close connection with the church and the Pottery, with a founder and a basket weave designer both being buried in the church yard.

Helen Thompson presented Canon Noel with a Belleek Basket, a replica of the one presented by Belleek Pottery to King Charles on his recent visit to Enniskillen. The basket had been hand painted by Rachel Love. Betty Johnston presented Joan Regan with a pot of flowers. Canon Noel planted an oak tree in the church yard to mark the recent Coronation of King Charles.



New Cork sports facilities

A new hockey pitch and bowling green at ICICYMA Garryduff Sports Centre was blessed by Bishop Paul Colton





and officially opened by the President of the Club, Carol Jermyn, the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Deirdre Forde, Michael McGrath TD, and Simon Coveney TD on May 27.

After the official opening, the special guests played a game of bowls on the new green and later joined members of the club in the Clubhouse.

Scots Moderator's rallying call

The Moderator of the General Assembly has issued a rallying call to Church of Scotland members and urged them to "remember who you are". Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton said they all belonged to the body of Christ and encouraged them to work together for a better world. As the Assembly drew to a close, the Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton said it had been 'a beautiful mix of ideas and energy, insight and innovation and inspiration'.



Mothers and Grandmothers celebrate Armagh Cathedral's 150th year

A very special evening in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh, as Mothers and Grandmothers throughout the Archdiocese, gathered to celebrate this 150th year.



‘Tiny Teachers’ help Kiltiernan kids understand emotions

It is often said that we can learn a lot from children and Kiltiernan Parish has been putting that into practice with their Tiny Teachers programme which ran during Mental Health Awareness week.



One of Kiltiernan’s Tiny Teachers in action

Tiny Teachers was developed as part of Kiltiernan All Minds Matter (KAMM) to promote positive mental health, which is run in association with MindMattersCOI, the Church of Ireland’s mental health project.

Tiny Teachers sees a new-born baby and his or her parent being brought into contact with a primary school class to facilitate a conversation to encourage the development and practice of empathy skills.



Children engage with the Tiny Teacher

Through observation and guided conversation, children are encouraged to consider what emotion the baby might be feeling and how we know that, especially if they are not able to use words. The students take time getting to know the baby and are encouraged to ask any question they might have.

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Research shows that practicing empathetic behaviour improves our ability to effectively manage and respond to our own emotions and be more equipped to handle stressful or emotionally challenging situations.



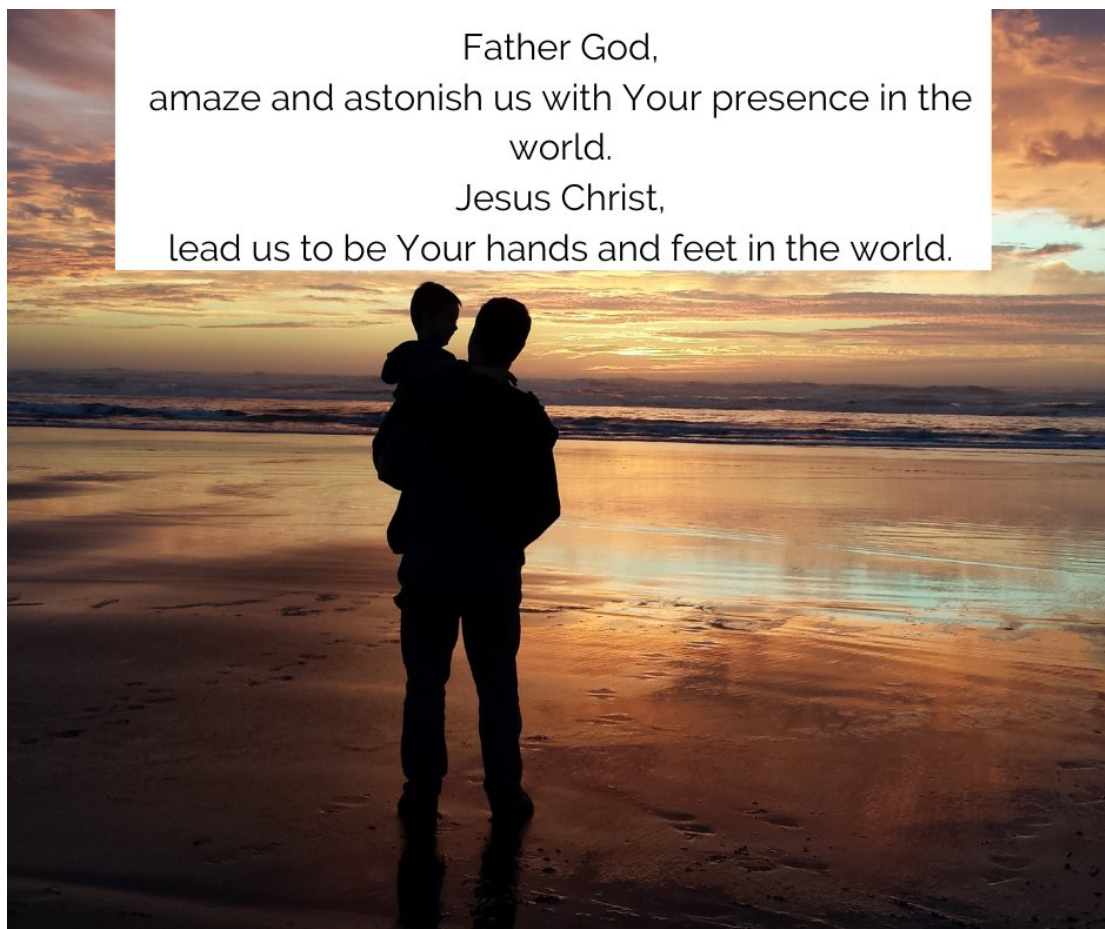
A Tiny Teachers gathering in progress in Gathering Grounds

The participating class was met outside Kiltiernan's Gathering Grounds to prepare them for their meeting with the selected mum and new-born. Children were encouraged to think about what they could do to put the baby at ease when walking into the room – for example, using quiet voices, moving slowly, smile with their face and eyes, sitting down at a low level with the baby.

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“We found the students were immediately engaged with the baby, attentive and curious to what the baby was doing. Discussion was started based on what the given baby was doing at the time; sleeping, calm, hungry/feeding, upset, etc. Discussion of each session followed lead of the baby’s behaviour. But ultimately, the goal was to brainstorm as many feelings and emotions as possible and discuss how we know the baby is feeling these things without being able to use words to tell us,” Julie Clements, who runs Gathering Grounds, explained.

The connection was also encouraged to be made with friends and classmates, with the children learning that people don’t always verbalise their feelings and emotions. They were encouraged to think of how they could look out and care for each other.



Father God,
amaze and astonish us with Your presence in the
world.
Jesus Christ,
lead us to be Your hands and feet in the world.

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“We ran a trial of Tiny Teachers last year with great feedback,” the Revd Rob Clements, Rector of Kilternan, added. “ Four classes (first, second, third and fourth class) participated. Everyone seemed to fully engage with and enjoy the experience. Not only was it a great experience for the children but hopefully also a positive experience for the mum and babes. We were delighted to be able to offer the mum a small gift of appreciation.



Derry rector installed as canon

Rev Canon David McBeth has been installed as a member of The Chapter of St Columb’s Cathedral, at a service led by the Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart and attended by the Bishop of Derry, Rt Rev Andrew Forster.



Members of the McBeth family, including his wife, April, were there to see Canon McBeth take his seat in the stall left vacant following the retirement of Rev Canon Paul Whittaker.

Members of Canon McBeth's previous parishes – Glendermott and Newbuildings where he served his curacy under Rev Canon Derek Creighton), and Dungiven and Bovevagh – mingled with those from his current parish, All Saints Clooney.

The sermon was preached by the Rector of the Balteagh Group of Parishes, Rev Rhys Jones, who was a former Curate of Canon McBeth's in Clooney.

After the sermon, Canon McBeth was installed by the Dean, the Very Reverend Raymond Stewart having made the necessary declarations in the presence of Rev Canon David Crooks (Diocesan Registrar).

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Dean Stewart told the congregation that 44 years ago this year he became curate of All Saints Clooney, so he regarded it as “a personal pleasure” to have installed Clooney’s current Rector, Canon McBeth.

The Rector’s Churchwarden at Clooney, Mr Charles McGarrigle, congratulated the new Canon, saying that his installation was an honour not only for Canon McBeth but for the whole Parish.



Randalstown school support for Trócaire

Some of the incredible students of Mount St Michael's PS in Randalstown whose outstanding efforts in Lent raised £800 for Trócaire during Lent.

Bishop warns a shortage of priests may hit funerals

A shortage of priests could mean there is no one available to say funeral Masses for families in some parts of Northern Ireland, a senior cleric has warned.

Bishop Donal McKeown of the Diocese of Derry and recently took up a second role as the apostolic administrator for Down and Connor, alerted parishioners to the crisis.

A pastoral letter outlined the consequences of dwindling numbers of young people entering into the priesthood, namely increasing difficulties of churches being able to meet demand in the near future.

“Very soon, it is also likely that in some parishes, the celebration of Requiem Mass for every individual as part of the funeral rites may no longer be the norm,” it states.

The correspondence said “statistical realities” mean it is necessary to change how around 84 currently active priests are supported in an area with 86 parishes and 146 churches.

According to Bishop McKeown's prediction, the number of clergymen will drop to just 24 within the next two decades.

He said it is no longer fair to ask priests to keep on “workloads and demands that are unreasonable and not sustainable” as he called on members to take on more responsibility.



“Within 15 years, and for the first time in the history of the diocese, we will have more retired priests than priests in active ministry,” the letter adds.

Around 3,000 funerals and 800 marriages are celebrated in the diocese each year usually in the form of a special Mass.

Bishop McKeown said meeting “unsustainable expectations” is no longer possible.

It comes as a number of parishes prepare to take part in pilot projects which will see lay people assist families preparing for funerals and lead prayers at gravesides or in the crematorium.

Bishop McKeown has committed to continuing in his dual role until a permanent Diocesan Bishop for Down and Connor can be appointed.

At present he is managing the largest pastoral area on the entire island — including 51 parishes in the Diocese of Derry with 260,000 parishioners in addition to the 406,000 in Down and Connor.

He warned that with only seven priests in the diocese aged under 40, the number of priests in active ministry will drop by almost 50% in just over 10 years.

Father Gary Donegan, who recently returned as an administrator to Holy Cross Church in Ardoyne and rarely takes time off, said there can be angry reactions from non-regular church goers when they are told a priest is unavailable to take funerals.

He recalled covering an incident in west Belfast last week where no priest was available for Requiem Mass.

“The reality is that there's no down time. I can't remember the last weekend I had what was time out,” he told the Irish News.

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“My big thing in life is going to Gaelic football matches, and I also had to cancel a recent holiday to France.

“That's because weekends are taken up with weddings and first communions. I have two funerals this week as well.

“What Bishop Donal is saying is true. Where it really impinges is the reality of people who don't practise and expect exactly the same service as before when they haven't journeyed along.

“They're shocked by that and in some cases angered by it. Some people get quite in your face about it.”

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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