

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Dublin Pentecost confirmation

May 31, 2023

Image of the day

Dublin parishes gather for Pentecost Confirmation



Some of the candidates being confirmed in Christ Church Cathedral.

Fifty–three young people and their families came from all over Dublin and Glendalough to be confirmed in Christ Church Cathedral on the Feast of Pentecost (Sunday May 28).

The candidates were drawn from St Catherine’s, Donore Avenue; Narraghmore and Timolin with Castledermot



The confirmation candidates stand for the Presentation and the Decision

Kinneagh; Donoughmore and Donard with Dunlavin, Tallaght; Kill O' the Grange; Blessington; Santry, Finglas and Glasnevin; Celbridge and Straffan with Newcastle Lyons; and Christ Church Cathedral.

The cathedral was full to capacity for the uplifting service which was celebrated by Archbishop Michael Jackson and sung by the Cathedral Choir.

Speaking to the candidates, the Archbishop said he was delighted to welcome them to the cathedral which, he pointed out, was their cathedral as members of the dioceses. He said that while the cathedral building itself was fascinating and inspiring, the candidates were part of a different type of building – building up the body of Christ.

May 31, 2023

“Confirmation contributes to this building. Confirmation takes place so that the Christian family may be built up,” he explained adding that each could use their individual gifts and talent to build the community of church.

On the day when Christians celebrate Pentecost, when as is written in the Acts of the Apostles, “they were all together in one place” and filled with the Holy Spirit, Archbishop Jackson observed that the candidates and their families were all together in Christ Church Cathedral gathered by the same Spirit of God. He encouraged them to take the spirit of Easter and Pentecost forward as they restated the vows of their baptism.

Bishops of Clogher lead annual ecumenical service at Pentecost

The Ecumenical Service for Pentecost Sunday in Clogher Diocese for 2023 took place at the former Church of Ireland church, graveyard and ancient round tower at Inniskeen, near Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan on a beautiful summer’s day.

Both the Roman Catholic Bishop of Clogher, the Most Revd Larry Duffy and the Church of Ireland Bishop of Clogher, the Right Revd Dr. Ian Ellis, attended the service on Pentecost Sunday, 28 May.

Bishop Larry Duffy gave the address welcoming all those attending the service at the ancient and holy place of St



The ecumenical service taking place at Inniskeen on Pentecost Sunday.

Daigh, the home to many gifted people over the years, not least Patrick Kavanagh.

He said; “We come together along the banks of the River Fane on this Feast of Pentecost, a feast which marks the end of the Easter season, but also the birth and beginning of the Church. The Spirit that descended on Jesus at the beginning of his public ministry is now given to us, the Body of Christ.

“St Luke in Acts of the Apostles tries to put words on this major religious event. He speaks of the rush of wind and the tongues of fire resting on the apostles. He tells us that the

May 31, 2023

first fruits of Pentecost is unity; bringing people together. Pentecost brought unity of language and understanding and a clear message that salvation is open to all who call on the name of Jesus. The rejoicing is so great that the crowd thought that those followers of Jesus were drunk.

“The Spirit brings unity and peace, gifts that Jesus says are at odds with the world. Yes, there are world forces at odds with the Spirit which cause division and disharmony. Therefore, the follower of Christ has to watch out in case those worldly forces enter the human heart, marginalising people, shutting people out of company because of skin colour, ethnic background, religion or sexuality.

“This year 2023 marks two important milestones in the journey of unity and witness of Christians in Ireland. It marks the centenary of the formation of the Irish Council of Churches in 1923 and it also marks the 50th anniversary of the Ballymascanlon Talks of 1973 (not far from here) which led to creation of what is known today as the Irish Inter-Church Meeting, the body through which the churches on the island engage and give witness together to the unity that the Spirit calls us to. These bodies were formed in difficult times, in times of civil strife and division, times of great fear. Their patient endurance and the work which they continue to undertake is further witness to the work of the Holy Spirit calling us into greater unity.

“We thank God for the progress that has been made over these decades; for the faithful commitment of so many people to the work of Christian unity, peace and reconciliation. In the tradition of St Daigh and St Macartan, we pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to enlighten this



The clergy who took part in the service.

and the future generations so that all may call on the name of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. Bishop Ian Ellis said the greeting and sentence of Scripture and also led the prayers of intercession and gave the blessing at the end.

Local clergy from parishes in the Carrickmacross area; Revd Ian Cruickshank, Rector of Carrickmacross Union, Magheracloone and Ardragh and Canon Martin Treanor, P.P., Inniskeen Parish, also took part, reading lessons and leading responses. Two young people from post-primary schools in the area, Amy Hill, a member of St. Finbarr's, Carrickmacross and a student at Monaghan Collegiate and Joseph McArdle, a member of Inniskeen Parish and student at Presentation Brothers, Carrickmacross gave their reflections on Pentecost.

The hymns were; "Be Thou my Vision," "Spirit of the Living God" and "Spirit of God, unseen as the wind." The music

May 31, 2023

was led by Fiona Kelly playing the keyboard accompanying singer, Niamh Monahan.

This year's outdoor service took place at the monastic site at Inniskeen where Saint Daigh lived towards the end of the 6th Century.

A short history of the area was given by Larry McDermott from the Inniskeen Development Group which has leased the church building deconsecrated as a Church of Ireland building in the 1950's.

He explained that Saint Daigh was born in Co Meath and is also linked with monastics sites such as Clonmacnoise as well as Devenish on Lough Erne.

The monastery at Inniskeen was burned in 789, plundered by the Vikings in 948 and burned again in 1166, just before the Norman invasion of Ireland, which would lead to much change. With the passage of time, the monks were replaced by secular clergy.

Today, all that is left of the monastic foundation is the Church of Ireland church which contains remnants of the earlier foundation, and the bottom part of the round tower. For many years afterwards, Inniskeen parish was (and still is, officially) known as the Parish of Inis-Caoin-Deagha.

He explained how one of the rectors, Revd George Harrison Reade appointed in 1852 rebuilt the church on the site of the earlier church in 1854. In 1921 the Church of Ireland parishes of Inniskeen and Donaghmoyne were united but the church was deconsecrated in 1953 bringing to an end a

May 31, 2023

1400 year service to the spiritual needs of the area on this site. The building was left as an empty shell.

In 1972, the Representative Church Body of the Church of Ireland leased the building to a local group, the Inniskeen Folk Museum. In 2009, the Inniskeen Development Group took over the lease from the church body and carried out extensive renovations to the church building, including a new roof and floor and this is an ongoing project to provide an amenity for the community.

The round tower dates from the 11th Century.

Palestrina Choir tour to Rome

The tour was a very special part of the Choir's 120 celebrations. “It was both a privilege and honour to be singing at the Papal Mass in St Peter's on the Feast of Pentecost.”

“We were in St Peter’s Basilica at 8.15am for rehearsal . We had the honour of singing four motets before Mass including the resplendent eight -part “Spiritus Sanctus Replevit”.

The Palestrina. Choir had a wave from Pope Francis as he passed by. After the Mass, it was time for sightseeing and gelato...

Then to the Basilica of San Silvestro in Rome where the choir gave a wonderful concert organised by the Irish Embassy to the Holy See and ambassador Frances Collins. Choir programme next page...

Palestrina Choir Tour to Rome

Friday 26th May | 5pm/6pm

*Mass at Cathedral di
S. Agapito, Palestrina.*

Missa Papae Marcelli - Palestrina
Ave Maria á 4 - Palestrina
Exsultate Deo - Palestrina

Saturday 27th May | 3:30pm/4:30pm

*Mass at Pontifical
Irish College*

Missa I (Lux et Origo)
Factus Est Repente - Aichinger
Spiritus Sanctus Replevit - Palestrina

Sunday 28th May | 8:30am/9:30am

*Performance at
St Peter's Basilica*

Exsultate Deo - Palestrina
Dum Complentur - Victoria
Factus Est Repente - Aichinger
Spiritus Sanctus Replevit - Palestrina

Sunday 28th May | 9am/10am

*Papal Mass at
St Peter's Basilica (Pentecost)*

Missa I (Lux et Origo)
Factus Est Repente - Plainchant

Monday 29th May | 7pm/8pm

*Concert at Basilica
of San Silvestro in Capite*

Music by Viadana, Grieg, Byrd,
Bruckner, Palestrina.
With arrangements of Irish Music.



This tour has been organised as part of
the 'Palestrina 120' celebrations.
To find out more, visit
palestrinachoirdublin.com

**Times are given as GMT/GMT(+1)*



Welcome to Cork

On the evening of Pentecost the Reverend Dr William Olhausen was welcomed as the new rector of Douglas Union of Parishes with Frankfield in the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross.

Church News Ireland

News reports



Scots General Synod 2023 to feature Net Zero plan and Moderator address

The General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church will meet at St Paul's & St George's Episcopal Church in Edinburgh, from Thursday 8 June to Saturday 10 June 2023.

The agenda and papers have now been sent to members and published [here] on the Scottish Episcopal Church website, detailing the business scheduled. Among the headline items are the presentation of the Net Zero Action Plan, a historic first address to Synod by a Moderator of the

May 31, 2023

General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and a second reading of Canon 4 on the election of bishops.

The meeting has been arranged in hybrid format, to allow a small number of members to join remotely. Proceedings will begin on the Thursday with the Opening Eucharist at Ps&Gs, with the offering donated to the Scottish Refugee Council. Offerings will be taken online.

One of the main items of Synod business on day one will be consideration of the Net Zero Action Plan prepared by the Provincial Environment Group following a period of consultation, which has included a series of webinars and presentations at diocesan synods. The consultation has helped to shape Synod's response to the climate emergency it acknowledged in 2020 when it set the goal of working towards achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. In light of the feedback received during the consultation process, the Action Plan has been substantially revised.

Two motions regarding the Net Zero Action Plan will go before Synod on Thursday afternoon: one to affirm the direction of the Plan as enabling fulfilment of the 2020 resolution, and the other to request Standing Committee to approve the provision of funding to support implementation of the Plan.

Other business on day one includes Standing Committee items of accounts, budget and quota overview and Board & Committee work plans, presentations from the Investment Committee and College of Bishops (the latter with

May 31, 2023

discussion in table groups), and a report on the recent Anglican Consultative Council gathering in Ghana.

On day two of Synod, there will be a presentation on the Season for Christian Life, which has been created “to offer to the church a season which would enliven Christian faith and life”. The Season is intended to provide a focus for three to five years, starting in 2023, and is part of the Anglican Consultative Council’s call to Churches across the Communion to have a Season for Intentional Discipleship. The Season for Christian Life session at Synod will be followed by a proposal to formalise a Local Mission Development Committee in the Synod structure, as a pendant committee of Mission Board.

Synod will then be addressed by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton (_pictured right_). This



May 31, 2023

will be the first time that a Moderator has addressed General Synod since the body first met in 1982. The Moderator, who was installed at the weekend, is expected to talk about her hopes and vision for the Church in Scotland at this time.

Church of Scotland has lost over half its membership since 2000 - Assembly report

The Church of Scotland has lost more than half of its members since the year 2000, with the average age of worship attendees being 62, according to a report presented by recently to the General Assembly

The Assembly Trustees' report analyzed statistical information about the denomination.

According to the report, the membership of the Church in 2021 was 283,600, which represented a 4.6% decline compared to 2020, and well below the 1.3 million reported in the 1950s.

The report explained that the 2021 membership numbers represented 46.6% of what was reported in 2000, while the number of ministers reported last year was 60% of what it was in 2000.

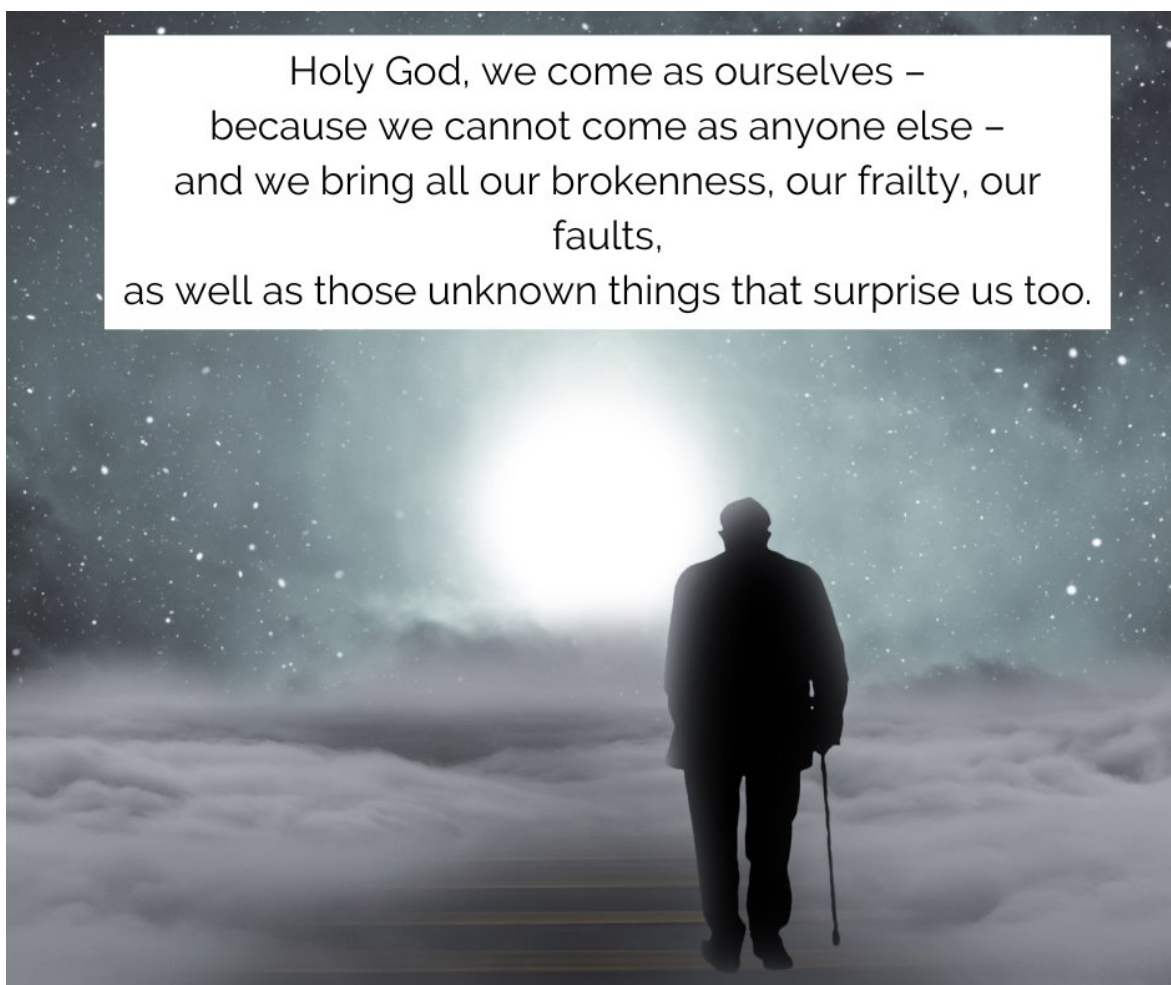
"This is no fault of one group of people or any decision-making body, but a trend that has not been reversed; we have lost members and Ministers of Word and Sacrament but not adjusted the number of charges," stated the report.

May 31, 2023

"One in three charges are in vacancy whilst across Scotland the size of almost every congregation is shrinking. Ministers are retiring and people are not coming forward (as has been the case for years) in the numbers needed to replace them. The good news of Jesus Christ, whilst being shared amongst some is not reaching the majority of the people of Scotland."

The report also found that the "vast majority" of the Church's ministers are over the age of 50, speculating that as many as half of them will retire within the next decade.

Church attendance stood at around 60,000 in 2021, which is below the approximately 88,000 reported before the COVID-19 pandemic forced many churches worldwide to



May 31, 2023

suspend in-person worship services. The report noted that around "45,000 people now worship online and 8,275 in 'other ways.'"

"The average age of those attending church is 62 years old — so the trends of decline are not likely to change without us taking positive action and addressing the demographic profile," the report added.

Archbishop gives ‘full support’ to inquiry into sexual abuse ‘cult’

The Archbishop of Canterbury has given his “full support” to a controversial internal investigation into a Christian youth festival founder accused of spiritual abuse, as he commented for the first time on the issue.

Earlier this month The Daily Telegraph revealed how alleged victims of Rev Canon Mike Pilavachi had spoken out for the first time, claiming he ran “a cult” in which young men were encouraged to receive full-body oil massages on his bed and engage in wrestling matches lasting up to 20 minutes.

The 65-year-old evangelist founded the Soul Survivor Watford church and its annual summer festivals, which ran from 1993 to 2019, and had an average attendance of 30,000 teenagers from around the world each summer. In 2020, he received an award from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, for his “outstanding contribution to evangelism and discipleship among young people”.

May 31, 2023

The Archbishop in a statement said he is “deeply conscious of the impact that reports concerning Soul Survivor and Mike Pilavachi continue to have on many people”.

However, he also affirmed his commitment to the Church of England’s own investigation into the allegations, which is being led by its National Safeguarding Team (NST) as well as the Diocese of St Albans.

He said: “The investigation has my full support ... [it] is prioritising the wellbeing of everyone concerned, and I am confident they are treating all who are involved in the investigation and everything that has been shared with the utmost care and sensitivity.”

His comments come just days after alleged victims came forward in The Daily Telegraph to warn that they “don’t trust the church to mark its own homework” or lead its own investigation.

Responding to the Archbishop’s intervention, one victim, speaking on condition of anonymity, said: “I am grateful the Archbishop has broken the previously encouraged silence on this matter. However, I remain deeply concerned about the independence of this investigation given the number of connections between Soul Survivor and the Church of England, both at diocesan and national level.”

Church News Ireland

Perspective

Introducing ourselves to the great music maker of the Trinity

Someone I once knew had always wanted to learn to dance. He could manage a barn dance reasonably well, especially when the caller would shout out the steps, writes the Very Reverend Dr William Morton

But, as he used to say, when it came to waltzes or fox trots, he felt like an ignoramus.

Being the rational, cerebral type of person he was, he thought to himself: “I’ll buy a book all about dancing, just as I purchased one all about computers!” And he did.

He was anxious to surprise his wife in a few weeks’ time with his new skill, so, late every evening, he’d lock himself in his study, get his book out, play the CD and start practicing the steps!

After a time, he invites his wife into the study and goes through his paces.

At the end, as he flops into a chair, he exclaims: “There you are! What do you think of that? Didn’t I execute the dance perfectly!?”

May 31, 2023

His wife looked at him in silence for a few minutes, shaking her head! “You certainly did execute it!,” she said, “you killed it!”

“What do you mean? replied her husband, rather disappointed and disgruntled.

“Well”, said his wife, “you forgot the most important part – the music!!”

That little story reminds us of the Christian life, does it not?

Sometimes we can be so tight on following the rules and proclaiming what we believe that we ‘forget the music.’

It is possible to set out on the ‘dance floor’ of the Christian life with the book but with no music in our hearts, no animation.

That is why on the night before His own death, when the disciples were getting anxious with all this talk about Him ‘going away’, that Jesus introduced them to the great music maker of the Trinity – the Holy Spirit.

He is the One who, on this Feast of Pentecost, can lead us on into the dance of the Christian life which is to be consummated in, what Belfast-born Christian academic C S Lewis called, the great dance of heaven.

So don’t forget! Dance the dance!

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May 31, 2023

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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