



Sir Anthony Hart is heading the inquiry

Inquiry to focus on priest abuse and three NI state facilities

Paedophile priest Father Brendan Smyth will be the subject of a focused investigation as part of a public inquiry into historical child abuse in Northern Ireland.

The serial child molester frequented Catholic residential homes and was convicted of more than 100 child abuse charges.

Retired judge Sir Anthony Hart is leading one of the UK's largest inquiries into physical, sexual and emotional harm to children at homes run by the church, state and voluntary organisations.

He said the inquiry will: "Examine issues arising from the actions of Fr Brendan Smyth in a number of homes in Northern Ireland, actions which have been described by a number of witnesses who have already given evidence to the Inquiry."

The Historical Institutional Abuse (HIA) inquiry has extended its work to cover three more state-run institutions; Hydebank Young Offenders Centre in south Belfast and former homes at Fort James and Harberton House, Londonderry.

Smyth, who was at the centre of one of the first clerical child sex abuse scandals to rock the Catholic Church in Ireland, was eventually convicted of more than 100 child abuse charges on both sides of the Irish border over a 40-year period.

Despite allegations being previously investigated by church officials, including the former Irish

primate, Sean Brady, as far back as 1975, it was almost 20 years before he was jailed.

Instead the cleric, a member of the Norbertine order, was moved between parishes, dioceses and even countries where he preyed on victims who were as young as eight.

He died in prison in 1997 following a heart attack.

The HIA module focusing on his actions will commence on June 22 and is expected to conclude by the end of the month.

A representative of the Sisters of Nazareth nuns has accepted that the Belfast priest visited Nazareth House and Nazareth Lodge residential homes and sexually abused children.

The inquiry has also heard he was among the offenders at Rubane House boy's home in Kircubbin, Co Down.

More at -

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/inquiry-to-focus-on-priest-abuse-31212233.html>

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Well known priest and broadcaster supports RSCM's Music Sunday

The priest and broadcaster, The Reverend Richard Coles has given his support to the celebration of music in church worship, as the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) invites churches of all denominations to celebrate *RSCM Music Sunday*.

The RSCM is inviting churches to give thanks for the power of music in church worship and to affirm the work of those who make it. Over the years there have been many imaginative *Music Sunday* ideas, as churches all over the world have organised anything from sponsored singing of favourite hymns and organ crawls, to special collections, church services and concerts. The 50:50 element of the campaign enables churches to raise funds equally for themselves and for the RSCM.

To promote *Music Sunday* the RSCM visited Finedon Parish Church in Northamptonshire, where priest and broadcaster The Reverend Richard Coles is the Vicar. A video follows preparations for a special *Music Sunday* Choral Evensong. Revd Coles, who was a chorister and later a member of The Communards, is in no doubt about the importance of music in worship.

“Music is absolutely fundamental to worship for me. It’s a medium of connectivity; it connects the horizontal axis of who we are, to the vertical axis of how we relate to God. Music is the means that achieves that. And it’s an enormous draw here; what we have is a parish choir on full throttle deeply committed to the music and that’s wonderful.”

Revd Coles thinks that *Music Sunday* also has an important function in affirming the musicians who make music in church. “Music Sunday is a chance for us to draw ourselves up to full height, take a deep breath and present what we do in as compelling a way as possible,” he said. “It’s not about the people who we address when we do that, but in telling us who we are too. It’s a very important thing in a world where people find it difficult to commit to lunch to find people who are prepared to commit to something which really is rooted deeply in the community.”

This will be the seventh year that *RSCM Music Sunday* has been held in its present form. More information can be found on the RSCM website www.rscm.com/musicsunday where appropriate materials for a service may be found, including ideas for hymns, songs, anthems, prayers and readings. The RSCM has earmarked 21st June 2015 as Music Sunday though, churches may

wish to change the date to suit their own schedules. A video about Music Sunday at Finedon may be seen on the webpage, along with clips from the interview with Richard Coles.

The Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) is an educational charity that promotes the best use of music in worship, church life, and the wider community. The RSCM also publishes music and training resources, and organises courses, short workshops and activities. With around 8,500 affiliates, members and friends in over 40 countries, it is an international network, supported by over 600 volunteers and a small team of staff based throughout the UK. More at www.rscm.com

Inter-church Pentecost Sunday Walk of Witness in Moville

Plans are under way for a Pentecostal Walk of Witness and Mission in Moville later this month.

The interdenominational event on May 24th – Pentecost Sunday – will see members of the local Church of Ireland, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist communities walking to each other's churches to worship and pray together. It will begin at St Columb's Church in Moville at 3 pm.

The Rector of the Moville, Donagh, Culdaff and Cloncha group of parishes, Rev Terence Kerr, says the Walk of Witness will be consistent with the Diocesan theme of 'Transforming Community, Radiating Christ'.

Rev Kerr, a rugby-loving Ballymena man, arrived in Moville less than three months ago and has been struck by the vitality of parish life in Inishowen. "It is extremely encouraging for me as rector to see such a wide age range – from the very young to the more mature in years – at our Sunday services." His ministry means he holds services in Greencastle and Malin, as well as Carndonagh, Culdaff and Moville.

On Palm Sunday the rector brought parishioners together for a joint service in Culdaff. "After the service almost 150 people were treated to a sit-down meal in the community hall," he points out. "That shows you how strong their sense of community and sense of parish is."

Rev Kerr put together a music group for the Palm Sunday service. "The blend of traditional and more modern pieces seemed to appeal to the worshippers." The minister was particularly impressed by the enthusiasm of younger parishioners in Greencastle, who created a

stunning tableau for the occasion, depicting the story of Holy Week.

The meal in Culdaff highlighted one of the main challenges facing any clergyman moving from Northern Ireland to Donegal, though: “The tray-bakes are very different. They’re called ‘smalls’ here; they’re half way between our tray-bakes and a slice of cake. But they are delicious.”

Life as a rector in Moville could hardly be more different from his previous parishes in Belfast or his earlier career as an engineer. He and his wife Carol – a former paediatric nurse – lived in Saudi Arabia for a number of years and worked in the same American-owned hospital.

Bishop leads controversial Knocknamuckley Black service

Church of Ireland Bishop Rt Rev Harold Miller has conducted a service for the Royal Black Institution in Co Armagh after the incumbent rector refused the use of the church building to the loyal order.

News Letter - In his scripture reading at St Matthias Parish Church at Knocknamuckley, Bishop Miller emphasised unity and peace among brothers.

Some 300 members of the loyal order paraded to the church accompanied by a band playing traditional hymns.

The incumbent minister Rev Alan Kilpatrick blocked the institution's use of his church, although no explanation has been given.

He has also caused disquiet among some members of the congregation due to his modern approach to services.

The church service is an annual event among Royal Black in the area which moves from church to church on a 12-year rota, this time coming back to Knocknamuckley....

... Bishop Miller read out 1 Peter chapter 3 as the basis for his sermon, acknowledging that his audience may not have been surprised by his choice.

“Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tender-hearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

“He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from

speaking deceit. Let him turn away from evil and do good; Let him seek peace and pursue it.”

The Bishop declined to offer any comment to the News Letter.

More at -

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/bishop-leads-controversial-knocknamuckley-black-service-1-6736350>

World Communications Day 2015 – Communicating the Family

World Communications Day is celebrated on Sunday 17 May 2015 – the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord and the Sunday before Pentecost. The World Day for Social Communications was the only worldwide celebration called for by the Second Vatican Council (*Inter Mirifica*, 1963).

Welcoming this year’s World Communications Day message from Pope Francis, Archbishop Eamon Martin said:

“Pope Francis expresses a clear and fundamental message for the benefit of the whole human family and it relates to our earliest shared experience and common bond. The Holy



Father tells us that “it is in the context of the family that we first learn how to communicate.” His message is offered to us as we prepare for the Synod of the Family which will take place in the Vatican, during October, guided by the theme The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and Contemporary World. I urge everyone with a love of family to reflect upon today’s challenging message.” For key point summary of Pope Francis’ message for World Communications Day, see -

<http://www.catholicbishops.ie/2015/05/11/world-communications-day-2015/>

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Cork Parish Marks Centenary of Sinking of Lusitania

Saint John's Church, Monkstown, County Cork (in the Church of Ireland Parish of Carrigaline Union) overlooks Cork Harbour. It has a spectacular vista of Great Island (where Cobh, known as Queenstown in 1915 and central to the responses to the sinking of RMS Lusitania), and a view also of the comings and goings today to and from the Port of Cork. The National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) is also situated in the parish and the rector, the Reverend Elaine Murray, is Church of Ireland Chaplain.

Officers and Cadets of the NMCI attended Choral Evensong in St John's Church on Sunday 10th May 2015 to mark the centenary of the sinking, on 7th May 1915, of RMS Lusitania. Gerard Horan of NMCI spoke very movingly of what is known about the lives of some of the survivors of the sinking.

Meanwhile on 7th May in the Parish of St Luke, Douglas, Cork, schoolchildren from St Luke's National School visited the Church on the centenary itself to see the memorial to a former parishioner Sir Hugh Lane, who died



The Reverend Elaine Murray, Rector of Carrigaline Union and Church of Ireland Chaplain to the National Maritime College of Ireland, with Officers and Cadets who attended the RMS Lusitania centenary commemoration in St John's Church, Monkstown, County Cork.

when RMS Lusitania was sunk. Hugh Lane was an Irish art collector who founded the Dublin Municipal Gallery of Modern Art (the first known gallery of modern art in the world).

Commemorations were held in many of the affected coastal towns, villages and parishes of the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross.

An oar washed ashore from one of the lifeboats

of RMS Lusitania hangs in the Church of St Barrahan, Castletownshend, County Cork.

Parish choirs raise the roof in Dublin Cathedral's Music Outreach

Christ Church Cathedral's Diocesan Music Outreach Project continued over the last week with a conducting workshop for parish church musicians taking place last Thursday (May 7) and diocesan Choral Evensong on Sunday (May 10).

Participants in the conducting workshop enjoyed an opportunity to conduct the cathedral choir in a coaching session which was led by Organist and Director of Music, Ian Keatley. The session took place in the cathedral's music room and attracted great interest.

Meanwhile on Sunday, choirs from across Dublin and Glendalough flocked to the cathedral to add their voices to the diocesan Choral Evensong. They joined the combined choirs of Christ Church Cathedral made up of the Cathedral Choir, the Girls' Choir, the Voluntary Choir, members of the Christ Church Choral Mentoring Scheme and the Past Choristers for the uplifting occasion.



Choirs from parishes and churches around Dublin and Glendalough sing with the Cathedral choirs at the Diocesan Choral Evensong

Among the choirs and parishes represented on Sunday were All Saints, Grangegorman; Christ Church, Bray; Zion Parish Church, Rathgar; Holy Trinity, Killiney, Monkstown Parish Church; All Saints, Blackrock; St Brigid's, Stillorgan; St Patrick's, Greystones; St Patrick's, Enniskerry; All Saints, Raheny; Howth Parish Church; Newcastle Parish, Wicklow; the Seafield Singers; St Cecilia Singers; and Blessington Chamber Choir

Outreach and education have, during the last three years, become a primary focus for the music department in terms of development and new projects. Any young local singers who might be interested in the cathedral's Choral Mentoring Scheme should contact Ian Keatley on ian@christchurch.ie

Lead Pioneer Evangelist appointed for Connor Diocese

Karen Webb, Children's Ministry Co-ordinator at Lisburn Cathedral, has been appointed Pioneer Lead Evangelist with Connor Diocese and the Church Army.

In her role, which will commence in the autumn, Karen will develop and lead a new Centre of Mission based in a deprived area of Belfast and also resource and enable evangelism across the diocese.

She will work with Stephen Whitten, who took up his role as Pioneer Evangelist with the diocese and Church Army earlier this year.

Karen is married to Tim and has two daughters, Amy (21) and Caroline (19). She is a Church Army Sister and along with John O'Neill leads

the Lisburn Centre of Mission with a focus on children's and schools' work.

Former musician appointed rector of Eglantine Parish

The Rev Jason Kernohan, one time lead singer of The Jason Kernohan Band, has been appointed rector of Eglantine Parish.

Jason, who has been Curate Assistant in the Parish of Drumachose, Diocese of Derry, since his ordination as a Deacon in 2010, will bring his love of music with him as he embarks on his first incumbency.

The 36-year-old is looking forward to returning to his home diocese of Connor. He grew up in Ballymena, attended Cambridge House Boys' Grammar School and was a parishioner of St Patrick's Ballymena.

He set up a parish music group, and was involved in Bible Study and House Groups, the choir and was a Parish Reader.

Jason made music his full time job when he left school, fronting his own band and releasing three albums and a DVD. He plays piano, violin

and accordion, and described his band's music as middle of the road, country, folk and Irish.

In 2007 Jason stepped away from his music career to train for the ministry in Dublin, but he has never lost his love of music – or of performing. He still sings in concerts, and last year he joined with a local Roman Catholic Priest to record a CD as part of a PEACE III project. The CD raised £10,000, which was divided between the two parishes.

“Music is still a big part of my life,” said Jason. “Music ministry is something I feel is very important, it inspires people. As St Augustine said ‘he who sings prays twice.’”

Looking ahead to his move to Eglantine Jason said: “I am looking forward to coming back to my home diocese and to the challenges of a new ministry in a new place. I am looking forward to getting to know the people of Eglantine and to journeying with them and to hopefully building up youth organisations in the parish.”

Church of Ireland faces shrinking congregations crisis - comment on

The leader of the Church of Ireland has said "we may as well close the doors now" if it cannot solve the problem of falling attendances.

Alf McCreay writes in Belfast Telegraph - Archbishop Richard Clarke made the comments after it was revealed in a survey that only 15% of Irish Anglicans attend services on Sundays.

This represents just 58,000 out of a total of 378,000 who claim affiliation to the church...

...The latest figures also show that only 13% of those attending are between the ages of 12 and 30.

The largest numbers are from the older age groups, with 19% between 46-60 and 24% between 61-74.

The figures also show the gender breakdown, with 57% female and 43% male.

The statistics showed greatly increased attendances at key points of the church year, with 108,000 people attending Christmas Eve/Day services, and 76,000 people going to Church on Easter Day.

One particularly worrying statistic for the Church of Ireland is the narrow gap between baptisms

and funerals. The survey recorded 3,700 baptisms, just 200 more than the 3,500 funerals, with 2,300 confirmations and 1,300 weddings each year.

These latest results were contained in a special Church of Ireland parish-based census taken over three Sundays in November 2013, at the request of the previous year's General Synod.

Attendance figures in the Methodist Church were not available but President-designate, Rev Brian Anderson, said: "It is fair to say that the numbers attending church have reduced generally, and there are more mature congregations in Northern Ireland.

"We are not complacent, and many churches are engaging with those who have no local church connection through some excellent work in the communities they serve.

"However, the trend is the opposite in the Irish Republic, where many of our congregations are growing through the influx of foreigners settling in Ireland and who find a welcome in the Methodist churches."

Meanwhile, a survey in the Catholic Diocese of Down and Connor, the largest in Ireland, showed

an average church attendance of 21% for Sunday Mass.

The Diocesan Living Church Review, published in May 2014, revealed that the estimated Sunday Mass attendance in Down and Connor is 72,000 out of the estimated Catholic population of some 350,000.

The age range of younger people attending is broadly similar to the Church of Ireland, with 16% between the ages of 12 and 25.

There is a similar pattern of greater attendance among older people, with 14% between 26-40, and 45% between 41-75.

The gender breakdown also reflects a striking similarity to the Church of Ireland, with a higher proportion of women worshippers (56%) compared to 44% of men.

Comparative figures were not available from the Presbyterian Church, which surveys its members differently.

However, the latest figures indicate only a marginal drop in members from 237,408 in 2012 to 234,579 in 2013.

More at -

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/church-of-ireland-faces-shrinking-congregations-crisis-31211426.html>

Archbishop's Ascension Day sermon live on BBC Radio 4

On Thursday evening you can listen to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, preaching at the St Martin-in-the-Fields Ascension Day service.

From 8pm the service will be broadcast live on BBC Radio 4 from the landmark church in London's Trafalgar Square.

Ascension Day is one of the most significant days in the Church's liturgical calendar, celebrating Christ's return to the Father in heaven, forty days after his resurrection.

Election result requires early delivery of new powers - Church of Scotland

Scotland's unprecedented General Election result should lead to the early delivery of the Smith Commission Agreement, according to the

convener of the Church of Scotland's Church & Society council.

Speaking as the composition of the United Kingdom's parliament became clear, Rev Sally Foster-Fulton said "The results of yesterday's General Election are remarkable by any stretch of the imagination and start a new chapter in our history as a country.

"As a Church we wish to offer our congratulations to the Prime Minister and wish him well in the task of forming his new government. The next five years will be important ones in the United Kingdom with the likelihood of a referendum on our continued membership of the European Union, proposals to renew Trident, and the ongoing impact of welfare reform and benefit cuts amongst key issues that we are already aware of – and are concerned about.

"As a Church we will seek, alongside others, to engage constructively and work with the Government, on these and other issues in the service of the common good. Running through all that we will do is our calling to follow Jesus, Son of God, Friend of the Poor and Prince of Peace.

"We also offer our congratulations to the Scottish National Party on what they have achieved. The

issue of Scotland's relationship with the rest of the United Kingdom will clearly be a vitally important issue over the coming weeks, months and years. It is imperative that the clear way in which Scotland has voted is recognised by the new government at Westminster.

An early step in achieving this will be delivery of the new powers for Scotland promised in the Smith Commission Agreement. It must also include a commitment on the part of both governments to work together for the people of Scotland and the rest of the United Kingdom.

"Both governments will remain in my prayers and in the prayers of so many in our Church. We look forward to debating many of the issues central to those facing the new government during our General Assembly later this month."

Christian Aid welcomes UK Cabinet appointment on climate change and development

Christian Aid has welcomed the appointment of Amber Rudd as the new Secretary of State for the Department of Energy and Climate Change, and the return of Justine Greening to lead DFID.

Welcoming Amber Rudd as DECC Minister, Christian Aid's Head of Advocacy, Laura Taylor, said: "Amber Rudd could not come to this role at a better time, with momentum building across the world for a new climate deal in Paris which will be finalised this year.

"Ms Rudd has a chance to reclaim climate change as a core Conservative agenda and champion this issue around the Cabinet table, because no one department or Minister can solve it alone.

"The priorities for her department were laid out before the election by David Cameron: to maintain the cross party consensus, seek an ambitious climate deal in Paris, agree carbon budgets in accordance with the Climate Change Act, and end the use of unabated coal for power generation. Christian Aid will support her in achieving these.

"On June 17 thousands of people will gather outside Westminster as part of a mass lobby to urge MPs to make tackling climate change a focus of this Parliament. I look forward to seeing Ms Rudd reflect this public support by making the UK a global leader in promoting solutions to the climate problem."

Ms Taylor also welcomed the return of Justine Greening as DFID Secretary. She said: “Justine Greening has overseen the historic legislation to enshrine in law the UK’s commitment on aid spending, and the Conservative manifesto has laid out a vision of greater changes to tackle the root causes of poverty. With major summits on financing and sustainable development coming up soon, there is an unprecedented opportunity to address the structural causes of global poverty, gender inequality and climate change.”

Media digest

Archbishop says civil partnership not enough

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/archbishop-says-civil-partnership-not-enough-329800.html>

Bishops step up opposition to gay marriage

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/politics/bishops-step-up-opposition-to-gay-marriage-31211346.html>

'Silent No': Fears of shock defeat in marriage referendum grow

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/politics/silent-no-fears-of-shock-defeat-in-marriage-referendum-grow-31211350.html>

Toxins leaking from embalmed bodies in graveyards pose threat to the living

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/toxins-leaking-from-embalmed-bodies-in-graveyards-pose-threat-to-the-living-31211012.html>

Jamie Bryson: I'm against the peace process...it's peace with a gun to its head

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/jamie-bryson-im-against-the-peace-processits-peace-with-a-gun-to-its-head-31207993.html>

Ind

Further article on the Archbishop of Canterbury's address to the Board of Deputies of British Jews, last week, which highlights his comments about receiving "poison pen letters" from fellow Christians. It states Justin Welby called on religious leaders to confront the "profound differences" between their faiths or risk allowing extremism to flourish.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/archbishop-of-canterbury-calls-on-christian-groups-to-be-more-tolerant-after-revealing-he-receives-poison-pen-letters-from-coreligionists-10240006.html>

Guard/Express/Star/Mail/Times/Mirror/Tel/BBC

Reports on the final day of the weekend of celebrations to mark the 70th anniversary of VE

day. They state 1,000 veterans paraded after a service at Westminster Abbey, attended by the Queen, Prince Philip, Prince Charles and the Prime Minister. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is quoted, when he spoke in his sermon about reconciliation..

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/10/the-queen-joins-war-veterans-to-mark-70th-anniversary-of-ve-day>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/royal/576335/The-Royal-family-leads-VE-Day-tributes-at-Westminster-Abbey>

<http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/441382/Queen-VE-Day-anniversary-70th-1-000-war-veterans>

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3076046/So-protocol-tears-selfies-VE-heroes-ROBERT-HARDMAN-witnesses-afternoon-emotion-London.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3076046/So-protocol-tears-selfies-VE-heroes-ROBERT-HARDMAN-witnesses-afternoon-emotion-London.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3076046/So-protocol-tears-selfies-VE-heroes-ROBERT-HARDMAN-witnesses-afternoon-emotion-London.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/article4436515.ece>

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/ve-day-celebrates-brave-who-5674785>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/world-war-two/11595708/VE-Day-parade-marches-through-Westminster.html>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-32679447>

Mail

Article on how Liberia's churches joined in celebrations for the announcement of the eradication of Ebola in the country. It states church members sang and played instruments to mark 42 days of no Ebola cases, which means the outbreak is officially over. For the first time in a year, worshippers were not forced to have their temperatures taken before entering the church.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-3075648/Liberia-churches-celebrate-end-Ebola.html#ixzz3Znp6YILK>