



Pope Francis waves to the crowd as he arrives for the final Mass for the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia Sept. 27.

Archbishop says Pope will visit Ireland in 2018

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin confirmed that Pope Francis, or his successor, will visit Ireland in 2018 for the World Meeting of Families.

Archbishop Martin confirmed that when he discussed the issue of visiting Ireland with the pontiff, Pope Francis said: “‘I will come’, and he said, ‘if I don’t come, my successor will come.’”

As well as Dublin, the pope would probably visit Northern Ireland to complete the 1979 historic pilgrimage of St John Paul II, when rising tensions in the North made a visit there impossible.

The Irish Catholic said Archbishop Martin made his remarks in an interview with the Irish Independent.

The Irish Catholic said that a “well-placed Vatican source” confirmed that “all the indications from Rome are very positive about this.”

“It would obviously be the hope that the Holy Father would make a visit to Northern Ireland and, perhaps, some other parts of Ireland, since many Irish Catholics will want to have an opportunity to attend Mass with Pope Francis,” the source told The Irish Catholic.

Speculation about a papal visit began in September, after Pope Francis announced in Philadelphia that Dublin would host the 2018 World Meeting of Families. Popes have presided

at all but two of the eight meetings held since the first meeting in 1994.

Archbishop of Canterbury to make history at Scotland's General Assembly

The Archbishop of Canterbury is set to make history on Wednesday when he will become the first head of the Church of England to take part in a debate at the Church of Scotland's General Assembly.

The Most Rev Justin Welby will speak in support of a landmark report, the Columba Declaration, which proposes that the two denominations enter into an historic ecumenical partnership.

Under the terms of the proposal, which is closely modelled on existing ecumenical agreements between other churches, both denominations would welcome one another's members into congregations and ordained ministers would be allowed to exercise ministry within the existing discipline of each church only within England and continental Europe.

The Moderator of last year's General Assembly, the Rt Rev Dr Angus Morrison, took part in a debate on the Columba Declaration at



The Rt Rev Angus Morrison and Most Rev Justin Welby at February's General Synod of the Church of England

February's Church of England's General Synod in London, which formally approved the agreement.

Dr Morrison said: "We all look forward to welcoming the Archbishop of Canterbury to the General Assembly on Wednesday to speak to the historic Columba Declaration.

"It was my privilege to address the General Synod of the Church of England on the same

document and by a very large majority the Synod affirmed it.

“I am confident that our General Assembly will do so too.

“In itself the Declaration is largely of a symbolic nature but it does pave the way for our further growth in fellowship and for extending partnership in mission as sister and national churches who share many common roots, challenges and opportunities.

“We wish this to happen in the closest possible fellowship with other sister churches in the United Kingdom as we seek together to address the challenges of mission in our country today.”

Archbishops of Canterbury have regularly visited and addressed the General Assembly, most recently Dr Rowan Williams in 2012, but none have taken part in a debate.

The 2016 General Assembly opens today (Saturday).

Scottish Episcopal Church to debate changes to marriage canon

A proposal to amend the marriage canon to permit same sex weddings in churches will be considered by the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church next month. The proposed changes, which were requested by the Synod in 2015, remove the current definition of marriage in the first clause of the canon and adds a new “conscience clause” to prevent clergy opposed to the move from being forced to conduct same-sex weddings against their will.

The current Canon, C31, begins by defining marriage by stating: “The Doctrine of this Church is that Marriage is a physical, spiritual and mystical union of one man and one woman created by their mutual consent of heart, mind and will thereto, and is a holy and lifelong estate instituted of God.”

The proposed amendment to Canon C31 would replace that wording with a new clause which says: “In the light of the fact that there are differing understandings of the nature of marriage in this Church, no cleric of this Church shall be obliged to conduct any marriage against their conscience. . .”

[The Synod](#) is being asked to give the proposed amendment a first reading – this requires a simple majority in each house of Synod. If



approved, it would return to the Synod next year for a second reading. This would require a two-thirds majority in each house. In between first and second reading, diocesan synods have the opportunity to make their views known on the proposals.

A counter-motion from the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney re-affirming the traditional doctrine of marriage will be put to the Synod; but only if it declines to give the proposed changes to the canon a first reading

The Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney had proposed a motion saying that

“In the light of the recent Anglican Primates meeting we, the General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church, wish to:

a) Support the Primates’ reaffirmation of the traditional doctrine of the church in upholding marriage as between a man and a woman in faithful, lifelong union.

b) And commit to making no decisions that could put the SEC’s relationship with the Anglican Communion at risk.”

The Standing Committee have agreed to put the first part of the motion to the Synod; but have rejected part B. “That is partly because the wording of the motion is too vague and ambiguous to be legally competent to put to the Synod,” secretary general John F Stuart said in a note to Synod members.

“The motion seeks to commit the Synod to taking no action that would put the Scottish Episcopal Church’s relationship with the Anglican Communion at risk. However, at the time of making a decision to take any action, General Synod would not necessarily be in a position to know whether any such prospective action would put the SEC’s relationship with the Anglican Communion at risk.

“Nor is the meaning of ‘at risk’ clear. Also, short of the usual canonical process, one General Synod cannot bind a future General Synod as to

how it should or should not act. In practice, it is for each Synod to decide for itself what decisions it wishes to make, in the light of whatever information is available to it at the time,” he said.

Discussion on the issue will begin on the afternoon of Thursday 9 June when Synod members will debate a report on the Primates’ Gathering and Meeting that took place in Canterbury Cathedral, England, in January and the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC-16) meeting in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Lusaka, Zambia, in April. After this, the Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway, the Rt Revd Gregor Duncan, acting convenor of the provincial Faith and Order Board, will present a report detailing the proposed changes and explaining the process to be following by the Synod the following day.

During this session, the bishop will also “outline further recommendations . . . of how best the unity of the Church can be maintained in the event of the Synod deciding to alter Canon 31,” Bishop Gregor said; and he will also “outline work being done by the College of Bishops on ‘surrounding’ issues which need to be addressed in advance of any second reading of the Canon in 2017.”

Union College honours Ministers

Rev. Frank Sellar, Moderator-Designate of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and Rev. Liz Hughes, Minister of Whitehouse Presbyterian Church in north Belfast, have been honoured by the Church's Union Theological College with the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Union Theological College holds its Graduation Service in Assembly Buildings, Belfast and awards honorary degrees to recognise notable ministries each year. At the ceremony, which took place this week, 13 students were awarded Postgraduate Diplomas in Ministry and Certificates for Licensing, along with 9 students who received Diplomas and Certificates in Youth Ministry.

Dr. Hughes has been minister of Whitehouse since the year 2000. On her ordination in 1986, she was the seventh woman to be ordained into the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. In his citation, Professor Laurence Kirkpatrick acknowledged her work overseas as a mission worker in the Caribbean, and her ministry in building her congregation in north Belfast, especially after a devastating arson attack that reduced the church to a shell.



Professor Stafford Carson, Principal of Union Theological College, with Rev. Liz Hughes and Rev. Frank Sellar, on the occasion of their being honoured with the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

He also acknowledged her work in community relations in and around Whitehouse that "... meshed with Catholic, Anglican and Methodist congregations listening and sharing experiences with each other. The process was painful and challenging at times but also rewarding and led to a collective vision of wanting to be relevant in the locality..."

Moderator-Designate of the General Assembly, Rev. Dr. Frank Sellar, will be formally elected and installed as Moderator on the Opening Night of

the 2016 General Assembly that starts on 6th June. He was called to Bloomfield Presbyterian Church in 2007 after spending 17 years as Minister of Adelaide Road in Dublin.

Professor Drew Gibson read the citation and in speaking of his forthcoming year as Moderator, said of the east Belfast minister, “In almost unanimously choosing Frank as the next Moderator of the General Assembly, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has recognised a man of stature, with a pacific temperament, who is wholly committed to Jesus Christ and to His Church. We know that he will represent our church well, with great dignity and we look forward to his leadership in the coming year.”

The Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland awards degrees by the authority of its Royal Charter, which was granted by Queen Victoria in 1881. Speaking at the ceremony, the Principal of Union College, the Very Rev. Professor Stafford Carson said, “This is a very happy occasion for the successful students and for the whole College community.

“Union College seeks to prepare students for effective ministry in Ireland and across the world, and we are excited for our students as they begin their full-time ministry. Our prayer is that

God would use them in significant ways to contribute to the advancement of His kingdom.”

The Graduate Diplomas in Ministry are awarded to students preparing for ordination within the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, indicating that they have completed all the requirements set out by the General Assembly and are now qualified to be licensed by their local presbyteries.

Trocaire lecturer critical of Europe's refusal to help refugees

The debate on migration taking place in Europe today is an attack on the fundamental concepts of the dignity of man and the equality of man, the President of the International Catholic Migration Commission said on Thursday evening in Maynooth.

Delivering the annual Trócaire address on the theme 'Migration – The Moral Challenge of Our Time', Peter Sutherland criticised those prime ministers in central and eastern Europe who said they would only take in refugees who are Christian.

“You begin to question whether the values of Christian civilisation, which they claim to

represent, have been anything more than skin deep,” he challenged and added, “When you see the rejection of desperate people – so desperate that 1,400 of them have already drowned this year trying to escape across the Mediterranean...”

Mr Sutherland said that such desperate people are not to be granted sanctuary or asylum because they are Muslims made him question what European society’s values really represent.

He also warned that “our inability in Europe to share the responsibility that we all owe to suffering humanity is spreading in a dangerous way.”

Europe’s refusal to help refugees is an indictment of our civilisation he said as he criticised border controls masquerading as migration policy as “a pathetic response to a moral challenge”.

Noting that Europe holds 29% of global wealth he noted that the continent said it was unable to handle one million refugees and this was the basis on which razor wire fences had been built. “What an indictment of our civilisation,” he criticised.

Praising efforts in Germany and Sweden to accommodate their fair share of refugees, he said that this had resulted in a backlash from the extreme right in both countries. “We can’t let the bad guys win,” he appealed.

Peter Sutherland also highlighted that when Pope Francis took 12 refugees back with him on the flight from Lesbos to the Vatican, that number of refugees was more than the number of refugees taken in by 21 countries in the EU took over the last 12 months.

Of Ireland’s role in the refugee crisis, he commented, “I think we could do much more,” as he emphasised that Irish politicians haven’t put in place a system to accommodate an increased number of refugees.

He said the protestant churches in Germany had achieved a system which the Church here could look to when organising their parishes to take refugees.

“Ireland should be part of the debate; we have left a mark throughout the world through our missionaries – leaving an image of society that did care. Trócaire continues that. Politically we should be leading in this debate but you can only lead if you can give example,” he said.

At the start of his address, Mr Sutherland paid tribute to St Patrick's College Maynooth, which hosted the lecture.

“It is a particular pleasure to be here in this place – in a place which represents the Church that has done so much for our country, for our people and for our world. To be here under the aegis of Trócaire which as part of Caritas is something which represents the values which are the essence of Church itself. It is an honour to be asked to speak,” he said.

Lay Leader of the Methodist church in Ireland steps down

Lay Leader of the Methodist church in Ireland, Ken Twyble, is about to step down from the position that he has held for the past three years. In his final column in the *Methodist Newsletter* he pleads for a more joyful Church. He asks that we pick up the message of the song *You shall go out with joy* (Dauermann and Rubin, 1975) and think joyfully about our daily walk with Christ. Ken suggests that we have become rather too earnest, too undemonstrative, and too unwilling either to experience simple joy or show it. Christ promised life ‘more abundant’ to his followers. Yet the picture that is often painted of us,

particularly by younger people and by those outside the Church, is that we are dour, or boring, or worse.

Ken's closing prayer is that we all experience joy in our hearts so that we radiate joy to the world and be the source of joyful encouragement to as many as possible in the Lord's name. Then truly 'the trees of the field shall clap their hands', and we shall all go out with joy.

US Methodists kick for touch on human sexuality

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church voted May 18 to commission a study on human sexuality, effectively postponing debate on homosexuality in the church.

In a 428 to 405 vote, the conference affirmed a request from the denomination's Council of Bishops to "pause for prayer" and study before commencing substantial revisions to the United Methodist Book of Discipline, which currently forbids the blessing of same-sex marriage and the ordination of noncelibate gay clergy.

"We recommend that the General Conference defer all votes on human sexuality and refer this entire subject to a special Commission, named



The Rev. Will Green lies on the floor of the 2016 United Methodist General Conference in Portland with his hands and feet bound to protest the denomination’s policies on human sexuality.

by the Council of Bishops, to develop a complete examination and possible revision of every paragraph in our Book of Discipline regarding human sexuality,” the Council of Bishops said in [a statement](#) [PDF]. “We continue to hear from many people on the debate over sexuality that our current Discipline contains language which is contradictory, unnecessarily hurtful, and inadequate for the variety of local, regional and global contexts.”

Cathedral, choral and musical

Children from St Anne's Cathedral's three north Belfast Choir Schools will showcase some of what they have learned as part of the Cathedral's Choir School Project in a concert on Sunday May 22.

The concert features pupils from Edenbrooke, Sacred Heart and Cliftonville Integrated Primary Schools, where St Anne's singing teachers have been working for the past three years, introducing choral singing to children aged 5-11.

Some of the pupils have progressed to the Cathedral's Junior Girls' and Boys' Choirs, and the Junior Girls will also be taking part in Sunday's concert, augmenting their usual sacred repertoire with some fun songs specially for the occasion.

A representative choir of some 30 children aged 7-11 will showcase some of the work done in the schools by the pupils and the Cathedral staff.

Tania Murphy, a member of the Senior Girls' Choir, will sing a solo 'Music for a while.' Tania recently sang for Royalty in a concert featuring choristers from 60 cathedrals in St Paul's in London.

Children will also play music on the Irish Harp, Violin and Piano, ensuring a light and entertaining programme.

Cathedral music tutor Thérèse Woodfield said: “This is an opportunity for pupils from our three Choir Schools to enjoy the experience of performing outside their schools, and for their families and friends to be part of a major event in the beautiful surroundings of Belfast Cathedral.”

The public are warmly invited to this short concert which begins at 3.30pm and will last approximately 40 minutes. There is no admission charge for this event.

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A great evening of musical celebration is planned for Sunday in St Paul's, Arran Quay, to bring **Ecumenical Bible Week** 2016 to a close. This is a free event and all are welcome. Choirs & Music from Dublin Gospel Choir, Dublin Deaf Choir, Hillside Choir, The Romanian Orthodox, Armenian Choir, Pentecostal Choirs, Holy Rosary Choir ... 7:30pm to 9pm - Sunday 22nd May

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New Irish Arts - Tickets on sale now for the two **Ireland in Christmas Praise** events taking place

in the Waterfront on 1st & 2nd December! Get the best pick of the seats by buying yours....
<http://www.waterfront.co.uk/.../new-irish-arts-presents-irel.../>

News briefs

John Williams, a lay reader in Dunmurry Parish (Connor), was recently invested to the rank of Commander in the **Order of St John**. John was granted this rank by Her Majesty The Queen and the award was presented by Viscount Brookeborough- Knight Commander - at Belfast Castle. Prior to his retirement John was a senior nursing manager in BCH.

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The **President of the Methodist Church**, Rev Brian AndersonI joined Derek Johnston and Brenda Duncan at the **dedication of the refurbished Chapel at the Royal Victoria Hospital** this week. Other church leaders were there along with trust chaplains. The President later commented, "Beautifully and tastefully done, open all day, it is a place for quiet reflection and worship. Derek said that while God is in all places and be found in all places, there are still those special spaces that bring us

closer to God. The Hospital has it Quiet Room near the main entrance but this Chapel is for Christian worship and prayer. It was also wonderful to be in the "old corridor " with its great sense of history and healing.”

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Portrush Men's Society welcomed sports commentator **Liam Beckett**, who spoke with humour and honesty about his life story. He has recently published his autobiography, 'From Start to Finish'.

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The **Revd Anthony Kelly** was instituted as Rector of the Parishes of Holmpatrick and Kenure wth Balbriggan and Balrothery on Wednesday evening. The evening marked the grouped parishes' return to full incumbency.

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Mount Merrion Church, Cregagh will be the venue for an **Evangelism Training Day** on Saturday 28 May.

The training will be delivered by Ludie Creech from [Operation Mobilisation Ireland](#) and the event is hosted by Diocesan Evangelists, Jim and Janet Fleming. Ludie, from Atlanta, Georgia is OM Ireland's Programme Manager and is

responsible for all of the evangelistic programmes and events. **Cost:** Just £5 (to cover travel costs). **What:** ‘The Way of the Master’ Evangelism Training – seek and save the lost the way Jesus did. **When:** Saturday 28 May 2016 from 10.00 am – 4.00 pm (optional street outreach afterwards). **Where:** Mount Merrion Church, 126 Mount Merrion Avenue, Belfast, BT6 OFS.

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Journalist, writer and broadcaster, **Charlie Bird** was in Cork on Thursday, 19th May for the launch of his book ‘A Day in May: Real Lives, True Stories.’ Bishop Paul Colton was invited by the organisers, author and publishers to launch the book at a function in Waterstones in Cork. Four of the Cork-based contributors were interviewed by Karl Hayden at the reception. The renowned freelance photographer, John Minihan, who took the photos for the book, spoke about his contribution, and Charlie Bird himself spoke. Bishop Colton said that the invitation to him to launch the book was ‘generous and gracious’. Bishop Colton said: In a world of generalisations and stereotypes where people make shallow assumptions about one another – ‘the poor, the sick, the mentally ill, the gays, the politicians, the church, the bishops’ – it is very important that

there are opportunities for properly getting to know people as fellow human beings, to hear their stories and to come genuinely to understand each others' situations. This book is a valuable contribution to such a process. True understanding of one another as human beings, based on getting to know one another at an ordinary day-to-day human level, is very often the first building block of justice and equality.

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A foundation course in Christian listening called **'Paying Attention to God: A Way of Listening'** is being offered by the Rev Alan Lorimer and Mrs Breige O'Hare, in conjunction with Edgehill Theological

This is an interdenominational programme, designed to support ordained and lay people for whom listening is an important part of their work/ministry. It aims to deepen and enrich their listening and nourish their sense of God's presence and leading in their own lives.

The year is also a prerequisite for those wishing to go on to the 'Steps in Spiritual Direction' programme, a two year programme which was very successful and finished in Edgehill a few weeks ago.

The course begins in September 2016. For further details and application pack, please [click here](#).

Breige O'Hare (Bsc, BAgr MA) is a spiritual director based in well.com, a Christian Centre for Psychological and Spiritual wellbeing. She was trained by the Jesuits in Manresa House, Dublin and has an MA in Pastoral theology and a Certificate in Counselling from QUB. She works with lay and ordained people, offering one-to-one sessions, as well as reflective prayer and learning experiences and retreats for groups and congregations.

Alan Lorimer (BSc. BD. P. G. Dip Cognitive Therapy) is a Counselling Psychologist on the Register of the Health Care Professions Council (HCPC) and a Registered Psychologist with Psychological Society of Ireland (PSSI). He is also an Accredited Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist with The British Association of Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy (BABCP) and a Minister in the Methodist Church in Ireland.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Social Democrats member dropped as Mass reader over abortion stance

Irish Examiner

The story emerged as a **Church of Ireland** rector in Wicklow rescinded an invitation to a guest speaker who has written of “rewiring” the psyche of gay ...

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/social-democrats-member-dropped-as-mass-reader-over-abortion-stance-400643.html&ct=ga&cd=CAEYBCoSMTUwNDI0MTYwNzA4NjM1MzEwMhxmYWM4NTk1OTJmMWJiNmIzOmNvLnVrOmVuOkdC&usg=AFQjCNH6kG22FkZpaXKGDB-AL1IjwDdr8g>

Church of Ireland pulls invite to anti-LGBT speaker Ed Silvosa

Irish Times

The **Church of Ireland** Archdiocese of Dublin has withdrawn an invitation to a controversial evangelist preacher who was written about ridding gay ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/church-of-ireland-pulls-invite-to-anti-lgbt-speaker-ed-silvosa-1.2653977>

Church of Ireland denies visit of evangelist timed for Marriage Equality Referendum anniversary -

[BreakingNews.ie](http://www.breakingnews.ie)

<http://www.breakingnews.ie/ireland/church-of-ireland-denies-visit-of-evangelist-timed-for-marriage-equality-referendum-anniversary-736192.html>

Total of 412 same-sex marriages registered since referendum

Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/total-of-412-same-sex-marriages-registered-since-referendum-1.2654751>

Irish priests' group to discuss vocation crisis with bishops

Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/irish-priests-group-to-discuss-vocation-crisis-with-bishops-1.2652657>

Vatican spin-doctor criticises Catholic keyboard warriors...

Sluggar O'Toole

One of the ironies of Northern **Ireland** is the enemy for some protestant churches is not the Catholic **Church** but their splinter **church** down the road.

<http://sluggerotoole.com/2016/05/18/vatican-spin-doctor-criticises-catholic-keyboard-warriors/>

Support for Fr Rory Coyle is heartening

Irish News

<http://www.irishnews.com/opinion/columnists/2016/05/19/news/support-for-fr-rory-coyle-is-heartening-524659/>

Orange Institution Somme services

Specially arranged memorial services will take place across Northern Ireland this weekend, as the Orange

Institution marks the upcoming centenary of the Battle of the Somme.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/orange-order-set-to-mark-somme-sacrifice-1-7389610>

Teachers vote to stop working extra hours - but say it won't affect students

The Journal

The hours were agreed under the Croke Park agreement.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/asti-teachers-vote-croke-park-hours-2778624-May2016/>

Educate Together to run new primary school at former priest-training college

The Journal

The organisation also won the patronage of a primary school in Cabra.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/educate-together-primary-school-priest-2778458-May2016/>

Plan for more non-faith schools

Irish Examiner

Only eight Catholic and **Church of Ireland** schools have so far divested their patronage to multi-denominational control. However, only two so far have ...

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/plan-for-more-non-faith-schools-400303.html>

Magherafelt schools cancel Euro 2016 finals trip over safety fears

BBC News

Two Magherafelt schools cancel a planned cross-community trip to Paris for the Euro 2016 football tournament due to safety concerns.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-36333778>

Archbishop of Canterbury apologies to Jersey Dean over abuse case

BBC News

The Archbishop of Canterbury apologises to Jersey's Dean over claims he mishandled an allegation by a woman of abuse relating to a church official.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-jersey-36336772>

Times

Report that the Archbishop of Canterbury has warned that racism is deeply embedded in British culture and that "dangerous political rhetoric" stokes division. Archbishop Justin was speaking at a *Near Neighbours* interfaith gathering at Lambeth Palace and spoke out against antisemitism, Islamophobia and politicians who spread fear. "We are in a time of rising tensions," he said. "We've seen a very sharp rise over the last year or so in antisemitic expression. It is absolutely intolerable."

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/racism-is-embedded-in-our-culture-warns-archbishop-7ggdzjn2l>

BBC/ITV

Reports that the Archbishop of Canterbury has apologised to Jersey's Dean Bob Key and his wife for the "hurt" they have received over the past years during the ongoing handling of a safeguarding case on the Island. Bob Key met with Archbishop Justin last week and a letter from the archbishop to the Bailiff of Jersey is churchnewsireland@gmail.com

quoted. Both articles note that the Bishop of Winchester has sent a private apology to the survivor in the case and that the Steel Report is not expected to be published but wider findings on safeguarding practice on the Island, currently being carried out by Bishop John Gladwin, will be released later in the summer.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-jersey-36336772>

<http://www.itv.com/news/channel/update/2016-05-19/archbishop-of-canterbury-apologies-to-jerseys-dean-for-abuse-probe/>

[Christian Today/Premier](#)

Reports the Archbishop of Canterbury has hosted a live Bible study on Facebook (see above). In conjunction with its evangelism adviser the Revd Chris Russell, [the video](#) features the passage John 1:35-42 and was watched in countries across the world.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Archbishop-of-Canterbury-hosts-Facebook-Bible-study>

[Northern Echo](#)

Further report previewing a safeguarding item for next week's House of Bishops agenda on the [Elliott Review recommendations published in March](#) which includes training for senior clergy on how to deal with disclosures. The article includes quotes from an open letter from the survivor and notes that the Bishop of Durham, who has sent a personal apology to the survivor, supports all the recommendations in the review. Bishop Sarah Mullally will present the item at the House of Bishops.

Guard

Reports that the scale of child sexual abuse in England and Wales is being exposed by evidence from thousands of victims, with cases being passed to police at a rate of 100 a month by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse being chaired by Justice Goddard. The Anglican Church in England and Wales is one of the 13 investigations the Inquiry will be carrying out. Yesterday the Inquiry opened new offices in Manchester as part of its nationwide Truth Project.

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/may/19/child-sex-abuse-police-expect-30000-goddard-inquiry-cases>

Guard

Reports that the selflessness of those who have donated their corpses for dissection by students to learn from, will be honoured at Southwark Cathedral today. Giles Fraser who writes the article is also giving the sermon at the service. In it, he says he will not only thank God for the generosity of those who have given of their bodies, but also thank God for the inclusivity of the NHS that exists for the benefit of all.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2016/may/19/giving-your-body-for-dissection-overcomes-an-ancient-taboo>

Christian Today

Report that research has found that most people who stop going to church retain their faith. The findings were unveiled at a church statistic conference in Birmingham by Steve Aisthorpe, a development worker for the Church of Scotland. The Bishop of Manchester is quoted.

BBC

Reports that teachers have voted to strike over plans to close a village primary school in East Sussex, where pupil numbers have fallen. Members of the National Union of Teachers plan to walk out of Rodmell C of E School on 25 May. East Sussex County Council said Rodmell and nearby Pells primary school in Lewes struggle to attract enough children and be financially stable. But the NUT claims that Rodmell will be oversubscribed by 2020.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-sussex-36330959>

ITV/Ind

Reports that a C of E primary school in Kent has devised a way to help parents plan cheaper holidays. Pupils at Chiddingstone Primary School, near Tonbridge, will see their school day extended by 20 minutes in return for an extra two weeks' holiday per school year. Rather than one week off for half-term in May and October, the school will now break for two weeks, allowing parents to plan cheaper, off-peak holidays. The headteacher, Rachel Streatfield is quoted.

<http://www.itv.com/news/2016-05-19/primary-school-helps-parents-afford-cheaper-holidays/>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/primary-school-extends-school-day-to-help-parents-afford-cheaper-holidays-a7037641.html>

BBC

Further coverage of the case of a mother who has been refused permission to place a fairytale castle headstone on her daughter's grave, because it does not adhere to churchyard regulations. Penni Hall's daughter, Alycia Mckee, died last year aged 18. Ms Hall had wanted to place the "princess" gravestone at St Margaret and St

Andrews church in Exmouth. But a spokesman for the Diocese of Exeter said it "fell outside the standard headstone" regulations.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-devon-36330617>

Guard

A review of a new book on Augustine of Hippo written by former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Williams.

<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/may/19/augustine-rowan-williams-robert-lane-fox-review>

Times

Reports that the Scottish Episcopal Church could become the first in the UK to allow its clergy to conduct gay weddings in church. A vote, which would change the position of the church on same-sex marriage, is likely to be passed next month, paving the way for the first gay weddings to be conducted next year. The Scottish Episcopal Church is the third most popular in Scotland, behind the Church of Scotland and the Catholic Church, with a membership of about 60,000 and 350 congregations.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/scottish-church-likely-to-be-the-first-in-britain-to-conduct-gay-marriages-mlpj2kqvj>

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