

Church News Ireland



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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

Image of the day



L-R, Isobel Wallace, Freda Allen, Bertie Allen and Julie's husband, Irvine Richardson.

This Presbyterian congregation in Ballynure in south Antrim went the full distance in their Christian Aid week effort.

Julie Richardson, CAI representative at Ballynure, decorated each fairy cake with the Christian Aid logo, made from edible icing.

Like all CAI representatives, Julie is passionate about the work of bringing hope to people living in poverty and crisis.

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She especially enjoyed the CAI Supporter Conference in March, an event held annually to prepare the reps and organisers for Christian Aid Week - and Julie recommends it to anyone who's never been.

News

Armagh Mothers Union linking with Burundi



Armagh Mothers Union Diocesan Festival Service was held in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh, conducted by The Dean, Rev Shane Foster.

Banners were received during the first hymn "To God be the Glory!" The first reading was read by Rev Alan Cross, Diocesan Chaplain and the second lesson read by Mrs Florence Hoey, Cathedral Reader and former Diocesan President.



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The Sermon was delivered by The Very Rev Liz Fitzgerald, Dean of Raphoe. Dean Fitzgerald is a granddaughter of Nancy Pollard, who was a Vice President of All Ireland MU and previously lived at Vicar's Hill opposite the Cathedral. The offering at the service is to go towards the Diocesan Trip to Burundi in September when Davina McAllister, the diocesan Worldwide Rep will represent Mother's Union on this trip



Thursdays in Black marked by Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission

Members of the Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission have marked 'Thursdays in Black' this week.

'Thursdays in Black' is a global campaign that speaks out against violence, to ensure that women and men, boys and girls, are safe in all places in our societies.

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The group is currently meeting in Dubai for dialogue, prayer and planning for the ongoing work of the Safe Church Commission.

Find out more about Anglican Communion Safe Church Commission here:
bit.ly/2PUB9QS.

Pope Leo appeals for Israel to allow humanitarian aid in Gaza

Pope Leo XIV on Wednesday appealed for Israel to allow humanitarian aid to enter Gaza, calling the situation in the Palestinian enclave "yet more worrying and saddening".

"I renew my fervent appeal to allow for the entry of fair humanitarian help and to bring to an end the hostilities, the devastating price of which is paid by children, the elderly and the sick," the new pope said during his first weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square.

Leo, the former Cardinal Robert Prevost, was elected the leader of the Catholic Church on May 8 to succeed the late Pope Francis. He has mentioned the situation in Gaza several times in the first weeks of his papacy.

The appeal came at the end of the pope's audience, when he added a few words to his prepared text. The pope, who U.S. President Donald Trump said on Monday had

expressed interest in hosting Russia-Ukraine peace talks, did not mention that conflict.

In his first Sunday message on May 11, the new pope called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and for the release of all Israeli hostages held by militant group Hamas.

Israel said on Monday that it would allow aid to enter Gaza after an 11-week blockade on the enclave, but the United Nations said no help had been distributed as of Tuesday.

Israel says it plans to intensify military operations against Hamas and to control the whole of Gaza, which has been devastated by an Israeli air and ground war since Hamas' cross-border attack on Israeli communities in October 2023.

Israel has said its blockade is aimed in part at preventing Palestinian militants from diverting and seizing aid supplies. Hamas has denied doing so.

FRANCIS' CRITICISM OF ISRAEL

Francis, who died on April 21, had been ramping up criticism of Israel's military campaign in Gaza in the months before his death.

He called the situation in the enclave "very serious and shameful" in January, two months after suggesting the international community should study whether there had been a genocide of the Palestinian people.

Reflecting a chill in Vatican-Israel relations after Francis' criticisms, Israel, unlike many other nations, did not send a

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high-level official to attend the late pope's funeral, but only its Vatican ambassador.

In a sign of possible hopes for a reset of relations with the new pope, Israeli President Isaac Herzog attended Leo's inaugural Mass in St. Peter's Square on Sunday.

A delegation of 13 Jewish officials also took part in the Mass, including Rome's chief rabbi and the vice president of the Italian Union of Jewish Communities.

The pope, born in Chicago and the first U.S. pontiff, spoke in fluent Italian for most of the audience but also addressed pilgrims in English and Spanish.

It was the first weekly papal audience in more than three months. Francis held his last weekly audience on February 12, two days before beginning a five-week hospital stay.

Education

BRAs Junior Battle of the Bands

On Wednesday 14th May, the ultimate contest took place in the Assembly Hall in front of 250 adoring fans - Junior Battle of the Bands.

This event provided a platform for the young musicians to gain experience, perform live, and potentially enjoy themselves. It was a fabulous lunchtime and many thanks to all the pupils who put themselves forward. Ultimately 'Core'



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were the overall winners with their very professional rendition of 'Master of Puppets' by Metallica. Well done guys!



Slemish College live link with Kenya

We are delighted to support our past employee, Patricia, as she returns to Kenya to continue her missionary work with Gillaj Star.

Slemish College staff and students raised money which will go towards the Community Library in Rabuor, Kenya, helping purchase basic stationery such as books and pencils for the children. Everyone at Slemish College sends good wishes to Patricia, Ibrahim and Daniel as they carry out this much needed and worthwhile work. Patricia is pictured receiving a cheque for £700 from Mr Bennett on behalf of everyone in the Slemish College community.



Firm stands by Strabane Academy

Huge congratulations to William, Carson, Riley, and Jake for their standout performances in the U13 victory over ERGS!

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These young stars lit up the pitch with century and half-century partnerships, showcasing teamwork, skill, and determination. 🌟

A brilliant win and an even better display of cricketing talent — the future is bright!

Belfast High School Cricket Success

Congratulations to former pupil and Ireland Cricket Captain Paul Stirling on becoming the first Irish player to reach 10,000 career runs in ODI, T20 and Test matches

- as Ireland comfortably beat West Indies in the opening one-day international at Clontarf.

Cathedral Calls

Commissioning of Dublin Diocesan Pastoral Council

The Dublin Diocesan Pastoral Council will advise the Archbishop on pastoral initiatives for the diocese into the future.

The membership is made up of mostly lay participants who were chosen after a lengthy process of discernment in deaneries and pastoral areas over the past year in order to reflect the entire population of the diocese, rural and urban, young and older, male and female... This is exciting



Bishop Roche blessing the members of the new council

The members of the Dublin Diocesan Pastoral Council in the sanctuary of St Mary's Pro-Cathedral development for the Archdiocese and it comes at a time when there is a great sense of hope in the Church with the recent election of Pope Leo XIV.

Homily of Bishop Donal Roche, Auxiliary Bishop of Dublin:
<https://dublindiocese.ie/pastoral-council-2025/>

New Lourdes Grotto at Newry Cathedral

It was a day for family fun in the sun this afternoon at Newry Cathedral Rose Garden. Canon Francis Brown blessed the new Lourdes Grotto, generously donated by the Burns family.

Canon Brown expressed heartfelt thanks to the Burns family for their meaningful gift and paid tribute to the many people who have worked tirelessly in recent years to restore the garden. Thanks to their dedication, it now stands as a beautiful and peaceful space for the people of Newry to enjoy.

Another generous gift was also unveiled — a beautiful granite seat, kindly donated by the Knights of Columbanus. This thoughtful addition commemorates both the blessing of the grotto and the upcoming bicentennial of Newry Cathedral in 2029.

The seat offers a peaceful spot for visitors to pause, reflect, and spend quiet moments at the grotto. Canon Francis thanked the Knights of St Columbanus - CK10, Newry for their generosity. The garden is open daily, and all are warmly welcome to visit and enjoy its peace and beauty.

Clergy and ministry

Expanding outreach work to students in the Cathedral Quarter of Belfast

The Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplaincy Belfast city wide ministry are seeking to expand its outreach work to students in the Cathedral Quarter of Belfast.

“We are looking for someone who will work alongside the University of Ulster Chaplain to develop new areas of

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mission and engagement with students who want to grow in faith and share in opportunities to share their faith and lives.

“The role will work from a base at St Anne’s Cathedral. We are looking for someone passionate about the discipleship of young adults and the growth of the church in Belfast.

“Come join our team! Click the link for more info...

<https://www.thehubbelfast.org/join-our-team>



CONCERT

Anchorage Concert Chorus

from: Alaska, USA

director: Grant Cochran

with:

Killorglin Mens Social Club Choir

Tuesday

27th May

8:00pm

St. Mary's Church of Ireland
Kenmare Place : Killarney : Ireland

www.churchofthesloes.ie

Free Admission

Retiring Collection in aid of church repair fund

Book Free Tickets On
www.eventbrite.com/e/1342844587309

Events

**Anchorage
Alaska
choir in
Killarney,
May 27**

**Our next
concert is on
Tuesday 27
May at 8pm
and combines
a visiting choir
from
Anchorage
Alaska with
our very own
neighbours the**

Killorglin Male Voice Choir.

It promises to be an exciting night. Entry is free

Donations are invited towards our ongoing restoration appeal — come and look at the progress being made, it's already looking spectacular. Supporting Killarney.ie



Resources

Council for Mission latest Mission Matter Podcast

Tim Wright talks to Rev. Dr. Chris Wright, Global Ambassador for Langham Partnership, to the C of I Mission Matters podcast.

Chris shares his Belfastroots, upbringing in the Presbyterian Church, and early exposure to world mission through his missionary parents. After studying and teaching in Cambridge, he pursued Old Testament ethics and theological education.

Ordained in the Church of England, he taught in India and later led All Nations Christian College. His experiences shaped his missional theology, culminating in his influential book *The Mission of God*. He now serves with Langham, supporting global theological education in the majority world.

<https://shows.acast.com/missionmatters/episodes/681346bdcea668298698b077>

Video highlights partnership between church and local school

A partnership in Connor diocese between **Derryvolgie Parish Church and Harmony Hill Primary School, Lisburn**, is the subject of a new video in the Church of Ireland's 'Inspiring Angles' series.

Video on opportunity for Young Leaders in Dublin and Glendalough

Young people aged 18 to 25 are invited to apply for a new 10-month internship programme from Dublin and Glendalough Youth Council

This is designed to deepen their faith, develop their leadership skills, and connect them with others. The video is part of the Church of Ireland's Inspiring angles series.

The United Dioceses' Youth Officer Emma Fawcett highlights what the internship will offer to those taking part, and how the Church can provide a space where young people can belong in the arms of Jesus who gives us hope for the future and brings out our potential as we follow him. Check out www.dgyc.org/internship to find out more! And feel free to share this with young people whom you who could benefit from this great opportunity. The closing date is Monday, 30th June 2025.

Perspective

Pope Leo XIV's coat of arms

Pope Leo XIV's coat of arms offers a clear reflection of his Augustinian roots and the values he seeks to promote during his pontificate, particularly unity and communion within the Church.

The shield is divided diagonally into two sections. The upper half features a blue background with a white lily.

The lower half of the shield has a light background and displays an image that recalls the Order of Saint Augustine: a closed book with a heart pierced by an arrow. This is a direct reference to the conversion experience of Saint Augustine himself, who described his personal encounter

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with God's Word using the phrase: "Vulnerasti cor meum verbo tuo" - "You have pierced my heart with your Word."

Pope Leo XIV has also chosen a motto that reflects this Augustinian tradition: In Illo uno unum, which means "In the One, we are one." The phrase is taken from Saint Augustine's Exposition on Psalm 127, where he explains that "although we Christians are many, in the one Christ we are one."

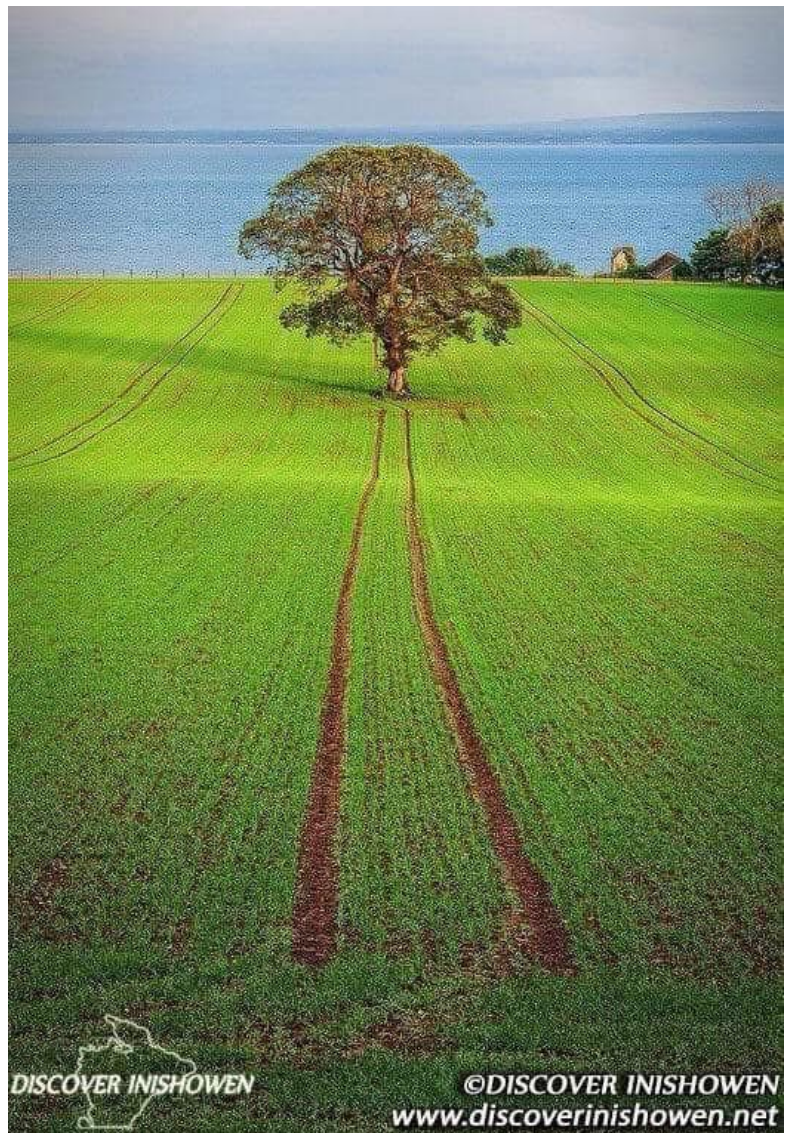
More: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2025-05/pope-leo-xiv-s-motto-and-coat-of-arms.html>

Poem for today

Advice from a Tree

by Ilan Shamir

Dear Friend,
Stand Tall and Proud
Sink your roots deeply
into the Earth
Reflect the light of a
greater source
Think long term
Go out on a limb
Remember your place
among all living
beings
Embrace with joy the



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changing seasons
For each yields its own abundance
The Energy and Birth of Spring
The Growth and Contentment of Summer
The Wisdom to let go of leaves in the Fall
The Rest and Quiet Renewal of Winter
Feel the wind and the sun
And delight in their presence
Look up at the moon that shines down upon you
And the mystery of the stars at night.
Seek nourishment from the good things in life
Simple pleasures
Earth, fresh air, light
Be content with your natural beauty
Drink plenty of water
Let your limbs sway and dance in the breezes
Be flexible
Remember your roots
Enjoy the view!

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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www.churchnewsireland.org

**Link in Monday through Saturday from
early morning**

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