

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Blessing the boats at Ballycastle**

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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

## Image of the day



### Blessing of the Boats at Ballycastle before Rathlin Sound Maritime Festival



Front page - Viking boat at the 'Blessing of the Boats' in Ballycastle, County Antrim, as the Rathlin Sound Maritime Festival opened on Friday evening, 23 May.



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Page 3 above -Rev. Canon David Ferguson pictured at the 'Blessing of the Boats' in Ballycastle, County Antrim.

## News



## Royal Navy ship with distinctive Welsh Dragon on its bow at Portrush

**Royal Navy Ship HMS Dragon (D35) visited Portrush at the weekend.**

It is a Type 45 Destroyer and it's primary role is Air Defence. It carries the Sea Viper Missile System as well as various other weapon systems including Counter Drone Measures.

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It is the first RN Ship to complete live firing and successfully bringing down a Supersonic Missile.

The distinctive Welsh Red Dragon on it's bow is 152m long. Dagon was built in 2008 and commissioned 2012 and sails under the flag of the UK.

## **Limavady Brigade displays support The Children's Cancer Unit charity**

**During the Annual Displays of 1st Drumachose Boys' Brigade and 249th NI Girls' Brigade, a total of £1500 donations were collected for The Children's Cancer Unit Charity. A charity that has been supporting families within the two companies.**

Pictured: Emily Hamilton (GB Officer and Staff Nurse who is accepting the cheque on behalf of the charity), Sandra Laird (GB Captain), Richard Gallick (BB Officer in Charge), and Stephen Breydin (BB Officer). Holding the cheque is Martha & Frazer who are representing the families that avail of the charity's services (members of GB & BB).

## **Cork and Ross Brazilian friends and family in faith**

**A joyful and grateful day in Cork's Brazilian Catholic Community! Bishop Fintan Gavin celebrated Mass with the community at Holy Trinity Church last weekend and was accompanied by Lorraine Buckley, Faith Development Coordinator.**



The Mass was very special and beautifully organised by the Brazilian community with great care and dedication. From the liturgy to the welcoming atmosphere, everything reflected the love and commitment of the members. The music during the celebration was truly amazing—inspiring, joyful, and uplifting. It touched hearts and helped make the experience even more meaningful for everyone present.

During the Mass, five new Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, who have generously committed themselves to serve with love and devotion, were commissioned. It was a proud and moving moment for everyone.

After Mass, there was a warm and engaging meeting with community leadership — a valuable opportunity to share ideas, grow in unity, and strengthen the mission together.



The community thanked Bishop Fintan Gavin and Lorraine Buckley for their visit, support, and presence. People said that it was a day full of blessings that they will carry in their hearts with gratitude and joy.

## **United prayer for the Holy Land during ecumenical service to celebrate Nicaea anniversary**

**In the beginning, the words were spoken in Jerusalem only. By the end, a chorus of voices filled the Temple Church in London, as, one by one, the congregation joined in saying a prayer for Christians in the Holy Land.**

The Archbishop in Jerusalem's chaplain, Canon Donald Binder, led the prayer from the Roman Catholic Co-Cathedral in Jerusalem, joined by video link to London for a service organised by the charity Friends of the Holy Land.

It was not clear, at first, whether the congregation was supposed to join in. But those at the back of the Temple Church began tentatively to say the words out loud, and the volume grew as others followed suit.

From the front, it sounded like a roll of thunder, gathering force until it filled the church. It was only at the end, the prayer now being recited confidently, that the words became easily intelligible: "Lord, remember our fellow Christians in their greatest need, and help us not to forget them."

The Temple Church was at capacity for the ecumenical service on Tuesday lunchtime, conceived by Friends of the Holy Land as a celebration of the 1700th anniversary of the opening of the First Council of Nicaea.

But it was also an occasion to remember the plight of today's inhabitants of the Holy Land, as the late Pope Francis had said in a message to the gathering written days before his death on Easter Monday.

“By bringing together church leaders and members of the faithful from various traditions, this commendable initiative bears eloquent witness to the rich religious tapestry that characterises the land of our saviour's birth, and it also calls attention to the enduring desire for peace held dear by its citizens today,” the message said.

The late Pope's words were read by the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nichols. In Jerusalem, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, read Pope Leo's first words in office, which focused on peace.

At the start of his sermon, Cardinal Pizzaballa said that, despite “different traditions, different languages, different rites”, Christians were “altogether united in one body of Christ”. The Nicene Creed, he said, was an “indispensable point of reference” for the Church.

Greek and Armenian church leaders in Jerusalem also participated in the service; representatives of Baptist, Methodist, and Pentecostal Churches led the intercessions from London.



The former Bishop of London Lord Chartres welcomed participants by saying that the event was one of the “most hopeful and encouraging events” since the consecration of the Temple Church by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Heraclius, in 1185.

Afterwards, at a reception, the Friends’ chief executive, Brendan Metcalfe, said that half the population of the West Bank were reached by the work of Christian-run institutions, including schools, hospitals, and social-outreach programmes.

“These Christian organisations are practising their faith every day, despite the pressures and despite the fact that [the Christian population] is declining,” Mr Metcalfe said.

## Education

### St Dominic’s Grammar School Year 10 retreats

**All 5 Year 10 RE classes have had their summer term retreats and were blessed this year with glorious weather!**

The retreat, held at the De LaSalle retreat centre, allows pupils a good chance to focus on their spiritual and mental well-being. The pupils have the opportunity to step away from their daily routines and allowed valuable time for reflection. The retreat ends with a group liturgy designed by

the pupils themselves. All our Key Stage 3 pupils will have summer term retreats organised by the RE department.

## **Last curtain for Year 14 at Dunclogh**

**It was a special moment at Dunclogh College as their Year 14 Performing Arts class took to the stage for the very last time ✨**

For their final practical exam, this talented group of young people delivered powerful devised performances to an audience of proud family and friends. After 7 incredible years of drama and music, their journey on our stage has come to a close.

We are so proud of everything they have achieved and wish them every success for the future. The world is your stage – go out and shine!

## **Cathedral Calls**

### **Diocesan School Services in Christ Church Cathedral Waterford.**

**The first of six Diocesan School Services was held in Christ Church Cathedral Waterford.**

It involved a tour of the cathedral and a workshop on prayer. The pupils also brought their questions to ask Bishop Wilkinson. The morning ended with worship and ice cream!



Thanks to those involved and to the pupils and staff who participated.

## **Singing for Schools Showcase at St Peter's Cathedral**

**On Friday 16 May, we hosted our annual Singing for Schools Showcase in the Cathedral, bringing together pupils from St Joseph's Primary School Slate Street, St. Peter's Primary School Belfast Holy Child Primary School & Nursery Unit, Belfast and St Kevin's Primary (St John's Parish Falls Road)**



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As well as singing together, some of the boys and girls had the opportunity to play the Cathedral organ, following a demonstration by James, our Director of Music.

Thank you to our participating schools, the teachers and parents for supporting this project throughout the year, to Neale Agnew for accompanying the children so beautifully and Rebecca Morris (Assistant Director of the Girl's Choir) who helped prepare a lot of work in advance of the morning.



Psalm 96: "Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth."

The project is supported by National Schools Singing Programme and Diocese of Leeds Music. Diocese of Down and Connor Pathways to The Future Down and Connor



## Good news for former Trinity College, Cambridge organists



**Recent weeks have brought welcome news from two former Trinity College, Cambridge organists.**

Luke Fitzgerald (R; Associate Organist 2019-20) has been announced by Pembroke College Cambridge as its new Janeway Director of Music from September in succession to Anna Lapwood. Luke joins Pembroke from Coventry Cathedral where he is presently Acting Director of Music.

September will also see a fresh start for Alexander Hamilton (L; Organ Scholar 2015-18) who leaves Wells Cathedral following four years as Assistant and latterly Acting Director

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of Music to become Director of Music at HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace in succession to Carl Jackson.

Luke and Alexander's success maintains a vibrant tradition of musical leadership by former Trinity organ scholars, who are active nationally and internationally as directors, conductors, soloists and accompanists.

A directory of all organ scholars at Trinity since 1945 is maintained at their website:

<https://trinitycollegechoir.com/trinity-college-organ/past-current-organ-scholars/>

Congratulations Luke and Alexander!

## Clergy and ministry

### Vocation Sunday is for exploration

The Church of Ireland's Commission on Ministry is asking parishes to set aside some time on the Sunday before Pentecost (which falls this year on



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**1st June), as Vocation Sunday, to encourage members of their parishes to explore God's call in their lives.**

The Very Revd Lynda Peilow and Ms Judy Peters ask everyone to play their part in listening to and responding to the call of God to serve him with our lives, including the potential for going forward for ordination.

Read more here:- <https://tlk.ie/vocation-sunday-2025/>



## **New Buildings new curate**

**Glendermott and New Buildings Parish, Derry and Raphoe diocese -**

**“Delighted to announce the appointment of James Shiels as Curate assisted.**

“James is married to Julie and they have a young son Clarke. We look forward to welcoming the family to the Parish towards the end of June”.



## Events

### Gaza - A question of witness and of the heart

**Meet the voices from Gaza who will help us understand what is happening on the ground...**




We'll be hearing from Muna Nassar - she is Executive Secretary for Mission and Advocacy at the World Communion of Reformed Churches, which represents 100 million people from 109 countries around the world. The WCRC strives to form resilient communities, able to resist violence, racism, nationalism, authoritarianism, and militarism.

Gaza - A question of witness and of the heart.  
Saturday 31st May 25 from 10.00am - 3.30pm  
**Bannside Presbyterian Church, 21 Castlewellan Road,  
Banbridge, BT32 4AX**

### Pilgrim's Walk on Sleah Head, Dingle Peninsula, 21st June

**TLK diocese - Our next Spiritual Tourism & Pilgrimage event will be in Kerry! A Pilgrim's Walk on Sleah Head, Dingle Peninsula - 21st June, 2025**






*A Pilgrim's Walk on Sleah Head,  
Dingle Peninsula, Co. Kerry*  
with Linda Woods (walk leader)

**Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2025**

Book now at [tlk.ie/spiritualtourism/](https://tlk.ie/spiritualtourism/)

Contact Valerie: 087 2276868 or  
Email [spiritualtourism@tlk.ie](mailto:spiritualtourism@tlk.ie)



Walking in County Kerry is more than just a great workout; it offers a refreshing breath of fresh air in a stunning natural environment where beaches, mountain, islands, and coastal cliffs surround you. This walk or to some hike offers peace, tranquillity, and the perfect setting for nurturing positive thoughts. As you follow the beautiful trail, take deep breaths, listen to the soothing sounds of waves, the symphony of birdcalls and delight in the panoramic views of the sea, mountains, and islands, you'll also encounter an astonishing array of ancient sites spanning 6,000 years. It's all about

embracing the rhythm and pace of walking while soaking in the inspiring scenery of the Dingle Peninsula.

The western tip of the Dingle Peninsula is said to be one of the richest in archaeological remains in Ireland. It is “littered” with the remains of beehive huts, thought to be an early form of B & B (or maybe today’s Air B&B is a more appropriate name!) for pilgrims in the 8th & 9th centuries. Who knows for sure, but one thing we are certain of is that this hike around Sleah Head is one of the most spectacular imaginable.

10am – Our day will begin by meeting at the Dingle Tourist Office (Fungi Statue) and travelling by bus to the Stone House Café, Dunbeg.

1.30pm - At Sleah Head Carpark, we will return to the bus and start our journey to the Blasket Centre, Dún Quin. Here we will stop for lunch (cost not included).

3pm – We will travel to Riasc, an ancient monastic site that adds another layer to the historical tapestry of the region.

4pm - We will travel to Kilmakeadar Church, another gem of early Christian architecture that stands as a testament to the enduring faith of Ireland's past.

Together, the Blasket Islands, Riasc, and Kilmakeadar Church offer a unique journey through time, weaving together the natural beauty and historical depth of County Kerry.

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Please note that the time given for the walk will be determined by the group and will reflect on the time frame for the afternoon.

6pm is our estimated time of arrival back in Dingle.

The day includes

- Round trip transportation from Dingle by bus. (cost of this to be paid in full when booking)
- Tours of two monastic sites and a breathtaking walk over Sleah Head which may be physically challenging for some.

Dietary requirements

- Please advise on the booking form relating to any dietary requirements so we can advise the restaurant at the Blasket Centre.
- Please note that the cost of lunch is not included for this day event.

Cost €40 per person

EARLY BOOKING is advised.

You'll find more details on the plans for the day on our website at:-

<https://tlk.ie/a-pilgrims-walk-on-slea-head-dingle-peninsula-co-kerry/>

To reserve your place and pay:-

<https://tlk.ie/spiritual-tourism-book/>

## Poem for today

### When Great Trees Fall

by Maya Angelou

When great trees fall,  
rocks on distant hills shudder,  
lions hunker down  
in tall grasses,  
and even elephants  
lumber after safety.

When great trees fall  
in forests,  
small things recoil into silence,  
their senses  
eroded beyond fear.

When great souls die,  
the air around us becomes  
light, rare, sterile.  
We breathe, briefly.  
Our eyes, briefly,  
see with  
a hurtful clarity.  
Our memory, suddenly sharpened,  
examines,  
gnaws on kind words  
unsaid,  
promised walks  
never taken.



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Great souls die and  
our reality, bound to  
them, takes leave of us.  
Our souls,  
dependent upon their  
nurture,  
now shrink, wizened.  
Our minds, formed  
and informed by their  
radiance, fall away.  
We are not so much maddened  
as reduced to the unutterable ignorance of  
dark, cold  
caves.

And when great souls die,  
after a period peace blooms,  
slowly and always  
irregularly. Spaces fill  
with a kind of  
soothing electric vibration.  
Our senses, restored, never  
to be the same, whisper to us.  
They existed. They existed.  
We can be. Be and be  
better. For they existed.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

# Church News Ireland

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

**Please recommend to your friends**

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