



CNI



NI Election 17: Moderator appeals to clergy and people not to be cynical or pessimistic

The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Rt. Rev. Dr. Frank Sellar, has written to the Church's ministers and their congregations in Northern Ireland to encourage them not to be cynical or pessimistic about this week's

Assembly election, but to approach it prayerfully, engage in the democratic process and vote.

With 228 candidates vying for 90 seats across 18 constituencies, just over 1.2 million people are eligible to vote in this Thursday's election, the second to the Northern Ireland Assembly in 9 months.

In his letter, which was written last week in time for yesterday's Sunday services, Dr. Sellar said, "Following May's election few of us expected a return to the ballot box within such a short space of time. In these circumstances we could easily be cynical and pessimistic about politics, but as followers of Christ who are called to pray for our political leaders (1 Timothy 2:2) we take comfort in the knowledge that He is able to make things work for good in the brokenness of our lives and our world."

Dr. Sellar also encouraged fellow Presbyterians to engage and participate in the democratic process as it was "...one of the ways that we may seek 'the peace and prosperity of the city' to which we have been called (Jeremiah 29:7). So can I encourage you and your congregation to approach the upcoming election prayerfully and to vote, in the hope that the people we elect

will work with integrity, generosity of spirit and a commitment to the common good?

“As we do so, let us always have in mind the words of Scripture and the example of Jesus, which teach us to love our neighbours; to love our enemies; to care for the weak, poor and most vulnerable; and, above all, to love God with all our heart and soul and mind.”

Bishops condemn attempted murder of police officer in Londonderry

The two bishops in Derry issued a joint statement condemning the attempted murder this week of a police officer in the city. The Bishop of Derry, Donal McKeown, and the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Ken Good, said the incident showed a callous disregard for the lives not only of the officer who was targeted but of the officer's neighbours in Culmore.

In a joint statement they said -

“We are appalled at this latest attempt to murder a PSNI officer in our city and relieved that the attack did not succeed.



"There can never be any justification for such a crime. It was wrong. It was evil. And it showed a callous disregard for the lives not only of the police officer targeted by the bombers but of the officer's neighbours too.

"Today's incident also shows a blatant disregard for the people of this city who have expressed their desire – repeatedly and overwhelmingly – for an end to violence. This attempted murder is, therefore, an attack on all of us.

"Our people want to move forward – together – to a better and brighter future. The bombers seem intent on taking us backwards and keeping us apart. They must not succeed.

"We, as church leaders, offer our prayers and support to the officer who was attacked this morning. And we urge anyone who has information about this attempted murder to share it with the PSNI."

Spring Issue of SEARCH

The spring issue of SEARCH the C of I theological journal edited by the Revd Dr Ginnie Kennerley will appear this week.

Migration and the care of immigrants has become an explosive issue and a major challenge not only to Christians, but to all the communities of the developed world and their governments. SEARCH has four articles on this theme, led by Dr David Shepherd of TCD, with a version of his autumn lecture for BACI. This is followed by Peter Cheney's recent experience in Malta, Tiffy Allen's Places of Sanctuary initiative to help local people help immigrants in Dublin and the editor's thoughts on the outsider as bearer of God's blessing.

The debate on the Eighth Amendment could be considered an even trickier challenge. Paul Loughlin has an article on the history of the debate on TV leading up to the 1983 referendum



Belfast-born Professor David Hempton, Dean of Harvard Divinity, is a contributor

and Bishop Kenneth Kearon offers a consideration of the ethical imperatives.

The Revd David Tuohy SJ and Canon Horace McKinley contribute reflections on the Dublin & Glendalough 'Come & C' project, and the Revd. Daniel Nuzum of Cork University Hospital explores the development of healthcare chaplaincy in partnership with colleagues the Revd Anne Skuse and Kathleen Keaney.

Finally, Belfast-born Professor David Hempton, Dean of Harvard Divinity, provides a

reflection on the pluralist calling of Divinity Schools today, and, from church historian Dr Henry Jefferies of Derry, there is an exploration of the ways historians have analysed the different responses to the Reformation in England and Ireland. This last should prove a tempting foretaste of the SEARCH Colloquium planned for 22 April on the legacy of the Reformation – Ecclesia Semper Reformanda.

Bishop Pat Storey returns to St Augustine's for Mothers' Union Faith in Action Prayer Breakfast

The Bishop of Meath and Kildare, Most Rev Pat Storey, returned to her former parish, St Augustine's in Londonderry, on Saturday for a 'Faith in Action' Prayer Breakfast, organised by Derry and Raphoe Mothers' Union and served by the men of St Augustine's.

The event – which was hosted by Bishop Storey's successor as Rector of 'the Wee Church', Canon Malcom Ferry – was part of the local celebrations marking 130 years of Mothers' Union in Ireland. Around 100 members of branches all across the Diocese attended the



Bishop Storey said it was great to be back in St Augustine's

breakfast in the parish hall, which was followed by a service in the adjoining church.

The congregation were treated to three pieces of music performed by the renowned Donegal harp-player Tracey McRory. Her performance included the first public rendition of one of Ms McRory's own compositions, 'James', which was written to commemorate her great-uncle, Fr James McRory.

Fr James McRory, who was an army chaplain, was shot and wounded as he ministered to soldiers during the First World War Battle of Passchendaele. There were audible gasps from

the congregation when Ms McRory produced the chalice used by her great-uncle for services in the trenches.

Bishop Storey said it was great to be back in St Augustine's where she had spent "ten very happy years in ministry". She commended the local Mothers' Union on its theme for this year, 'Faith in Action', which ran alongside the all-Ireland theme of 13 decades of love and action. "Isn't one incomplete without the other?", Bishop Storey asked. "Faith is meaningless without action," she said, "and action is empty without faith".

The service concluded with presentations to both Bishop Storey and Ms McRory by the Diocesan President, Mrs Mary Good.

LENT 2017: Call and Response Reflection Programme at Christ Church Dublin

As part of Christ Church Cathedral's Lenten programme this year they are offering a space for creative consideration of the questions that abound in our lives, space for reflection and space to respond in prayer in different ways.

Running from March 4 to April 5 2017, artists will be working in Christ Church Cathedral to invite, collect and pose questions as part of our Lenten journey. The series begins with a quiet morning on Saturday March 4 from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm. It continues on Wednesday evenings from 7.00 pm to 9.00 pm. Stop for just a little while or stay for the whole evening. All are welcome, no advance booking required. The sessions are free of charge and donations are welcome.

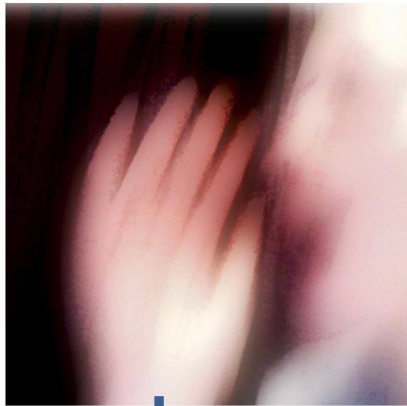
Saturday, 4 March

‘Giving Voice’? 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

For this quiet morning we will open up our voices physically through voice and breath work and meditatively through taking time to become aware of and contemplate the questions we carry. Free of charge; donations welcome. Advance booking recommended. Contact the office on 01 677 8099 or welcome@christchurch.ie.

Wednesday, 8 March

Working with input from the ‘Giving Voice’ Quiet Morning, Maria and Rachel will be collaborating on development of a score in designated areas of the cathedral, with visitors welcome to listen in or to make additional contribution to the



CHRIST
CHURCH
CATHEDRAL
DUBLIN

and Response

Creative Lenten Reflection Programme
Running from 4 March—5 April 2017

sound scape. Elsewhere in the cathedral creative prayers spaces and the labyrinth will be available for quiet reflection.

Wednesday, 15 March

Contemplative music, creative prayer spaces and labyrinth will be available for quiet reflection. Two sessions of lectio divina, meditative reading of scripture, will take place, at 7:30 and 8:15 pm, led by the Dean, the Very Revd Dermot Dunne.

Wednesday, 22 March

Rachel and Maria will continue their work in development of a score and choreography

reflecting on the project themes. Creative prayers spaces and the labyrinth will be available for quiet reflection.

Wednesday, 29 March

This session will focus particularly on the use of sound within the acoustic setting of the crypt. Two short periods of lectio divina, meditative reading of scripture, will take place, at 7:30 and 8:15 pm, led by the Dean, the Very Revd Dermot Dunne.

Wednesday, 5 April

This evening we will share in an act of worship together with liturgy developed out of the creative process of the previous weeks. Doors open at 7:00 pm, service begins at 7:30 pm.

Each session runs 7:00–9:00 pm. Stop for just a little while or stay for the whole evening. All are welcome, no advance booking required. Free of charge. Donations welcome.

‘Call and Response’ Conveners

Rachel Austin is a singer, songwriter, sound artist and voice teacher with over 10 years of experience across a wide range of styles including jazz, rock, punk and folk. Rachel lived

and worked in Belfast for a number of years and has studied at Mills College in Oakland, CA, as well as completing artist-in-residence fellowships in Austria and Germany.

Maria Nilson Waller is a dance artist and choreographer. Based in Dublin, she creates as an independent artist, dividing her work between Ireland and Sweden, often in close collaboration with dancers, musicians, film artists and photographers. Maria has received commissions from Galway Dance Days, Dublin City Council and Estrad Norr.

Abigail Sines is Dean's Vicar in Christ Church Cathedral. As part of the cathedral's Spirituality Programme, she seeks to make space for creative responses to Biblical texts and themes throughout the seasons in the church year.

Lent 2017: Drogheda Lenten Lunches major fundraiser for homeless

St. Peter's Church of Ireland, Drogheda, is running their ninth year of a series of lunches, on each Wednesday during Lent, from Ash Wednesday the 1st March Wednesday to the

12th April, for the benefit of Drogheda Homeless Aid, the Drogheda Independent reports

In the Parish Hall, Peter St., they will be offering a choice of tasty soups, sandwiches and tea or coffee, each Wednesday between 12.30pm to 2.30pm, in return for a suggested donation of €6 for adults and €3 for children.

All ingredients for the lunches and costs are completely sponsored by businesses and individuals in the local community, and as a result the entire proceeds will go towards Drogheda Homeless Aid.

Pam Bagnall, organiser said: "The idea behind the Lenten lunches is that we are reaching out to our local community, and it is a fantastic way for locals to see the excellent facilities that we are lucky to have. All of the facilities in the Parish Hall are made available to the entire community."

The Parish Hall is used regularly by many community groups such the Bowls Club, AA, Anon and also for classes in Yoga, meditation and Tai Chi, amongst others. Any other groups interested in using the facilities are most welcome and can contact the parish office.

Honorary Treasurer of St. Peter's COI, Clive Bagnall, said "We chose Drogheda Homeless

Aid to be the beneficiaries of the Lenten Lunches again this year, as we are aware that they rely heavily on the goodwill of the community to raise money and help maintain the level of service that they offer. Last year, the Lenten Lunches held in St Peters COI produced a magnificent result of €16,000 for Drogheda Homeless Aid".

Paul Murphy, Chairperson of Drogheda Homeless Aid added: "The money raised from the Lenten lunches over the next seven weeks will go towards our kitchen equipment and food budget for 2017, so that we can continue to provide meals to the vulnerable people in our community. I would like to thank Pam and Clive Bagnall and their Lenten Lunches team for running the lunches for Drogheda Homeless Aid again this year. I would encourage everyone to call up to St. Peter's COI Hall at lunchtime over the next few Wednesdays; it is a fantastic venue and you will enjoy freshly made soup, sandwiches and coffee".

Parents and former students battle to save Cistercian College Roscrea

Parents and former students of Cistercian College in Roscrea (CCR) on the Tipperary/Offaly

border have mounted a major campaign to save the famous secondary school from closure.

Last weekend, it was announced that the 112-year-old college, which is under the trusteeship of the Cistercian Order, was closing due to falling numbers.

However, a meeting of past students held in the County Arms Hotel in Birr on Wednesday 22 February heard that no effort will be spared to save the historic college, which counts former Taoiseach Brian Cowen and former Tánaiste Dick Spring amongst its illustrious alumni.

The Save CCR campaign meeting in Birr, which was attended by over 300 people, heard that the college had a running cost shortfall of €200,000 per annum, which could worsen in the 2017/2018 academic year. The main reasons for the decision to close the college were its financial viability and the broader issues of the changing nature of Irish society and education.

Currently, the college has a total enrolment of 167 pupils, with only 9 new first years booked in for next year. The meeting was also told that the college had capacity numbers for many years up to 2010. In 2009/2010 the trustees of the school – the monks of Mount St Joseph Abbey – had started to subsidise the financial shortfall at the

college. They sold a farm and put extra resources into the college. The meeting was told that the current cost of running the college, excluding capital expenditure and investment, is €2.4m per annum.

Ronnie Culliton, a past pupil who has sons in the school, challenged those in attendance as to what kind of money would be available to any new project for the school, asking people to consider what they would be willing to contribute. "Let's see what we can commit to," he said.

Current Connacht rugby player Sean O'Brien, who completed his education at the college in 2013, also spoke at the meeting. He said that CCR "provides an unbelievable educational and sporting platform. It's worth even more than that as it creates an unbelievable bond among students which you would not have in a day school. I know that many of the past pupils of this school are willing to fight for its future."

Meanwhile, in a letter sent to parents on Friday 24 February, Dom Richard Purcell welcomed "the many heart-warming expressions of support for Cistercian College Roscrea and the monastic community of Mount St Joseph Abbey on foot of

last Friday's closure announcement by the Trustees".

Furthermore, he added, "In recognition of this no further action will be taken prior to 17 March pending engagement with the group to be formed from among parents and past pupils to explore possible viable proposals for the future of the college. While I do not wish to give any false hope I have committed to give full consideration to any future viable proposals, should one emanate from any such discussions."

Leading gay cleric Jeffrey John narrowly rejected as Bishop In Wales

A leading gay C of E cleric has narrowly missed out on becoming a bishop after his appointment was rejected for the fourth time.

Very Rev Jeffrey John, who has twice been turned down for senior roles over his sexuality, was in the running to be Bishop of Llandaff, Christian Today has reported.

But despite winning support from more than half of the nominating body, he just missed on the two-thirds majority required.

It would appear that Dr John's long-term civil partnership with Grant Holmes, another Anglican priest, was a factor in his rejection by traditionalists.

After three days of discussions the electoral body of 47 people, made up of locals from the diocese, bishops and the official nomination committee, failed to agree on any candidate. The final decision will now be down to senior bishops despite Dr John winning strong support among electors in the mainly Anglo-Catholic region of Llandaff.

Neither the Church in Wales nor the Church of England are opposed to clergy being in civil partnerships. The Church of England requests that clergy in civil partnerships vow to remain sexually chaste, but the Church in Wales has no such restriction.

Currently Dean of St Albans, Dr John was previously nominated to be Bishop of Reading in 2003 but was forced to withdraw himself under intense pressure from traditionalists.

He was later in the running for Bishop of Bangor in 2008 and then again for Bishop of Southwark in 2010 but was both times turned down with conservatives threatening a split in the Church.

But Dr John's latest rejection to be Bishop of Llandaff is particularly striking because of the strong support he received among local clergy and parishioners in the largely liberal diocese.

It comes after the recently retired Archbishop of Wales used his final address to urge the Church to rethink its stance on LGBT couples

Dr Barry Morgan said supporting gay marriage did not mean 'abandoning the Bible' and that gay sex was perfectly 'proper'.

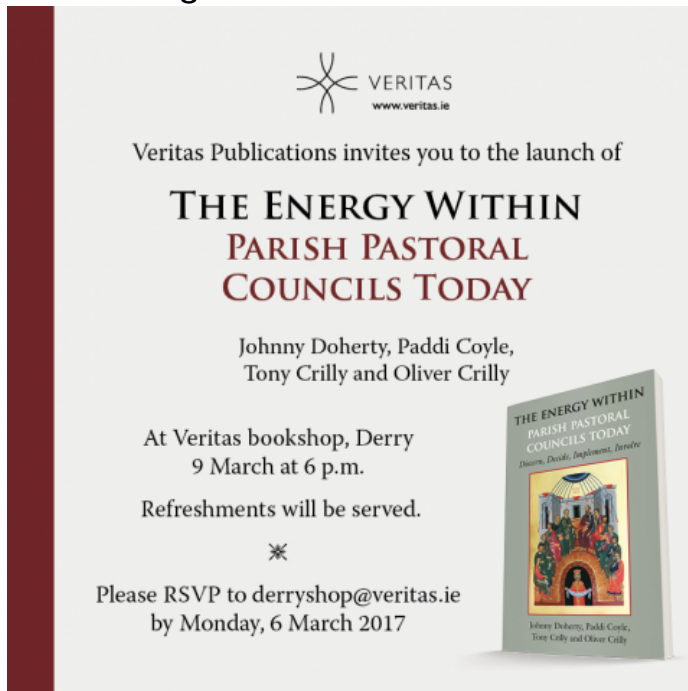
He said typical texts used to condemn homosexuality could be 'interpreted in more than one way' and read as a whole it is impossible to say there is 'one settled understanding of what the Bible says'.

He said: 'What all this amounts to is that one cannot argue that there is one accepted traditional way of interpreting scripture that is true and orthodox and all else is modern revisionism, culturally conditioned...so taking the Bible as a whole and taking what it says very seriously may lead us into a very different view of same-sex relationships than the one traditionally upheld by the Church.'

He went on: 'We are not thereby abandoning the Bible but trying to interpret it in a way that is

consistent with the main thrust of the ministry of Jesus, who went out of His way to minister to those who were excluded, marginalised, and abandoned by his society because they were regarded as impure and unholy by the religious leaders of his day, either because of their gender, age, morality or sexuality.'

Dr Morgan's address came after the Church in Wales has apologised unreservedly for its mistreatment of gay and lesbian people and strongly indicated it could allow or bless same-sex marriages in the future.



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Modern theological education mustn't lose sight of final goal, warns Canada primate

Archbishop Fred Hiltz, primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, has said that as Anglican educators and bishops and clergy debate how theological education should be adapted to meet the needs of the 21st-century church, they should not lose sight of the fact that the final goal is to produce ministers with a “Christ-like character.”

Addressing a national gathering on theological education which took place in Ontario, Archbishop Fred said the church must train candidates who have sufficient “spiritual maturity” to discharge the “sacred trust” of priestly ministry: “Alongside all the courses we put in place for training men and women to be priests in our church in very diverse missional and cultural contexts, there must be every effort across the board to nurture and form them in such a way that their ministries are enriched by their holiness of life, their own devotion to Christ,” he said.



Archbishop Fred Hiltz

The formation of such a character requires a “partnership between the churches and the schools,” Archbishop Fred told the gathering, which brought together 70 priests, bishops, professors, and diocesan and theological college support staff to discuss the future of theological education and priestly formation in the Canadian church.

Among the tools Archbishop Hiltz commended to the gathering were The Anglican Communion Approach to Theological Education, a [report](#) presented by Theological Education for the Anglican Communion at the meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in 2012, and the churchnewsireland@gmail.com

Competencies for the Ordination to the Priesthood in the Anglican Church of Canada, a series of [guidelines](#) produced by the Primate's Commission on Theological Education and Formation for Presbyteral Education in 2013. He praised both documents for stressing the relationship between theological education and the health of the church, but noted that "no document from the synod or Communion will ever be adopted holus bolus." To have value, they will need to be adapted for use in a particular context.

Archbishop Fred also stressed that these competencies are insufficient if a candidate or priest is not passionate about his or her faith: "We need the skills, we need the competence," he said. "But people can detect pretty quickly whether someone is exercising their pastoral skills, or someone is doing that out of a heart that beats with the love of Christ."

Of special importance for Archbishop Fred was that priests be passionate in their celebration of the Eucharist, and that they be "spiritually prepared and ready for this awesome moment [in the Eucharist] when the body of Christ is remembered, brought back together."