

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – St John the Divine, New York

Image of the day



St John the Divine, New York

The magnificent St. John the Divine Anglican Cathedral in NY. At present you will see scaffolding inside. They are cleaning the dome and inside the organ pipes after two fires

November 7, 2022

in the last 20 years. St. John the Divine is the largest Gothic cathedral in the world. There are seven exquisite chapels behind the high altar in a semi circular area. Also a huge baptismal font area, and a columbarium.

News reports



Members of Clogher Diocese who attended the Women's Weekend 2022 in Leixlip, Co Kildare. Pictured with Mrs Sheran Harper, Worldwide President together with Mrs June Butler, All Ireland President.

Pandemic memorial at St Mary's cathedral, Limerick

A lasting, fixed memorial, which is non-religious and as inclusive as possible, to remember those who died during

the pandemic as well as those who served on the front line, has been installed in the grounds of St Mary's cathedral, Limerick, through generous support from Limerick City & County Council. It will be unveiled by the Mayor, Cllr Francis Foley, on Tuesday at 2.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

Churches respond to Seanad Consultation on the Constitutional Future of the Island of Ireland

The Cathaoirleach (Speaker) of Seanad Éireann, Senator Mark Daly recently requested the Methodist Church in Ireland to contribute to the Seanad Public Consultation on the Constitutional Future of the Island of Ireland.

At a session of the consultation the Council on Social Responsibility represented the church with Rev Steven Foster speaking. Rev David Clements was unable to be present due to family bereavement, but his words were read.

You can read the text submitted to the Consultation [here](#).

More here: <https://bit.ly/3DVqqw3>

Ex-Presbyterian moderator asks London, Dublin, Washington and NI political

parties for their definition of reconciliation

A former Presbyterian Moderator has appealed for conversations with Dublin, London, Washington and political and civic leaders on the island of Ireland on what reconciliation is and how it can be achieved - Philip Bradfield reports in the News Letter

Last month Rev Dr Norman Hamilton told the Irish Seanad that it was “mystifying and really quite dispiriting that, to the best of my knowledge, neither the government here in Dublin, nor in London or Belfast or Washington, has a clear policy setting out what reconciliation is, or the steps needed to make it happen.”

The Seanad was taking evidence on the constitutional future of the island of Ireland.

Speaking to the News Letter yesterday, (November 4) Rev Hamilton said he had been “heard really well” by Fine Gael, Fianna Fail, Irish Labour Party and Sinn Fein. However there had been no feedback from London, Belfast, Dublin or Washington. Out of all the stakeholders, he is only aware of Sinn Fein having published a paper on reconciliation. However it carried “an assumption that reconciliation will automatically have taken place” in the event of political unification, which he describes as “far fetched”.

He believes that when the term “reconciliation” is used in the public square it is usually cited by nationalists in the context

of Irish unification, which is not lost on unionists. “That, I think, is an inevitable consequence.”

His own working description is “doing whatever is necessary to rebuild broken relationships”.

He suggests two key steps;- “That every level of society needs to say ‘we want reconciliation to be part and parcel of the future for our people’”.

Another would be “much more care being taken by politicians in the language they use about opponents”.

He added: “I would welcome thoughtful conversations with those in political leadership and civic society who actually want to make progress on this.”

The UK, Irish and US governments and the Stormont Executive parties were invited to comment. Rev Hamilton suggested that none of their responses offered a working definition of reconciliation.

DUP MLA Deborah Erskine responded that “justice is fundamental to reconciliation” and added that Michelle O’Neill’s claim that there was “no alternative” for the IRA’s campaign is “grotesquely offensive to IRA victims”.

Mike Nesbit said that when UUP leader, he consistently asked other leaders for a definition, but that none of them responded. “Norman Hamilton is right,” he said.

“Given it is a headline value in the Belfast Agreement, it is long past time we had an agreed view.”

Alliance said it is “deeply committed” to fostering reconciliation through means such as integrated education and sharing housing, and that the issue “has not been taken seriously enough” by devolved Executives.

The US Consulate responded with a comprehensive press statement issued last month during a visit to NI by Senior Policy Advisor Counselor Derek Chollet.

The Irish Department of Foreign Affairs said its definition was, “...deeper mutual understanding... initiatives that seek to address and heal the legacy of division and violence and build a society founded upon respect for all identities and traditions”.

The NIO said it is committed to the Good Friday Agreement and will continue to work with NI parties and Dublin to deliver “a stable, peaceful and prosperous NI for all communities who are at peace with its past and looking forward to a shared future”.

Dean's Vicar at Christ Church cathedral, Dublin

The Dean of Christ Church cathedral, Dublin, the Very Revd Dermot Dunne, has announced that the Revd Dr Edwin Aiken, intern deacon in Holmpatrick parish, Skerries. has been appointed as Dean's Vicar in succession to the Revd Abigail Sines.

Before training at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, he was an academic with special interests in the relationship between science and religion in the nineteenth century, the

November 7, 2022

history of ideas and the historical geography of the Holy Land. Dr Aiken will be ordained to the priesthood on Sunday 20 November.



New rector for Naas Union of parishes

**Archdeacon
Craig
McCauley has
been
appointed to
be the new
rector for Naas
Union of
parishes.**

Currently rector
of Virginia
group of
parishes in
Kilmore
diocese, he

married to Vida and we have two children, Laura who is 22 and is a final year business studies student at Dublin City University and Matthew who is 18 and in 6th year at the Royal School Cavan.

Craig was born in Dublin but grew up in Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan. Vida is originally from near Boyle in Co.

Roscommon. Describing his faith journey he says, "I became a committed Christian when I was 18 and at that time, I also sensed a call to ordained ministry. I was ordained in 1999 and have served in Banbridge, Co. Down, Kill O The Grange in Dublin and for the last 18 years as Rector of the Virginia Group of Parishes in Co. Cavan.

Craig says, "As I person I would describe myself as down to earth, what you see is what you get. Family is very important to me. I am a keen follower of Leinster Rugby and



Liverpool FC and since September 2019 I've taken up running via the local parkrun and at the end of October 2022, I completed my first marathon in Dublin." He continued, "My passion is building through word, deed and action a welcoming,

caring, Christian community centred on the person of Jesus Christ within the parish and out in the community.”

Talking of the move he commented, ”I am sad of course to be leaving the Virginia Group of Parishes and Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh diocese but I am excitedly looking forward to coming to Naas and to the Diocese of Meath and Kildare in early February 2023 and seeing what God has in store as we begin this new chapter of ministry. Until then I ask you to pray for me and my family as I will be praying for you.”

COP27: Archbishop of Canterbury says world ‘near point of no return’ and calls for climate justice

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said "As global leaders gather at COP27, the world holds its breath. A world which has this year suffered further catastrophic flooding, drought, heatwaves and storms. A world already in crisis. A world which knows that we are perilously near the point of no return.

"I've seen this myself just recently in Australia, whose great wealth is no protection against the flooding in New South Wales. And if it can happen in one of the most prosperous parts of the world, how much more devastating in one of the poorest like South Sudan, where more flooding has led to food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition.

"Living as one human family, I pray that we will hear clearly the voices of those suffering on the brutal front line of

climate change and climate injustice. I pray that together we will listen to young people and Indigenous Peoples. At this COP, hosted in Africa, the perspectives from that continent must be heard.

"The climate emergency is an existential global threat that requires a global response, with radical action, imagination and justice. Let us together see justice done, so that countries can access new and fair finance for the loss and damage caused by climate change.

"It is imperative that we seek justice so that those nations with greatest responsibility will take the lead, achieving net-zero carbon emissions and supporting other countries in this transition.

"God calls us to embrace justice. Christian scripture describes how we share in the 'renewed creation of heaven and earth with justice' (2 Peter 3:13). Let justice flow so that we see human lives and hope restored, and the life of the earth itself protected and renewed."

Poll suggests Catholics want government to do more about climate change as COP27 approaches

As world leaders gear up for COP27, a new study suggests Catholics want the government to do more to tackle climate change.

November 7, 2022

The YouGov poll suggests six in ten Catholics feel the government is not doing enough to fight climate change, and just 20 per cent believe it is committed to its net target.

There was also very little faith in promises to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels.



[Columban climate campaigners at COP26](#)

A third said that the UK's leaders are not doing enough to support poorer countries on the frontline of climate change.

The COP27 conference, held in Egypt, begins on Sunday.

The meeting has attracted headlines in recent weeks after Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said he was not planning to attend due to domestic matters.

He has since made a U-turn on the decision.

Catholic aid organisation CAFOD suggests the countries contributing ‘very little’ to global greenhouse gas emissions are the ones paying the price, as the changing climate creates deadly floods, droughts and starvation amongst the world’s poorest.

Bishop John Arnold, from the Diocese of Salford and Chair of CAFOD’s trustees, said: “The environment cannot be isolated from our relationship with God. We are blessed with stewardship over the earth, but with this comes the responsibility to protect our planet and preserve it for future generations.

“For too long, we have been reliant on fossil fuels which are causing devastation to communities around the world. As the world’s eyes descend on COP27, I pray the government and world leaders will seize this opportunity and invest in renewable energy so we can protect our planet for future generations.

CNI

Pope urges Muslim world to ditch the death penalty during historic trip to Bahrain

Pope Francis has spoken out against the death penalty in the historic first papal visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The Holy Father included a denunciation of capital punishment as part of a general defence of the right to life during a speech to King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, civic dignitaries and diplomatic corps at the Sakhir Royal Palace.

“I express my appreciation for the International Conferences and the possibilities for encounter that this Kingdom organises and promotes, stressing in particular the themes of respect, tolerance, and religious freedom,” the Pope said on the first day of his three-day visit to the Arab kingdom.

“These are, above all, commitments that need constantly to be put into practice so that religious freedom will be complete and not limited to freedom of worship; that equal dignity and equal opportunities will be concretely recognised for each group and for every individual; that no forms of discrimination exist and that fundamental human rights are not violated but promoted.”

The Pontiff said: “I think in the first place of the right to life, of the need to guarantee that right always, including for those being punished, whose lives should not be taken.”



Although most Western nations have abolished the death penalty, it remains in force in much of the Muslim world, including Bahrain.

The Persian Gulf state has sentenced 50 people to death since 2011, mostly on terrorism charges and 26 prisoners are at present on death row awaiting execution.

Francis, 85, is visiting Bahrain partly to attend the Bahrain Forum for Dialogue: East and West for Human Coexistence where he is due to deliver the closing speech.

He said that the forum was vital for the future of “peaceful human coexistence”.

“These days mark a precious stage in the journey of friendship that has intensified in recent years with various Islamic religious leaders, a fraternal journey that, beneath the gaze of heaven, seeks to foster peace on earth,” the Pope said.

“May we never allow opportunities for encounter between civilizations, religions, and cultures to evaporate, or the roots of our humanity to become desiccated and lifeless,” he added.

Bahrain is one of the most tolerant of all the Arab nations, having 10 Catholic churches and 20 priests serving a Catholic population of 161,000 people, mostly migrants from the Philippines and India, among an overall population of 1.5 million.

In his address, the Pope also spoke of the importance of protecting the environment and denounced unemployment and workplace practices that were “dehumanising”.

He also condemned war and called for peace, especially in Yemen, a country on the Arab peninsula which has endured a bitter eight-year conflict between the Saudi-backed government and Iranian-backed Houthi rebels.

“Let there be an end to the clash of weapons,” said Francis. “Let us be committed, everywhere and concretely, to building peace.”

He concluded: “I am here today as a believer, as a Christian, as a man and as a pilgrim of peace, because

today, more than ever, we are called, everywhere, to commit ourselves seriously to peace-making.”

Francis said: “War brings out the worst in man: selfishness, violence, and dishonesty. For war, every war, brings in its wake the death of truth.

“Let us reject the logic of weapons and change course, diverting enormous military expenditures to investments in combating hunger and the lack of health care and education.”

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Ulster hymn writers the Gettys win top US gospel album award

Northern Ireland Christian hymn-writers Keith and Kristyn Getty have won a top album accolade in the prestigious 'Dove' gospel music awards in the United States, Billy Kennedy writes.

The album ‘Hymns from Home’ is a rich children’s hymnal collection recorded during the Covid pandemic period of 2020-21 when the Getty couple and their four children were back in their Ulster homeland.

The hymns on the album were sung by the Gettys as part of their weekly ‘Family Hymn Sings’ that began at the start of

the global pandemic, inviting believers around the world into their home to sing hymns with their family.

The hymns garnered much acclaim in both America and UK with US media outlets such as influential Fox News accruing more than 14 million viewers worldwide.

The award-winning album contains hymns performed by the young Getty children, including renditions of classics such as ‘Amazing Grace’, ‘All Things Bright and Beautiful’ as well as the Getty-penned ‘Christ Our Hope in Life and Death’, one of the fastest growing hymns in the Getty catalogue.

The American gospel music ‘Dove’ awards are the foremost international Christian and gospel music accolades, honouring outstanding talent, achievement and musical excellence.

Next year, the Gettys – Keith is a Lisburn man, and his wife Kristyn from Newtownabbey – plan to return to Northern Ireland for concerts as part of a ‘Sing’ world tour. They will appear at the SSE Arena on Belfast’s Lagan side, joined on stage by their young daughters.

The Gettys are now permanently based in Nashville, Tennessee, operating extensively in the Christian gospel music industry.

Keith Getty said: “Winning the album award means the world to us as a family.

“Getting recognition from the industry’s foremost Christian music awards is absolutely wonderful.

“The girls have worked so hard and put an incredible amount of energy, creativity and passion into this collection of songs and we hope this comes across to listeners.

“Looking ahead, we can’t wait to perform the album with our girls live in Belfast next year in front of a sell-out home crowd.

“In making this album we wanted to hark back to our roots in Northern Ireland.”

Keith and Kristyn Getty are leading modern hymn writers globally, with Keith being the first church musician of the modern era to be awarded the OBE from the late Queen, for services to music and hymn writing.

Getty hymns such as “In Christ Alone”, written with prolific songwriter Stuart Townend, uniquely cross musical genres and teach traditional Christian doctrine.

As ambassadors of hymn writing, they have performed for United States presidents and government leaders in other countries.

Their annual national hymn tour and Christmas tour including sell-out concerts at Kennedy Centre, Washington and Carnegie Hall, New York.

Courtesy News Letter 05.11.2022

Poem for today

Free Soul by Patrick Kavanagh

Yesterday I saw the Earth beautiful
Through the frosted glass of November's tree
I peered into an April country
Where love was day-dream free.

And in the steam rising from the dung-heap
Another firmament was blown
Dotted over with fairy worlds
And lamped with silver stone.

Over the bleak grey-bearded bogs
I looked and beheld the last Atlantis
And surely it was not November
But a time the freed souls grant us.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at houstonmckelvey@mac.com

