



CNI



Corrymeela's new Easter Weekend Carafest

The Corrymeela Community invites readers to participate in their first annual Carafest which will take place over Easter Weekend 14–17 April 2017, at their stunning location in Ballycastle.

The Corrymeela folk say: “We are Corrymeela and you are always welcome.



**CARAFEST - FESTIVAL OF FAITH AND
RECONCILIATION APRIL 14-17 2017**

Workshops - Music - Literature - Theology
Dawn Service overlooking Rathlin

corrymeela.org/carafest



with the support of
trust greenbelt.

Join us for ...

Music

Discussions with Jo Berry & Pat Magee

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

Stories from Liz Weir

Political, interfaith and refugee panel discussions

Times for talking

and a wondrous celebration of life at Easter.

We will **celebrate Easter Sunday** with the dawn of the new day at a service on the cliffs overlooking Rathlin Island and the Mull of Kintyre.

The word reconciliation means 'to become friends again' and so we've chosen the word 'cara' (friend in Irish and Scots Gaelic) for our festival of faith and reconciliation.

Need more info? Read our FAQs about Carafest.

The secret lives of Ireland's Protestants

A major UCD research project is documenting the cultural experiences of growing up Protestant.

Peter McGuire writes in the Irish Times that - Hundreds of accounts are being gathered for a major folklore and oral history project that is being carried out by Dr Deirdre Nuttall for the National Folklore Collection in UCD. Faith is just one of the various aspects that make

Protestants distinctive, she says. “Protestant and Catholic are cultural markers, not necessarily denominational ones. Protestants have a slightly different folklore, collective memory and experience of 1916, 1922 and other major historical periods.”

So far, Nuttall, who is of Protestant descent, has interviewed over 50 people. She has also been inundated with correspondence from Protestants who are keen to tell their stories and to record their history. In the NFC archives, a filing cabinet is quickly filling up; some of the responses are quite short, but others are 10,000 words or more. One correspondent seems to have written a small book. Their stories and recollections span include folk history, supernatural and medical traditions, relations with Catholic neighbours, social diversity and uniquely Protestant traditions.

“While Irish Protestants are well represented among Ireland’s earlier folklore collectors in the Republic of Ireland, Irish Protestant cultural history is not as well represented in the archives of the National Folklore Collection as that of the Catholic community,” says Dr Críostóir Mac Cárthaigh, director of the National Folklore Collection at UCD. “The Protestant folk memory

project helps to redress a significant gap in the collection.”

Nuttall has been surprised by the strength of emotion from people telling their stories. “There was a lot of sorrow and anguish. Statistically, Protestants do tend to be bigger farmers, but there are plenty from poorer or working-class backgrounds and many of them grew up being asked: ‘What are you doing here?’ ‘Where is your butler?’ ‘Aren’t you rich?’ Anyone with money tended to be shielded because they went to a private school, perhaps on to Trinity and then into the family business. You were cocooned by privilege. It was different if you weren’t comfortable.”

Perhaps the most infamous episode of the hardship and discrimination endured by some Irish Protestants occurred in 1957. [Sheila Cloney](#), a Protestant woman from nearby Fethard-on-Sea who was married to a Catholic man, refused an order from the local priest to raise the children as Catholics in accordance with the *Ne Temere* decree. In response, the bishop called for Catholics to boycott local Protestants and their businesses; most duly complied.

Long before Fethard, the Scullabogue massacre during the 1798 rebellion is remembered by Protestants as a sectarian murder of at least 100 Protestants and farmers – by some estimates, there may have been 200 deaths – in a barn fire. “The folk record often overlooked or minimised this, or said it was a reprisal for something else,” says Nuttall. “My classmates in Wexford didn’t seem to know the story at all, though my family did.” Protestants also disproportionately sent their sons to fight in the first World War, and many died.”

Irish independence was a jolt for Protestants, most of whom, to some degree, had lent towards unionism. “They had to reinvent their lives and work with their neighbours,” says Nuttall. “They may not have seen themselves as British but as subjects of the British empire, so they had to come up with a new way of understanding their history and identity. In some cases, that took one or two generations.”

Nuttall says that, while there were rarely huge flare-ups between Catholics and Protestants, there could be underlying tensions. People in rural communities might thresh together, or share a plough, but observant Protestants did not take part in Sunday sports and this excluded them from many community events. “It was

sometimes a polite way of not taking part, because there was some anxiety that if your children socialised with Catholics too much, they may marry out. They were already watching their community shrink, and one of the reasons was *Ne Temere*. It wasn't just that they were preserving their religion; they were afraid their Catholic grandchildren could be subtly turned against them."

More at -

<http://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/the-secret-lives-of-ireland-s-protestants-1.2955670>

Pioneers want Good Friday alcohol ban retained

"Our hospital beds are occupied with up to 2,000 patients with illnesses related to excess alcohol and in the region of three people per day die in Ireland for the same reason."

The Pioneer Total Abstinence Association has said it is "fully in favour" of the ban on the sale of alcohol on Good Friday and the Association wants it to remain in place.

Speaking to CatholicIreland.net, James Shevlin, President of the Pioneers in Ireland, said Good Friday “is just one of two days in the entire year when alcohol cannot be sold. This represents approximately 0.5% of the entire year.”

He was responding to calls by the Licensed Vintners’ Association and the Vintners’ Federation of Ireland to the Government to remove the ban that prevents licensed premises from selling alcohol that day.

The two groups have claimed that the Intoxicating Liquor Act 1927, the legislation that gives effect to the ban, is “outdated and discriminatory”. They also claim the ban will damage the tourism industry.

Donall O’Keeffe, chief executive of the LVA told The Times, “Forcing pubs and all licensed hospitality businesses to close sends a very negative signal to tourists and visitors, who are left baffled and disappointed by the measure.”

However, James Shevlin argues that Ireland has liberal licencing laws throughout the year and that opening times have increased and have been extended down the years to give increased trading opportunities.



President of the PTAA, James Shevlin

He stressed that the Pioneer Association is not anti-alcohol; rather members are opposed to the abuse of alcohol.

“We have become concerned, as have many others, with recent investigations and statements from eminent doctors and experts on the havoc excess alcohol consumption is having on people’s health. Liver disease has spiralled in recent times, as have many other effects which have been associated with excess alcohol consumption.”

He underlined that the A&E departments in the country's hospitals are "beyond breaking point with overcrowding, and this is exacerbated by the extra pressure of alcohol-related admissions.

"Our hospital beds are occupied with up to 2,000 patients with illnesses related to excess alcohol and in the region of three people per day die in Ireland for the same reason. These are facts presented by medical experts. The supply of alcohol needs to be controlled to avoid this culture going out of control."

The PTAA president also highlighted that Ireland figures prominently in European and world tables, especially in relation to binge drinking.

Another reason the Pioneers are opposed to the lifting of the Good Friday ban relates to the Association's Christian ethos.

James Shevlin explained that the Pioneer Association is both a spiritual and a temperance movement.

"It was established by Fr James Cullen in 1898 as a form of sacrifice to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to pray for those who had suffered the ills of alcohol abuse. Pioneer members did this by freely abstaining from alcoholic drinks. Therefore the Association is deeply embedded in both the

ethos of Christianity and also in the interests of promoting a healthy and responsible attitude towards alcohol.”

Currently, the PTAA has a membership in the region of 150,000.

Waterford cathedral bells to ring out against xenophobia

Former president Mary McAleese is to launch a ‘Joy of Bells’ initiative at Waterford’s Church of Ireland Christ Church Cathedral on March 19th in protest at anti-immigrant sentiment sweeping the western world, Patsy McGarry writes in The Irish Times.

Responding to an idea by Dean of Waterford Maria Jansson, Ms McAleese will speak at the 10am Eucharist service there and launch a ringing of the Cathedral bells at 11am in opposition to what Dean Jansson has described as “the incredible fear out there” being generated towards immigrants and refugees.

Ms McAleese said: “The Dean of Waterford cathedral has taken a timely, simple but profound initiative which I hope will be copied by many churches throughout Europe and other parts of the world.”



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She continued: “The event at Waterford’s Christ Church Cathedral will take place over St Patrick’s weekend. That is not a coincidence. The name of St Patrick is known throughout the world and is synonymous with Ireland but what is not always so well known about him is that he was an immigrant to Ireland and by any standards, despite considerable personal suffering, one of the most successful in history.

“The bells will be ringing a message of love, hope and inclusion that we hope will bring

comfort to the men, women and children whose lives are blighted by the hatred and bigotry of those who would deny them their dignity and rights as human beings. The bells will ring out as a challenge to all Christians to honour the great commandment to love one another.”

‘Cacophony of hatred’

Dean Jansson said that “as a woman and a Christian I feel we have to make an appropriate response to the cacophony of hatred which gets more frightening every day across Europe.”

In the weeks between now and March 19th the dean will be encouraging other churches and places of worship across Ireland and Europe to join with Waterford in ringing their bells in joint protest.

Bangor Abbey craft fair to support CMS Ireland

A correspondent writes - The Parish of Bangor Abbey would like to welcome you to our Spring craft fair! On Saturday March at 12 pm - 3.00 pm. Absolutely everyone is welcome to come along for a fun afternoon to meet some of the talented crafters Northern Ireland has to offer!

There is a dedicated 'Fun Zone' for children, including a bouncy castle, face painter and balloon modelling artist which, no doubt, will keep them entertained for the afternoon and complementary refreshments in the main hall.

Also, please feel free to stop and chat with some of the hardworking volunteers from Bangor Abbey's many groups and societies, who will be in attendance to introduce themselves and what they do in the Church and the community.

If you're a history buff, why not stop and chat to the 'Friends of Bangor Abbey'. A group of volunteers who pride themselves in their knowledge of the religious and historical significance of the site of Bangor Abbey.

As this event is a fundraiser, and our charity is CMS Ireland, there will also be representatives joining us so please stop by to find out about all the amazing work they are doing.

Raffles - Yes, like any good fundraiser there will be many prizes up for grabs, our special Mother's Day Raffle Hamper contains a fantastic range of gifts, donated generously by the crafters who will be exhibiting with us on the day- a Mother's Day gift sure to make one lucky mummy feel very pampered! There will be a

separate raffle containing prizes donated generously by some of our local businesses. All proceeds from the raffles will go to CMS Ireland and to the essential refurbishments being carried out on the Abbey itself. Admission: £3.00 per Adult. Free Entry for Children. Venue - 1 Saint Malachy's Way, BT20 4 Bangor, County Down



Belfast Mayor's reception for retired clergy

The Lord Mayor of Belfast, Alderman Brian Kingston, is pictured following a reception which he hosted for retired members of the clergy at City Hall on the evening of Friday 3 February

2017. With the Lord Mayor are (L-R) the Rev Noel Agnew, the Rev Ken Doherty, Canon Barry Dodds, the Very Rev Dr Norman Hamilton OBE, the Rev Jim Rea and Jackie Redpath MBE. The Lord Mayor recently spoke with award-winning journalist Anne Hailes of his deep Christian faith in an interview which will appear in the March issue of the *Methodist Newsletter*.