

The essential brief on the Irish churches

Churches and communities embrace the Giro d'Italia



'Messy Church' at All Saints, Craigyhill, prior to the Giro d'Italia

Churches along the three stages of the Giro d'Italia embraced the spirit of the event, and certainly in the stages held in Belfast and along the County Antrim coast, pink flourished.

In Larne a C of I minister wore a pink surplice and a Messy Church at All Saints Craigyhill, the children took part in a 'wheelie' morning.

Larne Times - To mark the Giro d'Italia's visit to Larne, everyone dressed in pink and some arrived by bike.

Rector Roger Thompson introduced the topic linking it with the Church Mission Society Ireland's (CMSI) Wheels Appeal, which highlights the importance of bicycles in other countries. Team member Sharon Livingstone handed out bells to all the children and taught them a fun song called "My bicycle has a bell". Then they enjoyed crafts and games.

At the end of the service, each child received a special CMSI tube of sweets, which they were asked to take away and fill with 10 or 20 pence coins to raise [money](#) for the Wheels Appeal.



Archbishop of Canterbury calls for talks with Boko Haram

The Archbishop of Canterbury has called for negotiations with the “utterly merciless” Islamic extremists who kidnapped 276 girls from their school in Nigeria, amid reports that some have already been sold as “brides” for £8.

The Most Rev Justin Welby, who has experience of negotiating with violent groups in Nigeria, acknowledged that finding a way to end the attacks by the Boko Haram extremists would be “infinitely more difficult than Northern Ireland”.

In an interview with BBC radio about the fate of more than 200 schoolgirls seized by the Islamist group last month, the archbishop said the girls faced a “colossal” risk.



[See Prayer by Mothers' Union at end of this CNI bulletin](#)

“They’re in the hands of a very disparate group which is extremely irrational and difficult to deal with and utterly merciless in the example it’s shown in the past, and it must be a huge concern,” he said.

Asked if it is possible to talk to groups like Boko Haram, he said: “They’re in many layers. You have a very, very difficult inner core. and I think negotiation there is extremely complicated, though it needs to be tried.

“Then it goes out and out in different layers of commitment and understanding and involvement.

“There needs to be active negotiation, active contact with all the different layers.”

He said Boko Haram has “always been a mixture of groups united as much by a common enemy as by a common cause”.

Supporters turn to them because of immense poverty, high youth unemployment and the group’s promises of social change delivered through the barrel of a gun, he said.

Welby, a former oil executive who joined the Church in his 30s, was careful not to criticise too strongly the response of the Nigerian government security forces.

The leader of the world’s Anglicans noted their loss of control over large parts of northeastern Nigeria, despite a huge commitment of force.

“There needs to be effective police and security action across that area, and that is a huge challenge for the Nigerian government and one that we should not underestimate,” he said.

He added: “We’re talking about a massive area and a longstanding history of ethnic difference, of conflict with other Muslim groups.”

Asked about allegations of human rights abuses by the military, he said he had no firsthand evidence but viewed the reports “with great concern”.

He also said that it was “always a worry” that more Christians in Nigeria might take up arms to defend themselves against the group.

“They have a right to defend their lives and the lives of their children and their families,” he said.

“But at the heart of Christian teaching is the example of Jesus who said forgive your enemies and forgave his own enemies on the cross.”

Belfast man to become first lay headmaster at England’s top Catholic school



This summer David Lambon will leave behind St Malachy’s College in urban north Belfast to take over as headmaster of one of the world’s great Catholic schools, Ampleforth in rural north Yorkshire.

Irish Times - It is a prestigious appointment but this 46-year-old native of Andersonstown in west Belfast isn’t unduly daunted. He believes universal principles apply when dealing with teenage students.

He also believes in the value of Catholic education and is prepared to challenge the views of the “passionately secular” Minister of Education Ruairí

Quinn and also of First Minister Peter Robinson when he compares Catholic schools to a “benign form of apartheid”.

Lambon will be the first lay head of €36,000 a year Ampleforth, where British blue-blood and monied Catholics are educated, along with students from affluent Catholic families around the world. Until now, the college has been run by a succession of monks from Ampleforth Monastery, but the college is moving with the times. Traditionally a boys’ school, a third of its 600 pupils are now girls.

Lambon acknowledges that there is a cultural difference between Irish Catholics and English Catholics, particularly the elite cohort he will be teaching. “But fundamentally my job will be about children,” says Lambon and, whatever about their addiction to modern technology and their teenage cockiness, which he sees as a defensive facade, he has great faith in them.

Rather like the old Who song, he believes the kids are alright, whether privileged or not.

Ampleforth is the school attended by the current and previous dukes of Norfolk, England’s most aristocratic English Catholic family. It also boasts a significant list of old Amplefordians such as the late English Catholic primate Cardinal Basil Hume and the former abbot of Glenstal Abbey in Co Limerick Fr Christopher Dillon.

Other alumni include *Downton Abbey* writer Julian Fellowes, Irish painter Roderick O’Conor, actor Rupert Everett, former Northern Ireland Office minister Michael Ancram, Captain Robert Nairac, killed by the IRA in 1977, and former England and Ireland rugby internationals Lawrence Dallaglio, Guy and Simon Easterby.

Ampleforth, which was founded in 1802, has a great sense of itself but so too has St Malachy’s, which was established 31 years later. It also has a roll-call of leading alumni that includes the late Irish primate Cardinal Cahal Daly, Ireland manager Martin O’Neill, writers Brian Moore, Michael McLaverty, Bernard McLaverty and Robert McLiam Wilson, actor Ciarán Hinds, TV presenter Eamonn Holmes, and Major John MacBride executed in 1916 and Eoin MacNeill who countermanded the order for the Rising.

Lambon won’t be overawed. He was head-hunted for the post. He received an email “out of the blue” from executive search and assessment firm Saxton Bampfylde, which was engaged in a worldwide trawl on behalf of Ampleforth to find a new headmaster. This came as he was just over two years into his job as head of St Malachy’s.

"I had no intention of moving but Ampleforth is probably seen as one of the world's leading Catholic schools. It was the opportunity to further challenge myself as much as anything else . . . it was hard to refuse." More at -

<http://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/belfast-man-to-become-first-lay-headmaster-at-england-s-top-catholic-school-1.1788272#.U24tSbHFQBs.twitter>

Prayer movement at Christ Church, Dublin

Have you ever used movement to help you pray? It sounds a bit strange, doesn't it? But that is exactly what will be happening at a quiet morning in Christ Church Cathedral.

As part of the Open Doors quiet morning series, spiritual movement will be a prayer practice taught on Saturday 17th May 2014 between 10am-1pm.

The Revd Garth Bunting, organiser of the quiet mornings, said, "When I was first introduced to this particular reflective prayer practice I was very reticent. It felt very far away from anything I ever understood about ways to pray. Bernadette guided the group I was a part of in a very sensitive and supportive way and I found, to my surprise, that movement of the kind taught could lead me to connect with God."

Bernadette Purcell, who will lead the quiet morning, has a passion for this particular way of connecting with God. She uses spiritual movement regularly in her own prayer life and helps people to discover God through it by teaching the practice.

"Sacred movement is a reflective tool that embodies the spiritual aspect of each of us. All steps and movement are taught and experienced in a circle. Music enhances the experience and brings the participant into a deep place of peace, reflection and prayer. It is worth a risk trying it out!" says Bernadette.

If you would like to "risk it", or know more, then please book a place on this quiet morning by contacting Garth Bunting at the cathedral, on 01 6778099 or by email garth.bunting@cccdub.ie

Open air service at historic Irish Methodist site

Derryanville Methodist Church is hosting an open air service on Sunday, May 18, in the church grounds at 3pm.

Portadown Times - The speaker will be Rev George Bowes and the singers Brian and Ruth Agnew.

Derryanville Methodist Church is one of the oldest Methodist Churches in Ireland still in use. John Wesley visited the area no less than six times.

The first Methodist preacher in Derryanville - Mr Doolittle - came at the invitation of a lady called Alice Johnston.

John Wesley's first visit to Derryanville was in 1769 and his last was on June 15, 1785, when the crowd gathered was too large to fit into the church (erected in 1784). On that day many experienced the New Birth.

Methodism is still alive in Derryanville.

Monkstown and St Paul's choirs to present Choral Evensong

On Sunday 18 May at 7.30pm the combined choirs of Monkstown Parish and St Paul's will sing Choral Evensong .

The service will be conducted by Revd Gary Dowd and Canon Patrick Lawrence, with music directed by Derek Verso and Raymond Russell with Matthew Breen (organ scholar). Music includes Faure's much loved Cantique de Jean Racine, and the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis is the well known Short Service by Tallis

Lenten lunches assist charities

Lenten Lunches hosted by the United Parish of St Patrick's, Whitehead, and St John's, Islandmagee, have raised fantastic amounts for a number of charities.

The lunches are held every Wednesday during Lent and are very well attended and enjoyed by the local community. Many visitors return each year and old friendships are renewed.





The menu includes soup, which is prepared on the premises, fresh rolls, with the fillings generously donated by parishoners and local retailers; Jackie Wright of Spar, McMaster's Butchers, Sainsbury's and Tesco. The gorgeous desserts are prepared by the ladies of the parish and many litres of custard are consumed each year!

Every week a different charity is selected to benefit from the lunches, and on May 1 a £400 donation was presented to each of the following: The NI Children to Lapland Trust; the RNLI; Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI; NI Hospice; Chest Heart & Stroke; Church of Ireland Summer Madness, and Cancer Research.

Appointments



The Bishop of Down & Dromore has appointed the Revd Canon Bryan Kerr to be Dean of Dromore Cathedral.

Mr Kerr, currently rector of the Parish of Lisbellaw with Coolbuck and a canon of Clogher Cathedral, was recently appointed as incumbent of the Cathedral Parish of Dromore.

The institution will be on 6 August.

The Bishop of Down & Dromore has invited Revd Francey McCrea, rector of St Brendan's Parish, Sydenham, to become a canon of Down Cathedral.

Mr McCrea said, "I am delighted to accept a place in the chapter of the Cathedral and look forward to serving the Lord there.

"All of my 23 years of ordained ministry have been spent in the Diocese of Down, 20 of them as rector of St Brendan's and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the parish for all their support over the years."

The date of the installation has yet to be announced.



Rev Alan Peek, Rector of Castlederg, has been appointed Rector of Movilla Abbey Church.



Rev Alan Peek pictured with Bishop Ken Good at a Youth Volunteering Project in Castlederg

The institution will be on 5 September at 8.00 pm.

A spokesperson for Derry & Raphoe diocese said, "We are very sorry to see Alan, his wife Tammi and their daughters leave us. They have had a very fruitful ministry in Castlederg and they have our warm good wishes for their future.

His new parish has an ancient tradition with a very contemporary expression. The Abbey of Movilla was founded by St. Finnian in

540A.D. Malachy introduced Augustine monks in the 12th century, who remained until the dissolution of the monasteries in 1542. The remains of the monastery, mostly of the 15th century building, are close to the present church which was opened on the 7th June 1980 and extended in 2002. The building is now shared with a local Methodist congregation.

Mothers' Union - A prayer for the kidnapped Nigerian girls

O God, we cry out to you
for the lives and the freedom
of the 276 kidnapped girls in Nigeria.
In their time of danger and fear,
pour out your strong Spirit for them.
Make a way home for them in safety.
Make a way back for them
to the education that will lift them up.
Hold them in the knowledge
that they are not captive slaves,
they are not purchased brides,
but they are your beloved daughters,
and precious in your sight.
Change the hearts and minds of their kidnappers
and of all who choose violence against women and girls.
Cast down the mighty from their seat,
and lift up the humble and meek,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- written by Elizabeth Smith from the Diocese of Perth, Anglican Church of Australia.

Later this week a mini-series of reflections on last week's C of I General Synod...

Also - the coming Mothers' Union World Council meeting in Belfast... stay tuned!

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