



The essential daily brief on the Irish churches

200th Anniversary of Irish Missionary society

CMS Ireland is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year and as part of the events marking the milestone will be holding its 'Changing Times' conference in Armagh this Thursday and Friday, May 15 and 16.

Many people who have been connected to the work of CMSI overseas will attend the conference and among the many visitors to Ireland will be three Bishops who will also visit Dublin and Glendalough during their stay. Bishop Gaddiel Lenini (Kajiado, Kenya) has been visiting Bray while Bishop Anthony Poggo (Kajo Keji, South Sudan) will be in Delgany while Bishop Jered Kalimba (Shyogwe, Rwanda) will be in Whitechurch.



Bishop Gaddiel in a session with Boulders, Christ Church Bray's Youth group.

Bishop Anthony Poggo is visiting Delgany from May 17 to 20. His diocese of Kajo–Keji is located south of the South Sudanese capital Juba. In recent years he has travelled widely (UK, US, South Africa, Australia) in order to build bridges and seek support.



Bishop Gaddiel takes on flower arranging with Bray Mothers' Union.

On Sunday May 18 he will address a public meeting entitled 'The South Sudan Crisis – What the Churches are Doing to Help' in the Old Schoolhouse in Delgany.

On Sunday evening, Bishop Anthony will speak about the background to the conflict in South Sudan and give a first hand account of the current situation. He will also describe how the Churches are working to resolve conflict and outline some of the ways in which other Churches and countries can help. There will be an opportunity for questions, a cup of tea and a chance to meet Bishop Anthony informally.

Meanwhile in Whitechurch Bishop Jered Kalimba will be hosted by the parish from May 16 to 21. The Bishop will preach in Whitechurch Church at 10.30 am on Sunday morning. Whitechurch has had a mission link with the Anglican Diocese of Shyogwe in Rwanda for a number of years. Teams of parishioners from Whitechurch Parish have visited Shyogwe Diocese several times over the past decade and a further team will be flying out in November. Bishop Jered has visited Whitechurch Parish on three previous occasions and is always a most pleasant and valued presence.

Bishop Gaddiel Lenini from Kajiado Diocese in Kenya has been in Bray since May 9 also as part of the CMS Ireland 200 celebrations. It was his first visit to these Dioceses and he took part in many regular parish activities and met with many parishioners and townspeople. Kajiado Diocese has a significant Masai population and Bishop Gaddiel in his Sunday sermon touched on

some of the cultural challenges which this brings. His Diocese has had links with Bray for many years and a parish team plans to make a trip in 2015.

‘Vocation is never static’ - Bishop of Elphin appointed

Rev Kevin Doran, 61, was named by Pope Francis to succeed retired Bishop Christopher Jones at the head of the diocese.

The bishop-elect currently serving in Donnybrook parish, acted as secretary general for the 50th International Eucharistic

Congress, which saw 150,000 Catholic pilgrims come to Dublin in June 2012.

In a ceremony at the Cathedral of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Sligo, Bishop-elect Doran said: "I must confess to being a little surprised to find myself here this morning.

"Two weeks ago, we finalised a development plan for the parish, and that was the only plan I had in mind for the foreseeable future. I have learnt over the years, however, that vocation is never static."

The diocese of Elphin, which stretches from Westmeath to Roscommon, Sligo and Galway, has 37 parishes, 90 churches, and a Catholic population of about 70,000.

Bishop Jones, who set up the Catholic Church's crisis pregnancy agency Cura in 1977, retires after 20 years leading the diocese.

The senior cleric had been responsible for leading the church's formal opposition to the Government's plans to legislate for termination of pregnancy if a woman's life is at risk.



Bishop Jones was criticised by some politicians for his approach, with some describing his language as offensive and disturbing in submissions to Oireachtas Health Committee hearings on the laws early last year.

The child protection work in the diocese during his final months was praised last year following a review by the Catholic Church's watchdog.

Cardinal Sean Brady praised Bishop-elect Doran for his work organising the 50th International Eucharistic Congress.

"His advocacy and championing of the right to life of the unborn child, and his work in promoting vocations to the priesthood, are but two of the many talents and gifts which Bishop-elect Kevin has shared during his priestly ministry for the good of the Church and of our society," the Cardinal said.

"As their new bishop, I know that he will receive all the necessary support, cooperation and be received enthusiastically by the laity, religious, priests of the historic Diocese of Elphin."

New Dunmurry church will be 'a blessing to the whole community'

The new St Hilda's Parish Church, Hazel Avenue, Dunmurry, will be consecrated on Sunday May 18 by the Bishop of Connor, The Rt Rev Alan Abernethy.



The original dual purpose church and hall was dedicated in May 1958 as a daughter church of St Colman's, Dunmurry, and with the expansion of the parish a new separate church building was consecrated in December 1970.

But by 2005 it had become apparent that the buildings needed to be upgraded and repaired and a roof appeal got underway in 2008, raising £40,000.

A year later Bishop Abernethy put St Hilda's in contact with a developer interested in building a nursing home on the site and offering to build a new church and hall in return.

Agreement was reached in 2011 but subsequent delays meant the parish was 'homeless' for three years.

Parishioners have just moved into their new home, a modern, user-friendly building suitable for emerging outreach ministries. As well as the church, it includes offices, a prayer room, a café, a hall and a minor hall.

The rector, the Rev David Boyland, said: "The development, whilst benefiting the church directly, will also make a very significant impact on the community. The overall cost of the project is in the region of £5.3million, with the church and hall costing in the region of £800,000.

"During the construction phase there have been a significant number of jobs created with permanent jobs coming on stream with the imminent completion of the nursing home. This has and will continue to give a great boost in an area that has very high unemployment.

"The nursing home will provide 76 beds that are greatly needed in an area with an ageing population."

David continued: "Our vision for the new church and hall is that it will be a blessing to the whole community as they come in and experience the love and healing power of Christ as we seek to serve them."

Sunday's Service of Consecration is at 3pm.

Methodist Conference 2014: Be Inspired - Be Informed

The Annual Conference of the Methodist Church is taking place in Dublin from 11th - 15th June in Christ Church, Leeson Park.

A spokesperson said, "The Methodist Church in Ireland is on an exciting journey – stepping out and seeing where God is leading us and seeking to deal with the real challenges before us. There are representatives from each Circuit appointed to the Conference, but we want to encourage many others to be able to attend so that the membership of the church is as engaged as possible in the life of the church.

"It only comes to the district once every five years – so this is your chance to be inspired and be informed."

Conference documents and downloads will be available at -

<http://www.irishmethodist.org/conference-documents-and-downloads>

Sudan Link with Down & Dromore revitalised by visit



Bishop Justin Badi from Down & Dromore's link diocese of Maridi in South Sudan is currently on a short visit to Northern Ireland. He has a number of speaking engagements and will attend the CMS Ireland 200th Anniversary celebrations this week.

Bishop Justin Badi of the diocese of Maridi in South Sudan with Bishop Harold Miller

The Bishop reports that Maridi is peaceful but crowded with displaced

people who have travelled from the troubled states. There are about 6000 of them in the town, many of whom have come from over 300 miles away. Those who have the ability cross to Uganda or Kenya to where the UN is offering support.

"Of course we have limited help that we can give them," says Bishop Justin. "but the money that came from Northern Ireland helped us to support those people as they were arriving and get them started. It has been very helpful to be able to demonstrate the love of the church to those people at that difficult time.

"Our plan is to give those of them who have remained with us in Maridi a piece of land that they cultivate so that they can grow food for themselves as they wait for the situation back in their place to normalise. One of our parishes is giving them land temporarily and another of the things we want to get is agricultural tools."

The diocese has been busy building some washing cubicles (right) so that the refugees can have some privacy. They have also found some educated young men among the displaced and set them to work teaching the children whose education has ground to a halt.

Meeting these basic needs is one issue but another has been to deal with the tensions arising among traumatised Nuer and Dinka people.

“They wanted to bring their bitterness with them,” says Bishop Justin, “so we have tried to cool them down and help them be calm, so they are doing well.”

The political picture has changed recently with the signing of a ceasefire agreement, although there are indications that it was violated the very next day. An urgent prayer is that the ceasefire would hold on the ground and that the international community would use its influence to hold both sides to account.

Bishop Justin says, “The prayer which is very much needed is for peace because if the situation continues like that it will be difficult for us as a church and the people of Maridi because the conflict will not just remain in the one place. It will progress, so peace and stability is actually our priority for prayer.”

The South Sudan Crisis – what the Churches are doing to help

Bishop Anthony Poggo, Kajo–Keji Diocese, South Sudan will speak at a Public Meeting in Old School House, Delgany. 8.00 PM Sunday 18th May

South Sudan is the World’s newest nation and one of its poorest. Since late last year, in addition to its many other problems, it has been coping with a major internal conflict in which many have died and an estimated 1 million people have been displaced. Despite UN and African Union intervention, the conflict is still ongoing.

Both prior to and since South Sudan gained its independence, the country’s Christian Churches have played a major role in helping to build a fair and just civil society. Because of their leadership, organisational capacity and reputation for integrity and effectiveness they are frequently the local partners of choice through which foreign aid is channelled.

Bishop Anthony Poggo is in Ireland to attend the CMS Ireland 200th Anniversary Conference and is visiting Delgany from 17th – 20th May. His diocese of Kajo–Keji is located south of the South Sudanese capital Juba. In recent years he has travelled widely (UK, US, South Africa, Australia) in order to build bridges and seek support.

On Sunday evening, Bishop Anthony will speak about –

- The background to the conflict

- Give a first-hand account of the current situation
- Describe how the Churches are working to resolve conflict
- Outline some of the ways in which other Churches and countries can help.

There will be an opportunity for questions, a cup of tea and a chance to meet Bishop Anthony informally.

Services to medicine by church member recognised

Professor Patrick Morrison, a parishioner of St Mark's, Ballymacash, was at Buckingham Palace with his family earlier this month to receive a CBE.

Professor Morrison was made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for services to healthcare in the New Year's honours list.



A consultant in genetic medicine at Belfast City Hospital, Professor Morrison pioneered DNA testing for hereditary thyroid cancer in the 1990s and was the first person to instigate preventative surgery for familial thyroid cancers based solely on DNA testing.

Now, risk reducing surgery is available for several hereditary cancers including breast cancer (Angelina Jolie, the film star recently popularised breast surgery after testing positive for the BRCA1 gene in 2013), and ovarian cancer.

The honours ceremony was conducted by HRH The Princess Royal, who

congratulated Patrick on his work and unstinting service to the NHS over the last 25 years. Patrick is the son of Mr & Mrs Hilary Morrison.

New General Secretary of World Council of Reformed Churches

The Reverend Christopher Ferguson has been elected as the next General Secretary of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC).



Ferguson was elected by the WCRC Executive Committee after an extensive search process. “The WCRC is at the edge of a new moment of renewal and transformation. It is exciting and uplifting to be called to be part of this renewed commitment to communion and justice,” said Ferguson.

“I’m convinced Chris Ferguson will be an outstanding general secretary,” said Clifton Kirkpatrick, convener of the search committee. “I look forward to great things for the WCRC under his leadership.”

“It is critical that in this new location we have somebody who has solid ecumenical networking to sustain the visibility and work of the WCRC. Chris has this, as well as ecumenical experience on all levels, from the local to the global,” said Jerry Pillay, president of the WCRC.

Ferguson, 61 this week, was born in Canada, ordained to the ministry in the United Church of Canada, and has served in ministry in Canada, the Middle East, various parts of Latin America, and at the United Nations.

“I’m very delighted that Chris has been elected,” said Setri Nyomi, current general secretary. “I think he will bring gifts to move this organization forward as a communion committed to justice. I’ve known Chris for many years and believe he is the right person for this position in this time and place.”

Nyomi has served the maximum of two terms (14 years) as the general secretary of both the WCRC and its predecessor organization, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. He will remain in office through the end of August.

Ferguson and his wife Susan will relocate from Bogota, Colombia, to Hannover this summer. He will begin his duties on 1 August, providing for a month's transition time with Nyomi.

Ferguson will be installed as the general secretary at a worship service on Sunday, 18 May, at the Reformed Church in Hannover.

The Executive Committee, the governing board of the WCRC, is holding its annual meeting in Hannover, Germany, 11-18 May. It is composed of 30 members from around the world.

Roman Catholics and Anglicans meet for ARCIC III talks in South Africa

Catholic and Anglican theologians are meeting together in Durban, South Africa this week for a fourth session of their current dialogue known as ARCIC III.

The theme for this third phase of Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission is to explore the Church as Communion, local and universal, and how, together, they come to discern correct ethical teaching.

The new Catholic co-secretary of the dialogue is Fr Tony Curren, in charge of relations with the Anglican Communion at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

Fr Tony notes this 10 day encounter is the longest dialogue meeting the Council is involved in and that it is looking at the methodology for dialogue..."we're looking at how far we'll be using the tool of 'receptive ecumenism' as a way of preparing our documents and how much our documents will follow the previous tradition of writing a consensus document..."

Fr Tony says what the Anglican and Catholic theologians hope to do is to provide something that can be of benefit to both Churches: "the importance of the dialogue for both Communions is that we're living in the same world,

facing the same problems.....we have a traditional heartland in the West where we face problems of secularism....and a culture that is becoming estranged from its Christian roots.....at the same time, we've got expansion in the 'global south' but that causes a challenge for us to be a global communion across that vast cultural difference.....

Asked about some critics calling for a faster pace of progress in the talks, Fr Tony says superficial attempts to resolve our differences serve no purpose, but building deeper communion and unity takes time"it'll take some real hard thinking to really come up with a meeting of minds that is not just papering over the differences – that's what will be of service to both communities and that's what we're trying to produce."

Twitter or Facebook users - please link in with CNI - contact logos on the home page