



The essential daily brief on the Irish churches

Death of former rector of Fethart-on- Sea

**The death has
occurred of the
Reverend Adrian
Fisher the C of I
clergyman at the
centre of events
depicted in the
film A Love
Divided**



Daily Telegraph - The Reverend Adrian Fisher, who has died aged 90, arrived in a tiny, rural Irish parish in 1957 only to find himself faced with a controversy that reverberated around the world.

The mild-mannered, scholarly clergyman had assumed a Church of Ireland posting at Fethard-on-Sea, a village of only 100 inhabitants on the Hook peninsula in Co Wexford. It seemed like a peaceful billet after a spell as an Army padre coping with tense British troops waiting to be deployed from Cyprus as the Suez Crisis broke.

But on April 21 1957 — just six days after the official end of Fisher's short-service commission — Sheila Cloney, a young Protestant mother in Fethard, abandoned her Catholic husband, Sean, a farmer, and ran away to Belfast with their two daughters. Despite a promise given on her marriage that their children would be brought up in her husband's faith, it seemed that she could not bring herself to send them to Fethard's Roman Catholic school.

By mid-May, when Fisher arrived at the village's St Mogue's church, tempers in the small community were flaring.

Fisher found himself called in for a meeting with a furious Catholic curate, Fr William Stafford, who accused the Church of Ireland and its approximately 25 local adherents of helping Sheila Cloney to flee. "I was at the table sitting down and his fist came down with great force in front of my nose," Fisher remembered. "He said: 'You are to go to Belfast and see a solicitor and bring back Mrs Cloney's children.'"

Fr Stafford also called at Sunday Mass for the villagers to boycott local Protestant businesses. The Catholic flock's obedience devastated the lives of the owners of the newsagent and grocers, as well as the music teacher (who lost all her pupils) .

Fisher told Fr Stafford that he had no intention of going to Belfast after Sheila Cloney. Donations and messages of sympathy for the beleaguered Church of Ireland members flooded in from as far afield as Canada, the United States and South Africa. Time magazine coined the word "fethardism" to describe the sectarian dispute. The boycott ended only when a Catholic clergyman signalled a truce by entering Protestant Betty Cooper's newsagent and buying a packet of cigarettes.

The events became the subject of a film, *A Love Divided* (1999), and a book, *The Fethard-on-Sea Boycott* (2010), by Tim Fanning.

Adrian Charles Procter Fisher was born on February 20 1924 at Weymouth, Dorset, and grew up in Ireland, where his father became a canon of Kildare Cathedral. He was educated at Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, and Trinity College Dublin, being ordained priest at Kildare Cathedral in 1950.

Sheila Cloney returned home at Easter 1958, and she and her husband resolved their dispute by educating their children at home. Fisher stayed in Fethard until 1962, then rejoined the Royal Army Chaplains' Department, this time serving in Munster and Berlin in Germany.

An English parish followed when, on leaving the Army in 1970, he was appointed priest-in-charge of North Stoke with Mangewell and Ipsden, Oxfordshire. He was then vicar of the parishes from 1983 until 1992, when he retired.

Friends remember him pursuing Biblical researches among his many books in a large summerhouse, which he called "The Pavilion", at Aldermaston and then at Henley-on-Thames, his beloved black labrador, Rosie, at his feet.

Cousinship through his father, the Rev Charles Proctor Fisher, with Admiral of the Fleet Lord (Jacky) Fisher of Kilverstone, introduced Adrian Fisher to a cause that had been favoured by the Admiral and many members of the Establishment and the Royal family in the mid-20th century: the British-Israel World Federation, which promotes the notion that the people of the British Isles belong to the lost tribes of Israel. Adrian Fisher became one of the Federation's patrons.

He married, in 1960, Mary Elizabeth Anne Sadler, always known as Pan, with whom he had three sons.

The Rev Adrian Fisher, born February 20 1924, died April 15 2014

All mod cons: a rebuilt Maynooth organ passes its first test

Sunday brought the inauguration of a new Ruffatti organ in the chapel of St Patrick's College, Maynooth, although in the world of organ-building, "new" is a description that usually has to be qualified.



Irish Times - [Gerard Gillen](#), NUI Maynooth's emeritus professor of music, a man whose devotion to the organ remains unflagging in his early 70s, provided the background information in the printed programme.

The keyboards have optical sensors, there are record and playback functions and Midi connections, and stop combinations can be stored digitally

The original Maynooth organ was built following the most modern principles by the German firm of Georg Stahlhuth in 1890. It included an early version of electro-pneumatic action (the connection between the keyboard and the actual pipes was implemented by electrically controlled wind pressure), which allowed the playing console to be well removed from the pipes. As Gillen says, “This distance between player and instrument was an astonishing technological achievement for its time, although from the start it was hardly an arrangement likely to lead to the best musical results, either in accompaniment or in solo playing.”

The Stahlhuth instrument lasted just four decades. Organs are prone to be updated either through changing needs, changing fashions, or both. In 1928 and 1929, the instrument was enlarged by Henry Willis & Sons, in a rebuild that Gillen says “gave the instrument a romantic Anglo-French accent”.

Half a century elapsed before, in the mid-1970s, Bray company Kenneth Jones & Associates brought the instrument, says Gillen, “into line with contemporary classical principles of organ design”. Organists and organ-recital programmes had turned away from romantic repertoire and were showing an interest in the music of the 17th and 18th centuries, and Jones’s rebuild reflected this. He also moved the console from the ground floor to the gallery.

By the end of the 20th century, wear and tear created the opportunity for another rethink. This time it was decided to “restore the organ to its original romantic character, but with an enlarged palette of colours, and in the process to make the primary action of the instrument mechanical as opposed to electro-pneumatic as heretofore”. The task was given to an Italian firm, Fratelli Ruffatti of Padova.

More at -

<http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/all-mod-cons-a-rebuilt-maynooth-organ-passes-its-first-test-1.1777817>

**THE CHURCH
OF IRELAND**



**DIOCESE OF
CONNOR**

Connor Pentecost series

Special services will take place in each of the three Archdeaconries in the Diocese of Connor to celebrate Pentecost.

Preacher at the services in Jordanstown

(Archdeaconry of Belfast), Ballymena (Archdeaconry of Dalriada), and Lisburn Cathedral (Archdeaconry of Connor) will be the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy.

Every year during Lent Bishop Alan runs a series of seminars across the diocese, and this year the theme was Discipleship and Ministry.

“These special Pentecost Services are a follow up to the Lent courses and Renewal of Baptismal vows,” said Bishop Alan. “I want to invite everyone to come together to celebrate our faith as people of God in Connor Diocese.

“The services are open to all and I would love to see as many people coming along as possible.”

Dates and venues are:

ARCHDEACONRY OF BELFAST

Wednesday 14th May, 2014 at 7.30pm
St Patrick’s Parish Church, Jordanstown

ARCHDEACONRY OF DALRIADA

Tuesday 20th May, 2014 at 7.30pm
St Patrick’s Parish Church, Ballymena

ARCHDEACONRY OF CONNOR

Thursday 22nd May, 2014 at 7.30pm
Lisburn Cathedral

Testimony to Methodist Church Home support programme

Belfast City Miss’ions HOME Project aims to increase service user skills, social networks and improve living conditions by providing a home makeover where the service users could work together to learn new skills and provide peer support.

Service users who complete the project have a lovely home they could have pride in, leading to a more sustainable tenancy, a settled way of life and a sense of contentment.

Susan* is one of the young people who benefited from the HOME Project and this is her story.

"I have been in care, I've been in supported accommodation, I've been homeless, I've been pregnant and I've been in a parenting assessment centre. I was told that I couldn't get my baby back until I got my own place and sorted myself out...

My support worker and my social worker helped me with all the housing stuff and eventually I was given a 2 bedroom house in a quiet area. I was over the moon, what 19 year old wouldn't be? I thought this was it, I'd move in, get my child back and social services would leave me alone...

I got the keys of my house and my support worker and I went to visit it, I loved it but I had no idea where to start with the work. My application for HOME was completed straight away and Teresa helped to complete a community care grant.

I received £803 from the community care grant. I panicked. How on earth was I going to furnish a home with this, it's completely bare! No flooring, no walls painted, no blinds, nothing.

I was told I had been granted the HOME project. Teresa and I went shopping with my community care grant and HOME money; I purchased wooden flooring, paint, wallpaper, flat pack furniture and then managed to get absolutely everything else with my £806. Teresa is an absolute bargain hunter and I didn't argue with her!

We met Dave and I told him what I wanted to do with the house. We started off with basics like how to wash brushes and how to prepare walls, then I learned how to cut in...I also learned that painting was harder than it looked and wallpapering is almost impossible, every bone in my body ached after a week! Throughout my home makeover my support worker was there to motivate and help me, Dave was a great guide and by the end of the week I had learned how to put down uni-clic wooden floors, fit carpet and paint and paper. How many girls at my age can say that! When Dave and Teresa would leave in the evenings, I worked on, perfecting it! My house has been transformed, I am so chuffed I did it, I love telling people what I can do, I keep it tidy as I want people to be impressed! Thank you so much for the opportunity, It has really helped me settle into my new home"

BCM contacts - Grosvenor House, 5 Glengall Street, Belfast, BT12 5AD | T: +44 (0)28 9024 1917 | F: +44 (0)28 9024 0577 | info@belfastcentralmission.org



Rev Vivienne Faull, the Dean of York said views on marriage had evolved in recent decades, with many more people recognizing the possibility of same-sex couples marrying

CofE's top female cleric: I would have 'no problem' with blessings for gay marriages

The Dean of York, the Very Rev Vivienne Faull – tipped as future bishop – says effect of the Church's stance on same-sex marriage is 'dreadful'

Daily Telegraph - The most senior female cleric in the Church of England has said she would have no problem blessing gay marriages and accused the Church of "driving people away" with its current stance on same-sex relationships.

The Very Rev Vivienne Faull, the Dean of York, who is considered the frontrunner to become the first women bishop, said the current episcopate had not "quite got" how radically attitudes to homosexuality had changed in the UK.

In an interview with Radio Times, she disclosed that although she follows rules which ban official wedding-like blessing services for same-sex couples, she had previously "found ways" of celebrating gay and lesbian couples' civil partnerships.

Speaking ahead of a new BBC2 series about York Minster, she said she had already been approached by couples of the same sex wishing to celebrate their marriage in church.

She argued that many people in Britain no longer “understand in their hearts” the Church’s position on homosexuality. More at -

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10793083/CofEs-top-female-cleric-I-would-have-no-problem-with-blessings-for-gay-marriages.html>

Archbishop of Canterbury’s message to Christian Aid Week workers

This year’s Christian Aid Week (11-17 May 2014 www.caweeek.org), Britain and Ireland’s longest running door-to door fundraising week, is asking the public to support communities in war-ravaged countries to rebuild their lives and live a life free from fear.

In a [special video message](#) filmed at Lambeth Palace, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby encouraged churches to get involved.

He said: ‘Reconciliation is important to Christians. It’s more than important to Christians – it’s the very foundation of what it is to be a Christian. And Christian Aid’s 2014 objective around tackling violence, building peace is at the heart of this overflow of God’s reconciliation into the world.’

Worldwide more than 45.2 million people are displaced by conflict and more than 1.5 billion are living in conflict affected countries, according to the United Nations. The World Bank cites the insecurity caused by violence as one of the primary development challenges of our time and says that civil conflict costs the average developing country roughly 30 years of GDP growth.

Christian Aid works with partners in many countries around the world who are dealing with the challenges of on-going conflict, or the legacy war leaves behind. Places like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Colombia, Iraq, South Sudan and Syria which are regularly in the news,

but also in countries like Angola and Sierra Leone that are still rebuilding many years after the fighting has stopped.

The often life-saving work of Christian Aid partners includes providing emergency supplies such as food, water, medical care and shelter to those who are caught up in, or displaced by, the fighting. They also offer longer-term support to rebuild shattered lives; providing counselling to those affected by trauma, helping people who have lost everything to once again earn a living, and enabling communities to build homes that will allow families to feel safe.

As well as the practical work with stricken communities, Christian Aid partners lobby for change at the local, national and international level, influencing government policy and protecting human rights.

Loretta Minghella, Chief Executive of Christian Aid said: 'War tears lives apart. It leaves people broken, brutalised, grief-stricken and afraid. The horrors of war can seem remote to us here, but for millions of people across the world conflict is part of their everyday life. It has a huge impact on poverty, destroying lives and communities and preventing people from earning a living.'

The 50 year conflict in Colombia has resulted in 5.7 million people being forced from their homes, the second highest number of internally displaced people in any country, after Syria. Christian Aid partner Inter-Church Commission for Justice and Peace (CIJP) has played a crucial role in the setting up of vital humanitarian

**Midwest
Interfaith
Network**

warmly invite you to participate
in an afternoon of interfaith
worship and sharing

**Sunday May 18, 2014
3:00 - 5:00**

★ Teach Fáilte (Multifaith Chaplaincy)
University of Limerick

Share in devotional music and prayer
from different faith traditions
and stay for afternoon tea

Any inquiries, please contact Eva Maculova: 085 737 6948

**Doras
Luimní**
Promoting and protecting human rights

Intercultural Cities

zones in Colombia, offering protection to families who have been forcibly displaced from their land. CIJP also provides psychological support to those affected by the armed conflict, legal support to allow victims to get justice and workshops to educate people about their rights.

In northern Iraq, Christian Aid partner Rehabilitation, Education and Community's Health (REACH) works with communities whose villages were flattened by bombs as part of a genocidal campaign against the country's Kurds in 1988. REACH helps communities lobby the government for essential services, such as access to clean drinking water, and plays an important role in helping to improve agricultural practices and empowering women. With the on-going conflict in Syria REACH has also been supporting some of the two million refugees who have fled over the border to neighbouring countries like Iraq.

As violence once again flares in South Sudan, one of the world's youngest and poorest nations, Christian Aid's partner Hope Agency for Relief and Development (HARD), continues to work with people displaced as a result of the last conflict. In addition to providing families with basic materials such as cooking pots, plastic sheeting, seeds and tools, they also offer longer term support by making funds available for people to build brick homes, construct schools and pit latrines and support teacher training.

'Tackling violence and building peace is an essential part of Christian Aid's work,' added Ms Minghella. 'Too many people around the world are living in fear. Christian Aid works to protect vulnerable people from violence, to identify and challenge its causes, and transform conflict through peaceful means, so that people can flourish.'

The Archbishop gives a special video message for those taking part in Christian Aid Week.

<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5306/archbishop-justins-message-for-christian-aid-week-2014>

To donate to Christian Aid Week, give online at www.caweek.org call 08080 006 006, or text 'GIVE' to 70040 to give £5.

Churches criticise UK government for failure to progress on disarmament

Leaders of the Baptist Union, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church are pushing the government to make progress on disarmament at the NPT Preparatory Committee in New York

The leaders of the Baptist Union, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church are pushing the government to make progress on disarmament at the Non Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meeting in New York this week. They are concerned that the UK government has failed to live up to commitments made at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in 2010.

Steve Hucklesby, Policy Adviser for the Methodist Church, is part of a World Council of Churches delegation attending the PrepCom meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The delegation will meet with representatives of governments around the world. "The UK's report outlining four years' work is woefully thin," he said. "Our government appears happy to talk about a commitment to encouraging progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons but then acts against some of the most promising initiatives."

Leaders of seven UK Churches wrote to William Hague, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, in March outlining a series of missed opportunities for progress on promises made in 2010. The UK Government boycotted the Oslo and Nayarit inter-governmental conferences, held last year and earlier this year, on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. In his letter to Church leaders, William Hague said: "We concluded that the objectives of the (Oslo and Nayarit) conferences were at best unclear and that many supporters of the conferences appeared to have as their goal a nuclear weapons convention or other treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons outright."

In response to William Hague's letter, Steve Hucklesby said: "There is no adequate explanation from the Secretary of State as to why an examination of the relationship between nuclear weapons and International Humanitarian Law is such a concern to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The Oslo and Nayarit conferences did not focus solely on the disarmament agenda; such conferences have the potential to strengthen the Treaty as a whole. The NPT has been the cornerstone of efforts to constrain non-proliferation for

decades, but it will be under threat unless the nuclear weapons' states take their responsibilities seriously."

The Rev Dr Michael Jagessar, Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Reformed Church, said: "The possession of chemical and biological weapons is banned by international treaties and the same should apply to nuclear weapons. While states continue to invest billions in nuclear weapons there remains the risk of a nuclear disaster either by accident or design. Our Churches have long maintained that security policies based on the terror of a catastrophic nuclear explosion are both unreliable and unethical; that nuclear weapons offer more insecurity, fear, and a threat to life; that true peace will not be found in a climate of fear; and that the only ultimate protection against nuclear weapons is their total elimination."

Catholic Church saddened by school stabbing

The leader of Catholics in England and Wales has spoken of his "utter shock and sadness" over the fatal stabbing of teacher Ann Maguire.



Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster, who was made a Cardinal earlier this year by

Pope Francis, said his heart went out to the family of Mrs Maguire.

The much-loved teacher had worked at Corpus Christi Catholic College in Leeds for 40 years and had been due to retire in September.

"Today I express my utter shock and sadness at the tragic killing of Mrs Ann Maguire at Corpus Christi College," Cardinal Nichols said in a statement posted on the Diocese of Westminster website.

"My heart goes out to her husband and daughters, to their wider family, to everyone at Corpus Christi Catholic College and to the parishes connected to the College.

"I want to assure them of my prayers, and those of the entire Diocese of Westminster at this time. May the Lord comfort the bereaved, consoling them with his unshakeable promise of eternal life.

"I pray, too, that through the shock, distress and anger that this action evokes, the light of Christ may shine, a light that calls us to trust in his merciful love, that brings us a touch of calm and healing and that opens our hearts to each other in our bewilderment and dismay."

The statement from Cardinal Nichols comes after the chairman of the Catholic Education Service, the Most Rev Malcolm McMahon, Archbishop-elect of Liverpool, spoke of his shock and sadness over the killing.

"My prayers, and those of every Catholic parish and school in England and Wales, will be with her family and friends, the staff and students of Corpus Christi Catholic College in Leeds, and all who have been affected in any way by this senseless tragedy," he said.

"Ann gave her life to the college and Catholic education, and thousands of young people have benefited from her kindness and hard work over many years. May she rest in peace."

New Dean of King's

King's Cambridge has announced that the Revd Dr Stephen Cherry has been elected as the College's new Dean.

Dr Cherry is a former Chaplain of King's, having served here from 1989-1994. He is currently a Residentiary Canon of Durham Cathedral and Director of Ministerial Development and Parish Support for the diocese of Durham, where he leads a team of parish support officers and carries the portfolio for Continuing Ministerial Development (CMD) for clergy.



He has degrees in Psychology and Theology and is active as a writer and speaker in the areas of Christian spirituality and practical theology. He is currently writing a book about sin, as a follow-up to his book on forgiveness (*Healing Agony*, Continuum, 2012).

Before moving to Durham in 2006 Stephen was a parish priest in Loughborough for 12 years, a role which involved renewing and restoring a local church in a multi-faith environment.

He said, "I feel unbelievably fortunate to be returning to a place where I learnt so much in the past and have met so many wonderful, inspiring and challenging people.

"As I have explored the possibility of this move I have realised how much things have developed over the last twenty years, but I have also gained a keener sense of the timeless qualities of the Chapel and deeper virtues of the College.

"I hope and pray that my ministry will honour the past, be realistic in the present and be firmly focussed on the hope of a yet more glorious future for College and Chapel together. "

The Provost of King's, Professor Michael Proctor, said: "I am delighted that Stephen Cherry is to join the College as Dean. He is well known to many Fellows from his time as Chaplain twenty years ago, and brings to the position a huge amount of experience from his work at Loughborough and Durham.

"I much look forward to working with him in maintaining and developing the Chapel as a central part of the College's activities."

The new Dean was elected on 29 April at a meeting of the College's Governing Body and will take up his appointment on 1 October 2014.

Dr Cherry will succeed the current Dean, Revd Dr Jeremy Morris, who is leaving to become the Master of Trinity Hall.

Press briefs and links

Independent.ie

Four Benedictine Monks of Perpetual Adoration have renewed their appeal for donations in order to secure their home and save their Victorian-era monastery in Co Meath from falling into further decay. But they suffered a major setback when, shortly after midnight on Holy Thursday, a hot water pipe burst in its converted stables. They had been renovated just a fortnight before as guest lodging. Extensive damage was caused to the newly-laid floors, walls and ceilings.

"That came as a terrible shock. The whole place filled with hot steam," said Prior Dom Fr Mark Daniel Kirby.

The monastery – known as Silverstream Priory, and built around 1845 – is set on 15 idyllic acres of countryside near Stamullen, Co Meath, and has been owned by the Visitation Order of nuns since 1955.

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/setback-for-silent-monks-in-bid-to-save-monastery-30223336.html>

Irish Times

[Pope Francis](#) is believed to have intervened directly with the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) to have all sanctions on silenced Irish priest Fr [Sean Fagan](#) (86) lifted.

It was confirmed to *The Irish Times* in Rome last night that Marist priest Fr Fagan, who has been subject to sanction by the [Vatican](#) for six years, is no longer so.

The superior general of the Marist congregation in Rome, Fr John Hannan, said last night that Fr Fagan is now "a priest in good standing" where the church is concerned.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/vatican-lifts-sanctions-on-silenced-irish-priest-1.1777447>

Times

Report stating the Church of Scotland is losing members at a rate of more than 1,200 a month, with numbers down more than 10 per cent since 2010. It states a report to next month's General Assembly will reveal the drop, alongside separate analysis that reveals entrants to the ministry have dropped to their lowest level in a generation.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/scotland/article4075822.ece>

Times

Obituary report on William Peters, a former diplomat, who had been chairman of the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, author of two books on third world debt and poverty and co-founder of the Jubilee 2000 campaign.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/obituaries/article4076339.ece>

Humour

10 reasons Why Men Should Not Be Ordained

<http://liturgy.co.nz/10-reasons-why-men-should-not-be-ordained>

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