

Bishop in the Arctic to be rector in Warrenpoint

The Right Reverend Darren McCartney has been appointed Incumbent of the Parish of Clonallon and Warrenpoint with Kilbroney in the Diocese of Dromore. Since 2012 Darren has been Suffragan (assistant) bishop of the diocese of the Arctic.



He was ordained in the diocese of the Arctic in 2003, ministering in Pangnirtung before returning to Northern Ireland in 2006 on his appointment as curate in Carrickfergus, diocese of Connor. He was appointed rector of Knocknamuckley in 2009 and served there until 2012 when he was elected suffragan (assistant) bishop of the diocese of the Arctic.

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Bishop Harold Miller said: 'I am very pleased to welcome Bishop Darren back to the diocese of Down & Dromore. Please pray for him, his wife Karen and his son Liam, as they prepare to move. I know that Darren will be greatly used by God in his new ministry in Rostrevor & Warrenpoint'.

The date of the institution service will be announced soon.

Controlled schools becoming more diverse, says support council chief

New figures show the largest education sector in Northern Ireland is open to all, a support council chief has claimed.

Historically, Protestant and Catholic children in the region have attended different schools - with most of the former attending controlled schools and most of the latter attending Catholic maintained schools.

Barry Mulholland, who leads the Controlled Schools Support Council, was speaking as the body released a report containing new figures indicating the religious background of the children that attend those schools.

The controlled sector has 49.2% of schools in Northern Ireland including nursery, primary, secondary, grammar and special settings. These also include 27 controlled integrated schools and two Irish medium schools.

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The Catholic maintained sector has 40.2% of schools and the grant maintained integrated sector has 3.4%

There are also a number of voluntary grammar schools, Irish medium schools and independent schools.

Department of Education figures relating to the 2018 academic year have been compiled in a new report by the Controlled Schools Support Council (CSSC).

They show that 63.4% of those attending controlled schools last year were Protestant, 10% were Catholic and 26.5% were either of other faiths or had no recorded religious background.

Comparatively the figures show 95% of those being educated in Catholic Maintained schools were Catholic,

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0.6% were Protestant and 3.1% were of other faiths or had no recorded religious background.

At grant maintained integrated schools, 41% were Catholic, 35.1% were Protestant and 24.3% were of other faiths or had no recorded religious background.

Meanwhile, of the 15,290 newcomer pupils in Northern Ireland last year, most attended Catholic maintained schools (52.1%), 37.6% attended controlled schools and 4.7% attended grant maintained integrated schools.

In terms of children with special education needs, there was an even split with 41.3% attending controlled schools, and 41.6% attending Catholic maintained schools, as well as 6.5% at grant maintained integrated schools.

Mr Mulholland said the figures show the "diversity and inclusivity of controlled schools, which are open to all faiths and none".

"Controlled schools provide education to over 143,000 children and young people to enable them to learn, develop and grow together, within the ethos of non-denominational Christian values and principles," he said.

Cork Bishops in ceremony to reopen Saint Patrick's Bridge

On Saturday 16th March last, the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Mick Finn, put the last piece of masonry in place to mark the completion of the restoration of Saint Patrick's Bridge in

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From left: Michael Nolan, CEO of Transport Infrastructure Ireland; Bishops John Buckley and Paul Colton; Juia Gebel, Master Stonemason and Gerry O'Beirne, Director of Services of the Roads and Transportation Directorate, Cork City Council.

Cork City. The two Bishops of Cork, Dr John Buckley and Dr Paul Colton, said prayers and gave a blessing, after which the Lord Mayor officially re-opened the bridge and unveiled a plaque.

Cllr. Mick Finn, Lord Mayor of Cork, who performed the laying the final piece of stonework on St Patrick's Bridge with a silver trowel that was given to the Lord Mayor of Cork,

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Cllr. Mick Finn, Lord Mayor of Cork, laying the final piece of stonework on St Patrick's Bridge with the silver trowel that was given to the Lord Mayor of Cork, John Arnott, to mark the laying of the foundations of the bridge in 1859.

John Arnott, to mark the laying of the foundations of the bridge in 1859.

Today's bridge is not the first bridge built at that point over the River Lee.

When the ancient city of Cork, centred on North Main and South Main Streets, expanded in the 18th century, including the development of St Patrick's Street, the first St Patrick's Bridge was built. A foundation stone was laid on 25th July 1788, but six months later on 17th January 1789 a flood washed away the partially completed bridge. It was rebuilt, and was opened on 29th September 1789. That bridge was

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destroyed, again by a severe weather event in 1853 and was replaced by a temporary timber bridge.

It, in turn, was replaced by today's bridge. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the Earl of Carlisle, laid the foundation stone for the new bridge on 10 November 1859 using a level provided by the Freemasons of Cork. The Mayor of Cork, Sir John Arnott, opened the new Saint Patrick's Bridge on 12 December 1861. The bridge, 18.5 metres wide, spans a waterway of 51 metres. Both the level and trowel used in 1859 were brought to the re-opening on 16th March 2019.

The bridge's elegant design remains one of the best-known landmarks in Cork.

Clogher Diocese to celebrate Chrism Mass for first time since 2016

For the first time since 2016 the Diocese of Clogher will celebrate a Mass of Chrism on Holy Thursday. Members of the public are invited to join Bishop Larry Duffy, and the people of the Diocese in this celebration on 18 April 2019 at 11.00am in Saint Macartan's Cathedral, Monaghan.

The Mass of Chrism is a gathering of the entire diocese, bishop, priests, deacons, religious and lay faithful. It is an occasion during which the bishop blesses the holy oils and consecrates the oil of chrism. These will be used in the celebration of the sacraments in the year ahead. At the

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Mass, the priests will also renew their promises to serve God and his people.

The two oils that are blessed at the Chrism Mass: that of the sick and that of catechumens, are

then used, in the year ahead wherever there is a sacramental anointing, such as the anointing of the sick and the anointing of those to be baptised. The oil of chrism is consecrated for use in the anointing of those being confirmed in our parishes. It will also be used to anoint Deacon Kevin Connolly when he will be ordained to the priesthood on 30 June next.



The Diocese of Clogher was vacant from the retirement through ill-health of Bishop Liam MacDaid in October 2016 until the episcopal ordination of Bishop Larry Duffy on 10 February last. It was therefore not in a position to celebrate a Mass of Chrism.

The Diocese of Clogher encompasses all of Co Monaghan, most of Fermanagh and portions of Tyrone, Donegal, Louth and Cavan. It has a Catholic population of 88,000, across 37 parishes, which are served by 57 priests and 2 deacons. There are 85 churches in the diocese.



Christian rugby player faces sack after social media post about sin and hell

One of the best rugby players in the world is set to have his contract terminated after posting a picture on social media with a warning to those who sin.

Israel Folau, who's starred for Australia over the past six years, has often spoken about his Christian faith, regularly sharing Bible verses and messages on Twitter and Instagram.

Last year he received much criticism for telling a follower that God's plan for gay people was hell unless they repent of their sins.

His employer, Rugby Australia, had said his comments "did not reflect the views" of the organisation but added: "In his own words, Israel said that he did not intend to upset people

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izzyfolau • Follow

izzyfolau Those that are living in Sin will end up in Hell unless you repent. Jesus Christ loves you and is giving you time to turn away from your sin and come to him.

Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these , adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
Galatians 5:19-21 KJV



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intentionally or bring hurt to the game. We accept Israel's position."

His latest post (above) lists a number of different sins (homosexuality) and tells followers that "hell awaits".

Rugby Australia and his club NSW Warratahs have released a statement criticising his comments.

They say they have failed to get hold of Folau over the past 24 hours but now intend to sack him.

They said: "Whilst Israel is entitled to his religious beliefs, the way in which he has expressed these beliefs is inconsistent with the values of the sport.

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"We want to make it clear that he does not speak for the game with his recent social media posts.

"In the absence of compelling mitigating factors, it is our intention to terminate his contract."

Folau has previously defended his comments on the Players Voice website.

In a long article in which he talks about the basics of Christianity, he said: "People's lives are not for me to judge. Only God can do that.

"I have sinned many times in my life. I take responsibility for those sins and ask for forgiveness through repentance daily."

Speaking about his views on homosexuality and sin, he went on to say he was unprepared to "compromise my faith in Jesus Christ, which is the cornerstone of every single thing in my life".

South Sudanese Christian women pray and fast as ecumenical retreat continues at the Vatican

As a unique ecumenical spiritual retreat at the Vatican for the political and Church leaders of South Sudan enters its

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second day, a group of Christian women are gathered in Juba for three days of prayer and fasting. The women are gathered at the South Sudan Council of Churches headquarters as part of a monthly pattern of prayer and fasting for peace organised by the ecumenical group's women's desk.

The initiative began in 2013 after the conflict erupted in Juba and has continued ever since.

South Sudan's President Salva Kiir Mayardit and four of the five designated Vice Presidents: Riek Machar Teny Dhurgon, James Wani Igga, Taban Deng Gai and Rebecca Nyandeng De Mabior, are at the Vatican for the retreat. The unprecedented event was proposed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, and approved by Pope Francis. The Archbishop and the Pope are both helping to lead the

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retreat, alongside the former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, John Chalmers.

A joint visit to South Sudan by Pope Francis and the Archbishop of Canterbury had been mooted in February 2017. It would have been the first joint pastoral visit by the leaders of the Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches, but the increasing deterioration of the security situation in South Sudan caused by the ongoing civil war meant that the visit had to be shelved.

Many people around the world have joined in prayer for the retreat in the hope that, as a spokesperson for the Archbishop of Canterbury said, it “could be a step on a journey” and might “build confidence and trust between parties and give them spiritual nourishment.”

A torrid year for the Presbyterian Church

The announcement by Queen's University that it is severing academic ties with Union Theological College is the latest development in an "annus horribilis" - a horrible year - for the Presbyterian Church, Alf McCreary writes in the Belfast Telegraph.

It began last June when the General Assembly confirmed its policy of not giving communion to LGBT members, and not baptising their children.

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This led to strong criticism of the Church's allegedly harsh attitude, and it received more for its decision to stop annual exchange visits between the Scottish and Irish Moderators to Belfast and Edinburgh because of the Scots' more liberal views on same-sex issues.

This led to an early departure from the Belfast Assembly by the Scottish Moderator, Rev Dr Susan Brown, who was visibly upset.

Lord Alderdice, an elder for 30 years, resigned in protest and said that denying baptism to a child because the parents are gay was "obnoxious," and that cutting off ties with the Scottish Church was "disastrous". This decision was seen as an unforgivable snub to the Scottish Church, which had been the 'Mother Church' to Irish Presbyterians from the early 17th century.

More than 230 members signed a letter to the Belfast Telegraph on July 6 and said that they shared the "profound sense of hurt, dismay and anger being expressed in the wake of the 2018 General Assembly".

Last September, more than 600 Presbyterians signed a letter to the Moderator, saying that they would not be silenced in the row over same-sex relationships.

In the meantime, there was more dramatic news for the Presbyterians when Queen's announced on June 27 that it was reviewing its links with Union College.

The university has now confirmed it will sever its links with the institution.

Queen's will no longer award degrees in theology after the current students finish and term finishes at the end of

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August. This could result in a significant loss of revenue for Union College.

Following reviews in 2016 and 2018, the university had criticisms of the college, including the "highly problematic" situation of a single denomination providing all teaching in theology, and a lack of female teachers.

The Church has expressed its disappointment, but people outside the college are asking if the management did not see this coming, in an age of multi-culturalism and gender equality.

The Church is talking about "exciting days ahead" for the college, but what exactly does this mean?

To put things in perspective, the Church makes an important contribution to society at home and abroad.

The vast majority of Presbyterians are decent people trying to live out their faith, but many of them pay little enough attention to what goes on at the Assembly, or at Presbytery. However the adverse publicity has been such in the past year that many are wondering how the Church has brought itself to its current unenviable position.

Sadly, the Church has moved steadily to the right in recent years and the former strength of Presbyterianism as "a broad church" is being steadily eroded.

Recently the Church unveiled a visitor exhibition which underlined the cutting edge of Presbyterianism throughout history. It included pictures of the sister of Henry Joy McCracken as a reminder of the radicalism of the Church in the late 18th century.

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However many are asking where that radicalism and cutting edge is today as Presbyterianism struggles to find its place as a vibrant and relevant Church that is able to meet adequately the challenges of 21st century life in an increasingly secular society. (Published in the Belfast Telegraph, April 10, 2019)

Today in Christian history

April 12, 1204: The Fourth Crusade sacks Constantinople, an allied city. The attack virtually destroyed the Byzantine Empire and ruined any hope of reunifying eastern and western Christians.

April 12, 1850: Adoniram Judson, pioneer Baptist missionary to India and Burma, and Bible translator, dies during a sea voyage. He and his wife, Ann, were the foremost American missionary heroes of their day.

April 12, 1914: A convention in Hot Springs, Arkansas, having founded the Assemblies of God adjourns. The assembly of God which would become the world's largest Pentecostal denomination.

News Links

[Alf McCreary: News is latest blow in torrid year for Presbyterianism](#)

Belfast telegraph

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This decision was seen as an unforgivable snub to the Scottish **Church**, which had been the 'Mother **Church**' to Irish Presbyterians from the early 17th ...

[Irish people waiting longer than ever to get married](#)

Irish Times

There were 10,027 marriage ceremonies in Catholic **churches**, equating to 47.6 per cent of the total. There were a further 323 **Church of Ireland** ...

[Irish Catholics were less devout before the Famine, says new documentary](#)

IrishCentral

Professor Mary Daly from UCD correlates **Ireland's** dramatic population change as a result of the Great Hunger and the Catholic **Church's** influence in ...

[Famine 'strengthened church's hold on Ireland'](#)

[Herald.ie](#)

The RTE programme, Rome v Republic, examines how the **church** seized such a strong hold over every aspect of the nation's life after the foundation ...

[Ireland's attempts to secularise its schools have turned to farce](#)

The Guardian

Though the **church** agrees that some divestment is necessary, at local level it is ... Not only would divestment protect the rights of **Ireland's** non-Catholic ...

[Stranger things: Looking back at the year the statues moved](#)

Irish Examiner

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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The **Church** was in dire straits then and it's heading that way again.” ... The summer of 1985 was an unusually difficult one for **Ireland** — 329 people were ... what happened was you had a small town or village and it was in the **news**.

Jail for man who tried to steal from Cork church's collection boxes

Irish Examiner

A five-month jail term was imposed on a 62-year-old man who was described as being at a very low ebb trying to steal from **church** collection boxes to ...

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