



**Attacks were  
grizzly  
reminder of  
country's  
past horrors,  
Cofl cleric  
from Sri  
Lanka**



A Sri Lankan-born woman now living in Belfast has spoken of “the terrible evil and darkness” inflicted upon her country following the Easter Sunday bombings, Lauren Harte reports in Belfast Telegraph

The Rev Dr Maithrie White-Dundas (above) was reacting after eight blasts killed at least 290 people and injured over 500 others.

She was born in Sri Lanka and studied English literature at university there.

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The minister moved to Nottingham in 2000 to complete a doctorate in English literature.

It was in Nottingham where she met her husband, Paul Dundas, who is from Co Fermanagh. She has lived in Northern Ireland for 11 years.

Rev White-Dundas learned of the attacks while preparing for the Easter Sunday service at St Columbanus' Church in Ballyholme, where she is serving as deacon intern.

“Waking up to the news on Easter Sunday and then celebrating the resurrection at the Easter services felt very surreal,” she told the Belfast Telegraph.

“Singing hymns and sharing in the eucharist was a reminder of those who died while doing the same, without realising they were a heartbeat away from eternity.

“To hold the consequences of human evil and its darkness, together with the hope and glory of Christ's resurrection, was a strange balancing act.”

Sunday's attacks are the deadliest seen in Sri Lanka since the end of the country's civil war in 2009.

Rev White-Dundas added: “It has been devastating to watch the scenes on TV — and to feel a terrible sense of déjà-vu — probably what all Sri Lankans felt in remembering similar scenes from ethnic conflict of the past. The perpetrators are different, but the outcome is the same. “The taste and smell of death feels visceral due to our past experiences and I have not been able to watch much of it on TV.

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“As I thought further, I realised that Christians have always — throughout all history — lived trying to hold in tension the joy of resurrection life, with the reality of terrible suffering. It is the scale of it that differs and shocked.

“My own feelings 24 hours later, as a Christian and an ordained minister, is the need for forgiveness in the midst of all the cruelty.

“I know that Christian communities in Sri Lanka are already extending assurances to the Muslim community. This is as important in Northern Ireland as it is Sri Lanka.”

There are fears that the attacks could plunge Sri Lanka back to the early days its civil war, which lasted from 1983 to 2009.

Rev White-Dundas added: “The Muslim community in Sri Lanka has always been peace-loving — for many of us, they are our closest friends and will remain so.

“But there have been extremist Buddhist groups that have attacked both Muslim and Christian groups and the worry is that there could now be a reaction against the Muslim community after this event that has now been identified as having links to an extremist group.

“The Muslim community has condemned and distanced themselves from the attacks but Christians are nervous about further attacks.”

## **BB Queen's Badge presentations**

The President of the Methodist Church, Dr Billy Davison said, “It was a privilege to be among the guests at Belfast

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City Hall recently for the Boys' Brigade Northern Ireland Queen's Badge Presentation. Chief Guest, lady Mary Peters, presented the awards before sharing a brief but very inspiring message. It's wonderful to see BB having such an impact in laying Christian foundations for young men to carry with them into life. Congratulations to BB President, David Blevins, and everyone involved in organising such a great evening." The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church was also present.

## **Tanzania MU's programme to support the Anglican Church of Tanzania in spiritual and socio-economic transformation**

In the latter part of 2017, the Tanzanian Mothers' Union team began an exciting programme in order to support the





Anglican Church of Tanzania (ACT) in realising their vision of spiritual and socio-economic transformation across the country.

The 'Vicoba' programme merges two approaches (Church and Community Mobilisation (CCM) with Village Savings and Loans (VSL) groups) which aim to support churches and dioceses in mobilising their own resources to bring change from within their communities. The first year of the programme was a huge success with savings group members across 13 dioceses saving over £32,000, some of which has helped to pay for church improvements and community initiatives. This year, Tanzania MU are taking the programme a step further by embarking on an exciting partnership with Tearfund Tanzania. This is in order to combine Tearfund's

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experience and technical expertise in CCM/VSL with MU's already established, deep-rooted and trusted position within communities across the whole country. The new approach has been rebranded as 'ACT MU Pamoja' and aims to bring the process to communities spreading across all five zones of Tanzania.

In order to undertake this work, five 'Zonal Coordinators' have been especially selected by the MU Tanzania team for their skill and experience in community work, resource mobilisation and/or savings and credit initiatives. These five MU workers will each partner with a Tearfund 'counterpart' who will provide them with technical support. The MU and Tearfund workers have had their initial training together and are already establishing effective working relationships.

In the first year the Pamoja programme will be taken to 11 dioceses, with the aim of establishing 480 Pamoja groups with a projected beneficiary count of 9,600 people (which, due to the average family size in Tanzania, can be multiplied by approximately 5 to get the indirect beneficiary number). We will continue to update our website with the progress of these groups, the savings figures and the changes this has made in the lives of group members, their families and their communities.

## **Heritage - Assembly Buildings**

This amazing interior is from the Assembly Buildings of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland at Church House on Fisherwick Place.

Completed in 1905 by Young & McKenzie, who specialised in church architecture, the exterior of the building is suitably Scottish in style. The magnificent polygonal Assembly Hall





seen here was originally three storeys in height with an Art Nouveau leaded glass roof light.

A magnificent organ was later added behind the stage space. Following alterations to the building in 1992, the hall was reduced in height by one level and a shopping arcade known as The Spires inserted at ground level. The main tower contains 12 bells, with a repertoire of 28 tunes, many of which can still be heard today on Fisherwick Place.

## **Death of Church Army sister**

Sister Irene Locket went home to be with her Lord on Saturday past at the age of 94. She had served Him for nearly 70 years as a commissioned Church Army Sister in many different places including Africa (also with CMSI). She

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was a lady of great wisdom and strong faith and was an inspiration to many in CA and in Northern Ireland who have known her for many years.

### **Food for thought**

“I would rather be what God chose to make me than the most glorious creature that I could think of; for to have been born in God's thought, and then made by God is the dearest, grandest, and most precious thing in all thinking.” - CS Lewis

### **Today in Christian history**

**April 24, 387:** On this day, Augustine of Hippo writes in his autobiographical Confessions, "We were baptized and all anxiety for our past life vanished away." The 33-year-old had been a teacher of rhetoric and pagan philosophies at some of the Roman Empire's finest schools, but after great influence by his mother, Monica, and the famous bishop Ambrose, he turned to Christianity. His baptism by Ambrose, on Easter Sunday, marked his entrance into the church.

**April 24, 1581:** Vincent de Paul, founder of the Lazarist Fathers and the Sisters of Charity, is born in Pouy, France. The Roman Catholic Church named him patron saint of all works of charity because of his charity work during the Wars of Religion.

**April 24, 1944:** In "United States v. Ballard," the Supreme Court ruled that no governmental agency can determine "the truth or falsity of the beliefs or doctrines" of anyone—even if the beliefs "may seem incredible, if not preposterous



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to most people." But the court also reiterated its position that while freedom of belief is absolute, the freedom to act on those beliefs is not.

## **News Links**

[N Ireland: Woman arrested in slaying of journalist McKee](#)

Crux: Covering all things Catholic

**N Ireland:** Woman arrested in slaying of journalist McKee ...  
In a statement issued Tuesday to the Irish **News**, the New IRA offered "full and sincere" ...

[Funeral at St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast](#)

Belfast Telegraph

The service in the **Church of Ireland** cathedral will begin at 1pm. ... Dean of St Anne's Stephen Forde and Fr Martin Magill of St John's parish in Belfast.

[Video shows suspected suicide bomber entering Sri Lanka church](#)

Irish Times

This video also appears in: Sri Lanka: Islamic State claims responsibility for attacks · April 23, 2019 First burials take place as death toll following Easter ...

[Dublin Catholic archbishop says Irish \*\*Church\*\* must adapt or die](#)

La Croix International

The Irish **Church** must adapt and reform if it is survive the clerical sex abuse scandal and other challenges that lie ahead, said the Catholic Archbishop ...

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[Dublin archbishop: Irish \*\*Church\*\* 'imprisoned in its past'](#)

Crux: Covering all things Catholic

LEICESTER, United Kingdom - **Ireland's Catholic Church** is “changing enormously,” and will have to address serious problems in the future, according ...

[The Big Interview: Freight Transport Association manager Seamus Leheny](#)

Belfast Telegraph

"It was co-ed although a nun was the principal - and it was also cross-religious, so both **Church of Ireland** and Catholic children went to it. "It was all ...

[Battle of wits – An Irishman's Diary on Trinity and John Pentland Mahaffy](#)

Irish Times

He was born at Chapponnaire in Switzerland in February 1839, the youngest of six children of Nathaniel Mahaffy, a **Church of Ireland** clergyman, and ...

[Join us! A journey into the heart and soul of \*\*Ireland\*\*](#)

America Magazine

A journey into the heart and soul of **Ireland** ... Even today, we have many Irish-Americans on staff, and we still cover **news** from **Ireland** with some ... last summer to an in-depth feature on the struggles of the Irish **church** last spring.

[Coming this fall: A journey to \*\*Ireland\*\*](#)

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on the struggles of the Irish **church** last spring. ... So why not add to that list a journey into **Ireland**, we wondered?

**Church of England Vicar Likens Disruptive Climate Protestors to Jesus**

Canada Free Press

An eco-activist has praised a **Church of England** clergyman for playing a major ... Breitbart **News** is a Syndicated **news** and opinion website providing ...

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