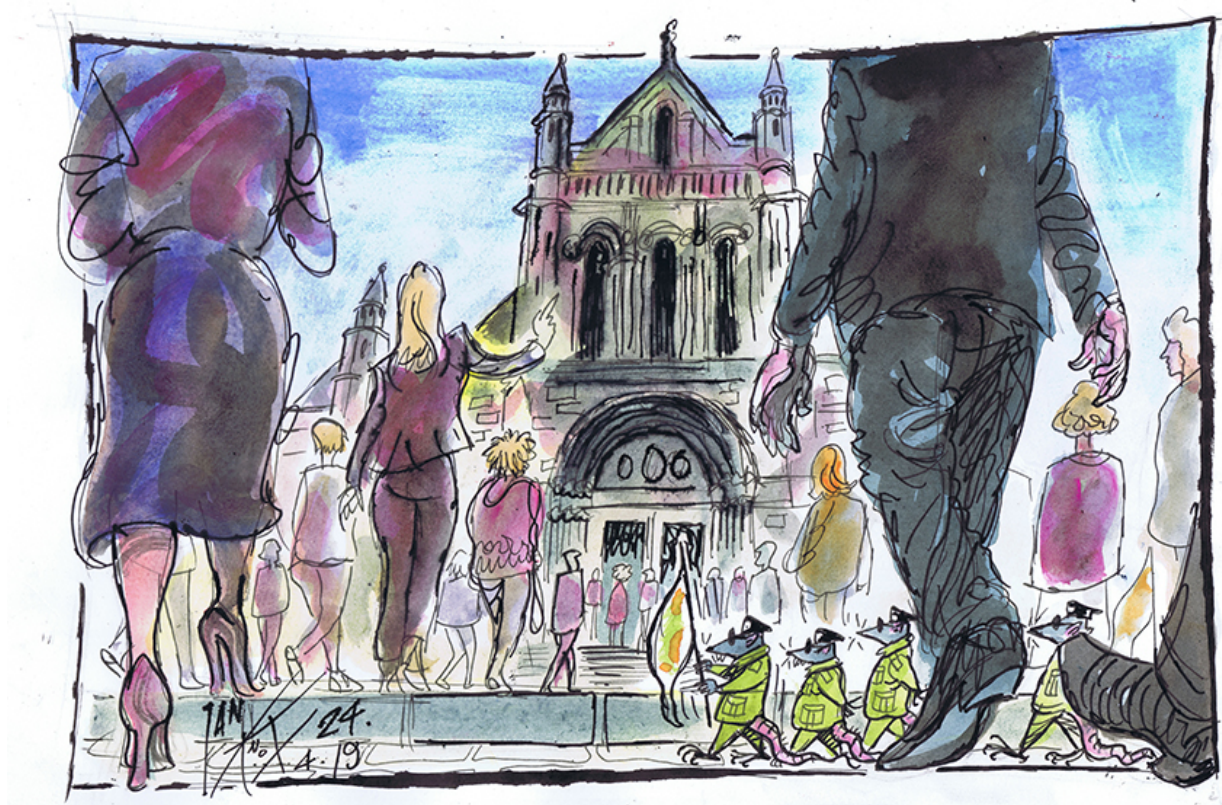


Priest calls for a 'new society' at Lyra McKee's funeral



Ian Knox's comment in The Irish News

The death of Lyra McKee should mark a new beginning for Northern Ireland, a priest has told mourners at her funeral.

January 25, 2019

Dissident republican gunmen who killed the Belfast-born journalist, 29, should lay down their arms, Father Martin Magill added.

He urged politicians at Northern Ireland's suspended powersharing administration to work together to produce a better life for young people.

Fr MARTIN MAGILL

"I commend our political leaders for standing together in Creggan on Good Friday. I am however left with a question: Why in God's name does it take the death of a 29 year old woman with her whole life in front of her to get us to this point?"

Fellow journalists formed a guard of honour as the service for their murdered colleague began in Belfast.

January 25, 2019

UK Prime Minister Theresa May, Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, Irish premier Leo Varadkar, President of Ireland Michael D Higgins and Irish foreign affairs minister Simon Coveney were among those who attended.

Ms McKee was killed by indiscriminate fire as she observed clashes between police and New IRA dissidents on the Creggan estate in Londonderry on April 18.

Her funeral was cross-community and mourners spanned both sides of the Irish border.

Catholic priest Fr Magill said: "I dare to hope that Lyra's murder on Holy Thursday night can be the doorway to a new beginning. I detect a deep desire for this."

The service of thanksgiving was held in the Church of Ireland's St Anne's Cathedral, a short distance from her north Belfast home.

Fr Magill said: "To those who had any part in her murder, I encourage you to reflect on Lyra McKee, journalist and writer, as a powerful example of 'The pen is mightier than the sword'.

"I plead with you to take the road of non-violence to achieve your political ends."

Since the killing many have condemned the culture of violence and coercive control practised by dissidents, the clergyman said.

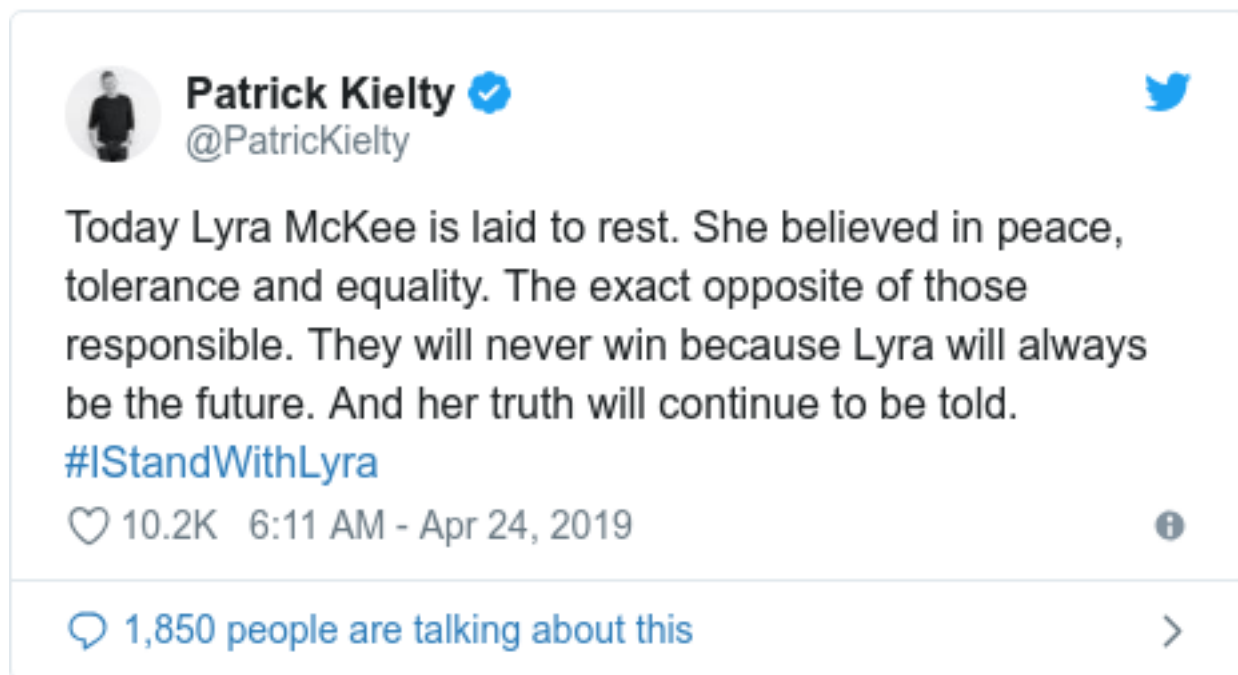
January 25, 2019

"We need to send a very different message and so I appeal to those who have information about Lyra's murder but who haven't yet come forward to do so now.

"If you want to see an end to these brutal rules, and see a new society built on justice and fairness, on hope and not fear, then you can help build that society by letting the police know what you know."

He called on political leaders to break the Stormont negotiations impasse.

"I pray that Lyra's murder may be the catalyst needed for parties to start talking, to reform that which was corrosive in previous assemblies and to begin anew."



Those attending the funeral were asked to wear Harry Potter and Marvel Comics merchandise in tribute to the journalist's passion for both.

January 25, 2019

Members of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) formed the guard of honour.

The principal mourners were Ms McKee's partner Sara Canning, 35, her mother Joan McKee, 68, brothers Gary and David and sisters Joan, Nichola and Mary.

Her family have paid tribute to a "gentle, innocent soul" whose "desire to bring people together made her totally apolitical".

The New IRA is an amalgam of armed groups opposed to the peace process and it recently claimed responsibility for parcel bombs sent to London and Glasgow in March.

Police believe the violence in Derry was orchestrated in response to an earlier search by officers aimed at averting imminent trouble associated with the anniversary of the Easter Rising.

C of I cleric urges caution over calls for talks with Lyra's killers

A Church of Ireland minister has urged caution after a Catholic priest said he was willing to talk with the 'New IRA' terrorists who murdered Lyra McKee in Londonderry, Mark Rainey reports in the News Letter.

Fr Joe Gormley, who anointed the 29-year-old journalist after she was shot dead last Thursday, said we must "have conversations" with those who would excuse what happened as an accident.

The Creggan priest said it was “very important we don’t excuse those who did that,” but added: “To dehumanise them is not to respect their dignity.”

Asked if he would be personally willing to talk to them, he said: “If they were willing to have a conversation with me.”

However, Church of Ireland minister Rev Alan Irwin, whose father and uncle were both murdered by the IRA, said any approach for talks would give those responsible “a level of credibility” they don’t deserve.

“That’s what happened in 1998 with the Provisionals and now they appear to be almost untouchable,” he said.

“We’ve now discovered about the on-the-run letters and everything else, and people continue to eulogise acts of terrorism in the past but somehow that seems to be acceptable. I think it’s wrong if you start to give them credibility.”

The rector of Lack parish in Co Fermanagh added: “If you do, they are really negotiating their peace on their terms, not our terms, and that has been shown in the past.”

Commenting on the support of some nationalist representatives for talks, Rev Irwin said: “I would urge caution. For those responsible to call it an accident is wrong. They deliberately went out to murder, irrespective of who that individual is.”

January 25, 2019

SDLP Foyle MLA Mark H Durkan said he supported the idea of talks.

“I’ve been saying for some time that we need to move beyond condemnation and towards conversation in an attempt to get these people to move away from their violent ways,” he said.

Former SDLP long-serving MLA Alban Maginness also supports the priest's thinking, saying Fr Joe Gormley was in the best position to gauge whether any talks with dissident republicans in Londonderry could have a positive outcome.

Sri Lanka Easter bombings death toll nears 360

The death toll from the Easter suicide bombings in Sri Lanka has risen to 359 and more suspects have been arrested, police in Colombo have said. Islamic State has claimed responsibility and released images that purported to show the seven bombers who blew themselves up at three churches and three hotels on Sunday. It was the worst violence the South Asian island nation had seen since its civil war ended a decade ago.

Portadown bells ring after 30 years of silence

The bell of St Gobhan’s, Seagoe Parish, rang out on Easter Day for the first time in over 30 years.

January 25, 2019

The silence was broken following extensive restoration of the bell and tower and the installation of a new electronic ringing mechanism.

The stonework of the tower was repointed and some stonework repaired, including the Diocesan plaque above the entrance door.

Internally, the three upper floors were replaced, the entrance porch retiled and the walls were replastered and painted.

The total cost of the restoration was approx £170,000 and was supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

In addition to the work on the tower, the grants also helped towards the cost of digitising some of the Parish Magazines, the complete set of which dates from 1906. The digitised editions from the first magazine in 1906 to 1935 can be accessed on a new website:

www.seagoearchives.uk

Seagoe Parish has a very important and extensive archive dating back to the 1600s, and the magazines are but one part of this.

[Find out more about the digitisation project here.](#)

Thanksgiving service for Sister Irene Lockett

Sister Irene Lockett, a Church Army Sister for almost 70 years, passed away on Saturday 20 April at the age of 94.

January 25, 2019

Irene served in Kenya with CMS/Mothers Union and Church Army, and then at home as the Children's work adviser for CMSI. She also worked in Willowfield Church where she remained a parishioner. Irene received the Maundy Money from the Queen when the sovereign visited St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh, in 2008.

Bishop Harold Miller of Down & Dromore said:

“Sister Irene Lockett was one of the ‘old school’ Church Army Evangelists. She came from inner city East Belfast, and her home was in My Lady's Road. I had the privilege of visiting Irene just before Easter. Although her body was very weak, she was determined to share her testimony and her call to be an evangelist. The spirit was willing but the flesh was weak.

“I will remember her for her unique mix of warmth and honesty – all inspired by the Lord she had so faithfully served.”

There will be a service of Thanksgiving in Willowfield Church next Tuesday 30 April at 2.00 pm.

News briefs

+++50th Anniversary service - NIVA, the Northern Ireland Veterans Association, facilitated by Lisburn Council will be holding a Drumhead Service followed by a Parade in Lisburn City Centre to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the start of Op Banner and to remember all the Fallen Security Forces from that period, it will be held in Wallace Park Lisburn on Sat 17th Aug at 11am. It is an open

January 25, 2019

invitation to any Op Banner Veterans and their Families, particularly any families of the Bereaved. This includes Regular Forces, UDR, RUC, Prison Service, Fire Service.

+++King's Broadcast Evensong - Three joint Evensongs, a BBC broadcast, and Stephen Cleobury's last services at King's after 37 years. See what music's coming up this term:

<http://bit.ly/chapelservices>

+++Celebrating Methodist World Development - You are invited to join Methodist World Development and Relief at 7pm on Sunday 5th May in Sydenham Methodist Church for an evening of celebration. Come together to give thanks for funds raised and to hear from speaker Rev. Stephen Skuce.

+++Prayer points -



Pray for the work and witness of the David Gordon Memorial hospital in Livingstonia, where Lyn Dowds of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is the doctor. Pray that management can work towards running the hospital in a sustainable way, reducing debts and making it more efficient.

January 25, 2019

Remember Billy Smyth as he travels out to Yei, South Sudan for just over 2 weeks. The vocational training college is opening its doors again to new students on 29th April. CMSI ask for prayer - for safety and security for Billy and the Church family in Yei; and remember Jenny and family in Moira, that they will know God's protection and peace while Billy is overseas.

+++Food for thought -

Doctrines are not God: they are only a kind of map. But that map is based on the experience of hundreds of people who really were in touch with God." C S Lewis

Today in Christian history

April 25, 1214: Louis IX, king of France and saint, is born. Leader of the Seventh and Eighth Crusades (he died on the latter), he was known for his humility: he wore hair shirts and visited hospitals—where he emptied the bedpans.

April 25, 1599: Oliver Cromwell, the Puritan lord protector of England, is born near Cambridge. As lord protector he sought to allow more freedom of religion.

April 25, 1887: Radio evangelist Charles E. Fuller, known for his "Old Fashioned Revival Hour" and for cofounding Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California, is born in Los Angeles.

News Links

[Lyra McKee's family and partner thank public for 'support and love' ahead of funeral](#)

January 25, 2019

Irish Times

Ahead of the ecumenical funeral service in St Anne's **Church of Ireland** cathedral at 1pm on Wednesday, Ms McKee's family and her partner Sara ...

[Lyra McKee killing: Family remembers 'gentle, innocent soul'](#)

BBC News

It may be **Church of Ireland** in its status and governance, but it has strong ... for the murder of journalist Lyra McKee, according to the Irish **News**.

[Theresa May attending Lyra McKee funeral service in Belfast](#)

Irish Times

She will represent the British government alongside Northern **Ireland** ... Zappone along with numerous political, community and **church** leaders, and ...

['We will say goodbye to the bomb and bullet'](#)

Derry Journal

Church of Ireland Bishop Ken Good, meanwhile, said that everyone was experiencing the same emotions together. He said: "I think we are resolute, ...

[Volunteers battle gorse fire on Achill Island](#)

Mayo News

... fire started along a local road known as the dump road and spread up the hill towards the historic St Thomas' **Church of Ireland** Church in Dugort.

January 25, 2019

**Eight local churches and URC Synod of Yorkshire join
Easter Declaration for Fossil Free Churches**

Independent Catholic News

Operation Noah has announced today that eight local **churches** and the ... of Sweden, the Anglican **Church** of Southern Africa and the **Church** of **Ireland**. ... and Sister Shelia Kinsey FCjM here:

**African Children's Choir Brings Their Gift of Song to Linden
DrumhellerOnline.com**

The African Children's **Choir** was founded in 1984, and the Linden ... Ray Barnett, who had immigrated from Northern **Ireland** was receiving **news** ...

[What's new? Irish festivals reveal the state of contemporary music](#)

Irish Times

Here in Ireland we have, collectively, a rather two-faced attitude to the arts. ... That's when St Peter's **Church** of **Ireland** will witness the premiere of ...

Milestone ceremony to be celebrated at Limerick church

Limerick Leader

SAINT Michael's **Church** is to host a celebratory concert featuring international ... Tenor Owen Gilhooly performs extensively in **Ireland**, England and in ...

+ Please share CNI with your friends
www.churchnewsireland.org

January 25, 2019