



Pope Francis to appoint seven new Irish bishops in coming months

About half of the current seven vacancies in the Irish hierarchy will likely be filled by candidates proposed by the outgoing Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Charles Brown, according to Vatican sources.

Currently there are seven of Ireland's 26 dioceses awaiting the appointment of a new bishop.

Sources in Rome this week indicated to *The Irish Catholic* that a number of these files were at an advanced stage when Archbishop Brown was transferred to Albania last month.

These recommendations are expected to proceed. However, the names of the new bishops will likely not be revealed until Pope Francis has appointed a new Apostolic Nuncio to Dublin, which may be in the summer.

In choosing a new bishop, the Pope generally chooses from a list of three candidates – a terna – which is forwarded to Rome by the nuncio. However, the Pontiff is free to appoint a candidate not on the list.

Archbishop Brown's successor is expected to canvass potential candidates for remaining dioceses when he arrives in Dublin.

Retirement

Clonfert has been awaiting the appointment of a new bishop since 2013 when John Kirby reached the mandatory retirement age of 75. In 2014, John Buckey in Cork & Ross turned 75 making the selection of a new bishop necessary.

Likewise, in Raphoe, Philip Boyce turned 75 in January 2015. Later that same year Michael Smith in Meath reached the mandatory retirement age.

In July 2016, both Martin Drennan in Galway and Seamus Freeman in Ossory announced that they were stepping down due to ill health.

Just three months later, Liam MacDaid in Clogher retired early for the same reason. Of the 19 serving diocesan bishops in Ireland, Archbishop Brown has had a role in the appointment of 11.

Nine of the current 19 were chosen by Pope Francis, five by Pope Benedict and the remaining five by St John Paul II.

When the current vacancies have been filled, Pope Francis will have appointed 16 of the 26 diocesan bishops.

The next vacancy in the Irish hierarchy is not expected to occur until 2019, when Leo O'Reilly in Kilmore will reach retirement age. Report courtesy of The Irish Catholic. Well known journalist to be diocesan press officer

Clontarf Parish Thousandaire quiz has nine €1000 prizes

The Church of St John the Baptist, Clontarf's, 'Who Wants to be A Thousandaire' quiz show fundraising event was launched on Wednesday night (April 19). RTE's Joe Duffy was on hand to perform the official launch which took place in the Parish Centre on Seafield Road West.

The evening began with a cheese and wine reception followed by an official welcome to all present by the Rector, the Revd Lesley Robinson who detailed the restoration work which has been untaken in the church since 2013. The work has cost in the region of €1.6 million and while the parish was in the blessed situation of being able to fund these costs without fundraising or borrowing, the Rector said that the parish reserves had been completely drained. This meant that fundraising was now needed to allow the ongoing work of ministry to continue from cradle to grave to all who seek it.

Tom Shanahan, from Pallas Marketing, gave brief description of how the 'Who Wants to be a Thousandaire' gameshow will play out on the night, before Mr Duffy took to the stage and regaled the audience with amusing anecdotes



Revd Lesley Robinson with Joe Duffy of RTE

from his many years' experience working with RTE. These included a list of Larry Gogan's favourite incorrect answers from his famous 'Just a Minute' quiz.

After this, it was time for Joe to take to the hot-seat and test his knowledge with a round of questions, using the same multiple-choice format as the well-known 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' show with the option to use the three lifelines: 50:50, phone a friend, and ask the audience. After much deliberation and employing each of these aids, Mr Duffy proceeded to answer each question correctly and to win the maximum prize.

‘Who Wants to be a Thousandaire’ takes place in Clontarf Castle on Thursday May 25 at 8.00 pm. Each audience member will be in with the chance to be one of nine contestants on the night and win a possible €1000 each. Tickets cost €20 with a book of four costing just €60 and all proceeds go towards the parish. Ticket hotline: 087-9091561.

Well known journalist to be diocesan press officer

The Diocese of Down & Dromore has announced the appointment of a new Diocesan Communications Officer, Niall Crozier.

Niall was educated at Portadown College and Liverpool University, following which he worked on a number of provincial weekly newspapers owned at that stage by the Morton family (Portadown Times, Londonderry Sentinel, Lurgan Mail, Ulster Star, Tyrone Times) and the Dromore Leader. He was Northern Ireland Weekly Newspaper Journalist of the Year in 2001.

He has also worked for both the News Letter and Belfast Telegraph as those two dailies’ chief rugby correspondent.

Niall will begin his role as Diocesan Communications Officer on Monday 24th April.

Closing Service of the Church of St George and St Thomas, Dublin

The Church of St George and St Thomas, Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin 1, will cease to function as a parish church on Sunday April 23 (Low Sunday). Parishioners and those associated with the church will gather for a final parish service on Sunday April 23 at 11.15 am. This service will be celebrated by Archbishop Michael Jackson who will also preach. The Parish of St George and St Thomas is being received by the Parish of Drumcondra, North Strand and St Barnabas. Members of that parish will also attend the service. There will be refreshments after the service and all who have had connections with St George and St Thomas's over the years are very welcome to attend.

Services by Divine Healing Ministries re-start

Divine Healing Ministries will be starting next week after the Easter break:-

Monday , April 24 at 1pm - St George's, at 8pm - St Anne's Cathedral. Tuesday, April 25 at 10.30am - St Peter's Cathedral at 8pm - St Finnian's. Thursday, April 27 at 10.30am - Shankill Methodist

Visit by Presbyterian Historical Society to Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich

The society will visit the centre in the former Broadway Presbyterian Church, on Wednesday 26 April 2017 at 2.00pm. There will also be a reflection from Mrs Mildred Poots about growing up in the Broadway congregation. Everyone is welcome. Refreshments provided. Car-parking is permissible in St Mary's College just opposite the Centre which is at 216 Falls Road, Belfast, BT12 6AH.

Handel's Messiah at St John's Sandymount

The Occasional Singers will perform Handel's Messiah at St John's, Sandymount, on Saturday April 29 at 7.30 pm.

The Occasional Singers make a speciality of singing the Messiah and the oratorio will be conducted by Robin Moore. Soloists will be Kathleen nic Dhiarmada (Soprano), Amy Luttrell (Contralto), Josh Smith (Tenor) and Tim Shaffrey (Bass) with Colm Byrne (Trumpet) and Charles Pearson (Organ).

Tickets, at €20 each, are available from Eventbrite at www.eventbrite.ie/e/handels-messiah-tickets-33362921396?aff=ehomecard or on the door on the night.

Further details can be found on the parish website www.sandymount.dublin.anglican.org or Facebook page www.facebook.com/Saint-John-the-Evangelist-Sandymount-Dublin-4-249177221775882/

Just Living in a Post-truth Society

Just Living in a Post-truth Society is Contemporary Christianity's theme for 2017. On Tuesday 2 May, 7:30pm Contemporary Christianity will host an informal evening with Derek Poole and Diane Holt. There will be plenty of opportunity for discussion.

The post-truth society is frequently mentioned in the media. Derek and Diane will help us begin to explore:

- what it means to live in a post-truth society
- what scripture has to say about the concept
- how people of faith can respond appropriately

Derek Poole used to work for ECONI and the Centre for Contemporary Christianity

Diane Holt used to work for Tear Fund and now works for Thrive Ireland

Venue: Contemporary Christianity, 3rd Floor, 21 Ormeau Avenue, BT2 8HD

Audrey Assad live in concert

Audrey Assad, the daughter of a Syrian refugee, an author, speaker, producer, and critically lauded songwriter and musician, will be playing at Ballyholme Parish Church on Saturday 20th May 2017.

Her first solo album was awarded the iTunes Christian Breakthrough Album of the Year in 2010 as she went on to be nominated for two Dove Awards. Audrey has recorded and performed alongside Chris Tomlin and Matt Maher.



Don't miss Audrey playing at the newly restored Ballyholme Parish Church on Saturday 20th May 2017.

Ticket are available at: <https://audreyassadatballyholme.eventbrite.com>

Irish bishop signals openness to women priests

Bishop of Derry Donal McKeown has signalled an openness to women priests, though insisted that there is no possibility of women being ordained “at the present time”.

Dr McKeown – who was appointed Bishop of Derry by Pope Francis in 2014 – also said that the hierarchy had to face serious questions



about seminaries for training future priests, including Maynooth.

Dr McKeown made the comments in an Irish-language interview broadcast by BBC Northern Ireland this week.

On the issue of women priests, he said: “If that’s God’s will in our day, I’m happy to accept it.” However, he added that “there is no possibility at the present time women will be priests”. Pope Francis has repeatedly insisted that the Church will not re-open the question of women’s ordination. At a recent press conference, the Pontiff declared the matter to be a closed issue pointing out that “Pope St John Paul II had the

last clear word on this and it stands, this stands". He was referring to a 1994 document by Pope John Paul that closed the door on a female priesthood. The Vatican says this teaching is an infallible part of Catholic tradition.

Training

On the issue of the training of future priests, Bishop McKeown said: "Maybe we shouldn't send anyone to somewhere like Maynooth.

"Maynooth was formed 200 years ago. Three hundred years or 400 years ago it didn't exist," he said.

He said that the Irish bishops had to struggle with the question of "what is the best way to prepare priests or prophets in this day and age?"

Referring to Archbishop Diarmuid Martin's contention that seminarians might benefit from training that is more parish-based, Bishop McKeown said "this is an important question and he [Archbishop Martin] may have a point".

The World's Poor Are Not A Political Football - Rowan Williams

Chair of Christian Aid and former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams said yesterday:

"Britain's political and social landscape is in flux and we face great choices about the soul and future of our nation. We can choose to turn inwards and struggle more and more urgently to protect ourselves; or we can look outwards, recognising that our good is bound up with that of others.

"The UK aid budget is at the heart of the choice between Little Britain and Global Britain. Our help to the world's poorest and most vulnerable people is something to be proud of, not a political football. Of course, the aid budget is not above debate; how we best and most effectively direct aid is a matter that needs discussing. But we must be careful not to present people with false choices that set the needs of the most vulnerable in our own society against those of people living in long-term poverty and powerlessness overseas, whose priority is the capacity to decide their own future and secure their own well-being.

"We British are known for standing up for the underdog and standing firm when things get tough. We do not only look out for those less fortunate than ourselves; we want to meet Dr



Rowan Williams, then Archbishop of Canterbury, waits to greet the Pope in 2010.

halfway those working hard to stand on their own two feet. Aid is not about creating dependence but helping people become valued partners and co-workers for a safe and equitable world. And the continuing levels of public generosity from British people in response to successive emergency appeals show how deeply rooted these impulses are in our national identity and our sense of responsibility to the wider world.

"As we debate the future of our country, our relationship to the EU and our new relationship

with the world, we should wear our aid budget as a badge of honour that sets a standard for others to follow.

“The British public are proud that our great nation hasn't turned its back on the world's poorest people. So, at a time when the world most needs our leadership and strength, we call on the leaders of all parties to hold firm on the promise we have made, and stand up for their belief in a bigger Britain.”

Today in Christian History, April 22

April 22, 1418: The Council of Constance ends, having finally ended the Great Western Schism. When the schism began nearly 40 years earlier, three men had reasonable claims to the papacy. The council deposed all three and elected Martin V. (Martin then turned around and rejected further councils' right to depose a pope.) Though that part of the council is regarded as a triumph, the council also hastily condemned Jan Hus, a Bohemian preacher and forerunner of Protestantism, and sentenced him to execution by burning. And since his teachings were based on those of John Wycliffe (c. 1329-1384), the council had the Bible translator's body dug up,

burned, and thrown into the Swift River (see [issue 68: Jan Hus](#)).

April 22, 1724: German philosopher Immanuel Kant, a pivotal figure in the history of modern philosophy and theology, is born in Königsberg, East Prussia.

April 22, 1669: Colonial religious leader Richard Mather (father of Increase, grandfather of Cotton) dies at age 63. He helped author the Bay Psalm Book and the Cambridge Platform, which served for many years as the standard doctrinal statement for New England Congregationalism (see issue 41: American Puritans).

April 22, 1864: The motto "In God We Trust," conceived during the Civil War, first appears on American coinage.

Today in Christian History, April 23

April 23, 1073: Hildebrand is elected pope, taking the name Gregory VII. The first pope to excommunicate a ruler (Henry IV), Gregory was driven out of Rome in 1084. "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity," were his last words, "therefore I died in exile.

April 23, 1538: John Calvin and William Farel (whom Calvin was assisting) are banished from Geneva. The Day before, Easter SunDay , both had refused to administer communion, saying the city was too full of vice to partake. Three years later, Calvin returned to the city he would forever be associated with (see issue 12: John Calvin).

April 23, 1968: The Evangelical United Brethren Church joins with the much larger Methodist Church, forming the United Methodist Church, the largest Methodist group in the world and America's second-largest Protestant denomination (after the Southern Baptist Convention).

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