



## Donegal flash mob – Catholic style – goes viral

An impromptu 'flash mob' rendition of the popular hymn 'How Great Thou Art' at a wedding in Donegal has become an internet sensation.

Patricia Doogan, niece of Daniel O'Donnell, married her fiancé last Friday, 3 February 2017 at St Mary's Church in Kincasslagh in west Donegal. The celebrant was Fr Pat Ward.

After the wedding ceremony, as Fr Pat began to sing the song 'How Great Thou Art', a group of well-known Irish singers, men and women, stood up one by one in the congregation to sing a line or two of the beautiful hymn.

As they sang the first chorus, a group of seven men walked to the front of the church and took their places by the priest, facing the bride and groom.

Then the women singers began singing the second verse before they too walked to the altar. Finally, the bride's uncle, Daniel O'Donnell, took his place to the left of the priest and sang the final line.

The bride, dabbing tears from her eyes, was clearly moved by the serenade, at the end of which Fr Pat Ward was heard to say to the

standing and applauding congregation: “Flash mob Catholic style!”

The singers included Shawn Cuddy, Tony Allen of Foster and Allen, Derek Ryan, Tony Kenny and, of course, the bride’s uncle, Daniel O’Donnell.

Daniel’s wife, Majella O’Donnell, posted that the newlyweds were completely surprised by the gesture. “Featuring Fr Pat Ward, Shawn Cuddy, Derek Ryan, Fergal Flaherty, John McNichol, Chris O’Donnell, Tony Allen, Tony Kenny, Vicki Kenny, myself, Trionagh Allan and Annette Griffin, Gavin Boyle and Daniel O’Donnell, that’s some line-up. It completely stunned the whole congregation,” she wrote. “What a fantastic memory to have.”

The bride and groom learned afterwards that the performers had not rehearsed beforehand and only planned how they would perform the song as they arrived for the wedding.

Three days later, the video had been viewed over 1.5 million times.

Afterwards, the new Mrs Swan spoke of her astonishment. “It was a total surprise. The only two people who knew were my friend Gavin who was one of the singers and my sister Fiona who

was bridesmaid. It was a huge surprise to everyone else at the church,” she told the Irish Independent.

“Apparently there wasn’t an actual rehearsal, just a gathering in the church before the Mass began to discuss it. We had the best day ever and absolutely everybody said that the church was their favourite part of the day,” she said.



## Vouchers for love on Valentine's Day!

The World meeting of Families 2018 offers free 'gift vouchers' to help you make a gift of yourself and enrich your love on Saint Valentine's Day (14 February) .

In his document on The Joy of Love (*Amoris Laetitia*), Pope Francis refers directly to Saint

Valentine's Day as an opportunity for couples to celebrate the importance of romantic love by gifting their time and attention to one another rather than simply relying on the more commercial approaches to the saint's day.

Taking this as a starting point, the World Meeting of Families 2018 is offering Saint Valentine's Day Gift Tokens with a difference. These vouchers commit the giver to performing a simple act of love for the other person, to celebrate their love and help it grow.

Vouchers are free and available from cathedrals across Ireland, the Knock Shrine, Veritas, and Accord Marriage Care centres. They may also be downloaded on the World Meeting of Families 2018 website: [www.worldmeeting2018.ie/stvalentinesday](http://www.worldmeeting2018.ie/stvalentinesday).

The vouchers, marked 'A token of my affection', are good for things such as 'Loads of tender hugs' and 'A journey down memory lane: take time to remember how we met and have grown together'. Mothers may particularly appreciate getting the voucher for 'A special dinner cooked by me!' from their husbands, whereas their husbands may like to receive 'A technology-free evening to do an activity of your choice'.



***Shrine to  
St  
Valentine,  
Whitefriar  
Street,  
Dublin***

But the voucher comes with ‘terms and conditions’: “This is a special *Joy of Love* gift token to celebrate our love and to help it grow. You can redeem this token over the next couple of days and I, on my part, will do my best to fulfil it.”

Available too from the World Meeting of Families 2018 (WMOF2018) website is a two page flyer, which might help couples with another of the

voucher pledges: 'Set aside time for prayer together as a couple', which includes a short prayer service, a reflection from Pope Francis on the secret to a successful relationship, and a prayer for those seeking a spouse.

Dublin, which is hosting the World Meeting of Families in August 2018, is the city where the reliquary containing the remains of Saint Valentine is located. WMOF2018 is inviting people to visit the shrine in Whitefriar Street Church and to pray through Saint Valentine's intercession to find a partner for life, or grow in the love they have already found.

The World Meeting of Families, with the theme, 'The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World', will take place in Dublin from 22 to 26 August 2018. At its heart the festival will have three main moments.

Firstly, from the 22 to 24 August, there will be a three-day Congress for all with workshops, talks and discussions centred around its theme as well as a parallel programme for children and young people.

On Saturday 25 August, there will be the Festival of Families – a special concert-style event where families from all over the world will share their stories of faith.

Finally, on Sunday 26 August, WMOF2018 will close with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration, which will gather thousands of people from Ireland and all over the world. The event will include exhibitions, cultural events and musical performances, events around the city, gestures of solidarity with those in need, and celebrations.

The World Meeting of Families takes place every three years. The most recent meeting was in Philadelphia in September 2015. In the coming months, as a preparation for the international gathering, a programme of pre-catechesis will be offered to parishes and families based largely on the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (The Joy of Love) to encourage reflection on different aspects of being family in the Church and in the world today.

Follow Whitefriar St live on <http://www.churchservices.tv/whitefriarstreet> or <http://www.whitefriarstreetchurch.ie/> from anywhere in the world

## **Cashel Ecumenical pilgrimage to Luxembourg**

An ecumenical pilgrimage to Luxembourg will be led by Bishop Michael Burrows, Bishop of Cashel, Ferns & Ossory, and Bishop Denis Nulty,





***Bishop Michael Burrows and Bishop Denis Nulty***

Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare & Leighlin,  
June 4 - 7, 2017

The pilgrimage was launched on St Willibrord's Day in Saint Laserian's Cathedral by Bishops Nulty and Burrows.

Participants will travel in the footsteps of St. Willibrord who trained and was ordained in Leighlin Union of Parishes and who, in 690 AD, led a successful European mission from Carlow.

St Willibrord was from England and is the Patron Saint of Luxembourg.

An annual procession is held in his honour in Echternach, Luxembourg each year and has received UNESCO World Heritage Status.

It occurs on Whit Tuesday each year.

Echternach has developed a strong tourism industry centred on this procession, which draws many thousands of tourists and [pilgrims](#) from around the world.

The cost is €590 per person sharing. This covers return flights, taxes and charges, sharing twin or double room for 3 nights & specified transfers.

Booking forms and further details from clergy in the Carlow area or from the diocesan office Tel: +353 56 7761910 Office hours: Monday to Wednesday 9.00am 1.00pm

The travel agent is [www.tullystravel.ie](http://www.tullystravel.ie)

## **Frock Around The Clock returns to Belfast Cathedral**

The Frock Around The Clock vintage and handmade fair will be returning to the beautiful location of Belfast Cathedral for its Marvellous March extravaganza on March 4.

The event will take place in the Nave and will showcase around 70 sellers of vintage, handmade and upcycled loveliness. Whether you are in search of stunning fashion accessories, authentic vintage treasures, beautiful and original handcrafted designs, or delicious edible goodies, this event has it all! The extensive exhibitor list includes Norma Jean Vintage, offering a fabulous selection of vintage collectables and fine jewellery, Holmes & Moore, connoisseurs of authentic antique and vintage furniture and homewares, Fiddlesticks Fabrics, purveyor of textiles, haberdashery and crafting supplies, Twisted Salvage, creator of industrial

style lighting and assemblage art, Crafts By Inga, showcasing beautiful handmade merino felt scarves, hats and children's accessories, The Loving Spoonful, creators of unique jewellery & gifts crafted from antique silver cutlery, Sea Dog & Sea Maiden, offering handcrafted skincare and beard oils, and Emily Loves Vintage offering beautiful, limited-edition eclectic jewellery and quirky prints.

The Marvellous March Vintage & Handmade Fair will take place from 12-5pm on Saturday March 4. Admission is £3, and all monies from the admission fee will go to Belfast Cathedral.

More information on the event and the exhibitor list can be found online at [frockfairsni.com](http://frockfairsni.com) and on [facebook.com/frockaroundtheclockvintagefairs](https://www.facebook.com/frockaroundtheclockvintagefairs).

## **Big Breakfast & Craft Fair success for Lisburn parish**

A Big Breakfast & Craft Fair was held at St Columba's, Derryvolgie Parish, Lisburn on Saturday February 4.

Organised by the parish Events Committee, the day was aimed at raising funds for the church as



***Busy preparing and serving breakfasts at the Big Breakfast & Craft Fair at St Columba's, Derryvolgie, are L to R: Stewart Gavin, Rhona Gavin, Valerie Scott, Hannah Perry, Margaret Perry, Lynn Perry and Lyn Dobbin.***

well as encouraging the community to come together for some fun and fellowship. Everyone who attended enjoyed a cooked breakfast and had the chance to pick up some bargains at the various stalls, which included toys, books, gifts, cakes and, new for this year – an extensive range of hand crafted items including jewellery and cosmetic.

## **Election of new Bishop of Llandaff**



The doors of Llandaff Cathedral will be locked for up to three days this month as a new bishop is elected for Wales' most populated diocese.

An electoral college of 47 people drawn from all over Wales, including all the Welsh bishops, will meet inside to nominate and vote on a confidential list of candidates for the next Bishop of Llandaff.

The election follows the retirement at the end of January of Dr Barry Morgan, who served as Bishop of Llandaff, as well as Archbishop of Wales. The new bishop will be the 72nd Bishop of Llandaff, a diocese which serves nearly half the population of Wales as it includes most of Cardiff, the South Wales Valleys and the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Electoral College is made up of representatives from all six Welsh dioceses. The “home” diocese is represented by six lay people and six clergy, and the other five dioceses by three lay people and three clergy each, plus the five remaining Bishops.

Its discussions are confidential. Candidates for election are nominated at the meeting, discussed and voted on by ballot. Any candidate receiving two-thirds of the votes of those present is declared Bishop-Elect. Otherwise, the College returns to the nomination stage and the cycle starts afresh. Once a decision is made, the Cathedral is unlocked and an announcement made at the west door.

The College may meet for up to three consecutive days in order to reach a decision; if it is unable to do so within this deadline the decision passes to the Bench of Bishops. Once a bishop is elected, he or she will have up to 28 days to accept the position. If he or she accepts, the election will be formally confirmed in April.

The Electoral College meeting will begin on February 21 with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist to which anyone is welcome. Following that college members will meet in private and the Cathedral will be locked.

## **Most Europeans want to stop migration from Muslim countries, study finds**

‘Sobering’ new figures reveal that more than half of Europeans favour banning [immigration](#) from predominately Muslim countries, reports Dave Burke, Mailonline

A survey carried out by [London](#)-based think-tank The Royal Institute of International Affairs found that 55 per cent of Europeans across 10 countries think further immigration from mostly-Muslim countries should stop.

The research by the institute, based at Chatham House, was carried out before [Donald Trump](#) introduced his controversial immigration ban in the US.

Trump signed an executive order immediately banning migrants arriving from seven nations – Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen – for 90 days.

The move sparked widespread protests across the world.





Researchers quizzed more than 10,000 people from 10 European states, asking them if they agree with the statement: 'All further migration from mainly Muslim countries should be stopped.'

Opposition to future migration is largest in Poland, where 71 per cent said they oppose more migrants arriving from mostly Muslim countries. In Austria this number was 65 per cent, in Germany it was 53 per cent and nearly half of Britons, 47 per cent, said they were in favour of a ban.

See:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4199918/Most-Europeans-want-end-migration-Muslim-countries.html#ixzz4Y5AZExl8>

[churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

## **‘Build bridges not walls’: Pope Francis reiterates message on migrants**

Pope Francis repeated his appeal for people to build bridges of understanding at his weekly audience at the Vatican.

The Pope also commented that Wednesday marked both the Church’s day of reflection for young victims of human trafficking and coincidentally the feast day of St Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese immigrant.

She was a 19th-century Sudanese slave who, after migrating to Europe, became a nun.

“In the social and civil context as well, I appeal not to create walls but to build bridges,” he said. “To not respond to evil with evil. To defeat evil with good, the offence with forgiveness. A Christian would never say ‘you will pay for that.’ Never.

“That is not a Christian gesture. An offence you overcome with forgiveness. To live in peace with everyone.”

Pope Francis has frequently invoked the “bridge not walls” appeal in urging countries to welcome

migrants, including when he returned from a visit last year to the US-Mexico border. On that occasion, he was asked about Donald Trump's campaign pledge to build a border wall and said anyone who wants to build a wall is "not Christian." In his remarks Wednesday, Pope Francis also appealed for prayers for members of Myanmar's Muslim Rohingya ethnic minority, who face official and social discrimination in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, also known as Burma.

"These are good people, peaceful people," Francis said. "They're not Christians, but they're good, our brothers and sisters. And they have been suffering for years. They've been tortured and killed, simply because they are continuing their traditions, their Muslim faith. Let us pray for them," he said.

Most of the estimated 1 million Rohingya do not have citizenship and are regarded as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, even when their families have lived in Myanmar for generations. Communal violence in 2012 forced many to flee their homes, and more than 100,000 still live in squalid refugee camps.

## **News briefs & Upcoming events**



***Very Rev Dr. William Morton (Left) with Canon Horace McKinley after his installation as Treasurer of St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin***

**+++ St. Patrick's Treasurer installed -**

Yesterday at Evensong in St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin, Canon Horace McKinley, was installed as Treasurer. Canon McKinley, who has been Rector of Whitechurch, Co. Dublin, since 1980, has been Prebendary of Dunlavin (the canon

representing the Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough) on the cathedral chapter since 1991.

**+++ Clogher appointment** - The Rev Colin McConaghie has been appointed to Carrickmacross Union of Parishes in Clogher Diocese. He has contributed to Meath and Kildare Dioceses through his curacy in Dunboyne & Rathmolyon Group of parishes and his chaplaincy to the Mothers' Union. Colin's institution will take place on Friday 28th April, 2017, venue to be confirmed.

**+++ 'Some Aspects of the Reformation'** - is the title of the Bishop of Clogher's roadshow which will be held at 7.30pm next Tuesday in St Macartin's cathedral, Enniskillen, while on Friday the Archbishop of Dublin will give an address at the opening of the Reformation Quincentenary Theological Symposium in Trinity College, Dublin, which has been organized by the Dublin Council of Churches.

**+++ Clergy Stress Management** - Thursday 16th February – Clogher Clerical Association meeting in St Salvator's Church, Glaslough with Holy Communion at 10.30am. Afterwards Sr Margaret McQuaid will speak on Stress Management in the Church Hall.

**+++ Cashel conference on church energy savings** - On Saturday 18 February the Cashel, Ferns & Ossory Environmental Committee will host 'Inside Out' a half day conference on how to save energy expenses and new ways to improve church environs. The speakers will be Ms Ruth Buggie (Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland), Dr Una Fitzpatrick (National Biodiversity Data Centre) and Ms Alison Harvey (The Heritage Council) and a question and answer session will be chaired by Cllr Malcolm Noonan from Kilkenny Council. The conference will begin at 10am in Kilkenny College and admission is free. Details may be had from the Ven Andrew Orr at 087-4196051.

**+++ Trocaire youth invite** - Join our **#Climate** Justice Workshop for Youth Leaders: 13 February, Dublin & 15 February, Cork, 9.30am - 2.30pm. <http://buff.ly/2lof6hX>

**+++ New Wine Ireland, Sligo 2017** - New Wine Ireland have released their second promotional video. Click play to find out why people love going to the event each year. For more information about Sligo 17 go to [www.newwineireland.org/event/sligo17](http://www.newwineireland.org/event/sligo17)

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