

Persecuted Church the focus for St Patrick's Day

The Diocese of Down & Dromore will partner with Open Doors UK & Ireland for its annual St Patrick's Day Festival on Monday 18 March.

The theme is Counting the Cost – Standing with the Persecuted Church and there will be a unique opportunity to hear from an Egyptian Christian, 'Michael Jones', and the President of Open Doors, Eddie Lyle.



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“Michael” is a Cairo–based businessman and evangelical Christian who has addressed the UK Parliament. He will speak at the Festival Service in Down Cathedral (11.45 am) and Eddie will speak at the service of Holy Communion at Saul (9.15 am). The Prayer Pilgrimage from Saul to Downpatrick will also focus on the persecuted church and will be led by Chris Philips from Open Doors.

Christians in Egypt make up 10% of the population but around 50% of all the Christians in the Middle East. They face daily discrimination and intimidation. Christians are overlooked for jobs or promotion, university students are given bad grades or failed, schoolchildren are made to sit at the back of the class, shop owners are boycotted and hospital patients are not given proper treatment. Yet they refuse to give up their faith.

You are invited on Monday 18 March to stand with them and the persecuted church worldwide. Arrangements for timings, transport arrangements and the full programme which includes lunch for all in the marquee are on the diocesan web site.

Transforming Unjust Structures: Gender Justice Seminar

The C of I Bishops’ Appeal, in conjunction with the United Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough, is hosting a seminar on Gender Justice on Tuesday March 19 in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin Castle. The seminar will focus on the Forth Mark of Mission of the Anglican

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Communion – Transforming Unjust Structures – and will look at gender equality and gender justice.

During the morning participants will hear stories of gender justice issues from a variety of perspectives. Ruth Garvey–Williams, editor of Vox Magazine, will look at the Irish Church context. Dr Cliona Loughnane, Women's Health Coordinator with the National Women's Council of Ireland, will talk about gender equality nationally. An international insight into global gender issues will be given by Veena Sullivan, head of the HIV and Sexual Violence team at Tearfund UK.

The seminar will be opened by Archbishop Michael Jackson and Lydia Monds, Education Advisor with Bishops' Appeal will bring proceedings to a close. The morning will begin at 10am and conclude with a light lunch at 1pm. Attendance is free but places are limited. To secure a place please email seminar@ireland.anglican.org or contact Caoimhe Leppard in Church of Ireland House in Rathmines on 01–4125608. Information on how to find the Chester Beatty Library here: [<https://chesterbeatty.ie/visit/>]

Queen's University quizzed over Saudi and Presbyterian theological college links

Questions have been raised as to how Queen's University can forge a relationship with a Saudi Arabian women's university which enforces strict Islamic rules, while

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at the same time suspending links with a Presbyterian college on theological grounds.

In December Queen's

announced it was suspending links with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's ministry training college, Union Theological College in Belfast (UTC), due to "concerns regarding the breadth and diversity of the teaching and curriculum".



Queen's announced a review of its links with the UTC in the wake of the Presbyterian Church voting last June to withhold membership from anyone in a same-sex relationship.

Questions are now being raised about QUB's consistency after it came to light this week that while it was conducting a review of links with UTC, the university was also exploring links with Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University (PNU) in Saudi Arabia. Based in Riyadh, it is the largest women's university in the world, with 60,000 students.

However, Amnesty International said this week that QUB has questions to answer. Its Northern Ireland director, Patrick Corrigan, said there are "severe human rights issues and reputational issues at play for Queen's".



**DUP MLA
Christopher
Stalford**

Saudi Arabia has a poor human rights record, including cracking down on women's

rights. Women were only allowed to drive for the first time in 2018 and other restrictions remain in place. PNU's 60,000 female students cannot leave the university without official permission. They are warned against having clothes, haircuts or earrings which do not comply with Islamic rules.

PNU rules warn female students about "non-commitment to general taste in dress or demeanour (short skirts, transparent clothes, short, men-like haircuts, and earrings in strange places) in a manner that does not comply to Islamic instructions, Saudi culture and PNU instructions". It is not known what other Islamic rules, if any, PNU might impose on students.

However by comparison it is understood that UTC does not impose any rules on the movement of students or on their clothes, earrings or hair.

DUP MLA Christopher Stalford said that many people would now wonder if QUB should instigate a review of teaching at PNU.

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“There have obviously been concerns raised about QUB’s partnership with Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University (PNU) in Saudi Arabia,” he said.

“Whilst I have no particular issue with the university pursuing such links, it appears that Queen’s takes a much more benign view of helping students at PNU ‘progress to leadership positions in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’ than it does of the education provision at Union Theological College.

“The review panel initiated by Queens stated that ‘the undergraduate curriculum in theology, however diverse the subject matter is taught almost entirely from a particular theological and religious perspective’. Many might question whether Queen’s will raise any such queries about the teaching at PNU, or if it is only reserved for Union College.”

It is understood that UTC has still not been given a copy of the review report based on which QUB decided to suspend links with the college. It is also understood that UTC is still awaiting confirmation of whether or not it will be entitled to an appeals process. QUB responded that it is an international university and, as with other institutions across the sector, engages with a range of partners across the world. “Queen’s rigorously evaluates and reviews all potential and existing partnerships on an on-going basis to ensure they reflect the University’s commitment to having a positive impact on global society”, it said. It has been in discussions with PNU for over a year regarding the potential delivery of a PhD Foundation Programme for the benefit of female staff members, it said. The programme would see five QUB academics training participants for the next stage

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in their academic career and progress to leadership positions in Saudi Arabia.

“QUB believes that the partnership would help support the progression of women in Saudi Arabia and therefore have a positive societal impact, with the possibility of a number of students from PNU enrolling at Queen’s in the future.” Report courtesy of the News Letter.

Planning ahead for Connor Streetreach 2019 and D & G Kids camp

The Connor Streetreach 2019 team will be commissioned at a special service in The Church of the Holy Spirit, Mossley, on Sunday June 16.

The service begins at 6pm and the young people will be commissioned by Archdeacon George Davison.

Streetreach is a local, missional, residential experience for young people run by Connor Diocese. It offers young people the opportunity to experience a mission within a safe context and with other young people.

Streetreach provides teaching, training and support to all participants as well as structured opportunities for mission in the context of a parish within Connor Diocese. In 2019 and 2020 Streetreach will be partnering with Mossley Parish in Newtownabbey.

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There is a day trip option open to young people who have finished Year 8 and older. The residential option is open to young people who have completed Year 11.

Anyone aged 18 or over can participate in Streetreach as a team leader.

The established partnership with Christ In Youth continues in 2019, with a team of young Americans joining the Connor team for Streetreach.

For information on how to sign up for Streetreach 2019, contact Diocesan Youth Officer Christina Baillie on 07753 312405 or email [christinabaillie@connordiocese.org] (<mailto:christinabaillie@connordiocese.org>) .

D&G Kids Camp 2019 – Now Open for Bookings

Diocese of Dublin & Glendalough has announced that this year's camp will be held from July 1 to 4 at the Glencree Centre in County Wicklow. Please do let your kids' clubs, Sunday schools, and parish schools know of this opportunity!

The booking fee is €175 and the booking

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

The United Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough are excited to announce details of the 2019 Kids' Camp.

Here's a camp just for you!

Four days full of the best of what camp has to offer: plenty of games, outdoor pursuits, music, arts & craft, good friends, laughter and fun.

It's a place where you can hang out and just relax.

The camp will provide great adventures in a safe and caring environment. Here you can just be yourself. Here it's easy to explore your faith in God.

What are you waiting for?

This is just the camp you've been looking for!



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deadline is 28 May. Full details are available on the booking form which can be downloaded on the diocesan web site.

A number of bursaries are available. Families in need of a bursary should contact the Revd Abigail Sines (abigail@christchurch.ie) before 1 May.

Academics to look into why Choral Evensong is so popular

Cathedrals are experiencing a surge in their Choral Evensong services, causing a research project at Oxford to look into why.

Although there are often stories of the rural church being in decline, the popularity of cathedral attendance, particularly at Christmas, has increased.

The most recent statistics on Church of England Cathedrals specifically from 2017 show midweek service attendance changed from a total of 7,000 people attending per week in the year 2000 to just over 18,000 people per week in 2017.

A survey to look into the reasons why people are attracted to evensong has now been launched by University of Oxford musicologist Kathryn King.

The doctoral researcher at Magdalen College will be asking: “Who is going to Choral Evensong? Who’s not

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going? What does it mean to them? What does it do for them? Why now?

“And what can understanding these motives and experiences add to our understanding of the role of cathedral music in the 21st century?”

She cites an increase of 35 per cent in evensong attendance since 2007 and the listener data for BBC Radio 3's Choral Evensong, showing its highest audience levels in the programme's 92-year history, as a catalyst for her curiosity.

Her research methods will combine insights from music psychology, using the congregations of two cathedrals and an Oxford college; interviews and focus groups and a programme of psychological and physiological 'experiments'.

Her project will include an immersive Evensong experience, which uses a specially-created virtual reality Evensong service.

Following a trial of the technology last October at iF Oxford, a science festival attended by 13,500 people, the 'virtual Evensong' experiments are now underway.

Meanwhile, King is collecting information from Choral Evensong-goers all over the world using an online survey, asking such questions as 'How often, over the last twelve months, have you: attended Choral Evensong, attended another type of regular Anglican/Church of England church service and attended a regular service or meeting of another religious or faith group?'

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Hanna Rijken, a Dutch scholar who has examined the attraction of Anglican Choral Evensong in the Netherlands – where it has been a growing phenomenon since the 1980s – is doing a similar survey and the pair will be sharing their results.

The emerging findings point to a complex and multifaceted picture of the diverse backgrounds, circumstances, motivations and experiences of contemporary Evensong-goers, even within the same congregation at the same service.

King said: “The findings of this research will, I hope, offer original insights into the lives and minds of today’s Choral Evensong-goers, shed new light on the real-time experience of listening to sacred music in sacred settings, and advance our understanding of the possibilities and potential of cathedral music, at Evensong and beyond”.

Pope Francis dismisses former US cardinal from the priesthood

The Vatican has announced that Pope Francis has dismissed former US cardinal Theodore McCarrick from the priesthood. A communique from the Holy See Press Office released this morning reads: On 11 January 2019, the Congregatio of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, at the conclusion of a penal process, issued a decree finding Theodore Edgar McCarrick, archbishop emeritus of Washington, D.C., guilty of the following delicts while a

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cleric: solicitation
in the Sacrament
of Confession, and
sins against the
Sixth
Commandment
with minors and



with adults, with the aggravating factor of the abuse of power. The Congresso imposed on him the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state. On 13 February 2019, the Ordinary Session (Feria IV) of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith considered the recourse he presented against this decision. Having examined the arguments in the recourse, the Ordinary Session confirmed the decree of the Congresso. This decision was notified to Theodore McCarrick on 15 February 2019. The Holy Father has recognized the definitive nature of this decision made in accord with law, rendering it a *res iudicata* (i.e., admitting of no further recourse).

Bishop's 8,000 mile trip to Confirmation in most southerly Anglican cathedral

Three people were confirmed this week in the most southerly cathedral in the Anglican Communion – but the cathedral's bishop, Tim Thornton, had to travel some 8,000 miles from his office in London, England, for the service. The Falkland Islands are not within an Anglican Communion



The Revd Ian Faulds, Bishop Tim Thornton, Denise Blake, Antonia and Stirling Marcus with Orlaith. Denise, Antonia and Stirling were confirmed this week at Christ Church Cathedral in Stanley on the Falkland Islands.

province but is an Extra Provincial area under the metropolitical authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Bishop to the Falklands is a post held by the Bishop at Lambeth – the senior episcopal assistant to the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace.

Despite the remoteness of the cathedral on the South Atlantic islands, a full slate of clergy were present for to watch Denise Blake and Antonia and Stirling Marcus make their confirmation vows during what was described as a “joyous” service. In addition to Bishop Tim, the interim priest in charge of the Falkland Islands, Ian Faulds was joined by other Christ Church Cathedral clergy Kathy Biles and Betty

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Turner. Also present was the Chaplain-in-Chief of the Royal Air Force, John Ellis, and Forces padre Alice McDermott.

There are currently six Extra Provincial areas in the Anglican Communion. In addition to the Falkland Islands, there are the Church of Ceylon, the Iglesia Episcopal de Cuba, Bermuda, the Lusitanian Church (Portugal) and the Reformed Episcopal Church of Spain. Most are under the metropolitan authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury; except for Cuba, which receives metropolitan authority from a Primatial council, comprising the Presiding Bishop of the US-based Episcopal Church, the Archbishop of Canada, and the Archbishop of the West Indies. Cuba will cease to be an Extra Provincial area when it resumes membership of the US-based Episcopal Church.

A new Rector will be sought for the Falkland Islands shortly after its previous Rector, Nicholas Mercer, returned to the UK in December to take up a new role in Bolton Abbey later this year.

News Briefs

+++Corrymeela seeks new leader - The Corrymeela Community, based in Northern Ireland, have been doing incredible ecumenical work for peace and reconciliation since 1965. They are looking for a new Leader. Information here: corrymeela.org/about/recruitm...

+++Disestablishment in Clogher - On Tuesday evening in St Macartin's Cathedral, Enniskillen, at 7.30pm, and on Wednesday evening in St Patrick's church, Monaghan, at 8pm, the Bishop of Clogher will give talks on

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the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland. Events to mark the 150th anniversary of disestablishment begin this year.

+++Red Book of Ossory Concert - In the National Concert Hall on Wednesday evening at 8.30pm the ensemble Anakronos will present 'The Red Book of Ossory', described as a 'thrilling new interplay between the music of the past and today'. The Red Book of Ossory is a 14th century cartulary associated with Richard Ledrede who became Bishop of Ossory in 1317. Ledrede is, perhaps, best remembered for initiating the famous witchcraft trial of Dame Alice Kyteler and for the burning at the stake of her servant, Petronella de Meath. However, he was also responsible for composing some sixty Latin songs for the vicars of St Canice's cathedral to sing at the great festivals so that their mouths 'be not defiled with theatrical, foul and secular songs'. These songs have survived in the Red Book of Ossory and have from time to time attracted the attention of scholars. Otherwise the manuscript has not, perhaps, had the attention it deserves, but the Revd Dr Adrian Empey is working on an edition which will make the text more generally available. Anakronos features four of Ireland's most innovative interpreters of medieval music, contemporary classical and jazz using voice, clarinet, saxophone, keyboard and percussion.

+++Tullow institution - On Friday the Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory will institute Canon Brian O'Rourke as incumbent of Tullow group of parishes. Canon O'Rourke moves from the Lismore/Waterford area of the diocese where he has been Diocesan Curate.

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+++Training courses start at CITI - Twenty-five students will be in attendance at the Theological Institute over the course of the weekend of 22–24 February for the commencement of two further training courses. Nine men and eight women from five dioceses will be embarking on the one year Foundation Course programme, whilst eight will start the fifth cycle of Reader training, lasting two years. The weekend, entitled 'Fit for the Purpose', takes as its theme a biblical and personal exploration of various matters to do with vocation. The main facilitators are Dr Christina Baxter, former Principal of St John's College Nottingham, and Canon Maurice Elliott, Director of CITI. Also in attendance from St John's will be the Rev Dr John Tomlinson, Course Director, and Jacqui Brown, Course Administrator.



+++CAMEO in Trim - Parents and children in Trim and Athboy parishes are invited to the next CAMEO ('come and meet each other') evening in the Diocesan Hall, Trim at 5pm on Saturday 2 March 2019. There will be sweet and savoury pancakes for all and there is no charge for this event.

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However, attendees may make a donation to cover the cost and any surplus will be donated in full to the Christian Aid Lenten Appeal. To help those who plan, please RSVP by Sunday 24 February if you wish to attend to [\[info@trimandathboy.com\]](mailto:info@trimandathboy.com)(<mailto:info@trimandathboy.com>) or by text to 085 808 1483.

+++Limerick's Unsung Heroes - Last year, St Mary's Cathedral celebrated its 850th anniversary and during the year a Community Awards Scheme was launched. This scheme was created to highlight the "unsung heroes" of Limerick. A special service was held yesterday (Sunday) evening to present the winners of the Community Award – the recipients were Sr Delia O'Connor, Mr Paul Carey, Mr Philip Doran, Mr Tom Naughton, Ms Maura O'Neill, and the Bedford Row Project.

This day in Christian History

February 18, 1546: German reformer Martin Luther dies in Eisleben. In one of his pockets he had placed the beginning of a projected manuscript against Roman Catholics. In another pocket was a slip of paper reminding him, "We are beggars, that's the truth".

February 18, 1564: Michelangelo Buonarroti, the Italian Renaissance artist whose works include the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, dies.

February 18, 1678: Puritan preacher John Bunyan publishes The Pilgrim's Progress, the best-selling book

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(apart from the Bible) in history. The allegorical tale, which describes Bunyan's own conversion process, begins, "I saw a man clothed with rags ... a book in his hand and a great burden upon his back").

February 18, 1688: Quakers in Germantown, Pennsylvania, issue America's first formal protest of slavery.

February 17, 661: Finan, bishop of Lindisfarne (an island off the eastern coast of England) who throughout his life sought to preserve Celtic customs against Roman influence, dies. Three years later, at the Synod of Whitby, Celtic Christians agreed to abide by Roman traditions. "Peter is guardian of the gates of heaven, and I shall not contradict him," said the Celtic King, Oswy.

February 17, 1858: Waldensians, ancient "Protestants" from the Italian Alps who survived through persecution for 800 years, are finally guaranteed civil and religious rights. They began with the teaching of a wealthy merchant named Pater Waldo in the late 1100s; thus they are considered "the oldest evangelical Church".

February 17, 1889: Former White Stockings baseball player Billy Sunday preaches his first evangelistic sermon in Chicago. By the time he died in 1935, he had preached to an estimated 100 million people, and about 1 million "walked the sawdust trail" to become Christians at his invitation.

February 17, 1898: Francis Willard, crusader for prohibition and women's suffrage, dies. She served as dean of Northwestern Women's College before becoming president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

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News links

[Annie Stephens obituary: One of Ireland's first female newspaper editors](#)

Irish Times

As an office junior she showed the **news** sense that would lead her into ... journalism with being an active laywoman in the **Church of Ireland**. From 16 ...

[Contactless card machines introduced at churches to counteract decline in cash donations](#) [Independent.ie](#)

Contactless card machines have been introduced to a number of Catholic **churches** across Dublin in an attempt to counteract the decline in cash ...

[Catholic churches in Dublin to introduce contactless card payments](#) [Buzz.ie](#)

Five Catholic Churches in Dublin are set to trial the introduction of ... At present there is currently a similar system in place in the **Church of England**.

[Landmark church to get a new lease of life](#)

The Corkman

One of Mitchelstown's most iconic buildings, St George's Church, is set to get a new ... by local historian Bill Power who was approached by the **Church of Ireland** to come up with ... "We lost the Catholic Church in 1978 and irreparable damage has been done by Breaking **News**; National; World; Sport ...

[Anne Graham: The IRA silenced my lawyer brother, Edgar, but his legacy lives on](#)

<https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/opinion/anne-graham-the-ira-silenced-my-lawyer-brother-edgar-but-his-legacy-lives-on-1-8811260>

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Alex Kane: Unionists don't need to panic about the border... however, they do need to be prepared

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/news-analysis/alex-kane-unionists-dont-need-to-panic-about-the-border-however-they-do-need-to-be-prepared-37818147.html>

The DUP have hit the Brexit jackpot, but...

<https://www.rte.ie/news/analysis-and-comment/2019/0215/1030907-dup-brexit-jackpot/>

A lot is riding on the SDLP's gamble to enter a partnership with Fianna Fáil — and not just for those two parties.

<https://www.newsletter.co.uk/sam-mcbride-sinn-fein-might-hope-the-sdip-fianna-fail-alliance-fails-but-that-would-be-short-sighted-1-8811358>

Church of England clears the way for first female Archbishop by rewriting laws that refer to the role ...

Daily Mail

The **Church of England** has edged closer to the appointment of its first ... job of Archbishop of York, second in the hierarchy of the Church, is about to ...

Alister McGrath: Michael Green Taught Me the Importance of Evange... | Christianity Today

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2019/february-web-only/alister-mcgrath-michael-green-tribute-evangelism.html>

UK faithful celebrate recognition of Newman's miracle

Vatican News

“This is wonderful **news** which will be greeted with thanks to God by people ... Newman first became an Anglican (**Church of England**) priest, before ...

Radio 2 cleric who spent time in Belfast has ‘weeks to live’

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/radio-2-cleric-who-spent-time-in-belfast-has-weeks-to-live-37818202.html>

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Rountree Foundation report criticises cuts in benefits

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2019/15-february/news/uk/jrf-report-criticises-cuts-in-benefits>

The Vatican is hosting a major summit on its response to child abuse, but what does it hope to achieve?

<https://www.thejournal.ie/rome-abuse-summit-4491410-Feb2019/>

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