



Derrick outside Lisburn Cathedral with, from left: Victoria Bell, Choir chaperone; Sarah Crawford, Cathedral Children's Officer; Neville Jones, Abaana Assistant Director; Dean Sam Wright and Gareth Campbell, Cathedral Youth Officer.

Derrick meets his sponsors as Abaana's New Life Choir visits Lisburn

Just a couple of years ago, 13-year-old Derrick was collecting discarded plastic bottles to earn 12p a day on the streets of Kampala.

Last week, he was having school lessons and making crafts in Lisburn Cathedral Halls, along with other young members of the Abaana New Life Choir.

The choir is currently on a five month tour of Ireland and the UK and Derrick and the children he is travelling with are walking, talking, singing proof that a little help can really transform lives.

Abaana, meaning 'children,' is a charity based in Bangor, Co Down. It was established by Scott Baxter, its Chief Executive, who was so moved by the poverty and need he encountered on a visit to Africa that he founded a charity giving hope to others, providing communities the opportunity to help solve their own problems.

Education is one of those tools and Abaana has been partnering with local churches and other organisations for 19 years. It has built 13 schools in different parts of Uganda, and runs a number of children's homes.

The 20 children taking part in this first ever New Life Choir tour all come from Abaana schools and are aged 8-13.

Neville Jones, the charity's Assistant Director and a parishioner of Lisburn Cathedral, has been involved in organising the tour. He explained that the children are sponsored by people in the UK. "The children represent their friends and communities and are hoping that through being here they can get more people in their communities sponsored so they can have an education as well," Neville said.

"This is the first time we have organised a choir tour like this and it is a big undertaking. We wanted representatives from all 13 schools and our sister organisation in Uganda worked with us to identify the singers and drummers."

The tour is underway and continues until June 4 ([concert dates](#)). The choir will visit Lisburn Cathedral to perform during the parish weekend on March 18, and will also sing in St Mark's, Ballymacash, on May 31, but there are other dates in other venues within Connor Diocese.

The children are accompanied at all times by 10 chaperones, four who have travelled with them from Uganda. One of the local chaperones is 27-year old Victoria Bell from Lisburn Cathedral, who has taken time out from her job as a teacher to be with the children for the duration of the tour.



Some members of the New Life Choir

The children's visit to Ireland is causing great excitement among members of Lisburn Cathedral's youth group Mettle, who sponsor Derrick.

Gareth Campbell, the Cathedral's youth worker, said: "Three years ago Mettle decided they wanted to sponsor a child through Abaana. All the members now pay in every week, and they also organised a fundraiser, the Sunday Funday Bunday, which raised over £1,000!"

Neville said that when the idea of a New Life Choir tour was first mooted two years ago, he really hoped that the young people from Mettle

could get involved. “Now we can have Derrick standing in front of them and we can say ‘this is the lad whose life you are changing.’”

Derrick’s life has indeed been changed. Due to family difficulties, he ran away from home and walked three days to reach Kampala. He lived for three years on the streets. He collected plastic bottles, earning around 12p a day for his labours, just about enough to buy a chapatti (pancake).

Derrick spoke about his life on the streets. “When I was on the streets I made some friends among the other children. They told me about the street and how you could get food. They told me if I looked for plastic bottles I could sell them. They told me that I could look for food in dustbins.”

It was his friends who pointed Derrick in the direction of one of the programmes Abaana runs for street children.

“Some of my friends started to go. They said we could get a place in one of their homes and aunties and uncles will tell us about Jesus. You have to study a little bit too, but they said if you are a good boy you could get into the home.”

Derrick did indeed get a place in a home, and is now in P5 at Abaana's New Foundations Primary School. He said the first thing that struck him on his arrival in Ireland was how cold it is. The people here are 'very good', he said, adding 'I am trying to learn the accent!'

Neville said Abaana works with social services in Uganda to identify young people who would benefit from a place in one of the charity's homes. Some, he said, would not be interested. The decision to move into a home has to be made by the child.

"When a child beds down on the streets, all they think about is will they get through the night safely, or will they eat the next day. Their horizons don't extend beyond that," said Neville.

"We now see boys in the children's home who are starting to plan for their future. Derrick wants to be a social worker so he can help other children. Cathy, our first sponsored child, graduated with a degree in social science and is now working for Abaana."

"We are trying to get the message across to people that something relatively small in our terms can do big things in Africa. A little makes a big difference. Sponsorship is literally transforming lives."

Gareth said the young members of Mettle can see the transformation their sponsorship of Derrick has brought about. They received letters and cards and were very keen to meet with him.”

That meeting took place this week at the Cathedral, which hosted the choir for two nights, but before they met up, Derrick was shown a short video recorded by Mettle in which members welcomed him to Ireland, and said how much they were looking forward to the concert next month.

The New Life Choir tour is aimed at raising awareness of Abaana’s work and bringing in more child sponsors, but Neville said being on a tour like this is potentially life changing for the children involved.

Not only are they singing in front of large crowds – they will sing at the Kingspan Stadium before Ulster Rugby’s match on March 3 – but they have been on planes and boats and buses for the first time ever.

During their time on the road, the choir and its chaperones are hosted by families from the different churches in the places the concerts take place.

Lisburn Cathedral is a big supporter of Abaana, parishioners sponsor at least 20 children in its schools and homes. The Dean of Connor, the Very Rev Sam Wright, rector at Lisburn Cathedral, said. "This is bringing people face to face with the realities of life in Africa in a very real way. Some of the children do live with their families, but the story of Derrick collecting plastic bottles for 12p after having to leave his family really touches people."

The good news is that Derrick is back in contact with his mother – Abaana's ultimate goal is to resettle the children who have lived on the streets with a family member.

Ticketing details for the New Life Choir Concerts vary, please check the Abaana website for details.

Trócaire's Education Resources for Lent 2017

Lent begins on Wednesday 1 March. Trócaire, the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland has developed a new series of educational resources for use by schools and youth groups.



Trócaire's Lent 2017 educational resources focus on climate change, climate justice and climate for Early Years to Post-Primary classrooms, as well as Youth groups/programmes.

Resources include a website which is suitable for both smartboard and projector use, and multiple downloadable resources for teachers and students, plus short films, animations, competitions and other activities.

The resources can be downloaded from here.
Resource Links:

- [Lent 2017 Education Website \(link\)](#)
- [Lent 2017 Early Years Resources \(link\)](#)
- [Lent 2017 Primary School Resources \(link\)](#)
- [Lent 2017 Post-Primary School Resources \(link\)](#)
- [Lent 2017 Youth Resources \(link\)](#)
- [Lent 2017 Additional Resources \(link\)](#)

Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly believes Permanent Diaconate will benefit Church

The Archbishop of Cashel and Emly has said that the Permanent Diaconate can really benefit the Catholic Church. Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly said that he hopes to introduce the Permanent Diaconate in the Archdiocese at some point in the future and would also be in favour of extending it to include women.

Speaking last week to the Tipperary Star newspaper, Archbishop O'Reilly said "It has already been discussed with the Council of Priests and I would be very much in favour of it and in favour of extending it out to more than just men. The commission that the Holy Father set up to examine the role of women is very significant.

"It is a very exciting calling really because it extends ministry to a family man. It brings a father of children who is engaged in that side of life into the celebration of the sacraments, not to a full degree, but to a limited degree."

Explaining the different perspective the Permanent Deaconate brings to the Catholic



*Archbishop
Kieran
O'Reilly*

Church, he said “It changes the goalposts of what we understand about who can celebrate the mysteries. Good family men can be in this position. I know a good number of them and they are doing very well. It is going to become more and more a normal feature of life and we will be encounter it more and more because many of those ordained will be coming in contact with us at funerals and weddings, baptisms, etc.”

The Permanent Diaconate is a voluntary part-time ministry for married or single men. Deacons

can assist the priest at the celebration of the Eucharist; they can celebrate baptism and marriage and preside at funerals. They also visit the sick, prisoners, and the bereaved, and promote awareness of the social teaching of the Church.

Deacons work in partnership with priests and parish pastoral workers, and their role includes supporting the parish structures that allow for the wider participation of the faithful in a range of ministries in the parish and in the wider community.

Those studying for the Permanent Diaconate would be ordained after a three to four year programme. The Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly, which has a population of over 80,000 people, currently has a resident priest in each of its parishes.

For more information about the Permanent Diaconate, see www.catholicbishops.ie/diaconate.

Alpaca your bag: minister off to Peru in charity trek



Balthazar, Rev Monika Redman and Apollo stop and have a wee rest during their walk in the Pentland Hills.

A fully robed Church of Scotland minister walking two Alpacas on a leash is not a sight people see every day.

But that is what greeted bemused hill walkers as Rev Monika Redman announced plans to trek to Machu Picchu in Peru to raise money for charity.

It is understood that the 48-year-old will be the first woman Kirk minister to trek to the legendary site in aid of a good cause.

Mrs Redman is fulfilling a childhood dream to raise more than £3,100 for Blythswood Care.

The charity runs a Christmas Shoebox Appeal to support vulnerable people across Europe, Africa and Asia.

The leader of St Leonard's Church in Dunfermline will climb the 3,000 steps to the Temple of the Sun.

Mrs Redman, who is married with a seven-year-old son, announced her plans at BobCat Alpacas farm near Bonaly on the outskirts of Edinburgh.

Armed with a Shepherds crook, backpack and hiking boots, the adventurer mingled with the 20-strong herd, which are farmed for their fleeces and used for animal tourism.

Mrs Redman, who took 18-month old Apollo and Balthazar for a stroll in the Pentland Hills, joked that she was considering taking a pair of Alpacas home with her because they would make "ideal lawnmowers" for the manse garden.

"Meeting the Alpacas and taking them for a walk was a lot of fun and helped build anticipation for the trek," she said.

"The congregation at St Leonard's Parish Church have been involved in the annual shoebox

appeal, which involves sending practical items like toiletries, clothing and other gifts to disadvantaged adults and children at Christmas, for many years.

"They are shipped out to lighten the winter for people who have very little and live in desperate parts of Europe.

"It is a privilege to raise money to support this important work."

The 10-day trip in October, which involves five days of trekking and sleeping under canvas, is being organised by Blythswood Care, which is based in Evanton in the Highlands.

Mrs Redman, who grew up in Lincoln and worked as minister in Wellington, New Zealand prior to taking up her current post, said she would be carrying a day sack and a mule will carry her luggage."

She is trying to walk 10 miles every day to get fit.

Margaret Tooth, a fundraising manager with Blythswood Care, said: "The charity may be best known for its annual Shoe Box Appeal but is committed to supporting Christian partners in Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia all year round,

funding humanitarian aid and social care projects and bringing hope to thousands."

Bob Crosbie, owner of BobCat Alpacas, said the animals originated in Peru where there is a population of around three million.

It is customary not to cut their hair because the animals recognise each other by their unique hairstyles.

Mr Crosbie said: "Alpacas have a very gentle temperament and they seem to sense that the smaller the person is, the gentler they have to be.

"They are very calm and very calming so we use them as therapy animals. We occasionally take them to meet patients at a Marie Curie Hospice and later this year we will be going to St Andrews, Edinburgh and Heriot Watt universities to assist students preparing to sit exams."

News briefs & Upcoming events

+++ Irish Chamber Choir in Belfast & Limerick
- On Thursday evening at 7.30pm in St Thomas' church, Belfast, the Irish Chamber Choir will give a recital entitled 'A Letter of Rights' to mark 800

years of Magna Carta. The recital will be repeated on Saturday 25 February in St Mary's cathedral, Limerick, and the following evening in Christ Church cathedral, Dublin.

+++ Kings at Maynooth - King's Voices, the mixed choir of King's College Cambridge, and the Maynooth University Chamber Choir presents a combined concert of choral music in the College Chapel of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. Featuring works by Duruflé, Poulenc and Ben Parry. Sunday 26th March 2017, 7:30pm (Please be seated by 7:10pm). Tickets available at the following outlets: Eventbrite.ie <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/kings-voices-mixed-choir-of-kin...> Maynooth Bookshop- Main street, Maynooth. Maynooth Campus and Conference office. (South Campus). Admission: €10 Standard €8 Concession (students/OAP's)

+++ Summer Madness savings - Book before 1st March for the early bird ticket price for Summer Madness 2017. Summer Madness is a festival that brings together young people, from all backgrounds, across the island of Ireland to celebrate, connect and explore the significance of faith in today's world. This years mainstage speakers include Matt Chandler (Village Church),

Rachel Gardner (Youthscape) and Simon Lennox (Word in the City). 30th June – 4th July, Glenarm Estate. For Tickets + Info go to: <http://www.summermadness.co.uk/festival/>

Notice of Upcoming events - Input Upcoming events in message bar and send information in text form to churchnewsireland@gmail.com

Tributes to the Right Revd Samuel Poyntz 1926 - 2017

The Right Revd Samuel Poyntz, formerly Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross (1978-87) and Bishop of Connor (1987-95) died peacefully on Saturday February 18.

On hearing of Bishop Poyntz's passing, The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, said:

‘It is with real sadness that I learned of the death of Bishop Samuel Poyntz over the weekend. I have known him since my own childhood in Dublin, but most closely from my time as a rector in Cork when he was bishop of the Diocese. I found him to be a decisive, practical and vigorous Christian leader but also someone

who was deeply caring and supportive of his clergy, in short a great bishop.

‘I also saw him to be a person of huge courage and fortitude, virtues which he demonstrated to the full during his time as Bishop of Connor during very difficult times in Northern Ireland, but these were also qualities which he used throughout his long and fulfilled life for the good of the life and witness of the entire Church of Ireland.

‘I hold the Poyntz family in my prayers at this time of loss, and trust that they will know God’s comfort in their bereavement.’

The Rt Revd Samuel Greenfield Poyntz was born in 1926 and was educated at Trinity College, Dublin (BA 1948; MA 1951; BD 1953; PhD 1960). He was ordained deacon in 1950; priest in 1951 and consecrated as a bishop in 1978. Dr Poyntz also received an Honorary DLitt from the University of Ulster in 1995.

Bishop Poyntz began his ministry as a curate in Dublin & Glendalough Dioceses, first in St George & Thomas (1950-52), then Bray (1952-55) and St Michan with St Paul (1955-9), followed by incumbencies at St Stephen’s (1959-67); St Ann’s (1967-70) and St Ann’s with

St Stephen's (1970-78). He was Archdeacon of Dublin from 1974 to 1978. Following his consecration, he served as Bishop of Cork, Cloyne & Ross Dioceses from 1978 to 1987, from where he was translated to serve as Bishop of Connor from 1987 to his retirement in 1995, having served almost forty-five years in the ordained ministry.

Amongst his varied contributions to the life of the Church, in 1969 Dr Poyntz proposed a private member's motion which led to the formation of the Bishops' Appeal for World Development of the Church of Ireland. From 1971 he was Convenor of the Bishops' Appeal Fund until becoming Archdeacon of Dublin. He was Vice-Chair of the British Council of Churches from 1986 to 1990.

Bishop Poyntz led an Irish Delegation to the first European Ecumenical Conference in Lausanne, Switzerland and subsequently made ecumenical visits to East and West Germany, Austria and France. He led an Irish Inter-Church Delegation to the USSR in 1987 and a British Council of Churches Delegation to Israel and the Occupied Territories in 1989.

In 1989 Bishop Poyntz ordained the first two women to be raised to the priesthood in the

Church of Ireland and in 1992 he instituted the first woman as an Incumbent in the Church of Ireland.

Bishop Poyntz is survived by Noreen, his wife of 65 years, and his children Jennifer, Timothy and Stephanie.

There will be a private family funeral this week followed by a Service of Thanksgiving at Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, next Saturday, February 25, at 11.30am.

Bishop Poyntz's ministry in Cork recalled

The Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, Church of Ireland Bishop of Cork has made the following statement in response to the news of the death of a former Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Reverend Dr Samuel Poyntz.

‘Although it is 30 years since Bishop Sam Poyntz left Cork, Cloyne and Ross to become Bishop of Connor, within the small community that is the Church of Ireland, contact with him and his wife Noreen has been regular and deep friendship has endured between them and many in this

Diocese. In recent years, they both returned to visit the Diocese for a number of significant occasions including the 250th anniversary of Kingston College, the official opening of the new Ashton School, and the retirement of our long serving Diocesan Secretary, Wilfred Baker.

More than that, even though his episcopate in this Diocese was reasonably short - just under 9 years - Bishop Poyntz's influence has endured, and his legacy is still felt and appreciated by many. Even today, many of the characteristic phrases he used are referred to and repeated affectionately.

My wife and I were teenagers when he became our bishop and our story of knowing him is not untypical. Sam Poyntz influenced those formative years greatly, and encouraged us, not only in the life of the Church of Ireland, but also in supporting our education and chosen careers.

Like other clergy from the Diocese (including my own contemporaries, Canon Robert Howard and Canon Nigel Baylor) he sponsored me for ordination training. He made great efforts to nurture vocations in the Diocese, and to keep in touch over the years with those who responded.

Many have deeply personal memories and we are no exception. When Susan and I married in

Cork in 1986 he presided at the celebration of the Eucharist, and he and Noreen invited us to the gardens of the Bishop's Palace to have the photographs taken. By the time he arrived in Connor Diocese I was working at Belfast Cathedral and also as a domestic chaplain to his predecessor. He continued that appointment and involved me in the arrangement of, and support for, a number of reconciliation and peace-making initiatives in those difficult days in Northern Ireland.

Bishop Poyntz was an innovator with a strong view of the role of the Church of Ireland. He had clear ideas of how the Church should keep pace with change, especially with international developments, social issues, and he was clear that it should take its place both in ecumenical dialogue and the concerns of the wider Anglican Communion. From a strongly Church of Ireland perspective, he himself engaged with all of those matters locally, nationally and internationally. He created opportunities in Cork for encounter with those issues, including hosting a meeting of the British Council of Churches (as it then was) and a visit to the Diocese by the Archbishop of York of the day, the Most Reverend Stuart Blanch.

Bishop Poyntz was energetic and pragmatic. He was decisive and forthright in his views. He was a strong supporter of Church music, and

particularly of the development of the Cathedral Choir at St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork.

Many did not realise how down to earth he was.

I recall well when I was a student at the Church of Ireland Theological College how he arrived to visit us announced. On one such occasion, I saw his car pulling up and went down to meet him: wrong thing to do! 'Should you not be in your study writing an essay?' he said. But then he came to the room, sat on the bed among us; 'Put on the kettle. Have you any biscuits? Now!

How are things going?' he asked. When he departed he also left a cheque behind for practical support. On other occasions there were gifts of books and core academic texts, or a cheque to buy a decent suit for ordination.

In Cork, Cloyne and Ross, in the late 1970s and 1980s he arrived with a flurry of enthusiasm after the long, steady, and pastoral episcopate of Bishop Gordon Perdue, a tenure which was no less innovative in its own ways. Notably, Bishop Poyntz presided over the complete refurbishment of the Diocesan Office buildings at Cove Street, the relocation and construction of the first phases of Lapp's Court (a sheltered housing complex), the consecration of the Chapel of Christ the Healer at the Regional Hospital (now Cork University Hospital), and

major remedial works at Kingston College (another housing charity within the Diocese).

Two, among many, ecumenical initiatives are worthy of note. First, as President of ICICYMA (the Incorporated Church of Ireland Cork Young Men's Association) at Garryduff Sports Centre, he led the club to open its membership to people of all religious outlooks enabling it to become the club that it is today. Second, before he left for Connor he was involved in the dialogue which led to the amalgamation of two religious-run voluntary hospitals, the Victoria Hospital and the South Infirmary, now the South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital, Cork. In its time this was a pioneering ecumenical step.

He was ahead of his time in many ways. I remember well how, in his retiring remarks at his last meeting of the Standing Committee of the General Synod he said that one of his big regrets was that he had not managed to persuade the Church of Ireland of the value of and importance of periodic sabbatical leave for clergy for study and refreshment in ministry.

We remember our former Bishop, Samuel, with immense affection and thanksgiving to God and, on behalf of us all in Cork, Cloyne and Ross, I extend our sincere sympathy to all his family, especially to his wife Noreen, and his children

Jennifer, Tim and Stephanie and their families.
May he rest in God's peace and rise in glory.'