



## LENT 2017

### Live burial at Willowfield Parish, Belfast

#### ***The coffin which will be assembled for the Ash Wednesday burial***

John Edwards, the founder of 'Walking Free', a charity set up to help suicidal and addicted people, is set to be buried alive on Wednesday 1 to Friday 3 March.

Preparations are already being made at a piece of ground alongside Willowfield Parish Church, East Belfast. JCBs have dug a hole for John to 'go under' in a coffin 8ft long x 3.5ft high x 4ft wide, enabling him to sit up as well as lie down. The coffin has been kitted out with electrics and broadband.

"I'm a former addict," said Edwards, "and I've been clean and sober for 25 years. I'm making a very large coffin, I'm burying it in East Belfast and I'm going to live in it for three days."

The shocking stunt is set to raise awareness of the needs of despairing people while John broadcasts stories of hope from a coffin.

"I know this is a radical move but people are continually contacting me who are either suicidal or who know friends or family who are. My plan is to speak to them from the grave before they get there and show them hope."

During this time, Edwards and his team will live stream from the coffin through the Walking Free website and live on Facebook. He will take calls, emails, Skype and texts from all kinds of people in East Belfast and around the world, who in turn will share their stories, live streaming through the coffin. This feed will potentially reach

millions of viewers around the world, and Edwards will offer messages of hope by communicating with them in this way.

“People will communicate with me how they have navigated and overcome trauma, suicide attempts, coping with addicted children or family members as well as addiction to substance and behaviour,” said Edwards.

Edwards has pioneered rehabs, overcome Hepatitis C from dirty needles, and spent time in mental homes back in the 1970s. John, with God’s help has changed his life and has been happily married for 20 years. He is a committed Christian, a stepfather and grandfather, and he is both privileged and humbled to help those who’ve lost hope.

Willowfield Rector, David McClay, comments, “John is going into the coffin on Ash Wednesday which marks the start of Lent. The season of Lent is one when Christians talk about dying to ourselves. But the message from the grave is one of hope – hope for those who are struggling with addictions, hope for those who feel life is hopeless, and hope of life that is eternal.

“John knows that he is going to be buried on March 1st. The rest of us don’t know when we

will be buried, when our lives will end – but for every Christian there is the confident hope of life forever because of what Jesus has won for us on the cross. He did it so that we don't have to pay the price for our sin and guilt. John Edwards demonstrates the amazing transformation that Jesus can bring to our lives. I invite you to join in the live streaming of this event and hear for yourself.”

Find the coffin at Willowfield Parish Church, My Lady's Road, Belfast BT6 8FE, March 1st–3rd. Follow the live stream on social media: #GraveChat. More information can be found at [www.walkingfree.org](http://www.walkingfree.org)

## **LENT 2017 - 'Drive-thru' ashes coming to Galway for the start of Lent**

A church in Galway will take a novel approach to Ash Wednesday next week, with a drive-thru service set to be in place at Glenamady church, near the border with Roscommon.

The Irish Catholic reports that Father Paddy Mooney had met with the pastoral council, who together decided on an approach that would cater for people on-the-go to get ashes on their

forehead when Lent starts next Wednesday 1 March.

The design of the church grounds will allow people to drive in one gate, stop and receive their ashes from their car, and then carry on to drive out a second gate.

The service will be available between 8am and 9.30am that morning.

The church has also installed a Lenten Petition box in the grounds where people will be able to pull in to submit prayer requests right up until Easter.

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## **Corrymeela Sunday events in Leicester**

There will be a weekend of events at Leicester Cathedral for Corrymeela Sunday, March 19.

Two seminars will be held on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March, sharing thoughts from the Irish Peace Process for the Shared Conversations process. These will be followed by an evening of music and poetry. On Sunday members of the Corrymeela Community will be part of the Cathedral service, followed by a gathering to share news of Corrymeela's projects.

The resources for Corrymeela Sunday (reflections on texts and prayers) can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

Details of all seminars are given below.

The Art of Reconciling - at St Martin's House, Peacock Lane, Saturday 18th March

Workshops 2.30–5.30pm

- Reconciling Memories: exploring cross cultural remembrance

- Reconciling Stories: beyond Shared Conversations about LGBT lives

Booking is essential via Eventbrite or ring the Cathedral Office 0116 261 5373

On Saturday evening (18th March) at Leicester Cathedral, Pádraig will be doing a poetry reading more information available [here](#).

On Sunday 19th March, Pádraig O Tuama leader of the Corymeela Community will be speaking at the 10.30am service at Leicester Cathedral followed by a talk about Corrymeela's projects at 12.15pm in the Cathedral.

The resources for Corrymeela Sunday (reflections on texts and prayers) can be downloaded by clicking here.

## **Visit of Statue of Our Lady of Fatima to St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry**

On 11 January this year, Pope Francis blessed six statues of Our Lady of Fatima to be brought to each continent, to appeal for prayer and reparation for world peace and to promote the sanctity of family life in our world.

One of the statues blessed on that day will be brought to St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry, on Tuesday 7 March by representatives of the Alliance of the two Hearts. The schedule for this event is as follows:

- Reception of the statue at St Eugene's Cathedral at 12.30pm, followed by Mass at

at 1.00pm



- Eucharistic Adoration will continue throughout the afternoon until 7.30pm and everyone is welcome to attend
- Concluding with Mass at 7.30pm: those present at the 7.30pm Mass may be consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary

## **St Patrick's Day celebrations in Downpatrick**

Bishop Harold Miller invites you to join him at Down Cathedral for the annual St Patrick's Day



Festival Service followed by lunch in the marquee in the Cathedral grounds.

This year's theme is Rising to the Challenge with two keynote speakers, Mickey Harte, of the Gaelic Athletic Association, and Shane Logan, CEO of Ulster Rugby. You are also welcome to attend the Holy Communion Service at Saul and to join the pilgrimage from Saul to Down Cathedral.

RSVP by email by 11 March to  
[info@downanddromore.org](mailto:info@downanddromore.org)

9:15am – Holy Communion at Saul /  
Preacher: Rev. Adrian Dorrian

10:15am – Pilgrimage from Saul to  
Downpatrick

11:45am – Festival Service in Down Cathedral  
with: Mickey Harte (Tyrone GAA) and Shane  
Logan (Ulster Rugby)

Wreath laying ceremony at St Patrick's Grave

1:15pm – Irish stew lunch in the marquee

Transport to Saul - From 8:00am private buses will leave from the Mall for the communion service and pilgrimage. The last bus for the communion service leaves at 8:45 am. The last bus for the pilgrimage leaves at 9:45am. The last

bus from Saul to the Cathedral leaves at 10:40am.

## **Dublin Catholic youth 10<sup>th</sup> *Faithfest***



Young people in the Archdiocese of Dublin are being invited to take part in the 10th *Faithfest* event in Dublin Diocese on Friday 10 March.

*FaithFest* is a faith inspired event for young people of secondary school age. Upwards of 80 teenagers from parishes across the diocese are expected to take part in a dynamic programme which supports their faith and creates opportunities for them to meet other young people.

The idea behind the *Faithfest* gathering came from four Parish Pastoral Workers in Dublin diocese who had seen the success of the Youth Space at the 50th International Eucharistic Congress which was held in Dublin in 2012. They wanted to create something similar on a smaller scale for teenagers in Dublin and *Faithfest* was the result.

*Faithfest* will be hosted in Clonliffe College with the support of the diocesan Office for Evangelisation and Ecumenism. For more information see [www.evangelisation.ie](http://www.evangelisation.ie).

## **Black Santa donates 7,000 pounds to alleviate Sudan famine**

The Dean of Belfast has given £7,000 from Black Santa funds to Christian Aid to support its work to alleviate famine in South Sudan.

The charity says that 100,000 people are at risk of starvation, and a further one million are classified as on the brink of famine. Almost five million people are in urgent need of food.

The Church of Ireland Diocese of Connor and the Diocese of Down and Dromore both have partnerships with dioceses in South Sudan –

Connor with Yei Diocese and Down and Dromore with Maridi.

The people in this relatively new country have already experienced three years of conflict, and are at breaking point with harvests being disrupted, increasing food and fuel prices, and the collapse of the economy. Christian Aid says they are struggling to feed their families and have been surviving on wild foods and drinking unsafe water.

The Dean, the Very Rev John Mann, said the donation was being given ‘conscious of the humanitarian catastrophe that has been unfolding for some months across the whole region, but specifically in South Sudan with which the local dioceses have a special affiliation.’

The money comes from funds raised by the annual Black Santa Sit-out on the steps of St Anne’s Cathedral. Dean Mann said: “With a feeling of near helplessness in the face of huge need we make this modest grant to Christian Aid, whose partners will ensure that it is used to relieve suffering in one of the most desperate situations in the world today.”

Rosie Crowther, Christian Aid's South Sudan Country Manager, said: "I have witnessed first-hand the incredible resilience of South Sudanese people in the face of many crises. However, many people have now exhausted their coping mechanisms, and tens of thousands could die of starvation, millions do not know where their next meal is coming from.

"Tragically, this crisis was utterly preventable. The situation will continue to deteriorate rapidly if we don't act now."

## **Harry Clarke's unique gift to former Archbishop of Dublin**

The fusion between books and archives is brought to life in the latest online Archive of the Month presentation from the RCB Library, the Church of Ireland's library and archive repository. In time for spring, the unique gift given to the former Archbishop of Dublin, The Most Revd Dr John Gregg (1873-1961) who was archbishop from 1920 to 1939, by renowned stained-glass artist Harry Clarke (1889-1931) is the focused item.

The gift, personally inscribed by Clarke on the half-title page with his compliments to the archbishop, in December 1922, is a limited edition volume of the collection of poems entitled *The Year's at the Spring* for which Clarke was illustrator. Published by George G. Harrap in September 1920, the book's print-run was limited to just 250 copies, of which Gregg's was number 50.

Harry Clarke was best known as a stained-glass artist, with his work being displayed in religious and secular places throughout Ireland and, indeed, the world. Visitors to Dublin will be familiar with Clarke from his 1928 work in Bewley's Oriental Café, with windows depicting the Corinthian, Doric, Ionic and Composite orders of architecture. Clarke's art was not limited to the secular, and he carried out many commissions for the Christian Churches, all of which from a Church of Ireland perspective are imaged, catalogued, and available on a free-to-view basis together with stained glass throughout the island here: [www.gloine.ie](http://www.gloine.ie)

Clarke had been working on numerous stained-glass commissions for the Church of Ireland during the late 1910s and 1920s which may explain his personal connection with Gregg. These include his work for St Barrahan's in



***The Baptism of Jesus. A Harry Clarke  
Window in Dingle Presentation Convent  
Chapel***

Castletownsend, Co. Cork (1918, 1921, and 1926), Christ Church in Gorey, Co. Wicklow (1922), and St Patrick's in Carnalway, Harristown, Co. Kildare (1921), as well as Holy Trinity in Killiney, Co. Dublin (1919), Eneriley and Kilbride Church near Arklow, Co. Wexford (1924), Sandford Parish Church in Ranelagh, Co. Dublin (1927) and St Brigid's in Castleknock, also Co. Dublin (1928), all of which were located in Gregg's own Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough.

Clarke's stunning originality as a stained-glass artist extended to other media, but what is often forgotten is the fact that he was also an accomplished book illustrator. Indeed, there are many similarities in his style in both art forms, and this is perhaps fitting, as his book illustrations and his work on stained-glass are examples of two-dimensional art focused on the telling of a story.

The current online exhibition, which has been put together by Assistant Librarian Bryan Whelan, tells the story this particular unique and rare volume, which is just one of more than 60,000 volumes of printed books held in the Representative Church Body Library. Many of these volumes have come into its safe custody from members of the Church of Ireland laity,



clergy and bishops. The bibliographic records of most of these books are now catalogued and accessible to a worldwide audience through the online printed books catalogue available here:

[www.ireland.anglican.org/about/rcb-library/catalogues/printed-books](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/about/rcb-library/catalogues/printed-books)

## **Sending out the 25: Church Of England bishops head to Durham for weekend's evangelism**

When Jesus sent out the 72 to preach the good news he warned them they were 'like lambs among wolves'

The sleepy northern city of Durham is unlikely to offer the same level of hostility as first century Palestine. Nevertheless that is the destination for 25 Church of England bishops plus all their staff next weekend for four days of evangelism.

The mass outreach team includes two of the most senior figures in the CofE in the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Durham. And with the prospect of more than 450 community events including abseiling and late night 'Street Pastor' care for the inebriated, the Church leaders will be hoping Jesus' promise of 'nothing will harm you' will extend to them.



***The Archbishop of York, John Sentamu, at a previous mission event.***

The 'Talking Jesus Durham' event is the third mission by bishops from the northern section of the CofE after one in Blackburn in 2016 and one in Sheffield in 2015.

The four days of events starts with a service led by the Archbishop of York, in Durham Cathedral on Thursday March 2 before the teams disperse across the diocese from the river Tyne to the river Tees.

Dr John Sentamu said: 'Jesus came to bring the very life of God as a gift to all of us. His resurrection makes it possible for us to live the

life he lived. The heart of the Christian faith is about having an encounter with Jesus – an encounter which transforms and brings hope and love.'

Rt Rev Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham, added: 'In this diocese, we're all about blessing our communities in Jesus' name for the transformation of us all.

'What greater blessing can we offer than an introduction to Jesus? What could be more transformative than coming to know him? Just imagine: one long weekend; 25 bishops; hundreds of events; thousands hearing about Jesus and having their lives transformed.'

## **Football, like life, requires thinking of others, Pope tells Villarreal team**

Spanish football team Villarreal had an audience with Pope Francis ahead of their Europa League match against Roma this week.

The team won the game 1-0 but crashed out of the league anyway because they had lost the first leg 4-0.



***AS Roma's forward Francesco Totti vies for the ball with Villarreal's Rodrigo Hernandez Cascante during the UEFA Europa League football match***

Francis told the players inside the Apostolic Palace that “football, like other sports, mirrors life and society.”

Francis also stressed the importance of playing as a team, adding that “when you start thinking only about yourself and forget your teammates, we in Argentina call those types of players someone who likes ‘to eat the ball’ alone.”

Francis, a lifelong fan of Buenos Aires club San Lorenzo, has had frequent meetings with football players from around the world.