

Pro-life supporters counter-demo outside NI office in response to decriminalisation effort



Pro-life groups responded to a pro-choice demonstration today outside the Northern Ireland office in London, highlighting the 100,000 people they estimate are alive because the 1967 Abortion Act wasn't introduced in Northern Ireland.



Campaigners carried the names in boxes and crossed Westminster bridge with balloons and banners.

They were responding to a demonstration by Amnesty International, supported by actors in the Derry Girls TV series, calling on Northern Ireland to decriminalise abortion.

Pro-choice campaigners took a petition to the Northern Ireland office signed by 62,000 people, asking for abortion law to be brought in-line with the rest of the UK.

Terminations are currently a criminal offence in Northern Ireland unless it is done to save the mother, physically or mentally.

Amnesty say the laws are “dangerous and degrading”.

Campaigners travelled with 28 suitcases to represent the 28 women who travel from Northern Ireland every week to get an abortion where it is legal.



Dublin Interfaith Forum condemns ‘Wanton destruction’ at St Michan’s

Dublin City Interfaith Forum has expressed its deep concern regarding the recent serious damage of St Michan’s Church crypt and the desecration of the remains of those lying within.

In a statement DCIF said: “This callous act is both deeply disappointing and sacrilegious. The wanton destruction of historic remains preserved in St Michan’s crypt for hundreds of years is an act of vandalism which comes with a high cost



Mummies in the St Michan's Church crypt in 2012

to ongoing efforts for conservation of our historic, cultural and religious heritage.

“Dublin City Interfaith Forum, as an organization, seeks to build relationships based on understanding and respect among faith communities. On this basis, we condemn any potential acts of hate, hostility or discrimination based on religious grounds.

“As an expression of our collective commitment to democracy, humanism and modernity, we reiterate that respect for our diversity of religious traditions and beliefs whilst publicly decrying such violent or offensive actions as we’ve seen in this instance.”

February 27 2019

The desecration of the crypt of St Michan's Church, Dublin, was discovered yesterday (Monday February 25). [You can read more here]([news/2019/02/25/crypt-of-st-michans-church](https://www.churchnewsireland.com/news/2019/02/25/crypt-of-st-michans-church)) .

Weekend of hymns and stories to celebrate Cecil Frances Alexander in Enniskillen Cathedral

An exhibition and an evening of stories and song to celebrate the life of one of the most iconic hymnwriters in Ireland, Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander, will be taking place in Clogher Diocese on the weekend of Saturday and Sunday, 9th and 10th March.

The exhibition in St. Macartin's Cathedral, Enniskillen runs throughout Saturday from 11am to 4pm and on Sunday from 2pm to 8pm with an evening service at 7pm at which some of Mrs Alexander's famous hymns will be sung and interspersed with stories of her life narrated by Mrs Eva Baxter.

During the service, the Cathedral Choir and a choir from the Girls' Friendly Society in Clogher Diocese, will be adding to the praise.

The weekend events has been organised by Clogher Diocesan Board of Religious Education in co-operation with the Dean of Clogher, the Very Revd. Kenneth Hall, to mark

February 27 2019

**Frances Boyd
Eva Baxter
and Dean
Kenneth Hall
preparing for
the exhibition.**

200 years
since the birth
of Mrs.
Alexander.
The exhibition
will be brought
from St.
Columb's
Cathedral,
Londonderry

by Mr Ian Bartlett with some artefacts also on loan from St. Bestius's Parish Church in the Parish of Termonamongan, Killeter, where Mrs Alexander and husband, Revd William Alexander began their married life.

Revd. Alexander subsequently became Bishop of Derry and following Mrs Alexander's death, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All-Ireland.

Mrs Alexander was born in Dublin but her family moved to the Strabane area due to her father's work commitments.

A talented young woman, she had written her book, "Hymns for Little Children published in 1848.

Her many talents also involved many aspects of pastoral work in the parishes where her husband was appointed.

churchnewsireland@gmail.org



Among the best known hymns she wrote were; “Once in Royal David’s City,” “All Things Bright and Beautiful,” and “There is a Green Hill Far Away.”

In conjunction with the weekend exhibition and service, the Clogher Diocesan Board of Religious Education has organised the theme for the Archdeacon Ruddell Prize and Bishop’s Medal Competition for Sunday School children on the “Hymns of Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander.” The closing date for entries is Wednesday, 19th June and these should be left in the Diocesan Office.

Politicians and Carlow Methodist Church sleep out to highlight rough sleepers

The desperate plight of people being homeless and having to sleep rough was starkly highlighted when a local church minister, several politicians and other people gave up their warm beds for one night to raise awareness and funds for Focus Ireland.

Reverend Paul Maxwell, cathaoirleach Brian O’Donoghue and deputy Pat Deering set aside the luxury of sleeping in the warmth and security of their own homes and instead slept under cardboard in the grounds of the Methodist Church in Carlow town for a night recently.

February 27 2019

Speaking before the event, Paul Maxwell said, “We’ll bed down under cardboard boxes to try to understand what it’s like to be homeless and to raise awareness and funds for Focus Ireland.”

“Unfortunately, there are people who, at the height of winter, have to sleep outside in the freezing cold. We’re only doing it for one night, after which we’ll have the luxury of going back to sleep in our own beds.”

Focus Ireland works in partnership with Carlow County Council through its tenancy support and settlement services to help families and individuals who have been homeless or at risk to secure a place to call home and settle in the local community.

In Co Carlow last year, Focus Ireland provided advice and information to more than 130 people and also worked with 81 households through its tenancy support and settlement services.

Rev Maxwell appealed to local people, businesses, schools and sports clubs to consider taking part in this event in the grounds of the Methodist church . To find out more information on Focus Ireland email cathryn.oleary@focusireland.ie or call her on 086 6042854.

Rathmichael Parish bids farewell to long serving Rector
There was standing room only in Rathmichael Parish Church yesterday (Sunday February 24) as parishioners, friends and well wishers flocked to say farewell to their Rector of almost 27 years. Canon Fred Appelbe presided at

February 27 2019

his final service as Rector of Rathmichael before retiring later this week.

In his sermon he said it had been a great privilege to serve the parish over the last 26 and a half years. There had been very many positive events, among them improvements at the parish school for which he thanked former Education Ministers, Niamh Breathnach and Mary Hanafin, who was present in the congregation.

Tributes to retiring Dublin rector



Canon Fred and Sonia Appelbe and their daughters Debbie and Hayley.

Leading tributes to Canon Appelbe, parishioner Geoffrey Perrin, said the day was emotionally charged. He described Fred as a man of exceptional humanity. "He has been behind us, praying for us and he has led us. He has been

February 27 2019

our inspiration. He has been a friend in happy and fun times and a companion in times of sadness,” he said.

Anne Thompson, who has been Fred’s PA throughout his ministry paid tribute to Fred’s wife Sonia for her industry and innovation in support of the parish. She said she had become part of the rectory family, which includes Fred and Sonia’s daughters Debbie and Hayley.

On behalf of the parish, Rector’s Churchwarden, Richard Marshall, made a presentation to Fred and said it had been a pleasure to meet and talk to him every Sunday morning.

Fund raising Day of Praise in Clogher Cathedral

Major maintenance projects are to be carried out at St Macartan’s Cathedral, Clogher, and as part of the fundraising, parishioners and friends of the Cathedral are having an afternoon of praise and worship.

On Sunday, 10th March, there will be continuous praise and worship from 2.30pm to 6.30pm and this will be followed by a Service of Praise and Thanksgiving at 7pm when the preacher will be the Revd Stephen McElhinney, Director of Missions for SAMS Ireland.

The Rector, the Revd Olivia Downey, stated; “We are very grateful to choirs, musicians, organists and worship bands who are giving of their time and gifts freely over the four hours to fill this beautiful historic cathedral with worship. It is

February 27 2019

a wonderful opportunity to come along during these hours for five minutes or all afternoon to listen, pray and spend time in the presence of the King of Kings. Among those already signed up for a slot over the afternoon are local church choirs, organists, worship bands and Down Cathedral Choir.”

Also during the afternoon, the graveyard around the Cathedral, one of the oldest in Ireland and the burial site of both Catholic and Protestant bishops, Presbyterian moderators, and soldiers from many wars, will be the subject of a tour by local historian, Jack Johnston focusing on the soldiers’ graves from six wars ranging from the Siege of Derry to the American Civil War.

People have worshipped at the site of St Macartan’s Cathedral in Clogher since the 5th century and although the site and its history have always been treasured, the years have taken its toll with maintenance work now required. On the Saturday prior to the praise and worship event, there will be a parish auction in Clogher ‘old’ Primary School with viewing from 11am to 1pm and the auction beginning at 2pm sharp.

**Bishop to attend Lambeth
Conference without wife in
protest at bar on gay clergy
partners**



The Bishop of Liverpool has said he will attend an international summit of Anglican leaders without his wife next year, in protest at a bar on the partners of gay clergy.

Rt Rev Paul Bayes described the decision to prevent same-sex partners of clergy from attending the 2020 Lambeth Conference as an "act of exclusion".

In a message posted on Twitter, he said: "I deeply regret that, in the fractious complexities of our life as a worldwide people, this act of exclusion has taken its place.

"It is a grief to me and to my wife, and to many others. Despite this, I aim to attend the Conference, alone, in the hope of a common future."

The Anglican Communion - which includes national churches from 165 countries - was forced to clarify its stance on the matter last week, following "misunderstanding".

February 27 2019

General Secretary Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon said: "The invitation process has...needed to take account of the Anglican Communion's position on marriage which is that it is the lifelong union of a man and a woman.

"Given this, it would be inappropriate for same-sex spouses to be invited to the conference."

The prospect of the same-sex partners of gay bishops being "received in good standing" at the 2020 Lambeth Conference had prompted consternation among conservative Anglicans.

Nigerian archbishop Nicholas Okoh from the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (known as GAFCON) cited it among his reasons for urging a boycott.

Death and funeral of Revd Dr John Medhurst

From the Diocese of Down & Dromore - It is with sadness that we announce the death of Revd Dr John Medhurst, former rector of Helen's Bay, on February 24, 2019. Our thoughts and prayers are with Norah and the family circle.

Revd Medhurst was ordained deacon in 1985 for the curacy of Seapatrick in the Diocese of Down and Dromore and from 1990–97 he was Incumbent of St Mark's, Ballysillan, Diocese of Connor. Revd Medhurst then moved back to Down and Dromore to become Incumbent of Helen's Bay and retired into the diocese in 2005. From 2013 he served as an Honorary Priest in St George's Belfast (Connor).

February 27 2019

The funeral service will be in St. George's Belfast on Friday at 11.00 a.m. Followed by a private family committal.

February 27 in Christian history

February 27, 280: Constantine, the first Roman emperor converted to Christianity, is born. Though some scholars question the authenticity of Constantine's conversion (which came after he saw a vision on the battlefield), the emperor did seek to settle church controversies by calling the Council of Nicea in 325

February 27, 380: Roman emperor Theodosius makes Christianity the official law of the land. "It is our will," he decreed, "that all the peoples we rule shall practice that religion that Peter the Apostle transmitted to the Romans"

February 27, 1773: Christ Church in Alexandria, Virginia, is completed after six years of construction at a cost of about \$4,070. George Washington purchased a pew for himself and his family for \$100.

February 27, 1871: Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder and first president of Dallas Theological Seminary, is born. His eight-volume Systematic Theology (1947) is one of the most detailed analyses of dispensational premillennial Protestant theology.

**AN INVITATION
to become a
FACEBOOK FRIEND**

of CNI...

**...and get headlines of the CNI daily
news magazine...**

...Just a click at

<https://www.facebook.com/Church-News-Ireland-261305103892998/timeline/>

**+ Please share CNI with your friends
www.churchnewsireland.org**

