



Speaker at the 2017 Lecture was renowned American scholar Professor Mark Noll.

Ecumenical support for C of I's QUB lecture on Luther

This year's annual Church of Ireland Theological Lecture at Queen's University, Belfast, on Monday February 6, was by renowned American

scholar Professor Mark Noll, Paul Harron reports.

It took the theme of examining Martin Luther's 'Sola Scriptura' – the focus on the Bible as above every other authority – as churches of various traditions reflect on the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation.

In a creative move, the organisers – the joint Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplaincy at QUB – brought in Professor Mark Noll to speak to a large audience at Riddel Hall, and invited Bishop Brendan Leahy, Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick, to respond, and the following evening engaged both in a follow-up dialogue responding to a wide range of questions from the audience.

In this way, a shared conversation was brought about, Bishop Leahy encouraging 'ecumenical enrichment 500 years on'.

Professor Noll's lecture was attended by a number of senior figures including Bishop Alan Abernethy, Bishop Noel Treanor and Bishop Donal McKeown, and he was welcomed to Queen's by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Paddy Johnston.

Professor Noll described himself as a Presbyterian who had recently retired from one of the USA's great Catholic Universities, Notre Dame. Opening with Martin Luther's famous words at the Diet of Worms, 'My conscience is captive to the Word of God', he argued that 'Sola Scriptura' was both 'a blessing and a curse' inasmuch as while 'the Bible alone' brings a message of hope and liberation, and an ethical guide and a blueprint for holiness, there has also been 'unprecedented strife over what it has meant to follow the Word of God'.

He referenced the eminent Evangelical theologian J I Packer, who had observed that Protestants have sometimes neglected other aspects of Christian discipleship by an overemphasis on the maxim.

Within Protestantism there has been fracture and fragmentation and even the misuse of the Bible in Imperialism and political aggression, Noll said; however, he stressed that the fragmentation of Protestantism because of 'Sola Scriptura' was not as extensive as some might suggest and that the Bible 'reshapes people into holiness' – it is 'a pathway to purification'.

He called, in this 500th anniversary year, for Protestants to examine 'Sola Scriptura' 'with



Bishop Brendan Leahy, Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick, responds to the lecture by Prof Noll.

searching scrutiny’ and for others to do so ‘with charity’. He used as the framework for his talk, a number of texts: William Chillingworth (‘The Religion of Protestants as a Safe Way of Salvation’, 1637); Robert Baird (‘Religion in America’, 1844) and Philip Jenkins (‘The New Faces of Christianity: Believing in the Bible in the Global South’, 2006); as well poems by Brooks Hinton and Emily Dickinson.

Professor Noll went on to discuss a number of critiques of 'Sola Scriptura' by Brad Gregory ('The Unintended Reformation: How a Religious Revolution Secularized Society', 2012) and Christian Smith ('The Bible Made Impossible', 2012), the latter (also author of 'How to Go from Being a Good Evangelical to a Committed Catholic in 95 Difficult Steps', 2011) questioning the 'Biblicism' and 'rampant interpretive pluralism of Evangelicalism at its worst'.

Bishop Leahy's response

Bishop Leahy responded by recommending that there is room for exploration of 'Sola Scriptura', with Roman Catholics coming to the Bible – 'a common treasure' – in different ways.

Bishop Leahy spoke about Pope Francis's recent declaration of gratitude for what was positive in the Reformation and that, especially since the Second Vatican Council, there has been a greater encounter amongst Catholics 'with the Word of God in its written form'.

He stressed that ecclesiology has changed from the institutional to a greater sense of community in the Body of Christ, drawing on Augustine's view that the Word proclaimed brings a community to life.

Bishop Leahy also praised the 'rich' ecumenical work of ARCIC (the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission) and spoke of the need to 're-receive our traditions in the light of the Word of God ... something relevant to all Christian traditions'.

Report and pictures by Paul Harron, Church of Ireland Press Officer

Bishop of Clogher's Roadshow on aspects of the Reformation

The Bishop of Clogher, the Rt Revd John McDowell will travel around three venues across the Clogher Diocese to address parishioners in an informal manner?

This event is being hosted by the Dean and Chapter of St Macartan's Clogher and St Macartin's Enniskillen and is styled on last year's event which was well attended at each venue.

This year the chosen topic is 'Some aspects of the Reformation'. In 2017 many Christians will be commemorating the anniversary of the Reformation in Germany. As Luther discovered himself reconciled to Christ by faith, we remember that God has reconciled us through Jesus Christ whose love compels us to be

ministers of reconciliation. Everyone is welcome and as same talk will be given in all three venues you are invited to attend the closest or most suitable venue.

14th February @ 7.30pm – St Macartin's Cathedral, Enniskillen

21st February @7.30pm – St Patrick's Church, Monaghan

28th February @7.30pm – St Macartan's Cathedral, Clogher

25th World Day of the Sick on Sunday and new Charter for Healthcare Workers

The 25th World Day of the Sick will be celebrated on Saturday 11 February, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. The World Day of the Sick is an initiative which was started by Saint John Paul II in 1992. Pope Benedict and Pope Francis have continued this special World Day which is an occasion during which the whole Church bears witness with special concern to the tender mercy and love of God towards all who suffer. It is a time to pause and be prayerfully in solidarity with those who are sick and with all who care for the sick



The theme for the 2017 World Day of the Sick is *Amazement at what God has accomplished: "The Almighty has done great things for me..." (Lk 1:49).*

A conference was held in the Vatican on Monday of this week to present the 25th World Day of the Sick. It also provided the opportunity to present the New Charter for Healthcare Workers.

Msgr. Mupendawatu explained that the World Day of the Sick was instituted by Saint John Paul II in 1992 and, on this twenty-fifth anniversary, it will be celebrated in an

extraordinary way, at Pope Francis' behest. Among those who will attend the event in Lourdes on 11 February will be Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, who will be present as papal legate, and will celebrate the solemn Holy Mass on the anniversary of the first apparition of the Virgin to Bernadette Soubirous.

The New Charter for Healthcare Workers. is a revision and updating of the Charter for Healthcare Workers, the theological, moral and medical "vademecum" that resulted from the intuition of the first president of the Council, Cardinal Fiorenzo Angelini, which was translated in nineteen languages and became for twenty years a basic text for healthcare workers.

Msgr. Musivi Mupendawatu went on to underline that the Holy Father's Message for this year's World Day of the Sick, the theme of which is "Amazement at what God has accomplished: 'The Almighty has done great things for me...'" (Luke 1:49), invites us to "imitate the journey of St. Bernadette to contemplate in Mary, the Immaculate, and then her life of silence and meditation". With reference to the New Charter for Healthcare Workers, he affirmed that "from the doctrinal point of view, it reaffirms the sacredness of life and its indispensability inasmuch as it is a gift from God".

Msgr. Jean-Marie Mate Musivi Mupendawatu, is the secretary of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development;. Other speakers included, Alessandro de Franciscis, president of the Bureau des Constatations Médicales de Lourdes and the Association Médicale Internationale de Lourdes (AMIL); and Antonio Gioacchino Spagnolo, professor of bioethics and director of the Institute of Bioethics and Medical Humanities in the Faculty of Medicine and Surgery of the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Rome.

Professor Spagnolo gave an extensive overview of the document. He said, “The conquests of biomedical research and the new social and healthcare realities that have come to pass since 1994, as well as the pronouncements of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church that have been emanated in the ambit of life and health sciences (those of the Pontiffs John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Pope Francis, and the documents of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Academy for Life), have made it necessary to revise and update the Charter for Healthcare Workers”, he explained.

“The Charter has however kept its original structure as a tool in a serious preparation and continuing formation of healthcare workers at an

ethical level, to maintain the necessary professional competence and their vocation as ministers of life”.

The Charter seeks to support the ethical loyalty of the healthcare worker, in the choices and behaviour in which this service to life takes its form, and this loyalty is outlined following the stages of human existence – generating, living, dying – as moments of ethical and pastoral reflection.

“Certainly, the Charter cannot be exhaustive with regard to all the problems and issues that arise in the context of health and sickness”, Professor Spagnolo concluded, “but it has been produced in order to offer the clearest guidelines possible for the ethical problems that must be faced in the world of health in general, in harmony with the teachings of Christ, and with the Church’s Magisterium”.

Great growth in Diocesan Readers’ Course in Down & Dromore

With just over one year passed since the re-launch of the Diocesan Readers course in the diocese there are now 24 people from 21 different parishes halfway through their studies and about to undertake practical preaching

placements. Now, with interviews completed for the next cohort of Readers, another 13 people have been just accepted onto the course. This means that the diocese is on track to more than double its number of Diocesan Readers within two years from 34 to 71. It also means that 30 parishes in the diocese will have Readers commissioned into them as well as a role from time to time throughout the wider diocese to assist parishes in vacancies and sickness cover.

Part of the reason for the sharp growth in applications has come through a renewed publicity and information approach to this ministry as part of the dioceses 'Life Changing Ministry' project. This has also involved meeting with all the Diocesan Readers and trainees twice a year for worship and fellowship together.

Speaking about these new developments the warden of Readers, Willie Nixon, commented that; 'The role of a Reader is becoming increasingly important in supporting the ministry of a parish, particularly through preaching and leading services. We hope that these new Readers will become a great asset to their churches in this role but also, for some, in a wider ministry in supporting other churches throughout the diocese. Please pray for them as

they seek to complete their training over the months ahead.'

For a leaflet on Diocesan Reader Ministry please [click here](#)



Rays at Noon in Saint Peters Basilica, Vatican City

Anglican Choral Evensong at the Vatican

For the first time ever, Anglican Choral Evensong will be celebrated at the altar of the Chair of St Peter in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican next

month. The music will be sung by the renowned Choir of Merton College, Oxford.

Permission for this unique occasion was granted by Cardinal Angelo Comastri, Archpriest of St Peter's Basilica, during a recent meeting with Archbishop David Moxon, the Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome, and the Archbishop of Canterbury's representative to the Holy See.

In a statement, the Anglican Centre said: "The gesture reflects the deepening bonds of affection and trust between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church."

Five months ago Pope Francis and Archbishop Justin Welby celebrated Vespers together at the Basilica of San Gregorio al Celio in Rome.

March 13 has been chosen as the nearest available day to the historic feast day of St Gregory the Great, who has become an unofficial patron of relations between the two churches. St Gregory was the Pope who sent St Augustine to England in 595 to evangelise the Anglo-Saxons and who became the first Archbishop of Canterbury.

The invitation to celebrate Evensong at St Peter's also reciprocates the liturgical hospitality of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Dean

Robert Willis in welcoming Cardinal George Pell to celebrate Solemn Mass at the High Altar of Canterbury Cathedral in 2015.

Merton College Choir will be following in the footsteps of Westminster Abbey choir, which has sung previously in Rome with the choir of the Sistine Chapel – a collaboration that has grown out of closer ties between the two traditions, in particular following Pope Benedict XVI's visit to London in September 2010.

Armagh Organ Recital by David O'Shea

Due to unforeseen circumstances, the next recital in the Theo Saunders Memorial Organ Recital Series will be given by David O'Shea in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh on Sunday 19 February 2017 at 4.15pm and not as previously advertised.

The programme will include music by Johann Sebastian Bach, Charles Villiers Stanford and Charles Wood.

David attended the Dublin Institute of Technology's Conservatory of Music, graduating with a BMus in Musicology, and the University of



Cambridge, from which he graduated with an MMus in Choral Studies. He is currently undertaking research towards a PhD at Trinity College, Dublin.

As an organ recitalist, piano accompanist, choral conductor and continuo-player, David has given concerts throughout Ireland, the UK, Europe and the USA. Since 2011 he has been Organist and Director of Music at Sandford Parish Church and St Philip's, Milltown in Dublin. He is Répétiteur and Assistant Conductor to the Culwick Choral Society, Dublin, and Musical Director of the Dublin Gay Men's Chorus.

The Dean of Armagh, the Very Revd Gregory Dunstan said, “Both at the keyboard and as a singer, David has a thorough grounding in music

for the Church. The composers in his choice of programme reflects this interest.

Since September 2016, he has been a lay vicar choral at St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin. We look forward to welcoming him to Armagh."

As with all the recitals in this series, admission is free. The retiring collection will go towards the cost of a new piano for the Cathedral Choir's rehearsal room.

For further information, please contact: St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral: Tel. 028 37523142

Christian Aid condemns UK government stopping scheme for unaccompanied asylum seeking children

Christian Aid has condemned the UK government's decision to close the scheme set up to bring unaccompanied asylum seeking children to Britain.

The Dubs amendment was passed in May 2016 at the height of the European refugee crisis and was supposed to ensure that 3,000 lone children were given protection in the UK. The

Government has announced the scheme will close after only relocating 350 children.

Commenting on today's announcement, Tom Viita, Head of Advocacy at Christian Aid, said: 'Protecting people fleeing their homes is no one country's responsibility – it demands global cooperation. Today's announcement is not only a broken promise to vulnerable children, but a rejection of our international responsibilities.

'After Trump's refugee ban in recent weeks, it is shocking to see the UK sending out another deeply worrying message to the rest of the world. Theresa May and her government need to be pulling Trump up, rather than following him downwards.

'The international community, the UK included, needs to find a fair way of sharing responsibility for people forcibly displaced from their homes. We are experiencing global displacement on a level not seen since the Second World War. Poor countries are hosting most people in dire need and here we are once again, one of the richest countries in the world, attempting to shirk responsibility.'

The announcement by the government earlier today states that local authorities only have

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provision to provide housing and care for 350 unaccompanied children. Responding to that claim, Mr. Viita continued:

‘UK immigration policy is set by Ministers in the Home Office, not local authorities. Passing the buck to them is an abdication of responsibility.

‘The UK needs to play a full role in the international community’s response to the refugee crisis and work with other nations to find effective longer-term solutions that honour everybody’s human dignity.’

Christian Aid works through its local partners around the world to support refugee communities displaced by conflict. In the UK and Europe, we advocate for long-term practical solutions to global displacement, including the resettlement and relocation of refugees, as well as greater investment in addressing the root causes of displacement worldwide.

News briefs

+++ Gala dinner at Belfast City Hall - On 5 May 2017 Christian Aid are holding a Gala Dinner in the Great Hall, Belfast City Hall to mark 60 years of Christian Aid Week. The event will be

hosted by Rt. Hon. The Lord Mayor, Alderman Brian Kingston. The dress code is formal and in lieu of a ticket charge, donations are requested for Christian Aid. Tickets are limited for this prestigious event, please email Deborah Doherty to book your place: ddoherty@christian-aid.org

+++ Rossorry Arts and Crafts Exhibition -

Rossorry Arts and Crafts Group celebrated their 5th birthday in style last weekend with an Exhibition of their work in Rossorry Parish Hall. A large crowd came to admire the work of the Acrylic Painting Class and the Basket Weaving Class which have been running for 5 years.

+++ Bishop Burrowes' Spring Lecture - The Spring Lecture will be delivered by the Right Reverend Michael Burrows in the Church Institute, Enniscorthy on Thursday 2nd March 2017.

Contributions of News briefs of events are welcome. Please send to CNI at address below.

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Magna Carta

Please see next page for details of Free Family workshop at Christ Church, Dublin



MAKE YOUR OWN MINI MAGNA CARTA

Free Family Workshop
Sunday 26th February, 2-3pm
Christ Church Cathedral

Learn about the 800 year old Magna Carta,
try out some of the designs used by 14th -
century monks and create your own unique
list of rules to take home.

For ages 8+. No booking necessary.

Normal cathedral admission applies.

In association with Chamber Choir Ireland, whose Magna
Carta inspired *A Letter of Rights* concert will be taking
place at 7.30pm in Christ Church Cathedral on

26th of February 2017