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Volunteers on Clonard Summer scheme

Concern at Westminster intervention in C of I statement on abortion and same-sex marriage

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The Rt Revd Dr Kenneth Kearon, Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe, and Chair of the Church and Society Commission, has issued the following statement in relation to proposed amendments to the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation) Bill, to be discussed at Westminster today:

On numerous occasions in recent times, representatives of the Church of Ireland have expressed concern about the absence of the Northern Ireland Assembly and called upon political parties represented in that Assembly to take steps urgently to re-instate its meetings and the Executive.

While the absence of an Assembly is very regrettable, it is equally regrettable that MPs at Westminster are seeking to use the opportunity to introduce Northern Ireland-specific legislation on two of the most controversial issues facing the Province today.

With respect to the issues themselves, the Church of Ireland has made its position abundantly clear in recent times.

With respect to abortion, ‘the tradition of the Church of Ireland would reject an unrestricted access to abortion, while being concerned to ensure provision for hopefully rare circumstances and in a secure medical setting. Where individuals draw such a line will inevitably differ. Instances where the life of the woman is at serious risk have long been regarded within Church of Ireland teaching as situations where termination of a pregnancy would be justifiable.’

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Archbishop Eamon Martin outside St Peter's church in Drogheda greeting the faithful who attended Mass in honour of St Oliver Plunkett - commemorating his martyrdom and 350th anniversary of his appointment to Armagh

With respect to same-sex relationships, we have stated that ‘the Church of Ireland defines marriage as between a man and a woman. The church has often existed, in history, with different views from those adopted by the state, and has sought to live with both conviction and good relationships with the civil authorities and communities in which it is set.’

The Church of Ireland Commission’s statement follows those from the Presbyterian Church and the Bishopp of Down and Connor issued recently.

Anglican-Methodist communion agreement in UK getting lost in the weeds

A foremost independent US Anglican voice - The Episcopal Cafe - has commented this week on the state of C of E and Methodist Church dialogue.

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In an internet post The Episcopal Cafe states:

“The process in England to bring a full communion agreement between the Church of England and the [Methodist Church of Britain](#) (separate from the UMC) is sort-of moving forward, but at a pre-global-warming glacial pace.

“There is some confusion on how to interpret the recent actions of the CoE’s General Synod meeting in York. Britain’s Christian Today news magazine has the headline; “Church of England moves towards communion with the Methodist Church,” while Church Times, the independent CoE news site has “Division over Anglican-Methodist plan prompts Synod to decelerate process.”

“The original motion would have directed the introduction for legislation on full communion between the two churches as soon as next year. After passionate debate, a measure calling for a “more measured pace” which removed all references to legislation was approved 220 to 127.

“According to a story in [Church Times](#);
The division among the Bishops was evident in their speeches. The Bishop of Guildford, the Rt Revd Andrew Watson, spoke in support of an unsuccessful amendment from the Revd Paul Benfield (Blackburn) which also removed all reference to legislation. While there was a danger of being accused of kicking the ball into the long grass, “the alternative might be to lose the ball altogether, which would be a real tragedy.”

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“But the Bishop of Liverpool, co-chair of the Methodist-Anglican Covenant working group, spoke strongly in favour of an unamended motion: “I hope today that we won’t embrace our own security so tightly that we will smother our moment of grace.”

“The amended motion offers instead a timetable for updating General Synod on progress made by the Faith and Order commissions of the two Churches on drafting a series of texts, including a formal declaration of a new relationship of communion between the two Churches.

“While the amended motion affirms the “priority of doing mission together” it also expressed the fears of many by adding that “for some within the Church of England, concerns about the proposals remain.”

“Several CoE interest groups also expressed their concerns over the mutual recognition of ordained ministry according to [Christian Today](#);

The Anglican Catholic Future group said that its concerns have not been allayed by the latest recommendations and that “rather than serving the greater unity of the Church, [they] will divide the Church yet further”.

“It added: “Difficult though it may be to say, the Church of England simply does not hold that a Methodist presbyter is entirely equivalent to one in our own church. Our practice makes that clear.”

“Speaking ahead of the debate, Forward in Faith agreed, saying that it would be “premature and irresponsible” for the

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General Synod to vote for legislation to be drawn up while the proposals are still in a developmental stage.

“Proposals that sacrifice doctrinal integrity to ecumenical expediency are unlikely to prove wholesome, fruitful or – in the end – unifying,” it said.

Forward in Faith and the Anglican Catholic Future network have previously expressed concerns over the Methodist Churches decision at its just completed conference to move forward with marriage equality.

Bishop claims sparsely populated rural parishes are every bit as much part of the church as large urban parishes

Preaching in the most westerly Church of Ireland church building in the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, and the most southerly Church of Ireland church on the island of Ireland – the Church of Saint Brendan the Navigator in Crookhaven on the Mizen Peninsula – on Sunday evening 7th July, the Bishop, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, reflected on the challenges facing the Church in sparsely populated rural areas in Ireland.

He said, “Today we are here at the edge of Ireland – a spectacular edge: the coast, the Fastnet, the islands, the Mizen, Mount Gabriel, the villages and its people.”

And he gave an important affirmation, “Where the people of God are, in a particular place in the sparsely populated areas such as this, they are ‘the Church’ as much as the big

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Crookhaven, County Cork - the Church of St Brendan the Navigator, built in 1717.

city and suburban parishes in Cork, Dublin or in the North East of Ireland are ‘the Church’.”

‘It is no secret’ said Bishop Colton, ‘that in places like this, our Diocese, the Church of Ireland as a whole, indeed other churches too, and not only religious institutions, but also other organisations have been and are reflecting about how best to support the sustainability of rural Ireland. The sustainability of rural Ireland is a national concern ... Every day, not least as people are fearful about BREXIT in farming communities throughout this Diocese, people mention their anxieties to me as their bishop. A diocese like this is heavily dependent on its members who are dairy and beef farmers.’

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Bishop Colton referred to the figures from the Census 2016; in 2016 the entire Crookhaven district had 17 members of the Church of Ireland. 'But', said the Bishop 'that represents 7.6% of the total population of this area. Further east on the Mizen Peninsula, in Toormore, there are 22 Church of Ireland people representing 11.8% of the population. The point is, the population of the entire area is sparse and this is the pattern on all these iconic peninsulas in south-west Ireland and in other parts of rural Ireland too'

The Bishop was speaking at the 2019 inaugural Service in the Crookhaven Summer Series of Epilogue Services which are well-established and renowned in the south-west. From the Gospel of the day he was preaching on the text 'After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go...' (Luke 10.1)

He referred to the month of July as the 150th anniversary month – 26th July 1869 – of the royal assent being given to the Irish Church Act which would result in the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland as and from 1st January 1871.

'Even at that time there were concerns about the effects on rural parishes' said Bishop Colton. He quoted a sermon of Archdeacon William Lee in Dublin on 22nd October 1867 at an Episcopal Visitation to St Patrick's Cathedral Dublin. William Lee asked, in the heat of debate about the proposed disestablishment:

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Pray for Gary and Mary Reid, PCI global mission workers in Kenya, as they continue with the various mission outreaches amongst the community, for God's glory. Pray for Gary as he

teaches the Family Bible Synopsis on the book of Joel.

'What is to become of the members of the Church, especially in the outlying districts of Ireland, if the Church Establishment is overthrown?'

Bishop Colton said that concerns 'for the outlying districts' is a thread of continuity with that period.

Mentioning the current proposals to reduce the size of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland he said, "While I support the overall principle of synodical reorganisation and the reduction in the number of members, we must do all we can not to marginalize or disadvantage rural, sparsely populated areas. They are, as I say, as much part of the Church as the big city and suburban parishes in Dublin or in the North East of Ireland. We just need to figure out the best ways of being disciples of Jesus, and doing the work of the Church in places like this. Those places that claim to be strong and vibrant in the Gospel have a special responsibility, I believe, to help us with this."

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The summer series of Epilogue Services continues in the Church of Saint Brendan the Navigator, Crookhaven at 8.30 p.m. each Sunday evening in July and August. Among the speakers will be Rabbi Dame Julia Neuberger on Sunday 11th August, and, on the 4th August the preacher will be the Most Reverend Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh. All are welcome.

Big in Japan: how an 84-year-old Northern Ireland priest earned one of nation's highest honours

He is 84, a judo expert and has just been recognised by the Emperor of Japan.

And he is a priest who has spent more than half-a-century of his life in the wilds of Africa.

Welcome to the decidedly interesting world of Father Jude McKenna.

The Ballymoney judoka has hit a career high after being awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays by the Japanese government.

It is one of the highest honours bestowed to individuals who have strengthened relations with Japan.

"It's given to people who make a very significant contribution to the spread of Japanese culture," Fr Jude explained.

"That's what I did in Africa through judo, which is one of the greatest gifts Japan has given to the sporting world and it's

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one of the biggest sports in the world today."

He added: "It's a great recognition. I'm very proud of it, but I'm also surprised and overcome by the enormity of it. It's not something I was expecting at all."

Born on St Valentine's Day, Fr Jude spent the bulk of his career from 1966 to 2017 in Africa before retiring to Dublin, where he is now based, due to his failing eyesight.

Having come into the world with his twin brother Fr Brian McKenna, the siblings did everything together - they pursued the same theological studies, were ordained together and then joined the Capuchin Order.

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It was only when the day came for the young brothers to be allocated postings that the pair got split up, with Fr Brian being sent to California while Fr Jude was given an open ticket to Zambia.

Fr Jude said his interest in judo followed on from a love of boxing - he revealed he "used to box for Ireland when I was a young crazy fellow" back in the 1950s.



He joined the Capuchin Order - an order of friars within the Catholic Church and a branch of the Franciscans dating back to 1525 - 61 years ago, having yearned to be a priest.

"I always felt the urge that I was being called by God," he said.

"After leaving school I spent five years discerning and confirming that was what I wanted and in the meantime I was doing sports, and playing cricket and football and boxing."

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While in Africa, Fr Jude, who has been to Japan three times, said he also picked up "a few technical words" of the language.

"I trained orphans, street children, rich people, black, white and coloured Africans for 50 years," he said.

And, by way of reward, the Co Antrim priest revealed that "the Japanese emperor was the one who stamped the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays document with his seal".

Fr Jude recently retired from his post in Zambia after 50 years' service where, in addition to his missionary work, he made a major contribution to the development of judo in Zambia and all of Africa.

He is getting treatment for his eye condition, macular degeneration, but "unfortunately it's not really working".

He is former president of the Zambian Judo Federation and vice president of the African Judo Union.

Since his retirement to Dublin Fr Jude has supported several local judo events including last year's Northwest Open in Londonderry and this year's Intervarsity in Coleraine where he was a guest of honour.

Fr Jude's Order of the Rising Sun was presented by Japan's Ambassador to Ireland Mari Miyoshi in recognition of his outstanding contribution towards strengthening bilateral relations and promoting friendship between Japan and Zambia through judo. The ceremony was held at the Japanese Residency, Oakfield, in Dublin.

Report by Claire McNeilly, Belfast Telegraph

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July 09 - Today in Christian history

July 9, 386: Nestorius, the first patriarch of Constantinople, is born in what is now Maras, Turkey. Nestorius is famous for his opposition to Mary being described as “theotokos” or God-bearer, preferring the term “Christotokos” or Christ-bearer. Other theologians, such as Cyril of Alexandria were concerned that this implied that Christ had two natures and two persons (rather than two natures in one person). The Council of Ephesus in 431 condemned this view as heresy and deposed Nestorius, but modern historians believe that may have been too harsh.

July 9, 1228: Stephen Langton, greatest of the medieval archbishops of Canterbury, dies. He had formulated the original division of the Bible into chapters in the late 1100s, and his name appears on the Magna Carta as counselor to the king (though he supported the English barons in their pursuit for more freedoms).

July 09 - News briefs

+++ Comment on C of I concern on blood contamination

- Former hospital consultant and Seapatrick Curate, Revd Rory Corbett, spoke on Sunday Sequence yesterday (7 July) on behalf of The Church and Society Commission of the Church of Ireland. The commission has written to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, to request an increase in welfare payments for people living in Northern Ireland who have been infected or otherwise affected by cv. The uplift coming to all victims will be considerably more in England than in Northern Ireland.

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Revd Corbett said that he believed that a lack of Executive in Northern Ireland was no barrier to the Secretary of State implementing the increased payments since they were administered from London in the first place.

+++ Clogher institution - The Institution of the Revd Philip Bryson as Rector of Kilskeery and Trillick will take place in Kilskeery Parish Church on Thursday 12th September at 7.30 pm. The appointment of Revd Bryson, currently Curate of Magheraculmoney Parish, Ardess, to the incumbency of the parishes of Kilskeery and Trillick was announced last month. Revd Bryson, originally from Belfast, previously worked in the areas of youth and children's work, pastoral support and community work before training for the Church of Ireland ministry. He served his deacon intern year with St. Bartholomew's in Stranmillis, Belfast before beginning his curacy with Magheraculmoney Parish, Kesh in 2016.

+++ Staff post for older teens and young adults - Belvoir Parish seeks to appoint a part-time member of staff to lead its older teens and young adults (15–25yrs). The task will be three-fold: to support the existing youth group (IN) - to develop new patterns of youth discipleship and worship (UP) - to make connections to wider youth programmes (OF) and mission opportunities (OUT). This appointment will be part-time for three years (hours etc will be reviewed annually). Job description and application forms are available by emailing office@belvoirparish.co.uk. A church profile can also be sent if you include a postal address. Closing date for applications is Monday 22 July 2019 at 5.00 pm.

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+++ Vacancy Organist & Director of Music - St

Augustine's Church, Londonderry, is seeking to appoint an Organist & Director of Music to provide a consistently high standard of music within the church and its liturgy. Key Duties: A: Choral Training, B: Organ Performance C: Management/Administrative Responsibilities. Applications close July 19. For an application form, job description and details of Sunday Services and Additional Services at which organ music will be required, contact Mr Gavin Harkin at the Diocesan Office, London Street, Londonderry, BT48 6RQ. Telephone: 02871 (0044 2871 from the Republic) 262440 or email: office.derry@btconnect.com

July 09 News Links

[Northern Ireland couple facing terror charges were preparing for 'doomsday scenario', court hears](#)

Belfast Telegraph

A defence lawyer said there had been a sermon a number of months ago at a church in the Ballymena area "about a doomsday scenario" in which ...

[Court decides child in foster care can go to Church of Ireland school against wishes of Catholic ...](#)

thejournal.ie

A JUDGE IN the District Court has ruled that a child who is in foster care may attend a Church of Ireland school despite the Catholic parents of the child ...

[Girl can be educated in Protestant school against parents' wishes, says judge - Independent.ie](#)

[Ireland needs family court for child care cases - CCLRP director - RTE.ie](#)

[Family cases 'the poor relation' of justice system - Irish Examiner](#)

[Ireland needs family court for child care cases - CCLRP director RTE.ie](#)

Ireland needs family court for child care cases - CCLRP director ... Speaking on RTÉ's Morning Ireland, Dr Carol Coulter highlighted some of the cases detailed in the ... young child were not consenting to her attending the local Church of Ireland primary school on religious grounds". ... News Headlines.

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[Catholic parents of girl in foster care objected to her attending Cofl school](#)

Irish Times

The Catholic parents of a child in foster care would not consent to her attending a **Church of Ireland** school, the latest issue of the Child Care Law ...

[Head of the Catholic Church in Ireland calls for reintroduction of abstinence from alcohol and drugs](#)

Irish Post

IRELAND must "reignite a temperance movement" and return to a state of abstinence around drug and alcohol use. That's according to the head of the ...

[Irish society needs to reintroduce abstinence from alcohol and drugs - Archbishop Eamon Martin](#) [Independent.ie](#)

The head of the Catholic **Church** in **Ireland** has said it is time for Irish society to "reignite a temperance movement" to address the "terrible impact" of ...

[Douglas Hyde, the low-key Protestant who was appointed Eire's first head of state](#)

Belfast Newsletter

As the first president of Eire, Hyde was accorded a state funeral. As a member of the **Church of Ireland**, Hyde's funeral service took place in St Patrick's ...

[New life breathed into old church building](#)

Belfast Newsletter

New life breathed into old church building ... Cushendun was officially opened on Saturday in the former home of the **Church of Ireland** in the village.

[Cushendun Old Church Centre opens](#)

Ballymoney Times

Built in 1840 as a **Church of Ireland** place of worship, Cushendun Old Church was deconsecrated in 2003. Since then, Cushendun Building ...

[Girl \(11\) 'molested' in school bookstore by priest taking Confession](#)

Impartial Reporter

Fresh allegations against a priest who was asked to stand down from his position following claims of "misconduct" towards children have emerged this ...

[Church of England votes to adopt covenant on clergy care and well-being](#)

Premier

The **Church of England's** General Synod has voted to support a new deal to ... In a world of fake **news** there's never been a greater need for quality ...

[Church of England says it will recognize marriages of transgender worshipers](#) - Christian Post

[Church of England Will Not Challenge 'Same-Sex' Marriage if Spouse Becomes Trans](#) - Breitbart

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Church of England rejects plea for worshippers to pay to help train refugees as doctors
and ... - Daily Mail
[Full Coverage](#)

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