



## **Museum waxes lyrical about effect of Pope's visit to Ireland**

The papal visit to Ireland has ended up being a blessing for one well-known Dublin tourism spot.

Visitor numbers to the National Wax Museum Plus in the Irish capital have swelled since Pope Francis made his historic visit to the country in August.

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National Wax Museum Plus general manager Ed Coleman (pictured above) said everyone wanted a selfie with Pope Francis.

The museum has positioned the life-like waxwork next to the chair from the refurbished 1979 Popemobile.

"You can sit in Pope John Paul II's chair beside Francis or stand beside Pope Francis and get your photograph taken with him," Mr Coleman said.

Just days before the pontiff visited Ireland, the museum unveiled a waxwork of him and the refurbished Popemobile used by John Paul II during his historic visit to Ireland in 1979.

Crowds gathered on O'Connell Street as the Popemobile took to the streets with the waxwork of the popes on board.

"We weren't expecting the reaction that we got from (it)," he said.

Mr Coleman added: "We made so many people's days when we brought Pope Francis out on to the street. So many people were stopping by and getting photos done."

And the pope is not the only major attraction in the museum. "We have Donald Trump on the other side of the room," he said.

Mr Coleman said the controversial US president was also proving popular with the public.

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"Love him or hate him, everyone wants to have their photo taken with him. Some people pose with their thumbs up, some people pose with their thumbs down," he said.

"It sparks emotion and that's what we're trying to do."

He added: "We want people to be immersed in the wax museum. We don't want people to manhandle (the waxworks) but we want people to get up close, put their arm around the wax figure, even give them a kiss."

Mr Coleman described trading during the month of October as "unprecedented".

"We weren't expecting it to be as high as it was," he said.

"We saw a massive spike and we had almost 12,000 visitors in October, up 20% (on last year)... It's the busiest October since the museum opened more than 30 years ago."

Mr Coleman added: "We do attribute a lot of that to the publicity we did around the pope's visit, so we feel very delighted about how it all worked out."

## **Brexit will create challenges for Ireland beyond the political, Archbishop Martin of Dublin**

The Most Rev. Diarmuid Martin Archbishop of Dublin, speaking in the Church of Our Lady Queen of Peace, Merrion Road on the World Day of Peace 2019, said-

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“In Ireland, the consequences of Brexit will inevitably create new challenges, no matter what the details of Brexit may be. One hundred years after the significant all-Ireland parliamentary elections of 1918, our relationship with our nearest neighbour will alter. That relationship had attained new levels of peaceful and fruitful connection, especially because of the Good Friday agreement and our common membership of the European Union.

“One of the challenges of politics in this period of change is to safeguard what has been attained over recent years. We should remember the early builders of the formidable change in Ireland and in Europe. They were men and women who knew how to rise above prejudice and appeal to what is best and what is most noble in people’s hearts. This was politics at its best. That is what politics needs today worldwide.

“However, for some time now clouds have been appearing on the horizon. Right across Europe narrow nationalism has begun to reappear. By narrow nationalism I do not refer to love of, or pride in one’s nation and history. I refer rather to misuse and exploitation of national feelings for other scopes.

“The very notion of politics and the role of politics and especially of confidence in politics and politicians is under threat in many corners of Europe and farther afield. The notion of openness and understanding that is at the basis of a Europe of peace, had within it an unescapable logic of reaching out beyond its own borders; this is now being undermined by policies of narrow nationalism characterised by hostility to minorities and migrants.

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“Let me come back to words of Pope Francis’ message: “When the exercise of political power aims only at protecting the interests of a few privileged individuals, the future is compromised and young people can be tempted to lose confidence...” We need a politics that embraces and attracts young people towards a politics of service.

“Thank God, this has been a characteristic of many young men and women in Ireland. Ireland has indeed much to be proud of in what its young men and women have achieved here at home and in humanitarian service around the world. I think of the work for peace that is carried out by our defence forces, our Garda Síochána, our diplomats, our development organisations, our lay and religious missionaries and also in a way, not often mentioned, by sectors of our business community in fostering economic development.

“However, Ireland is not immune to the negative trends that appear on the horizon worldwide. 2019 will be a challenging year for politics and politicians and those who form public opinion.

“Ireland despite its progress is immersed and trapped in a series of social crises that seem almost intractable to politics. I am talking about the crises of homelessness, healthcare and access to an education system, especially for the poorest. Homelessness, healthcare and education are words that are on everybody’s lips and when that happens genuine concern can easily fall victim to a sort of a sense of immunity and therefore of immobility. Homelessness, healthcare and education are challenges that politics in Ireland must face without procrastination.

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People want answers in facts and achievements and not in words and spin. Good politics is at the service of peace. Poor politics will only serve the emergence of negativity and frustration in society and will lead young people to mistrust democracy itself.

The task of resolving these challenges will certainly be made more difficult as they must be addressed within the framework of the challenges of Brexit; talk of Brexit must however not be allowed to smother them. One of my hopes for the coming year is that every policy decision regarding Brexit will have within it an inbuilt window analysing its effects on the poorest.”

## **Community is 'joy and blessing', says Archbishop of Canterbury in call for national unity**

The Archbishop of Canterbury has urged Britain to overcome the 'divisions' of recent years in a New Year sermon.

The sermon at his Lambeth Palace residence, broadcasted yesterday afternoon by the BBC, reflects the themes of his Christmas broadcast in which he also called for national reconciliation.

In yesterday's message he said, in an implicit reference to the continuing acrimonious debate about Brexit: 'We're wonderfully much more diverse than we used to be. Yet we disagree on many things. And we are struggling with how to disagree well. Turn on the television, read the news, and you see a lot that could tempt you to despair.'



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**Justin Welby has called for British people to see each other as neighbours.**

He called for a new attitude in 2019 reflecting the 'joy and blessing of being a community', saying: 'Hope lies in our capacity to approach this new year in a spirit of openness towards each other. Committed to discovering more of what it means to be citizens together, even amid great challenges and changes.

'That will involve choosing to see ourselves as neighbours, as fellow citizens, as communities each with something to contribute. It will mean gathering around our common values, a common vision and a commitment to one another.

'With the struggles and divisions of recent years, that will not be easy. But that difficult work is part of the joy and blessing of being a community.'

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Prime Minister Theresa May is expected to call a parliamentary vote on her proposed Brexit deal this month, with many doubting whether it will pass.

## **Resignation of Bishop Leo O'Reilly of Kilmore**

Pope Francis has accepted the resignation of Bishop Leo O'Reilly as Bishop of Kilmore on health grounds. An announcement made on 31 December 2018, confirmed Bishop O'Reilly's resignation following the advice of his doctor and in advance of his 75th birthday on 10 April 2019.



A bishop is obliged by canon law to submit his resignation to the Pope when he reaches 75 years of age.



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Responding to the news, Archbishop Eamon Martin, President of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, offered his warm appreciation and very best wishes to Bishop O'Reilly. He said, "Bishop Leo has remained completely committed to the demands of his episcopal office and he has been unflinching in his service, not only to the Diocese of Kilmore, but also to his many national roles and responsibilities."

Archbishop Eamon went on to thank Bishop O'Reilly for his insightful contributions to the discussions at the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, as well as for his "warmth and fraternal encouragement to me and to the other bishops".

He said the Bishop of Kilmore's ministry has been characterised by a compassionate and pastoral instinct together with a real empathy for those who are struggling with life and faith.

## **January 1 and 2 in Christian history**

**January 2, 1909:** Aimee Semple and her husband, Robert, are ordained by Chicago evangelist William H. Durham. Aimee, who married Harold McPherson after Robert died, would become the founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel and one of America's most popular preachers of the twentieth century

**January 1, 379:** Early church father Basil the Great dies. Founder and financial supporter of a monastery in Annessi, which became a complex of hospitals, hostels, and schools,

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he also succeeded Eusebius as bishop of Caesarea. He is also known for his theological work explaining the Trinity and for healing the Antioch schism in the eastern church. His monastic rule remains the basis of the Rule followed by the Eastern Orthodox religious today.

**January 1, 1484:** Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli is born at Wildhaus, Switzerland

**January 1, 1622:** The Roman Catholic church adopts January 1 as the beginning of the year, rather than March 25.

**January 1, 1643:** English mathematician and physicist Sir Isaac Newton is baptized at St. John's Church in Colsterworth, England. Deeply interested in religion throughout his life, Newton (known especially for formulating the laws of gravitation) acknowledged Jesus as Saviour of the world, but not God incarnate.

**January 1, 1802:** In a letter to the Danbury (Connecticut) Baptist Association, Thomas Jefferson coins the famous metaphor, "a wall of separation between Church and State." A recent exhibit at the Library of Congress has sparked argument over whether Jefferson used the term merely for political reasons or whether he meant it to explain the First Amendment

**January 1, 1863:** American President Abraham Lincoln frees all slaves in Confederate states by issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. Churches throughout the North held candlelight vigils commemorating the event.

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