

## Church Unity services in Belfast and Dublin



**Front row L–R: Bishop Harold Miller, Revd Billy Davison, Bishop Noel Treanor, Bishop Ken Good and Rt Revd Charles McMullen.**

**Back row L–R: Revd Martin Whyte, Revd Brian Anderson, Dr John Dunlop, Very Revd Martin Graham, Dean Stephen Forde, Bishop Patrick Walsh, Canon Brendan Murray and Revd Joe Baxter.**

**January 24, 2019**

Church leaders attended the annual service hosted in turn by Belfast's two cathedrals. The host this year was Saint Peter's Cathedral. Saint Peter's is the cathedral church for the Roman Catholic diocese of Down and Connor and the service was led by the Bishop, the Most Revd Noel Treanor.

Also participating were the Rt Revd Charles McMullen, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; the Revd Billy Davison, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland; Rt Rev Harold Miller of Down and Dromore, the Very Revd Stephen Forde, Dean of Saint Anne's Cathedral; the Very Revd Martin Graham, Administrator of Saint Peter's Cathedral, and the Revd Brian Anderson, President of the Irish Council of Churches. The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, the Rt Revd Ken Good, gave the address.

**The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2019 opened in Dublin & Glendalough on Friday evening, January 18, with an ecumenical service in the Church of St John the Baptist in Clontarf.**

The service, which was led by Archbishop Michael Jackson, took the theme 'Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue' [Deuteronomy 16:18–20]. This theme is being adopted by Christians all over the world this week and was chosen by the churches of Indonesia.

During the service members of the congregation wrote a personal commitment each could make to justice. Their commitments, written on coloured cards, were collected and offered to God. Dublin Council of Churches, who organise the service annually, will take time to consider these commitments to see how they can enable churches in the city to pursue them.

January 24, 2019



## **Clergy, church leaders and participants in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity inaugural service in Clontarf.**

The sermon was given by Fr Fachtna McCarthy, Adm of St Mary's Haddington Road, who said that this week Christians were being called to form a united witness for justice. He added that the demand for justice was central to the mission of the Church.

He said that Christians formed a tiny minority in Indonesia where the people have lived by the principle of 'gotong royong' which is to live in solidarity and by collaboration, regarding all Indonesians as brothers and sisters. Sadly the reality is different and there is economic injustice, poverty and division.

Injustice in society has fed poor relationships among Indonesia's churches, Fr Fachtna said and there were also divisions among Christians. "The call to the path of unity



**January 24, 2019**

seems ever more urgent to them. That picture resonates with us also. This week we pray with the Indonesian churches for unity... We believe in the reconciling power of Christ. This year our prayers for Christian unity are offered against this background of divisions and inequalities in society, resulting in divisions in the Churches and impinging on our life together,” he said.

He commended the spirit of fellowship among Dublin Council of Churches members and warned that unless Churches healed their divisions they would be poor advocates for justice. “When we pray for visible unity, we celebrate the rich diversity of the Church. We pray that the world may become a happy and peaceful home for the whole Christian family,” he concluded.

## **Archbishop Eamon Martin consults church members ahead of Rome summit**

Archbishop Eamon Martin has invited church members in Ireland to share their thoughts on abuse ahead of a universal Church summit on safeguarding in Rome next month.

As well as consulting with victims and survivors, Archbishop Eamon is also inviting Catholics, in an open letter, to pray, reflect and offer feedback on a number of key questions (see questions below).

The archbishop said he is conscious that “a group that is often forgotten is the faithful who have been deeply impacted by the grave scandal of abuse in the Church. Many of them have been bewildered, angered and had their

January 24, 2019

faith tested  
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I want to  
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opportunity



to reflect and to pray and put pen to paper to me if they wish.”

Those interested in offering feedback can do so by post to: Ara Coeli, Cathedral Road, Armagh, BT61 7QY or by email to [feedback@aracoeli.com](mailto:feedback@aracoeli.com)

### **Open Letter from Archbishop Eamon Martin:**

As you and your readers will be aware the Holy Father Pope Francis has called the presidents of bishops' conference to Rome to discuss the vital issue of safeguarding at a meeting from February 21-24. As we are all too painfully aware in Ireland, this is an issue that has profound consequences for those who have experienced abuse and their families, and it is also a deep wound to the Body of Christ – the Church.

Ahead of my participation at the meeting on behalf of the Irish Episcopal Conference, I shall be meeting with some victims and survivors of abuse, and the organising group has also requested that the participants reflect on a number of questions. I would like to share these questions with your [churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)

January 24, 2019

readers in the hope that they will reflect and pray with me about this important issue in the life of the Church. I would welcome their thoughts and suggestions regarding these questions:

- How would you describe the present situation regarding sexual abuse of minors in the Catholic Church in Ireland?
- How would you describe the level of awareness of this topic among the public?
- In your opinion, what are the greatest risk factors for the sexual abuse of minors in Ireland?
- What are the factors in Ireland that contribute to a lack of adequate response by the Church in dealing with child sexual abuse?
- What are the most effective preventive measures that the Catholic Church in Ireland has adopted to protect children from sexual abuse in the Church?
- If you had one key message to communicate to the meeting in Rome on this issue, what would it be?

As I continue my reflections ahead of the meeting, I would appreciate any feedback on these questions so we can continue to build on the important work of safeguarding that is already an integral part of our mission to ensure that the Church is a safe environment for children and other vulnerable people. Your readers may write to me at the address below or via email to [feedback@aracoeli.com](mailto:feedback@aracoeli.com)

Archbishop Eamon Martin,  
President of the Irish Episcopal Conference,  
Ara Coeli, Cathedral Road, Armagh BT61 7QY.

January 24, 2019

## Dunboyne parish promotes children's liturgy

The parish of Dunboyne and Kilbride is continuing its outreach to its youngest parishioners by facilitating a children's liturgy programme at 11.30am each



Sunday morning, in the Church of Saints Peter and Paul in Dunboyne village.

At the start of Mass, children in attendance are invited to come forward to participate in a child-friendly presentation of the weekend's Scripture Reading and in prayer development. The young people are invited to join their respective groups, determined by age, which are led and animated by adult catechists.

This is a worthwhile programme and is helpful to children as they grow in faith and knowledge of the love God has for them, by participating in these groups.

Parents are also welcome to join the Children's liturgy groups. A register of participants is kept for conformity with child safeguarding policies. The parish priest of Dunboyne and Kilbride is Father Pat O'Connor.

January 24, 2019

## **Tuam cathedral installations**

Three new members were added to the Chapter of Saint Mary's Cathedral, Tuam, on Sunday 20th January 2019.

At a Service of Choral Evensong, The Dean of Tuam, Killala and Achonry, the Very Reverend Alistair Grimason, installed the Venerable Stephen McWhirter to the Dignitary of Archdeacon of Tuam, the Very Reverend Lynda Peilow to the Dignitary of Provost of Tuam and the Reverend Canon Dr Andrew Ison to the Prebend of Balla–Killabegs.

Choral Evensong was sung by the Dean and the Choir of Saint Nicholas' Collegiate Church, Galway with Mark Duley as Choir Master and Organist. The preacher was the Dean of Limerick, the Very Reverend Niall Sloane, who spoke about the role and duties of Cathedrals and Cathedral Chapters in the life of both Diocese and Church. The Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry pronounced the Benediction.

## **Church of England entices young with workouts and weekday services in £35m boost**

A new church boasting gym and cafe facilities shall be opened by the Church of England in a city centre nightclub district.

The congregation - proposed for Bradford - will try and entice students and young adults.

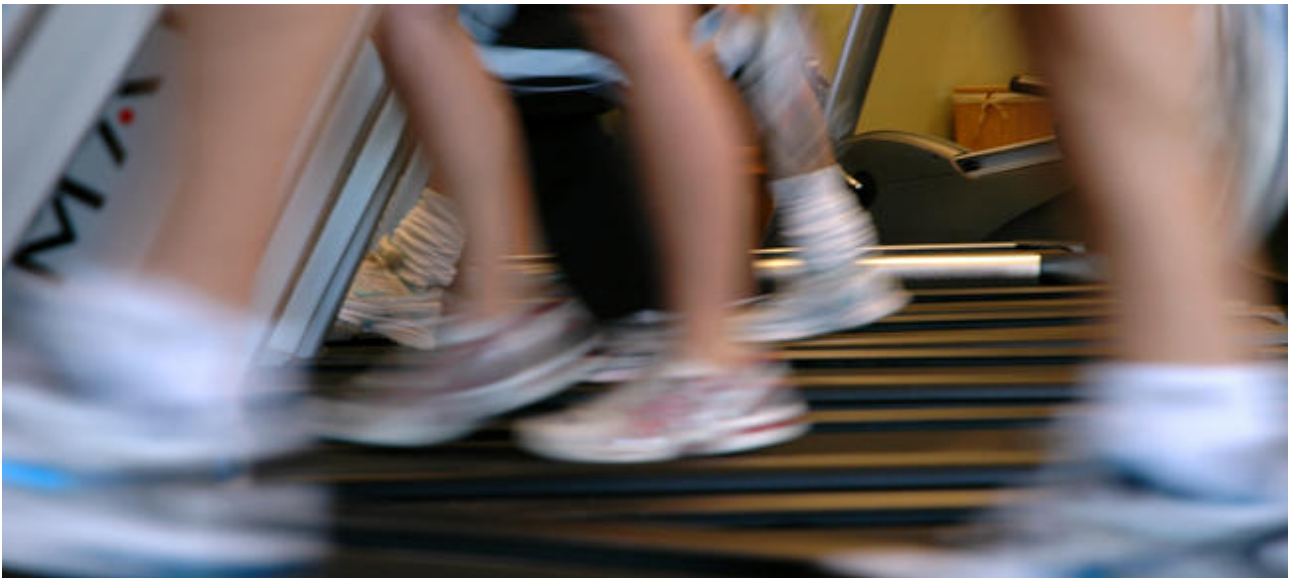




**The extension to Killaloo Church is progressing well. This will consist of a meeting room, a kitchen and a storage area. The total extension is 800 square foot. The church is in the parish of Cumber Upper and Lower, Learmount, in the Banagher Group of churches, in Derry and Raphoe**

It forms part of "bold" £35 million plans by the Church to reverse a decline in attendance and champion "new types of churches".

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Rev Justin Welby, said: "These projects show the dynamism and drive of the Church of England's mission to share this good news with people throughout our dioceses and parishes.



"We are committed to this work because we want everyone to know how much they are loved by God through Jesus Christ, and how they can find that love for themselves."

Busy young professionals working near Holy Trinity Church in Leeds will be encouraged to try new weekday services, while money will also go towards creating house churches in rural parts of Suffolk.

The Community of St Cuthbert, a new group inspired by the monastic tradition, shall be established in Durham and a social media pastor - lay or ordained - will spearhead digital mission from Stockton Parish Church in County Durham.

The cash forms part of the Church's Renewal and Reform programme, which aims to create "a growing church for all people and for all places".

Programme director, Debbie Clinton said: "From a church in a nightclub area to weekday congregations and a social media pastor, the Church of England is not afraid to try

**January 24, 2019**

something new to ensure it continues to serve every community in the country.

"We believe that everyone should have a chance to experience the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the fellowship of belonging to a Christian community wherever they live, whether in an urban city centre, an outer housing estate or in remote rural areas."

Funds are also being earmarked for a new church near the Becontree Estate in Barking and Dagenham, east London - the biggest housing estate in Europe.

## **Zambian Churches unite in call for an end to the “persecution of Zimbabwean citizens”**

The ecumenical Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ), which includes the Anglican dioceses in the country, has joined other NGOs and Christian groups to express their “deep concern” about the crisis in neighbouring Zimbabwe.

In a joint statement issued by the CCZ, Caritas Zambia, Civil Society Constitutional Agenda, Non- Governmental Gender Organisations Coordinating Council, Alliance for Community Action and Action Aid, call for an international response, and say: “as civil society activists, we cannot sit idle while our neighbours are being beaten, arrested, detained and killed.”

Zimbabwe’s President Emmerson Mnangagwa arrived back in the country on Monday night after calling short a five-day



January 24, 2019



## **A police patrol in Harare, Zimbabwe, on Sunday (20 January)**

trip to Europe, where he was due to attend the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland.

He said that “heads would roll” if security forces were found to be responsible for systematic torture amid reports of a brutal response to protests. More than 600 people are said to have been arrested, and protestors claim that dozens have been killed. The protests were sparked by an economic collapse and steep fuel rises.

“Civil Society in Zambia remains deeply concerned with the economic meltdown in Zimbabwe and the reported human rights violations against citizens by the state”, the Zambian NGO joint statement said.



**January 24, 2019**

“As civil rights groups, we are particularly concerned with the reported beatings, arrest and killing of unarmed citizens who were peacefully demonstrating against the dire economic situation in Zimbabwe. We also take note that it had to take a Court action to overturn the shutdown of the internet which had [been done] in an effort to silence the masses.

“The economic situation in Zimbabwe remains a huge challenge for the majority of the people in that country. The situation has been compounded with the recent hike in fuel prices. We urge the leadership in Zimbabwe to be magnanimous and begin to address the suffering of the people. The onus lies on President Mnangagwa to be all inclusive in finding a lasting solution to the many challenges that the country faces.

“In 2018, Zimbabwean signed the African Charter on Democracy Elections and Governance, committing to adhere to good governance principles as outlined in the ACDEG. However, it is unfortunate that the happenings in Zimbabwe are a contradiction of the provisions of the ACDEG and a violation of fundamental human rights and freedoms. Already a number of Zimbabweans have crossed the borders into neighbouring countries like Zambia and South Africa.

“It is disheartening to note that the terrible situation in Zimbabwe has not garnered the desired response both regionally and internationally. As civil society activists, we cannot sit idle while our neighbours are being beaten, arrested, detained and killed. We therefore urge the Zimbabwean government through President Emmerson

**January 24, 2019**

Mnangagwa to immediately halt the human rights violations against its citizens and to respect the rule of law.

“We also call upon [Zambian] President Edgar Lungu, as Chairman of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Organ on Politics Defence and Security, and any influential members of the international community, including the African Union, to take a keen interest in the happenings in Zimbabwe before more innocent lives are lost. Zimbabwe deserves better from its leaders and the international community.”

## **January 24 in Christian history**

**January 24, 1076:** Germany's Henry IV convenes the Synod of Worms to secure the deposition of Pope Gregory VII. The Synod charged the pope with serious crimes, called upon Rome to depose him, and issued other anti-papal statements. The pope quickly excommunicated Henry. One year later, Henry traveled to Canossa, Italy, and stood three days in the snow in an attempt to gain Gregory's forgiveness. Gregory granted it, but the two men soon fought again; Henry set up an antipope in Gregory's place.

**January 24, 1573:** English poet and preacher John Donne, dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, is born. One of the most prominent preachers of his day and one of the greatest English poets, he is known for such famous lines as "No man is an island," "For whom does the bell toll? It tolls for thee," and "Death be not proud."

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