



**The essential daily
brief on the Irish
churches**

Church leaders meet new PSNI Chief Constable



Rev. Donald Kerr, Dr. Donald Watts, Bishop Donal McKeown, Rev. Dr. Rob Craig, Bishop Ken Good and Rev. Peter Murray, with PSNI Chief Constable George Hamilton and PSNI Chief Superintendent Stephen Cargin, Londonderry's Police Commander.

The meeting with church leaders was held in the Strand Road PSNI station in Londonderry

Taking part were - Bishop Ken Good (representing the Church of Ireland Bishops), Bishop Donal McKeown (representing the Roman Catholic Bishops), Rev. Peter Murray (President of the Methodist Church in Ireland), Rev. Dr. Rob Craig (representing the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland), Rev. Dr. Donald Watts (President of Irish Council of Churches) and Rev. Donald Kerr (Secretary of the Methodist Church in Ireland).

Ahead of the annual Twelfth of July parades, the leaders wanted to assure the Chief Constable of their support at what is a demanding time of the year for the top policing role. The meeting was an opportunity for the leaders to further affirm their joint support of the PSNI as they seek to protect the community all year round.

The Church leaders seek to encourage a peaceful and respectful summer, urging those participating in parades and protests to obey the law, respect the PSNI officers as they carry out their duties, and avoid any behaviour which is not for the overall good of society. They encourage all those who are committed to seeking better relations at a local level.

Leadership Course to Equip Young Adults to Participate in Church Life

A new leadership foundation course for young adults is to be launched in November in Dublin and Glendalough. The course will aim to empower Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic young adults, aged between 18 and 35, to take more active roles in their respective parishes.

The course has been developed by Greg Fromholz of the Dublin and Glendalough Ministry To Young Adults, Ger Gallagher of the Office of Evangelisation of the Archdiocese of Dublin and Brother Martin Bennett of the Capuchin Friary.

It is envisaged that 10 Anglicans and 10 Roman Catholics will be trained in leadership and discipleship. The year long course will equip them to lead effectively in their churches, aid spiritual exploration, work with volunteers and serve their local communities.

“We’re trying to assist churches to enable their young adults to participate more fully and become more involved in the life of the church,” Greg Fromholz explains adding that running the course ecumenically will give participants access to a wide range of communicators.

The Dublin and Glendalough Ministry to Young Adults has been up and running for almost a year and is continuing with its aim to help 18 to 35 year olds engage with their faith and exploring ways of building links between them and the church.

Greg asserts that young adults are interested in faith and highlights two recent events – two different worship bands played in mainstream venues in

Dublin and tickets sold out. Rend Collective played in Whelan's on Wexford Street (pictured) to 450 young adults. Seven days later Matt Redmond and Matt Maher performed in the Button Factory in front of 650 young adults.

"Within a week we had 1,100 people, a large amount of them Anglican and the majority of them young adults, coming to see two bands who are unashamedly worship bands in mainstream music venues," Greg commented. "We often hear that there are no young adults, but these young adults came to see worship bands and not only that but they paid for the tickets. So they are there."

Meanwhile, Paradoxology is due to make a return to the Electric Picnic festival in August. Last year for the first time the festival featured a sacred space – a Christian prayer tent, called Paradoxology. It was organised by Greg, Pamela Rooney of Dundrum Methodist Church and Scott Evans, freelance author, blogger and speaker from Holy Trinity, Rathmines. Last year an estimated 2,000 people passed through the tent over three days with many stopping to engage in conversation with the volunteers who were on duty around the clock. This year they plan to double the size of the tent and increase team numbers, who consist of young adults who are learning about mission and leadership.

"For me, young adults' ministry is about assisting church culture so that it can embrace young adults in their own communities... One of the key points is to restore the trust between young adults and the Church, and between young adults and God," Greg concludes.

Presbyterian concern for bonfires and parades

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, Dr. Michael Barry, has issued the following statement regarding bonfires and parades

"It is totally unacceptable that pictures of political representatives are being built onto eleventh night bonfires. I would ask organisers to remove such images immediately and refrain from burning any items which increase tension and which serve no helpful purpose. Items, such as flags or effigies or indeed anything that would cause offence, should not be burnt.

"Our Presbyterian theme this year is 'a people of service and outreach'. I would remind people that we cannot serve others if we are attacking them. We are to treat all people with respect and dignity because they have been created in the image of God.

We would encourage all who participate in public parades and protests to obey the law and avoid any behaviour which is not for the overall good of society and respectfully urge those parading organisations which espouse Christian values to uphold those values through behaviour in the public square which honours the Lord Jesus Christ and reflects the teaching of the Scripture.”

People are my strength - retiring bishop



Huge excitement is building in the Diocese of Elphin, with preparations underway for the episcopal ordination of Fr Kevin Doran next weekend.

Irish Catholic - However, this is a bittersweet time for the people of the diocese, as they bid farewell to his much loved predecessor, Bishop Christy Jones, who now retires after over 50 years of ministry.

Bishop Christy is known as a people person who, through his work with Sligo social services, the Traveller community and developments in pastoral services, has given much to the community and particularly to the most vulnerable.

On the announcement of his retirement, Archbishop Michael Neary of Tuam described Bishop Christy as “first and foremost a much loved local pastor and popular shepherd of the faithful”, and Bishop Ray Browne of Kerry paid tribute to “his care and love of being amongst his people, and in particular his compassion for people in need”.

Bishop Christy says that it is he who has received so much from the people of his diocese, and that they have been his strength throughout his ministry as both a priest and a bishop.

“One thing I have learned is the goodness of people,” he says, “their willingness, once encouraged, and how quickly they are willing to take responsibility for their parish and church. I have found it very rewarding. The love of people, and the love of God through our people, is the greatest strength we have in our priesthood.”

- See more at: <http://www.irishcatholic.ie/article/people-are-my-strength#sthash.iQYYRMUR.dpuf>

Vandals attack Catholic church

A Catholic church has been damaged in Co Down.

Belfast Telegraph - Crosses, statues, pews and windows were targeted by the vandals at Our Lady of the Angels Oratory in Kilkeel, police said.

The windscreen of a Volkswagen Passat, parked close by, was smashed during an attack which is believed to have happened overnight.

PSNI superintendent Simon Walls said: "Any attack on a place of worship must be condemned and we are now investigating to find those responsible."

Detectives appealed for anybody with information to contact them.

South Down SDLP MP Margaret Ritchie said: "I join with the community in South Down in condemning this attack on this place of worship.

"No place of worship should be subject to vandalism and acts of disrespect. I know the community in Kilkeel will be horrified to learn of this attack, and would ask anyone with information to come forward to the police at the earliest possible

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/northern-ireland/vandals-attack-catholic-church-30422289.html>

Scottish Episcopal Institute Appointment

Following a process of advertisement and recruitment, The Rev Canon Dr Anne Tomlinson has been appointed as the new Principal of the Scottish Episcopal Institute.



Dr Tomlinson will take up office during August and says “It is an immense privilege to have been called to serve the Scottish Episcopal Church as Principal of its Institute. I ask for your prayers for the staff and students, as for myself, as together we set out in faith on this new stage of the journey.”

Commenting on the appointment the **Most Rev David Chillingworth**, Bishop of St Andrews,

Dunkeld & Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church says “The Scottish Episcopal Institute will shape the character and quality of our ministry in the next generation. The appointment of the first Principal is an important moment for our church. I warmly welcome Canon Dr Anne Tomlinson in that role. Anne has helped to shape the ministry of clergy and laity in every part of our church. Her work is theologically and spiritually rooted. She is rigorous and ordered in what she undertakes. She is generous in sharing programmes which she has developed. The Principal will work closely with the College of Bishops and I know that she will have their confidence. We uphold Anne in our prayers as she prepares for this new challenge in ministry”.

This is a new post created following an extensive review of ministerial formation and training within the Church. The Scottish Episcopal Institute will replace the Theological Institute of the Scottish Episcopal Church (TISEC) and will provide a new emphasis on formation-led training.

Following degrees in prehistoric archaeology, Dr Anne Tomlinson did her formational training through St John’s College, Nottingham and subsequently studied Practical Theology at New College, University of Edinburgh. She worked in the Theological Institute of the Scottish Episcopal Church (TISEC) for nine years variously as Tutor, Director of Pastoral Studies and Co-ordinator of the South-East Region before becoming the Church’s Provincial Officer for Local Collaborative Ministry and Director of Ordinands for the Diocese of Edinburgh. For the past five years she has been the Ministry Development Officer of the Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway. Married to Fred, a Rector in the Diocese of Edinburgh, with a grown-up daughter, Anne is a vocational Deacon.

Church of England women bishops: archbishops will overrule synod

The archbishop of Canterbury plans to force legislation through if the General Synod does not accept female bishops.

Guardian - The archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby is preparing to drive through legislation to allow women bishops even if it is rejected by the church's governing body, the General Synod.



The synod is poised to vote again on the vexed plan next week but senior sources have told the Guardian that should the move be blocked again, there are now options being considered to force the change on the church.

Options under consideration include an immediate dissolution of the synod so that fresh elections could produce a sufficient majority by November, or even a move by the bishops in the House of Lords to introduce the legislation without synodical approval.

The dramatic intervention would be designed to pre-empt any attempts, which are already being threatened by parliament, to remove the church's exemption from equality legislation.

"It's quite clear that there absolutely is a plan C which the archbishops have prepared," said one source. He explained that the plan is being called plan C because the present legislation is itself plan B, prepared after the dramatic failure of earlier legislation in 2012 which left the church in shock and led to direct threats of parliamentary intervention.

A second source, who has campaigned in favour of women's ordination, said: "If it fails this time, it's up to the bishops [in the Lords]. They can get rid of the synod or they can ask parliament to act directly."

The archbishop of Canterbury will chair the synod's debate and is expected to speak about the plans to press on with the legislation almost as soon as the result of the vote is known, in the event that women's bishops are again opposed.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/09/church-women-bishops-welby-legislation>

Chaplain accuses Church of England of homophobia

The first British clergyman to enter a [gay marriage](#) has accused the Church of England of homophobia and said that he is considering legal action after it blocked his



attempt to take up a new post in a move he says is intended to stop others following in his footsteps.

[Guardian - Canon Jeremy Pemberton, a hospital chaplain in Lincoln, married his partner Laurence Cunnington in April](#) in defiance of guidance from Church of England bishops that it was at variance with Anglican teachings.

Last month, [the acting Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham, the Right Reverend Richard Inwood, responded by revoking Pemberton permission to operate as a priest in the diocese of Southwell and Nottinghamshire](#), where the chaplain lives, although it did not affect his ability to work as a priest in Lincoln.

However, Inwood has now scuppered Pemberton's attempt to take up a new job, as chaplaincy and bereavement manager at the Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Trust, by refusing to issue the required licence, it emerged on Wednesday.

Pemberton told the Guardian: "I don't think it's clear that what they've done is legal, I certainly don't think it's fair. There's been no process. The bishop is

effectively threatening my ability to be in employment. It's clear that the only reason my taking that [post] up is threatened is about nothing to do with my ability as a chaplain but is entirely about the fact that I got married."

He said that he would be investigating whether he had a legal case against the church under anti-discrimination legislation.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/09/chaplain-accuses-church-england-homophobia>

“Christians at risk”, the Pope’s alarm

Yesterday at the Angelus the Pope invited the faithful to pray “for the dear nation of Iraq” and in particular for “the multitude of people, including many Christians, who have had to leave their homes.”

Vatican Insider - He expressed “deep concern” hoping for “a future of reconciliation and justice” for a land that has seen Abraham, the father of the three monotheistic religions, open a new era of humanity.



It was to start from Ur of the Chaldeans, the Jubilee for Karol Wojtyla, who first warned the West on military intervention in the Gulf, just like nine months ago Bergoglio opposed the U.S. raid on Syria, where due to the civil war and to advanced extremist groups such as the al-Nusra Front and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant the influence of radical Islam has increased and consequently the persecutions against the Christians. The kidnapping of the Sisters of Maalula (the ancient city where they still speak Aramaic), and the mass graves in Sadad are infinite “Stations of the Cross”. Many Christians were forced to flee to Lebanon and other neighboring countries to the point that, after more than three years of civil war in Syria, Christians make up 5% of the population. They were 15% before the outbreak of the revolt against Assad.

In Egypt as well, Christians have come under attack, particularly after the dismissal of former President Mohamed Morsi, who came to power in 2012

after the electoral victory of the Muslim Brotherhood. After the intervention of the armed forces who arrested Morsi, the attacks against Christians, as confirmed by the expert committee appointed by the National Council for Human Rights to take stock of the situation of the Copts in the country. The members of the religious minority suffer many forms of violence, especially in the governorates of Luxor, Sohag and Aswan. The document speaks of kidnappings, fires set to the houses of the Copts, vandalism against their shops, obstacles to the practice of their religious rites. But the situation for Christians is especially dramatic in Iran and Iraq, where today the Chaldeans represent only 1% of the population. Here Christians came under attack in Baghdad on Christmas Day (37 deaths).

<http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/news/detail/articolo/francesco-francisco-francisco-cristiani-christians-cristianos-34744/>

WCC strongly condemns violence in Gaza

Attacks by the Israeli military on the civilian population in Gaza, as well as firing of rockets by militants from Gaza to Israel, were strongly condemned by the World Council of Churches (WCC) general secretary Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit.

In a statement issued on 10 July from the WCC headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, Tveit said, “We strongly condemn the indiscriminate attacks by Israeli military on the civilian population in Gaza, as we absolutely condemn the absurd and immoral firing of rockets by militants from Gaza to populated areas in Israel”.

Tveit also noted that “what is happening in Gaza now is not an isolated tragedy.”

The failure of the peace negotiations and the loss of prospects for a two-state solution to end occupation have led to this “unbearable and infernal cycle of violence and hatred that we are witnessing today,” Tveit said.

“Without an end to the occupation, the cycle of violence will continue,” he said.

The statement comes at a time when media reports have confirmed over 500 casualties in the Gaza conflict in the last week.

In the statement, Tveit said that recent events in Israel and Palestine must be seen in the context of the occupation of Palestinian territories, which began in

1967. He added that calling for an end to the occupation and the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip by Israel has remained a long-term commitment of the WCC.

“Both Israelis and Palestinians require their well-being, security and a just and genuine peace,” he said.

Tveit urged the United Nations Security Council to demand an immediate end to all kinds of violence from all parties to the conflict.

He called on the churches and religious leaders to “work together to transform the discourse of hatred and revenge that is spreading more and more in many circles in society into one that sees the other as neighbour and as equal brother and sister in the one Lord.”

The WCC Central Committee, the chief governing body of the WCC also expressed “deep sorrow and concern” this week over the violence, following the tragic deaths of young people in Israel and Palestine.

[Read full text of the WCC general secretary’s statement](#)

[Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel](#)

[WCC member churches in the Middle East](#)

Press Coverage

Mail

Report that MPs and peers were told legalising assisted suicide is a slippery slope toward widespread killing of the sick. It states a former euthanasia supporter warned of a surge in deaths if Parliament allowed the bill to go ahead. Theo Boer, a European watchdog in assisted suicide cases, said in the Netherlands, where euthanasia has been legal since 2002, the country has seen deaths double in just six years and this year's total may reach a record 6,000.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2686711/Dont-make-mistake-As-assisted-suicide-bill-goes-Lords-Dutch-regulator-backed-euthanasia-warns-Britain-leads-mass-killing.html#ixzz372dS9qh2>

Tel/Mail/Eve Standard

Reports claiming Baroness Butler-Sloss, the former judge appointed to

investigate allegations of an establishment cover-up of child sex abuse, was forced to issue an apology after making crucial errors in a previous Church of England inquiry. They state the peer was put in charge of a "flawed" investigation into how the Church handled the cases of two priests in Chichester Diocese who had sexually abused boys. And it says eight months after her report was published Lady Butler-Sloss had to issue a six-page addendum in which she apologised for "inaccuracies" which, she admitted, arose from her failure to corroborate information which was given to her by senior Anglican figures.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/crime/10957364/Baroness-Butler-Sloss-criticised-over-previous-flawed-paedophile-report.html>

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2686781/I-wont-quit-says-head-sex-abuse-inquiry-brother-linked-paedophile-cover-up.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2686781/I-wont-quit-says-head-sex-abuse-inquiry-brother-linked-paedophile-cover-up.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2686781/I-wont-quit-says-head-sex-abuse-inquiry-brother-linked-paedophile-cover-up.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/questions-over-baroness-butlersloss-as-head-of-paedophile-coverup-review-9594322.html>

Times

Report that the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, has reopened the rift in the Church of England over homosexuality after declaring that its current position is unsustainable. It states Lord Williams of Oystermouth says in an updated version of his biography, *Rowan's Rule*, that the "rhetoric of anti-gay violence" had worsened over the past decade, with some Anglicans having "moved back on this".

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4143198.ece>

Ind

Report that the former Bishop of Liverpool, James Jones is to head a Hillsborough-style inquiry to investigate up to 100 suspicious deaths at a Hampshire hospital during the 1990s. It states the inquiry will examine cases at Gosport War Memorial Hospital dating back to 1991, including those of up to a dozen elderly patients who were given powerful "life-shortening" painkillers.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/exclusive-government-launches-inquiry-over-100-suspicious-deaths-at-a-hampshire-hospital-9596095.html>