



An artist's impression of how the church in Glenstal Abbey will look after once work is completed

Major renovations planned for Glenstal Abbey's church

The community of Glenstal Abbey is planning €750,000 worth of “exciting renovations” to its church – the first Benedictine one built in Ireland since the Reformation.

Donal O'Regan in Limerick Leader - The Abbot of Glenstal, Mark Patrick Hederman, says the windows, after 60 years, have begun to fall in.

“The original heating system, abetted by the radiant gas-fired system from the 1980s, is valiantly but extravagantly failing to heat the vast spaces around them. The wiring is antiquated to the point of danger and the amplification no longer fit for purpose. The only obstacle remaining is the money to pay for this exciting renovation,” said Abbot Hederman. Underfloor heating will put paid to the days of frozen knees on frosty morns.

He says the dynamic centre of every Benedictine monastery is its church.

“Every other thing that happens in the monastery receives its energy and is given sense and meaning by our worship in that church. This is the identifying hallmark of all that we do and are. It was with this in mind that the Glenstal community, who were founded in 1927, built the first Benedictine church in Ireland since the Reformation.

“In 1951 Dom Sebastian Braun OSB, a monk from Maredsous, Belgium – from where Glenstal Abbey was founded in 1927 – started designs for a new church. His designs were based on

12th century Romanesque architecture deriving from early Christian basilicas,” explained Abbot Hederman.

A vast scheme was drawn up but his “flamboyant designs” were unrealistic and would never be completed.

“In 1958 when the church was blessed, a spate of letters went to the press expressing disappointment with the squatness of the church as unfitting for a Benedictine Abbey. They had built a body without a head,” said Abbot Hederman. The monks always knew they would have to finish the church.

“Every church needs regular maintenance, and every generation needs its own spiritual ambience. In 1979, twenty-three years after its opening, the church was revisited. The re-decoration which then took place went beyond a necessary new coat of paint. By daring use of colour, an attempt was made to remedy structural difficulties of length and height, endemic to the inherited building,” said the abbot.

The ceiling’s colour scheme of vibrant red and green flows in a Celtic pattern through the proscenium arch in an attempt to link the nave and sanctuary.

“It was so flamboyant that one of the monks vowed he would never again look at the ceiling but would keep his eyes fixed on the floor; another said it was no longer a church but a discotheque,” said Abbot Hederman.

Through his connection with the le Brocquy family he met Hughie and Clare O'Donoghue.

“I invited them to visit Glenstal. We all agreed that the spaces above the choir stalls in our sanctuary in the church at Glenstal Abbey might be a good place to hang some of his work. They suggested his Blue Crucifixion which we could borrow on permanent loan from the Irish Museum of Modern Art, and the The Red Crucifixion, which they have in their own studio, and which they would donate to us as an outright gift,” said Abbot Hederman, who describes it as a “unique privilege” for Glenstal.

And so starts a new chapter in the story of Glenstal Abbey's church. Work is hoped to commence shortly.

Moving Hearts in Letterkenny

Letterkenny has been undergoing a transformation this week as dozens of volunteers descended on the town on a street-cleaning blitz

as part of Derry and Raphoe Youth's annual outreach, On The Move.

Young people from the DRY were joined on the week-long residential project by teams from Albany in New York and Youth Initiatives, along with helpers from Belfast and Dublin.

The volunteers gathered each morning at Letterkenny parish hall for worship, teaching and prayer before being dispatched to different parts of the town each afternoon and evening on their clean-up mission. Working in teams of four, the volunteers cleared gardens, cleaned roads and pavements, picked up litter, removed graffiti and painted fences. In a new departure this year, they also took part in street theatre.

Among the leaders helping out was Karen Love, whose husband is the Bishop of Albany in New York, the Rt. Rev. William H. Love. The Rector of Conwall Union with Gartan, Canon Stewart Wright, got his hands dirty, too, helping out with litter-picking and weed-clearing.

The event was co-ordinated by Derry and Raphoe Diocese's Youth Officer, Martin Montgomery, who describes On The Move as "faith translated into action and service".

“Trying to encourage a young person to paint a fence or pull weeds around a house is a ‘hard sell’,” Martin says, “but something mysterious happens when it becomes a group activity. We can’t really explain it, only to say that the time we spend together is special, and it is truly putting our Christian faith into action.”

Bishop Ken Good visited the volunteers on Thursday to thank them for their effort. During grace, before their evening meal, the Bishop told the young people that they were transforming the community and radiating Christ. He said their labour was consistent with our diocesan vision and that the whole community was grateful for their hard work.

Church leaders tribute to catechism groups

We have to be careful not to have a privatised idea of ‘our Christ’ – a Christ who speaks to us in a complete personal way but not a Christ who goes beyond our own perception, the papal nuncio to Ireland, Archbishop Charles Brown has said.

This is why the study of the Catechism is so important, because it helps us to see the Lord in all his transfigured beauty, he told over 250



Archbishop Charles Brown, Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland

members of catechism study groups at the *Third Annual Gathering of Catechism Studies* in St Patrick's College Maynooth last week.

“By studying the catechism as you are doing in groups all over Ireland, we come in contact with the person of Jesus Christ. There's no contradiction at all between studying the truths of our faith in the Catechism of the Catholic

Church and knowing Jesus – it is the same thing,” the Nuncio said.

Archbishop Eamon Martin paid tribute to the people all over Ireland who are “committed to the study of the catechism” and in particular to Máirín Ní Shúilleabháin and the steering committee of the ‘Adult Studies of the Catechism of the Catholic Church’.

“The valuable work you are doing is truly a blessing on the life of the Church in this country. It is a blessing that is felt in our parishes, communities, homes and your local groups.”

Effective evangelisation involved being “wholly faithful to the deposit of faith”, he said.

“Never lose sight of the pearl of great price in the one holy Catholic Church. Your study of the catechism is a very effective way of helping all of us remain faithful to and nourish our apostolic mission.”

The Primate of All Ireland said the Holy Spirit was enriching the Church with charisms given to many people.

“We have to be able to recognise them, identify and nourish them and give them space.” The

initiative of studying the catechism in groups was a great example of this.

He recommended identifying “good people in the parish or diocese” and allowing them to “do the Spirit’s work”.

Among those present at the one day gathering in Maynooth was Gillian Doherty a young mother from Cork who shared what the effect of studying the catechism has been for her and her group.

“The Holy Spirit is guiding us, helping us discern what is asked of us,” she said.

Some had been drawn to work with young people, others in the world of business, others in pastoral councils, “drawing people not just to activities but to prayer”.

Gillian joined a group to “find solidarity with other young families” after her 3-year-old son complained about going to mass as his friends weren’t there.”

“They began to take children to Adoration on Saturdays. There were ten to start, now we have 30. It has helped my children in forming faith friendships.”

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Dublin Funds Begin to Benefit Gaza Hospital Projects

Funds raised for the Prepare a Place Appeal by parishes and individuals in Dublin and Glendalough and beyond are now being put to good use by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. The appeal, which is coordinated by the Dublin and Glendalough Council for Mission in collaboration with the United Society, Bishops' Appeal and Friends of Sabeel, received donations of €109,848 and £14,204.

As a result of the donations, funds to refurbish the medical staff's on-call residence at Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza have been sent and work has begun. The first instalment for the hospital's solar panels has also been sent and more funds will be released when a progress report on the project is received. It is hoped that the remaining funds needed can be raised this Advent.

Al Ahli Hospital provides services to the whole community in Gaza. It is the only Christian

hospital in Gaza and is owned and controlled by the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. The facilities for on-call staff at the hospital had not been refurbished for 20 years. During last summer's conflict, hospital staff lived in Al Ahli for 51 days. Electricity restrictions continue in Gaza meaning that the hospital has to use expensive generators for power when there is no supply. The solar panel project will reduce their dependence on generators.

The fundraising campaign was the first step in building a link with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem which covers Jordan, Palestine, Israel, Syria, and Lebanon. Work on that link is continuing with exploration being carried out to see how the people of each diocese can grow in friendship.

UK's first bishop for church plants

The UK's first "bishop for church plants" is to be appointed in the latest indication that the Archbishop of Canterbury's new leadership strategy for revival and evangelism is taking root in the Church of England.

Rev Ric Thorpe, Rector of St Paul's, Shadwell, is to become bishop of the revived See of Islington

in north London, with a special focus on planting and growing new churches and congregations.



Rev Ric Thorpe with his wife Louie and the Bishop of London, Dr Richard Chartres.

There was only one previous Bishop of Islington. Charles Turner, who was at the same time Rector of St Andrew Undershaft, served in the post from 1898 to 1923.

Wycliffe-trained Thorpe will also contribute to the new School of Church Growth in Liverpool and work with the evangelical St Mellitus theological college in London.

He said: "The Church is growing in the London diocese, and church planting has played a significant part in our story. It is a huge privilege to be called to serve as a new bishop in the diocese with a special focus on planting and growing churches so that we can reach more of the people of this great world city with the good news of Jesus Christ.

"My prayer is that God will continue to guide us to new places, in new ways, and give us boldness to proclaim this good news in our generation."

Thorpe, who served his title at Holy Trinity Brompton, the heart of church growth in the London diocese, was the favourite for the post.

Along with the appointment of Dr Graham Tomlin, Dean of St Mellitus theological college in London, to be Bishop of Kensington, the choice of Thorpe for Islington represents an overdue harvesting by Church of England leadership of the phenomenal talent emerging from HTB and its network of church plants.

Thorpe revitalised St Paul's when he took a team of 100 to the parish in 2005 and then went on to send planting teams to four other Anglican churches in Tower Hamlets. He has gone on to

advise several other dioceses on their church planting strategy.

When Bishop of London Dr Richard Chartres first proposed the see be revived, he cited St Paul's, which before the arrival of Thorpe had a small congregation with low morale, as an example of a successful plant. He said: "It has not lost any of its existing supporters, but, of course, it has developed the kind of church life which people who went nowhere, or went out of the area, find very attractive."

Downing Street also announced today that Rev Rob Wickham, Area Dean of Hackney and Rector of St John at Hackney, is to be the new Bishop of Edmonton. Preb John Hawkins is to be new Archdeacon of Hampstead.

Dr Chartres said: "As Bishop of the revived See of Islington, Ric will expand on his important work to date, supporting those involved in new Christian ventures, as well as applying the lessons learned for pioneers in training. He will harvest and share experience of church growth strategies as well as supporting people beyond the Diocese who are interested in the London experience."

About the other two appointments, he said:
"Rob brings to the London team an enormous amount of experience and, in his eight years in Hackney, he has helped to provide a distinctive Christian contribution to the regeneration of his community. He will be well supported by John as Archdeacon of Hampstead, who has already experienced serving in an archidiaconal role in the area. They will form a highly effective partnership when they take up their roles in the autumn."

The Diocese of London's strategy for growth and development, Capital Vision 2020, sets out a target of creating 100 new worshipping communities within the Diocese by 2020. The new bishop's job will mean putting into action this strategic priority as well as working on church growth through the entire church.

Don't Stop at the Lights - church greening guide updated

The Church of England's lead bishop on the environment has welcomed a new update to a guide providing

environmental advice and resources for parishes.

Don't Stop at the Lights - Leading Your Church Through a Changing Climate, first published in 2008 by Church House Publishing, has now a new booklet giving updated information and practical tips to churches on incorporating the environment into the Church year. People who already have the book, co-authored by Claire Foster and David Shreeve, can either download the update or apply for a free copy by email.

Nicholas Holtam, Bishop of Salisbury, writing in the update, detailed practical action taken by churches including work on energy efficiency, renewable energy and care for churchyards which are havens of biodiversity. All churches are committed to shrinking their carbon footprint and there is a growing movement to pray and fast for the climate on the first day of every month, he added.

"I do hope this book helps clergy and congregations to see how the environment can matter throughout the year and how it need not be yet another burden to add to an already heavy workload, but a real contribution to our service and commitment," Bishop Nicholas wrote.

David Shreeve, the Church of England's environmental adviser, said: "So much has happened since Don't Stop at the Lights was first published in 2008 - the update provides new website links including vital information about how churches can prepare for the forthcoming Paris climate change talks. "Don't Stop at the Lights takes the whole of the Church year and gives advice and ideas to churches on how they can include the environment throughout the Christian calendar year. You don't have to wait for Harvest festival to do something on the environment."

The update, which will be available at General Synod, has been issued after faith leaders including the Archbishop

of Canterbury signed the Lambeth Declaration last month warning of the "huge challenge" facing the world over climate change. The declaration includes a call on faith communities to recognise the pressing need to make the transition to a low carbon economy.

The 2015 Update to Don't Stop at the Lights - Leading your church through a changing climate is available to download from the Church House Publishing website via <http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/books/9780715141380/dont-stop-at-the-lights>

Hard copies can be ordered via publishing@churchofengland.org <<mailto:publishing@churchofengland.org>>

For more information about the Church of England's national environmental campaign see <http://www.churchcare.co.uk/shrinking-the-footprint>

Scotland remembers Srebrenica in St Giles Cathedral service

Scotland remembered the victims of the Srebrenica massacre at a memorial

service in St Giles Cathedral Friday July 10 to mark the 20th anniversary of the atrocity.



First Minister Nicola Sturgeon meets some of the Mothers of Srebrenica after the memorial service.

The Moderator, Rt Rev Angus Morrison, delivered the sermon at the memorial service, which also included remarks from Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and from Very Rev Dr Lorna Hood. Last week marked the 20th anniversary of the massacre where more than 8,000 Bosnian men were killed by Serbian forces despite the presence of UN peacekeepers.

The Moderator said his visit to Srebrenica in February and his meeting with the Mothers of

Srebrenica had been one of the most moving experiences of his life:

"My most vivid memory is of our group's meeting, on the night we arrived, with several of the Mothers of Srebrenica," he said. "Their quiet courage and love, their total commitment to the pursuit of justice, and refusal to give way to hatred and vengeance, made an enormous impression that evening, not just on me, but on us all.

"The desire of these remarkable ladies was clear: Let the story of Srebrenica be told – told all over Europe and beyond—so that the lessons of Srebrenica might be well learned, so that other mothers and wives and sisters would not have to endure the pain which has been theirs to know so deeply."

After WWII Europeans vowed to never again allow genocide on the continent. But the conflict that saw Yugoslavia break up into independent states included more than one mass killing as well as the mass rape of women and girls.

The genocide occurred in July 1995, when 20,000 refugees fled to Srebrenica to escape Bosnian Serb forces fighting the Muslim-led Bosnian government. Four Hundred UN Dutch

soldiers were supposed to be protecting the besieged enclave. But paramilitary troops under the command of Gen Ratko Mladic overran the area, rounded up more than 80,000 men and boys and killed them. They were buried in mass graves, but later exhumed and scattered across the landscape in an attempt to cover up the massacre.

Gen Mladic was finally arrested in 2011 after 16 years in hiding. He remains on trial for war crimes at the UN tribunal in The Hague.

The First Minister said Srebrenica had shattered the illusion that genocide could never happen again in Europe.

"We must learn those lessons," she said. "We must understand what it is that turns people into those who can commit acts of such horror, and by understanding know better how to prevent that happening in the future."

Remembering Srebrenica aims not only to make sure the victims of Srebrenica will never be forgotten, but also to bring attention to the dangers of ethnic and religious violence and to support community building aimed at preventing future atrocities.

The memorial was organised by the board of Remembering Srebrenica Scotland. Very Rev Dr Lorna Hood, who chairs the board, first visited Srebrenica during her year as Moderator and has since returned twice taking others with her. From those visits a group of people came together as the Remembering Srebrenica Scotland board, including: Ruth Davidson MSP, David Hamilton, John Corrigan and Seonag Mackinnon.

The Moderator's sermon urged everyone to help create peace in the world.

"Today we remember the unspeakable events which took place at Srebrenica, only twenty years ago, and their ongoing consequences," he said. "It is an abiding stain on our European continent and our modern democracies. But in honour of all who have suffered and continue to suffer on account of this great evil, let us find courage and the commitment to move from simply keeping the peace, and commit ourselves to the costly path of peacemaking and reconciliation in the place where we ourselves happen to live, in troubled Bosnia and Herzegovina, and around a broken world. May we all be living signs of a love that can bridge all divisions and heal all wounds."

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Evangelical will be returning to The Simpsons

Praise the Lord! TV's favourite cartoon Evangelical is not leaving our screens after all. In May, Ned Flanders' [Simpsons](#) future was left hanging by a thread when voice actor Harry Shearer was unable to agree a pay deal with the show's producers. However, the show's official Twitter account this week announced that "all principal cast members" have now signed up for its 27th season.

Shearer had previously stated that he turned down the offer to work on the show for another year because he wanted "the freedom to do other work", but while the details of negotiations haven't been released, that hurdle appears to have been overcome.

It's great news for fans of the show, and particularly of Shearer's iconic over-the-top evangelical Christian. Along with Shearer's other characters – including Mr Burns, Smithers and Principal Skinner – Flanders will return with his trademark cheeriness and hopefully a few more

of those moments when he reflects some of the more positive aspects of the faith. It's a



resurrection story in keeping with his closely observed religion.

Five great Ned Flanders lines...

5. "I'm not thinking straight, why did I have that wine cooler last month?"
4. "Say your prayers, Simpson... Because the schools can't force you like they should!"
3. "Science is like a blabbermouth who ruins the movie by telling you how it ends. Well, I say there are some things we don't want to know. Important things."

2. "I wish we lived in a place more like the America of yesteryear that only exists in the brains of us Republicans."

1. "Ok, boys, when you meet Jesus, be sure to call Him Mr Christ."

Media digest

Irish Jehovah's Witnesses convention to attract over 7,000

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/jehovah-s-witnesses-convention-to-attract-over-7-000-1.2281143>

Abortion poll provides an interesting snapshot of Ireland's attitudes

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/abortion-poll-provides-an-interesting-snapshot-of-ireland-s-attitudes-1.2281123>

Tel

Reports that the Church of England is spending £360,000 on a series of away-days and retreats to enable clergy and lay members to engage in a series of "facilitated conversations", aimed at breaking down divisions between different factions over issues such as homosexuality.

Article states the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is encouraging these face-to-face discussions to open up the issue. Also ref to other answers on issue of sexuality during Synod Questions.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11732778/Churchs-360000-budget-for-retreats-to-talk-about-sex.html>

Times/Exp/Mirror/Star/Mail

Reports that the son of a couple killed in the Tunisian terrorist attack told mourners at their funeral yesterday that his parents had “lived to enjoy life”. Stuart McQuire thanked the congregation at Abrohill Parish in Cumbernauld, North Lanarkshire for their support. His parents Jim and Ann were regular worshippers at the church.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/scotland/article4495120.ece>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/590366/Tunisia-attack-hundreds-funeral-devoted-couple-Jim-Ann-McQuire-Scotland>

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/tunisia-attack-first-funeral-takes-6043693>

<http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/453173/Funeral-Tunisia-terror-attack>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3156356/Hundreds-mourners-attend-funeral-devoted-Scottish-couple-killed-Tunisia->

[terror-attack.html?](#)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](#)

BBC/Western Morning News

Reports that the former communications director of the Diocese of Truro, Jeremy Dowling has been jailed for historic sexual offences against five young boys when working at a school. Mr Dowling admitted sexually abusing the boys, who cannot be named for legal reasons, between 1959 and 1971.

<http://www.westernmorningnews.co.uk/Bishop-s-press-aide-jailed-7-years-sexually/story-26877858-detail/story.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-cornwall-33475842>

Times/Mail

Review of Channel 4's "Married at first sight", where CofE priest Revd Nick Devenish is one of the programme experts. The channel has been criticised by the Bishop of Manchester, the Rt Rev David Walker, who has accused it of "crass, inappropriate and rather seedy behavior", and of being "careless of people's deepest personal lives".

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/tv-radio/reviews/article4493750.ece>

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3156869/A-victim-cynical-reality-stupidity-Ex-Para-agreed-marry-stranger-TV-JILTED-minute.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490

Tel

Comment piece on Sunday trading arguing, “People don’t go to church because it’s outdated not because they’d rather be at Tesco”.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11731361/Bryony-Gordon-Sunday-opening-wont-destroy-the-Church...-But-the-Church-might-destroy-itself.html>

Mirror

Comment piece on this week’s budget, “Shows the rich has inherit the earth tax-free while the rest can pick up the bill”.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/osbornes-budget-shows-rich-shall-6044381>

Mail

Comment piece focussing on grief in the wake of the Tunisian terrorist attack and the anniversary of the 7/7 bombings.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3157018/Grief-dead-wound-never-heals->

[s-pain-proves-human.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](#)

Metro

Reports of a church grown out of trees in New Zealand. The structure, which seats 100 people and took 4 years to grow is proving popular with wedding couples.

[http://metro.co.uk/2015/07/10/someone-spent-four-years-growing-a-church-out-of-trees-and-it-looks-incredibly-tranquil-5290195/](#)