

## The essential brief on the Irish churches

### Tributes to Ulster- born NZ cleric

The parents of tragic Anglican cleric Lynda Patterson said they have been inundated with support, as tributes continued to flow for their daughter.

News Letter - Lynda, the Dean of Christchurch [Cathedral](#) in New Zealand, was found dead at her home after she did not turn up for Sunday service.



*A statue of an angel held in place by supporting cables, stands amid the rubble of central Christchurch, New Zealand, as the clean up from the 2011 earthquake takes place*

A death certificate has not been issued to the family at time of writing, but it was suspected the 40-year-old may have suffered a heart attack.

Yesterday her father Cedric said that visits to their home in Dromore, Co Down, have been non-stop since the news broke.

Asked if the community has been being supportive, the 68-year-old said: "Supportive? The house hasn't ceased all day. There were two chaps who came in here who we didn't know – one was the Garvaghy Presbyterian minister, who said he was just calling to give his sympathies."

He visited the [cathedral](#) about six weeks ago and Lynda had shown him around.

“People have called and they’re very kind – at the moment the house is full,” he said last night.

He added that he has been told that there are memorial services taking place across New Zealand.

Among the many stand-out events of Lynda’s life was the deadly and widely-reported 2011 Christchurch earthquake which seriously damaged their cathedral – while she and 19 others were inside.

After the disaster, she set about the task of “looking after her flock” and keeping the congregation going, said Mr Patterson.

[New Zealand](#) media and social websites have continued carrying tributes to her.

Auckland Dean Jo Kelly-Moore was yesterday reported as telling one news website: “She was an extraordinary woman. She was generous, humorous, extremely intelligent and a fun person,” adding that Lynda had been “one of the finest preachers I have ever heard”.

Among the social media messages circulating was one from Rev Joshua Moore reading: “You taught me a huge amount about how to tell great stories my Irish sister, and how to see the lighter side of Anglican shenanigans. Will miss you hugely”.

The former Principal of Dromore Central Primary school – which Lynda had attended and where her mother Evelyn had worked – said he had received a string of phone calls about the news.

Jim Cochrane added that the Pattersons are well-known in the area, and that such a “close-knit” community as Dromore could be relied on to rally round them in the wake of such a tragedy.

## **What is it really like to be a female bishop? - Yorkshire Post interview with Bishop Pat Storey**

**With the Church of England having voted in favour of female bishops, Sarah Freeman speaks to Pat Storey, the woman who has already made religious history in Ireland.**

Her official title is The Most Reverend Patricia Storey. Some refer to her as Your Grace, others My Lord. She prefers to be known simply as Pat.

It's perhaps this down to earth, unfussy attitude which has endeared the Church of Ireland's first female bishop to her parishioners, although she's game enough to admit not everyone has been entirely supportive.

Remembering back to her days as a parish priest, when she arrived to take up a post Ballymena, one man made his feelings very clear about the presence of a woman at the altar.

"He very firmly said, 'I won't be back until she's gone'. And you know what, he was true to his word. I never saw him in church again."

Quite what he made of the Church's decision to make the former Ballymena minister Ireland's first female bishop one can only guess, but it's doubtful he had anything favourable to say. The issue has long been a contentious one, but with the Church of England having finally voted in favour of allowing women into its higher echelons, those same murmurings of discontent are beginning to rumble on this side of the Irish Sea.

"You know, I think Justin Welby has got it right," she says, referring to the Archbishop of Canterbury's long campaign to ensure a yes vote. "If you have a disagreement with someone in your family, you generally don't chuck them out or make life difficult for them. No, you agree to differ and move on."

"There are still people here who are against women priests, some for quite complicated theological reasons. I understand that, they are entitled to their view and when we have to work together we do."

"We accept there are some things on which we disagree, but there is enough common ground for it not to blight the entire relationship."

Unlike in England, when Ireland voted in favour of women priests in 1990 the Church also said it would allow women bishops. However, the cogs of the ecclesiastical world turn slowly and it was only last November, just short of a quarter of a century since the yes vote, that Pat found herself making history.

It's now seven months since she took up the post and while she's reluctant to offer any advice to England's first wave of female bishops – there is, she says still too much to learn – it is, she says, a good move for the Church as a whole

"I'm delighted for the Church of England. It has been a long time coming, but now is not a time to look back, it's a time to look forward. I'm still very much

on a learning curve. As soon as I became bishop people wanted to know whether I had a grand plan, they kept asking me to set out my vision, but I was very clear that I would take a year to listen to people and to find out how this level of the Church works before committing to anything.”

Pat also admits that she wasn't the most likely candidates to have landed one of the Church's top jobs. In fact, when the call came, she was a rector in Londonderry and had barely given promotion a second thought.

“I was a very happy parish minister and I wasn't particularly looking to climb through the ranks,” she says. “So when I was approached to be the Bishop of Meath and Kildare I was shocked and I know there were others who thought it was quite a left field appointment. It was quite overwhelming, so much so that I asked for 24 hours' thinking time. I don't think that is generally done, but I wanted to be confident that I could do the job and it was right not just for me, but the rest of the family.”

Her husband Earl had previously been a minister, but now runs his own PR company. Many of his clients are churches in Northern Ireland and a move south would inevitably have an effect on his business.

“I didn't get much sleep that night and went for a long walk with Earl,” says Pat. “He felt immediately that I should take it, but for me it was more of a leap of faith. I said yes because I couldn't think of a good reason to say no, but it was about three or four days after saying yes that I really began to feel at peace with the decision.”

While she says that she tried not think about the historical implications, for someone who had left school dreaming of being an air hostess, it was a heart in the mouth moment.

Her parents had been “nominally Presbyterian”, but growing up the Church wasn't a huge presence in her life. In fact, it was only when she went to study English and French at Trinity College, Dublin, the she found her calling, and even then it was quite by accident.

Another girl from her home town of Killinchy was in the same year and in an effort to be friendly she went with her to a meeting of the Christian Union.

“It was at university, that I really discovered the Church and my own faith,” she says. “I knew God had to be part of my life, but back then, the idea of

women becoming ministers wasn't even on the agenda, so I didn't even think about it."

Instead she married Earl and the couple settled in Dublin and started a family. In between looking after their two children – Carolyn and Luke – Pat spent much of her time working in youth ministry. However, four years after the crucial vote, she took the first step to becoming a minister.

Following a three-year theology course, she was ordained a deacon and within 12 months had been made a priest. To come from minister's wife to bishop in less than a decade is some going and there was extra media interest given the post had been due to be taken by the Venerable Leslie Stevenson before he resigned following allegations surrounding his private life.

"Of course it was a big deal and a lot of women before me had fought for equality within the Church, but really I think it's important that priests and bishops are judged on whether they are doing a good job, not on their gender.

"Do I think of myself as a trailblazer? Honestly? No. I don't. I know that it is an important landmark for the Church, but on day to day basis, I'm just a bishop like any other doing my job.

"It is a wonderful privilege to be a bishop, but I think I'm enjoying myself much more than I thought I ever would."

There's clearly an element of relief that she made the right decision, but the Church of Ireland and England does have to grapple with some difficult issues, with discussions over same sex marriage likely to be even more divisive than the debate over women bishops.

"Certainly that's high on the agenda, but the bigger issue, I think, is the gradual secularisation of our society, particularly our schools. The Church has to find ways of being relevant."

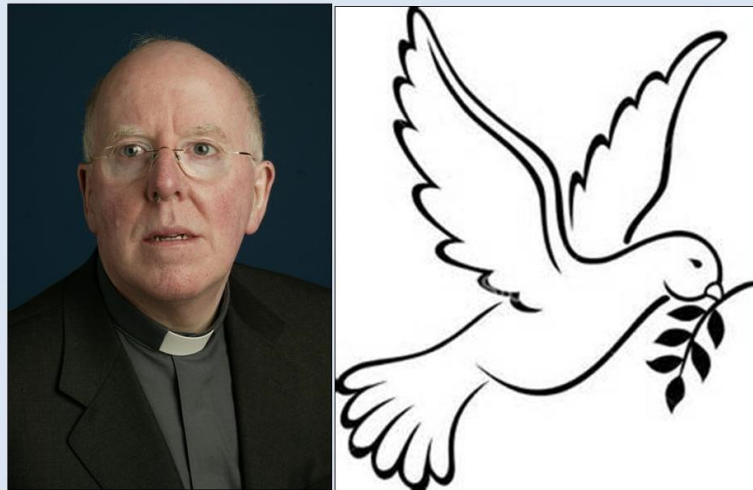
If a link to ordinary people is what the Church needs, it may need to find more bishops like Pat Storey.

"I am just an ordinary wife and mother. I try to get one clear day off each week. I like to walk the dog, go out for dinner with friends. Everyone needs time for themselves. Not even God worked seven days a week."

## Pray for an end to the conflicts - Bishop McAreevey

**Bishop John McAreevey, Bishop of Dromore and Chairman of the Bishops' Council for Justice and Peace yesterday issued a statement**

**calling for prayers for peace in the Middle East. Read the statement below:**



**#prayforpeace**

The death and destruction that we are witnessing in certain parts of the Middle East is truly shocking and heart-breaking. I encourage all Christians and all people of goodwill to pray for an end to the conflicts in Iraq, in Syria, in Palestine, and in Israel.

Persecution of some Christian communities in Iraq has reached new levels and for the first time it is reported that there are no longer Christians in the city of Mosul. The horrific ongoing war in Syria and the terrible bombing and ground offensive in Gaza and Israel, have claimed the lives of too many people. Children and families are being particularly affected by displacement from their homes and destruction of livelihoods.

The images of death and destruction emerging daily from these places are all the more distressing when we consider the rich cultural and religious heritage of this region and, in particular, its deep spiritual significance to the Abrahamic faiths. The violence and devastation of these days shows the horror that is unleashed when differences of faith and identity are allowed to obscure the bonds of our common humanity.

The plight of persecuted and endangered Christian communities in the Middle East is a particular challenge to the whole world. Pope Francis has said: “Dear brothers and sisters who are so persecuted, I know how much you suffer, I know that you are stripped of everything. I am with you in the faith of the one who has conquered evil!”

I call on the international community not to tolerate the denial of basic human rights and to protect the safety of those trapped in the conflict zones, as well as those who risk their lives to bring much-needed humanitarian aid.

Pope Francis has said: “Prayer helps us not let ourselves be defeated by evil or resign ourselves to violence and hatred having the upper hand over dialogue and reconciliation”. I therefore invite everybody to join in solidarity with all who are suffering in the Middle East and to pray, both personally and at Masses, for peace and justice in these lands.

+ John McAreavey

- **Bishop John McAreavey is Bishop of Dromore and Chairman of the Irish Bishops’ Council for Justice and Peace.**
- **Special prayers for peace will be circulated to all parishes for use this coming weekend.**

## **Book of Condolence for Victims of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17**

**A book of condolence to enable people express their sympathies with the families of the victims of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 will be available in St Michan’s Church, Church Street, Dublin 7, this week.**

The church will be open from Wednesday July 23 until Sunday July 27 from 10.00 am until 4.00 pm daily to allow people sign the book of condolence. The completed book will then be handed over to the appropriate authorities.

## **New Chair for C of E Board of Education**

**The Bishop of Ely, the Rt Revd Stephen Conway, has accepted the invitation of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to be the lead bishop for Education.**

The role includes chairing the Church of England's national Board of Education and the National Society Council as well as negotiating with government departments and ministers. He will take up the post in the autumn succeeding the Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Revd John Pritchard who is retiring at the end of October.

Bishop Stephen will come to the role at a time of continuing change in education with church schools flourishing at all levels, expanding to meet the needs of the local community. Diocesan multi-academy trusts are changing the face of Church education locally maintaining high standards within the inclusive Christian ethos. Bishop Stephen is familiar with developments in his own diocese of Ely, where a Multi-Academy Trust currently comprising six primary academies will increase to 14 schools in the autumn. Ely also has two pioneering joint Anglican/Roman Catholic academies.

In a Church of England video interview released today(<http://bit.ly/1na45OT>) Bishop Stephen shares how his time at a church secondary school in south London provided his early Christian formation and equipped him to go to university - the first in his family to do so.

"It is an immense privilege to be asked to take on this role, especially as education continues to be such a key issue in our society. The Church of England has a deep commitment to education going back 200 years, and today some one million children are taught in more than 4,700 Church of England schools across the country.

"Our work with children and young people in schools, colleges, universities and voluntary settings is a vital part of our mission as we seek to enable everyone to have a life enhancing encounter with the Christian faith and the person of Jesus Christ. I am committed to ensuring that we serve whole communities by providing education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that continues to happen."

Bishop John Pritchard said: "The Church of England has been playing a vital role in the education of our children for the last 200 years and I am passionate about the role our church schools play in the life of the nation. The last few years have seen a time of unprecedented change in the world of education, but I believe the Church has responded to the challenges with energy and vision, and will continue to do so. It has been a huge privilege to serve the Church by chairing the Board. I am delighted to be passing on the



baton to Bishop Stephen who I know will bring a great deal of wisdom to the role."



## **Pope calls for prayers as militants chase all Christians out of Mosul**

**As the last Iraqi Christians in Mosul fled the city, Pope Francis has urgently called for prayers, dialogue and peace.**

"Violence isn't overcome with violence. Violence is conquered with peace," the Pope said before leading thousands of pilgrims gathered in St Peter's Square in a moment of silent prayer on Sunday.

"Our brothers and sisters are persecuted, they are chased away," he said, as he assured Christians in all of Iraq and the Middle East of his "constant prayers".

The Pope's plea came as the last Christian families living in Mosul were forced from the city after facing increasing threats, violence and intimidation.

The Islamic State group, also known as ISIS, which has taken control of Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, was threatening to kill any Christians who did not convert to Islam or pay a tax, Syriac Patriarch Ignace Joseph III Younan told Vatican Radio.

The militants in Mosul also burned to the ground the building housing the Syriac bishop's office, residence and library, and everything inside, he said.

ISIS fighters "have already threatened that if they don't convert to Islam, all Christians will be murdered. It's terrible. This is a disgrace for the whole international community," he added.

"Whom are they getting their weapons from? From these extremist nations in the (Persian) Gulf, with the approval of Western political leaders because they need their oil."

The patriarch said the world community must uphold human rights and the freedom of religion.

"We are in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon: We Christians weren't imported, we've been here for millennia and, therefore, we have the right to be treated as human beings and citizens of these countries," he said.

Patriarch Younan spoke with Pope Francis by telephone while visiting Rome over the weekend and told him of the "disastrous" situation in Mosul.

The Pope said "he was following closely and with anxiety the plight of Christians" in Mosul, the patriarch told the Catholic News Service.

During their nine-minute phone conversation, the patriarch begged the Pope "to continue intensifying efforts with the powerful of this world" and to warn them "that it is a mass purification based on religion which is underway in the province of Ninevah," whose capital is Mosul.

## Press Review

### Guard

Stephen Bates writes in the diary column comparing David Cameron's reshuffle last week with the Church of England's appointment process for promoting women to the episcopate. He writes, that [now it has finally taken the plunge](http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jul/21/church-of-england-female-bishops-house-of-lords-diary), the C of E is desperate not just to get a female candidate into the ranks of the junior episcopate - the suffragans - but to go the whole hog with a diocesan bishop who can go straight into the top tier and the House of Lords.

<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jul/21/church-of-england-female-bishops-house-of-lords-diary>

**Times**

Opinion column by Oliver Kamm mentioned how the Church of England last week agreed an alternative text for christening services that removed mention of the Devil. He writes, that the problem, according to one bishop, was that "the Devil has been turned into a cartoon-like character of no particular malevolence".

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/columnists/article4153862.ece>

**FT**

Article that says the Church of England's prolonged struggle to sell its stake in Wonga, the payday lender, illustrates the problems that investors can encounter when they lock up their capital in illiquid private vehicles instead of buying publicly traded securities that offer a straightforward exit. However, buying and selling positions in existing private equity funds in the secondary market is becoming increasingly popular, attracting growing interest from institutional investors.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b67960fc-0c35-11e4-943b-00144feabdc0.html?siteedition=intl#axzz38AexpDy>

**Tel/Times/BBC**

Reports that Jihadist militants have taken over a monastery in northern Iraq, one of the country's best-known Christian landmarks, and expelled its resident monks, a cleric and residents. Islamic State (IS) fighters stormed Mar (Saint) Behnam, a fourth-century monastery run by the Syriac Catholic church near the predominantly Christian town of Qaraqosh, on Sunday, the sources said. A member of the Syriac clergy said the monks pleaded to be allowed to save some of the monastery's relics but the fighters refused and ordered them to leave on foot with nothing but their clothes.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/10980404/Jihadists-seize-ancient-Iraqi-monastery-and-expel-monks.html>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/middleeast/iraq/article4153752.ece>

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-28408926#sa-ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_source=PublicRSS20-sa](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-28408926#sa-ns_mchannel=rss&ns_source=PublicRSS20-sa)

**Tel**

Report that Israel's offensive in Gaza has forced almost 90,000 Palestinians to flee their homes - and this total rises daily, or even hourly. It states last Friday, the United Nations said 30,000 people were sheltering inside its schools and other properties in Gaza; by Monday, that figure had nearly trebled and that the UN is struggling to provide food, water and bedding for the influx. Chris Gunness, spokesman for the UN Relief and Works Agency, said the "huge displacement" was causing "unimaginable human suffering"

that could only worsen the longer the fighting continued.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/10981004/Gaza-conflict-a-huge-population-on-the-move-in-a-tiny-enclave-UN-fears-humanitarian-disaster.html>

### **Times**

Report that parents would choose to have girls rather than boys if they had the chance to select, according to a fertility expert. Daniel Potter, who treats women in the United States, where gender selection is permitted, said that four out of five British patients who travelled to his clinic were choosing to have girls. Some women had become desperate for a daughter, especially if they had had a couple of sons, he said. It states sex selection is banned in the United Kingdom unless it is for purely medical reasons, such as the risk of passing on a debilitating genetic condition through the male line.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/health/child-health/article4154149.ece>

### **Obituary**

#### **Times**

Obituary report on the Rev Dr John Hughes, who was described as an influential Cambridge theologian and academic tipped for high office in the Church of England. It states John Hughes, the highly popular Dean of Chapel and Chaplain at Jesus College, Cambridge, was recognised by his peers as one of the most significant Anglican thinkers of his generation. In a speech to the General Synod, after Hughes's death in a car crash, the Bishop of Coventry, Christopher Cocksworth, said he had been on the point of nominating Hughes, at only 35, to the Faith and Order Advisory Commission of the General Synod - the senior theological body in the Church.

[http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/obituaries/article4153847.ece?CMP=OTH-gnws-standard-2014\\_07\\_21](http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/opinion/obituaries/article4153847.ece?CMP=OTH-gnws-standard-2014_07_21)