

## The essential brief on the Irish churches

### Award winning Scottish choir on Irish tour



**A Choired Taste is a mixed-voice community choir based in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire with almost 70 members from all walks of life.**

They sing a wide variety of music including sacred, folk, musicals, pop, ballads, movie music, classical, opera, spirituals and light jazz. The choir also fundraises for national charities, and has raised more than £39,000 since it was founded in 2009.

A Choired Taste has won Overall Best Adult Choir at the Ayrshire Music Festival for the past five years, and this year also won the award for Best Choral Performance of the entire festival.

At this year's Glasgow Musical Festival, A Choired Taste won the class for Adult Mixed Voice Choirs, and was also awarded the Glasgow Orpheus Trophy for Best Overall Choir.

Musical Director Liam Baillie, said: 'We have taken part in two tours. Our first

tour in 2011 was to Northern Ireland, where we performed concerts in Joymount Presbyterian Church, Carrickfergus, Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church, Bangor, and Killead Prebyterian Church.

‘We enjoyed our first tour so much that we decided to go on an international tour last year to Belgium, where we performed concerts in St Salvator’s Cathedral, Bruges, and St Michielskerk, Ghent, and well as having the wonderful opportunity to perform in the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate, Ypres. We also had some very poignant moments, singing on various war cemeteries and war memorials.’

Liam added: ‘This concert in St Anne’s Cathedral is part of our third concert tour, and we will be performing three concerts: Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast, and Killead Presbyterian Church.’

The concert begins at 1pm on Sunday August 10. All are welcome.

## **Wales hosts international GFS conference**

**Wales will host the international conference of a Christian society which promotes the welfare of girls and young women this weekend.**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Girls’ Friendly Society (GFS) week-long world conference will be held at Swansea University from July 25-August 3. More than 180 women and girls from across the globe will attend the event which will be chaired by the society’s current world president, the Revd Glenys Payne, from Llanelli.

GFS, which was founded in 1875, works with girls and young women in churches and community projects in 23 countries across the world.

The conference will open with a service at Brecon Cathedral on Saturday at 2pm at which the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, John Davies, will preach. Speakers during the week include the Rev’d Rose Hudson Wilkins, Speaker’s Chaplain in the House of Commons and Chaplain to the Queen and Lynne Tembey, Worldwide President of Mothers’ Union. Delegates will also visit the Senedd to meet Ann Jones, AM for the Vale of Clwyd and Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee and Keith Towler, the Children’s Commissioner for Wales.

On Friday, August 1 from [1.30.pm](#) many delegates will wear national dress and set up stalls with items specific to their country. Children and young people will be attending and craft workshops will be available.

The week will close with a colourful and informal service at St Mary's Church, Swansea, on August 3 at which the Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan, will preach and commission Val Gribble, of Australia, as World President of the GFS for 2015 - 2017. The service starts at 2pm and many delegates will wear national dress. The final day will conclude at 6.45pm with a reception with Lord Mayor of Swansea and a gala dinner.

Revd Glenys Payne says "We are really excited at the prospect of welcoming GFS members from all over the world. We hope the conference will forge new friendships, empower the members and promote international well being. It is also an opportunity for us to showcase Wales and some of what we have to offer."

## **Pope 'updated' on church in Ireland**

**The Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Charles Brown, has met Pope Francis in the Vatican to update him on the church in Ireland.**

Irish Independent - It is believed the pontiff was briefed on the ongoing process of renewal in the Irish church – which Pope Francis's predecessor, [Benedict XVI](#), instigated with the apostolic visitation which concluded in 2012.

The American archbishop is now two years into his first diplomatic role. He has overseen eight new appointments to the Irish hierarchy in that time, the most recent being the new bishop of Elphin, Dr Kevin Doran, who was ordained earlier this month.

### **Abuse**

The Vatican briefing follows closely on the meeting between the Pope and two Irish survivors of clerical abuse, which was widely regarded as a success.

However, Dr Brown will also undoubtedly have raised the ongoing thorny issue of the Irish church's dissident priests, five of whom have been censured to varying degrees by the Vatican's doctrinal watchdog, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith.

Some of the priests are members of the Association of Catholic Priests (ACP) and Dr Brown has yet to meet any representative of the group, despite the fact that it has over 1,000 Irish priest members.

Last weekend, Dr Brown publicly criticised those who "are constantly predicting the demise of the Catholic Church in Ireland".

- See more at: <http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/pope-updated-on-church-in-ireland-30455731.html#sthash.iHEWG1Ee.dpuf>

## **Meriam meets Pope Francis after arriving in Italy**

**Meriam Ibrahim, the Christian Sudanese woman who was spared a death sentence for renouncing Islam, has met Pope Francis after arriving in Italy following a diplomatic effort by the the Italian government.**



According to the Daily Telegraph, the Vatican was also involved in the negotiations. Ms Ibrahim, 27, was flown to Rome's Ciampino airport with her family and Italy's deputy minister for foreign affairs, Lapo Pistelli. Italy's prime minister Matteo Renzi met them at the airport. He said: "Today is a day of celebration."

From the airport Ms Ibrahim and her family were taken to the Pope guesthouse residency, the Domus Sanctae Marthae, in the Vatican.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, told journalists that the encounter in the Pope's residence was marked by "affection" and "great serenity and joy."

They had "a beautiful conversation," during which the Pope thanked Ibrahim for "her steadfast witness of faith," the priest said.

Ibrahim thanked the Pope for the Church's prayers and support during her plight, Father Lombardi said.

The Vatican spokesman said the meeting was a sign of the Pope's "closeness, solidarity and presence with all those who suffer for their faith,"

adding that Ibrahim's ordeal has come to represent the serious challenges many people face in living out their faith.

The informal conversation also touched upon the family's plans now that Ibrahim is free, he said. The Pope gave the family a few small gifts, including papal rosaries.

Ms Ibrahim, whose father was Muslim but whose mother was an Orthodox Christian from Ethiopia, was sentenced to death over charges of apostasy in April.

She married her husband Daniel Wani, a Christian, in a church ceremony in 2011. Muslim women in Sudan are prohibited from marrying non-Muslims.

The sentence was condemned by the US, the United Nations and Amnesty International, among others. Sudan's high court quashed the death sentence in June, but upon her release she was prevented from leaving the country after officials questioned the validity of her travel documents.

Ms Ibrahim took refuge in the US embassy where she was visited by Mr Pistelli two weeks ago. Ms Ibrahim arrived in Italy with her husband, 18-month-old son and baby girl, who she gave birth to while shackled in prison in May.

## **Peter Tatchell: I am considering outing bishops who discipline married gay clergy**



**Peter Tatchell has threatened to name gay bishops, if they discipline members of the clergy who have entered into [Image result for Peter Tatchell photos same-sex marriage](#).**

Pink News - Gay hospital chaplain Jeremy Pemberton had his [Permission to Officiate revoked by the Bishop of Southwell and Nottingham after he married his same-sex partner](#), while [London vicar Andrew Cain said he "fully expects" to be punished for marrying last month](#).

The veteran rights campaigner Peter Tatchell said this week that he would out any gay bishops who discipline their married colleagues.

Speaking to Kelvin Holdsworth of St Mary's Cathedral, Tatchell said: "I believe people have a right to privacy so long as they are not using their own power and authority to harm other people and when other people are being caused harm and suffering we have a duty to try and stop it.

"If this is the only way, it is certainly not the preferable way, it's not the first option but as a last resort I think it is morally and ethically justifiable."

I am considering outing gay [@c of e](#) bishops who discipline gay clergy who marry <http://t.co/wtKDYO4oRv> [@LGCM](#) [@changingatt](#) [@LondonLGBTPrude](#)

— Peter Tatchell (@PeterTatchell) [July 24, 2014](#)

Holdsworth writes in a blog post: "My own view that it is perfectly justifiable to out those who are gay who use their authority to inhibit the lives of those gay people in their care.

"It seems to me that it is perfectly legitimate for anyone with concrete evidence of a bishop who has supported an anti-gay policy such as the recent pastoral statement in the Church of England and who is in a same-sex partnership, to draw attention to that hypocrisy in public."

Labour councillor and prospective parliamentary candidate Wes Streeting, who has worked for Stonewall, attacked Tatchell for the approach.

[@PeterTatchell](#) That's not the right approach. It's not necessarily hypocritical; one can be gay and not support same sex marriage. — Wes Streeting (@wesstreeting) [July 24, 2014](#)

In 1994, Tatchell's LGBT rights group OutRage! named 10 bishops in an attempt to get them to clarify their sexuality.



**Christian Aid welcomes government ambition to tackle fgm and child marriage**

**Long-term solutions to end female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage are essential to ensure progress towards ending harmful practices, says [Christian Aid](#).**

Better opportunities for girls and women, supporting survivors and protecting girls at risk were among the key areas to be addressed at the Girl Summit today (Tuesday), hosted by the UK Prime Minister and jointly organised by the Department for International Development (DfID) and UNICEF.

“We welcome the Summit and DfID’s ambition to tackle these issues and the recognition of the key role of faith-based and civil society organisations in the fight against both practices,” said Chiara Capraro, Christian Aid’s Policy Advisor on Gender.

“We want to remind political and faith leaders that this commendable ambition needs long-term commitment and investment to address the damaging social and cultural norms that reinforce these practices. Working with communities, education and engaging with religious and traditional leaders is essential.”

Christian Aid wants to see the ending of FGM and child, early and forced marriage included in the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), set to replace the current Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) when they expire in 2015.

Christian Aid therefore welcomes the inclusion of a target on harmful practices within the recently agreed report from the UN’s Open Working Group on SDGs, and urges world leaders to take this forward as part of a specific stand-alone goal addressing the rights of women and girls.

Such a move could be a significant step forward in enhancing deepening global commitment to gender equality.

Approximately 140 million girls and women are currently living with the consequences of FGM globally, of whom 92 million live in Africa. Worldwide, more than 60 million girls are child brides, forced into marriage before the age of 18.

Ms Capraro added: “Christian Aid works with partner organisations around the world to address the rights of women and girls, as well as harmful practices including FGM and child early and forced marriages. To coincide with this Summit, Christian Aid has launched a new strategy, [Gender Justice](#)

for All, to share its own commitment to long-term change and gender equality.”

## **Uganda Anglican Church seeks support to build martyrs museum**

**The Anglican Church in Uganda has begun initial preparations to construct a museum at the Uganda Martyrs Heritage Centre in Namugongo, a township in Central Uganda.**

The Chairman of the Project, the Archbishop Emeritus of Uganda, Livingstone Mpalanyi Nkoyoyo, made the announcement in a recent letter to supporters and friends.

“The purpose of the Project is to develop the entire Martyrs Heritage Centre where the first seed of Christianity was sown in Uganda, possibly in East Africa and the whole of Africa during the reign of King Mwanga Basammula 11,” he said.

According to the Project Chairman, the proposed museum is based on the need to provide “empirical information on the Uganda martyrs with the construction of a one-stop centre in which information can be obtain on issues related to the martyrs.”

The project, which is estimated at about US\$14 million, is intended to create a “national and international tourist centre giving honour to the brave men who were killed and also depicting the rich religious and cultural values of Uganda.”

Considering the large sums of money required to complete this project, the Archbishop Emeritus said the construction would be carried out in “justifiable phases so as not to fatigue the willing contributors.”

He explained: “Work will begin with the core site where the main killing...of the martyrs took place. This will include a big shelter estimated at 2 billion Uganda Shillings (approx. USD 800,000) which will house the command post of the Chief Executioner of the prison where the convicts were kept for some time before they were finally killed.”

He said that the shelter will also house the fire wood spot where dry fire wood was kept in readiness to burn the convicts and the tree to which the convicts were tied and had their bodies dismembered.



“The facility will also have the burning spot where the convicts were burnt to death and the Martyrs Memorial Church where the remains of the martyrs are kept,” he explained.

The second phase of the ambitious project will include the construction of a three-storey building to accommodate offices, religious and cultural artifacts, a resource centre and a library.

“The third phase of the project will cover other items like a children’s recreation centre, a 100-room self-contained guest house, a multipurpose recreation ground, a perimeter wall for security,” said the Archbishop Emeritus Nkoyoyo.

“We will also do some work on the Uganda martyrs well and a facility for bottling the water, as well as doing improvements on the worship site where the Martyrs Day services and are conducted.”

The Abp Emeritus Nkoyoyo and the rest of the development committee has the support of the current Archbishop of the Anglican Church in Uganda, the Most Revd Stanley Ntagali and other Christians there.

He has since called on Christians world over and other well-wishers to help in whatever way possible in the realisation of this ambitious project which will help “invigorate the conservation and appreciation of Uganda religious heritage among all ages.”

For more details go to <http://www.ugandamartyrsmuseumnamugongo-cou.org/> or contact [restgardens@yahoo.com](mailto:restgardens@yahoo.com)

## Press review

Reports on yesterday's Lords debate on the importance of freedom of belief and religion introduced by Lord Alton of Liverpool

### Mail

The Archbishop of Canterbury should not feel downbeat about his lack of Twitter followers compared to the Pope and Dalai Lama, Baroness Lane-Fox of Soho, who co-founded online travel company [lastminute.com](http://lastminute.com), told the Lords. She said she hoped the Archbishop was not "dispirited" with this Twitter following as she spoke about the importance of an open internet to religious freedom. She said: "It seems you can hardly be a self-respecting religious leader without an active social media management. The Pope has

4.2 million Twitter followers, the Dalai Lama 9.4 million - I hope your grace the Archbishop of Canterbury isn't dispirited with his 60,000."

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-2704274/FREE-SPEECH-NEEDS-OPEN-INTERNET.html#ixzz38SUdHIRR>

### **BBC (video)**

Report that the world is experiencing a "global crisis" of repression of religious freedom and Britain should lead a "diplomatic war" on opposing religious extremism, members of the House of Lords urged the government yesterday. Includes comment from Bishop of Coventry, Christopher Cocksworth.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/democracylive/house-of-lords-28463863>

### **Tel**

Report from the same debate where the former Chief Rabbi Lord Sacks said that an upsurge in religious persecution which threatens to drag humanity "back to the dark ages" is being made worse by the impact of social media sites such as Twitter. He said attempts to wipe out Christianity in parts of the Middle East and the murder of followers across much of Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia amount to the "religious equivalent of ethnic cleansing".

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10989576/Social-media-fuelling-surge-in-back-to-the-dark-ages-religious-persecution-Lord-Sacks.html>

### **Guard**

Further report on the plight of Christians in Mosul, Iraqi. Those who were forced to flee the city under threat of forced conversion or execution by jihadists have spoken of their terror as churches were turned into mosques and their homes and property confiscated.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/24/iraqi-christians-mosul-isis-convert-islam-or-be-executed>

### **BBC**

Report that sham marriages have become an "industry of deceit" that is increasing at an "alarming rate", chair of the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee Keith Vaz has warned. He questioned whether the government knew the "scale of the problem". The committee has called for more powers for registrars to stop suspicious weddings and better training to identify potential shams. The report noted that new measures to combat the practice, had been introduced this year, including a longer minimum period between a marriage being announced and a ceremony going ahead, and checks on

church, as well as civil, marriages.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-28474696>

### **Ind**

Report that Council registrars should be given the power to call off suspected bogus weddings with the numbers soaring to thousands every year, MPs from the Commons Home Affairs Select Committee said yesterday. Report added that in 2012, a Church of England vicar the Rev Canon Dr John Magumba was jailed for two and a half years after carrying out dozens of sham marriages in Rochdale, Greater Manchester.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/registrars-should-have-power-to-call-off-sham-marriages-say-mps-9627180.html>

### **Guard/Mail/Tel(video)/Ind**

Report that Meriam Ibrahim and her family met Pope Francis yesterday at the Vatican. Meriam, a Christian Sudanese woman, was spared the death sentence for apostasy in Sudan earlier this year. She is married to a Christian US citizen and was sentenced to death for converting from Islam to Christianity.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2014/jul/24/pope-francis-meriam-ibrahim-sudan-christian-death-sentence-apostasy-video>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/video/news/video-1107574/Pope-meets-Sudanese-woman-converted-Christianity.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/italy/10987694/Sudanese-Christian-woman-Meriam-Ibrahim-arrives-in-Italy.html>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/pope-francis-holds-very-affectionate-meeting-with-sudanese-apostasy-woman-meriam-ibrahim-after-she-arrives-in-rome-9626154.html>

### **Guard (diary)**

Stephen Bates asks "Will there be a resounding silence in September at the World Nuclear Association symposium and exhibition in Central Hall, Westminster?", saying there is to be Russian input. He notes there will be a reception for the the world's nuclear industries will be at Westminster Abbey.

<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jul/24/stephen-bates-diary-tenex-crabble>

### **Mail**

Report that a fraudster stole a dead child's identity and pretended to be a vicar to claim £250,000 in benefits she was not entitled to. Yvonne Doyle conned the Department of Work and Pensions and Milton Keynes Council for

20 years and has been ordered to pay back £107,000 by a judge at Reading Crown Court. The 64-year-old was jailed for seven years in December after stealing a dead four-year-old's identity, using the name of Carol Ann Naylor, who died in 1951. She also posed as a vicar named Reverend Naylor and took on the alias of Bridgette Meally, who died in 1999, to make the claims <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2704633/Fraudster-stole-dead-childs-identity-pretended-vicar-illegally-claim-250-000-benefits-20-years.html#ixzz38SRT9jwr>

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