

## Recognition of Cork C of I engagement with LGBTI awareness

**Bishop Paul Colton (individual award) and the Reverend Sarah Marry (award to St Anne's Church, Shandon) at the 'Allies for Inclusion' awards in Cork City Hall.**



Bishop Paul Colton and St Anne's Church Shandon received "Allies for Inclusion" awards last week. At the formal launch of this year's LGBTI+ Awareness Week in



**The Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Mick Finn, presented Bishop Paul Colton with an 'Allies for Inclusion' award.**

Cork City Hall by the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Mick Finn, awards were presented to 'Allies for Inclusion.'

Recognising the pioneering steps taken by St Anne's Parish, Shandon in Cork, for leading a way that others have followed since, and referring in particular to the work done by the former rector, the Reverend Brian O'Rourke, and in the years since by the Reverend Sarah Marry, together with the people of the Parish, the parish was the only faith group to receive an 'Allies for Inclusion' award. The Reverend Sarah Marry received the award from the Lord Mayor of Cork on behalf of the Parish.

Along with this one 'faith champion' award, there were eight awards to public service champions, and six community champions.

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The Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, was one of just seven people who was honoured with an individual award. The other individual recipients were: Pat Ledwidge and Ann Doherty of Cork City Council, Catherine Clancy (a former Lord Mayor of Cork), Cllr Tony Fitzgerald, Cllr John Buttimer, and the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Mick Finn.

## **Irish Catholic Bishops plead for ‘informed voting’ in EU elections**

With European Parliament elections taking place from 23-26 May, the Catholic Bishops of Ireland are highlighting the Christian values which motivated the founding of the European Union.

In a statement released on Monday, Irish Bishops also warn voters of the rise of populism and address the Irish concerns over Brexit.

In addition to members of the European Parliament, the election will also see the appointment of a new President of the European Commission, with 6 candidates in the running for the position.

Highlighting both the right and privilege of each citizen to exercise their vote, the Bishops note the potentially wide-reaching effects of the elections, saying “Politics is local; it is also regional, national, European and international. What is decided by MEPs in the European Parliament affects us all here on the island of Ireland. Similarly, our vote and our elected representatives in Europe can influence debates and decisions taken at EU level, which often have the



potential to contribute to development and peace in the wider world.”

### Brexit uncertainty

A plea for informed voting follows, with voters challenged to develop a knowledge and understanding of the EU Parliament and other European institutions, particularly with regard to the potential impact of Brexit.

Acknowledging the fact that the Brexit issue evokes strong emotions on all sides of the argument, the Bishops invite voters to look “honestly and critically at where the European Union – and its Member States – have fallen short in realising its fundamental values, let us not forget to appreciate the historic and significant achievements of the European project.”

The statement ends with a call to not disengage from the European project and suggesting that it is now more

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important than ever that the Irish people take part in these elections and the decisions which could well shape the future of both their country and the European Union itself.

The Bishops invoke not only their own Christian heritage but also that of the European Union in order to illustrate their point.

“In looking to the future of Europe with hope, we remember the Irish missionary, Saint Columbanus, who has been described as ‘Ireland’s first European’. We also remember Edith Stein (Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross), co-patroness of Europe, who suffered and died as a result of war in Europe. We hope never to see such horror in Europe again. The European project, its institutions and its political method, are key to promoting and consolidating a lasting peace.

“On the eve of the European Parliament elections, we continue to pray through the intercession of Saint Columbanus and Saint Teresa for wisdom and right judgement for our political and civic leaders in our own country, in Europe, and throughout the world.”

## **C of I bishops urged to explore different paths in ordination training**

At the C of I General Synod last week bishops were urged to explore various pathways in ordination training.

A private member’s motion asking the House of Bishops to review the pathway to stipendiary ordination with regard to



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simplifying and shortening the training route for those applicants that have already obtained theological qualifications was moved at General Synod today. The motion further requests that if the House of Bishops has any recommendations in relation to the foregoing, it would communicate same to General Synod.

Proposer, Andrew Brannigan, said the motion sought an additional pathway which would increase the number of people studying in CITI. He said there were people who already have qualifications in theology and a pathway should be available to them to avoid them having to follow the traditional route of foundation course and three year masters.

“These people have a lot to offer and we need them. This question this motion asks is if we expect them to follow the foundation course and three year masters ... when they are already theologically trained. The masters route has been reviewed positively but it is not the only route. We already allow the ordination of Church Army ministers and people from other denominations so should we consider this for other people,” he said adding that there was a rapidly approaching crisis in ordination numbers.

Colin Morris (Dromore) seconded the motion saying there was a need for ministers in parishes. Shortening and simplifying training, where appropriate, would get the right people in the right roles in parishes.

He said people were interested in serving the church but that passion towards stipendiary ministry may be dampened for some by the prospect of repeating training

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they have already done and entering into a four or five year process that takes them away from their career and families. A more simple training path may encourage them. He said the current system makes no allowance for previous theological study and people needed to know that the church placed a value on their training.

Speaking to the motion, Gillian Purser (Cashel, Ferns and Ossory) said she agreed with the motion through personal family experience but said she had some reservations. She said she had a certificate from the Pontifical University of Maynooth but she said that the House of Bishops, if the motion was passed, must ensure that the qualification comes from an internationally recognised university as there would be some theological qualifications which would not be in line with the theology of the Church of Ireland.

Archdeacon Andrew Foster (Armagh) urged people to tread carefully as ministerial formation was about living in community in CITI, the rhythm of worship and the elements of ministry that matter. He commended calibre of the training provided in ministerial formation in CITI. A theological education is different from ministerial formation, he added.

The Revd Alan McCann (Connor) echoed what Archdeacon Foster stated that formation was very important. He said that the work of the soul was slow work but as a society and a church we are often moving too fast. We need formation in college, he said, diversity of opinion and learning from those at opposite ends of the theological scale. He said there is an individual learning agreement which allows bishops to explore with CITI.

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Peter White (Killaloe) said his instinct was that the motivation behind the motion was good but it needed to be approached with the greatest of caution. He said that the evaluation of standards of any course was a highly specialised thing and is not something that can be done by anyone and it cannot be rushed.

Michael Bower (Connor) said he saw the motion as removing impediments to vocations. He questioned the mindset of people of a certain age, of which he said he was one. He warned that the mindset could affect the spirit of the motion which was to remove impediments to vocation.

Responding to the debate Mr Brannigan said there was no question of short cuts but asks the question that their experience and qualifications be built on.

Members of Synod agreed to pass the motion.

## **Church of Scotland General Assembly discusses radical proposals on future of church**

Radical proposals to future-proof the Church of Scotland for generations to come are taking centre stage at the General Assembly which is underway.

Commissioners, made up of ministers, elders and deacons, are debating and vote on two “bold” plans to reform governance and the practices of the charity, which can trace its roots to 1560.



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The objective is to improve the welfare of the whole Church, ensuring the proper stewardship of resources and making mission work in a local setting a top priority.

Rev Dr George Whyte, Principal Clerk to the General Assembly, said: “The intention is that wherever you live in Scotland, you will be seeing a Church which is deeply committed to the communities it seeks to serve and up for the challenge of these times.”

Proposed changes include the creation of a 12-person trustee body to hold responsibility for finances.

The number of presbyteries could be reduced from 45 to 12 and Kirk Sessions could be reduced in size with local churches retaining more resources to support mission work.

*Bold plans*



## **The General Assembly is the highest court of the Church of Scotland**

A Growth Fund of between £20million to £25 million, has been proposed to plant new worshipping communities and to fund new work with children, young people and young adults.

The fund will also be used for Church projects that support communities across Scotland.

Commissioners will be asked to consider plans to reduce administration costs by 20-30% and merge four of the Church's Councils into two.

They will also consider whether CrossReach, the operating name of the Social Care Council, should become a more arms-length, self-sustaining organisation.

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Dr Whyte said: “This General Assembly will be asked to make bold plans for the future of the Church of Scotland.

“There will be proposals to invest in growth, to work in new ways and to put mission right at the top of our priorities.”

“If Commissioners accept the proposals the Church will see a radical shift of resources and energy towards the local church.”

## **World Council of Churches opens up millions of ethical resources online in new partnership**

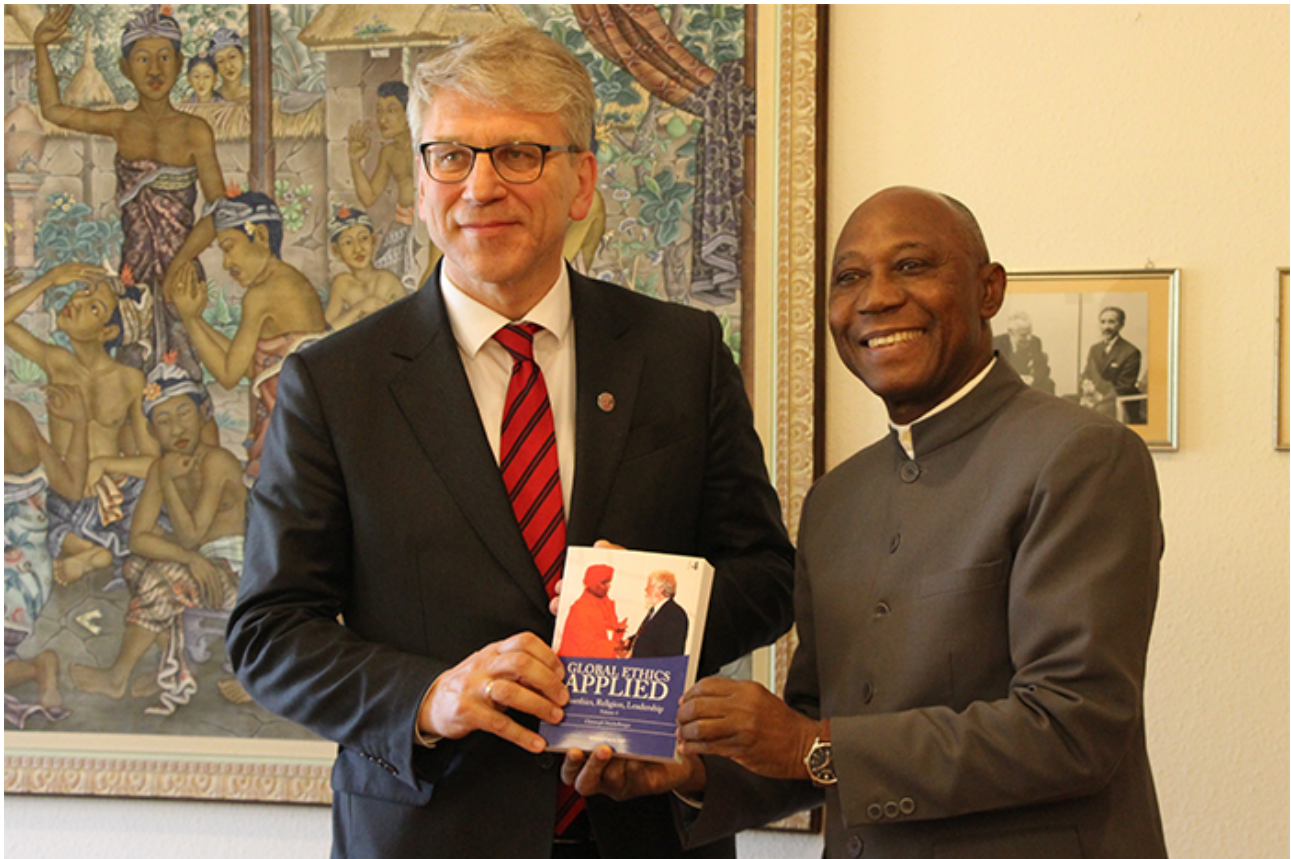
A new partnership between the World Council of Churches (WCC) and an international ethics network will unlock a vast global bank of resources for ethical reflection and action. Beginning in June, the new contract between the WCC and *Globethics.net* will allow all WCC digital documents to be available in the *Globethics* online library, which currently includes some 3.5 million titles.

The two organisations reached an agreement related to the WCC Online Academy, which will continue to offer courses on many aspects of ecumenism as well as a joint series of publications. Next month the first online seminar, on “Food Security”, will be led by Dr Manoj Kurian.

The WCC General Secretary, Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, said: “there is an urgent need to expand online education to better understand the role of the ecumenical movement in



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**The Revd Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches (left) with Globethics Executive Director, Professor Dr Obiora Ike.**

today's world. We will use our common resources to encourage coexistence and bridge building.”

*Globethics.net* is a worldwide ethics network that provides an electronic platform for ethical reflection and action through its website, [globethics.net](http://globethics.net). Its aim is to ensure that people in all regions of the world are empowered to reflect and act on ethical issues. It was set up to ensure that people in Africa, Asia and Latin-America, have access to good quality and up to date knowledge resources.

*Globethics* executive director, Prof Dr Obiora Ike, said:  
“Building bridges and spiritual bonds which spread the Word

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and universal love beyond boundaries and barriers happens through shared values and ethical linkages where education is key. The WCC and *Globethics.net* remain committed to this service of stewardship to a humanity in need and hungry for this mission."

## **Today in Christian history**

**May 21, 1382:** The "Earthquake Synod" in London (so named because a temblor interrupted the proceedings), led by Archbishop Courtenay, condemns as heretical 24 theses from the writings of John Wycliffe. Wycliffe later claimed that God sent the earthquake "because the friars had put heresy upon Christ. The earth trembled as it did when Christ was damned to bodily death".

**May 21, 1471:** Painter, engraver, and woodcut designer Albrecht Durer is born in Nuremberg, Germany. Durer, one of the greatest artists of his Day , almost certainly converted to Protestantism in the 1520s.

**May 21, 1527:** Anabaptist minister Michael Sattler, a former Benedictine monk who left the monastery and married after reading Paul's letters, is tortured and killed in Rottenburg, Germany. His wife was drowned eight Days later.

**May 21, 1536:** The General Assembly of Geneva officially adopts the Reformation and separates from the Roman Catholic diocese. John Calvin, who became forever associated with the Swiss city, arrives two months later.

**May 21, 1738:** Charles Wesley, who would cofound Methodism with his brother, converts to Christianity while sick with pleurisy. "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise



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and believe, and thou shalt be healed of thy infirmities," a mysterious voice told him in his sickbed. "I believe, I believe," he replied. One year later on this date, he wrote "O for a Thousand Tongues" to commemorate the event.

**May 21, 1780:** English Quaker and social reformer Elizabeth Fry is born in Norwich, England. Though involved in reforms from education to poverty, her greatest burden was to improve prison life.

**May 21, 1789:** The first American Presbyterian General Assembly convenes in Philadelphia.

**May 21, 1832:** Hudson Taylor, English missionary to China and founder of the China Inland Mission, is born in Barnsley, Yorkshire.

**May 21, 1864:** Missionary-priest Joseph de Veuster (better known as Father Damien) is ordained a priest in Honolulu. In 1873, at his own request, he was sent to a settlement of lepers on the island of Molokai, where he later contracted the disease and died.

## **News Links May 21**

[Education crisis could lead to four-day week in Northern Ireland schools: principal](#)

Belfast Telegraph

He was speaking after the call from **Church of Ireland** Bishop of Derry and Raphoe Ken Good for a political intervention to tackle the crisis. Addressing ...

[Irish Bishops plead for 'informed voting' in EU elections](#)

Vatican News

By John Waters. With European Parliament elections taking place from 23-26 May, the Catholic Bishops of **Ireland** are highlighting the Christian ...

[Irish voters urged to think carefully before divorce referendum](#)

La Croix International

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Bishop Nulty underlined the **Church's** belief that marriage breakdowns and divorces could be reduced through introducing socioeconomic policies that ...

[The 1995 referendum campaign was a thoroughly different beast to this one](#)  
[thejournal.ie](#)

Aside from the personal and social toll proponents of a change pointed to, **Ireland's** lack of divorce made the country an international outlier and there ...

[Opinion: Are we ready to let go of the Catholic Church's rituals?](#)  
[thejournal.ie](#)

I don't think it an over-exaggeration to suggest that this would mean the end of the established **Church** in **Ireland**, because I'm fairly certain that most ...

[Donal Lynch: 'How Ireland turned its back on religion, but kept Communion'](#)  
[Independent.ie](#)

Streaks of fake tan on the bouncing castle. A pop-up charity shop overflowing with tulle, lace, chiffon and tiny jackets with rosettes. Princess packages ...

[Historic Bessbrook church celebrates major renovation](#)

Belfast Telegraph

He paid tribute to the congregation and others for their hard work in restoring the interior of the beautiful mid-19th century **church**, which is on a hill ...

[Here's What Got Extremist Pastor Steven Anderson Banned from Ireland](#)

Phoenix New Times

"The good **news** is there are 50 less pedophiles in this world," Anderson, pastor of Tempe's Faithful Word Baptist **Church**, says in the video. "Because ...

[Church of England has 'failed' abuse survivors, say bishops](#)

ChristianToday

The failure of the **Church of England** to be a safe place for victims of abuse is a source of shame, bishops in the **Church of England** have said.

**AN INVITATION**  
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**from CNI**

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