

South India flourishing in Drumbeg parish



Revd Viji Varghese Eapen, Bishop Harold Miller, Revd Willie Nixon and Revd Dr Jacob Thomas.

May 28, 2019

On Saturday 25 May, Bishop Harold Miller was a special guest of the South Indian congregation that meets regularly in Drumbeg Parish Centre.

About 40 people from the Church of South India gather once a month for Holy Communion and the bishop was both celebrant and preacher.

The service is usually in their native language, but they make an exception when they have English speaking guests.

Everyone stayed on for a curry lunch and Bishop Harold and Liz posed for photos with the families. The hospitality was generous and the fellowship warm.



The Church of South India has its roots in the Kerala region of the country and is the result of the union of churches of

May 28, 2019

varying traditions Anglican, Methodist, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Reformed.

The rector of Drumbeg, Revd Willie Nixon, explained the connection with the parish, “The Church of South India congregation in Belfast started in 2007 under Jacob Thomas at the Belfast Bible College. Jacob always wanted to have a relationship the Anglican Church here, so in 2012 when I came to Drumbeg, he approached me to ask if they could use our church building. As it turned out, the numbers were too small for the church, so they began to meet in the old hall. And really that was the beginning of a relationship that saw Church of South India folks beginning to worship with us on a Sunday. We now have five of the families coming along every week and they’re very involved.”

“They’re a brilliant group of people, he continued. “I’ve found them very prayerful – very deeply prayerful actually – and very supportive of the spiritual things we do. They’re also very committed to Sunday School and seeing their children grow up in the faith and in their knowledge of the Bible.

“We share a really encouraging, exciting friendship and as Bishop Harold said at the end of the service, we treasure this unique expression of worship in the diocese.”

Inclusivity of GAA celebrated in St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin

Some of Ireland’s most coveted silverware took centre stage at a service celebrating inclusivity in the Gaelic Athletic

May 28, 2019

Association in St Patrick's Cathedral on Sundaylast, May 26).

The Sam Maguire and Liam MacCarthy cups were both present at the service of Choral Evensong which was led by Dean William Morton and sung by the Cathedral Choir in the presence of Archbishop Michael Jackson.



Dean William Morton, GAA President John Horan, the Revd Cliff Jeffers and Archbishop Michael Jackson with the Sam Maguire Cup in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.

GAA dignitaries from around the island were in attendance, including the president, John Horan, who gave the address. Former President of Ireland, Mary McAleese and GAA director general, Tom Ryan, read the lessons. The service was also attended by Cork man George Maguire, the



closest living relative to Sam Maguire.

Acknowledging the rich tapestry of cultures and creeds that, since 1884, have contributed to and continue to contribute to the enhancement of Gaelic games, culture and life in Ireland and beyond, John Horan said that sport was a great unifier.

He said that the organisation was

anti-racist and anti-sectarian and added that it was encouraging to see players of different ethnic backgrounds playing GAA. "When we support our team the only colour that should matter is the colour of the jersey," he stated.

Mr Horan said that the GAA would continue to work on inclusivity and had recently launched a new manifesto under the banner 'Where we all Belong'. The GAA had always aimed to reflect Irish society and if that was to continue in today's multicultural society, he said that the organisation

May 28, 2019

must encourage as many children as possible to join. He highlighted the cross community initiatives in Northern Ireland which aimed to bring communities together in sport.

The GAA must also be inclusive of the LGBT community, he said, noting that for the first time ever the organisation would have a presence at Pride this year.

“Today’s event highlights the fact that our games are open to all. We don’t need to know one another’s religion to kick, chase and puck a ball,” he concluded.

Following the service the new Sam Maguire Passport was officially launched by the GAA President. The passport trail takes people around Sam Maguire’s home town of Dunmanway in West Cork where they can learn more about the life of the man behind the cup.

Sam was a member of the Church of Ireland and the trail is part of a wider community project in the town which is being spearheaded by the Revd Cliff Jeffers, Rector of the Fanlobbus Union of Parishes, of which Dunmanway is part.

Mr Horan paid tribute to the Rector for driving the Sam Maguire project. “We pride ourselves in being a community organisation. Rev Cliff is so keen and so driven. He is doing something that is a big benefit to the community and to the GAA... This is a GAA story and he is giving new life to it. But it will also bring benefit to the community. It will put Dunmanway on the map,” he stated. Officially launching the Sam Maguire Passport he put the final stamp on the first passport which had been completed by a child from the parish.

May 28, 2019

Incoming Moderator honoured with award

The next Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the Minister of Maze Presbyterian Church, Rev William Henry, has been awarded an honorary Doctorate of Divinity. It was conferred upon him by the Presbyterian Theological Faculty, Ireland (PTFI) at its annual graduation ceremony at the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Assembly Buildings in Belfast.

The PTFI awards degrees by the authority of its Royal Charter, which was granted by Queen Victoria in 1881. Dr Henry was one of a number of recipients of various awards, which included 5 ministry students at Union Theological College (UTC) graduating with Postgraduate Diploma in Ministry and 2 students graduating with Graduate Certificates in Youth Ministry.

The citation was delivered by Rev Professor Michael McClenahan, Professor of Systematic Theology at UTC, who spoke about the years that he had known the Moderator-Designate, which included an eight week placement in Dr Henry's Maze congregation as part of his application for the ministry.

Describing him as his "respected brother in Jesus Christ and as a minister of the Gospel of God," to those graduating, their families and friends, members of Faculty and staff, Professor McClenahan also spoke of the Dr Henry's clear sense of God's call on his life to the ministry. This included serving in Whiteabbey Presbyterian Church, as Assistant Minister to Rev Trevor Gribben, who is now Clerk of the

May 28, 2019

General Assembly, and Dr Henry's call to Maze Presbyterian Church in 1997.



He also told those gathered in the Assembly Hall of Dr Henry's close involvement with the local community, his 20 year service on the Board of Governors of Meadow Bridge Primary School, for example, of which he was chairman for many years. Mention was also made of the additional responsibility he was given in 2001 for Ballinderry Presbyterian, where he is the Stated Supply minister. His service to the wider church and his work on various church bodies was also detailed.

Speaking of his congregation, and referring to the church's neighbours at the former prison a few miles away, Professor McClenahan said, "William was installed in Maze at a time

May 28, 2019

in the history of this province when ‘being installed in Maze’ meant only one thing to most people...”

“His ministry has been marked by a number of priorities: priorities with which he began his ministry and which he continues to prioritise. William describes his ministry as ‘nothing out of the ordinary’: a commitment to the Bible, to prayer, and to people. His preaching is clear and challenging. The claims of the Lord Jesus Christ are pressed on those who hear him,” he said.

Speaking of his early days at Maze, which he said was well known to the thousands and thousands of commuters who see it every day from the M1, “The large buildings and the young vibrant congregation should not mask for us the history of William’s ministry. By his own testimony the early years in the congregation were far from encouraging. There may be over 100 people in bible study groups today, but there were 6 at his first midweek, 5 at his second.”

Professor McClenahan, however, spoke of a key moment in those early years when a visiting speaker spoke about Joseph and the time that he spent in an Egyptian dungeon. The story not only strengthened Dr Henry’s resolve, but reassured him that he was in the place where God wanted him to be.

Looking to the immediate future, Professor McClenahan concluded by saying, “The church awaits his term of office with anticipation that his leadership will enable us to understand our contemporary situation more clearly and to grasp more fully the significance of Jesus Christ and his cross for this generation. We assure him, his wife Nora, and

May 28, 2019

children Bethany, Megan, and Connor of our warm good wishes and prayers for the year ahead.”

The evening was presided over by the Principal of Union Theological College, Very Rev Professor Stafford Carson. The former Moderator congratulated the Church’s next holder of the office on his honorary doctorate, along with the graduates and the ministry students in particular, congratulating them on reaching this stage in their preparation for ministry.

The Opening Night will be streamed live on the PCI website, www.presbyterianireland.org. It will also be broadcast live on BBC Radio Ulster 1341 Medium Wave at 7pm. The live stream will continue throughout the General Assembly, which closes on Friday 7 June. You can also follow the debates on Twitter @pciassembly using the hashtag #PCIGA19.

Bishop of Connor’s battle with depression

The Church of Ireland Bishop of Connor has recently opened up about his battle with depression, his childhood woes and admitted that he had to refocus his faith having lost sight of the original awe that led him to the church.

His new book ‘The Jewel In The Mess’ discusses these topics at length, with Bishop Alan commenting that being part of life’s mess has made him a more compassionate person.

May 28, 2019

The 62-year-old said: “I hadn’t lost my faith, but I had questions like everybody else. I just wanted to go back to the very basics of what brought me to the point of offering my life to serve God and the Church.

“It was Jesus. I wanted to examine this person who I’ve sought to follow all my life and in a sense rekindle that first love. I never lost my faith but I was trying to just refocus it.”

He continued: “From my perspective, when you’ve spent 25 years in parish life in one shape or form, when you’ve buried young children, when you’ve been with parents after a cot death, when you’ve been with a father whose son has just committed suicide, when you’ve watched those people suffer, you’ve got to wrestle with it.

“You can just say this is all fine, it’s not all fine. Life is really difficult and painful and messy for people.

“So what’s the Christian message into that? For me it’s that Jesus came into the mess of the world, he didn’t fix it, he lived among us, touched many lives, died and rose again. He didn’t fix it but he somehow gave us a message ever since – let’s be with people in their mess and be there for them and be God to them.”

Of his book he said: “For years I’d wanted to do this. I’d wanted to write a book about Jesus – the jewel in the mess.

“Also I wanted to wrestle with what I believe is a very important theological principle for the church today that our role is not to fix people or sort their lives out, it’s to be with them in the mess.”



Dublin and Jerusalem joint clergy retreat

Next week clergy from Dublin & Glendalough and the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem will gather in Dublin for their first joint clergy retreat. The retreat takes place from June 3 to 7 and involves an equal number of clergy from each diocese. The second leg of the retreat will be in Jerusalem.

The joint retreat is part of the friendship link which has been developing between Jerusalem and Dublin & Glendalough over the last three years.

Archbishop Suheil Dawani (Jerusalem) and Archbishop Michael Jackson (Dublin & Glendalough) are looking forward to the retreat which members of the clergy of both dioceses will share together with their archbishops. The programme has been organised by a group of clergy in Dublin & Glendalough. A similar group will organise the return visit to the Diocese of Jerusalem.

May 28, 2019

The joint retreat is part of the shared spiritual life made possible by the partnership of friendship between the dioceses. The archbishops hope that as personal relations strengthen and deepen among the clergy it will be possible to develop reciprocal relations between parishes and institutions.

Please pray for this exciting initiative and for all who have put great work into its organisation.

Make charity more of an encounter, less of a 'service,' Pope Francis says

Pope Francis told members of a global charitable group Monday that real charity is about encountering Christ in the poor and needy, not merely handing out aid to soothe one's conscience.

“If we look at charity as a service, the Church would become a humanitarian agency and the service of charity its ‘logistics department.’ But the Church is nothing of all this, it is something different and much greater,” he said May 27.

“It is, in Christ, the sign and instrument of God's love for humanity and for all of creation, our common home.”

The pope addressed the Church charity Caritas Internationalis during their general assembly in Rome, which ends May 28.

“Given the mission that Caritas is called to carry out in the Church, it is important to always return to reflect together on



the meaning of the word charity itself,” he said. “Charity is not a sterile performance or a simple offering to donate to silence our conscience.”

“This is why we must avoid assimilating the work of charity with philanthropic efficacy or with planning efficiency...” he stated, reiterating “that charity is not an idea or a pious feeling, but is an experiential encounter with Christ; it is the desire to live with the heart of God who does not ask us to have a generic love, affection, solidarity, etc. for the poor, but to meet Himself in them.” Francis referenced John 4:8 to explain that the origin of charity is found in God himself, for “whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.”

“Charity is the embrace of God our Father to every man, especially to the least and the suffering, who occupy a preferential place in his heart,” he said.

May 28, 2019

The pope stated that to live charity requires interpersonal relationships with the poor: “living with the poor and for the poor. Because by living with the poor we learn to practice charity with the spirit of poverty, we learn that charity is sharing.”

“In reality, not only the charity that does not reach the pocket is a false charity, but the charity that does not involve the heart, the soul and all our being is an idea of charity that is not yet realized,” he said.

Reflecting on charity as a theological virtue, Pope Francis said he finds it “scandalous” to see charitable work turned into a business. Especially when people “talk so much about charity but live in the luxury of dissipation or organize forums on charity uselessly wasting so much money.”

“It is very bad to note that some charity workers turn into officials and bureaucrats,” he opined, advising encounter with Jesus Christ as the antidote.

“It is communion in Christ and in the Church that animates, accompanies and supports the service of charity both in the communities themselves and in emergency situations throughout the world,” he said.

“The poor are first and foremost persons, and their faces conceal that of Christ himself. They are his flesh, signs of his crucified body, and we have the duty to reach them even in the most extreme peripheries and in the hidden parts of history with the delicacy and tenderness of Mother Church.”

May 28, 2019

Today in Christian history

May 28, 1533: English reformer Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, declares King Henry VIII's marriage to Anne Boleyn valid, having earlier approved the king's divorce of Catherine of Aragon.

May 28, 1841: Edwin Moody dies, leaving his wife to raise 4-year-old Dwight Lyman and eight other children. D.L. Moody went on to become the leading American evangelist of his generation.

News briefs

+++ Award for Little Island parish - St Lappan's, Little Island, in the Cobh and Glanmire Union of Parishes in the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, has been nominated for a LIBA Award.

The LIBA Awards are presented by the Little Island Business Association, and acknowledge the contribution of members of the business, civic, and residential community to the growth and development of Little Island.

St Lappan's has been nominated in the category of 'The Little Island Community Project of the Year, 2019'.

This is an acknowledgment of the refurbishment of St Lappan's Church and the opening of the church to the business community as a place of reflection and peace.

The award ceremony will take place on Friday 14th June at 7pm, where well-known broadcaster Bibi Baskin will be the

May 28, 2019



guest speaker.

The Rector of Cobh and Glanmire Union of Parishes, Revd Paul Arbuthnot, said, "It is an honour for this parish to have been nominated for a LIBA Award. This nomination is testament to the hard work of the Select Vestry and to the

vision of the late Rev'd Adrian Moran who helped to drive this project forward. We are delighted to be an open, inclusive, Christian presence in the midst of this bustling and growing community.

+++ Last week for Moderator - As Dr McMullen starts his last full week as Moderator, in this blog he writes of a special gift that Nathan, a 12 year old member of his congregation, blessed him with at the start of his year in office. A gift that has seen him through. Read his last blog

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

May 28, 2019

as Moderator to find out more about 'The Moderator's Box'
<https://bit.ly/2EA6JvP>

+++ Faith in the digital world - Archbishop Eamon Martin to open interactive seminar on faith in the digital world
<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2019/05/27/archbishop-eamon-martin-to-open-interactive-seminar-on-faith-in-the-digital-world/>

+++ Limerick & Killaloe Synod - The Annual Diocesan Synod of the United Dioceses of Limerick & Killaloe will be held in Villiers School, North Circular Road, Limerick on Saturday 29th June 2019.

+++Walk in Love border tour - All along the 1,954-mile U.S.-Mexico border stretching from Brownsville, Texas, to San Diego, California, Episcopalians are providing humanitarian aid to asylum-seekers and, where possible, providing support for law enforcement officers in their parishes and communities. The “Walk in Love” border tour, organized and led by the [Episcopal Diocese of West Texas](#) highlighted some of the Episcopal ministries and humanitarian efforts in south-central Texas. The May 15-17 tour of Texas began in San Antonio and made stops along the U.S.-Mexico border in Roma, McAllen and Brownsville. (The West Texas diocese geographically covers 69,000-square-miles of mostly rural central and south Texas and includes 86 congregations.) “The intention of the perspectives and experiences gained on the tour is to provide information and shed the light of Christ, not stoke the fires of discord, on very complicated realities experienced by people within our communities,” said West Texas Bishop David Reed

May 28, 2019

+++ Please pray for - National Evangelical Church in Syria and Lebanon (NESSL). Pray for the leaders and members of NESSL and their witness to others. Pray for all still suffering due to the Syrian conflict; and for religious freedom and lasting peace in Syria and throughout the region. Pray for NESSL's various projects to help displaced people and refugees. Pray especially for NESSL's work with educating refugee children. NESSL is now providing an education for around 700 refugee children in schools they have set up in Lebanon. Pray for the resources needed to run these schools. They hope that as people begin to return to Syria, the schools will be able to close by the end of 2020.

+++ Food for thought -

We found each instant, to our open eyes,
Was lit with recognition and surprise;
On each side of the way the world was rich,
Field after field, with furrow, bush and ditch,
All brimmed with marvel to invoke our care.
John Hewitt

News Links May 28

[Irish affinity for Palestinians runs deep](#)

Gulf News

Whether it's the imposing steeples of the Anglican **Church of Ireland**, brought by the colonisers and imposed on Irish soil, or the monuments to the ...

[I'll pray for those who carried out church arson, says priest](#)

Belfast Telegraph

The blaze spread to the **church** and nearby parochial house, causing damage to both. More than 20 firefighters battled the fire while those attending ...

[Leading Irish prelate presses Church to embrace 'more joyful language'](#)

Crux: Covering all things Catholic

churchnewsireland@gmail.org

May 28, 2019

NEW YORK - A leading Catholic bishop in **Ireland** is calling for the **Church** to embrace a “more joyful language” as part of a “new springtime” called for ...

[Schoolgirl Evan Cromie \(12\) was full of potential and promise, mourners told](#)

Belfast Telegraph

The **Church of Ireland** rector revealed that Evan's school friends had told him she was a young girl who initially was quite quiet, but had developed ...

[Ballycarry congregation bids fond farewell to Rev. Gabrielle Farquhar](#)

Belfast Newsletter

A special evening was held in the **church** to mark her departure and make a presentation to the popular cleric, who has retired early for health reasons ...

[Ireland Votes Overwhelmingly to Ease Divorce Restrictions](#)

The New York Times

DUBLIN — **Ireland** has voted overwhelmingly to ease restrictions on ... that was once dominated by the teachings of the Roman Catholic **Church**.

[Ireland Has Voted Overwhelmingly to Ease Its Divorce Laws](#) - TIME

[Ireland to liberalize divorce laws following referendum](#) - [WRAL.com](#)

[Vicar quits over transgenderism policy at Church of England school](#)

ChristianToday

A vicar in the **Church of England** has resigned as a governor at one of its primary schools following a dispute over how it handled the transition of a ...

[The Good Practice Guide for improving outcomes for Traveller children in Parliament has been ...](#)

Newark Advertiser

Mrs Claire Kent, headteacher of the Mount **Church of England**, where 36% of students are gypsies or travellers, attended the Houses of Parliament to ...

**+ Please
with your**



**share CNI
friends**

www.churchnewsireland.org

May 28, 2019