



GAFCON gathering claims 'sense of betrayal' at liberal Anglican teaching

A gathering of conservative Anglicans organised by the former Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali, has called for liberal bishops not to be invited to the 2020 Lambeth Conference.



The Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria, Nicholas Okoh

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A GAFCON meeting for Anglicans in 'restricted circumstances' – where practising Christian faith is difficult or dangerous – in Dubai referred in a closing statement to 'the sense of betrayal they experience when the very gospel for which they are suffering is being undermined and denied in other parts of the Anglican Communion. It grieves us that those who reject the clarity and authority of the Scriptures, the universal teaching of the Church, the classical Anglican formularies and the decisions of the Lambeth Conference undermine the credibility of our witness amongst our fellow citizens of other faiths and of none,' the statement said.

It called for representatives of breakaway groups like the Anglican Church of North America and the Anglican Province of Brazil to be invited and warned that 'the fellowship in the Anglican Communion has been torn at the deepest level by those who preach another gospel and those who urge us to continue to "walk together" with them'.



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Among those present were the Primate of All Nigeria, GAFCON chairman Nicholas Okoh, the Primate of South Sudan, the Primate of the Anglican Church in North America, the Moderator of the Church of Bangladesh and other senior bishops, including the Archbishop of Jos, the new general secretary. Together they represent the 'vast majority of faithful Anglicans', according to GAFCON.

Diocese of New York bishops and spouses will be at Lambeth2020 despite same-sex spouse exclusion

The bishops of the Diocese of New York issued the following statement March 1 concerning their plans about the 2020 Lambeth Conference from which the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby has decided to exclude same-sex spouses of bishops invited to the gathering.

To Our Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Diocese of New York,

Many of you will have learned by now that Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, has invited all active bishops in the communion, including gay bishops, to attend the 2020 Lambeth Conference. That is a positive development, since that was not true of the last Lambeth in 2008, when Bishop Gene Robinson was pointedly not invited to attend and

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participate. However, we are alarmed that at the same time he has said that spouses of bishops who are in same-sex marriages will not be invited. As of this writing that ruling affects a single bishop and spouse in the Anglican Church of Canada, and a single bishop and spouse in the Episcopal Church – Mary Glasspool and her spouse Becki Sander of our own diocese (though note that the bishop-elect of Maine is in a same-sex marriage, and when he becomes the bishop, this will apply to his spouse as well).

In two weeks the House of Bishops will hold our spring meeting in North Carolina, and we expect this matter to occupy some of our time. However, as so many of you have contacted us to know the response we will make from this diocese, we are writing this letter now to inform you of our thinking, understanding that we have not yet been in conversation with the full community of our fellow bishops.

Though this has only recently become public, we have actually been wrestling with this for some time. Archbishop Welby wrote a letter to Bishop Glasspool, and copied Bishop Dietsche, in early December, and the three of us have been in conversation on this matter for the time since. We have considered not attending, in protest over this extraordinary action. But in the end we have concluded that we cannot in conscience remove the voice of the Diocese of New York from the larger conversations at Lambeth regarding sexuality and the inclusion of LGBTQ people in the full sacramental life of the church. We certainly do not want to exclude the unique witness of Bishop Mary and her ministry from those debates and deliberations. So, not without mixed feelings, we the bishops of New York will be attending the Lambeth Conference.

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From the start, it has been the conviction of the spouses of Bishops Andy and Allen that they would fully and unambiguously support Becki, their sister and friend. They too look forward to being in conversation with the fuller community of bishops' spouses, but at this time it is the intention of Becki Sander to accompany Bishop Mary to England, though she will not be permitted to participate in the Lambeth conversations and activities. Margaret Dietsche and Clara Mun are also planning to go to England, to stand with Becki.

So much of our dismay over the Archbishop's decision is that we are so blessed by the inclusion of members of the LGBTQ community in the full sacramental life of this diocese, including ordination and access to marriage for same-sex couples. We are graced by the lives and witness of the countless gay and lesbian priests, deacons and laypersons who have enhanced and magnified our common life by the depth of their faith, by their courage, and by the self-offering of their lives to the service to God and God's children. We will be taking to Lambeth the lives and stories of the LGBTQ people of our diocese. We will be taking the hard histories and the holy graces of people who have asked only to receive from their church the dignity and love which they have received from their God. We will bear witness to the struggle and the triumph, and we will give voice at Lambeth to the voiceless many who will not be there. We will carry to Lambeth the spirit raised this year on the 50th anniversary of Stonewall in this our own diocese, and the celebration of World Pride Week. We go to Lambeth so that you will be at Lambeth.

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We ask your prayers for the Archbishop of Canterbury, for our two hundred congregations and us your bishops, for the worldwide community of bishops preparing to gather at Lambeth, for those who love us and for those who do not, for the LGBTQ community in the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of New York, and for the gay and lesbian Christians across our communion who do not yet enjoy the fullest possibilities and promise of the church. May the Holy Spirit come to Lambeth, that the prayer of Our Lord Jesus that “all may be one, as the father and I are one” may be realized in our day. With every good wish, we remain

Yours,

The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche, Bishop of New York; The Right Reverend Allen K Shin, Bishop Suffragan of New York; The Right Reverend Mary D Glasspool, Bishop Assistant of New York

Archbishop Eamon Martin encourages the faithful to #LiveLent 2019

“I encourage the faithful to reflect during this Lenten season on how to grow closer to God by our daily actions, thoughts, words and to consider what sacrifice might be made to achieve this.” – Archbishop Eamon

Archbishop Eamon Martin has launched a special web resource, and a Twitter and Instagram #LiveLent initiative, for Lent 2019, which begins on Ash Wednesday 6 March.



Ash Wednesday is a day of fast and abstinence. Lent is traditionally described as lasting for forty days, in commemoration of the forty days which, according to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Jesus spent fasting in the desert before the beginning of His public ministry where He endured temptation.

Archbishop Martin said, “In his message for Lent 2019, which I encourage everyone to read, Pope Francis is inviting the faithful to return to God with all their hearts and to observe the three pillars of the Lenten season: Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving. The theme for the Pope’s message for Lent 2019 is ‘For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God (Rm 8:19)’.

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“Appealing to the faithful to not allow this season of grace to pass in vain, Pope Francis says that if, ‘the Lent of the Son of God ‘was an entry into the desert of creation to make it become again that garden of communion with God that it was before the original sin, Christians today are invited to embody the paschal mystery more deeply and concretely in their personal, family and social lives, above all by fasting, prayer and almsgiving.’

“*Fasting*, the Pope says, means turning away from the temptation to ‘devour’ everything to satisfy our voracity; *Prayer* teaches us to abandon idolatry and the self-sufficiency of our ego; *Almsgiving or charity*, whereby we escape from the insanity of hoarding everything for ourselves in the illusory belief that we can secure a future that does not belong to us.

“Pope Francis tells us that if we follow this journey it ‘is possible to rediscover the joy of God’s plan for creation and for each of us, which is to love him, our brothers and sisters, and the entire world, and to find in this love our true happiness.’

“The path to Easter, therefore, demands that ‘we renew our faces and hearts as Christians through repentance, conversion and forgiveness’ the Pope said pointing out that it is a call that involves the whole of creation.

“I encourage the faithful to reflect during this Lenten season on how to grow closer to God by our daily actions, thoughts, words and to consider what sacrifice might be made to achieve this. I also encourage the faithful to support this year’s Trócaire Lenten campaign which focuses

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on their work with communities in Guatemala, Lebanon and Uganda.

“For Lent 2019 we are providing online resources, including the message of Pope Francis for Lent 2019, to assist our spiritual preparations for the joy and hope which comes with the Easter season. I encourage everyone to avail of our online resources and to take part in our #LiveLent initiative”, Archbishop Martin said.

The #LiveLent initiative will involve short daily suggestions shared on Twitter and Instagram based on the theme of the Holy Father’s Lenten message on how to best #LiveLent 2019. These will include suggestions on fasting, prayer and almsgiving, which are the three pillars of the Lenten season; prayer and scripture suggestions; opportunities for penance and fasting in our daily lives (e.g. fasting from gossip, fasting from negativity online, giving up certain foods for Lent, availing of the Sacrament of Reconciliation); suggestions of charitable acts (e.g. donating to Trócaire and other charities; donating your time by volunteering or helping out within your own family, school, parish; and behaving in a charitable way towards all those we meet).

Everyone is invited to take part using the hashtag #LiveLent and are encouraged to share with their own followers how they are putting the themes of prayer, fasting and almsgiving into practice during Lent.

See catholicbishops.ie for the Lenten resources and for links to the #LiveLent initiative on Instagram and Twitter

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Two team vicars instituted for mission in Lecale

The service of institution at St Anne's, Killough, on Sunday 3 March was a first for the diocese of Down & Dromore with the institution of two vicars together.

Bishop Harold Miller instituted the Revd Adrian Dorrian and the Revd Capt Scott McDonald as team vicars for the Lecale Area Mission Partnership (LAMP) under the leadership of the rector and Dean of Down, the Very Revd Henry Hull.

Dean Hull said: "The appointment of Adrian and Scott as team vicars underscores what we have been doing for the past two years. It has been a pleasure to work with them and our curate Julie, supporting each other in the work of ministry and creatively engaging in mission in the community. These appointments recognise Adrian and Scott's ministry experience and cement their respective roles in the LAMP team. We hope that this ministry model will be developed and used in other situations in the Church of Ireland."

Scott's current responsibility is for the congregations of Down Parish and Hollymount. He is also tasked with stimulating LAMP's thinking around evangelism and mission. Adrian is responsible for the congregations of Seaforde and Ballee and is developing the work among children and young people. Julie Bell is curate to Dean Hull

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The Revd Adrian Dorrian, Dean Henry Hull, and the Revd Capt Scott McDonald.

and has a passion for the integration of children and families in worship.

The stipendiary clergy are also assisted by retired colleagues the Revd Graham Savidge, Canon Cecil Wilson, and the Revd Michael Houston and Diocesan Reader Mrs Rosemarie Armstrong-Woodruffe.

Bishop Harold preached on Galatians 1, a letter addressed, not to a city but to the church in a geographical area.

At the outset, the bishop reminded the congregation, gathered from across Lecale that “it is the Gospel that holds the church together and the thing which must hold the Lecale Area together is mission. Mission partnership together and the good news of Jesus Christ have to be above everything else.”

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Speaking of his appointment, the Revd Adrian Dorrian said: “I’m really honoured to have been appointed as one of the vicars in the LAMP team. The past three years here as associate have been incredibly fulfilling and along with my wife, Anne, I feel really blessed to know that, God–willing, we will get to spend more time in ministry here in South Down. Having served in a few different contexts, the great thing about LAMP is the team approach we take. Under God, I truly believe this allows us to achieve a great deal more together than we would if we were each ploughing our own individual furrows.”

The Revd Scott McDonald said: “Before I was ordained, my entire ministry as a Church Army evangelist took place in urban settings. Two years ago, however, I became Diocesan Curate in Downpatrick in the stunning setting of Lecale. It’s been a real blessing to work alongside the Dean and others in the LAMP team and I’m grateful to all those who have helped Pauline, myself and our children on the journey. This being St Patrick’s country, I’m conscious of the great legacy of gospel proclamation and how the good news of Christ still has the power today to change lives and transform communities. This is both an encouragement and a challenge. It is with a sense of great privilege that I look forward to serving as a team vicar, alongside Adrian Dorrian.”

Omagh parishioners put their faith in Lee for Special Olympics success

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There was warm applause in St Columba's Church of Ireland in Omagh, on Sunday morning, 3rd March, after a special presentation to one of its own parishioners, Lee Mitchell, ahead of his trip to the Special Olympics in Abu Dhabi.

Lee will be representing Team Ireland in the equestrian events at the 2019 World Summer Games. The Curate of Drumragh with Mountfield, the Rev Sean Hanily, said as a church family St Columba's wanted to show its support to Lee and his parents, Laura and David, who'll be accompanying their son to Abu Dhabi.

Below - Communion service in C of E in Iranian language - report later



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During the 10.30am Service of Holy Communion, parish treasurer Nigel Strain handed over a cheque – the proceeds of a recent coffee morning in the parish hall which Lee had missed because of illness.

Mr Hanily, and diocesan readers Paddy Quinn and Claire Henderson, prayed for Lee at the front of the church. The young Omagh Spires athlete addressed the congregation briefly, thanking them for their generosity and expressing particular gratitude to his mother and father for their support.

Lee, who was proudly sporting his new Team Ireland kit, received hugs aplenty from fellow parishioners who'll be following his performances with keen interest. The Special Olympics will last from 14th March until 21st March.

Powerscourt with Kilbride welcome new Rector

The people of the parishes of Powerscourt with Kilbride turned out in force on Friday evening (March 1) to give a warm welcome to their new Rector. The Revd Cathy Hallissey was instituted by Archbishop Michael Jackson in St Patrick's Church, Powerscourt.

Among the large congregation was Cathy's family, her husband Eddie, daughters Lizzie and Claire and son Robert, many friends and well wishers including a large contingent from Taney Parish where Cathy served as Curate, and the principal and teachers from Powerscourt National School.

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The Revd Cathy and Eddie Hallissey and their family, Lizzie, Robert and Claire.

The preacher was Canon Fred Appelbe, who recently retired from the neighbouring parish of Rathmichael. He told parishioners that Cathy was a wife, a mum, a pastor and a graduate of the school of hard knocks and the proverbial university of life. She also possessed an innate wisdom, intuition and exploitative honest faith, he stated.

Canon Appelbe said that he and his counterparts who had served many years in ministry had noticed many changes in parish ministry in the last two decades. There were fewer callouts to hospitals and homes with people not expecting clergy to be present at every death. The institutional church had taken a beating from many angles and was often greeted with antipathy.

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It was into this context that Cathy was landing as a Rector, he said and wondered what a rector was to do into the light of this reality. He said that while clergy were ordained to be purveyors of forgiveness, grace and to live prayerfully in the Spirit, they could also experience the guilt of wondering if they were doing enough. He urged Cathy's new parishioners to be aware of this at a time of 'great expectations'.

"Christianity is a faith of positivity and hope. And under pressure it becomes more real.

Speaking on behalf of the Catholic community in Enniskerry, Fr Bernard Kennedy, highlighted the focus on ecumenism which exists between Powerscourt with Kilbride and St Mary's Parish in Enniskerry. Cathy said they had been "borne on a wave of support over the last two weeks". She thanked everyone who had helped make arrangements for her institution and all who had attended to the rectory and the grounds. "Looking at this magnificent parish I am reminded of the hands that cared for it before

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and we think of Archdeacon Ricky Rountree, the Revd Terry Lilburn and the Revd Niall Stratford," she said. She thanked her family for their support and for uprooting themselves from Dundrum.

Man arrested over fatal stabbing of Belfast community worker who'd been praying with pastor

A man has been arrested at Manchester Airport on suspicion of murdering Belfast community worker Ian Ogle.

The 32-year-old suspect is to be brought to Northern Ireland for questioning.

Mr Ogle, 45, died after being stabbed 11 times shortly after praying with a pastor near his home on Cluan Place in east Belfast on January 27.

On Sunday evening, PSNI Detective Chief Inspector Peter McKenna said: "Following excellent partnership working with UK and international partners, the man was detained in Manchester Airport this evening.

"He was subsequently arrested on suspicion of murder and will be conveyed to Northern Ireland to be questioned by Major Investigation Team detectives.

"At this time, I would also reiterate my appeal for witnesses to this horrific murder. Ian Ogle was subjected to a brutal attack.

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"His skull was fractured and he was savagely stabbed 11 times in the back before being left to die on the street. His family deserve justice."

One man has already been charged with Mr Ogle's murder. Jonathan Brown, 33, of McArthur Court, Belfast, was remanded in custody last month after appearing before Belfast Magistrates' Court. His solicitor said he denied planning, preparing and committing the offence. A group of clergy from the local area stood together in public and made an appeal for the ending of violence.

Francis to open Vatican archives on controversial wartime Pope Pius XII

Pope Francis said he has decided to open up the Vatican archives on Second World War-era pontiff Pius XII, who has been accused by Jews of staying silent on the Holocaust.

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Francis told officials and personnel of the Vatican Secret Archives that documents would be open to researchers starting on March 2 next year.

Pius was elected pontiff on March 2 1939, six months before the war erupted in Europe. He died on October 9 1958 at the Vatican summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, near Rome.

The Vatican usually waits 70 years after the end of a pontificate to open up the relevant archives, but the Holy See has been under pressure to make the Pius XII documentation available sooner, while Holocaust survivors are still alive.

Vatican archivists had already started preparing the documentation for consultation in 2006, at the behest of Francis's German-born predecessor Benedict XVI.

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The Vatican has defended Pius, saying he used behind-the-scenes diplomacy to try to save lives. Francis indicated he embraced that interpretation.

Pius's actions will be scrutinised as part of efforts to decide if he should be declared a saint.

Francis indicated that the church was confident the papacy would withstand the findings by historians studying the archives, saying Pius was "criticised, one can say, with some prejudice and exaggeration".

"The church isn't afraid of history - on the contrary, it loves it, and would like to love it even more, like it loves God," Francis told staff at the archive.

"Thus, with the same trust of my predecessors, I open, and entrust to researchers, this patrimony of documentation."

Francis expressed certainty that historical research would properly evaluate Pius's legacy "with appropriate criticism".

He said the Pius papacy included "moments of grave difficulties, tormented decisions of human and Christian prudence, that to some could appear as reticence".

Instead, he said, they could be seen as attempts "to keep lit, in the darkest and cruellest periods, the flame of humanitarian initiatives, of hidden but active diplomacy" aimed at possibly "opening hearts".

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Anglican Iranians take Communion in native language for first time in C of E



Holy Communion has been conducted in Farsi within the Church of England for the first time, amid a growing number of Iranians joining the country's Anglican congregations.

Approximately 450 people attended a service unveiling the new liturgy at Wakefield Cathedral on Saturday past, including the Bishop of Loughborough Rt Rev Guli Francis-Dehqani.

Born and raised in Iran, Bishop Guli (pictured centre) was a teenager when her brother was murdered for being a Christian. She fled in 1980 during the early stages of a revolution which toppled the country's monarchy. She said: "This translated service of Holy Communion is hugely significant within the life of the Church of England as

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we seek to find ways of recognising the diversity which is increasingly the reality of the Church of England.

"We've had, over the last few years, over 75 clergy contact us to ask how can we best help to integrate the Iranians who we find are coming to our churches, so in this liturgy what we're doing is formally recognising a minority community as part of our wider body and crucially enabling Persian, Farsi speaking people and English speaking people to worship alongside one another."

There were almost 85,000 Iranian-born people residing in the UK at the time of the 2011 census. In Iran, the Shi'a branch of Islam is overwhelmingly the most common belief.

Iran has been consistently ranked by Open Doors UK as among nations where persecution against Christians is worst.

On its website, the charity says: "Believers from Muslim backgrounds keep their faith secret.

"Secret house churches are monitored and frequently raided, and dozens of Christians are imprisoned in appalling conditions."

News briefs

+++Ash Wednesday music at St Colummb's Cathedral, Derry - 7.30pm a service sung by the Cathedral Chamber Choir. Music includes Gregorio Allegri's Miserere. There will

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also be a Lenten mid-week address with hymns and music every Thursday at 1.05pm.

Left to right: Laura Mitchell (Lee's mother), Paddy Quinn (diocesan reader), Nigel Strain (parish treasurer), Lee Mitchell (Special Olympian), Claire Henderson (diocesan reader), the Rev Sean Hanily and David Mitchell (Lee's father). Report above



+++Archbishop's Lenten start for DCU - The Archbishop of Dublin will mark the beginning of the season of Lent on Wednesday when he will lead the Ash Wednesday Service at the Inter Faith Centre in DCU at 1.05pm.

+++Limerick lunchtime concets - A new series of lunchtime concerts begins in St Mary's cathedral, Limerick, when, at 1.15pm, Helen Hancock (soprano), Peter Sebestyen (cello), and Irina Dernova (piano) will play music by Fauré, Britten and Strauss.

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+++Archbishops to the stars - The Heavens Declare - On Friday evening St Patrick's church, Ballyclog, Co. Tyrone, will host 'The Heavens Declare', an exciting exploration of space and faith with Professor Michael Burton, Director of the Armagh Observatory & Planetarium, and Professor Monica Grady, Professor of Planetary & Space Sciences at the Open University, plus special guests, astronomer Terry Moseley, Archbishop Richard Clarke and Archbishop Eamon Martin. The evening will include a viewing of the night sky with the Irish Astronomical Association.

+++Yesterday in 1880 - Isabella Augusta Persse married Sir William Henry Gregory in the church of St Matthias, Dublin. Lady Gregory is mainly remembered for her literary work behind the Irish Literary Revival.

March 5 in Christian history

March 5, 1179: Alexander III convokes the Third Lateran Council. Attended by 300 bishops, it gave the college of cardinals the exclusive right to elect the pope (by a two-thirds majority) and enacted measures against the Waldensians and Albigensians.

March 5, 1409: The college of cardinals convokes the Council of Pisa to end the Great Schism, which had divided Western Christendom in 1378 by the election of rival popes. Unfortunately, all the Council of Pisa did was to produce another candidate for the papacy.

March 5, 1743: The Christian History, America's first religious magazine, is published in Boston in the midst of the Great Awakening. The weekly publication, "containing

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accounts of the propagation and revival of religion," is not to be confused with our magazine—though we're proud to carry on the name.

March 5, 1797: The three-masted ship Duff arrives in Tahiti's Matavai Bay, completing a 207-day voyage from London. The ship, commanded by Captain John Wilson, had aboard 37 artisans and pastors of the London Missionary Society (L.M.S.) and their families, who were to be resettled in the South Pacific on the islands of Tahiti, Tonga and the Marquesas.

March 5, 1899: Alcoholic-turned-evangelist Sam Jones begins a crusade in Toledo, Ohio, where the mayor was also named Sam Jones. Mayor Jones at first welcomed the publicity, but he worried when evangelist Jones decried the city's immorality (if the Devil were mayor of Toledo, the preacher said, he wouldn't change a thing). Nonetheless, the mayor was reelected the next month by a huge margin.

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