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New video on the Irish ‘Mother Teresa of Africa’

A new video interview with Irish missionary Sr Miriam Duggan, often referred to as ‘The Mother Teresa of Africa’, has just been launched in which she recalls her work as an obstetrician and in HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

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In 2015 Sr Miriam, a native of Limerick and a member of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters for Africa, received a Presidential Distinguished Service Award in recognition of her missionary work in Africa.

Her work has also been recognised by the Parliament of Uganda and by her alma mater, University College Cork.

Now aged 82, Sr Miriam graduated from UCC with a degree in medicine in 1964. She studied obstetrics in Birmingham, receiving her MRCOG in 1969 and FRCOG in 1982.

She was one of the first qualified obstetricians in Uganda where she headed the maternity unit of Nsambia Hospital in Kampala for 30 years. She was also involved in the training of midwives and doctors.

In response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic she helped establish clinics, as well as mobile-home-based care programmes for those ill with HIV/AIDS and the many orphans left behind.

She founded Youth Alive in an effort to address the root causes for the spread of HIV and to help young people to make responsible choices and avoid getting AIDS.

The Youth Alive programme provides ongoing education regarding sexual behaviour, drugs, self-esteem and constructive life choices by providing members with a strong sense of belonging and the necessary support that they need to oppose the negative forces and pressures all around them.

This prevention programme was very successful in Uganda in reducing the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. It was extended to 21 other African countries.

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The video 'Sr Miriam Duggan: My Story' is also being used to further the cause of Wicklow-born Mother Kevin, foundress of Sr Miriam's congregation and the Little Sisters of St Francis in Africa.

Mother Kevin was declared Servant of God by Pope Francis in 2016.

In the 26-minute interview, Sr Miriam discusses her address to the Ugandan parliament on abortion; the abstinence programme she promotes, which has reduced the incidence of HIV from 25 per cent to 6 per cent; the role of Mother Kevin in the development of healthcare in Uganda; conscientious objection for pro-life medical students and healthcare personnel; and UK abortion experiences.

Sr Miriam served as superior of her congregation for 12 years.

During that time she was based in Dublin and was chairperson of the Irish Missionary Union when, with the government, Mísean Cara was set up as a channel through which Irish missionary organisations could obtain funding from Irish Aid to support their development and humanitarian projects in the global south.

Despite her age, she is currently working with out-of-school youth in Huruma in Nairobi delivering programmes on rehabilitation and character formation. She cannot register as a medical doctor due to her age.

The interview with Sr Miriam can be seen here: <https://youtu.be/15011IjzRoA>.

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In search of gender justice – creating space to listen to women

“Gender justice is not a women’s issue – it’s our together issue.” This was one of the resounding messages from yesterday’s seminar on gender justice which was organised by Bishops’ Appeal and the United Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough.

Based on the Fourth Mark of Mission ‘Transform Unjust Structures’, the seminar took place in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin as part of Dublin & Glendalough’s Come&C programme. Three engaging speakers looked at the imbalance that exists between men and women in the church, in society in Ireland and around the globe. Issues facing women, both nationally and globally, were highlighted with one common denominator. The root cause of gender inequality in each context was to be found in social gender norms whether that be barriers to women in employment or using their gifts within the church in Ireland or the culture of rape and abuse of women in the Great Lakes region in Africa, or in Ireland.

Three speakers addressed the seminar. Ruth Garvey–Williams is editor of Vox Magazine, an interdenominational Christian magazine which recently celebrated its 10th anniversary. Last year, in partnership with YWCA Ireland, Vox conducted a survey exploring the role and experiences of women in Irish churches.

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Veena Sullivan of Tearfund, Caoimhe Leppard of Dublin & Glendalough (co-organiser), Lydia Monds of Bishops' Appeal (co-organiser), Ruth Garvey-Williams of Vox, Dr Cliona Loughnane of the National Women's Council, Charlotte Olhausen of the RCB (co-organiser) and Archbishop Michael Jackson.

Dr Cliona Loughnane is Women's Health Coordinator with the National Women's Council of Ireland. She looked at areas in Irish society in which women experience discrimination from employment and public representation to health and sport.

The final speaker was Veena Sullivan, head of the HIV and Sexual Violence Team of Tearfund UK. Veena brought news of the stark realities faced by women in a number of African countries but also the uplifting outcomes of the work of

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Tearfund in partnering with local church leaders to bring about great change.

The seminar was opened by Archbishop Michael Jackson who stressed the importance of engaging with the issue of gender justice. He highlighted the Come&C programme which he said was the dioceses' intentional response to things that are happening in the church and society. The Five Marks of Mission on which the programme is based are not confined to the church but can be brought into secular or post secular society or used as a bridge into interfaith engagement, he said.

Families' Associate commissioned in Ballyclare parish

The United Parish of Christ Church and St John's, Ballyclare, held a commissioning service for new Families' Associate Dianne Hamilton.

Dianne was accompanied by her husband Luke at the service in St John's, Ballyclare, on St Patrick's Day, March 17.

At the age of 18, after doing a foundation course in art and design at the University of Ulster, Dianne decided to take a year out to work with Youth for Christ as an intern in Geneva Switzerland, before hoping to go to university to study set design and stage management.

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The Rev Jonny Campbell-Smyth (rector), Dianne and Luke Hamilton and Andrew Brannigan at the commissioning service in St John's, Ballyclare.

That year out changed the trajectory of her life and Dianne returned home to embark on a calling to youth ministry in the parish of St Paul and St Barnabas in north Belfast, Diocese of Connor.

For 12 years she worked with young people, local community groups, ran Streetreach, and helped other churches develop youth ministry within Connor Diocese, before a move to Trinity Church (CofE) Lewes, East Sussex, where she has been Youth Minister for seven and a half years.

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She saw the job of Families' Associate in Ballyclare on Facebook, and, feeling that God once again had a plan, she and Luke investigated further.

New Life Children's Choir tour of Clogher diocese

A taste of Uganda sunshine will shine on people in Clogher Diocese over the next month as the New Life Children's Choir, also known as Abaana, perform at a number of venues. Their first performance locally will be in St. Patrick's Church, Monaghan, tonight Friday, 22nd March at 7.30pm.

The young people taking part are all primary school children from 14 schools in Uganda who have just begun the journey of a lifetime, touring the UK and Ireland. They are from schools built by the charity, Abaana based in Bangor, Co. Down which works with children living in poverty across the country. The children will be giving concerts in churches, schools and workplaces and sharing about life in their country.

The aim of the tour is to raise awareness of the plight of other children living in poverty in Uganda and to seek to generate much needed sponsorship to help rescue more children who are currently living rough on the streets.

The children aged between 7 and 15, who form the Abaana New Life Choir, began touring from the beginning of February 2019 and will continue their programme until early June 2019.

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For them, this will be an amazing, life-changing experience and most of them had not travelled outside their local villages, let alone flown thousands of miles from Africa, before joining the Choir.

A team of 10 local and Ugandan chaperones will accompany the children as they travel.

Other performances include Tuesday, 9th April in the Archdale Centre, Lisnaskea at 7.30pm and Sunday, 14th April in Magheracross Parish Church, Ballinamallard at 7pm.

Parish resource for supporting asylum seekers and refugees

The Church of Ireland Refugee Working Groups have produced an updated resource, highlighting opportunities
churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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A Rohingya mother and child in Bangladesh

to become more involved in supporting asylum seekers and refugees.

The resource covers:

- examples of the Church's current and past responses to the refugee crisis;
- how members of the Church can offer support for asylum seekers and refugees;
- definitions, statistics and processes for asylum and refugee resettlement; and
- responses by associated missionary societies and ecumenical networks.

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A growing number of parishes and cathedrals across the island of Ireland are working with and supporting asylum seekers and refugees in their communities. The Church – at several levels – also responds through financial appeals, working with other organisations at home and abroad, and overseas visits to encourage people who have been displaced and are living away from their homes.

Successful Patrick's Mysterious Adventures

Well over 600 people, including 360 school pupils and CLCGB members, learned all about the life of Ireland's patron saint at Patrick's Mysterious Adventures in Christ Church, Lisburn, Diocese of Connor.

The interactive exhibition and story trail opened at Christ Church Parish, Lisburn, on March 13, and ran until Saturday March 16, with a special St Patrick's themed service on March 17 at 11.30am.

Pupils and teaching staff from seven primary schools jumped on board during the first three days, there was an evening for youth organisations, and around 250 people attended on the public day on Saturday March 16.

On the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, the school groups visited seven different zones each depicting a different stage of Patrick's life.

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They also took part in a history workshop led by Spencer Cusack from the Saint Patrick Centre in Downpatrick and an art workshop.

Participating schools were Old Warren, Brownlee, Central, Tonagh, Knockmore and Wallace Prep. Two schools who had participated last year – Broughshane Primary and St Patrick's, Loughguile – enjoyed that experience so much they came back for more this year!

The schools also took part in snake drawing and snake modelling competitions before the trip. All entries were displayed as part of the exhibition and the prize winners were announced during the school visits. All the pupils also took a goody bag away with them.

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For the first time the event also featured an evening for youth organisations. Victoria Jackson, a member of Connor Children's Council, is Development Officer for CLCGB and she organised for some of the local brigades to come along on the Thursday evening.

As well as the Christ Church brigade, other brigades who attended were St Michael's, Shankill Road; Lambeg; St Hilda's, Seymour Hill; and St Matthew's, Broomhedge.

On Saturday March 16 the event was open to the public, with four timed performances of the Story Trail throughout the day as well as a café, craft workshops from Jumping Clay and Julia's Ceramics, a reptile exhibition from Talking Reptiles and Irish dancing.

On Sunday March 17 there was a special St Patrick themed service in Christ Church. Ross Jonas and Chris Neilands from the Play It By Ear Theatre Company, who led the drama all week, performed again in the service and Sister Karen Webb spoke about St Patrick's faith and character.

The event was organised by Connor Children's Council. Jill Hamilton, Connor Children's Project Development Officer, and Karen Webb, North Belfast Centre of Mission, said it had been a great success.

March 22 in Christian history

March 22, 1638: Religious dissident Anne Hutchinson is expelled from Massachusetts Bay Colony. Questioned about her teachings on grace, she insisted she had received divine revelations. When her examiners asked how she

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knew these came from God, she replied, "How did Abraham know that it was God that bid him offer his son, being a breach of the Sixth Commandment?" Although Hutchinson repented of her "errors," her questioners decided she was lying and banished her from the colony.

March 22, 1758: Jonathan Edwards, America's greatest theologian, dies from the effects of a smallpox vaccination after arriving in New Jersey to accept the presidency of what is now Princeton University

News Links

[Presbyterian minister fired from college over 'gross misconduct'](#)

BBC News

By Robbie Meredith BBC **News** NI Education Correspondent ... The Presbyterian **Church** told BBC **News** NI it would not be appropriate to comment ... your employer, the Presbyterian **Church** in **Ireland** into disrepute," the letter read.

[Moy Church to benefit from £2m faith fund](#)

Tyrone Times

St. James' **Church of Ireland** in Moy is investing over £650,000 to redevelop the ... Alan Money Penny, Chairman of UCIT said: "St James' Parish Hall is ... the Parish to create a "The launch of the new Fund is welcome **news** for the ...

[Archbishop calls for merger of dioceses as 'crisis of faith' deepens](#)

[Independent.ie](#)

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Archbishop of Dublin Dr Diarmuid Martin has said **Ireland** is in the grip of a "crisis of faith" and called for the number of dioceses to be reduced.

[Remember Taoiseach's call for new **Church-State** covenant, archbishop urges](#)

The Irish Catholic

Dialogue to build a new Church-State covenant will require changes of ... marking the 175th anniversary of St Michael's **Church of Ireland** Church in ...

[People do not have true sense of 'crisis of faith' in **Ireland** - Archbishop RTE.ie](#)

Addressing a **Church of Ireland** gathering in Limerick city's St Michael's Church, the head of the country's largest diocese quoted what he called the ...

[More than 100 Catholic primary schools have closed over past decade](#)

Irish Times

Church of Ireland schools had enrolments of 16,514, representing 3 per cent of all pupils. The fastest-growing category of school by religious ethos in ...

[City's hidden park is given a new life](#)

Dublin People

They were joined by the Canon Mark Gardner, St Audoen's **Church of Ireland** and Fr Stanislaw Hajkowski, St Audoen's Catholic Church. Before the ...

[€34000 already spent in search for new county Limerick graveyard](#)

Limerick Leader

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“The council's answer is to bury people in graves already used in St Mary's or the **Church of Ireland**,” he said. “I am not happy with the response,” he ...

[Old Church being restored](#)

Coleraine Times

Cushendun Old Church Centre will be an arts, heritage and community space ... Built in 1842 as a **Church of Ireland** place of worship, Cushendun Old ...

[City of Derry International Choir Festival](#)

The Journal of Music

First held in 2013, the City of Derry International **Choir Festival** is now established as a major event in the musical life of Northern **Ireland** and as the ...

[Anglican set to ordain Nigerian gay, Jide Macaulay as Priest in England](#)

Within Nigeria

”It is a delight to share this **news**, I am to be ordained Anglican Priest in the **Church of England** in June 2019. “Wait on the Lord, be of Good courage ...

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