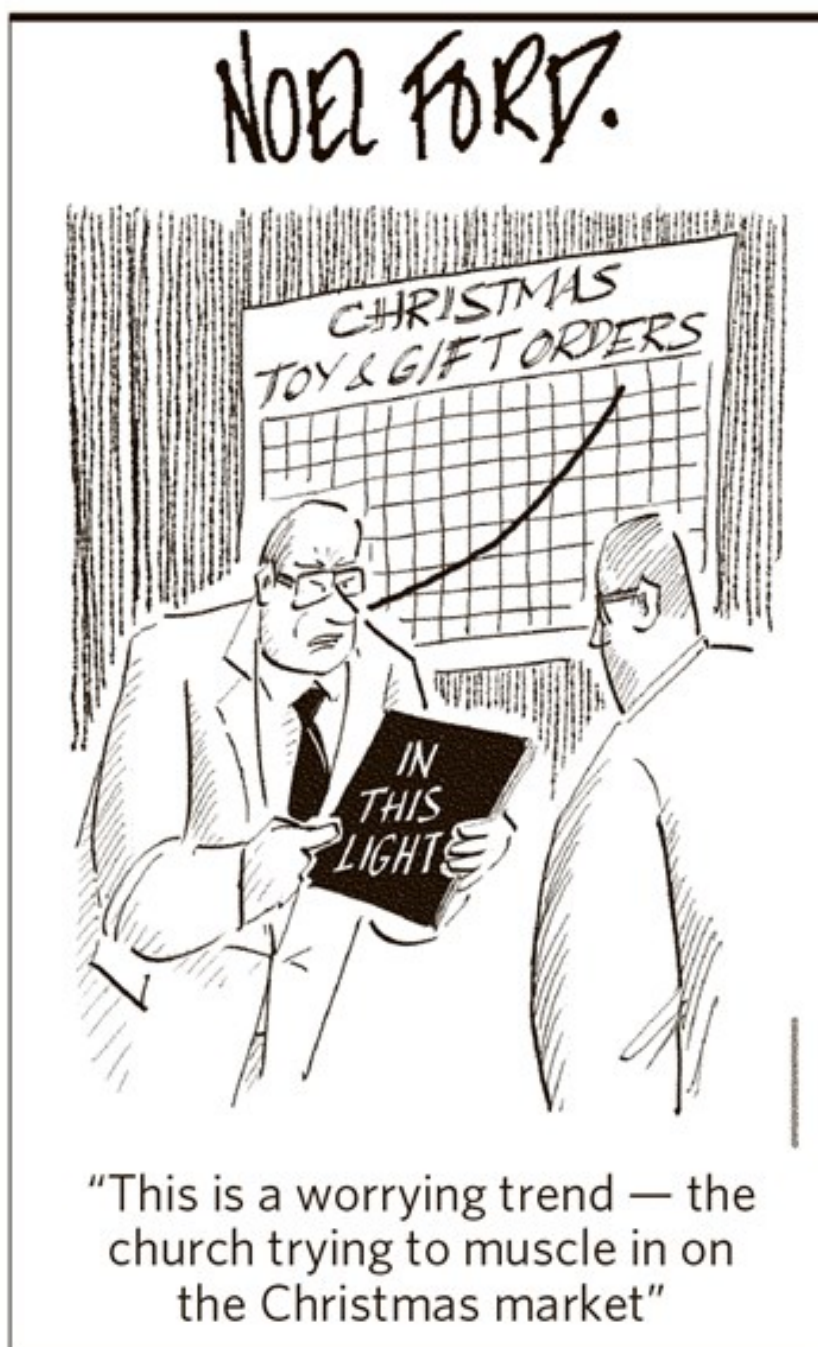


Archbishop of Canterbury gathers Christmas reflections from across the public spectrum

Figures from across the public spectrum, from the TV gardener Alan Titchmarsh to Hea Woo, a Christian imprisoned for her faith in a labour camp in North Korea, have



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contributed their reflections on Christmas to an anthology gathered by the [Archbishop of Canterbury](#).

The stories in *In This Light: Thoughts for Christmas* (published yesterday 1 November by HarperCollins at £10.99) move from hard times in prisons and refugee camps to observations on the virtues of gentleness by the actress and comedian Miranda Hart. Contributors include the former United States Secretary of State John F. Kerry; the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan; the ITN newsreader Julie Etchingham; and the triple Olympic gold-medal oarsman Pete Reed.

Perhaps most surprising, given the Archbishop's hostile views on the activities of internet giants, the book opens with the views of Google's European president, Matt Brittin, who talks about how new technology can be used to bring people together at Christmas.

The Archbishop explains how he was impressed by the company's London staff when he was invited to speak to them. "They are faced with the increasingly complex challenge of preserving freedom of speech and access to information, while impeding those with malicious intent," he writes.

"Google recognise their role in this and are not perfect (we discussed that, too), but the relentless maze of issues created by our existence online is not just for the tech giants to confront. We each need to join the conversation in addressing what is perhaps the greatest challenge of the century: how to manage the internet."

The Archbishop goes on to express gratitude to his contributors for "expressing their own individual and

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particular view of the light they see in our world, especially at Christmas. As you will quickly see, they are an eclectic bunch — believers and sceptics, priests, teachers and artists — each of whom has shaped how I think and work.

“Becoming Archbishop has given me untold privileges, one of which has been to meet and spend time with these wise friends and colleagues. Each of them has enriched my life and work, and this book fulfils my hope to share some of their words with you.”

He concludes: “It is quite easy to assume that Christmas is to be survived rather than enjoyed. But I am not in the least cynical, because every year there is something, as I look back over the previous twelve months, which speaks to me of the miracle of God coming to be with us.”

St Patrick's Cathedral Community and Charitable Fund invites applications

St Patrick's Cathedral's Community and Charitable Fund 2018 was officially launched on Tuesday this week (October 30). Applications for the fund went live yesterday afternoon and charities and community groups have until the beginning of December to submit forms for consideration for grants.

Last year St Patrick's distributed €125,000 from its Community and Charitable Fund. Organisations received grants ranging from €800 to €10,000. The fund is built up from collections at the Cathedral Eucharist services along

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with contributions from the carol service and contributions to the candles in the cathedral. It is distributed annually.

Applications are invited from charities and organisations under a number of categories including Christian faith in action, health and well-being, inclusivity, education, alleviation of suffering, community support and conservation and restoration. Organisations must outline their project goals and impacts and are asked to align them with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



Speaking at the official launch of the 2018 fund, St Patrick's Dean's Vicar, Canon Charles Mullen, said that the cathedral's charitable giving programme was a response to the call to generosity. He added that they were delighted to be able to support worthy projects.

The cathedral's Community Officer, Kelley Bermingham, said that it was important that the projects for which organisations were seeking funding were sustainable. She said that the UN Sustainable Development Goals were

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internationally recognised standards and encouraged all community and charitable organisations to get to know them. She added that anyone who needed help with their application should contact her.

Applications are available on the community support section of the St Patrick's Cathedral website [here](#). The deadline for applications is December 7 2018 and if you need further information you can contact Kelley at community@stpatrickscathedral.ie

Royal Black Institution leader slams churches

The sovereign grand master of the Royal Black Institution has accused the Churches of failing to give its members a clear lead, Alf McCreary reports in the Belfast Telegraph

Rev William Anderson said: "The Church at large is failing to demonstrate clearly to many people the core central message of the Christian Gospel."

He made the comments to the Belfast Telegraph in the first of a series of in-depth interviews published on the theme 'What I Believe'.

Rev Anderson continued: "They have simply given way to populism.

"There are too many of them wishy-washy, with mixed messages. What people need is a clear lead..."

The Rev Anderson also criticised his own denomination, the Church of Ireland, for how it marked the 500th anniversary

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of the Reformation, describing its efforts as a "damp squib".

Crib Festival returns to Thornhill Convent

The Crib Festival weekend is on November 23-25 and this year's collection of cribs is diverse and beautiful, novel and traditional. There are crèches from Japan, France, Zambia, Mexico, New Zealand, as well as nativity scenes specially made for the event.

With their imagination, friends of Thornhill have created cribs out of glass, wood, paper, wool, ceramics, stones, metal, flowers and so on and they will appeal to the adult children as well as to those of school-going age! A small number of creative decorative gifts, candles, fare from the Holy Land and religious Christmas cards will be available for sale.

This is also a fundraising event for the work of Thornhill Ministries and the Team there would be glad of your support.

Dtes: 23,24,25 November. Times: Friday 12:00 noon - 6:30 pm Saturday & Sunday 10:30 am - 6:00 pm Venue: Thornhill House 121 Culmore Road Derry.

St Matthew's Irishtown front doors reopen after 50 years

St Matthew's Church in Irishtown has thrown open its front doors for the first time in over 50 years. The church has been undergoing renovations and a major part of the

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Archbishop Michael Jackson and the Revd John Marchant outside the newly reopened doors of St Matthew's Church, Irishtown

labours has been to reopen the front doors to improve their welcome to the community of Irishtown, Ringsend and Sandymount.

For over half a century worshippers entered the church through a side door. Now the original Georgian front doors have been refurbished. Two new internal glass doors have been fitted allowing much needed light into the church and a view right up to the stained glass windows in the sanctuary. A second general purpose room has also been added in the south transept. Further works will follow.

St Matthew's was rededicated on Sunday afternoon (October 28) by Archbishop Michael Jackson in the presence of parishioners who were joined by a broad cross-section of the community, which included public

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representatives and clergy from nearby parishes as well as many well wishers and children and parents of the nearby St Matthew's School. The school choir sang during the service.

The congregation was welcomed by the Revd John Marchant who spoke of the journey of hope which the parish had undertaken and thanked all who had helped to plan the work on the church and bring it to fruition.

In his sermon, Archbishop Michael Jackson spoke of the significance of reopening the front doors which he said signaled inclusivity and welcome. He thanked the Rector, church wardens, members of the select vestry and the whole community who had made the open church a possibility.

He said the openness and versatility of the church was admirable. "While we all find God and worship God in different ways, this openness is relevant to the way in which church is done today. Our understanding of church is from the Scriptures and the Scriptures we have heard today speak to that. Ephesians [2: 19–22] speaks of breaking down walls and Matthew [9: 9–13] talks of the call to be followers of Jesus... Hospitality, welcome and starting again – all of this is entirely natural," he said.

The Archbishop paid tribute to John Marchant for holding the project together in both practical and spiritual ways and for enabling everyone to gather in a full church to celebration and to give thanks to God and to form a new community.

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New home for the heart of St Laurence O'Toole in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin

The heart of St Laurence O'Toole goes on permanent public display in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, from November 14, 2018. This occasion will be marked by free entry to the cathedral from 9:30am to 2:30pm, welcoming the people of Dublin to view the heart of the city's patron saint.

A special ecumenical service of dedication and thanksgiving marking this historic occasion will be held that evening at 5:45 pm. The Archbishop of Dublin, The Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, will first bless and dedicate the redesigned grounds incorporating the new stone labyrinth. Following this the Archbishop will preside at a service of Festal Choral Evensong, sung by the Cathedral Choirs, during which he will bless and dedicate the new resting place of the heart of St Laurence O'Toole. This service will be open to the public and all are most welcome to attend.

St Laurence's heart will be housed in a specially designed art piece, crafted by the renowned Cork-based artist Eoin Turner.

Commenting on this upcoming special day of celebration, the Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, The Very Revd Dermot Dunne, stated, 'I am delighted that we have two such tremendous reasons for celebration at this time. We are deeply grateful for the grant funding from Dublin City Council and Fáilte Ireland that has enabled the redesign and landscaping of our grounds. Further it is my great

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privilege and joy at this time to be able to return the heart of St Laurence to the people of Dublin.'

Theft and Return

The heart relic was stolen from the cathedral in March 2012 from the iron-barred cage on the wall of the Chapel of St Laud, which had been its resting place for many years. Following a long-running investigation, the heart was recovered, undamaged, by An Garda Síochána. After a six year absence, it was officially handed over by Assistant Commissioner Pat Leahy to the Archbishop of Dublin at a service of Choral Evensong on April 26 this year.



About St Laurence O'Toole

Laurence O'Toole is the Patron Saint of Dublin and is closely associated with the early years of Christ Church Cathedral. His feast day falls on November 14.

He was born at Castledermot, County Kildare, in 1132, the youngest of four sons of Maurice O'Toole, a Leinster chieftain, who was engaged in rivalry with the powerful Mac Murchada family. When he was 10 years old, Laurence was

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handed over to Diarmait Mac Murchada as a hostage for his father's loyalty. When his father was suspected of treachery, Laurence was imprisoned and became very ill. He was eventually rescued and cared for by the Bishop of Glendalough and decided to join the church. He was ordained a priest and became abbot of the monastery at Glendalough at the age of 25. In 1161 he became Archbishop of Dublin and was consecrated the following year at Christ Church Cathedral.

The Anglo–Norman invasion of Ireland, led by Strongbow, in 1169 resulted in two sieges and a famine in Dublin. Laurence played an important part in the negotiations when an Anglo–Norman victory became inevitable.

Laurence has traditionally been given credit for the rebuilding of Christ Church in the 1180s, although it is now considered more likely that his successor, Archbishop John Cumin, was responsible.

In 1180, Laurence left Ireland for the last time to travel to Normandy. However, he became ill on arrival and was brought to the Abbey of St Victor at Eu where he died on 14 November 1180. He was made a saint in 1226.

Following Laurence's canonisation some relics of his were returned to Dublin where they lay in the cathedral's relic collection until the Reformation. The heart had been on display in the Chapel of St Laud in the cathedral until it was stolen in 2012.

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News briefs

Church of Ireland Theological Institute lecture

The next lecture in the Featherstonehaugh Series 2018 is scheduled for Wednesday, 14th November, at 3pm at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute. All are welcome to attend. The speaker is the Revd Dr Andy Angel and title of his lecture is "Negotiating the distance between missional aims and missional reality: Jesus' own experience in John 4:1–42".



Dr Angel is currently the vicar of St Andrew's, Burgess Hill, in the diocese of Chichester; having worked in theological education, most recently as Vice-Principal of St John's College, Nottingham. He is also Chair of SEAN International, a mission society working in theological education by extension in 100 countries, and he has been involved in a variety of church work from open youth work in the UK through to training church leaders in Brazil.

Londonderry Children's Light Party Christian alternative to the city's Halloween celebrations

A Children's Light Party was held in St Augustine's Church Hall in Londonderry on Wednesday morning as a Christian alternative to the city's Halloween celebrations. Just over a year ago, at the Diocesan Synod, the Rector of Taughboyne, Rev Canon David Crooks, complained that Halloween was "becoming quite a cult" and sending the wrong message to children. And Rev Canon Malcolm Ferry said "maybe the Diocese would need to think that if this is Council's strategy, we need to have a strategy." The Diocesan Children's Officer, Kirsty Lynch, told this year's

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Diocesan Synod, that the light party at St Augustine's - with games, puppets, arts and crafts, and party food - was a response to such calls. Kirsty led the children and adults in prayers and hymn-singing, celebrating Jesus as "the Light of the World". Click on the image below for full coverage.

Dementia Friendly Churches - free seminar at CRE

This two hour free seminar at the Christian Resources Exhibition in Belfast will be addressed by Pamela Frazer of the Alzheimer's Society. This session will look at the role of the church in supporting someone with dementia - and their carers. It looks at the different types of dementia, signs and symptoms and how to best communicate with, and support, someone with dementia. Thought will be given to what style of church service you provide, what pastoral care you provide and how to tailor these to become more understanding and supportive. Information will also be given on how your church can avail of the Dementia Friendly Communities workshops. Book your free places at: <http://churchresourcesonline.com/churchlife2018>

Thoughts on recruiting volunteers

You may be dealing with pressing needs right now. But the simple act of taking the necessary time to get good people in the correct positions for the best reasons will make the difference between perpetually trying to deal with volunteer emergencies and putting those urgencies to rest. The converse is true, too—if you don't make the effort up front, you'll pay for it in attrition, conflicting expectations, and harder than ever recruiting next time around. Here's a

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recruiting plan that'll help you engage a reliable and committed team.

<https://childrensministry.com/volunteers-that-stick/>

CMSI teams 2019

CMSI teams offer a chance for groups from Ireland to visit one of our partner locations and experience life, faith and work in another part of the world. It's a great way to deepen your understanding of global mission and to help the church-to-church partnership links grow. A CMSI team involves training and preparation in the months before the visit, the experience itself and some follow-up meetings afterwards.

Details of 2019 team locations at - <https://www.cmsireland.org/cmsi-teams>

The Mageough celebrates its 140th anniversary at the end on November.

The 140th Anniversary of the opening of the Mageough will be celebrated on Wednesday the 28th November. At 7pm there will be a service in the Chapel at which the preacher will be the Dean of St. Patrick's, Dr William Morton. This will be followed by a reception in the Function Room. All are welcome. The Chaplain has also been doing research into the history of the Mageough. He has 3 interesting publications online. See The Chapel website for further details.

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