



## **Hall-hay-lujah! A new church is born in Co Down**

A spectacular structure made by a team of volunteers from a Co Down church has been attracting visitors far and wide.

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Minister of  
Rathfriland  
Presbyterian  
Church Rev  
Trevor Boyd



The church  
made of hay  
was  
constructed  
by First  
Rathfriland  
Presbyterian

Church by way of an invitation to its upcoming harvest service ... though hay-fever sufferers can rest easy as the structure is for promotional purposes only.

It was the church's minister, Rev Trevor Boyd, who first introduced hay sculptures in conjunction with First Rathfriland's annual harvest service: "We've been doing a harvest build for four years – we've had teddy bears, cows, this year we've went for a church.

"Historically, and still currently, harvest is one of those occasions when people tend to go to church. People will go as a community to worship, they'll move about each others churches. We thought this year we'd put the church back in the centre of it."

Of the newly built church, he said: "It's a bit of a step up from a teddy bear but we have a willing band of workers, so fair play to them for putting this together.

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“There was probably about a dozen people of all ages working on it. It took them a day and half to put it on site but they been working at it before that, preparing the windows and things like that.

“You’ve got people involved in the painting, there’s farmers involved with their telehandlers, supplying the straw and putting it into place.

“It’s a relevant way to connect with people, to get their interest and to highlight to them that it’s harvest time and that there’s an opportunity to thank God for the harvest in First Rathfriland.”

Of the structure, which is located around half a mile from the church, Rev Boyd said: “There’s been quite a draw to it, as in other years.

People come to it to have their photos taken. People look forward to seeing what’s going to be on the site.

“This year with Storm Ali it was a wee bit later. People thought maybe nothing was going up this year, but we didn’t want to put it up and lose it in the storm, so we waited.”

The Harvest Thanksgiving services take place on Sunday, October 7 at 11.30am and 7pm.

Rev Boyd added: “Our church building will also be open from 3pm to 6pm for the whole community to look at the displays, listen to live music and enjoy some apple tart.”

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## Second Level school students urged to promote peace



### Participants in the Second Level Schools' Service with Garda Marc Kelly.

Hundreds of secondary school students from around Ireland converged on St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, last Thursday afternoon (September 27) for the annual service marking the start of the academic year.

The service, which is organised by the General Synod Board of Education (RI), was attended by Minister of State at the Department of Education and Skills, Mary Mitchell O'Connor, who also read a lesson. The Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, presided and the service was led by the Dean, the Very Revd William Morton. The theme of the service was peace and

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**Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor with Archbishop Michael Jackson and Dean William Morton at the Second Level Schools Service in St Patrick's Cathedral.**

reconciliation and the speaker this year was Garda Marc Kelly, a member of An Garda Síochána from the nearby Kevin Street Garda Station.

As part of the service, the Minister and students wrote messages for those affected by violence and conflict on

prayer leaves. These leaves, along with 30,000 others which have been attached to the Tree of Remembrance in St Patrick's Cathedral since its installation in 2014, will be suspended from the ceiling of the nave of the cathedral. This is part of a special project to symbolise the 30,000 Irish people who lost their lives in World War I as part of commemorations marking the end of the war.

In his address, Garda Kelly told the students about his role, and that of his fellow Gardaí, as keepers of the peace. He

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**Andrew Forrest  
and Ken Fennelly  
and the Minister of  
State for Higher  
Education, Mary  
Mitchell O'Connor.**

said that their main aim in the event of a breach of the peace is that people leave the situation in a better position than they arrived.



He suggested that the best way to deal with an argument was through communication. Shouting and overreacting rarely led to a resolution, he said. “The key to finding a resolution and peaceful cooperation is to take a step back and look at the situation from the other person’s point of view, from their shoes. This brings empathy and understanding,” he said.

He concluded by asking for the students’ help in promoting peace, understanding and empathy throughout the island of Ireland.

## **New Global Guide highlights persecution of Christians and encourages action**

Irish charity Church in Chains has launched the third edition of its Global Guide detailing 60 countries worldwide where

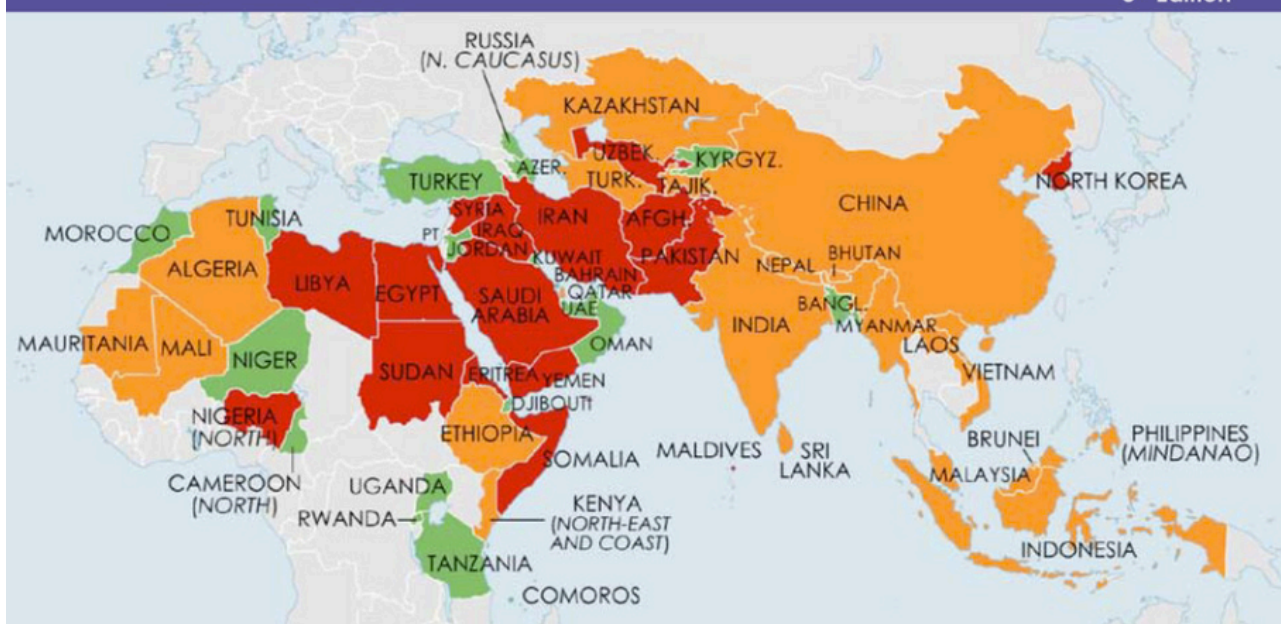
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**Keith Talbot, Trustee, Virginia Chipperfield, Researcher and Writer, David Turner, Director, the Revd Trevor Sargent and Susanne Chipperfield, Operations Coordinator at the launch of the Church in Chains Global Guide.**

Christians face persecution because of their faith. The Global Guide was launched Thursday last (September 27) by the Revd Trevor Sargent, Curate Assistant in Waterford and former Green Party Leader. He urged people to use the Global Guide prayerfully and said it gave people the tools to transform the lives of those who are being persecuted for their faith.

The Global Guide aims to raise awareness in Ireland about the situation of persecuted Christians around the world. It also seeks to motivate readers to respond. It divides the countries into three colour coded categories – red/severe, where many or all Christians face persecution including



## Where Christians Are Persecuted Around The World

imprisonment, torture, murder or violent mob attacks, orange/significant, where some, but not all, Christians face arrest, attack or serious restrictions and green/limited, where some churches or individual Christians face restriction or discrimination.

Launching the Global Guide, the Revd Trevor Sargent said that it was an essential part of life which helped people to put words into action as James 1:22 urges. He described the guide as a tool box to enable people to do something about what they read. “The essential element of this is that it starts in prayer and leads to action,” he said. “This gives an edge to anyone with an interest in writing as the reader is urged to write to the heads of states where there is oppression. You can be part of the solution.”



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He highlighted three things that needed to be taken into account in the context of the Global Guide: national interest, scarcity of resources and good people doing nothing.

He pointed out that the Department of Foreign Affairs was committed to upholding human rights in every country. However, he said this was not entirely honest as all State departments protect the national interest and this could cause conflict where addressing injustice interfered with the national interest. For example, he said Saudi Arabia was an abuser of human rights yet our lifestyle depended on oil.

Where there was scarcity of resources, Mr Sargent said there was often growing oppression. Where there was stress on resources, tolerance, altruism and good receded. Climate change would exacerbate oppression, he suggested. Quoting Edmund Burke, he said that the only thing necessary for evil to triumph was for good men to do nothing. “The reality is that if people who claim to be good ignore this Global Guide and do nothing, that is an example of good people doing nothing and evil triumphing,” he commented adding that we could each do something about this.

Giving the background to the Global Guide, Church in Chains Director David Turner said: “The persecution of Christians rarely makes the headlines but is a weekly if not daily lived experience for millions of Christians worldwide – we estimate that over 200 million Christians are at constant risk of persecution. The Global Guide is being launched at a time when the situation is noticeably worsening in the two most populous nations on earth, as Hindu extremists

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across India attack churches in rural areas every week with impunity, while in China the authorities close churches every week as President Xi's religious clampdown gathers momentum."

He said the guide demonstrated the need for action and said they were sending copies to TDs and Senators as well as calling on the government to raise the violation of religious freedom detailed in the book.

Church in Chains Researcher and Writer Virginia Chipperfield described the methodology behind the publication. She noted that it was a team effort, researched and written by David Turner, Susanne Chipperfield (Operations Coordinator) and herself, with support from many other organisations and individuals. She listed some of the many international reports from governments and NGOs that were used as source material and the important role played by independent country experts who were consulted. She also outlined how the maps were commissioned and referred to the fact that the Guide was financed by a generous grant designated for the purpose. You can read the Global Guide online [here](#). Or order a copy from Church in Chains by emailing [info@churchinchains.ie](mailto:info@churchinchains.ie).

## **Waterford school choir sings with Harry and Meghan's wedding choir**

The choir from Mount Sion CBS Secondary School, Co Waterford, wowed with an impromptu performance of Ben E.

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King's classic 'Stand by Me' with a little help from Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding choir.

The Waterford students were in London to record a charity single for The Solas Centre, Can Teen and Can Care 4 Living, with Irish singer songwriter Don Mescall.

They had just finished their recording when one of the pupils spotted Karen Gibson from The Kingdom Choir, who performed 'Stand by Me' at Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding.

Ms Gibson listened to the students fundraising story and, a few moments later, surprised them with an invite to perform with the wedding choir.

Speaking to Independent.ie Colette Kearney, the Mount Sion choir teacher, noted that the students surprise was 'magic'.

## **Evangelism bishop says C of E is “coming back” to England’s housing estates**

The bishop who chairs the Church of England's Estates Evangelism Task Group has said that the Church is returning to the country's inner-city housing estates. In doing so, it is reversing a trend which has seen other services, like shops and children's centres, moving out from these areas. The Bishop of Burnley, Philip North, made his comments at a conference of the National Estate Churches Network, where he said that outer estates are to be a key priority for the Church, which has published a new

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Commitment to Action to share the Christian faith on some of the country's most deprived estates.

The conference was held at St Francis at the Engine Room in Tottenham Hale – one of 100 new churches being opened by the Diocese of London before 2020. Bishop Philip told those attending that “we want to have a thriving, growing, loving church on every significant estate in the country.”

The National Estate Churches Network says it is committed to training estates residents to become future church leaders and to supporting existing Christian communities on estates, which may see collaboration with other denominations.

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“The Church is coming back,” Bishop North said. “The Holy Spirit is doing amazing things on the estates of this nation.”

The Vicar of church@five, on the Strawberry Estate in East Finchley, London, Helen Shannon, said: “The Church of England’s vision is ‘A Christian presence in every community’: that means no forgotten people; no forgotten places, even in some of our toughest estates.

“I’m so excited that the Church has a growing commitment to the revitalisation of estate churches, plans to launch new estate churches where none currently exist, and a vision to raise up local people from the estates to achieve this.”

The Chair of the network, Andy Delmege, Vicar at St Bede’s Church in Brandwood, Birmingham, said: “As a priest who ministers on estates, I am very excited about these plans.

“I pray it will continue to stimulate fresh energy, vision, and resources in our existing estate churches, as well as inspiring new initiatives.”

The Church’s Estates Evangelism Task Group is part of the C of E’s Renewal and Reform programme.

## **Pope Francis: Pray the rosary daily for Church’s protection from Satan**

Pope Francis has asked all Catholics to pray the rosary daily during the month of October, asking Mary and St. Michael the Archangel to intercede for the protection of the Church in a moment of “spiritual turbulence.”

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### **A priest holds a rosary outside the Pastoral Congress at the World Meeting of Families in Dublin**

A Sept. 29 statement from the Vatican said that Pope Francis had recently affirmed that prayer “is the weapon against the Great Accuser who ‘goes around the world seeking to accuse.’ Only prayer can defeat him.”

“The Russian mystics and the great saints of all the traditions advised, in moments of spiritual turbulence, to shelter beneath the mantle of the Holy Mother of God,” the statement added.

The pope said that recitation of the rosary would invoke Mary’s intercession, placing the Church under her “protective mantle.”

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The statement also encouraged the prayer of Sub Tuum Praesidium: “We fly to Thy protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from all dangers, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.”

The pope did not specify the “spiritual turbulence” to which he referred, but did say that prayer could help the Church to become “more aware of the faults, the errors and the abuses committed in the present and in the past, and committed to combating without any hesitation, so that evil may not prevail.”

Pope Francis also encouraged that Catholics end the rosary with the recitation of the prayer to St. Michael the Archangel, composed by Pope Leo XII: “Saint Michael Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil; may God rebuke him, we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl through the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.”

## **News briefs**

**+++Dublin readers commissioned** - On Saturday the Archbishop of Dublin commissioned Diocesan Lay Readers in Christ Church cathedral.

**+++Dublin ordinations** - In Christ Church, yesterday afternoon the Archbishop of Dublin ordained to the priesthood the Revd Dr Anne Lodge and the Revd Tom O’Brien.

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**A new build for Stranmillis Evangelical Presbyterian Church was opened on September 29. For the past 13 months, the congregation has been meeting in temporary premises while the new building was erected on their site on the Stranmillis Road. Dr Derek Thomas, a previous minister of the congregation, preached at the opening service. and throughout the weekend. The present minister is the Rev Gareth Burke.**

**+++Moderator's presbytery visit** - Yesterday the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church preached at the morning service in Muckamore Presbyterian Church, to begin his week-long tour of the Templepatrick Presbytery. His prayer is that he will bring encouragement to those he meets.

**+++Harvest preachers** - the Bishop of Cork yesterday preached at the services St Peter's church, Formby, in the Diocese of Liverpool, where the rector is the Revd Anne



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Taylor, formerly of Rathfarnham parish in the Diocese of Dublin. In St Nicholas' church, Millicent, there was a united Harvest Festival for the parishes of Clane and Donadea at which the preacher was the Very Revd Dr Robert MacCarthy.

**+++New Law Term Service** - This morning Monday ) at 10.15am the Annual New Law Term Service will be held in St Michan's church, Dublin. The preacher will be the Revd Barry Forde, Dean of Residence in Queen's University, Belfast, and the music will be led by the Choir of the King's Hospital.

**+++Clergy conference** - The clergy of the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory will be attending their annual residential conference in Dungarvan where the guest speaker will be the Rt Revd David Hamid, one of the bishops of the Church of England in Europe.

**+++What's the Story series** - In Christ Church cathedral, Dublin, this evening at 6.30pm 'What's the Story?' a series of talks on lives in direct provision, will begin and continue on 8 and 15 October. This series will provide an opportunity for those currently or previously in the direct provision system to share their experiences and reflect on the themes of family, home, and time.

**+++Ballymena venue for Connor Diocesan Synod** - On Wednesday the Connor Diocesan Synod will meet in Ballymena in St Patrick's church, Kilconriola, and Ballymena Elim Pentecostal church.

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**+++Sandford in concert** - In Sandford parish church, Ranelagh, on Thursday evening at 8pm, there will be a concert by the Garda Band and Garda Ladies Choir. Admission is free but donations towards the Organ Restoration Funds will be welcome.

**+++Cork institution** - On Friday the Bishop of Cork will preside at the institution of the Very Revd Susan Green as incumbent of the Cloyne union of parishes, followed by her installation as Dean of Cloyne. The preacher will be the Revd Katharine Poulton, Rector of Julianstown in the Diocese of Meath.

**+++CS Lewis Flower Festival - A** unique flower and cultural festival was held at St Mark's Dundela this past weekend. It marked 140 years since the consecration of the church, and the 120th anniversary of the birth of C. S. Lewis. Lady Christine Eames opened the festival. Artistic director Barbara Megarry and a team of award winning floral artists created 17 stunning creations on the Harvest theme 'A seed is sown'. The display also included a striking image of Aslan, the lion from CS Lewis' Narnia adventures, created in flowers by the Rainbows, Brownies and children of the parish. The weekend's events included a concert by Ashfield Girls School, Ashfield Boys School and Strathearn Chamber Choir, dramatic readings by St Marks Players, and talks by local 'Lewis' expert Mr Sandy Smith. A children's art competition, craft stall and refreshments was held, and the lion door knob which reportedly inspired the Narnia books was on public display. St Marks has many connections to the famous author C.S. Lewis, who was baptised in the church and often visited his grandfather in the Old Rectory.

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**+++Bishop's visit to Ashton School** - On Wednesday, 26th September, the Bishop of Cork, Dr Paul Colton, visited Ashton School Cork to speak at assembly. Beforehand the Bishop spent time in the staff room chatting with teachers. After assembly, Bishop Colton spent time with the students and stood in for what has now become a school tradition; the photo of the senior students – head boy and head girl – with the Bishop. Ashton School in Cork is under the co-patronage of the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, and the Cork Education and Training Board. It was the first school where a Church of Ireland Bishop entered into co-patronage with an Education and Training Board in Ireland.

## News Links

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## **Primary teachers disproportionately white, Irish and Catholic**

NUI Galway finds Irish-nationality teachers 'significantly overrepresented'

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/primary-teachers-disproportionately-white-irish-and-catholic-1.3642624>

## **Church monopoly in schools 'anything but healthy', says archbishop**

... people had lost confidence in the ability of the church to “act as a moral guarantor in tomorrow's Ireland”. ... Catholic schools warn Minister that religion opt-out may breach law · Baptism of ire: School move to ... It is the history of extraordinary-ordinary figures of priests and religious. ....

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/church-monopoly-in-schools-anything-but-healthy-says-archbishop-1.3641408>.

## **Catholic Church still owes Irish state €253M in unpaid compensation**

The Catholic Church is still indebted to the Irish state for the sum of €253 million, it was revealed today. A Joint Oireachtas Public Accounts Committee ...

<https://www.buzz.ie/news/catholic-church-owe-irish-253m-300990>

## **Scouting Ireland funding suspended until board replaced, Zappone announces**

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Safeguarding expert Ian Elliott 'appalled' at recent board vote to reinstate chief scout

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/scouting-ireland-funding-suspended-until-board-replaced-zappone-announces-1.3643676>

### **Priest scraps Communion Mass after parents fail to bring their children to church**

Parents are not bringing their children to Mass and then expecting a 'big day out' for their Communion, a parish priest who has decided to scrap ...

<https://extra.ie/2018/09/27/news/irish-news/communion-mass-cancelled-carlow-priest>

### **Máirtín Ó Muilleoir's took credit for keeping RHI open while pledging to maximise approvals for scheme**

Sinn Féin has moved in an attempt to clarify the context for Máirtín Ó Muilleoir's audacious claim that he had a role in delaying the closure of the RHI.

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2018/09/26/news/ma-irti-n-o-muilleoir-s-took-credit-for-keeping-rhi-open-while-pledging-to-maximise-approvals-for-scheme-1442547/>

### **Church celebrates 150 years**

Newtown Abbey Times

The Church of St Patrick was consecrated on August 15 1868 by the Right Reverend Robert Knox, Church of Ireland Bishop of Down, Connor and ...

<https://www.newtownabbeytoday.co.uk/news/church-celebrates-150-years-1-8646365>

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