



EU Bishops pray for peace in Ypres ahead of autumn conference

European Bishops commemorated all victims of the First World War in a major event held on Wednesday 24 October 2018, in the city of Ypres (Belgium) in the context of the COMECE (The Catholic Church in the European Union)

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Assembly “Autumn 2018” dedicated to the upcoming European elections.

On the occasion of the centenary of the end of World War I, COMECE bishops urged all persons of good will to work together in the promotion of dialogue - a key element for the European Union as a project of peace - by preserving the diversity of historical memories in Europe. Their call came from the symbolic setting of Ypres, theatre of some of the darkest and most cruel pages of the conflict.

EU Bishops participated in the Holy Mass celebrated at the St. Martinâs Cathedral attended by hundreds of youths from several countries and local residents.

The commemoration continued with an ecumenical prayer at the St. Georges Memorial Church. Before being received by public authorities at the local city hall, Bishops visited the *”In Flanders Fields”* Memorial and prayed both at the German Cemetery *Studentenfriedhof* and at the Commonwealth Cemetery *Tyne Cot*, where they deposed wreaths of flowers to pay tribute to the victims of the war and to commit to a lasting peace in Europe.

The event was organised by COMECE in the context of its autumn Assembly that is taking place in Brussels on 25-26 October 2018. Bishops are focusing on the May 2019 European elections, and exchange on future EU challenges in dialogue with high-level EU representatives, including Mrs. Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr. Luca Jahier, President of the European Economic and

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Social Committee, and Mr. Michel Barnier, European Chief Negotiator for Brexit.

Brexit without Stormont is an embarrassment says Bishop Good

The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe has urged the parties at Stormont to be heroic and redouble their efforts to get the political institutions up and running again. The Rt Revd Ken Good was delivering his Presidential Address at the Derry and Raphoe Diocesan Synod in Donegal.

Delegates met in An Grianán Hotel in Burt, three miles from the border and five months from the UK's scheduled departure from the EU. The lack of a devolved administration in Northern Ireland would be regrettable in normal circumstances, the Bishop said, but with Brexit looming it had become an embarrassment. And the longer Northern Ireland's political institutions remained collapsed, the harder he feared it would be to get them up and running again.

“We have the enormous problem of climate change,” Bishop Good said in his Presidential Address, “and the cataclysmic events that accompany it. We have the reality of a changing world order, with all the uncertainty that that brings. We have had radical social change in the Republic, perhaps symbolized by the outcome of the abortion referendum. And then there's Brexit, the lack of clarity around which is an on-going source of uncertainty on both sides of the border in this diocese.”

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The one area where, at first glance, the Bishop said, there seemed to have been little change was in Northern Ireland, where the promise of recent years had dissipated and we were experiencing what he called “the political equivalent of locked-in syndrome”. Bishop Good sought inspiration from a conflict elsewhere in the world to encourage local politicians.

“The late Nelson Mandela said, ‘It is so easy to break down and destroy. The heroes are those who make peace and build.’ I urge the parties at Stormont to be heroic, to redouble their efforts to have the political institutions restored, and to behave in a manner which restores our faith in the body politic.”

With the UK scheduled to leave the European Union in just over 150 days’ time, it was far from clear what would happen afterwards, the Bishop said. “We don’t know if it will be a hard Brexit or a soft Brexit, perhaps, even, a blind Brexit? Will there be a hard border just three miles up the road or will it be a soft border? Will Brexit deliver the kind of prosperity its advocates promised or will it prove to be the economic catastrophe its opponents predicted? Five months to go, and nobody really knows. It would appear we aren’t the only people in the ‘faith’ business.”

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The Bishop commended the Irish government for its stewardship of the Irish economy and for achieving results

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that he said were the envy of the rest of Europe. But, he said, a civilised society was judged by the way it treated its most vulnerable – the young, the sick, the elderly, the poor and the homeless. He urged the government not to forget the least fortunate in our society and specifically – where homelessness was concerned – to meaningfully address the provision of affordable social housing and ensure that there was adequate emergency accommodation available.

Bishop Good highlighted one other issue about which he said Church members could make a real and significant difference – loneliness. “I don’t want to trivialise the issue,” he said, “or underestimate its crushing impact, but we can all help address the problem – right away – by making contact with a neighbour; by speaking to someone who lives on their own; by calling someone on the telephone or having a cup of tea with them; by being more thoughtful. Small gestures like these can make a huge difference to people’s lives, giving comfort, encouragement and reassurance to those who need it.”

Bishop Francis Duffy calls for action and prayers for Bord na Móna staff and their families

Bishop Francis Duffy, Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois, released the following statement in response to the news of the job losses at Bord na Móna.

“Like many others I heard with concern the news of the job losses in Bord na Móna. The loss of up to 430 jobs is a devastating blow to employees in the midlands region, their

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families and to the local economy. As well as being a vital energy resource, this semi-state company had a mandate to create employment for the region. The midlands now faces the real prospect of falling into a sharp regional recession unless multi-agency action is taken immediately.

“I am asking that special prayers be said at Masses throughout the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnois this weekend. I ask that prayers be said for the intentions of the employees and for the prospect of future employment.

“I also ask that the Minister for Business, Enterprise and Innovation, Ms Heather Humphreys, a rural TD, and relevant State agencies, to prioritise our region in terms of sustaining employment opportunities for this skilled workforce.

“This shocking announcement not only directly affects Bord na Móna workers but, in addition, it jeopardises thousands of ancillary jobs which have been created since the 1940s, and which rely for survival on the pay spend of the workers.

“It is incumbent on our public representatives to continue to seek a commitment from government to assist these workers by every means possible. With our economy in the midlands still under par with the rest of the country, our community needs support today more than ever. I cannot overstate the depth of the impact that the loss of a major source of employment like Bord na Móna will have on a rural area which is weak with comparable alternatives.”

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Hall of Heroes bust of Mary Slessor unveiled

The bust of a Presbyterian missionary considered by many as one of the most inspirational, compassionate and determined Scots who ever lived has been unveiled.

Mary Slessor (1848-1915) will be immortalised as a figurehead in the Hall of Heroes at the National Wallace Monument near Stirling following a public vote.

The bust, made out of jesmonite injected with marble dust, was unveiled at a ceremony at the National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh earlier this evening.

It will take its place in the Hall of Heroes next Spring, joining 16 famous men from Scotland's history including Robert Burns, James Watt, Adam Smith and Sir Walter Scott, ahead of the Monument's 150th anniversary since its opening.

Ms Slessor, a Dundee mill worker, was inspired by the legendary explorer, Dr David Livingstone, to work as a missionary in Calabar, Nigeria in Western Africa in 1876.

Despite several bouts of illness and constant danger, she lived with the tribes, learned their language, and traditions, earning their respect and putting an end to some barbaric practices, such as the killing of twins.

The first woman honoured on a Scottish banknote (Clydesdale Bank £10 note), she was a weaver, teacher and

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Sculptor Csilla Karsay working on the Mary Slessor bust

a humanitarian who adopted many Nigerian children who had been left to die.

When Southern Nigeria became a British Protectorate, she became the first ever female Magistrate in the British Empire and a skilful diplomatic emissary.

Dona Robertson, a member of The Steeple Church in Dundee, which bears a bronze plaque to commemorate the missionary's work, attended the unveiling.

“This is an amazing tribute to Mary Slessor and quite incredible that it has happened after a public vote to finally have a woman in the Hall of Heroes,” she said.

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“Mary, herself, I feel would be very embarrassed about the whole idea, as she was all those years ago when she was made an honorary member of The Order of St John of Jerusalem by King George V.

“Honorary because she was female.

“She was an amazing woman, far removed from the Victorian women missionaries of her time in the way she befriended and lived with the local people she worked alongside.

“She was much loved, and, as we see today, still very much remembered.”

21% UK Christians disagree that Jesus is only way to salvation

A survey into the theological understanding of Christians in the UK found many areas where researchers say pluralism has influenced believers' doctrine.

Comres conducted a poll for Ligonier Ministries, a discipleship organisation founded by the American theologian R.C. Sproul, to look into what self-professing Christians in the UK thought.

They asked a series of in-depth questions about the Trinity, the authority of the Bible, the nature of Jesus and his role in salvation and whether people thought it was necessary to evangelise.

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Some of the responses revealed that many Christians had parted from doctrines previously considered Biblical truths.

For example, 64% agreed either strongly or somewhat that God accepts the worship of those in other religions.

42% strongly disagreed with the statement "Even the smallest sin deserves eternal damnation", with a further 20% disagreeing somewhat.

Dr Stephen Nichols, Chief Academic officer at Ligonier Ministries and the President of Reformation Bible College in Florida, told Premier Christian Radio: "This is a pretty intense survey and it has pretty intense questions and so it's a way of diving deep beneath the surface to really uncover what people believe about God, the Bible, Jesus, salvation and also some key ethical issues.

"What we're seeing here is the influence of the culture around us, the pluralism of our day, the ethic of simply tolerating religious views and we're taking our cues from

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culture when we really need to be taking our cues from God's word and from the Bible".

While some answers fell in line with orthodox understanding, such as 84% practising Christians believing that God is perfect and cannot make a mistake, Dr Nichols said other results were worth noting by the UK church:

"It's actually tragic when you look at the survey and you see so many saying 'I don't know' - these aren't just matters of life and death, these are matters of eternal life and eternal death. There can't be any more consequential questions than the questions on this survey and so these 'I don't know' are really troubling"

Two French priests commit suicide after being accused of sexual misconduct

Two French priests have committed suicide in the past month after being accused of sexual misconduct.

According to [AFP](#), the body of Pierre-Yves Fumery was found on Saturday after he hanged himself inside his church in the small town of Gien, in the Loire Valley.

The 38-year-old had been questioned by the area's public prosecutor after accusations of 'inappropriate behaviour' towards a minor, including that 'he took a girl in his arms', the news agency reported.

He had not been charged at the time of his death.

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Orleans bishop Jacques Blaquart said it was a 'moment of suffering and a tragic ordeal', the news agency reported.

Fumery had taken a temporary leave of absence at the recommendation of the bishop and had only just returned on October 8. He had not yet resumed his duties, according to [the BBC](#).

He is the second priest in France to take his own life in the space of a month after the suicide in September of Jean-Baptiste Sebe.

The priest, 38, also hanged himself in his church in Rouen, northern France, after a woman accused him of sexually assaulting her adult daughter, although the BBC reports that at the time of his death, no formal complaint had been made.

France has not been immune from the sex abuse scandal that has badly shaken the worldwide Catholic Church.

French Cardinal Philippe Barbarin is to stand trial in January for allegedly covering up a child sex abuse scandal in the Archdiocese of Lyon.

News briefs

+++Curry in a hurry from Cork MU

The National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) is located in Ringaskiddy, County Cork. It provides training and education for the Merchant Marine and the non-military

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needs of the Irish Naval Service. The local Church of Ireland rector, the Revd Elaine Murray, from Carrigaline Union of Parishes, is also the Church of Ireland Chaplain to the National Maritime College of Ireland. In that capacity Elaine recently dropped in for a visit and to deliver the 'Curry in a Hurry' books produced by the Mothers' Union to all of the NMCI 1st year students. With this super little book they won't have to rely on fast food and tins and will be cooking for themselves in no time.



+++Bake bread for peace

Join CCD for this hand's-on baking workshop and a meeting of three cultures. This event is free but places are limited and pre-booking is essential. Please go to the St Patrick's Cathedral website to register.

+++Kenya joins Green Anglicans movement

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The Anglican Church of Kenya has become the third Anglican province to become home to the Green Anglicans movement. Spearheaded by the Anglican Students' Fellowship, Green Anglicans in Kenya will encourage members to "take up their roles in being good stewards of God's creations and ensure that future generations will have a better place to live in", ASF coordinator Dennis Nthenge said. The Green Anglicans movement in Kenya took place at

All Souls Cathedral in Machakos on Saturday. Youth representatives from all over Kenya were in attendance, as were environment specialists and representatives from



Phase 2 of the Society of St Vincent De Paul (SVP) St Benedict's Housing Scheme at Estuary Road, Malahide, County Dublin was officially opened on Friday 19 October by Murphy Eoghan, Minister for Housing, Planning & Local Government.

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Anglican institutions. The Bishop of Machakos, Joseph Mutungi, said that the Green Anglicans movement would help communities across Kenya realise that the “environment is God’s creation and should be preserved for the sake of future generations.” And he praised the young people for “embracing the concept”.

+++Trócaire’s Annual Remembrance Mass for deceased supporters

Down & Connor - Sat, 10 Nov 2018 - 6pm - St Malachy’s Church, Belfast. The Mass will be concelebrated by Bishop Treanor & Fr Michael McGinnity. We invite you to attend and celebrate the lives & lasting legacy of these wonderful people.

+++Mothers’ Union Worldwide Parenting Programme

Breaks down cultural barriers and allows parents to talk about parenting experiences. “The programme changed the way I communicate”- Read Danny’s story here: [https://www.mothersunion.org/news/meet-danny-participant-mothers-union-parenting-programme ...](https://www.mothersunion.org/news/meet-danny-participant-mothers-union-parenting-programme...)

+++The Priests Christmas concert in Omagh

Sacred Heart Church, Omagh, Sunday 30 December, 7.30 pm. Tickets, cost £25, now available from Drumragh Parish Office, 48 Brook St, Omagh, Tel 028 8224 2092 (office hours), or from Top News, George St, Omagh, Tel 028 8224 0084. Purchase early to avoid disappointment. Perfect as a Christmas gift!

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News links

Working together to change attitudes and heal the hurt of paramilitary-style attacks - The Irish News

<http://www.irishnews.com/lifestyle/faithmatters/2018/10/25/news/working-together-to-change-attitudes-and-heal-the-hurt-of-paramilitary-style-attacks-1466967/>

Compensation for Bloody Sunday families - BBC Ni

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-foyle-west-45981720>

Newton Emerson: Leo Varadkar continues to show a tin ear to the North

<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/newton-emerson-leo-varadkar-continues-to-show-a-tin-ear-to-the-north-1.3674167>

Ann Travers: IRA, not Sinn Fein, is at Stormont making decisions

https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/ann-travers-ira-not-sinn-fein-is-at-stormont-making-decisions-1-8681535/amp?__twitter_impression=true

Suspension of head of Garda HR sought

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/suspension-of-garda-head-of-hr-sought-by-drew-harris-1.3673442>

Vatican bishops at synod struggle with what to call gay people - Religion News Service

<https://religionnews.com/2018/10/23/vatican-bishops-at-synod-struggle-with-what-to-call-gay-people/>

Irish Primate Says Viganò 'Hijacked' World Meeting of Families
The Tablet Catholic Newspaper

Irish Primate Says Viganò 'Hijacked' World Meeting of Families ...
We got a great sense of a vibrant, dynamic **Church**, not just in

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Ireland, but indeed, ... we became aware of the fact that overnight in the States this **news** had broken.

[Rt Rev John McDowell: Why Brexit can't be allowed to damage the trust and mutual understanding ...](#)

Belfast Telegraph

In our own **Church of Ireland** community, there has been considerable ... form - will entail a period of major readjustment for both the UK and Ireland.

[Fr Sean McManus hits out after Ulster Unionist mocked by DUP for attending Pope 'antichrist' event](#)

The Irish News

Mr Butler told The Irish **News** a senior DUP figure said he was wrong to ... A **Church of Ireland** spokesman said any reference to the Pope being the ...

[Irish gov't approves excavation of orphanage mass grave site](#)

ABC News

Church-run homes in **Ireland** housed orphans, unmarried pregnant women and their babies for most of the 20th century. The institutions have been ...

[Rights groups push for yes vote in Irish blasphemy referendum](#)

The Guardian

Its stance was echoed by the **Church of Ireland**, part of the Anglican communion, which also said: "There is a fundamental human right to freedom of ...

[Music filling the air in Derry as choral singing festival takes place](#)

The Irish News

MUSIC is filling the air in Derry this week as a **choral** singing festival takes place in the city. The City of Derry International **Choir** Festival is described as a "joyous celebration of ... Estonia, Norway, Wales, Latvia, Finland, Germany and **Ireland** participating. ... 25 October, 2018 01:00 Northern **Ireland news**

[Seymour Crawford hailed as a 'peacemaker' at funeral](#)

Irish Times

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Addressing a service of thanksgiving at Newbliss Presbyterian **Church**, retired Presbyterian minister and father of the Presbytery of Monaghan Rev

Crawford bore 'strong convictions with a gracious civility', funeral told

Independent.ie

Rt Rev Dr Charles McMullen, Moderator of the Presbyterian **Church** in **Ireland**, paid a glowing tribute to Mr Crawford who died last Saturday at the age ...

Church of England: Transgender People Should Get Gender Recognition Easily

Christian Post

The **Church of England** has confirmed that in addition to allowing transgender people to marry in church, it supports making the legal process of their ...

C of E gives a holding response to Government's trans consultation
Church Times

The Church of England took part in the Gender Reform Act (GRA) ... practice for LGBTI+ people, which is expected to be finished in 2020

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