



The poppy is the enduring symbol of remembrance of the First World War. It is strongly linked with Armistice Day, but the poppy's origin as a symbol of remembrance lies in the landscapes of the First World War. The red represents the blood of all those who gave their lives, the black represents the mourning of those who didn't have their loved ones return home, and the green leaf represents the grass and crops growing and future prosperity after the war

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Biography published of Belfast priest who ministered at Belsen and Birmingham

Belfast-born Redemptorist Fr Dan Cummings had a remarkable life and career. Leaving home three days after his 15th birthday, he went on to serve as a British Army chaplain, help liberate Belsen concentration camp and become a pioneer ecumenist in Clonard Monastery - and share sweets with Ian Paisley...

Dan Cummings was first and foremost a Belfast man. He loved the city and its people.

He had been born into a devout Catholic teacher's family in 1907, and spent his young days living in Agincourt Avenue, then a mainly Protestant area in the south of the city near Queen's University.

The family got the chance of a house exchange to Springfield Road in west Belfast, close to Clonard Monastery.

Inspired by his education at St Malachy's College and his admiration for the self-sacrificing Redemptorist ideals, Dan decided, at the age of 15, to enter the 'juvenate' or preparatory college for the priesthood.

It was a difficult decision for himself and his family, as it entailed 'migrating' to Limerick.

But he was determined and, ignoring the difficulties, he headed off alone for his new life.

He was never to live at home again. After the demanding and uncompromising regime of his novitiate and student

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Fr Daniel Cummings, in a portrait painted in 1946 by Hans Baumeister, a survivor of the Belsen concentration camp. Fr Daniel served in the Phillipines, as a wartime chaplain and with Irish migrants in Birmingham

days, he was eventually ordained a Redemptorist priest in Esker, Co Galway in 1930.

He was secure in being part of the impressive religious tradition in his family that reached back to 1742. Over five generations, 16 members of the family had been ordained priests.

His great great grand uncle was known as 'the old priest' and probably tended those who fought in the battles of '98. His mother's uncle was Dr Richard Marner, first president of

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St Malachy's College; her brother was Dr Daniel Mageean, who became bishop of Down and Connor.

The family also had a strong Redemptorist connection. An uncle, Fr Robert Mageean, was a Redemptorist missionary in Australia; one cousin, Fr Joe Morgan, would become a Redemptorist missionary in India; and another, Fr Robert Quinn, would go to the Philippines.

Other family members of the 'Reds' included Brother Malachy Morgan and Richard McCall, who died as a student for the priesthood in Esker.

Dan's first appointment took him 16,000 miles from home to the Philippines. He was swept from a life of protective obedience to having to fend for himself. He set off by boat to an alien country with alien illnesses.

It was one of these which put him back on the boat to Ireland three years later. Back in Ireland, Dan was sent to the new house of studies in Galway to help the preparation of young men for the priesthood by teaching them sacred scripture.

His quiet life of study and teaching in Galway was rudely interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War.

The religious orders were asked to provide priests as chaplains to minister to the growing number of Catholic men in the forces. Dan applied and was accepted. He arrived in England and entered a new life as a British army chaplain.

Dan was among the men who landed in Normandy on D-Day, June 6 1944.

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In the following weeks, he proceeded through war-torn Europe. He was with the army that liberated Brussels. He spent much of his time serving in hospital tending the wounded and eventually those liberated from Belsen.

Like all the chaplains, Dan provided an immense support system for all those they encountered, friend and foe alike.

Dan had good German and was able to hear the confessions of German prisoners.

One he encountered was a young Redemptorist brother conscripted into the army. In gratitude to Dan, he carved him a wooden statute of St Gerard Majella. It can still be seen in Clonard Monastery.

Back in the Belfast he loved, Dan was enthusiastic in embarking on a new venture: a 'Mission for non-Catholics' in Clonard. It was the idea of the then-rector, Fr Gerry Reynolds; years later, his nephew - also Gerry - continued this work. When he died last week, he was mourned as a courageous advocate for Christian unity.

Fr Dan knew that the war years had radically transformed attitudes in Belfast. Catholics had fought alongside Protestants, and both traditions had sheltered together in Clonard's crypt during air raids.

The first mission was held on the Sundays of Lent in 1948. This work brought him into contact with a newly self-appointed minister by the name of Ian Paisley. They made good sparring partners and had many a heated discussion, even sharing sweets on occasion...

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On the basis of the talks and questions that arose during the mission, Dan produced a book, *The Facts about the Catholic Church*.

It had an initial run of 5,000 in 1956 and a reprint of 12,000 in 1968. He had a gift for writing that was accessible, simple and succinct. He prided himself on being able to write for the 'man in the street'.

After a few quiet years, Dan was offered a fresh challenge in 1966 - to go to Birmingham as chaplain for Irish immigrants.

It was the time of massive road construction in Britain. Many of those who built the Gravelly Hill Interchange, better known as Spaghetti Junction, were Irish.

It is said that Dan knew each worker by name. When they realised he wasn't collecting or preaching, he became accepted and respected as a friend. They knew him to be good listener and a solicitous advisor.

His work in Birmingham included running an Irish club and befriending those immigrants who worked in the hotel trade.

Fr Dan died in Birmingham on May 25 1977. He is buried in the Redemptorist plot in Milltown Cemetery, Belfast.

Rest and Be Thankful - Autobiography of a Belfast Missionary by Daniel Cummings C.Ss.R is published by Colourpoint, £12.99. A version of this article first appeared in *Reality*, the Redemptorists' magazine. Rosemary Doherty, Fr Cummings's niece who persuaded him to write his memoirs, is a retired lecturer and lives in Belfast. She edited the book and oversaw its publication.

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'A beautiful soul', Bono dedicates song to Eugene Peterson at U2 London gig

Bono took time out of his concert at London's O2 Arena this week to pay tribute to creator of the Message Bible Eugene Peterson who died earlier this week.

Dedicating the song '(13) There is a Light', to the pastor and author, he said: "To the great Eugene Peterson, who left us last night. A beautiful spirit who opened up the Scriptures, opened up so much else, to me, to us, to lots of people here. A beautiful soul."

The two struck up a friendship in recent years sharing a video online of the pair expressing their love of the Psalms.

Bono first endorsed Eugene Peterson's translation of the Bible in an interview with Rolling Stone magazine in 2002. He said The Message "has been a great strength to me".

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Peterson died this week after being admitted into a hospice following what his son Eric said was a "dramatic turn in his health caused by an infection".

He was being treated for pneumonia and experienced heart failure and dementia, with his care becoming primarily palliative.

Former Bible smuggler to speak at healing service in Belfast

Divine Healing Ministries has two exciting services coming up at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, in November and will be also be involved in a united Day of Prayer in Downpatrick open to all denominations.

The first special service is on Monday, 12th November, at 8pm, when the speaker will be the evangelist David Hathaway. He has the largest evangelical mission in Europe. David initially became famous for smuggling Bibles into the Soviet Union and has also worked with Holocaust survivors in Israel. He has recently testified to a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit at a recent prayer meeting in Westminster Central Hall and feels that God has inspired him with a powerful sense of direction for the coming days, leading up to a spiritual re-awakening in Britain.

On Saturday, 24th November, there will be a Day of Prayer for God's healing and peace in Downpatrick, County Down. Five Downpatrick churches of different denominations are involved and silent prayer and reflection will take place in each church, with everyone then walking to the next church

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behind a large wooden cross. Everyone will be encouraged to lay down burdens from the past and to seek God's peace. Divine Healing Ministries will be participating and will offer the opportunity for individual prayer for healing.

On Monday, 26th November, at 8pm, Divine Healing Ministries will be working with Release International to support the Persecuted Church with a service at St Anne's. The speaker will be the Most Rev Dr Ben Kwashi. Archbishop Ben is well-known for faithfully serving persecuted Christians in Plateau State, central Nigeria. A powerful speaker, he will be sharing his experience from Nigeria at various venues around the UK in late November.

Divine Healing Ministries Director Fergus McMorrow said: "We are really looking forward to these 3 special events in November. David Hathaway will speak into the situation we face as Christians in United Kingdom at this time and is a Spirit-filled evangelist. The Day of Prayer in Downpatrick follows other very successful days of prayer throughout the province and the unity in the churches in Downpatrick will add a special blessing. We are tremendously excited to be working with Release International on the service for the Persecuted Church at St Anne's on Monday, 26th November."

Church leaders meet Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs

Following their meeting with Northern Ireland's political parties at the end of September and with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, earlier

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this month, the leaders of the main Churches in Ireland met the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Simon Coveney TD, this week (25 October) at Iveagh House, Dublin.

Following the meeting at the Department for Foreign Affairs, the Church leaders said, “As part of the ongoing dialogue in relation to restoring the devolved institutions to Northern Ireland, following the collapse of the Assembly in January 2017, we welcomed the opportunity today to meet with Mr Coveney as an important part of those discussions.

“In our previous meetings with the political parties and the Secretary of State over the last few weeks, we have impressed upon them our concerns that the absence of devolved government in Northern Ireland was affecting many areas of community life, the delivery of public services and cross border co-operation. We conveyed these concerns to the Tánaiste, while emphasising the importance of continuing to build relationships and trust among all concerned, even in these difficult times. We also
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welcomed the opportunity to hear the Irish government's assessment of the current situation.

“While not underestimating the challenges involved in moving forward, we emphasised the importance of dialogue and finding the space that encourages engagement and participation. As we had done with the political parties and the Secretary of State previously, we reiterated our willingness and desire to assist in the process where we could.”

The Church leaders present were: The Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke (Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland), Rev William Davison (President of the Methodist Church in Ireland), Monsignor Joseph McGuinness, Diocesan Administrator for the Diocese of Clogher (representing The Most Rev Eamon Martin, Catholic Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland), Right Rev Dr Charles McMullen (Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland), Rev Brian Anderson, President of the Irish Council of Churches.

Encouraging reports from church planting programme in Down and Dromore

The Church Planting programme in Down and Dromore began in 2015. It plants in brand new locations and replants into existing situations as we seek to reach unchurched people with the gospel. Read on for encouraging updates from our five church plants:

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Moneyreagh Community Church led by Rory Blake- Knox

It has been amazing to see God ministering in and through our church

over five years. We recently celebrated our 5th birthday with over 100 worshippers coming along having started with 16 people on that very first Sunday.

We have seen local people come to faith and become part of our worshipping community as well as growing in their walk with God. As well as our morning service we now hold an evening service once a month; three Life Groups run bi-weekly; we hold regular community events and our youth and kids ministry has grown through investing in a part-time Youth/Kids Worker. We now have a kids' club, youth club, creche, youth church and school's work.

We were blessed to host a mission team from St. Aldate's in Oxford in July who helped us run our community week of kids' clubs, youth nights, free community lunches, Street Reach, a family fun day as well as our church services on the Sunday. This was a time of meeting new people, building new relationship and seeing people connect with God. Currently we are running an Alpha course in the local pub, 'The Auld House'.



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We are excited moving forward to see God build his Kingdom in Moneyreagh and beyond as we are obedient to him and seek him in everything. Our hope and prayer is that of Genesis 28 v.16–17, that people of all ages will say, as Jacob did, will say: “Surely the Lord is in this place, and I didn’t even know it””How awesome is this place, it is none other than the house of God”



Branial Community Church (currently led by a ministry team)

Over the summer we held two fun nights of *Burgers & Bouncingout* in the community. Both were brilliant evenings with lots of local folks coming along. One resident said: “As a resident it is great to see something positive for the young people in our community – well done to everyone.” This was followed by *Banter Week* with Dream Scheme. We held a *Community Quiz* earlier this month and our next community event is *Light up Branial* on the 31 October. We are now well known in the community and this is reflected by attendance at such events and positive feedback.

On Sundays we have an average attendance of 32 people with the family service often attracting around 45 worshippers. New people continue to turn up which is really encouraging but getting regular weekly attendance continues to be a challenge.

The Kids’ Club has around 20 children each week and we also run a Youth Club. We continue with a soup and prayer

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lunch once a month and worship and prayer nights, including both a week of prayer and a night of prayer.

Glen Community Church led by Stephen Doherty

The Glen has a comprehensive midweek programme with a couple of projects that are new this term. With the *Parents Breakfast Club* we are working



alongside the local school in an attempt to reach out to parents. We're offering a healthy breakfast as well as support and encouragement for parenting by providing visits from external agencies (CAB, CAP, special needs in education, etc). The school principal is on hand with advice and me and some of my team serve and invite prayer opportunities.

Open House is a joint initiative with the local Community Association offering locals a specified time where they can access employment support, housing advice, prayer, and food provided by ASDA through the fareshare scheme.

As well as our main Sunday gathering each morning, GCC also hosts an evening bible study series with follow-ups throughout the week through Life Groups. We also operate a Prayer Room offering a weekly opportunity for corporate prayer and Alpha will run again this autumn.

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GCC Youth & Kids currently attracts some 50 local children and young people. We have a fantastic team of voluntary leaders who are providing exceptional programmes with excellent activities, crafts, outings and experiences. Not forgetting the older members of our community, GCC Seniors brings them together for weekly projects and outings including knitting Trauma Teddies for the emergency services.

Killicomaine pioneered by Jim Fleming

Jim Fleming is employed by Seagoe Parish to pioneer a new Christian community



in Killicomaine, Craigavon. Jim is part-time in the role and works out of Killicomaine Community Centre. Regular outreach initiatives include a CAP Job Club, Men's Club and Alpha Course. Jim is working closely with other churches in the area.

Killough led by Colin Irwin

Over the last three years Colin Irwin and his core group of volunteers have built a successful ministry to children and young people in Killough. They run a weekly drop-in out of the church hall (St Anne's) and the *Messy Church* ministry works closely with the Roman Catholic church and reaches 50–60 families.

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Tuam babies to be exhumed and identified, says Minister

The government has agreed to excavate the Tuam babies site, identify those buried there and respectfully rebury them. Proper inquests are required, according to representatives of families of the babies who died and were buried on the site of the Tuam Mother and Baby Home.

On 23 October, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr Katherine Zappone, announced that the government has approved the forensic excavation of the site in a “multi-disciplinary framework, known as Humanitarian Forensic Action”, in response to the discovery of children’s remains interred at the site of the former mother and baby home run by the Bon Secours order of nuns.

“I am committed to ensuring that all the children interred at this site can have a dignified and respectful burial,” she stated. “While we must not underestimate the legal and technical challenges ahead, this comprehensive and scientific approach provides us with the best opportunity to address the many deeply personal questions to which former residents and their families need answers. I am also mindful of minimising the level of disruption for those who live in the vicinity of the site.”

In advance of Minister Zappone’s announcement, the Tuam Home Survivors Network stated: “The only acceptable outcome in the matter of the Tuam mass grave is the immediate convening of an inquest into the deaths of all the children recorded as dying within it, for whom no burial record exists. This requires a complete forensic

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exhumation, together with use of all resources required, to complete the most extensive DNA database possible and post-mortems to determine, wherever possible, the cause of each death.”

The statement concluded that the removal of the children of Tuam from one mass grave to a different mass grave would be disrespectful and “will be resisted by all lawful means”.

The actions to be taken by the government include:

- a phased approach to the forensic excavation and recovery of the babies’ remains in so far as this is possible;
- the use of on-site *ground-truthing and test excavations to effectively locate potential burials;
- the forensic analysis of any recovered remains and, where possible, identification;
- the respectful reburial of the babies with memorial/s, and conservation of the site.

Minister Zappone confirmed that new legislation will be needed to implement these actions. Initially the excavation and recovery works will be focused on the remains within the series of chambers identified by the Commission of Investigation. Further testing will facilitate phased extension of the investigation across the site as necessary. This does not include the areas where houses and gardens have been built and developed.

The Expert Technical Group has already identified eight separate areas that should be examined. Further investigations will be needed to determine where there are more human remains across the site. The Minister’s statement said that every “reasonable effort” will be made to locate and recover all remains from the site.

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There will be special community liaison in place to keep former residents and their families informed and involved in the process.

*Ground truth allows image data to be related to real features and materials on the ground.

News briefs

+++Reredos moved in north Belfast churches



The reredos from the former St James' Church, Antrim Road, has

been relocated from the chancel in St James' to the north side aisle of St Peter's Church. The reredos was at risk of water damage if it remained in the now closed St James' Church. The Rev Brian Lacey, rector of St Peter and St James, said: "It is a magnificent altar-piece, which depicts our Lord Jesus alongside the four archangels. The Chapel of St James (as the side aisle is now known) is already used for non-sacramental services with a small congregation. The addition of the St James' Holy Table means that Holy Communion can now be celebrated occasionally there too."

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+++Appointments

The Venerable Stephen J McWhirter, Incumbent of the Kilmoremoy Union of parishes, Diocese of Killala, and Archdeacon of Killala and Achonry, to be also Archdeacon of Tuam.

The Rev Lynda Peilow, Rector of Galway and Kilcummin (Tuam Diocese), to be also Provost of Tuam in the Chapter of St Mary's Cathedral, Tuam, and Prebendary of Lackan in the Chapter of St Patrick's Cathedral, Killala.

The Reverend Dr Andrew P Ison, Incumbent of the Ballisodare Group of parishes, Diocese of Achonry, to be also Canon of Tuam and Killala Cathedrals.

The Reverend Peter J Norman, formerly Incumbent of the Winkleigh Group of parishes, Diocese of Exeter, to be Priest in Charge of the Tubbercurry Group of parishes, Diocese of Achonry (from 1st December 2018).

The Reverend Canon Noel H L Regan, formerly Incumbent of the Clogher Cathedral Group of parishes, Diocese of Clogher, to be Priest in Charge of the Skreen Group of parishes, Diocese of Killala (from 1st January 2019).

The team at the Kilbroney Centre, Rostrevor, has recently launched a new residential package for Primary Schools. The programme has generated a lot of interest and resulted in several bookings already.

“We have a lot to offer Primary Schools,” says Development Officer, Jan Peach, “especially with the closure of so many

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outdoor and education centres that they would traditionally have used. “

+++Larne parish quilters' Advent exhibition

The Parish Piecemakers of St Cedma's, Larne, will be hosting their Quilts for Advent exhibition for the third consecutive year this December.



The exhibition depicts the Christmas story as revealed in the nine lessons of the traditional carols service, telling the story of Christmas in a colourful and accessible way.

The quilts are all handcrafted by the Parish Piecemakers, a group of talented quilters who have been meeting together for the past 12 years. All proceeds from the exhibition will go to the Parish Hall Building Fund.

The exhibition will be open on Saturday December 1 and Sunday December 2 from 2-4pm each day, with festive afternoon teas in the adjoining hall.

For further information, contact the parish office on 028 2827 4633.

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+++New primary school programme at Kilbroney

“The basic package is a fully catered two–night stay, arriving mid–afternoon before tea and leaving two days later after lunch. This would include three instructed outdoor activity sessions with Cloughmor Extreme (a local business based in Rostrevor), a nightline on the first night in our forest and a campfire on the second night. “

Schools can choose from:

- Water bouldering
- Canoeing
- Rock climbing
- Team games
- Archery
- Team games and archery
- Bushcraft and shelter building
- Zip line

“We can also bolt on additional days, activities and an environmental slot with, Liz Farnan, an Environmental Educator and parishioner from Kilbroney Parish Church in the village,” says Jan.

The programme is another step in realising the potential of the Kilbroney Centre and securing its long–term future. *Please spread the word in the primary school sector and consider using the centre for your youth group or parish weekend.*

Find out more at www.kilbroneycentre.com or if you would like to arrange a visit or have a chat with Jan, please contact her on 07342883538.

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+++Talk on the Theology of John Cennick

In 'John Cennick 300: A Talk on the Theology of John Cennick,' Church of Ireland clergyman the Rev Dr Bob Cotter explores the role John Cennick played in the eighteenth-century evangelical revival.

This is the last in a number of events organised by Mid-Antrim Museum, in partnership with Gracehill Moravian Church, to mark the 300th Anniversary of John Cennick's birth.

The evening takes place in the Braid, Ballymena, and admission is free. November 3 @ 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

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