

October 5, 2018



Former GP threads together linen story at Lisburn cathedral exhibition



Dr John Ennis with a selection of exhibits in the linen exhibition

A Lisburn man who spent 25 years in Scotland as a GP, has given up the medical profession to focus on one of

October 5, 2018

Ireland and Scotland's oldest fabrics, the News Letter reports.

Dr John Ennis said linen is undergoing something of a revival, and up until Saturday he will be curating an exhibition in Lisburn Cathedral exploring the fabric which was hugely important in this part of the world in industrial times.

He said: "I trained as a medic and worked for the NHS in Scotland for 25 years. I suppose if you're from Lisburn there's a thread of linen in your DNA in some respects.

The linen exhibition in Lisburn Cathedral

"The job I do now is as a curator



October 5, 2018

looking at design. I've had a passion for design all my life and I see it as a way of generating interest and income for people.

“Gathering linen stories as we go has been an amazing privilege. I found it quite similar to when I was a general practitioner, in those situations I was listening to people talk about illness or discomfort. In this situation it's very joyous, being able to tell someone about their working life in their past.”

The 'Our Linen Stories' exhibition is touring internationally but is specially adapted for each stop that it makes.

In keeping with the setting of Lisburn Cathedral there will be a special focus on the relationship of linen with religious faiths and the traditional ceremonies around birth, death and marriage.

The exhibition also looks at 'millies' a term often used disrespectfully, but originally referred to skilled, hard-working woman in linen mills.

Dr Ennis said: “Lisburn Cathedral is a fabulous venue. The Huguenots – the first weavers who galvanised 18th century linen trade in Ireland and Scotland – are buried in the church. There's a church window in memory of the Barbour family (famed linen manufacturers), so we have a lot of resonance here.”

Of the linen revival he said: “Flax is perhaps the most sustainable of fibre crops as every part of the plant can be used.

October 5, 2018

“Novel material research is producing flax bio composites which have many uses. This potential can contribute to a vibrant, innovative and low waste economy.

“For every litre of water used to manufacture linen it takes 1,000 litres to produce the same amount of cotton together with a range of polluting pesticides.”

The exhibition in Lisburn Cathedral runs from 10am to 4pm each day.

Today, Friday, Dr Ennis hosts a tour and informal discussions about the exhibition at 11am and 2.30pm. Saturday will see a reception to celebrate Northern Ireland and Scotland’s linen links with special guests and weaving songs performed by Claire McNicol from 2.30pm. All events are free and further information is on the website www.ourlinenstories.com

Dublin Synod members to eat in support of the homeless

Dublin & Glendalough Diocesan Synod members will have an opportunity to support a homelessness and addiction charity when they attend Synod next week. Diocesan Synod takes place in Temple Carrig School in Greystones on Tuesday October 9 and the catering on the night will be provided by Tiglin which, through its No Bucks Café bus, provides hot meals to people experiencing homelessness in the Dublin area. The charity also offers programmes to people tackling addiction.

October 5, 2018

In return for a cash donation (a minimum of €12) Synod members will receive a simple meal of soup and sandwiches, similar to that served nightly by the No Bucks Café. A representative of Tiglin will also give a short presentation at the beginning of Synod.



‘Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is’ – Diocesan Synod Members urged to Support Tiglin next week

The move is the brainchild of Powerscourt Curate, the Revd Niall Stratford. Each year Synod members spend up to €14.50 on a meal provided by caterers. Niall spotted the No Bucks Café in Greystones a few years ago and the seed of an idea was planted.

“At a time, then and sadly continuing ever since, when so many individuals in our Dioceses were experiencing

October 5, 2018

homelessness and/or having to go without food, it occurred to me that we as Synod members could do something practical at Synod to assist our less fortunate brothers and sisters. Instead of indulging in a full catered meal, we could experience at first hand what they experience on a daily basis. They don't have a choice – but we do. So why don't we consciously exercise our choice: not to have a lavish meal," he explained.

Niall believes that partaking in the type and quantity of food that the No Bucks Café brings to people on the streets of the city and its suburbs Synod members can experience what it is like not to have a choice and by paying a similar sum that they would have paid for a catered meal, Tiglin can receive a donation which will more than cover their costs and which will make a real difference to the lives of others.

“My slogan for this initiative is ‘Putting our Money Where our Mouths are’. We are exercising in a meaningful way the ‘social Gospel’. Synod members have an opportunity not just to talk about social responsibility but to do something practical [James 1:22–25],” he added.

Temple Carrig School's charity of the year is Tiglin. As the charity does not have the personnel available to serve the meal, students of Transition Year will step in and serve the food. Tiglin will continue providing their services to the people who need them most on the streets of Dublin on the night.

The cost of the food provided by Tiglin will be reimbursed and all money donated on the night will go directly to Tiglin.

October 5, 2018

All Synod members are being asked to make a donation – a minimum of €12. Please bring cash as there will be no facility for credit/debit cards. The figure donated is to be viewed as a charity donation rather than the price of the food.

Supreme Court set to announce decision on Christian bakery in 'gay cake' case



The UK's highest court is to rule next week on whether the Christian owners of a bakery discriminated against a customer by refusing to make a cake decorated with the words "Support Gay Marriage".

Five Supreme Court justices will announce their decision in London on Wednesday 10th October.

Their ruling follows the latest round of a legal action brought against family-run Ashers bakery in Belfast by gay rights

October 5, 2018

activist Gareth Lee, who won his case initially in the county court **and then at the Northern Ireland Court of Appeal.**

The bakery went on to fight the finding of discrimination at a Supreme Court hearing in Belfast in May.

Owners Daniel and Amy McArthur have said the law risked "extinguishing" their consciences.

During the Supreme Court proceedings, the panel of justices including president Lady Hale, were told that the owners were being forced to act against their religious beliefs.

David Scoffield QC, for Ashers, argued that the state is penalising the baking firm, with the courts effectively compelling or forcing them to make a cake bearing a message with which they disagree as a matter of religious conscience.

The legal action against Ashers was taken by Mr Lee with support from Northern Ireland's Equality Commission.

Controversy first flared when Mr Lee (pictured below), a member of the LGBT advocacy group QueerSpace, ordered a cake in 2014 featuring Sesame Street puppets Bert and Ernie for a private function marking International Day Against Homophobia.

His order was accepted and he paid in full but, two days later, the company called to say it could not proceed due to the message requested.

October 5, 2018

In the original court case, District Judge Isobel Brownlie ruled that religious beliefs could not dictate the law and ordered the firm to pay damages of £500.

Mounting an unsuccessful challenge at the Court of Appeal in Belfast in 2016, Ashers contended that it never had an issue with Mr Lee's sexuality, rather the message he was seeking to put on the cake.



Mr Scoffield told the justices that the case, a simple transaction, raised an issue of principle since those with deeply-held religious or philosophical convictions could be compelled to act against their beliefs.

October 5, 2018

Robin Allen QC, for MrLee, said: "This was a relatively small incident in his life which has become enormously significant and continues to be so. That is a heavy burden to bear for one individual."

[The Ashers legal battle has run for four years](#) and attracted enormous attention.

Northern Ireland is the only part of the UK or Ireland where same-sex marriage is outlawed, with Theresa May's DUP allies staunch opponents of changing the law.

The Supreme Court will rule on whether Ashers "directly discriminated" against Mr Lee on grounds of sexual orientation contrary to the Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2006, and religious and political belief, contrary to the Fair Employment and treatment (NI) Order 1998, by refusing to make a cake decorated with the requested message.

The justices have also been asked to decide if the relevant provisions under the regulations and order breached the McArthur family's rights under the European Convention on Human Rights relating to freedom to manifest one's religious beliefs and freedom of expression.

Benefit to Belfast as Netflix create new TV series and films from the Chronicles of Narnia

New Chronicles Of Narnia projects for film and television are in the works at Netflix, it has been announced, and

October 5, 2018

organisations in Belfast which have highlighted CS Lewis's links with the east of the city have stated this could have an impact similar to the Titanic if developed.

The streaming service has signed a multi-year deal with The C.S. Lewis Company to develop the classic stories from across the fictional Narnia universe.



The deal marks the first time that rights to all seven books penned by Lewis, including *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*, have been held by the same company.

Douglas Gresham, the author's stepson, said in a statement: "It is wonderful to know that folks from all over are looking forward to seeing more of Narnia, and that the advances in production and distribution technology have made it possible for us to make Narnian adventures come to life all over the world.

Netflix seems to be the very best medium with which to achieve this aim, and I am looking forward to working with them towards this goal."

October 5, 2018

The Narnia books have sold more than 100 million copies and been translated in more than 47 languages worldwide.

Ted Sarandos, chief content officer at Netflix, said: "C.S. Lewis' beloved Chronicles Of Narnia stories have resonated with generations of readers around the world.

"Families have fallen in love with characters like Aslan and the entire world of Narnia, and we're thrilled to be their home for years to come."

Disney has previously released movie adaptations of three of the Narnia books, *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe*, *Prince Caspian and The Voyage Of The Dawn Treader* between 2005 and 2010.

The BBC also adapted *The Lion, The Witch And The Wardrobe* for series in 1988.

Irish National Vocations Office focus on The Gift of the Priestly Vocation

Seventeen students for the priesthood have begun their formation and academic programme for 2018 – 2019. The new students currently in formation are in Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth (five); Redemptoris Mater Seminary, Dundalk (four); and eight have begun their propaedeutic year in other locations in Ireland and abroad.

Last year, the Congregation for Clergy, in Rome – which has overall responsibility for seminary formation – issued a new document (*Ratio*), *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation*, which is

October 5, 2018



**Members of the National Vocations Council: Front row L-R Rev Eric Cooney, Bishop Denis Brennan, Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan, Father Willie Purcell
Back row L-R Barney Byrnes, Ciarán Hickey, Anthony Hartnett, Margaret Cartwright**

the revised programme for seminary formation. The *Ratio* strongly recommends to bishops around the world the introduction of a pre-seminary (propaedeutic) year for new candidates who wish to discern their priestly vocation.

The National Vocations Office of the Irish Bishops' Conference (see photograph below) was established last year and is based in Columba Centre, Saint Patrick's

October 5, 2018

College, Maynooth. The mandate of the office is to oversee and coordinate the work of training diocesan vocation directors and the promotion of vocations to the priesthood.

Commenting on the first anniversary of the establishment of the National Vocations Office of the Bishops' Conference, its coordinator Father Willie Purcell said, 'The National Vocations Office is a timely initiative of the bishops as it supports and affirms those who are thinking of diocesan priesthood to discern God's call in their lives. It is also timely as it is the 10th anniversary of the National Year of Vocations and this month the Synod on Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment meets in Rome. Its purpose is to encourage young people to look deeper into their relationship with God and follow the direction in which He is calling them. As National Vocations Coordinator I look forward to the office being a resource for initiatives and formation for our vocations directors and those discerning God's call to diocesan priesthood.'

Building on the momentum of the very successful World Meeting of Families and Papal Visit by Pope Francis, the National Office is organising a national 'Come and See' vocations exploration retreat on 23 and 24 November and will be supporting all of the diocesan vocation directors by sending promotion material for this event to every parish priest in the country, encouraging them to find at least one young man (18 to 40) who would like to explore what is involved in becoming a diocesan priest and how to discern whether they have a vocation. To find out more about this overnight event, please contact Rev Eric Cooney on eric.cooney@vocations.ie or (01) 5053118.

October 5, 2018

Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan, chair of the bishops' Council for Vocations said, "I am delighted with this initiative of the National Vocations Office. While we are all aware of the great challenges facing the Church and society at this time, we know also that God the All-powerful is always with us.

This 'Come and See' event in November invites men who sense that they may have a call to the priesthood to explore this possibility. Pope Francis, writing in his 2018 message for the World Day of Vocations, encourages us, "to learn how to view things with the eyes of faith and to keep ourselves open to the surprises of the Spirit". I pray that many will hear God's call and be courageous in following whatever path God puts before them."

Pro-life doctors in Ireland call for robust conscience protections

A "small but significant" number of general practitioners in the Republic of Ireland are appealing to the county's health minister to exempt them from being forced to refer patients to other doctors for abortions, the Irish Independent is reporting.

Ireland is facing a potential shortage of doctors willing to participate in abortions; a March survey of Irish healthcare professionals **found** that that roughly seven out of 10 general practitioners in Ireland are unwilling to perform abortions.

The Independent reports that the objecting GPs "will require some form of accommodation," though it is not yet clear how it will be done.

October 5, 2018

The **current draft** of the legislation to be debated in Irish parliament states that a doctor, nurse or midwife who has a conscientious objection to abortion must make arrangements for the woman to “transfer her care “ to another medic who will terminate her pregnancy, and must do so “as soon as may be.”



The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission in September **called for** the establishment of “clear procedures within healthcare facilities for medical personnel to report in advance their refusal to provide certain services,” as well as the “establishment of a register of objecting providers.”

Dr Maitiu O Tuathail, president of the National Association of General Practitioners, **wrote in June** that his organization churchnewsireland@gmail.org

October 5, 2018

had voted unanimously that its 2,000 members wanted to be able to opt in to abortion procedures rather than opt out.

“Medical abortion is not part of routine general practice. 85% of GPs are of this opinion. This has again been replicated in several polls consistently,” O Tuathail wrote in The Journal. “By equating abortion to the management of asthma, heart disease or diabetes, people are being disingenuous and I believe disrespectful to women.”

Health Minister Simon Harris **has criticized** the “opt-in” stance of the National Association of General Practitioners, and even recently expressed his hope that abortion would soon be provided in Ireland free-of-charge.

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar clarified to the Dáil in June that individual medical professionals will be able to opt out of performing abortions, but entire hospitals will not be able to do so, now that abortion is being legalized in the country. Many publicly-funded hospitals have historic ties to the Catholic Church and operate under Catholic ethics.

General practitioners would be able use medication to terminate pregnancies under the new law, without restriction, up until 12 weeks.

If there is a serious risk to the life of the mother, two doctors will be able to certify that they believe an abortion to be necessary after 12 weeks, as long as the fetus has not reached viability. The law also allows doctors to carry out abortions in what they deem to be an emergency, when they consider an abortion to be immediately necessary.

October 5, 2018

The Irish Independent reports that 24-hour phone line is expected to be set up to give women in a crisis pregnancy advice and direction if complications arise due to a medical abortion.

Kirk minister to address Highland Pride festival

A Church of Scotland minister will highlight the importance of challenging “hatred, discrimination and exclusion” when he addresses a LGBT+ festival in Inverness this weekend.

Rev Peter Nimmo said he accepted an invitation to be a keynote speaker at the opening of Proud Ness in a “gesture of solidarity and support” for people who have felt they have been discriminated against and misunderstood by the Church.

The minister of Old High St Stephen’s Church in Inverness said it was an “honour” to be asked to take part in the event on Saturday because he believed that everyone, regardless of who they are, is of equal worth.

Mr Nimmo will be speaking in a personal capacity and his gesture follows a [decision made by the General Assembly in 2017 to endorse a call on the Church to take stock of its history of discrimination at different levels against gay people and apologise individually and corporately, while seeking to do better.](#)

Proud Ness includes a parade which will start at Falcon Square, where the minister will address the crowd, head

October 5, 2018



Rev Peter Nimmo

along Inglis Street and High Street to the Town House, then across the bridge and along the river to Eden Court theatre.

Organised by Highland LGBT Forum, which campaigns for the fair treatment of all LGBT people, the main event is being held at Eden Court and an after party will take place at the Mercure Hotel.

A spokeswoman said up to 2,000 people are expected to take part in the parade.

Mr Nimmo was invited to speak at the event before it emerged that a petition calling on Highland Council to prevent Proud Ness from taking place was started by a local man, who claimed the event went against his religious beliefs.

October 5, 2018

“I was asked by the event organisers to say a few words at the start of the parade in order to show support for the LGBT community in Inverness and the Highlands,” said the Kirk minister.

“I feel honoured to be invited and pleased to hear that a number of clergy from the Church of Scotland and other denominations will be attending.

“I would encourage as many ministers as possible to come along.”

Mr Nimmo, who was ordained in 1996 and has served churches in Edinburgh and Glasgow, said he had been involved in several Highland LGBT Forum events over the years.

He took part in a seminar on LGBT and faith matters in 2012 and spoke at a vigil following the shootings at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida in June 2016.

