

July 13

CNI

Christian TV presenter joins The Leprosy Mission



TV Broadcaster and author Pam Rhodes has been appointed Vice President of The Leprosy Mission England and Wales by a unanimous vote of the Board of Trustees.

Inspired by her Christian faith, TV broadcaster and author Pam Rhodes has stepped in to help people suffering from leprosy.

July 13

Rhodes, known for fronting the BBC's *Songs of Praise*, has been appointed vice president of **The Leprosy Mission**.

She said: 'As a Christian, I've always been moved by stories in the Bible of people with leprosy being feared, expelled to live in colonies and separated from their families and community.

'Like most of us, I assumed that both that attitude, and the disfiguring disease itself, had been eradicated over the last 2,000 years. It was shocking to discover that despite a cure being available, millions of people worldwide still struggle with the terrible effects of leprosy and a general attitude of rejection and stigma.

'We often ask, "What would Christ do?" I think he'd work to change the health and the lives of everyone with leprosy by the development of medical science, education and the creation of opportunities which will allow leprosy-affected people to have the dignity and sense of worth they deserve.'

She said she loved the fact that the Leprosy Mission is supported by Christians in all walks of life who do whatever they can to help: 'An army of ordinary people can work wonders when they

July 13

know they are fighting to eradicate injustice and suffering.'

National Director of The Leprosy Mission England and Wales, Peter Waddup, said, "We are delighted to welcome Pam to The Mission" "We know she will make a wonderful Vice President and a great contribution to our work."



Pope Francis adds new pathway to sainthood

Pope Francis has added a fourth pathway to possible sainthood.

People who live a good Catholic life and lay down their life to save others will now be eligible for beatification - the first step on the path toward sainthood.

July 13



Before the change, gaining consideration for sainthood in the Catholic Church required martyrdom, living a life heroically of Christian virtues or having a strong reputation for religious devotion.

The new category, introduced in an official letter from the pope on Tuesday read: "The heroic offering of life, suggested and sustained by charity, expresses a true, full and exemplary imitation of Christ."

In his introduction to the fourth way in the form of a *motu proprio* (or, decree on his own initiative), the pope opens with the words of Jesus according to St. John: "No one has

July 13

greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends".

"Those Christians are worthy of special consideration and honor who, following in the footsteps and teaching of Jesus, have offered their life voluntarily and freely for others and have persevered in this to death."

The letter also said that possible candidates must have practised Christian values in their life before their selfless act and have a holy reputation. They must also be credited with a miracle after their death.

Christians who are sainted through martyrdom - which stipulates being killed out of hatred for the faith - are the only ones exempt from being involved in a miracle.

Archbishop Marcello Bartolucci, secretary of the Vatican Congregation for Saints' Causes, said the new category aims "to promote heroic Christian testimony, up to now without a specific process, precisely because it did not completely fit within the case of martyrdom or heroic virtues", Catholic News Service reports.

July 13

Christian Institute slams drag queen story time



A new scheme which involves cross-dressing men reading and singing to primary school-aged children has been branded "dangerous" by the Christian Institute (CI).

It fears Drag Queen Story Time, which has been inspired by a similar idea in the United States (pictured above), could confuse children about gender.

Ciarán Kelly, Head of Communications at the CI, said: "This has nothing to do with helping children but everything to do with using them as a propaganda tool to further the radical agenda of those who wish to do away with the precious distinctions between men and women."

July 13



Drag Queen Story Time is being developed in Birmingham and Bristol. The first even took place at an LGBT pride festival last week.

The initiative involves drag queens reading from books they enjoyed as youngsters, followed by a song with a so-called 'drag twist'.

One example includes changing words in the song 'The Wheels on the Bus' to say 'the skirt on the drag queen goes swish, swish, swish'.

Ciarán Kelly went on to say: "Children are becoming increasingly confused by teaching that constantly bombards them with the notion that they can change gender."

July 13

Drag Queen Story Time has been endorsed by the Time for Inclusive Education campaign which wants to see pro-LGBT teaching in all Scottish school.

Head of the campaign, Jordan Daly, admitted it could be "provocative or controversial for some people" but added "using drag queens like this is a fun and colourful way of challenging rigid gender stereotypes."

The growth of UK pioneer missionaries for Jesus - and the gift of not fitting into social norms

The Church of England is seeing a consistent growth in numbers opting to be pioneer missionaries – and they have the special gift of 'not fitting in'.

The growth is demonstrated by the Church Mission Society's Pioneer Mission Leadership Training programme, which has seen an increase in numbers, with yesterday's annual graduation ceremony in Oxford seeing 24 students received Durham University awards signifying the completion of their studies in theology, ministry and mission.

July 13

The Bishop of Reading, Andrew Proud, officiated at the ceremony, saying: 'Pioneer leaders have an exciting, pivotal role to play in helping us communicate the love of God to an often confused, hurting and divided world. The growth of the CMS Pioneer Mission Leadership Training programme shows how many people are choosing a pioneer route to ordination and stands as real testament to the quality of CMS's training programme.'

The pioneers included some being ordained into the Church of England as deacons and others who were admitted to the order of lay pioneers. The group represented an eclectic mix of missionaries, drawn together by a common desire to share the Gospel with all parts of society.

The Pioneer Mission Leadership programme was established in 2010 as a creative way of equipping and mobilising Christians for ground-breaking, transformational and sustainable mission.

Jonny Baker, director of mission education at CMS, explained how the programme has been designed to provide an unconventional and diverse approach to training pioneers. 'The course gives pioneers, who often display "the

July 13

gift of not fitting in", a supportive learning community – a place to belong, as well as equipping and empowering them to initiate and follow through with mission projects that have a wider impact on the church and society,' he said.

One such pioneer is Libby Hawkness-Smith, who lives in Oxfordshire and heads up Journey On, a community for people with learning difficulties such as autism and anxiety.

Libby said: 'Like so much of society the church can be unintentionally patronising for people with autism, but a lot of people want to be challenged, they just need someone to help them build up to a challenge.'

Asked about her particular gift for 'not fitting in,' she added: 'I struggled for a long time with knowing that I'm different yet not quite being able to put my finger on how or why. I grew up in the mission field and came back to the UK...as a teenager, but that only partly explained my differences. I wrestled with trying to be like other people around me yet feeling that by doing so, I was being inauthentic and shunning the beautiful differences that make me unique. My studies have been instrumental in giving me the cognitive and physical space to re-engage and embrace the "me" I tried so long to hide. It's a

July 13

lot easier to minister out of a place that you know well and which you have come to embrace.'

The Church Mission Society's Pioneer Mission Leadership Training programme provides a pathway for ordination as an ordained pioneer minister (OPM) – alongside the more traditional routes for teachers and pastors.

Students complete a range of modules throughout the training programme, including mission in contemporary society, cross cultural engagement, leadership, pastoral care and entrepreneurship in mission.

Students are encouraged to enlist the support of a mentor, and to attend an annual retreat, starting additional projects and visiting existing pioneer community projects.

'Mission pioneers are giving the church a glimpse of the future, where mission will not be delivered solely by large para-church organisations, but increasingly through agile, innovative and creative pioneers, witnessing love in action,' said Baker.

July 13

100th anniversary celebrations for Muckamore Mothers' Union



Muckamore MU branch members

The ladies of Muckamore Mothers' Union were joined by members from branches in Mid Connor to celebrate their 100th anniversary at a service of worship in St Jude's Church, Muckamore.

The service on June 18 was conducted by the Rev Canon Derek Kerr. Guest speaker was Mrs Paddy Wallace, former All Ireland President of the Mothers Union.

July 13

Lord Mayor Paul Hamill attended, as well as Trustee/Executive members Mrs Joyce Bond, Mrs Norma Bell and Mrs Wendy Halligian and Connor Diocesan President, Mrs Valerie Ash, who read the five Objects of the Mothers' Union during the service.

Sylvia Beacom, branch chair, welcomed everyone before the service commenced; The Mothers' Union Banner was carried by Lillian Nesbitt, readings were by Ann Moore and Joan Currie, and prayers by Heather Booth and Irene Paget.

A sum of £400 was collected for Worldwide funds, and a memento for the occasion was presented to everyone.

After the service everyone made their way across to the Parish Hall where a delicious afternoon tea was served. Eileen Carson and Jean Scott, two long service members, assisted with cutting the celebration cake which was made by one of the Muckamore branch members. This was a time to catch up with friends!

Muckamore branch was founded in October 1917 by Mrs E Thompson of Muckamore Abbey and Mrs Evelyn Bannon, the then rector's wife.

July 13

The branch was delighted that Mr Richard Thompson, a grandson of Mrs Thompson's, was able attend this centenary celebration.

+++Parish Readers commissioned - Three members of the congregation of St Peter's Parish Church, Antrim Road, Belfast, have received their licenses as Parish Readers.



The Rev Brian Lacey, rector, St Peter's, left, and the Rev Kevin Graham, diocesan Warden of Readers, right, with the three new Parish Readers.

July 13

David Cromie, Forde Patterson, and Tony Swan are now authorised to assist the rector and to officiate at some services of worship in St Peter's. They were commissioned by the Rev Kevin Graham, who is the diocesan Warden of Readers and rector of St Bartholomew's in Stranmillis, at a service on July 3.



+++ Handmade blankets en route to Gambia -

The squares of these nine colourful blankets were knitted by a 102-year-old friend of Ballymoney, Finvoy and Rasharkin parishioner Olive Archibald. The squares were sewn together by Olive and are now on their way to Gambia to bring comfort to those less fortunate. This is part

July 13

of a much larger contribution by the St Patrick's, Ballymoney, 'Pins and Needles' group.

See CNI's WWW Reviews for additional news

CNI