



Pilgrims on the first Camino de Glendalough which took place last Sunday

Pilgrims journey together on the first Camino de Glendalough

The first Camino de Glendalough took place in bright crisp conditions in the Wicklow Mountains on Sunday November 6. People from all over Dublin and Glendalough came to take part and some pilgrims came from as far afield as Waterford. A hardy group of about 25 people undertook the full camino along the 30 kilometre

St Kevin's Way. Many more walked the section of St Kevin's Way from the Wicklow Gap to Glendalough while others undertook shorter walks around the Green Road in Glendalough and the Monastic City.

Whatever distance they walked, pilgrims were encouraged to reflect on their lives and put aside the usual business of day-to-day living. The booklet produced to accompany the camino reminded them that every pilgrim undertakes two journeys – a physical journey containing challenge, adventure and some degree of discomfort but also an inner journey or quest for meaning and understanding and a reawakening of the spirit within.

Those completing the full Camino de Glendalough were presented with a special commemorative badge. All pilgrims were given Come&C wristbands. Those who got the bus from St John's Church in Laragh were provided with water and fruit for their journey and the parish also provided hospitality for the visitors.

The day began with services taking place simultaneously at either end of St Kevin's Way, in St Kevin's Church in Hollywood and St John's Church in Laragh. The camino concluded with a

short service of thanksgiving at the Upper Lake in Glendalough led by Archdeacon Ricky Rountree, the Revd Leonard Ruddock and the Revd Brian O'Reilly, who organised the camino. Pilgrims gathered in the stone Caher near the lakeshore for prayers and a reading [Mark 4: 35–41]. The Caher is likely to have been used as a station for those on pilgrimage across the mountains to the remains of St Kevin's monastery.

Archbishop Michael Jackson observed that many people could be part of the same event and yet have different experiences of it. They are held together by faith and relationship. "I imagine many of you had similar experiences of today – you walked together but each will bring something different away with you," he said. "This is the first official pilgrimage of Dublin & Glendalough 800 and I hope you will venture with us in the future."

The idea for the camino arose from the diocesan Come&C discipleship project and it is intertwined with the Dublin & Glendalough 800 commemorations. It is hoped that people will continue to undertake the Camino de Glendalough either individually or as part of groups. The special booklet produced to

accompany the camino can be downloaded at from the Come&C page of the Dublin & Glendalough website at <http://dublin.anglican.org/Come-and-C> . There are plans to hold regular gatherings and pilgrimages from St John's Church, Laragh and details will be available in the new year.

Blessing of the new Abbot of Glenstal

Religious men and women were invited to look to the past with gratitude, to live the present with passion and to look to the future with hope.

The sentence from Pope Francis, in his Apostolic Letter for the Year of Consecrated Life, was quoted by the Most Reverend Kieran O'Reilly, SMA, Archbishop of Cashel and Emly, at the blessing of the new Abbot of Glenstal, Brendan Coffey OSB. The blessing took place in the abbey church on Saturday 5 November.

Highlighting in his homily the heritage of Glenstal and the Benedictine spiritual tradition, the Archbishop encouraged the monks to allow the new phase in their community's life inaugurated by the choosing of a new abbot to be a time of



Dr Kenneth Kearon (Church of Ireland) and six bishops with Abbot Brendan Coffey.
renewed reflection on their own calling and role in the community.

The Archbishop invited Abbot Brendan Coffey and the Glenstal community to be part of an upcoming biblical initiative in the diocese.

“We are truly blessed in this diocese to have a community devoted to the Office and the Sacred Scriptures,” he said. “When I came to this archdiocese I stated that I would like to broaden the biblical apostolate here and it is with this in mind that I invite you, Abbot Brendan, and your community, with the priests and people of the archdiocese, to undertake with me a journey of

discovery and rediscovery of the Sacred Scriptures.”

Abbot Brendan Coffey addressed the congregation, asking for prayers, and citing St Bernard’s advice to new abbots – “Notice everything. Turn a blind eye to some things. Correct a little. Cherish the brethren.”

Even though Fr Brendan Coffey was elected Abbot of Glenstal twelve weeks ago, the community waited until after the completion of the current phase of the renovation of the church before celebrating the solemn Rite of Blessing of an Abbot.

The Glenstal community was joined in choir by 25 abbots, abbesses, monks and nuns from Benedictine, Cistercian and Poor Clare monasteries from both Ireland and abroad.

They included the Abbot President of the congregation, Abbot Ansgar Schmidt OSB from Trier, Germany, and the Abbot of the monastery that founded Glenstal, P. Abbé Bernard Lorent OSB from Maredsous, Belgium.

Five other bishops concelebrated the Mass with the Archbishop and Abbot Brendan, including the

retired Archbishop of Cashel and Emly, Dr Dermot Clifford, and the retired Bishop of Killaloe, Dr Willie Walsh who ordained Abbot Brendan in 1995. The Church of Ireland Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe, Dr Kenneth Kearon, was also present.

The Rite of Blessing took place after the Gospel. Abbot Brendan was escorted to the Archbishop by his two immediate predecessors, Frs Christopher Dillon OSB and Mark Patrick Hederman OSB. The Prior of the monastery, Fr Senan Furlong OSB, then formally presented the Abbot to the Archbishop and asked him to confer the blessing.

Bishop's tribute to Sam Harper 'southern' lay secretary of the General Synod

Bishop Michael Burrowes of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory as paid tribute to the work of Mr Sam Harper, the senior lay secretary of the General Synod who is retiring this month.

Bishop Burrowes writes - It is in the very nature of the Church of Ireland that it relies hugely upon the commitment, skill and generosity of its lay

volunteers. Ever since we were disestablished in 1871, we have been a church which cherishes the indispensable place of the laity in its polity – there are, after all, twice as many lay members as clerical members in the General Synod itself.

Among the many demanding roles which the church entrusts to its lay volunteers, few can be compared in terms of sheer hard work with that of the lay honorary secretaries of the General Synod and of its Standing Committee. There are two such secretaries, one representing the province of Armagh and the other the province of Dublin. There are also two clerical honorary secretaries. Since 1994, the ‘southern’ lay secretary has been Mr Sam Harper of this diocese ... Indeed he is at this stage very much the senior secretary of the synod. He has now indicated his intention to retire from this demanding role at the November meeting of the Standing Committee.

It has been a source of pride to this diocese that Sam’s service has been so long and so distinguished. It is no exaggeration to say that he has carried a workload virtually equivalent to a full time job, which has involved considerable travel around Ireland and endless homework as

well! It is certainly not all about attending meetings in Dublin (although there are many of these) It is about preparing the agenda for the General Synod and ensuring that that event each year runs smoothly and fruitfully. It is about working constantly with the staff of Church of Ireland House and having an overview of almost every aspect of the governance, life and witness of the Church of Ireland. It is about making sure there is no part of the life of the church in which the lay voice is not audible and effective. In many ways, given the nature of the Church of Ireland and the checks and balances within it, the role of a lay General Synod secretary can be extremely significant and influential ... Perhaps more so than that of any bishop! (In all of this, the holder of such an office requires an extremely tolerant and understanding family at home as Lilia will I am sure agree)

The lay secretaries also have a vital ambassadorial role on behalf of the church They may be required to attend public gatherings or parliamentary committees and convey the views of the Church of Ireland (rather than simply their own views) in a way that is insightful and fair to all shades of opinion. They will require the

confidence of those who sent them, they will need to be able to think quickly on their feet, they will not be easily fazed. To do all this, they need a huge working knowledge of the Church of Ireland itself, and they need to be well rooted in the worship and life of their own diocese.

To all of this Sam has brought utter commitment and great skill for over twenty years. He has become one of the synod's best known faces, and is regarded with grateful affection by very many. He earths his task in a shrewd understanding particularly of the southern rural church, and his 'other' life as a farmer helps him to understand the everyday issues and problems of that sector which is so much the backbone of a diocese like this. But, above all, good administrator and financier that he may be, the key to Sam's style of work (indeed I would prefer to call it his ministry) is that he prays about every iota of it. He is someone of deep and sincere spirituality, motivated always by faith, ready to listen to the views of others but very clear about the values and priorities for which he stands. To hear him take opening prayers at a meeting of the Standing Committee provides ample evidence of what matters most to him. Those

who have been enriched by his ministry as a Diocesan Reader will most certainly concur.

We offer Sam our most grateful good wishes as he lays down this particular task ... Although he will carry out many other roles still in our common life both at diocesan and central level. But it is only right that at this juncture he should be specially saluted by his own diocese, which as I said at the outset has been proud to number him among its sons.

Irish nun in Gaza greeted by Cardinal Vincent Nichols

Cardinal Vincent Nichols has said he hopes his visit to Gaza on Sunday in some way strengthens the faith and hope of the tiny Catholic church and faith community there.

Addressing the 170 Catholics who live in the predominantly Muslim enclave, the Cardinal thanked them for their witness and strength.

“Christians have been in Gaza since the Holy Family fled to Egypt, as depicted on the wall behind the altar in the Holy Family Church. Their



Sr Bridget Tighe FMDM, executive director of Caritas Jerusalem in Gaza and Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster.

numbers are small, but I believe their faith is strong,” he stated.

There are now around 1,200 Christians, of whom 170 are Catholic, in a total population of 1.8 million in Gaza.

In addition to the Holy Family Parish where Cardinal Nichols celebrated Mass, the Catholic

Church runs two schools where over 90% of the pupils are Muslim, an orphanage for disabled children, and other charities offering support to the population as a whole.

In his homily, Cardinal Nichols called on Mary to pray for the protection of the Christian community.

He also explained that the green vestments he was wearing, as worn week in week out by priests during Mass, represented Christian hope.

The Archbishop of Westminster said that what is particular to Christian hope is that while the present may be difficult and uncertain, our belief in Jesus Christ assures a certain future.

The Cardinal also met with parishioners, listening to their stories and concerns, as well as religious sisters working in Gaza.

Among the nuns the Cardinal met was Irish-born Sr Bridget Tighe, originally from Co Sligo, who is a member of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood and executive director of Caritas Jerusalem in Gaza.

She came to Gaza two years ago to take up her role with Caritas after she had finished her term

as regional superior of her order in England and Scotland.

Of life in Gaza over the past two years, she told Catholicireland.net, “I’ve got used to it – one gets accustomed to almost anything. This is worrying, the abnormal becomes the norm.”

While some rebuilding of the structures destroyed in the 2014 bombardment has taken place, the blockade remains in place.

A partial lifting of that has ensured that there is no shortage of food in the shops – for those who can afford it.

According to the 71-year-old nun, Gazans are well educated, with a high proportion of university graduates. But unemployment among 16–25 year olds is very high and she said that she “sometimes see[s] young men with Masters degrees sweeping the streets on cash for work programmes. It is soul destroying.”

Another thing Gazans find very hard is the curtailment of electricity to between four and six hours a day.

The water in the taps is undrinkable so everyone buys desalinated water.

A recent UN report said that if things didn't change radically, Gaza would be unliveable by 2020. "It is pretty grim," according to Sr Bridget.

Though its population is over 98% Muslim, the Irish nun feels accepted as a Catholic Sister.

"Gaza is a fundamentalist Muslim enclave but Christians are not harassed, in fact they are protected to some extent.

Tragically, the Christian community has reduced in number over a short time.

"The number keeps going down. Christians get permission from Israel to go to Jerusalem and Bethlehem for Christmas and Easter and some who go do not return. They stay so-called 'illegally' in the West Bank and when whole families go that is the future gone."

News briefs

+++ Belfast canon transferred - Canon David Humphries was until 8.00 p.m. on Tuesday, a canon of St Anne's Cathedral representing the Diocese of Down. For a brief two hours he reverted to 'The Reverend' David Humphries for his service of institution to the Parish of Kilbride

in Connor Diocese. At about 10.00 p.m., in a closing speech at the tea afterwards, the Bishop of Connor announced that David is appointed a canon of St Anne's Cathedral representing the Diocese of Connor. David will be installed on the Connor side on January 8, at the same service at which we will also witness the installation of the Canon Gareth Harron and Canon Mark Niblock.

+++ New rector of Glendermott and Newbuildings - A new incumbent has been appointed for the parish of Glendermott and Newbuildings, County Londonderry. He is Revd Canon Robert Boyd, currently Rector of Killyman Parish in the Diocese of Armagh. He succeeds Revd Canon David Creighton who retired last summer. No date has yet been fixed for the new Rector's Institution but it is expected to take place early in the new year.

+++ Vacancy for Youth Co-ordinator - St John's Parish, Moira wishes to appoint a full-time Youth Ministry Co-ordinator. The parish states : We are a growing church family with a vibrant youth ministry. The successful applicant will share the ethos and values embodied in our Mission Statement and he/she will be a committed Bible believing Christian who has a

heart and passion for young people. For further information, including a role profile and person specification please contact jennifer@moiraparish.org.uk Application by CV and a covering letter explaining your motivation for applying and outlining how you meet the essential criteria. Please mark your application Private and Confidential. Applications will be received by email to jennifer@moiraparish.org.uk or by post to St John's Parish Centre, 51 Main Street, Moira, Craigavon BT67 0LQ. Closing date for completed applications is 5.00pm on Friday 25 November 2016. Interviews will be held the week beginning 5 December.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Gay pardons get backing in Northern Ireland

Belfast Newsletter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/crime/gay-pardons-get-backing-in-northern-ireland-1-7669137>

Child sex abuse image cases soar by 300% in Northern Ireland

[BelfastTelegraph.co.uk](http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk)

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/child-sex-abuse-image-cases-soar-by-300-in-northern-ireland-35196204.html>



Holy row avoided after The Priests are confused with US punk rockers Priests

Irish News

<http://www.irishnews.com/arts/music/2016/11/08/news/the-priests-are-confused-with-us-punk-rockers-priests-775263/>

If I disagreed with Church teaching on marriage, I'd stand down as a minister

[BelfastTelegraph.co.uk](http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk)

[http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/news-analysis/if-i-disagreed-with-church-teaching-on-marriage-id-stand-down-as-a-minister-35176975.html?](http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/news-analysis/if-i-disagreed-with-church-teaching-on-marriage-id-stand-down-as-a-minister-35176975.html?utm_source=ipad_share&utm_medium=ipad_app&utm_campaign=clickbacks)

[utm_source=ipad_share&utm_medium=ipad_app&utm_campaign=clickbacks](http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/news-analysis/if-i-disagreed-with-church-teaching-on-marriage-id-stand-down-as-a-minister-35176975.html?utm_source=ipad_share&utm_medium=ipad_app&utm_campaign=clickbacks)

Tel/Christian Today

Reports on comments made by the Archbishop of Canterbury about religious literacy in Government and Whitehall, to heads and senior teachers of C of E schools at the start of a three-

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day visit to the Diocese of Bath and Wells. The Telegraph reported that Archbishop Justin said some staff in Government departments like the Foreign Office or Ministry of Defence were desperately trying to catch up and understand a world in which they had “no grip” on what it is to be religious. Discussing challenges facing church schools, Archbishop Justin said changes in the economy would affect today’s generation of schoolchildren throughout their careers.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/08/welby-government-assumes-believers-are-just-a-bit-bonkers/>

Premier

Further report on the Archbishop of Canterbury's visit to the Diocese of Bath and Wells. Archbishop Justin led prayers at the Glastonbury Tor in Somerset before addressing a gathering of several hundred people in ministry in Wells Cathedral, on the second day of his three-day visit.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Archbishop-Justin-Welby-climbs-301-steps-to-Glastonbury-Tor>

Sheffield Star, Rochdale Online, Express and Star

Further coverage of the End Child Poverty Coalition report showing almost half of children are living in poverty in some parts of the UK with the problem worst in large cities especially London, Birmingham and Manchester. The Bishop of Manchester, David Walker and the Bishop of Stepney, Adrian Newman, are quoted as well as the Bishop of Durham, Paul Butler.

<http://www.thestar.co.uk/news/coalition-urges-government-to-act-on-child-poverty-1-8224501>

<http://www.rochdaleonline.co.uk/news-features/2/news-headlines/106105/bishop-of-manchester-supports-call-for-action-on-child-poverty>

<http://www.expressandstar.com/business/uk-money/2016/11/08/coalition-urges-government-to-act-on-child-poverty/>

Premier

Report that the Bishop of Salisbury, Nicholas Holtam, has said that the distribution of more than 500,000 emergency food parcels by church-based foodbank staff across the UK in the first six months of 2016 is a "huge scandal". Bishop Nicholas spoke after the Trussell Trust, which operates 400 foodbanks across the country, said it handed out 519,342 packages in the first half of this year. It's now on course to hand out the

highest number of food parcels in its 12-year history.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Foodbank-milestone-a-scandal-says-bishop>

Tel

Small Business feature article examines the question, “Do you think that the Christian ethic is declining in our workplaces these days, when in the past, for example, a person’s word was their bond – or has the discussion now entered a no-go area?”

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/connect/small-business/ask-john-on-christian-values-in-modern-business/>

Exp

Picture report that the first all-female choir in the almost 500-year history of Gloucester Cathedral has sung at its first service. The Inaugural Evensong and Making Up Service took place on Monday. The Dean of Gloucester, Stephen Lake, said the move represented an “exciting new chapter in the cathedral’s famous Choral Foundation”.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/730131/Gloucester-Cathedral-choir-all-girl-female-first-ever>

Exp

Further coverage of the North Yorkshire knitting group which have made 40,000 poppies out of 450 miles of yarn which have been displayed outside St Mary's church, Thirsk.

[http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/729986/
Remembrance-Day-knitted-poppies-
commemorate-Britain-armed-forces](http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/729986/Remembrance-Day-knitted-poppies-commemorate-Britain-armed-forces)

Obituary

Telegraph: The Revd John Lee a C of E priest who devoted virtually his entire ministry to counselling. From 1998 to 2014 he worked at Lambeth Palace and Church House, Westminster, as clergy appointments adviser.

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/obituaries/2016/11/08/
the-reverend-john-lee--obituary/](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/obituaries/2016/11/08/the-reverend-john-lee--obituary/)