



***Durham Cathedral illuminated in the colours of the tricolore flag in sympathy with Paris and France***

## **Presidential support for Ecumenical Prayer Service and National Day of Prayer for Climate Justice**

Eco-Congregation Ireland, Christian Aid and Trócaire are encouraging people from all denominations to pray for the upcoming UN Climate Summit, otherwise known as COP21, that is due to take place in Paris from November 30 to December 11 2015.

The three organisations are hosting a **National Ecumenical Prayer Service** in preparation for the summit in the presence of Uachtarán na hÉireann Michael D Higgins on Wednesday November 25 at 7.30pm in St Teresa's, Clarendon Street, Dublin.

Music at the service will be provided by the Clarendon Street Choir and poet John F Deane will read two of his poems, including one written specially for the occasion. A time of reflection will be led by Nellie McLaughlin RSM whose recent book, *Life's Delicate Balance* (Veritas), was written in response to Pope Francis's encyclical, *Laudato Si – On Care for Our Common Home*.

A **National Day of Prayer** will take place on the eve of the summit – November 29 – and it is hoped that all church services throughout the country that day will include a prayer for the



***Church members on The Pilgrimage2Paris to lobby at the climate summit***

successful outcome of the climate summit.

Suitable prayers can be found on the [Eco-Congregation Ireland \(ECI\) website](#).

Encouraging people from all denominations to take part in this initiative, which has been endorsed by the Irish Council of Churches, ECI Chairperson Ven Andrew Orr said: “The COP 21 climate summit represents a real moment of opportunity for world leaders to come up with an enforceable, sustainable programme for reducing carbon emissions, which will be necessary to

keep global temperature rise under two degrees Celsius.

“Christians everywhere need to be people of both prayer and action in the run up to these talks. Pressure has to be put on politicians to make this summit meaningful and this will happen if we make our voices heard. At the same time, our prayers help us to stand in solidarity with all life on our planet and especially the poorest communities most affected by climate change. By joining our intercessions with our actions, we become part of the answer to our own prayers. Please join us in making a real difference.”

People are also encouraged to take part in the **People's Climate Marches** that will take place in Dublin, Belfast, Cork and Galway on November 29. See [www.stopclimatechaos.ie](http://www.stopclimatechaos.ie) for further details.

## **New Welcome Centre opens at Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church, Bangor**

Built in 1897, the building is one of Bangor's most recognisable and well-known churches. The



congregation has made many additions and improvements over the years, with their impressive stained glass windows at the front of the building standing out as a landmark in the area.

The Welcome Centre has been designed so that the church can better connect with the local community. A warming kitchen and purpose-built crèche enables the church to run its Mothers of Pre-Schoolers programme, while the 'English Corner' offers space for language classes for those to whom English is a second language. In addition, there are opportunities for those who wish to explore the Bible and find out more about Christianity and arrange of courses that are run in the new building.



***At the official opening of the New Welcome Centre (left to right): Mr. Billy Walker, Mr. Tom Clarke, Mrs. Olive Johnston, Rev. David Johnston, Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian McNie and Mrs. Anne McNie.***

When visitors enter the Welcome Centre the first thing they will encounter are the friendly faces and listening ears of the team of volunteers, along with tea and coffee that is always readily available. The Centre, which is open from 9am to 4.30pm from Monday to Friday, also provides access to the church building itself for those who wish to take time to reflect and pray.

“As you approach the Welcome Centre you will see the words of a Bible verse, which says ‘Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, to the glory of God.’ “This is our

vision for the Welcome Centre and we pray that for many in our community it will become a place where they feel welcomed and valued, and where they will experience something of the welcome that Jesus gives to all who come to Him,” Rev. David Johnston said.

Presbyterian Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian McNie and his wife Anne took part in the special weekend of thanksgiving and celebration. Having preached at the morning service, the Moderator made his way to the Welcome Centre with Mrs. McNie, Rev. David Johnston, the Clerk of Session Tom Clarke and Stephen Douglas of architects Hall Black Douglas, where Mrs McNie cut the ribbon and officially declared the Centre open – watched by 500 members of the congregation and invited guests via an audio-video link in the main church building.

Speaking of the striking new addition to the Hamilton Road site, Dr. McNie said, “To see the ambitious and imaginative plans come to fruition is so exciting. This contemporary and modern extension will be of huge benefit to the congregation, but also and perhaps more importantly, to the community around them, as it offers new and greater opportunities to serve and

connect with people of all ages, from the very young to senior citizens. Everyone will benefit from the Welcome Centre.”

## **Derry Bishops Sign Book of Condolence for Paris Victims**

The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Ken Good, and the Bishop of Derry, Dr Donal McKeown, have signed the Book of Condolence opened at Londonderry’s Guildhall for the victims of Friday’s terrorist attacks in Paris.

The bishops (*pictured above*) visited the Guildhall at 11 o’clock on Monday morning, just as staff observed a minute’s silence for the victims. The two church leaders felt it was important that they signed the book together as a sign of their solidarity with the people of Paris.

The two men wrote short messages of sympathy in the book. Bishop Good wrote, ‘You are all in our prayers’, while Bishop McKeown’s said, ‘Make us channels of Your peace’.

Speaking to journalists in the Guildhall, Bishop Good said that while it was a moment of





darkness for France, there was light too in the response of the people of Paris. “The perpetrators of these attacks wanted to generate fear and hopelessness. But what we are seeing, instead, is resilience and calmness in the face of danger.”

Bishop Good said the scale of Friday’s attack was outrageous but he sensed a resilience among Parisians and a determination that they would not give in to the terrorists.

Bishop McKeown said there was an awareness that this kind of attack could happen anywhere. People in this community had all lived through

moments of horror and could empathise with the people of Paris. He hoped that our experience in Northern Ireland would show that there was a better way to resolve our differences: “We have to keep saying to everyone who’s involved in the killing of civilians and the killing of military personnel that that is not the way to find a resolution. Simply to send in more warplanes, after what happened in Paris, to kill more people in Syria, that is not the way forward. That will not find a resolution.”

## **Military chaplaincy in the catholic Anglican tradition**

Affirming Catholicism Ireland is hosting a meeting on Saturday 21st November in St John the Evangelist, Malone. The Rev'd Kevin Graham, Rector of St Bartholomew, Stranmillis, and Padre with 204 Field Hospital, part of 2 Medical Brigade, will reflect on the mission and role of the military chaplain, and how it relates to the catholic Anglican tradition.

The Rev'd Graham has been a Padre for 10 years, and previously he was with an infantry unit. In early October this year, he was on

exercise with 204 Hospital in California, in conjunction with the United States Marine Corps and United States Navy.

The meeting will commence with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist at 12 o'clock, followed by lunch and the Affirming Catholicism Ireland AGM. The presentation by the Rev'd Graham will commence at 2pm.

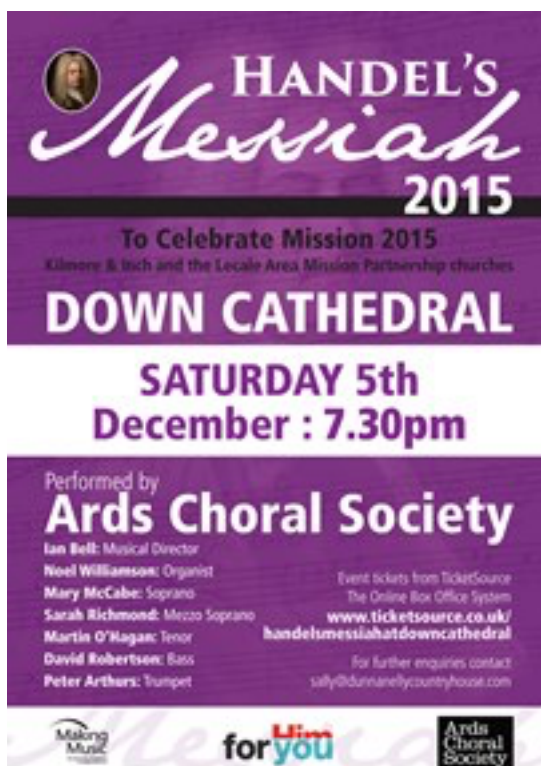
The meeting will conclude with Evensong at 3:30pm. To confirm attendance please email [affcathire@gmail.com](mailto:affcathire@gmail.com).

## **‘Messiah’ mission event at Down Cathedral**

Handel’s “Messiah” is being performed by The Ards Choral Society in Down Cathedral on Saturday 5 December at 7.30 pm.

This is a Mission 2015 event and is being organised by the parish of Kilmore and Inch and the Lecale Area Mission Partnership churches.

Ian Bell: Musical Director. Noel Williamson: Organist. Mary McCabe: Soprano.



A purple poster for Handel's Messiah 2015. At the top left is a small circular portrait of George Frideric Handel. The title 'HANDEL'S Messiah' is in a large, elegant white script, with '2015' in a bold, white sans-serif font below it. A black horizontal band contains the text 'To Celebrate Mission 2015' and 'Kilmore & Inch and the Lecale Area Mission Partnership churches' in white. Below this, 'DOWN CATHEDRAL' is written in large, bold, white sans-serif capital letters. The date and time 'SATURDAY 5th December : 7.30pm' are in a bold, white sans-serif font. The bottom section, separated by a thin white line, lists the performers: 'Performed by Ards Choral Society'. Below this, the names and roles of the soloists and instrumentalists are listed in white: Ian Bell (Musical Director), Noel Williamson (Organist), Mary McCabe (Soprano), Sarah Richmond (Mezzo Soprano), Martin O'Hagan (Tenor), David Robertson (Bass), and Peter Arthurs (Trumpet). To the right of these names, the text 'Event tickets from TicketSource The Online Box Office System' is followed by the website 'www.ticketsource.co.uk/handelmessiahatdowncathedral'. At the bottom right, it says 'For further enquiries contact: sally@downanellycountryhouse.com'. At the very bottom, there are three logos: 'Making Music' on the left, 'for you' in the center, and 'Ards Choral Society' on the right.

**HANDEL'S**  
*Messiah*  
**2015**

To Celebrate Mission 2015  
Kilmore & Inch and the Lecale Area Mission Partnership churches

**DOWN CATHEDRAL**

**SATURDAY 5th**  
**December : 7.30pm**

Performed by  
**Ards Choral Society**

**Ian Bell:** Musical Director  
**Noel Williamson:** Organist  
**Mary McCabe:** Soprano  
**Sarah Richmond:** Mezzo Soprano  
**Martin O'Hagan:** Tenor  
**David Robertson:** Bass  
**Peter Arthurs:** Trumpet

Event tickets from TicketSource  
The Online Box Office System  
[www.ticketsource.co.uk/handelmessiahatdowncathedral](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/handelmessiahatdowncathedral)  
For further enquiries contact:  
[sally@downanellycountryhouse.com](mailto:sally@downanellycountryhouse.com)

Making Music  
for you  
Ards Choral Society

Sara Richmond: Mezzo Soprano. Martin O'Hagan: Tenor. David Robertson: Bass. Peter Arthurs: Trumpet.

Tickets are available online from TicketSource [here](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/handelmessiahatdowncathedral). Adults £12.00. Concession £8.00

[churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

## **Pope visits Rome's Jewish community**

Pope Francis yesterday visited Rome's synagogue and met with the city's Jewish community, the Vatican has announced.

Invited by Rome's Chief Rabbi Riccardo Di Segni, Pope Francis was the third pope to visit the synagogue; St John Paul II made his landmark visit in 1986 and Pope Benedict XVI visited in 2010.

The January 17 visit fell on Italy's annual day for Christian-Jewish dialogue – a day that has been observed for more than 20 years in Italy to reflect on relations between Catholics and Jews, and recall the Jewish roots of the Christian faith.

A similar day of dialogue is also celebrated in Poland, Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

January 17 is also the date Rome's Jewish community commemorates "Lead Mo'ed" when a torrential rain in 1793 saved Jews from a Roman mob's attempt to attack them.

In 1793, anti-Jewish tensions ran high throughout the Papal States because Jews were being blamed for supporting new revolutionary ideas coming from France. A Roman mob descended on the city's Jewish ghetto, intent on burning down its gates and doing violence to its residents.

Authorities were unable to stop the rabble and feared the worst, but a sudden and tremendous downpour extinguished the mob's torches and scattered the crowd, saving the ghetto's inhabitants.

The name "Lead Mo'ed" refers to the dark, leaden colour of the Roman skies just before the rain began to fall.

Pope Francis has made inter-religious dialogue and relations with Jews a priority in his pontificate following his longtime efforts as archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Then-Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio co-authored a book, "On Heaven and Earth," with his friend, Argentine Rabbi Abraham Skorka.

The collection of their frank conversations about themes of great concern to many people was meant to be a living example of what dialogue entailed and to show that religions “offer a valid alternative in facing life’s problems,” the rabbi had said in 2014.

They also recorded 31 televised discussions about current topics of social and religious interest in Argentina.

“All we did was offer people the fruit of our relationship,” the rabbi has said.

“The Bible offers a clear, simple response to the concerns of our age,” which Pope Francis continues “to show in his daily teachings” through his morning Mass homilies, general audience talks and Sunday Angelus addresses.

## **Installation of Canon at Belfast Cathedral**

The Rev Michael Parker, rector of Carnalea, Diocese of Down and Dromore, was installed as a Canon of St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast, on Sunday November 15.



***The Rev Canon Michael Parker and the Dean of Belfast, the Very Rev John Mann.***

Canon Parker was installed by the Dean of Belfast, the Very Rev John Mann. Cathedral registrar, Mr Michael Robinson, was present to read the mandate, and the new Canon was presented by fellow Canon Ronnie Nesbitt.

There was a congregation of around 160 for this afternoon service. The Cathedral choir changed the anthem as a gesture of respect in the wake of the suffering and death in Paris on the previous Friday night to a part of Faure's



Requiem, singing the beautiful, quiet and poignant Agnes Dei.

The Bishop of Down and Dromore, the Rt Rev Harold Miller, was present to witness one of his clergy becoming a Canon and the Bishop gave the blessing at the end. Family, friends and parishioners enjoyed tea after the service.

Canon Parker was ordained deacon in 1996 and following a four year curacy in St Mark's Dundela, became incumbent of St Gall's, Carnalea, where he has ministered for 15 years. He is also a member of the Board of Christian Aid Ireland and, speaking before his installation, said he was looking forward to the 'privilege' of joining Black Santa on the steps of St Anne's.

## **Media digest**

### **West Belfast tops for electronic tags - Irish News**

Almost one in six of people in Northern Ireland fitted with an electronic tag live in west Belfast, according to new figures.

The constituency has the highest proportion of people under the strict monitoring while they await criminal trial.

There are 49 people living in the area who wear the tags, with 47 in nearby north Belfast - which has almost 8,500 more people living in its environs.

Foyle, which includes Derry city, has 34 people currently fitted with electronic tags.

Lagan Valley, with a population of 104,621, around 20,000 more than west Belfast, has the lowest number - with just four people tagged.

This is followed by North Down with five and Strangford and South Antrim who each have six people subject to such monitoring.

East and south Belfast are among the areas with the lowest number of people with the tags fitted - 11 and 12 respectively.

There are 321 people currently fitted with tags, according to the figures which were released by the department of justice.

[http://www.irishnews.com/news/2015/11/17/news/almost-one-in-six-tag-wearers-lives-in-west-belfast-325388/?mc\\_cid=a7d1969d28&mc\\_eid=23f2f80c40](http://www.irishnews.com/news/2015/11/17/news/almost-one-in-six-tag-wearers-lives-in-west-belfast-325388/?mc_cid=a7d1969d28&mc_eid=23f2f80c40)

## Same-sex marriage is now legal in Republic of Ireland

BBC News

The Marriage Act 2015 only applies to civil marriage, and no Irish **church** or religious organisation that objects to the new law will be forced to perform ...

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-34810598>

## Ireland's Muslims don't expect major backlash after Paris

Irish Times

Meanwhile, the **Irish** Council of Imams, which represents Muslim **religious** leaders across the state, emphasised that the killings “can by no means be ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/ireland-s-muslims-don-t-expect-major-backlash-after-paris-1.2432212>

## Paris Terror Attacks: **Religious** leaders condemn the barbarism of Isil's twisted faith

Irish Independent

Shaykh Dr Umar Al-Qadri, Imam of the Al-Mustafa Islamic Centre and chair of the **Irish** Muslim Peace and Integration Council, said in a video message: ...

<http://www.independent.ie/world-news/europe/paris-terror-attacks/paris-terror-attacks-religious-leaders-condemn-the-barbarism-of-isils-twisted-faith-34203624.html>

## **Mail**

Agency report that Andreas Whittam Smith will receive his knighthood from the Duke of Cambridge later today. The honour for Sir Andreas, 78, is for public service, particularly to the Church of England. Sir Andreas was a financial journalist until 1985 when he led the team that founded The Independent newspaper. He was the paper's first editor. He went on to become the president

of the British Board of Film Classification and is currently First Church Estates Commissioner.

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3321505/Rugby-hero-Jonny-Wilkinson-boxer-Carl-Froch-collect-honours.html?ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3321505/Rugby-hero-Jonny-Wilkinson-boxer-Carl-Froch-collect-honours.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

## **Mail**

The Prime Minister has announced that the government will spend an additional £2bn on the British special forces in the coming five years. Speaking at the Lord Mayor's banquet, which was attended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Mr Cameron said the money will fund new weapons and vehicles.

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3321157/Cameron-s-Blitz-spirit-call-battle-against-terrorism-PM-uses-Lord-Mayor-s-speech-tell-Britain-resolve-announce-2bn-funding-SAS-special-forces.html?ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3321157/Cameron-s-Blitz-spirit-call-battle-against-terrorism-PM-uses-Lord-Mayor-s-speech-tell-Britain-resolve-announce-2bn-funding-SAS-special-forces.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

## **BBC**

About 100 Syrian refugees have landed in the UK - the largest group to arrive since the government expanded its resettlement scheme in September. The group - thought to be mainly families - flew into Glasgow Airport on the first of a series of charter flights carrying refugees. They are expected to be resettled by local authorities across Scotland.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-34839477>

## **BBC**

A priest accused of defrauding banns and funeral fees was not dishonest but made a "pig's ear" of church finances, a court has heard. Canon Ian Finn's trial

previously heard he took £13,000 from church service fees later found in his bank account - a charge he denies. His defence argued he had not had proper training to handle accounts. A jury at Ipswich Crown Court retired to consider its verdict on Monday.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-34837569>

### **Premier**

A Ugandan Christian asylum seeker has been released from detention, despite reportedly failing to prove to the Home Office that he is gay. Robert Kityo, fears he could be killed if he's forced to go back to his home country, where homosexuality is illegal. Mr Kityo originally came to Britain as a student. He lives in Manchester and worships at the city's Metropolitan Community Church and his campaign received a letter of support from the Bishop of Manchester David Walker.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Christian-asylum-seeker-from-Uganda-released-from-detention-after-doubts-over-his-sexuality>

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