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**Image of the day - Carrickfergus**

## News Reports

### Rebekah through to final of BBC 'Young Chorister of the Year'

**Huge congratulations to All Saints', Belfast, parishioner Rebekah Devlin, whose stunning rendition of 'He will hold me fast' has earned her a place in the final of the BBC Songs of Praise and Radio 2 'Young Chorister of the Year' competition.**

The song, by Keith and Kristyn Getty and arranged for Rebekah by Jonathan Rea from New Irish Arts, was one of two video recordings 16-year-old Rebekah submitted as her entry to the competition last May.

Viewers who tune in for the competition final on December 5 will hear her sing her second song, 'Midwinter' (Bob Chilcott) as she takes on boy and girl finalists from across the UK in her bid for the prestigious title.

Rebekah, a sixth form student at Strathearn School and a singing pupil of Jenny Bourke, secured her place in the girls' semi-final after competing against hundreds of entrants.

She sings regularly with All Saints' Church, and is a member of the Belfast Philharmonic Youth Chamber Choir, the National Youth Choir of Northern Ireland and the Belfast School of Performing Arts. She also sings with her school's Chamber Choir.



## **Rebekah at Salisbury Cathedral**

Her mum Tricia has been Musical Director at All Saints' for 30 years, and along with Rebekah's dad Alistair is a member of the Priory Singers. Older sister Stephanie released a CD a number of years ago, and brother Tim is also musical.

Entries for the 'Young Chorister of the Year' had to be submitted several months ago. "I sent my videos in for the competition last May, then completely forgot about it until we got a call in July," said Rebekah. "I really did not expect it and I am just really excited to have got this far."

The semi-final was recorded in Salisbury Cathedral, and the adjudicators were Aled Jones, who presents the programme; composer Howard Goodall; vocal coach and presenter David Grant; and renowned soprano Lesley

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Garrett. All had really positive comments on Rebekah's semi-final performance, broadcast on November 21.

"I have really been singing all my life. I joined a theatre group and Belfast Philharmonic when I was eight, and started singing in the choir around then," said Rebekah. "I sing in church, and with our senior school choir before Covid. Our school chamber choir is just started up again. Lockdown has made me really appreciate being able to get back together to sing, although we did have a virtual choir and met online."

Rebekah is in Lower Sixth, studying Music, RE, Geography and History at AS Level. The semi-final was recorded in beautiful Salisbury Cathedral just after half term. "It was great to meet the judges, especially Aled. I felt so honoured," said Rebekah. "Laura Wright, a previous winner who was a judge last year, gave us all a mentoring session the day before the semi-final was recorded. She knew how we were all feeling."

"I was quite nervous about the competition. I had Covid not long before, so I didn't even know if I would be able to go until a few days before because I still had a bit of a cough. It was great to meet the other choristers, although we didn't meet the judges until after singing."

Rebekah is passionate about musical theatre, but doesn't see herself making a career of it. "I can definitely see myself doing a Music Degree though," she said. "I just love getting into a character when I sing, even when it is not musical theatre, and I love getting involved with the audience."



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Tricia said the opportunity to sing on national television in this competition was a 'privilege and honour' for Rebekah. "It is a great opportunity to show her talent and her gifts," she said. "We were surprised when she reached the final, not because she hasn't got a beautiful voice, but we never expected her to get this far!"

If you missed Rebekah singing in the semi-final, you can watch again on the BBC iPlayer

[[] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m0011vnf/songs-of-praise-young-chorister-of-the-year-girls-semifinal> ]

and tune in for the final on December 5. Rebecca will also feature in New Irish Arts 'Ireland in Christmas Praise' concert in the Waterfront Hall on December 17-18, when she will sing a solo.

[[] <https://www.ulsterhall.co.uk/what-s-on/ireland-in-christmas-praise-2/> ]

## **D&G Mothers' Union announces details of 16 Days of Activism Campaign**

**Mothers' Union Dublin & Glendalough is marking the 16 Days of Activism Campaign with a series of online events this year. The campaign against violence towards women and girls runs from November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Girls) to December 10 (United Nations Human Rights Day).**

Each year Mothers' Union takes part in the 16 Days Campaign to raise awareness of all forms of abuse,

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particularly domestic abuse, against women.

They will be using the Mothers' Union dedicated Prayer Diary and daily prayers will take place on the Dublin & Glendalough Mothers' Union Facebook page.

The prayers will be read by branch members each day at 12.30 pm except on Thursday December 2.  
([www.facebook.com/mothersuniondublinandglendalough](https://www.facebook.com/mothersuniondublinandglendalough)).

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On Saturday November 27, daily prayers will be via Zoom at 12.30pm. This will be followed by a Global Day of Action speaker on the impact of domestic violence on children.



# 16 DAYS OF ACTIVITIES AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

## Nov 25th to Dec 10th

12:30pm daily on Facebook

Thursday 25th - International day for the elimination of violence against women and girls	Friday 3rd - Coercive Control
Friday 26th - Spotlight on female Genital Mutilation	Saturday 4th - Breaking the cycle of Trafficking
Saturday 27th - Financial Distress. Global day of Action No more 1:3	Sunday 5th - Church of Ireland Marriage Council
Sunday 28th - The story of Tamar	Monday 6th - Love Matters
Monday 29th - The Girl's Friendly Society	Tuesday 7th - Women in Conflict Zones
Tuesday 30th - Safe Places	Wednesday 8th - Child Marriage
Wednesday 1st - CRITiCall	Thursday 9th - Transforming Power
Thursday 2nd - The Samaritan at the Well	Friday 10th - International Human Rights Day

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There will be three minutes' silence at 1pm for 'No More 1 in 3' – deaths of women at the hands of an intimate partner.

On Thursday December 2 there Holy Communion and prayers will be livestreamed from Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, and there will be a speaker on the effects of domestic abuse. Members will also promote Christian Aid's Thursdays in Black, when they will dress in black as a symbol of strength and courage, representing solidarity with victims and survivors of violence, and calling for a world without rape and violence.

On December 4 during daily prayers on Facebook there will be a speaker on the trafficking of women and girls. The 16 Days draws to a close on December 10 when there will be a speaker on the Istanbul Convention.

## **Responding to the Cost of Living Crisis**

**Rising inflation, especially in the areas of food, transport, electricity and gas, and reductions in state benefits are causing increasing financial and emotional pressure for families and individuals living across the island of Ireland.**

To assist with the Church of Ireland's pastoral response to this crisis, the Church and Society Commission has prepared the following list of sources of support and is asking parishes to take a pro-active approach by:

- encouraging anyone to ask for help when they sense that they are in need;

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- being more aware of neighbours who may be struggling with finances;
- knowledge of and supporting local foodbanks;
- an awareness of the impact of these pressures on family relationships.

Many diocesan orphan societies exist for the benefit and welfare of vulnerable children and their families in financial need. Information on how to apply for assistance from local societies can be obtained from diocesan offices.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul – [www.svp.ie](http://www.svp.ie) – has a presence in all counties and the Salvation Army operates churches and centres in Dublin and major towns across Northern Ireland – a listing with contact details is available at [www.salvationarmy.org.uk/ireland](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/ireland)

Protestant Aid, operating in the Republic of Ireland, treats all genuine calls for help equally. Its primary activities include grants to alleviate poverty or distress; annuities for the elderly; allowances for heating/energy costs; school expenses; second-level education grants; and third-level loans. Contact details: [www.protestantaid.org](http://www.protestantaid.org) / 01 668 4298.

Christians Against Poverty's helpline, for anyone struggling with debt in Northern Ireland, is 0800 328 0006 and a postcode search is available at [www.capuk.org](http://www.capuk.org). The Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) provides a similar free and confidential service in the Republic – debt advisors can be contacted on 0818 07 2000 or a call-back requested by emailing [helpline@mabs.ie](mailto:helpline@mabs.ie) or texting by WhatsApp on 086 035 3141.



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All of these organisations provide assistance to anyone in need regardless of religious or social background.

Grants or benefits may also be available from local authorities and social welfare officers. Examples of support have included funding for slow cooker schemes and Warm at Home packs. Diocesan Mothers' Unions have successfully applied for government funding on a cross-community basis to meet social need.

Key contacts for support and advice from public services

Republic of Ireland  
Department of Social Protection  
Income support helpline:  
0818 800024

All other helplines are listed at  
[www.gov.ie/dspphonenumbers](http://www.gov.ie/dspphonenumbers)

Competition and Consumer Protection Commission  
01 402 5555  
1890 432 432  
Visit the consumer hub:  
[www.ccpc.ie/consumers](http://www.ccpc.ie/consumers)

Commission for Regulation of Utilities  
1800 404 404  
Energy and water advice at:  
[www.cru.ie/customer-care](http://www.cru.ie/customer-care)

Northern Ireland  
Department for Communities  
[churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)

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Make the Call – to check if you are missing out on any benefits, services and support to which you are entitled:  
0800 232 1271

Consumer Council  
0800 121 6022  
[www.consumerCouncil.org.uk](http://www.consumerCouncil.org.uk)

Utility Regulator  
028 9031 1575  
Energy and water advice at: [www.uregni.gov.uk](http://www.uregni.gov.uk)

## **Tributes to the late Archdeacon Jack Patterson**

**The Ven Jack Patterson kept ‘the simple truth that Christ died for you’ at the heart and centre of his life, the Rev Malcolm Ferry told mourners at Jack’s Funeral Service in Agherton Parish Church, Portstewart, on November 20.**

The former Archdeacon of Dalriada died on November 15, aged 82.

Referring to two readings Jack had specially chosen for the occasion, Malcolm, rector of Agherton Parish where the service was held, said: “They are not some carefully sought out obscure passage from a hidden prophet or some verse filled with theological wordplay. Rather they give us the simple yet profound words commonly used at funeral

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services to point us to hope and to the Redeemer of the World.

“Jack in his ministry remained determined that he should keep the main thing simple. And what do I mean by the main thing? – that at the heart and centre of your life is the simple truth that Christ died for you.”

He said that Jack had witnessed over many years, as a faithful pastor to his people, that when religion becomes complicated, it is a sign that it is drifting away from the realities and centralities of faith.

“Jack had discovered that, even as he looked around at the world of nature, the beauty of the north coast and the little patch that was his parish, he could see the simplicity of God’s design everywhere,” Malcolm said. “In the Parish of Ballintoy and Dunseverick, where he gave his life’s work – he saw how God built the year around four seasons. That simple pattern of four wasn’t complicated and if it was good enough for the seasons it was good enough for Jack. To over complicate things was a sign that it is departing from Christ.”

Malcolm continued: “Jack looked for the relationship in ministry and as a pastor for his parish he excelled at that... Jack built and developed relationships with the people of God and through his easy style of ministry brought the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ as he led them forward and pointed them to God.”

Malcolm told mourners that Jack was well read and up for debate.

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“As a pastor of his people Jack’s easy style meant that those who found themselves under the pressures of daily living, busy and worried and anxious – Jack was there to listen and pray that those in need would be reminded that Christ was with them, and Christ is adequate. The beautiful simplicity that is a living relationship with Jesus.”

He said Jack’s family know the sacrifices he made personally and that they had made as a family so that Jack could be the pastor he was.

He added: “Some clergy have a certain type of humour which breaks through the polite false smile. Like when Jack would quip that some have greatness thrust upon them but he was just great!”

Malcolm spoke of Jack’s elevation to be a Chapter Canon in St Anne’s Cathedral in Belfast and then to Archdeacon of Dalriada, positions which he said he held with distinction, although they were far from his first love of being a pastor.

“Thankfully, Jack laughed at himself at the lack of his ‘managerial’ skills but deep down the Church had a man of God where the simplicity of the Gospel was to the front,” Malcolm said. He added that after retirement, Jack was charged with bringinbg ministry to the retired clergy families and again to keep and build relationships with the people of God.”

Extending his sympathy to Jack’s wife Frances and their family, Malcolm said. “Here again the pastor speaks and Jack does so in the words he chose from the Old Testament. Ecclesiastes chapter Three we hear – ‘To

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everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and time to die; A time to weep, and time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.'

"Surely we hear, in those words, the simple and profound truth of life and death and then we hear echoing in our ears the words of Jesus himself: 'I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man cometh unto the Father, but by me.'

"The simple yet profound truth that we affirm today for ourselves in our lives. The same yardstick which John Norton Patterson lived in life and ministered in word and sacrament over his long and significant years ordained as priest and pastor. A truth that will bring comfort to each one of you in the loss of Jack."

Prior to the service, the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev George Davison, paid this tribute to Archdeacon Patterson:-

"Jack Patterson's 40 year ministry in the Diocese of Connor, the greater part of which was spent in the parish of Ballintoy with Rathlin and Dunseverick, was a model of diligent pastoral ministry to a generation of people in Co Antrim.

"His faithful service in north Antrim was recognised with his appointment as Archdeacon of Dalriada during the final years of his active ministry.

"Jack continued to be a familiar figure to many as he lived out his retirement in Dunseverick. He will be greatly missed by many in the diocese and we extend our prayerful sympathy to Frances and his grieving family."



## People and places



### New main runway at Cork Airport reopened and blessed

Thanks to Brian Loughheed who was photographer at the reopening and blessing of the new main runway at Cork Airport for going to the trouble, after a hectic day, of sending some of the photos of what was a memorable occasion.

### Another Order meets in Derry

Saturday was a significant day in the history of Christ Church Londonderry as it hosted the Ordo Supremus



## Militaris Templi Hierosolymitani's first Admission and Investiture Ceremony in Ireland.

The Sovereign Military Order Temple of Jerusalem, as it's known in English – or OSMTH as it's more commonly known – is an international non-governmental organisation, recognised by the United Nations, which seeks to bring God's hope to a world in need.

Saturday's service was led by the Rector of the Christ Church Group of Parishes, Ven. Robert Miller. During it, five new members were admitted to the Order; ten novices were invested as Knights or Dames of the OSMTH; a knight and a dame from another chivalric order were transferred to the Order of the Temple of Jerusalem; and a new chaplain was inducted.

OSMTH has members in more than 40 countries who focus on focuses on matters of human rights, political and religious freedom, humanitarian aid and conflict resolution. The organisation's objectives include the international promotion of inter-cultural and inter-religious contacts and worldwide networks in order to help build bridges of brotherhood between nations and cultures, as well as individual good works performed by individual anonymous Knights (both male and female).

## **Clogher Diocesan Synod**

Clogher Diocesan Synod in the Cathedral Hall, Enniskillen at 5.30pm on Thursday 25th November if held as an in-person meeting or at 7pm for an online meeting.

## **Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocesan 'Synod in 30 minutes' 2021**

This year's Diocesan Synod of the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross is again to be held online on Saturday 27th November.

Like last year considering current circumstances, a brief functional meeting online appears to be the safest course of action again.

Until this meeting takes place, you can watch this year's 'Synod in 30 minutes' today or in the coming days to catch up with what has been happening throughout the Diocese



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during this past year. To view the 2021 Diocesan 'Synod' click -

[[] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIHeD9Roigs> ]



## Congratulations

Congratulations and prayerful best wishes are extended to Mark Latimer and Sinead O'Hanlon who were married in St Patrick's Cathedral on Saturday afternoon.

## Appointment of Dean of Cashel

The Reverend Canon James Mulhall has been appointed Dean of Cashel and rector of Cashel Union. The [churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)

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announcement  
was made on  
Sunday,  
November 21st  
by Bishop  
Michael Burrows  
who added:



We all wish  
James every joy  
and blessing  
there. It is good  
that someone  
from our own  
clerical family  
who is held in  
much affection and esteem by all of us will be taking up the  
reins in Cashel in the new year.

## **Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts and books**

## **Irish interactive digital Advent Calendar launched**

Archbishop Eamon Martin has today launched the 2021 interactive digital Advent Calendar, which will go live on [www.catholicbishops.ie](http://www.catholicbishops.ie) on the first Sunday of Advent, 28 November next.

Now in its eighth year, the unique digital Advent Calendar offers resources for the parish, school and for families which





# Advent Calendar 2021

#SharingHope

can be accessed behind a virtual door each day during the season of Advent. The content is aimed at assisting people of all ages to pray and reflect on how best we can keep Christ at the centre of our Christmas preparations during this special liturgical season.

Welcoming this year's Advent Calendar Archbishop Eamon said, "After another difficult year of living with the Covid-19 pandemic, the season of Advent arrives and offers us a new beginning and a promise of hope for better times. The First Sunday of Advent is actually the Christian Church's New Year's Day. This year – perhaps more than ever – we need ideas and inspiration to help us delve deeper, to find

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that glimmer of light, that note of joy, that promise of consolation. I am very conscious that in troubled parts of the world the message of Christian “peace and goodwill to all” needs to be heard above the noise of war, the cries of the poor and the agony of the displaced and oppressed. Our digital advent calendar offers ideas to help us spiritually prepare for our Lord’s coming at Christmas so that we are more aware of the suffering of our brothers and sisters throughout the world and of the things that we ourselves can easily take for granted. Every day of our lives presents a moment for change and conversion and a reminder to look out for the presence of the suffering Christ in the sick, the poor and the stranger.

“Our digital Advent calendar is a helpful resource on our ‘journey’ towards Christmas. By clicking on a virtual door we are inviting people to take just five minutes for reflection so as to find moments of peace and to rediscover the true meaning of Advent and Christmas.

“Since the outbreak of the pandemic the people of Ireland have endured testing times with courage, resilience, and compassion. Individuals and communities have made great sacrifices for the protection of life, health and for the common good. Many Christians have been reaching out in generous service and support for their neighbours, the lonely, the isolated, the sick and the bereaved. Faith, love and hope – in the home and in church – have been a huge support during these difficult times. As we continue, in solidarity, to progress together, I invite everyone to be part of #SharingHope this Advent season by availing of the helpful resources on our calendar and through sharing these with others on social media.

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“The seasons of Advent and Christmas occur in the depth of winter reminding us that Christ was born to bring hope to a darkened world. The Covid-19 virus may have struck at the very heart of our outreach and ministry to the sick, the dying and the bereaved; but, it could not, and did not, and will not destroy our hope and our conviction that God remains especially near to people who suffer, and God is close to those who are broken-hearted. As the prophet Isaiah said “the people that wait in darkness have seen a great light”. During Advent, let us reflect on the uplifting promise of Christmas, that Christ is alive and that He is our hope.”

## Poem for today

### Epic by Patrick Kavanagh

I have lived in important places, times  
When great events were decided, who owned  
That half a rood of rock, a no-man's land  
Surrounded by our pitchfork-armed claims.  
I heard the Duffys shouting "Damn your soul!"  
And old McCabe stripped to the waist, seen  
Step the plot defying blue cast-steel -  
"Here is the march along these iron stones."  
That was the year of the Munich bother. Which  
Was more important? I inclined  
To lose my faith in Ballyrush and Gortin  
Till Homer's ghost came whispering to my mind.  
He said: I made the Iliad from such  
A local row. Gods make their own importance.

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