



**Image of the day - Advent wreath preparation at York Minster. See article here by the Archbishop**

## News Reports

### Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and Archbishop of Canterbury issue joint statement on the plight of refugees and asylum seekers



Moderator and Archbishop issue statement on refugee crisis  
L-R - the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the General Assembly at Lambeth Palace in London

**The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and the Archbishop of Canterbury have issued a joint statement about the plight of refugees and asylum seekers following the tragic loss of life in the English Channel.**



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At least 27 people died trying to reach the UK in a small boat this week.

"The Church of England and Church of Scotland, along with Christians around the world, believe that every person is made in God's image.

"We celebrate our work supporting vulnerable people seeking refuge and asylum.

"In a climate that is often hostile towards these men, women and children, we commit to offer them welcome and compassion.

"In too many cases, the churches are the only available support in an asylum system that is proving inadequate to the task.

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"We take care to ensure our practices are safe, robust and above all founded on Christ's command to welcome the stranger.

"It is a tragic reality that worldwide there are more than 26 million refugees, around half of whom are children.

"The number of displaced people due to persecution, conflict and violence is more than 80 million.

"This is a global challenge of terrifying proportion.

"No effective solutions will be found unless states, religious groups and civil society come together in a spirit of pragmatism and compassion.

"This situation cannot go on - let this be the moment we bring hope for all God's precious children."

Lord Wallace, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

The Most Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury

## **PCI welcomes Northern Ireland Health Minister's social care support package**

**The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) has welcomed the Minister of Health's announcement of a one-off support package for domiciliary care staff in Northern Ireland, but has said real root and branch change is needed.**

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Through PCI's social care arm, its Council for Social Witness manages the denomination's provision of residential, nursing, supported housing, respite and day care, along with a number of community-based programmes, employing around 400 people.

Speaking about Minister Swann's announcement of the £23 million support package, Lindsay Conway OBE, outgoing Secretary to the Council for Social Witness said, "While we welcome Mr Swann's announcement, as he recognised himself, a longer-term and more durable solution is needed for social care services across Northern Ireland.

"Over the last 19 months the social care system has been tested above and beyond its limits. Along with other social care providers, and the sector in general, the biggest issue facing us is staffing. We operate almost permanently with considerable staffing vacancies as attracting and retaining staff has become increasingly more difficult," he said.

"If I could take the opportunity to reiterate what I said at our General Assembly last month, I can't stress enough that we must grasp the big issues of underfunding, terms and conditions, pay, creating a career structure within the sector, and address both the use and cost of agency staff. We need to give the care of older people and those with additional needs the highest priority. This is why we welcome the review of the social care sector and call upon all parties to take the hard decisions, the necessary root and branch decisions, required to implement long-overdue and necessary change in this area."

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In conclusion, Mr Conway said, “My colleagues, along with our colleagues in health, have been heroes this last while, going above and beyond what they have been called to do, often putting their own lives at risk. We owe it to them, and to those we care for, to get this right.”

## **York Minster’s spectacular Advent Wreath**

**York Minster’s spectacular Advent Wreath, was suspended below the Minster’s Central Tower marking the beginning of the Christian festival of Advent and Christmas at the Minster.**

The Archbishop of York, Most Rev Dr Steven Cottrell commented - The wreath is assembled around a vast and heavy three metre wide, metal ring with built-in channels to hold the water required to keep the foliage fresh. The structure also features five one metre high candle holders. It takes the Minster’s expert team of volunteer flower arrangers almost two hours to transform the metal ring into a spectacular, abundant display, overflowing with fresh, evergreen winter foliage. This year’s display will be mainly of ivy, kindly donated from the gardens of internationally renowned flower arranger George Smith.

For Head Flower Arranger, Mandy Barker and her team, dressing the Advent Wreath is one of the most important challenges of the year. Mandy said: “Between us, we’ve had plenty of practice assembling and installing the advent wreath and getting creative with the seasonal foliage that we can find. It is just wonderful to see it come together and to produce a display which is so important for the Minster’s





Advent and Christmas celebrations.”

Decorating the wreath this year will also provide an important social occasion for the Minster’s flower arrangers. Mandy said: “There are volunteers who come to help who have been coming along for the last 30 years. It is a really lovely occasion and we all take great pride and satisfaction in making a wonderful display.”

Once the wreath is complete, children from St Peter’s School, York, will arrive at the Minster to help Head Verger Alex Carberry, lift four one metre high candles into position on the wreath and watch as Alex lifts the fifth candle into its central position. The wreath will then be hoisted into position below the Central Tower. The first candle will be lit on Sunday 28 November (the first Sunday of Advent), and then on three successive Sundays with the final candle being lit at the Christmas Day Eucharist service.

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Canon Victoria Johnson, Precentor said: “After two difficult and challenging years, the raising of this wreath and the hope that it brings, is more poignant and wonderful than ever. The lighting of each candle brings us ever closer to the joy of the birth of the Christ child and the bringing of His light into the world.”

## **Catholic Church in Scotland has defied Nicola Sturgeon’s call to “tighten up” coronavirus precautions**

**Church defies Sturgeon with a call to Sunday Mass  
Catholic bishops order faithful to return in person to communal worship as SNP urges Covid caution**

The Catholic Church in Scotland has defied Nicola Sturgeon’s call to “tighten up” coronavirus precautions by ordering its members back to Mass.

The country’s bishops will issue a pastoral letter this weekend saying that an obligation to attend church on Sundays, as well as specified holy days, will be reinstated from Jan 2.

Watching services online will not qualify, the faithful will be warned, with only those told to self-isolate or with another recognised reason such as being in poor health, to be excused from attendance.

A decree which mandates that Catholics attend church on Sundays was lifted at the start of the pandemic, due to the risk to public health. While services have continued,



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attendance was not compulsory. However, the letter, which will be read at services this weekend, tells Catholics that the festive season is an “opportune moment” to restore the obligation and “return, with purified hearts and fresh fervour, to our sacramental and liturgical life”.

The mandate comes days after Ms Sturgeon called on the public to “tighten up again” and to limit in-person interactions with others.

She demanded “renewed care and commitment” from the public and institutions, and claimed that failing to take her advice would risk a “new year hangover” of new restrictions. She also urged people to continue to work from home wherever possible in order to reduce the risk of Covid spreading.

However, the bishops’ letter said: “In our fluid situation, this is not an easy judgment to make.

“Thanks, however, to the effort and good sense of so many, our churches have proven to be safe places.

“So, saving any serious worsening of the situation, we believe that Christmastide provides an opportune moment to restore the obligation. It has been good to have access to the sacred liturgy online, and we encourage those unable to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days to continue making use of this.

“Of itself, though, online participation does not fulfil the obligation. Nothing can adequately replace actual presence.”

The move could add further strain to the relationship between religious bodies and the SNP government.

Earlier in the pandemic, ministers attempted to impose a legal ban on communal worship, citing the risks of the virus spreading.

However, the Court of Session ruled in March that the move had been unlawful, after 27 church leaders took legal action.

Catholic leaders suspended public Mass in Scotland in March 2020, but services resumed in the summer.

The Government then made holding in-person services a crime in January this year, before this was ruled unconstitutional by the courts.

A Scottish Government spokesperson said: “We ask our faith and belief partners to encourage adherence to Covid guidance and remaining restrictions, to ensure the continued safe use of places of worship.”

## People and places

### Ecumenical Service of Remembrance at Youghal Lifeboat Station

On Sunday, 14th November, parishioners of Youghal Union joined with people from all over the seafaring town to remember those who died at sea in both World Wars and



CONTINUATION OF THE SERVICES  
 RENDERED BY  
 THE — YOUGHAL — LIFE-BOATS  
 — OF THE —  
 ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION  
 Rescued

The "MARGORY TURNER" Atlantic 21 I.L.B.  
 was sent on station on 25th May 1984  
 This lifeboat was provided by Vincent Scott Turner  
 in memory of his wife

1984		
May 15	Two sailboards	Saved two boards and 2
June 18	Fishing boat	Gave help
June 23	Two sailboards	Escorted boards
July 1	Fishing boat LINDISFARNE	Gave help
July 2	Fishing boat	Gave help
July 3	Fishing Boat CYGNUS	Gave help
July 29	Motor boat	Gave help
Aug 1	Fishing vessel LISMORE	Rescued
Aug 10	Fishing boat	Gave help
Aug 28	Fishing boat	Saved boat and 2
Dec 8	Fishing boat CAREM LOUISE	Gave help
Dec 11	Fishing boat REALT NA DEISA	Gave help

1985		
Jan 28	Trawler MARTINIQUE in tow of trawler HELEN MARGARET	Escorted vessles
July 14	Sailboard	Gave help
July 17	Fishing vessel KAREN LOUISE	Saved vessel and 2
Sept 16	Fishing boat	Saved boat and 2

1986		
Mar 30	Fishing boat LINDISFARNE	Saved boat and 3
May 21	Fishing vessel ST. CORAN	Gave help
June 8	Sailing dinghy	Saved boat and 3
June 24	Fishing boat LINDISFARNE	Gave help
July 10	Fishing boat LINDISFARNE	Gave help
July 26	Sailing dingy	Saved boat and 2

1987		
July 8	Fishing boat MARY B	Saved boat and 2



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deceased members of the Naval Service, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and Coastguard.

Canon Andrew Orr officiated along with other dignitaries, friends, supporters, crew members and other agencies. Hymns were sung by the Youghal Choral Society with Kevin O'Connell on keyboards. A piper from the Youghal Pipe Band played the bagpipes and poems were read by Oonagh Doran.



Shortly after a minute's silence was observed, the lifeboat departed with Youghal RNLI volunteer crew members John McCarthy, Shane Buckley, and helmsman Erik Brooks who

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laid the wreath on the river Blackwater to remember all those lost at sea.

Photo above - The RNLI Youghal lifeboat (which remained operational throughout) then returned to station. The service was broadcast live on Community Radio Youghal – CRY104FM.

## **Birthday wishes from Rathmichael Parish to Canon Salter**

Rathmichael Parish recently wished a very happy 96th birthday to their parishioner Canon George Salter. Canon George entered Holy Orders in 1949 and is one of the longest ordained clerics in the Church of Ireland. He is a constant source of wisdom and encouragement and we wish him well!

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

## **Finding Hope, Peace, Love and Joy in Advent 2021**

This Advent the Diocese of Dublin & Glendalough invite you to join them online as they explore how parishes in Dublin & Glendalough are reaching out to serve their communities. The series of four videos will be released each weekend in Advent, starting on November 27.

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Entitled Advent: Hope Peace Love and Joy, the videos will focus on St Patrick's Parish and School in Greystones and their work for Dublin Christian Mission's Light House which serves homeless people (Hope); Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, and their outreach to people living in Direct Provision accommodation centres as a Cathedral of Sanctuary (Peace); Gathering Grounds in Kilternan whose mission is to provide a place for community, belonging, growth and healing (Love); and the Storehouse foodbank in Crinken which reaches out to serve and support those in need in their community (Joy).

You can find these videos on our YouTube channel

[www.youtube.com/c/](http://www.youtube.com/c/TheUnitedDiocesesofDublinandGlendalough)

TheUnitedDiocesesofDublinandGlendalough

or website [www.dublin.anglican.org](http://www.dublin.anglican.org)

and on social media.

## **Connor Advent online**

During Advent this year, the diocesan team again hope to post a short online act of worship each day on the diocesan Facebook page. This will include a reflection on one of the daily readings.

The series will begin on Advent Sunday, November 28, with worship led by the Bishop, the Rt Rev George Davison. Clergy from across the diocese will contribute over the course of the Advent period.



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To tune in, visit the Church of Ireland Diocese of Connor on Facebook and to ensure you don't miss out, please like and follow the page

## **Marsh's Library, Dublin, on-line exhibition,**

Marsh's Library, Dublin, has an on-line exhibition, 'Ragged Livid & On Fire' which is a celebration of the publication in 1820 of *Melmoth the Wanderer* by the Revd Charles Robert Maturin who was curate of St Peter's, 1807–27. He lived close to Marsh's Library and was a regular visitor. This exhibition shows that Maturin used a familiarity with 16th and 17th century printed material to condemn religious hypocrisy and to draw a sharp distinction between the light of culture and the darkness of fanaticism. The exhibition has been curated by Dr Christina Morin of the University of Limerick and Dr Jason McElligott, Director of Marsh's Library..

## **Perspective**

### **It's Christian to seek after the needs of others in real need by Norman Hamilton**

It's Christian to seek after the needs of others in real need

Recently, I have spent quite a lot of time exploring the Old Testament book of Proverbs — a book that I think is seriously undervalued in many Christian circles.

In essence, it sets out how to become wise and productive in everyday living.

The opening chapter says ‘the first step in learning is bowing down to God; only fools thumb their noses at such wisdom and learning.

I have been very struck by the number of times it talks about people whom it describes as “righteous”.

That’s a word which is rarely used in church circles or personal conversation, for none of us would dare to say: “I am a righteous man / woman”.

To do so would certainly be seen as boasting.

As a way of describing a Christian, we simply don’t go there, even though it is used in Proverbs dozens and dozens of times.

That first step means bowing down to God in reverent and worship-filled obedience which is then worked out in generous love for our neighbours.

This is beautifully summed up by Jesus Himself in the parable of the good Samaritan in St Luke 10. Proverbs however, spells it out in real detail, and emphasises the constant need to do what is right and just in the eyes of the living God – irrespective of what the standards are in the world around us, or what colleagues or friends may say. To take just one example, there is the stark statement in

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chapter 29: The righteous care about justice for the poor, but the wicked have no such concern.

These words have every bit as much relevance today as they did when they were written around 2,500 years ago. Day and daily, we are being told that the cost of living will continue to rise. We see it under way in the rising price of petrol and many foods in the supermarket, alongside the cost of heating our home and paying more tax.

Here is Northern Ireland, the government reckons that 13 per cent of people (approximately 241,000) live in absolute poverty (before taking into account the costs of housing).

This means that 17 per cent of children, 14 per cent of pensioners and 11 per cent of the working age population are in very dire straits.

We are within striking distance of Christmas. That one proverb tells me that doing what I can to help meet the real needs of others around me is but one expression of being seen as righteous by the Lord.

So, for example, helping to supply the local foodbank by putting some extra groceries in the big collection box in my local supermarket is massively important – not just at Christmas, but all through next year too.

And following through on this also means playing my little part in helping to meet the indescribable needs of billions across the world. I'm so blessed by being in a position where I can help.



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If you are too, neither of us can dare to be found wanting.  
How's about it?

• Rev Dr Norman Hamilton OBE, Presbyterian Church

## Poem for today

### Father and Son by Frederick Robert Higgins

Only last week, walking the hushed fields  
Of our most lovely Meath, now thinned by November,  
I came to where the road from Laracor leads  
To the Boyne river-that seems more lake than river,  
Stretched in uneasy light and stript of reeds.

And walking longside an old weir  
Of my people's, where nothing stirs-only the shadowed  
Leaden flight of a heron up the lean air-  
I went unmanly with grief, knowing how my father,  
Happy though captive in years, walked last with me there.

Yes, happy in Meath with me for a day  
He walked, taking stock of herds hid in their own breathing;  
And naming colts, gusty as wind, once steered by his hand,  
Lightnings winked in the eyes that were half shy in greeting  
Old friends-the wild blades, when he gallivanted the land.

For that proud, wayward man now my heart breaks-  
Breaks for that man whose mind was a secret eyrie,  
Whose kind hand was sole signet of his race,

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Who curbed me, scorned my green ways, yet increasingly  
loved me  
Till Death drew its grey blind down his face.

And yet I am pleased that even my reckless ways  
Are living shades of his rich calms and passions-  
Witnesses for him and for those faint namesakes  
With whom now he is one, under yew branches,  
Yes, one in a graven silence no bird breaks.

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