



Francis Campbell , former UK Ambassador to the Vatican, addressing ‘The Future of Faith Based Schools in a Pluralist Society’ conference

Irish citizens must think about role of religion in Republic’s second century

The Vice-Chancellor of St Mary’s University, Twickenham has said Irish citizens need to consider the very nature of what a republic is and
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what way the Irish Republic will move in its second century and the role religion will play in it.

Francis Campbell, the former British Ambassador to the Holy See (2005–2011) and Pakistan (2011–2013), made his comments after his address to the education conference, ‘The Future of Faith Based Schools in a Pluralist Society’, which was hosted by the Irish Catholic newspaper.

Speaking to CatholicIreland.net, he said he was making a comparative assessment with other republics, as there are different models and quite often it comes down to the role of religion.

“Religion is in many respects a lightning rod for a whole set of other issues,” he commented.

Acknowledging that the French model of a republic could be attractive to a certain set of opinions, Francis Campbell said this French republican tradition was “born out of a very unique particular historical evolution”.

He said that “If you import something like that into an Irish republican tradition you could end up with something that is not organic.”

The former policy adviser and private secretary to Tony Blair said the question was whether Ireland would opt for the American model of republic or a French model of republic or a third way which was “something organic and unique to Ireland” and which “looks to the plurality here”.

He added, “It is not accident that we have this very extensive state supported faith-based sector” (in education) and he said he believed this was a legacy of the influence of the British system.

Asked about his suggestion in his address to the education conference that Catholic education needs to be re-embedded in the public square, Francis Campbell said it was important to recognise that it was not just about running or maintaining a Catholic school for the sake of a Catholic school.

“There is a much broader mission, which society also benefits from, and that is the plurality that faith-based or denominational-based education brings because you have a plurality of perspectives contributing to the liberal nature of society.”

He told CatholicIreland.net, “If you had a single uniformity in relation to the state alone providing education then that could lead really to a diminishing of a space and a set of ideas rather than an opening up of those ideas.”

He added that having a broad umbrella within society, with the state operating with basic minimum standards that different providers would have to reach, but allowing different philosophies of education to be part of that wider conversation in society, enriches society and democracy and contributes to a pluralist perspective.

Elsewhere in his address, the Vice-Chancellor of St Mary’s University, Twickenham warned that ‘the state pays so the state rules’ approach could become linked to a threat of depriving funds to faith-based schools – and could potentially lead to “a certain totalitarianism”.

Referring to the state’s takeover of faith schools in Quebec, he commented, “What I have warned about is the risk that if you have a very narrowly defined ‘state pays, state says’ approach, that can diminish the space in which democracies actually revolve around the expression of difference and the right to be different.”

“Look at different systems of the world where the state has encroached on the role of civil society and the two become conflated – you’ll have seen that in Marxist systems where the state and society can’t be distinguished. You have nothing other than one particular narrative of one particular view of history – of one particular critique to the detriment of the rest.”

He said the risk in the post-modern phase, especially in the West, as western countries struggle with complexity, is that “there could be a tendency to think let’s go for a minimalist common denominator approach, where we sort of marginalise every other provider so as to have a single state provider.”

He warned there was a risk that this could “erode the very difference and the right to be different that democracies revolve around”.

Read Francis Campbell’s full address to the conference on ‘The Future of Faith Based Schools in a Pluralist Society’, which was hosted by the Irish Catholic newspaper, at <http://www.irishcatholic.ie/article/embedding-catholic-education-public-square>

New look at Rebel Prods and the 1916 Rising

A new book entitled Rebel Prods: The Forgotten Story of Protestant Radical Nationalists and the 1916 Rising by the late Dr Valerie Jones, is to be launched by the former Archbishop of Dublin, The Rt Revd Walton Empey, at the Treasury, Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, on Monday 21 November 2016 at 6.30pm.

The book, brought to fruition by Dr Valerie Jones's daughter, Dr Heather Jones, an Associate Professor in History at the London School of Economics, is published by Ashfield Press and has been supported by the Church of Ireland's Historical Centenaries Working Group as one of its several contributions to marking the centenaries of 1916 during this calendar year.

The outgoing Chairman on the Historical Centenaries Working Group, the Rt Revd John McDowell, says, 'One of the objectives of more or less everyone who has been involved in the Decade of Centenaries has been to explore the complexity of Irish History during this crucial period. Many people are aware of the involvement of well known, and often well

connected, Irish Protestants in radical politics during the revolutionary period. However, there were others whose participation on the republican side are much less well known, or barely known at all but whose stories deserve to be told and reflected upon.

‘In her research the late Dr Valerie Jones devoted her prodigious energy to uncovering and re-telling their stories which have now been brought to publication by her daughter Dr Heather Jones. This book fills a gap in the scholarship of that period and should also be of interest to a much wider readership who, once again, history will surprise.’

Former Moderator appointed to Holyrood reform panel

A former Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland has been appointed to an independent panel examining ways of modernising the Scottish Parliament.

Very Rev Dr Lorna Hood, who held the role in 2013-14, was selected to join the Commission on Parliamentary Reform by Holyrood presiding officer Ken Macintosh. He said the minister, who retired from Renfrew North Parish Church in

September after 37 years , and the other nine members were well placed to take the legislature “back to its roots of being open, transparent and truly participative”.

Former Labour MSP Mr Macintosh, a member of Holyrood since it opened in 1999, said the parliament's systems "are not broken but are in need of an MOT".

The Commission’s remit is to consider ways in which the parliament can be assured it has the right checks and balances in place for the effective conduct of parliamentary business, increase its engagement with wider society and the public, and clarify its identity as distinct from the Scottish Government.

Christian Aid and ABColombia warmly welcome the timely visit of Colombian President

Christian Aid and ABColombia warmly welcome the timely visit of Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon this week to the UK. President Santos was recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in

the name of the 8 million victims of Colombia's internal armed conflict.

Thomas Mortensen, Christian Aid's country manager in Colombia said: "The UK must demonstrate in this state visit its ongoing support to the Colombian government and the Colombian people as they continue to work for peace.

"Now, more than ever Colombia needs the engagement of the international community to continue to work for a negotiated solution to the armed conflict, despite last month's referendum set back."

Both the UK and Colombia have made commitments in the [joint statement](#) on Human Rights issued on the last official visit of President Santos, when he came as a Guest of Government in 2011, to see the displaced victims return to the land from which they have been forcibly displaced.

Colombia has world's largest internally displaced population – in a country where all

armed groups, including the security forces and the paramilitaries - acting alone or in collusion - and insurgents, have committed serious human rights crimes, including forced displacements, torture, sexual violence and enforced disappearances.

The Santos Government is currently renegotiating some aspects of the Peace Agreement with the FARC following a “no” referendum vote by the slimmest of margins on 2 October 2016.

Louise Winstanley Programme Manager of ABColombia said: “Whilst changes to include points made by the “No” campaign are essential to ensuring a wider-ranging acceptance of the Agreement there are some things it is crucial not to change.

“These include the Agreement’s guarantees for truth, justice, reparation and - most importantly - non-repetition to thousands of victims and the guarantee of no amnesties for conflict sexual violence. These must be ensured to build sustainable peace”

These guarantees reflect international standards and the British and Colombian Governments' commitment following the 2014 Global Summit on in London to End Sexual Violence in Conflict.

Ms. Winstanley added: “The Agreement also makes important commitments on land reform and strengthening the rural economy, which is essential if we are to see people lifted out of poverty.”

Whilst President Santos has positively engaged with the “no” campaign led by ex-president Álvaro Uribe Velez, and the stalled talks with the second largest group ELN are likely to start again next weekend, violence by paramilitary groups continues and is directed at rural communities and human rights defenders.

In 2012, 33 human rights defenders were killed, making Colombia one of the worst countries in the world for the number of human rights defenders killed. In 2015, this doubled to 63 which means that one in three

human rights defenders killed in the world last year were Colombian.

ABColumbia and Christian Aid urge the Colombian government to invite Michel Forst the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders to Colombia in order to demonstrate this commitment and we hope that the UK Government will promote this.”

Sudan's War On Christians: School With 1,000 Pupils Closed After Raid

An evangelical Christian school in Sudan with more than 1,000 pupils has been closed after it was raided by authorities.

According to sources [cited by Sight magazine](#), armed police aided by civilians bused in from the surrounding area were involved in the raid on the Evangelical Basic School in Madani, Al Jazirah state last week.

Sight said it was the third raid on the school in two months and follows the jailing of Christian

staff members who tried to prevent the seizure of the institution.

The school belongs to the Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church and was established in 1901. It was first raided on September 5 by police who presented documents ordering its handover to the government's National Ministry of Guidance and Endowments.

"They just want to form a government body to run the school," an area Christian told Morning Star News. "Muslims were on board the bus that came from Khartoum."

The school's administrators and teachers are ethnic Nuba, a group targeted by Sudan's controlling Arabist faction, and the move appears to be an attempt to exert further pressure on Nuba Christians.

It was unclear whether the school would re-open.

Among those arrested on October 6 were the school's headmaster, Rev Samuel Suleiman, and Rev Ismail Zakaria, pastor of the church to which it belongs. Seven other teachers were also detained before being released on bail, accused of resisting the authorities. were seven other

teachers who objected to the takeover of the school.

Suleiman was also arrested during the September raid with 12 other teachers and accused of supporting the Sudan People's Liberation Army North, a rebel group fighting government forces. He has denied the charge.

News briefs

+++ Belfast Cathedral talk on 1916 Rebellion-

The Autumn Talks series in St. Anne's continues on Wednesday November 9 when Dr Christopher McGimpsey speaks about the 1916

Rebellion. Alderman Dr Christopher McGimpsey holds a BA from Syracuse University, New York and a PhD in Irish history from Edinburgh University. He is a member of the Ulster Unionist party and is a Belfast city councillor. The talk will begin at 12.45pm and last 45 minutes. Light refreshments will be served at 12.15pm. A suggested donation is £5.

+++ C of I Irish language services - (1) The next service in St. Fionnbarra's Cathedral, Cork, is on Saturday, 5 November, at 12.00 noon.

Everyone welcome. (2) Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise is organising a Reflective Service during Oireachtas na Samhna. The service will be held in the Gleneagle Hotel in Killarney on 5 November 2016 at 5.15pm and Rev Tony Murphy from Cork will be presiding. Everyone is welcome. (3) In the Parish Church of St George, Belfast: Festival of Lessons and Carols - Dé Domhnaigh 4 Nollaig ag 5.00 i.n - Sunday 4th December 2016, 5pm. Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise: The Irish Guild of the Church was founded in 1914 to (a) promote all that tends to preserve within the Church of Ireland the spirit of the ancient Celtic Church and to provide a bond of union for all members of the Church of Ireland inspired with Irish ideals, (b) promote the use of the Irish language in the Church, (3) collect from Irish sources suitable hymns and other devotional literature, (c) encourage the use of Irish art and music in the Church.

+++ Tribute to Father Michael Ross -

Archbishop Eamon Martin has said: I was very saddened to hear of the death last Sunday of Father Michael Ross, the much loved Salesian priest and spiritual director of Radio Maria Ireland. Today I offer my prayerful support to Father Michael's family, his brothers Denis, Liam

and Noel; sisters-in-law Joan, Maridle and Maria; brother-in-law Austin, to his Salesian Brothers in Christ, as well as to the World Family of Radio Maria community and to his wider circle of friends. Father Michael was a communicator *par excellence* and this, along with his Cork charm, warmth and infectious enthusiasm, characterised his priestly vocation which he served faithfully for thirty-eight years. This pioneering ministry was exemplified by the opening of Radio Maria Ireland – Ireland’s only Catholic radio station – which was officially launched in Dublin on 11 February this year, the Feast of our Lady of Lourdes. Father Michael’s evangelical zeal was a true gift from God which enabled the many people, young and old, whom he encountered to fruitfully live the mission of the Gospel. I also wish to pay tribute to Father Michael’s commitment to the faith, and in particular his veneration of Saint Faustina. His important ministry in this regard played a large part in the success of the annual Divine Mercy Conference.

[News links to reports on faith, politics and education](#)

[Mail/Gulf News/National/Christian Today](#)

Reports on speech made yesterday by the Archbishop of Canterbury at a Muslim-Christian dialogue on integration and religious freedom in Abu Dhabi. Reports note the Archbishop's ongoing concern for persecuted Christians around the world saying religious freedom is more than freedom from persecution 'it is the freedom to choose how to express our understanding of our relationship with God'.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3899772/Welby-attacks-Arab-hostility-Christians-Archbishop-says-freedom-granted-religions-Britain-not-matched-Middle-East.html>

<http://gulfnews.com/news/uae/society/religious-leaders-call-for-peaceful-integrated-world-1.1923258>

<http://www.thenational.ae/uae/uae-sets-good-example-with-freedom-of-religion-says-archbishop-of-canterbury>

Tel

Reports that a new website launched by the C of E, www.achristmasnearyou.com will enable would-be worshippers to find the nearest Anglican service over Christmas. Every parish in England is being invited to upload details of services and events taking place over the Christmas period onto the site during the next

month before it goes live for the public in early December. The Telegraph reports that the site will be able to filter by date, whether there are carols and also users will be able to find out which Christmas services are serving mince pies or mulled wine.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/11/02/churchs-mince-pie-tracker-to-boost-christmas-congregations/>

BBC/Premier

Reports that the Church in Wales has elected its first woman bishop. Canon Joanna Penberthy said she is "immensely humbled" to become the 129th Bishop of St Davids in Pembrokeshire. An electoral college of 47 people from across Wales spent two days locked in St Davids Cathedral before coming to their decision. Canon Penberthy is currently the Rector of the parish of Glan Ithon, near Llandrindod Wells, Powys. The Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan, called Canon Penberthy's election "an historic moment" for the Church.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-37847575>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Church-in-Wales-appoints-first-female-bishop>

Guard/BBC/Mail/Mirror/Times/Sun

Reports that the head of the Catholic Church in England and Wales Cardinal Vincent Nichols has apologised for its part in the ‘hurt’ caused to young unmarried women who handed over their babies for adoption in the 1950s, 60s and 70s. The reports are in advance of a broadcast on ITV next week of a documentary which will hear from a group of women who speak of being pressured into adoption by agencies working on behalf of the Catholic Church, and also the Church of England and the Salvation Army. The Guardian quotes a Church of England spokesperson saying: “What was thought to be the right thing to do at the time has caused great hurt. That is a matter of great regret.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/nov/03/catholic-church-apologises-for-role-in-forced-adoptions-over-30-year-period>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-37855722>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3899708/Cardinal-apologises-adoption-babies-born-unmarried-mothers.html>

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/head-catholic-church-uk-says-9184739#ICID=nsm>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/church-to-apologise-for-forced-adoptions-hbpffsxfq>

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/2105898/unmarried-mothers-who-were-forced-to-give-up->

[their-babies-receive-apology-from-the-catholic-church/](#)

Guard

Report that Prof Alexis Jay, the chair of the Independent Inquiry into Child Abuse (IICSA) has written to the Yvette Cooper, the new chair of the Home Affairs select committee, requesting that MPs desist from calling her or other inquiry members to give evidence before them. The Anglican Church in England and Wales is one of the 13 strands of investigation by IICSA.

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/nov/02/transparency-vital-to-rebuild-confidence-in-child-abuse-inquiry-says-yvette-cooper>

Guard/Sky

Reports that the last of the Calais refugee children have been evacuated as the camp clearance ends. The Guardian reported that buses were taking remaining teenagers from the camp to undisclosed locations around France where their applications for asylum in the UK and France were due to be processed.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/02/calais-refugee-children-evacuated-as-camp-clearance-winds-up>

November 4

<http://news.sky.com/story/calais-refugee-children-moved-out-of-migrant-camp-10641581>