

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Sole Mates

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St Molua's Sole Mates

Sole Mates' Walking Group from St Molua's parish Dundonald have been out on their last scheduled trip for the 2025 season when, on Saturday 18 October, they visited Hillsborough Forest Park and Lake set in the picturesque Georgian village of Royal Hillsborough, County Down.

"We were very lucky with the weather which, despite a foreboding forecast, remained mostly dry although cool and breezy at times.

"Our walk led us around the lake and through the forest of glorious autumn colours where we encountered a range of weird and wonderful large sculptures including Unit of Life, Power Up and Big Foot."

News

Holocaust stories of rescue exhibition in Dublin

'Between Life and Death. Stories of Rescue during the Holocaust' officially opened in Dublin last week.



This display was organized in partnership with ENRS. The Ireland panel tells the story of Dr Bob Collis and the children he saved.

During the opening the guests were greeted by Prof Thomas O'Dowd, the Chair of Holocaust Education Ireland, Lynn Jackson from Holocaust Education Ireland, Barbara Walshe from European Network



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Remembrance & Solidarity, Piotr Erenfeicht, Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Poland, Colm O'Loughlin from the Department of Justice.



Personal reflections and family stories showcased in the exhibition were shared by the Zinn-Collis Family and Ms.

Suzi Diamond. The tour of the exhibition was led by Prof Piotr Trojanski.



The event was also attended by diplomats: H.E. Nicola Faganello, the Italian Ambassador to

Ireland, H.E. Pavel Vošalík, the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Ireland, H.E. Lars Thuesen, the Danish Ambassador to Ireland, Andreas Strauchmann from the German Embassy in Ireland, Dalia Sukackienė from the Lithuanian Embassy in Ireland, as well as the team of Polish Embassy in Ireland: Piotr Erenfeicht – Deputy Head of Mission at Polish Embassy in Ireland, Artur Michalski Chargé d'affaires a.i., Agnieszka Skolimowska and NikolaIn

Act of Solidarity – Taney Service of Prayer and Reflection for Gaza and the Middle East

“Our future must be built on respect for human dignity, for all peoples, all members of our shared global family.” So reads the message on behalf of President Michael D Higgins to the large congregation at an ecumenical service of prayer and reflection in solidarity with the people of Gaza and the Middle East which was held in Taney yesterday evening (Sunday October 19).

The service, organised in conjunction with Christian Aid, brought together a number of churches and traditions to stand together in prayer and hope. There were prayers for peace, hymns of hope and healing and there were contributions from the choir of Taney National School and the parish choir. The service drew towards a close with the Archbishop of Dublin reading a Prayer for the Holy Land written by Archbishop Hosam Naoum, the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem.

In his message to the service, which was read by the Rector, the Revd Nigel Pierpoint, President Higgins extended his warmest greetings to those who gathered in Taney. The message said he had been moved by the recent news of the ceasefire in Gaza and of the hostages being reunited with their families. He remained acutely aware of the immense challenges faced by the people in Gaza as they return to their homes and underlined the urgent need for humanitarian assistance.



Front row: Archbishop Michael Jackson, Michael Briggs, Rachel Fitzsimmons (who came up with the idea of holding the service), the Revd Nigel Pierpoint. Back row: the Revd Jane Burns, the Revd Bernie Daly, Sandra Ganley, Trilly Keatinge, Fr Jim Caffrey and the Revd David Bowles.

The President expressed gratitude for the gathering describing it as “a profound act of solidarity and a moment that reminds us of our shared yearning for peace and for the restoration of what is most human”. The message continued: “By bringing together voices of different faiths to stand as one in grief, empathy, and hope, you are affirming the most vital of principals: that our future must be built on respect for human dignity, for all peoples, all members or our shared global family”.

Michael Briggs of Christian Aid gave a moving and thought provoking reflection based on Psalm 46 and the readings from Matthew [5: 1–12 and 25:31–46]. He said that the Psalm doesn't deny chaos but sits in the middle of it saying 'Be still, and know that I am God'.

"Over the last two years we have seen what is happening on the news and social media – cities broken, families starved, the silence of war and famine. We have watched and feel helpless. And something inside us burns. That burning – that's anger.

Anger is so important. We should not ignore our anger. We should not hide it," he said. He noted that anger alone can lead to bitterness and despair but in our Christian story there is hope.

Christian Aid has been working in Gaza and the Middle East for 60 years and their partners are not outsiders but live there and face the same dangers as everyone else, he explained.

"They live in the crisis and yet they deliver aid, they lift up their voices, they bring hope to others," he said sharing the story of Weaam, a midwife who works with Christian Aid partner, the Palestinian Medical Relief Society. She reported seeing pregnant women about to give birth weighing only 50kg. They are dizzy and weak for lack of food and can't produce milk for their babies.

"That's the reality on the ground and yet in the midst of it all there are people like Weaam still showing up, still serving, still loving their neighbours. That's what faith looks like.

That's what hope looks like... We need both anger and hope – anger wakes us up, hope keeps us going. Together they can become faith – a faith that feels the ache of the world but still believes another world is possible. And maybe that's what it means to be still and know God; to hold our fury in the one hand and hope in the other and trust that somehow love will rise again," he said.

Before praying Archbishop Hosam's prayer, Archbishop Michael Jackson described the Archbishop of Jerusalem's work, alongside the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem. He said that the Diocese of Jerusalem encompasses Israel and Palestine as well as Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. "That whole vast territory which is now a cauldron of warfare and a turmoil of fear, anger and hope is part of what he cares for together with all his ecumenical partners, the way we care for them and the way we lit a flame for them here in Dundrum this evening,"he said.

Next week, the Archbishop said, he will be in Jordan for the deferred Synod of the Diocese of Jerusalem and will bring greetings from the congregation and the order of service to show that people gathered and prayed for them.

Three Irish Friends attend German Yearly Meeting

Three Irish Friends joined German Yearly Meeting at Quakerhaus in Bad Pyrmont last weekend, at the celebrations for 100 years of German Yearly Meeting.

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IYM was represented by Andrea Ward (Monkstown) and was joined by Will Haire who was representing FWCC-EMES and Bronwen Haire (South Belfast). Bronwen was retracing the steps of three Irish Friends, John and Norah Douglas from Friends School Lisburn, and Bronwen's grandfather Aubrey Harding who drove from Ireland to German Yearly Meeting in August 1939, to convey support of Friends to our German Friends as the situation deteriorated.



CMSI had the opportunity to pitch medical electives to Queen's University students at a recent meeting of the Christian Medical Fellowship. Pray for 4 fourth year students who are hoping to undertake mission placements through us next summer at Kiwoko Hospital, Uganda.



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Synodal Pathway priorities identified at national assembly

The celebration of Mass in the morning, an all-day prayer room for delegates, Taizé music performed by Kilkenny's Loreto Secondary School and Christian Brothers School, along with prayers led by Gemma Mulligan, Patricia Carroll, and Caoimhe O'Neill, set the tone for Saturday's gathering of over 230 Synodal Pathway delegates, from across the island, who attended the Pre-Synodal Assembly in Kilkenny's Convention Centre.

Other local schools: Saint Kieran's College and Presentation Secondary School, also provided music throughout the day-long gathering.

In preparation for their meeting, delegates had reflected on Baptised and Sent - the preparatory document for the Pre-Synodal Assembly.

Welcoming the attendees to Kilkenny, Bishop Niall Coll, Bishop of Ossory, said that discussions offered an opportunity "for a national conversation about the how the Spirit is leading the Irish Church today."

The Pre-Synodal Assembly evolved from local Spring Gatherings, held from February to May, when communities across the country came together to consider how the Holy Spirit is speaking through emerging proposals and themes, and to identify priorities for action. A picture emerged of both



hopes and tensions shaping the Church, and of the directions that the Spirit is calling the faithful. The assembly's purpose was to shape concrete pathways for renewal, rooted in their baptismal calling, ahead of next year's National Synodal Assembly.

Seven priorities were presented by the National Synodal Team for discussion amongst delegates:

- Belonging: fostering a Church of welcome, inclusion, and safety where each person finds a home in community and in Christ.
- Co-responsibility and Lay Ministry: empowering all the baptised, women and men, to share responsibility for leadership and mission through new models of ministry and decision-making.

- Family: supporting the domestic Church as the primary place of faith transmission and belonging, and strengthening its connection with parishes and schools.
- Formation and Catechesis: deepening faith through lifelong formation that is Christ-centred, experiential, and equips the baptised for discipleship in today's world, rooted not only in learning but also in liturgy and sacramental life, so that prayer and worship become living sources of faith, understanding, and mission.
- Healing: acknowledging wounds, especially those caused by abuse; committing to accountability, justice, and reconciliation; and ensuring safe spaces for survivors and all who carry pain.
- Women: recognising and including women's gifts, leadership, and co-responsibility at every level of Church life, as a matter of justice and credibility.
- Youth: engaging young people with authenticity, offering them meaningful roles in leadership and mission, and listening to their hopes and challenges.

During the assembly, various delegates offered their opinion on the Irish Synodal Pathway:

Prior to delivering the final address, Archbishop Eamon Martin, said: "synodality is not a new idea - it has been part of our Church, and what we are trying to do is to rediscover it as a way of being Church today, which Pope Francis kept telling us."

Liz White said: "You can really feel the Holy Spirit at work here. There is a lot of prayer and adoration happening here at the Assembly, and it is so encouraging that this is a key part of this process."

Rev Dr Gary Carville said: "Today has shown the process of listening and discerning being more outward looking and focussed on mission. Of course, there is much to be discerned and done yet and other questions will emerge, but the primacy of baptism in building disciples for mission and enabling encounter with Jesus Christ alive through the sacraments is clear. Alongside this is the urgency of co-responsibility, or shared responsibility, throughout our Church. That is how a shared mission can be truly fruitful. All of this is a continuing reception of Vatican II and its relevance in a changing Ireland today. This belongs to all of us. I look forward to the next steps on this journey in Ireland and universally."

Natalie Doherty said: "These kinds of events really allow young people to have their voice heard and that's what gives a whole new energy and perspective to the Church in Ireland today."

Bishop Coll said: "A synodal Church encourages a more open culture of debate, discussion and discernment within the Church. Our presence here today means that there are voices in Ireland attuned to the need to read the 'signs of the times' and anxious to follow the direction for renewal and reform that Pope Francis charted."

Education

Spooky school haybales at Strabane Academy

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Six fabulously creative Year 10 students, Daisy, Aoife, Daisy,



Roberta, Rebekah and Bethany, have brought our spooky school haybale to life!



What a talented bunch of artists! Their masterpiece will take pride of place on the Tinney's roundabout over Halloween, keep an eye out for it if you dare!



Good News for Lisneal College

Last week, we were delighted to welcome Rona, William, and Pamela from Good News for Everyone to speak with our Year 8 pupils.

Each pupil received a gift of the

New Testament with the Psalms, and Proverbs. Our visitors shared the importance of having a faith in Jesus through their personal experiences and helped our pupils understand how the Bible can guide and support them through every step of life.

We are truly grateful for the kindness and support shown by GOOD NEWS for Everyone.

Cathedral Calls

**Help
warm
hearts
this
winter**

**As the
colder
months
approach,
Saint Mary's
Cathedral
Limerick is
appealing
for
donations of
tins of soup
to help
those in
need.**

Your
generosity

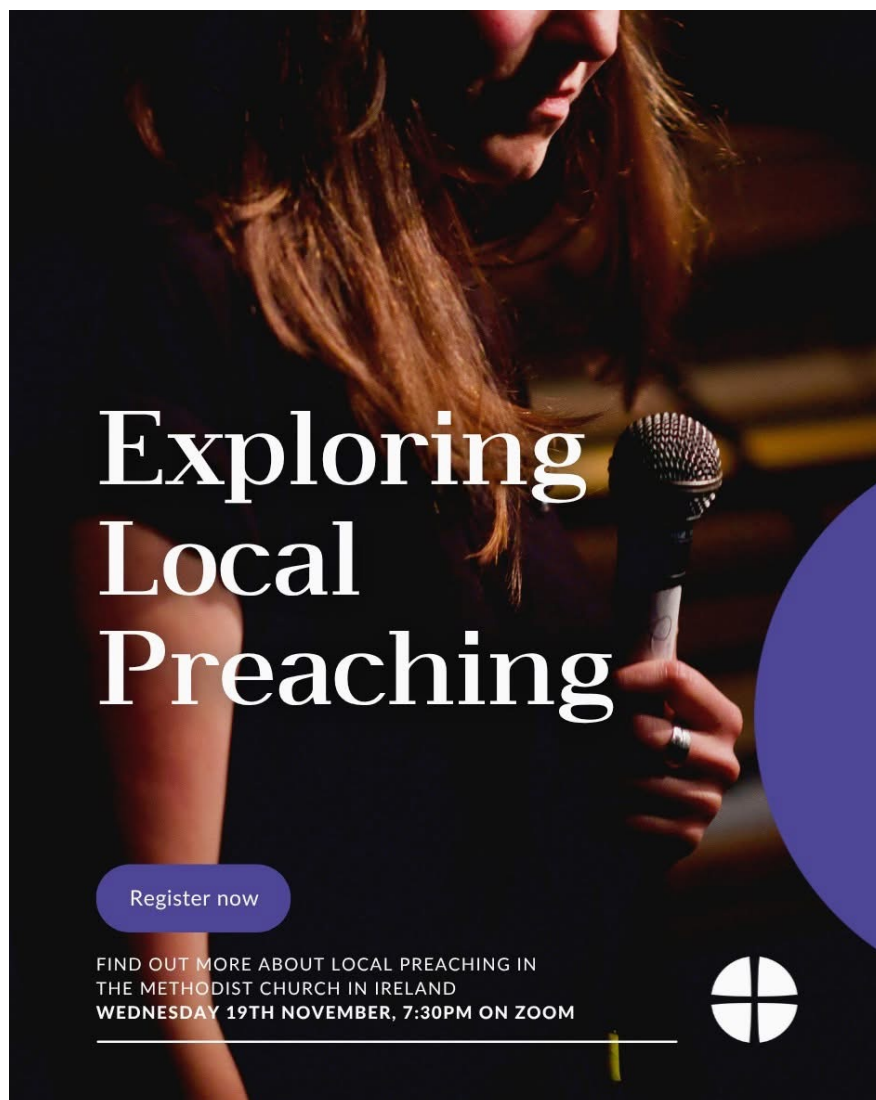
can bring a little warmth and comfort to someone facing the chill of winter.

We are also happy to accept other non-perishable food items. Donation bags can be collected at the reception desk. Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference. Let's



come together as a community to share warmth and kindness this season.

Clergy and ministry



Local Preaching in the Methodist Church

Are you interested in finding out more about Local Preaching in the Methodist Church in Ireland?

This online session is for those who are

discerning a calling to this important ministry. The session is also for ordained ministers, lay workers and accredited local preachers who will support those in training in their local context.

The evening will include an exploration of:
– Being called to be a Local Preacher

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- The why and how of Local Preacher Training in MCI
- Training in the local context

Wednesday 19th November 2025 at 7:30pm on Zoom

→ Register your attendance at: <http://bit.ly/477Q27r>

Events



Excelsus Choir at St Molua's

St Molua's are very pleased to be welcoming the Excelsus Choir, directed by Tony Morrison, to lead a special service of Choral Evensong at 3.30pm in St Molua's church on Sunday 26 October.

Formerly The Balligan Consort, the Excelsus Chamber Choir exist to sing Choral Evensong in various churches around the country. They started earlier this year and have

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sung in St George's Belfast and St Columb's Cathedral in Derry/Londonderry. In addition to St Molua's this week, there are upcoming services in St John's Malone and a Christmas concert in Bangor Abbey .

All are warmly invited.

Resources

On display at Cashel, Ferns & Ossory Synod





Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at houstonmckelvey@mac.com

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**Link in Monday through Saturday from
early morning**

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