

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Dedication of new Jesuit Centre in Belfast

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The rain did not dampen the spirit at the launch of the Belfast Jesuit Centre earlier this week.

A varied programme over the day launched the establishment of the Jesuit Centre in Belfast city centre which neighbours the new University of Ulster campus.



The day began with an historical talk and walk of the building and local area. The Jesuit Provincial Fr Leonard Moloney SJ,



officially launched and blessed the building.

Following lunch Dr Austen Ivereigh gave the Inaugural lecture. Which was followed by an interview and Q&A facilitated by Pat Coyle Jesuit Director.

Dr Austen Ivereigh launched the new book by Fr Brendan McManus SJ and Jim Deeds.

Austen drew attention to the chapter on Ignatius discerning together with his companions the setting up of the Jesuits and the accompanying story of Jim and Brendan being involved in setting up the new Jesuit Center.

This book illustrates how the 'slow work of God' (Teilhard de Chardin), an unfolding of God's plan for our lives over time,



is a helpful and humanising way to look at faith. Using seven distinct moments from the life of St Ignatius, the authors illustrate how God works through the unexpected twists and turns of life and how this process plays out over time.

The Ignatian spirituality points from each are drawn out and explained in imagined conversations with God, reflections, scripture pieces and real-life applications. The authors have established a very popular style of conveying the essentials of Ignatian spirituality and readers will find the book both accessible and enjoyable.

Reviews

‘It is a joy to read this beautifully-written book. This little gem presents us with a vision of a compassionate God,

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powerfully guiding us through those messy bits and pieces of life'. - Intercom

'...the two authors have come up with another winner, which will help and encourage others on their pilgrimage through life.' - Catholic South West

'accessible and enjoyable... the authors have established a very popular style of conveying the essentials of Ignatian spirituality.'

Independent Catholic News

The day concluded with the celebration of Eucharist followed by some refreshments and entertainment. A day full of joy. Good conversation, prayer and fun launching this new centre and resource in the Diocese of Down and Connor.

Diocesan Service for Primary and Junior Schools packs Christ Church Cathedral Dublin to capacity

Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, was packed to capacity last Thursday morning as young people from schools across the dioceses gathered for the first Diocesan Service for Primary and Junior Schools since 2019.

The theme of the service was 'All things bright and beautiful' and the children raised the roof with their singing while giving thanks for God's creation. The service was led by the Revd Sean Hanily in the presence of Archbishop Michael Jackson, Dean Dermot Dunne and Archdeacon Neal O'Raw.



Children from primary and junior schools across the dioceses filled Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin

The address was given by Dublin and Glendalough's Youth Ministry Development Officer, Emma Fawcett.

Representatives of the Department of Education, the General Synod and diocesan boards of education and the INTO were also in attendance.

A drama, set in the Garden of Eden, was presented by Play it by Ear Drama Company who noted that the humans had one rule to follow but they broke it by eating from the tree of knowledge. However, the said that God would find a way to make it right.

Picking up on the theme, Emma observed that in the beginning God's creation was perfect but the sin put a

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barrier between God and his people. She said God's relationship with humanity was restored through Jesus. God created some amazing things, Emma said adding th at the Psalm that was read during the service [Psalm 104: 31–34]



Children greet the Archbishop and the Revd Sean Hanily after the Diocesan Schools Service

told us how to respond to creation saying that we should praise God and rejoice in the Lord. “The next time you see a magical moment in creation I want you to give thanks to God because he restored our relationship with God and he created so many fabulous things,” she concluded.

Prayers were led by children from a number of schools during the service. They prayed for the people of Ukraine and of Russia for all involved in education. The collection was taken up for the Alice Leahy Trust.



Archdeacon of Killaloe et al appointed

Bishop Michael Burrows of Tuam, Killaloe and Limerick posted on social media - It was announced on Sunday morning that John Godfrey is to be the new archdeacon of Killaloe et al. John is well known among us for his gifts of wisdom, spirituality, pastoral commitment and administration. The esteem in which he is held across the whole diocese was demonstrated by his recent election as our representative canon in St Patrick's Cathedral

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Next month when Stephen McWhirter takes leave of us John will also, as the constitution permits, become archdeacon of Tuam et al. His manifold gifts will equip him well for this enlarged role, and his geographical location and previous experience in Galway/Tuam will assist him too.

I look forward to working closely with John and with Simon in the years ahead, and I know you will all want to affirm and support John at this time. We are deeply grateful to him for agreeing to undertake this somewhat pioneering role in our midst and look forward to all that he will bring to his task.

Special visitor to Lisburn RAF Cadets

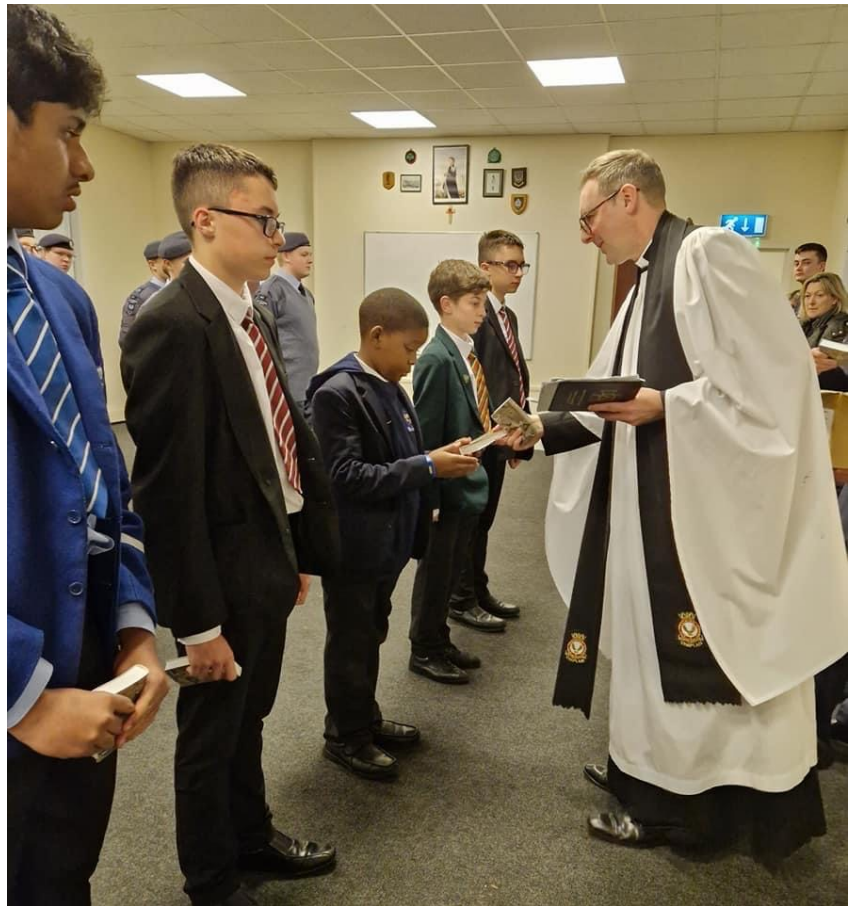


817 Lisburn Squadron of the RAF Cadets recently had a very special evening. when their Squadron President His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of County Antrim Lord Lieutenant of Antrim in attendance to assist in the enrollment of new cadets alongside their Chaplain Rev Jason Kernohan of All Saints' Eglantine.

In a message to the Lord Lieutenant the Squadron said “We really enjoyed having you down at the Squadron Sir

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and we will be posting more about this evening over the coming days to the Northern Ireland Wing Air Training Corps Scotland & Northern Ireland Region Air Training Corps, RAFAC Royal Air Force Air Cadets RFCAN I OC N Ireland Wing ATC Commandant Air Cadets”.



Soup & Sandwich Lunch

Sacred Heart Parish Centre, Ballyclare

Saturday 29 October
12-2pm

All proceeds in aid of St Vincent de Paul

In the media

Eilis O'Hanlon on southern Irish unease with the sectarian aggression of northern nationalists

"Like all marriages, a united Ireland would need work", Eilis O' Hanlon writes in the Sunday Independent October 23, 2022.

It was suggested last week that Derry Girls should be shown in British schools to help the English better understand Northern Ireland. Why bother? If the over-excited pundits are right, the North won't be the UK's problem for much longer anyway. It will be Dublin's.

Unfortunately, many of the people into whose hands Northern Ireland may soon fall seem to think they have nothing to learn, having spent their lives hearing about it on the news.

The truth is that people in the Republic don't know very much about their northern neighbours at all.

After years of daydreaming about Irish unity, singing rebel songs in bars at last orders and paying lip service to the idea of a 32-county nation, an assumption grew that when it did come about, all would just fall into place.

Slowly, though, people are learning that northerners may be a bit more alien than they realised. And not just unionists — the nationalist ones too.

The increase in support for Sinn Féin has led to a certain “northernisation” of political discourse, and there are plenty of folk who don’t like it.

Partly that’s to do with Sinn Féin’s whitewashing of the IRA campaign, expressed in the normalisation of “Ooh, ah, up the ’Ra” chants.

While many young people have no memory of the Troubles, older people do remember the atrocities and sectarianism that were an inherent part of the republican cause. They don’t want that imported into their country.

But it goes deeper than that. I was talking to someone this week who lives in Dublin and admitted he didn’t really warm to northern nationalists. He’d only crossed the Border three times in his life. He knew people who had never made the journey at all.

Although he didn’t have that much direct experience of northerners in their own backyard, he knew they were different from him. He had seen enough of them up close in Dublin over the years, including at Croke Park. He had also seen their growing influence on Irish political culture.

And he didn’t like it. He was beginning to wonder whether, in a united Ireland, he could actually get along with these people at all.

Curiously, he even suspected the Republic might be better able to accommodate northern unionists than their nationalist counterparts.

As it happens, I suspect he might be wrong about that. There's a strain of unionism represented by current UUP leader Doug Beattie that is tolerant, good-humoured and pluralistic, but it's not the dominant political brand right now. That strain is far spikier.

But he's right in one sense. The average unionist with a small "u" in the North is less "political", if that's the right way to put it, than the average nationalist. They don't rub anyone's nose in their British identity. They are certainly not as fixated on the past.

That's an odd thing about younger nationalists in Northern Ireland. Even those not born until the 1990s seem unduly obsessed with past resentments, seething about things they never experienced, as if they feel they missed out on something by being born too late and have chosen to latch on to that as their primary identity.

They've appropriated the Troubles like a new fashion. With no direct experience of discrimination, they still bristle as if it's all around them.

As a result, just as there are unity-minded people in Dublin who would rather share the country with unionists than those with whom, on paper, they have more in common, so there are moderate unionists who feel unnerved by the growing stridency of northern nationalists in a way they are not with people down south.

They cross the Border regularly on business, or for visits, and are perfectly comfortable with what they find there. They don't feel their Britishness is being constantly rebuked.

Only among northern nationalists is their identity seen as an aberration that must be educated out of them.

These culturally pro-union but less rigidly political people even suggest tentatively they would rather live under a Fianna Fáil- or Fine Gael-dominated government in Dublin rather than a Sinn Féin one in Stormont. One way of putting it is: Better Kildare Street than the Falls Road.

Again, I think they are slightly fooling themselves. There is a huge cultural and political divide between north and south that the most open-minded northern Protestant might find equally difficult to live with.

But what both have identified is a sectarian aggression in northern nationalists that they find off-putting.

Unfortunately, the difference between the two addresses may be narrowing as Sinn Féin imports its brand of populist toxicity into the South.

That has ruffled feathers, not only because people from more centrist backgrounds don't like being on the back foot, but because Sinn Féin's advance seems to be based on trashing the very character of the State.

It's part of the populist playbook to aver that elites neither represent nor understand ordinary people — and there's plenty of truth in it. That's why populist movements of the

right (as in Italy and the US) and the left (as in Ireland) have made headway. They address genuine concerns, alienation.

But Sinn Féin has done so by pushing the idea that the Irish Republic itself is a botched job. Northern nationalists want to foster the notion of parallel “failed states” on either side of the Border. It’s an idea that finds a ready audience among young people who feel, justifiably, that the current economic situation is against them.

It’s still bound to rankle with those who, while recognising Ireland is far from perfect, feel a genuine and equally justifiable pride in the country’s achievements from hard beginnings and see it as something to be celebrated, not derided.

Just as unionists have never, in the words of early 20th-century republican socialist Fr Michael O’Flanagan, “transferred their love and allegiance to Ireland”, so nationalists in the North never had much love or allegiance for the Irish Republic.

Their loyalty was to a fantasy Irish state that didn’t exist yet.

As a Northerner, I understand the sense of irritation there can be among others from the North when faced by the smugness and sentimentality the Republic’s softer patriotism can engender.

That’s especially so when it comes to the undoubted sense of superiority when looking north, as if the North’s troubles were one of moral turpitude rather than history. Instead of thinking “there but for the grace of God go I”, many in the Republic seem to say: “If only you were more like us.”

You can see it in the response to the political turmoil in the UK too. Thank goodness we're not like that, people think. Again, all perfectly understandable, but it can lead to complacency. It's this complacency that Sinn Féin has been able to exploit so effectively.

My friend in Dublin thinks the solution is for northern nationalists to soften their natures and become more like their southern neighbours.

But that creates problems of its own. The creative ambiguity that means so much of Irish life down south operates on a nod and a wink basis simply doesn't suit the blunter, more cynical northern character.

Neither of these forms of Irishness is more authentic. But they are different, and the particular Irishness of northern nationalists will prove as great a challenge to accommodate in any future united Ireland as unionists' Britishness. Perhaps greater.

A united Ireland won't simply be a bigger version of the 26 counties, after all. It won't be the same house with an extension. It will be a wholly new house, and it's not entirely clear that people in the Republic have taken on board that the people who'll be living in it have very different plans on how to furnish and decorate that house.

If we're not compatible as a couple, maybe it's best to have that conversation now before moving in together, because there's nothing more unhappy than a marriage both parties instantly regret but can't escape."

Courtesy the Sunday Independent

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

World Development Materials

The World Development Appeal is an annual initiative of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland that focuses on helping people trapped in poverty.

It endeavours to change lives and communities for the better by channeling resources in support of sustainable development projects in every continent. This work is taken forward through PCI's development partners, Christian Aid and Tearfund.

PCI congregations are encouraged to highlight the World Development Appeal during the Advent and Christmas period.

Rekindling Hope: From flight to flourishing

The 2022 Appeal focuses on those who have been forced to flee their homes and on the communities they have ended up in. Almost 90 million people worldwide have fled their homes and journeyed elsewhere in search of safety or a better life. Many of the places they have arrived in are ill-equipped to host them. Yet, in those places, there are

people and organisations who are dedicated to supporting these people on their journeys.

Lebanon

Lebanon is host to the highest number of refugees per capita in the world: 1.5 million refugees from neighbouring Syria are thought to live in Lebanon, having fled the civil war, which has been raging since 2011. Lebanon is facing its own political, economic and social difficulties, worsened by the effects of Covid-19 and the 2020 explosion in Beirut port. Inflation is soaring, food security is a growing issue and people are being forced into poverty.

The featured project this year is based in a suburb of Beirut that is home to Syrian and Palestinian refugees, living alongside undocumented Lebanese people. It is a bleak area, where life is difficult. Tearfund's partner, the Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development (LSESD) works with The Tahaddi Centre, situated in the midst of this suburb, shining a light into dark situations. The Centre supports whole families, providing education for children, healthcare, psychosocial support and income generating opportunities.

This year's Appeal will support the Tahaddi Centre as it seeks to be a light, changing stories of flight into stories of flourishing.

South Sudan

The Appeal will also support projects in South Sudan, through Christian Aid's partner, the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC).

Following the outbreak of violence in 2013, one in every three people in South Sudan is an Internally Displaced Person. The huge movement of people around the country, with already existing tribal tensions has led to conflict.

The Church's ability to speak into these situations of conflict is unique and the SSCC is working at community level to bring reconciliation across South Sudan. SSCC provides displaced people with psychosocial support, space and accompaniment to achieve peaceful resolutions at local level.

The Appeal will also support similar projects in other areas of the world.

Resources

On the PCI website there is a downloads box of various resources and background materials that are available for the 2022 World Development Appeal, including a video, PowerPoint slides and worship materials.

Poem for today

When You Are Old by William Butler Yeats

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

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How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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