

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Lambeth Award for Aboriginal Pastor leader of Scarred Tree Ministries in Sydney

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The Archbishop of Canterbury presented Aboriginal pastor Uncle Ray Minniecon with the Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Interfaith Cooperation during a visit to Sydney. See report page

News reports

Winter coat giveaway in Ballybeen

With a drop in temperatures and winter around the corner, along with the challenges of the current cost of living crisis, St Mary's Ballybeen is running the Winter Coat Project this week in conjunction with ROC (Redeeming Our Communities).

Good quality, pre-loved coats as well as (new) hats, scarves and gloves for children and adults have been donated over the last three days and will be given away on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday. Whilst St Mary's is the collection and pick-up location, other churches in the area are supporting the project through the ROC Ballybeen initiative.

Rector of St Mary's, Revd Jim Cheshire said, "I was startled recently to hear that 65% of Christians Against Poverty NI clients could not afford weather-appropriate clothing for



themselves or a family member. Given the extent of the cost of living crisis and the jump in fuel and utility prices, we knew we wanted to do something to help our community. We could not afford to provide gas and oil for everyone who needs it, but giving away pre-loved winter clothing to help people stay warm seemed like something that we could do.

“Through our working relationships with ROC and local churches and the generosity of the community, I’ve been blown away by the quality and quantity of clothing that’s come in for us to give away over the next few days. It’s all free, no questions asked. Please pray with us that many will be blessed by this initiative.”

Pick-up times - Thursday 27 October: 12–4pm and at Sunday’s service on 30 October which starts at 11.30am

School’s giant greeting card celebrates 800 years of Youghal church

Giant greeting card made by the pupils of South Abbey National School to celebrate 800 years of the Collegiate Church of Saint Mary the Virgin at the door of the Church.



South Abbey National School, with its 28 nationalities enrolled as students. is now the largest Church of Ireland National School in the Church of Ireland in Cork, Cloyne and Ross

Grants for studying in the US

The Sutton trust are currently offering students currently in year 13 support to apply to US universities.

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The Sutton trust provide an all expenses paid trip for 1 week in the US to visit prospective Universities.

They will also offer support and advice in filling out Financial Aid application.

Applications open on 5th November 2022. More info and how to apply

<https://us.suttontrust.com/>

Abortion Northern Ireland: Pro-choice and pro-life campaigners react to further intervention from Westminster by Secretary of State Chris Heaton-Harris

The first of two reports by Philip Bradfield in the News Letter

Pro-choice and pro-life campaigners have reacted with equal passion to news that Westminster is to force NI health authorities to roll out full abortion services across Northern Ireland, Philip Bradfield writes in the Newsletter.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland responded that they "deeply regret that Mr Heaton-Harris, like his predecessor, has stated his intention to continue to override our fragile devolved settlement in relation to such sensitive issues".

The church added: "In doing so he proposes to use powers not only to direct Northern Ireland Executive Ministers and Departments on this issue, but also potentially interfere with matters which stretch beyond the provision of abortion services, in education and other areas, which is clearly worrying. Such a scenario would be unthinkable in the Scottish or Welsh devolved contexts." He added that it was "curious" that there were no interventions on other pressing NHS matters such as waiting lists, staff levels and under-resourced services.

The Church of Ireland added: "We oppose the extreme abortion legislation imposed on Northern Ireland by the United Kingdom Parliament in what was previously considered a devolved issue and ask that legislation is developed that safeguards the wellbeing of both the mother and unborn child."

Similarly a Catholic Church spokesman also referred to a previous statement made when the laws were put in place to facilitate the move. "What Westminster seeks to impose, against the clear will of a majority of people here, is a law which blatantly undermines the right to life of unborn children and promotes an abhorrent and indefensible prejudice against persons with disabilities, even before they are born," it said.

The DUP's Upper Bann MP Carla Lockhart also hit out. "This is a backward step for Northern Ireland which not only undermines the devolution settlement but more importantly makes Northern Ireland a more dangerous place for the unborn," she said.

Amnesty International published a poll last week which found that only 46% of women in NI are aware that abortion is now liberalised but that only 10% know how to access it. NI Deputy Director Grainne Teggart said the announcement marks “a critical step towards ending the denial of abortion healthcare”. She added: “Westminster has yet again had to intervene to ensure people aren’t denied their right to abortion, exposing the clear failure of Health Minister Robin Swann to protect and support women and healthcare professionals.”

People Before Profit Councillor Fiona Ferguson also named-checked MrHealth Minister Robin Swann, saying he should be "red-faced that the UK Government has once again been forced to intervene to ensure women have access to abortion".

The Department of Health responded that it will continue to “work closely with the Northern Ireland Office and NI Health and Social Care Trusts on the implementation of these services, in line with legislative requirements”. It added: “The Department also notes the Secretary of State’s commitment that the UK Government will ensure that appropriate funding is available for these services, it added.

Alliance for Choice Co-Convenor Emma Campbell was pleased that the government was pressing ahead with UN recommendations for abortion in NI – and providing related funding. "We are saddened for hundreds who have still had to travel despite the change in law," she added. Abortion Northern Ireland: Methodists urge Secretary of State Chris Heaton-Harris not to add to democratic vacuum at Stormont

The Methodist Church has urged the Secretary of State not to add unnecessarily to the current democratic vacuum at Stormont by intervening to roll out abortion facilities across NI.

Philip Bradfield writes in the News Letter - On Monday the Secretary of State Chris Heaton-Harris MP announced that the UK Government would now direct health chiefs in NI to provide full abortion facilities across the Province.

Liberalised laws were imposed on NI by Westminster in 2019 however full abortion facilities have still not been provided. The Stormont Executive currently lies suspended over the NI Protocol.

The Northern Executive of the Methodist Church in Ireland's Council on Social Responsibility has now responded to the Government, saying that the church "has long recognised that there are very limited and rare circumstances in which the termination of a pregnancy might be morally permissible and that women in such a situation should be treated with great care and compassion".

It added: "Like all our sister churches we greatly lamented the introduction from Westminster, over the heads of our devolved democracy, possibly the most liberal abortion legislation in Europe.

The Presbyterian, Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic churches issued similar statements on Monday, while pro-choice campaign groups such as Amnesty International welcomed the announcement.

Courtesy Philip Bradfield and the News Letter.

Organ Scholarship scheme invites applicants

The Board of Management of the Dioceses of Down, Dromore and Connor Organ Scholarship scheme invites applications for Scholarships which are awarded annually.

This scheme is in its 32nd year and helps provide and equip organists for public worship. It was established in 1990 when an anonymous benefactor, recognising the importance of the ministry of music in parish life and worship provided a very generous endowment to train organists in these Dioceses. A trust was set up and administered by Church of Ireland Trustees Board of Management.

The aims of any Organ Scholarship scheme are to provide firstly, training in organ playing, choir accompaniment, choral direction and vocal techniques and secondly, the experience of a wide variety of liturgical music.

The benefits of music study are well known, fostering concentration, discipline and confidence. Music making promotes good mental health, feelings of self-esteem and the knowledge that we are contributing something of beauty and value to society.

The UK's church music tradition is arguably the finest in the world with choirs and organists providing music of an exceptionally high standard to enhance the liturgy, but there

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is always the need to train more young organists who can ensure its future.

Every organ in every church or cathedral is a different instrument and opens up a new world, and whilst an organ scholar's life is a busy one, if the idea of playing one of these on a regular basis sounds exciting and your keyboard skills are pretty good, why not consider training towards an Organ Scholarship?

Catholic Church renews a provisional agreement with China

The Roman Catholic Church has renewed a scrutinized agreement with the People's Republic of China over the appointment of bishops, even as the Communist government continues to restrict religious freedom.

The Holy See Press Office announced Saturday that the Catholic Church renewed a provisional agreement with China allowing the government to submit candidates for bishop offices, with Pope Francis getting the final say.

The provisional agreement was initially approved in 2018 and was previously renewed in 2020, with the latest renewal scheduled to expire in 2024.

"The Vatican ... is committed to continuing a respectful and constructive dialogue with the Chinese Party for a productive implementation of the Accord and further development of bilateral relations, with a view to fostering

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the mission of the Catholic Church and the good of the Chinese people," stated the Holy See Press Office.

In an interview with Vatican News published Saturday, Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin said that the two-year renewal "mainly concerns aspects that are essential to the daily life of the Church in China."

"Pope Francis — with determination and patient foresight — has decided to continue along this path not under the illusion of finding perfection in human rules, but in the concrete hope of being able to assure Chinese Catholic communities, even in such a complex context, of the guidance of pastors who are worthy and suitable for the task entrusted to them," said Parolin.

"The ultimate goal of this journey is for the 'little flock' of Chinese Catholics to advance in the possibility of living serenely and freely their Christian life, which is made up of the proclamation of the Gospel, solid formation, joyful celebration of the Eucharist, as well as an industrious witness of charity, in order to be close to those who struggle the most to cope with life, as was the case during the difficult time of the pandemic."

The renewal comes as Chinese leader Xi Jinping claimed a third term as head of the Chinese Communist Party, which has increased government control of religious bodies in recent years.

Since the agreement was enacted in 2018, six Catholic bishops have been ordained, even though 40 dioceses in

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China still do not have a bishop, according to The Wall Street Journal.

Religious freedom advocates and some clergy have criticized the agreement.

"Despite the Holy See's attempt to normalize its operation in the authoritarian country, religious freedom has not improved for the underground Chinese Catholics in the last few years," the United States-based NGO International Christian Concern warned in a statement.

"Many disappeared clergy have not returned, while those who are loyal to the Vatican constantly face threats and sometimes are subject to a 're-education' for their submission to join the official church."

Former U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo stated in September 2020 that religious freedom conditions for Catholics in China had only worsened in the two years since the agreement was first adopted.

"The Vatican endangers its moral authority, should it renew the deal," Pompeo tweeted at the time.

Among critics of the agreement between the Vatican and the Chinese government is Cardinal Joseph Zen, who formerly served as bishop of Hong Kong, a Chinese protectorate.

The 90-year-old Zen was arrested in May by Chinese authorities for his involvement in a humanitarian organization tied to the 2019 pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong.

"The Vatican may have acted out of good faith but they have made an unwise decision," said Zen at a prayer meeting in May, as quoted by the WSJ.

The Christian persecution watchdog group, Open Doors USA, ranks China as the 17th worst persecutor of Christians in the world.

In late August, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights released a report documenting human rights abuses in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, especially aimed at predominantly Muslim communities like the Uyghurs

Archbishop presents Pastor Ray Minniecon with Lambeth Award

The Archbishop of Canterbury presented Pastor Ray Minniecon with the Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Interfaith Cooperation today during a visit to Scarred Tree Ministries in Sydney.

The Archbishop of Canterbury presented Aboriginal pastor Uncle Ray Minniecon with the Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Interfaith Cooperation during a visit to Sydney.

Archbishop Justin presented Pastor Ray with the award at St John's Glebe in Sydney, where he is Honorary Indigenous Minister and runs Scarred Tree Ministries.

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Uncle Ray is an Aboriginal pastor with roots in the Kabikabi and Gurang-Gurang tribes of Queensland. He lives in Sydney and has dedicated his life to supporting members of the Stolen Generations of Aboriginals (the tens of thousands of Aboriginal children who were forcibly removed from their families by government agencies and church missions from the late 1800s).

The Archbishop is currently visiting Australia to spend time with dioceses in the Church of Australia, with a particular focus on meeting with First Nations peoples and communities affected by climate change.

Presenting Pastor Ray with the award, Archbishop Justin read the following citation:

Pastor Raymond Minniecon – the Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Interfaith Cooperation

For his outstanding contribution to the ministry of reconciliation through costly work with Australia's Stolen Generation and with the Anglican Church.

"Pastor Raymond (Uncle Ray) has dedicated his life to working with the Stolen Generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia, in ways that are often out of the limelight and speak of deep personal integrity and an inspirational faith. A descendant of the Kabi Kabi nation, the Gureng Gureng nation of South-East Queensland, and the South Sea Islander people, Pastor Ray's near relations were enslaved as cane cutters. He grew up on a reserve and only narrowly avoided being taken from his parents by the colonial authorities. Later he was offered roles in the

Australian Government, but chose to stay working in the community.

"Through his ministry, he has dealt with complex, intergenerational trauma and high rates of incarceration, suicide and addiction in his community resulting from colonial policies. Yet he chooses to pursue relationship with colonising cultures, saying: 'It's God himself, in the middle of all of this mess, these powers that be – he's putting out his hand, both to the wounded as well as to those who have made the wounds, – and saying, "Come on, let's get back together again. Let's heal these relationships again. Let's make us be one as God created us to be.'" That really is the heart of the gospel.'

"Pastor Ray has started, directed and mentored numerous organisations working with and representing First Nations people, to strengthen education, employment opportunities, traditional arts, poverty reduction, health, church ministry and more. He and his wife Sharon now lead Scarred Tree Ministries within St John's Anglican Church in Glebe and Gawura Aboriginal Christian School within St Andrew's Cathedral School as distinct offerings for First Nations people within established Australian institutions - a way of demonstrating the possibility of reconciliation."

Cork-born Archbishop dies following globetrotting career

Cork-born Archbishop Patrick Coveney has died at the age of 88, it has been announced.



The archbishop, who was living in Crosshaven, Co Cork, died unexpectedly at his home on Saturday.

Born in 1934 in the parish of Tracton Abbey, south of Cork City, Archbishop Patrick Coveney led a globetrotting life spanning all continents.

In 1959, he was ordained as a priest in Rome for the Diocese of Cork and Ross, before being sent to Birmingham for a year. He joined the staff of St Finbarr's seminary in Farranferris, Co Cork from 1960 to 1966.

Soon after, he began what would be a long career of spreading Catholicism around the world.

Global mission

The archbishop worked in the Vatican in the late 1960s, before moving to Argentina in 1972 to serve as secretary to

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the apostolic nuncio (ecclesiastical diplomat). He returned to Rome between 1976 and 1982 to join the secretariat of state at the Vatican.

The archbishop then spent two years in New Delhi, India and one year in Khartoum, Sudan.

In September 1985 he became a titular archbishop in the Cathedral of St Mary and St Anne in the Cork and Ross diocese, and was appointed as apostolic pro-nuncio to Zimbabwe, and apostolic delegate to Mozambique until 1990.

He then spent time in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and Djibouti until 1996 when he left for New Zealand. There he lived in Wellington as apostolic nuncio until 2005.

During this period he also worked in Samoa, Tonga, Marshall Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia, Vanuatu, Nauru, Cook Islands, and Palau.

He was appointed in 2005 as apostolic nuncio to Greece, and lived in Athens until his retirement in 2009.

The archbishop returned to Crosshaven parish and assisted the church in his spare time at the invitation of the Bishop of Cork and Ross.

He is survived by his sister Nora (Murphy), sister-in-law Molly Coveney, nephews, nieces, grandnephews and grandnieces.

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His funeral will take place tomorrow in St Brigid's Church in Crosshaven at 11am, where a burial will follow in Ballyfeard cemetery.

*Courtesy of Connor Capplis and the Irish Examiner
25/10/2022*

Heritage

Memorial of Cecil Frances Alexander

An illustration from the Northern Whig, of Thursday, December 19, 1895, appeared in the Londonderry Sentinel in December 1901. It was of a couple of a half-dozen newly-built cottages, off Carrigans Lane in the city of Londonderry, as a memorial to famous hymn-writer, Cecil Frances Alexander.

The idea of commemorating Mrs Alexander by means of cottages was due to the Duchess of Abercorn, who was impressed by the view that as the gifted poetess devoted all the profits derived from her publications to the alleviation of sickness and distress the memorial should harmonise with Mrs Alexander's life, her concerns and values

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Resources for C of I Day of Prayer for Young People and Youth Ministry 2022

This year, the Church of Ireland's Day of Prayer for Young People and Youth Ministry will be on Sunday 20th November 2022.

The Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD) has made available a new prayer journal to accompany the day. Produced in partnership with Missional Generation, the prayer journal is designed to help young people to pray and provide creative ways to listen to and

The graphic features the Exalt logo (a maze-like symbol) and the word 'EXALT' in a bold, sans-serif font. Below the logo, the text 'This app offers:' is followed by a bulleted list of features. The central focus is three smartphones displaying the app's interface. The largest phone shows the 'FREEDOM' theme with a quote from Romans 12:1. Two smaller phones show the 'GIVING' and 'REJOICING' themes, each featuring a video of a young person. A circular icon with 'AR+' and a hand holding a phone is connected to the 'FREEDOM' phone by a pink arrow, with the text 'AUGMENTED REALITY SPOKEN WORD EXPERIENCE'. A diagonal banner in the top right corner says 'GREAT FOR AGES 11-18'. At the bottom, there are instructions on how to download the app from the App Store or Google Play, and logos for the App Store, Google Play, and Missional Generation.

EXALT

This app offers:

- Augmented Reality Bible reading experience
- 52 videos exploring six rotating themes linked to Freedom, Justice, Forgiveness, Giving, Rejoicing and Mission.
- A number of meditation audios linked to a digital candle giving space for contemplative prayer
- Annual saint's reflections celebrating their life and rhythms of prayer

GREAT FOR AGES 11-18

FREEDOM

He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.

GIVING

Romans 12:1

REJOICING

John 15:11

HOW TO DOWNLOAD THE EXALT APP

Head over to the Apple store or Android's play store and search "Exalt app" to download it to your smart device

Download on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

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respond to God. The prayer journals are available from Diocesan Youth Officers or youth ministry contacts.

In addition, the Exalt prayer app now has some new features. Since the launch of the app at the Summer Madness youth festival in June CIYD has seen over 250 young people downloading the app. Exalt is designed to help 11-18 year olds, their peers and their youth group leaders to explore a weekly devotion together; this is designed to help young people seeking a faith in Jesus as well as those who have an active rhythm of faith.

The aim of the app is to make a creative and interactive way to help young people to pray as they explore six rotating themes over a year. During the year, young people will listen to reflections on Freedom, Justice, Forgiveness, Giving, Rejoicing and Mission. The hope is that as a generation listens to people reflect on Scripture and hear honest and open testimony, we will see this generation growing in their knowledge and understanding of the Bible.

One of the new features allows users to share their experience of the Bible verse into their digital spaces, strengthening the young person's confidence in sharing the Christian faith and Scripture amongst their digital platforms. Exalt is available from either the Apple Store or Google Play and to find out more, readers are welcome to check out its promotional video at <https://vimeo.com/726774098>

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Rev. Richard Coles in Book Week conversation

If you missed Rev. Richard Coles in conversation with Emma Vardy on Wednesday, you can watch it now on the Book Week YouTube channel

Poem for today

In A Field by Seamus Heaney

And there I was in the middle of a field,
The furrows once called "scores" still with their gloss,
The tractor with its hoisted plough just gone
Snarling at an unexpected speed
Out on the road. Last of the jobs,
The windings had been ploughed, furrows turned
Three ply or four round each of the four sides
Of the breathing land, to mark it off
And out. Within that boundary now
Step the fleshy earth and follow
The long healed footprints of one who arrived
From nowhere, unfamiliar and de-mobbed,
In buttoned khaki and buffed army boots,
Bruising the turned-up acres of our back field
To stumble from the windings' magic ring
And take me by a hand to lead me back
Through the same old gate into the yard
Where everyone has suddenly appeared
All standing waiting.

*Last poem of Seamus Heaney, published nine years ago
this week in The Guardian*

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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