

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Westminster Abbey**

## Image of the day

### Westminster Abbey

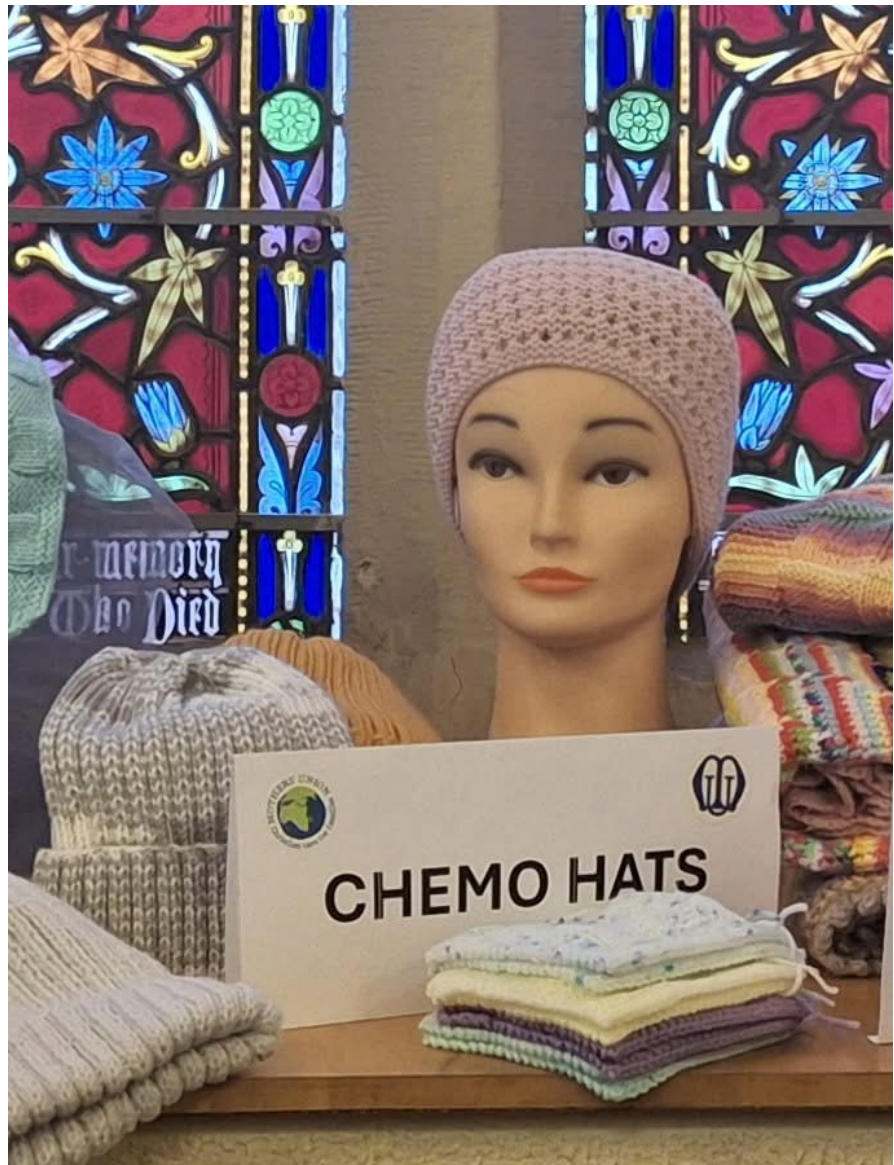
A view of and from a door.

## News

### Chemo hats are Carnmoney MU's caring project

The members of Carnmoney Mothers' Union Branch have been busy using their knitting needles for a very special purpose

— creating chemo hats to bring warmth, comfort, and love to those undergoing cancer treatment.



These beautiful, soft hats are made with care and compassion, offering both practical support and a reminder

that no one faces their journey alone. Whether you're an experienced knitter or just starting out, this is a wonderful way to share your skills and make a real difference in someone's life.

To help get you started, Carnmoney MU have kindly shared a selection of easy-to-follow hat patterns suitable for all skill levels. You can use your favourite soft yarns — especially cotton or bamboo blends — to ensure comfort for sensitive skin.

Finished hats can be donated through your local Mothers' Union branch or delivered directly to hospitals and cancer support centres in your area.

Together, we can knit a little love into every stitch.

If you'd like copies of the patterns, please click the link below:

<https://mariannaslazydaisydays.blogspot.com/2015/08>

## **French community seeking relatives of Moira WW2 soldier**

**An ex-service community at Beauvais in France would like to contact the family of Joseph Walker, a WW2 soldier from Moira who with three other men from Northern Ireland was murdered by the Gestapo 15 km S of Beauvais, near Noailles on 9th Aug 1944.**

Alain Bodel contacted Dean Houston McKelvey after seeing a feature on the four men by him on his web-site Remembrance Ni. [www.remembrancenir.org](http://www.remembrancenir.org)

Also, a reader in Australia forwarded a News Letter article by journalist HC McDowell who stated that Joseph Walkers' parents were Annie and Isaac Walker who lived at 15 Castlevue Park, Risk, Moira. They also had a second son who died in the war. Both are named on the Roll of Honour in Moira Parish Church.

HC McDowell also states that 12 members of Lurgan Rotary Club who lived in Moira had agreed to donate 5 pounds each to enable the parents to attend a ceremony at Berthecourt and that they would travel with RUC Sergeant Dick Barker of Comber who had made provisional arrangements for their flight. Dick Barker's brother was one of the Ulstermen killed.

Alain Bodel has organised acts of remembrance each year for some years now with the encouragement of the RBL Paris. Several members of the other families have been hosted by the group at Beauvais.

Dean Houston McKelvey would be very grateful to receive information about the location and if possible contact details of Joseph Walker's family. His email is [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com). These will be shared with Alain Bodel.

For further details on the men - See opening pages and 1944 entries in Roll of Honour at -

(<https://remembrancenir.org/2025/08/09/august-9-sas-men-from-ni-executed-by-the-gestapo-roll-of-honour/>)

## New Celtic High Cross dedicated at Tullamore



**On Sunday morning Bishop Pat of Meath and Kildare dedicated a new Celtic High Cross at St Carthage Church, Rahan in the Tullamore Union of Parishes.**

The magnificent cross was carved from a 100-year old hawthorn tree that fell during storm Darragh last year. It will be a sign for generations to come of the persistent love of God.



## Inheritance, heritage and memory at Shandon

**Cllr Kieran McCarthy said “It was an honour to give the address at the Service of the Word in Thanksgiving for Harvest, at St Anne’s Church, Shandon.**





“Well done to Rev Meghan Farr and Fiona Collins of the Cork Jazz Festival, Carrigtwohill Gospel Choir and Lamarrotte Jazzband”

Cllr McCarthy spoke on “Reading between the Lines – Inheritance, Heritage and Memory at Shandon”.

He said, “...Shandon links to a powerful nostalgia, an



emotionally charged connection, a collective identity, where even poems, songs or personal tributes create, as Fr Prout noted as a “deep affection and deep recollection”, of not only the bells, but this neighbourhood and its connection to the wider city and its memories, stories and narratives...”

Read the full speech here, [http://corkheritage.ie/?page\\_id=10563](http://corkheritage.ie/?page_id=10563)

## **Crinken's Storehouse foodbank 10th anniversary**

**The 10th anniversary of Crinken's Storehouse foodbank was marked with a special gathering on the morning of Friday October 17.**

Representatives from regular donor churches and the agencies supported by the foodbank gathered alongside volunteers for a low key celebration, which acknowledged that after 10 years the facility was needed more than ever.

The event provided an opportunity for those who steadfastly bring food to the Storehouse to hear how their donations make a difference to the agencies and the people they support. There were many stories exchanged and touching accounts of how donations from parishes, which supplement food from FoodCloud and a local supermarket, make a real difference.

The Storehouse operates a novel model in that agencies come to them to collect boxes of food and other domestic and hygiene products. This preserves the dignity and

privacy of their clients but it also means that they know best what their clients need and can tailor their requests accordingly.

Throughout the morning people came and went in Crinken's parish centre and had soup and sandwiches and sweet treats. They heard from speakers who outlined the history of the Storehouse and its impact.



The poster for the Clare Presbyterian Church Christmas Tree Festival features a central illustration of a church building with two decorated Christmas trees on either side. The church is labeled 'Indoor Bowling Club'. Above the church, the text 'Clare Presbyterian Church' is written in a blue, cursive font. Below the church, the text 'CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL' is written in large, bold, green capital letters. Underneath this, the dates 'Thurs 27th - Sun 30th November 2025' are written in red. The theme 'Theme: 'Love came down at Christmas'' is written in blue. The poster is divided into two main sections by a large yellow star with rays. The left section details the events for Thursday 27th, Friday 28th, and Saturday 29th. The right section details the event for Sunday 30th. At the bottom, there are two illustrations: a nativity scene on the left and three decorated Christmas trees with children on the right. The text 'All proceeds in aid of Clare Presbyterian Church building fund.' is written in blue at the bottom right.

*Clare Presbyterian Church*

Indoor Bowling Club

**CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL**

**Thurs 27th - Sun 30th November 2025**

*Theme: 'Love came down at Christmas'*

**Thurs 27th**  
*Opening Service 7pm*  
(Rev. Philip McClelland)

**Fri 28th and Sat 29th**  
**10am - 6pm**  
Tea / Coffee  
Scones, Mince Pies,  
Shortbread, Traybakes.

12 noon - 2pm:  
Soup and  
Wheaten Bread .

**Group Bookings**  
**Welcome:**  
**079 6668 5163**

**Sun 30th**  
**2pm - 6pm.**  
Tea / Coffee and  
Light Refreshments.

*Closing Service 6.30pm*  
(Rev. Philip McClelland)

*Musical Performances at  
Opening & Closing Services.*

**All proceeds in aid of  
Clare Presbyterian Church  
building fund.**



Former Minister in Crinken, Canon Trevor Stevenson, who founded the Storehouse a decade ago outlined the early years during which they operated from a tiny shed in the church grounds. He recalled his shock in the autumn of 2014 when he read a news story which stated that thousands of children in Ireland went to bed hungry. This led him to approach the vestry and ultimately to setting up the Storehouse.

“When we started this 10 years ago, I foolishly thought that we might do it for a couple of years. But 10 years later and the situation is only worsening,” he commented. He thanked everyone who journeyed with Crinken on the project, in particular all the churches and agencies who they partner with. “Unfortunately it looks like the need for the Storehouse is going to continue for a long time to come,” he concluded.

Veronica O’Leary, CEO and co–founder of Purple House Cancer Support in Bray spoke about the impact of the boxes of food they get from the Storehouse. She set up the charity 35 years ago when it was one of the first cancer support charities in Ireland. Now they help thousands of people impacted by cancer each year.

The food hampers from Crinken are given to families who have been affected by a cancer diagnosis or who have been bereaved by cancer. “We are 35% funded but everything else is funded by donations. We couldn’t function without support from you,” she told the Storehouse volunteers. “The needs of the families are huge.”

## **Archbishop joins Armenian worship and hospitality**

**On Sunday evening October 12 Archbishop Michael Jackson was invited to attend the gathering for worship and hospitality of the Armenian Orthodox Community in Dublin. The community meets in Christ Church Taney where they feel honoured and welcomed.**

Bishop Hovakim and the Archbishop are longstanding friends and both serve on the Anglican–Oriental Orthodox Commission (AOOIC) of which the Archbishop is Anglican co–chairperson.

The Gospel of the day told of the widow who put two copper coins in the collection – all her wealth. Bishop Hovakim spoke movingly of how this reading connects with the

experience of the Armenian people at home and in the international diaspora.

The Archbishop was invited to preach also and spoke of why the widow was singled out by Jesus: because she had looked death in the eye through the loss of her husband and this gave her a particular sensitivity to need for support and for the impact of small measures and their cumulative effects.

After the liturgy all enjoyed a meal together generously provided by the community. The centrepiece was roast pumpkin filled with rice and chicken pieces. “Try it for Halloween and I guarantee you will find it delicious,” Archbishop Jackson suggests.  
Bishop Hovakim and Archbishop Jackson.

## **King and Pope exchange orchids**

**One of the many poignant moments during His Majesty The King's State Visit to the Holy See was when he and Pope Leo exchanged orchids.**

Both are deeply committed to living sustainably on the earth and this exchange of gifts represented this shared commitment to the earth.

In a moment of prayer and reflection Archbishop Stephen Cottrell, the Archbishop of York, and Father Manuel Dorantes, Management Director of the Borgo Laudato Si' in Castel Gandolfo, joined the gardeners to plant the orchid that The King gave Pope Leo. The planting took place in a

October 28, 2025

beautiful place of prayer in the garden where Pope Leo visits and prays most weeks.

The garden of Castel Gandolfo, the Pope's summer residence, through the Borgo Laudato Si' project models sustainable business, gardening and farming, and works to train and inspire others to do the same. A vision that is shared by His Majesty.

Offering prayers of thanksgiving, Archbishop Stephen said: "May this orchid, a gift exchanged between His Majesty the King and Pope Leo, be a sign of the flourishing that God longs for His Church and for the world."

His visit concluded with prayers for His Majesty The King and for Pope Leo.

## Education



## **SistersIN mentoring programme with First and Deputy First Ministers**

**Two female students in Northern Ireland have received an extraordinary opportunity through the SistersIN mentoring programme, as they have been assigned the First Minister and Deputy First Minister as their personal mentors for the academic school year.**

Clodagh Conroy, from St Pius X College, Magherafelt, and Sophie Murray, from Strathearn School in Belfast, will benefit directly from the unique guidance and support offered by the Executive's two most senior political leaders.

Over 1,200 girls aged 16-18 have taken part in the programme since its launch in 2022.

## **Nine schools meet theologian, philosopher and writer**

**Peter Vardy, theologian, philosopher and writer visited Lisneal to talk to our AS and A2 pupils.**

We were delighted to host the event and we were joined by 8 visiting schools – St. Dominics, Belfast, Magherfelt High School, St. Cecillas, St. Mary's Limavady, Trinity College, Belfast, Dominican Portstewart, Omagh Academy and St. Columb's College. The pupils enjoyed lectures on key topics in their syllabus - What is evil?, Just War, Life, Death, Poverty and Inequality.



We would like to thank Peter Vardy for making the journey to Lisneal and we hope to see him in the future.

## Shared Education in action

**BRA Lower Sixth students had a fantastic day at the first Shared Education for Positive Initiative (SEPI) collaborative**





## **working day, hosted at St. Malachy's College.**

Working alongside peers from our partnership school St. Malachy's and five other schools across Belfast, Lisburn, Drogheda, and Dundalk, our students spent the day designing their projects focused on the environment and peacebuilding. We're excited to see the innovative ideas from all the teams at the big Pitch Off day at QUB in November, when students will present their projects to businesses such as SSE and Fujitsu.

## Ballycastle Agri Club

**The Agri Club were absolutely delighted to welcome Wallace Gregg.**

He talked to the group about the history of his family farm and his passion for milking his herd of pedigree Holstein COWS.

Wallace took time to discuss the benefits of technology on the farm, the importance of sustainability and explained the process of breeding and genetics within his own herd.

Finally, Wallace imparted a few words of encouragement and advice for the future farmers within the club. He emphasised the importance of studying at school, and post 16, and advised pupils to embrace any opportunity to travel and experience farming overseas.

## Cathedral Calls

### First address at Canterbury Cathedral

**On Sunday Bishop Sarah Mullally, nominated as the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury, made her first address at Canterbury Cathedral.**

Watch the address at <https://lnkd.in/ewPQ5gDR>.

## Truro Cathedral displays Luke Jerram's Mars

**The exhibition explores war and peace in these challenging times. Mars: War and Peace is at Truro Cathedral until 2 November. Mars follows the success of Jerram's Museum of the Moon and Gaia installations suspended in the nave of Truro Cathedral– both which attracted record crowds.**

Measuring seven metres in diameter, the artwork features 120dpi detailed NASA imagery of the Martian surface. The Mars artwork is made from NASA Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter data, Visible Earth series, NASA. At an approximate scale of 1:1 million, each centimetre of the internally lit spherical sculpture represents 10 kilometres of the surface of Mars. Mars was named by the ancient Romans as their god of war, as its reddish colour was reminiscent of blood.

Accompanying the Mars sculpture is a newly created sound composition by BAFTA and Ivor Novello award winning composer Dan Jones. Featuring the sounds of seas, deserts and clips from NASA missions to Mars, it also hints at the sounds of war. The artwork allows the visitor to view Mars from the air, as if satellite mapping and studying the surface in perfect detail. Every valley, crater, volcano and mountain is laid bare for inspection. Transport to this desert wasteland and imagine what it's like to step foot on this incredible planet and in comparison, value life on Earth. Truro has organised a range of events to accompany the installation. Find out more here - [Trurocathedral.co.uk](http://Trurocathedral.co.uk).

## Events

### Behind the Music

**We sit down with Donal McCrisken, former Musical Director of Cappella Caeciliana— a leading figure in Belfast’s classical music scene, known for his decades of shaping voices, harmonies, and choral sound.**

Join us as he reflects on his musical journey, the legacy of Cappella Caeciliana, and what makes choral music so powerful today. Hear Donal’s arrangement of ‘She Moved Through the Fair’ live at our upcoming concert!

30 years of Cappella Caeciliana  
Saturday, 23 November  
Good Shepherd Church, Belfast

We would be honoured to have you join us as we mark this important chapter in our story.

## In the media

### Bangor mum charged with swindling Presbyterian church and global ministry

**A mum-of-two has appeared in court charged with defrauding a church and a branch of a 200-year-old international evangelical organisation, John Toner writes in Sunday Life**

Nicola Ferguson faced four counts of fraud by abuse of position at Newtownards Magistrates Court last week.

The case against the 47-year-old, of Shaftesbury Park, Bangor, Co Down, was adjourned until Tuesday with no pleas yet entered.

When Sunday Life called to her door Ferguson declined to comment.

According to the indictment, she is said to have defrauded both a branch of Biblica Europe Ministries Trust based in east Belfast, as well as Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church in Bangor.

The charges allege she defrauded the ministry by raising company cheques in her own name and creating false invoices to be paid by the organisation, a registered charity, into her personal bank account.

The offences are said to have been committed while she “occupied a position of trust” at the ministry between October 2015 and November 2022.

Biblica Europe Ministries Trust is based in The Mount Business & Conference Centre just off the Albertbridge Road.

According to the Charity Commission, the organisation spent over £1.5m on charitable activities in the financial year ending September 2024.

Founded in 1809 in New York City, Biblica Ministries is now a global organisation committed to spreading the gospel.

Their website reads: “Now in its third century, Biblica continues to produce relevant, reliable Scripture translations and innovative Bible resources that power the ministry of the world's widest-reaching mission organisations.

“We do everything in partnership with others and with one all-consuming purpose: Let's end Gospel poverty wherever it is found.”

It is further alleged Ferguson similarly swindled Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church between February 2023 and July 2024.

The charge sheet claims she created false invoices to be paid by the church into her own bank account and also moved gift aid claimed on charitable donations made by the church into her account.

## Poem for today

### Autumn

**By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow**

Thou comest, Autumn, heralded by the rain,  
With banners, by great gales incessant fanned,  
Brighter than brightest silks of Samarcand,  
And stately oxen harnessed to thy wain!  
Thou standest, like imperial Charlemagne,  
Upon thy bridge of gold; thy royal hand  
Outstretched with benedictions o'er the land,  
Blessing the farms through all thy vast domain!  
Thy shield is the red harvest moon, suspended

October 28, 2025

So long beneath the heaven's o'erhanging eaves;  
Thy steps are by the farmer's prayers attended;  
Like flames upon an altar shine the sheaves;  
And, following thee, in thy ovation splendid,  
Thine almoner, the wind, scatters the golden leaves!

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## 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](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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# Church News Ireland

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

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