

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Creation at Southwark Cathedral**

# Image of the day

## Creation at Southwark Cathedral

## News reports

### First ever Church of the Year 2022 top prize won by Auger Church

The top prize of Church of the Year 2022 was won by St Macartan's, The Forth in Augher, County Tyrone in Northern Ireland. (Photo: National Churches Trust)

Winners of the first ever National Church Awards have been announced by comedian and actor Hugh Dennis.

The awards are run by the National Churches Trust and celebrate churches and the people who use and look after them.

The top prize of Church of the Year 2022 went to St Macartan's, The Forth church in Augher, County Tyrone in Northern Ireland.

The Church of the Year award recognises "a shining example of a church, chapel or meeting house which is open, available to all and supported by the local community".

The winning church should also "meet the needs of this community and be welcoming to those visiting from near and far".





St Macartan's, The Forth church in Augher, County Tyrone in Northern Ireland.

St Macartan's dates back to 1838 and is the former cathedral of the Roman Catholic diocese of Clogher.

Its beautiful 1922 Clarke Studio stained glass window was recently restored as part of a major heritage project led by Martin McKenna.

The church impressed judges not only with the standard of care of the building, but how it is promoted as part of the heritage of County Tyrone and involves local people as volunteers.

Judges also praised the recent restoration as a "catalyst" for greater local involvement with the church.

"There's a sense of bringing everyone together to share in the activity. It's wonderful to see an ecumenical project which demonstrates that leadership is a real linchpin to success. So often clergy think that the gutters have nothing to do with their vocation but it's great to see their involvement here," the judges said.

## **Church Leaders meet with Secretary of State for Northern Ireland**

**The Church Leaders Group (Ireland) met with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland at Hillsborough Castle, the Rt Hon Chris Heaton–Harris MP, on Wednesday evening (26th October 2022)**

They said they were able to relay to him the reality of life for ordinary people from their congregations and parishes across Northern Ireland, outlining the significant stress that is being caused by the fear of what is coming in the months ahead.

Their statement following the meeting is provided in full below:

Wednesday evening's meeting was a long-standing arrangement and we welcomed the opportunity to meet with Mr Heaton–Harris for the first time since his appointment last month, and his reappointment by the new Prime Minister on Tuesday. We stressed the need for urgent action to be taken in light of the fact that the people of Northern Ireland are experiencing the worst cost of living crisis in generations.



The Church Leaders Group comprised The Most Revd John McDowell, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh & Primate of All Ireland; The Most Revd Eamon Martin, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh & Primate of All Ireland; The Rt Revd Andrew Forster, President of the Irish Council of Churches; The Rt Revd Dr John Kirkpatrick, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; The Revd David Nixon, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland

Together we were able to relay to him the reality of life for ordinary people from across our congregations and parishes, outlining the significant stress that is being caused by the fear of what is coming in the months ahead and the uncertainty about the support that is being offered.

While outlining some of the initiatives that our churches are undertaking on the ground, as they seek to make a difference, we took the opportunity to urge the Secretary of



State to give the clarity that is needed in relation to the support that has been promised, especially for the most vulnerable in our society, who are always affected the most when there is a cost of living crisis.

In a productive and wide-ranging conversation, we also discussed the current uncertainty around the political situation in Northern Ireland and the importance of maintaining stability, regardless of whatever scenario evolves after this Friday's deadline expires to re-establish the Executive. We also took the opportunity to highlight the increasingly strained relationships on these islands, and within local communities, caused by the outworking of Brexit and the resulting Northern Ireland Protocol.

Together we urged the Secretary of State to encourage his colleague, the Foreign Secretary, to work for a negotiated settlement with the European Union that both deals with the trade issues and enables people to be secure in their identity, allowing relationships to improve.



**Transforming Care**  
An evening with Home for Good

How you and your church can play a part in finding a home for every child who needs one.

**Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November - 7.30pm**  
Glendermott Parish Church, Derry/Londonderry

 **home for good**

[www.homeforgood.org.uk/events](http://www.homeforgood.org.uk/events)

As Church Leaders we also raised two important issues that the UK government had acted on in recent years – the introduction of the most liberal abortion regime on these islands, and the current legacy bill before Parliament – outlining the concerns of many on both these highly sensitive issues.

## **Presbyterian Church concern at commissioning of abortion services in Northern Ireland**

**Alongside this week's announcement by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland that he is to formally commission abortion services, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI), has expressed its deep concern and dismay at the number of abortions which have taken place in Northern Ireland since the legal change in 2020.**

Speaking after a meeting of PCI's Council for Public Affairs Council, which was held in Assembly Buildings, Belfast, Council Convener Rev Daniel Kane said, "As a Church with a strong pro-life position, over the last number of years we have consistently put on record our total opposition to Westminster's imposition of the most destructive liberal abortion legislation in these islands.

"Figures provided recently by the Department of Health show that over 4,100 abortions have taken place across the five health trusts in Northern Ireland between 31 March 2020 and 26 September this year, an average of 340 per month. This compares to an average of around 86 per month in 2018 and 2019 of those accessing abortion

services from Northern Ireland in England. The genuine fears and concerns expressed by PCI about the removal of the legal protection of future generations of Northern Ireland's unborn children have, unfortunately, come to pass."

Mr Kane continued, "We recognise that women, and their families, may find themselves in a crisis situation for a variety of reasons, which could include a medical diagnoses, difficult personal circumstances, and increasingly the pressures of the cost of living. This is why a new response is required to support women and their families, including the provision of comprehensive perinatal care services that involve practical, emotional and spiritual support for women, alongside other measures, including appropriate welfare mitigations.

"Such interventions would help to ensure that the provision of abortion services here would, by necessity, be rare. We would also like to take this opportunity to commend ministers and their congregations who often provide this caring, pastoral and practical support to those who find themselves in such difficult circumstances."

Mr Kane concluded by saying, "At the same time, we deeply regret that Mr Heaton-Harris, like his predecessor, has recently indicated his intention to continue to override our fragile devolved settlement in relation to such sensitive issues. 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.”

“There are many challenges facing Northern Ireland and its Health Service in particular, waiting lists, staff recruitment and retention, services that are under resourced. It is curious to note that no interventions appear to be forthcoming in these areas.”

## **Christian Aid: Rishi Sunak must re-set government's approach**

**Responding to the news that Rishi Sunak has become the next Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Chief Executive of Christian Aid Patrick Watt said: "In the face of the worst global cost of living crisis in a generation, the new Prime Minister must re-set the government's approach. We need a commitment that he will not balance the books on the back of the poorest people, either at home or abroad.**

"With COP27 on the horizon, Rishi Sunak must show leadership on the climate crisis by supporting a swift just transition to net zero while also urgently helping the millions of people on the brink of famine in East Africa by restoring the aid budget."

"We would urge the prime minister to protect the diminishing aid budget from any further cuts."

Sunak was chancellor of the exchequer in 2021 when the government reduced its aid spending from 0.7 per cent of

gross national income to 0.5 per cent, wiping billions of pounds from internal development charity budgets.

## **Prostate Cancer Centre of Excellence to open at Queen's thanks to £1.6M donation**

**Queen's University, Belfast, has announced - We are opening a new Prostate Cancer Centre of Excellence, thanks to a donation made by a local charitable trust set up by a donor who had been part of a previous clinical trial at the university.**

One of the largest single donations in the University's history, the gift will build on the existing world-class prostate cancer research programme at Queen's and help to improve the lives of patients through innovations in treatment.

“The Prostate Cancer Centre of Excellence will link world-class research at Queen's University Belfast with clinical trials at the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and the Northern Ireland Cancer Centre. We are grateful to the donor for this generous gift, and hope our work will benefit men and their families who are facing their own very personal prostate cancer journeys.” - Joe O'Sullivan, Professor of Radiation Oncology at The Patrick G. Johnson Centre for Cancer Research.

# CNI

## **Irish Kidney Association's 37th annual Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving**

**Thousands of organ donor families and grateful transplant recipients will tune in at home and abroad to watch the Irish Kidney Association's third virtual and 37th Annual Service of Remembrance & Thanksgiving.**

The inter-faith Service was pre-recorded by Kairos Communications at Newman University Church, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2, for broadcast on RTÉ One and RTÉ Radio 1 Extra (LW252) on Sunday, October 30 at 11am.

The Irish Kidney Association is asking the public to tune into RTÉ and actively participate in this year's virtual Service, including the symbolic Service of Light ceremony. It is hoped that in households the length and breadth of the country, and beyond, a candle will be lit in memory of deceased donors who gave the gift of life.

For many organ donor families this annual service has become an anniversary to remember their loved ones, and for transplant recipients, the opportunity to honour and give thanks for the wonderful 'gift of life' they have received. Prior to the global pandemic, the annual event attracted a physical congregation of close to 2,000 people.





Rev Gary Chamberland, Archbishop Michael Jackson and Rev John Kelly.

For the past three years the service has been pre-recorded with a small gathering of participants due to safety issues around Covid-19, particularly for transplant recipients and other vulnerable people.

When the first pre-recorded ‘virtual’ service was held in 2020, a total of 64,000 households nationwide tuned in to watch its first viewing on RTÉ and it was streamed in 24 other countries.

Last year after the service broadcast there was an uplift in donor card requests, with 43% increase in average weekly requests.

Twelve families of deceased organ donors participated in the filming of this year's 'virtual' Service, to remember their loved ones who became organ donors following their untimely deaths. Nine grateful transplant recipients who received different deceased donors' organs (including heart, lung, liver, kidney, and pancreas). They included a five-year-old twin boy who received a kidney transplant this year, a lung transplant grandmother in her late 60s, a 45-year-old mother who has received the gift of life three times in her lifetime, and another mother who is enjoying the successful longevity of a kidney transplant she received 32 years ago.

The service, an occasion for both sadness and joy, includes clergy, humanists, as well as organ transplant recipients, organ donor families, and the medical profession involved in organ donation and transplantation. Music and song are interspersed between poignant symbolic processions and meaningful scripture, reflections and expressions of gratitude, selflessness, and faith in humanity.

The Book of Remembrance, a 'Roll of Honour', has been an integral part of the service since its inception with the names of organ and tissue donors carefully inscribed by calligrapher Annette Daly from Glenageary, Co Dublin for the past 37 years.

A letter from President of Ireland Michael D. Higgins, who is patron to the Irish Kidney Association, is read aloud at the Service by Rebecca Maher, from Castleknock, Dublin, the mother of deceased organ donor infant Matilda Quinn who passed away in 2015. In an extract from the President's message, Rebecca reads, "I join you all in expressing my

support and thanksgiving for the great gift of organ transplantation, which has transformed and enriched so many lives – allowing new possibilities and new opportunities for recipients and their loved ones”.

Archbishop Michael Jackson gives the Homily and the Revd John Kelly reads the Gospel on behalf of the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin Dermot Farrell. Chief Celebrant is Rev. Gary Chamberland, Newman University Church. Following the Service broadcast on RTÉ One and RTÉ Radio One Extra (LW252) at 11am on Sunday, 30th October, it will be available to watch on the Irish Kidney Association's website [www.ika.ie](http://www.ika.ie)

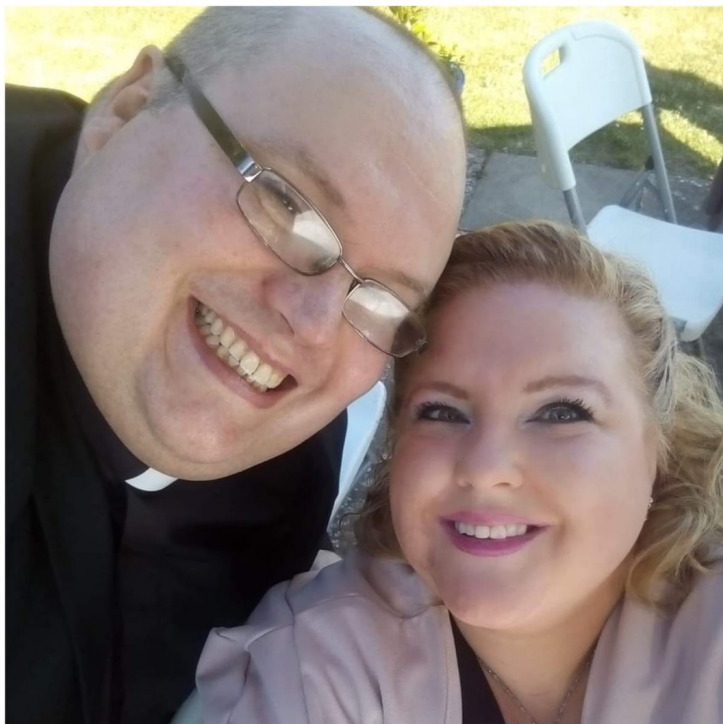
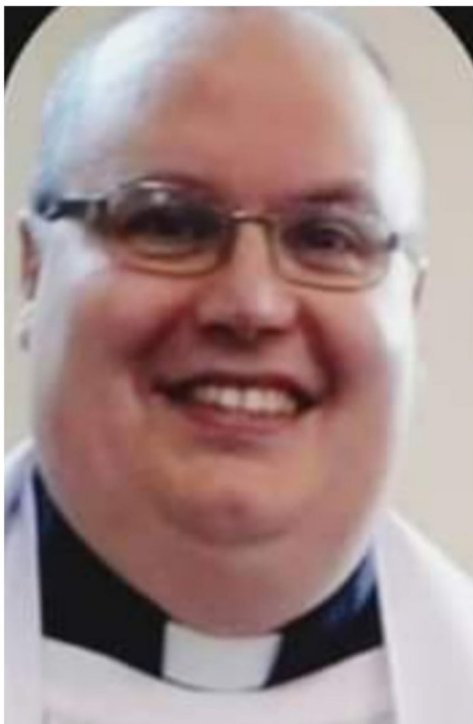
Individuals who wish to support organ donation are encouraged to Share their Wishes with their family and keep the reminders of their decision available by carrying the organ donor card, permitting Code 115 to be included on their driver's licence or having the 'digital organ donor card' App on their smartphone. Organ Donor Cards can be requested by visiting the IKA website [www.ika.ie/get-a-donor-card](http://www.ika.ie/get-a-donor-card) or to your phone, phoning the Irish Kidney Association on 01 6205306 or Free text the word DONOR to 50050.

## **Appointment of Rector of Athy Union**

**The Revd Conor O'Reilly has been appointed the new Rector of Athy Union of Parishes in the Diocese of Glendalough.**



He will be instituted by the Archbishop on Friday December 9. Conor is currently serving as Curate of the Wexford and Kilsoran Union of Parishes in the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory.



Conor grew up in Portarlinton in County Offaly and is married to Mollie. Together they have two dogs, Sophie and Ruthie. He is a graduate of NUI Maynooth and the Pontifical University Maynooth where he gained a Bachelor of Divinity Honours Degree. He also completed the Clinical Pastoral Education course in Cork University Hospital. He previously

worked as a secondary school teacher in the UK. He was ordained Deacon in 1999 and a Priest in 2001 and was a Roman Catholic priest in the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin.

Having spent a full academic year in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, where he was awarded the Downes Oratory Prize for Extemporaneous Speaking, Conor has served as Curate of the Wexford and Kilsoran Union since 2018. This included seven months as Priest in Charge.

An active member of his current dioceses he is deputy editor of the Cashel, Ferns and Ossory Diocesan Magazine, compiler of the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, administrator of the Diocesan Facebook page, member of Diocesan Council, the Diocesan Finance Committee and the Diocesan Communications and Magazine Committee. He is also a frequent contributor to the Church of Ireland Gazette.

Commenting on his appointment, Conor said he was excited to see what this new chapter in ministry would bring.

“I greatly look forward to the next phase of my ministry in the Athy Union of Parishes. Athy Union is already a lively and thriving parish with great parishioner participation and I look forward to consolidating and building upon this excellent foundation,” he stated.

“I would like to sincerely thank everyone involved with the Wexford and Kilsoran Union of Parishes for their great encouragement and support of my ministry amongst them for the past nearly 4 and a half years. While I am excited to become the new Rector of the Athy Union of Parishes, it

also comes with a mixture of sadness as Mollie and myself prepare to leave Wexford.”

He succeeds Canon Olive Donohoe who has retired.

## **Pope pleads with priests and nuns to drop their porn habits**

**Even priests and nuns watch online pornography, Pope Francis has admitted, in an unusual admonishment of Catholic clergy.**

“It’s a vice many people have – many lay people but also priests and nuns. The Devil enters from there,” he told an assembly at the Vatican.

“I’m not just talking about criminal pornography, involving abuse of children, where you see live cases of abuse. That is already degenerate. I’m talking about ‘normal’ pornography. My dear brothers and sisters, be careful.”

A person with “a pure heart” should not be looking at porn, the head of the Roman Catholic Church added.

“If you can cancel it from your phone, then cancel it, then you won’t have temptation in your hand,” the Pope went on. “I’m sorry if I lower myself to such details about pornography, but it is reality. A reality that involves priests, seminarians, nuns, all consecrated souls. Have you understood? Good.”



October 28, 2022

In June, the Argentine pontiff denounced porn as a threat to public health and the family.

The Vatican had to launch an investigation in 2020 after the Pope's official Instagram account, Franciscus, which has nearly nine million followers, "liked" an image of a Brazilian model in a skimpy schoolgirl outfit.

There was speculation that someone in the Holy See's communications team may have accidentally pressed the "like" button while browsing the model's extensive gallery of images.

A Vatican official said at the time that the Holy See had asked Instagram for "a detailed explanation" of the incident.

## Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

### Everyday Faith Journey

Journey through stories that Jesus told in the Gospel of Luke, on your own, or as a family.

This Everyday Faith Journey is also available in audio format.

Login and start 'Stories Jesus Told' at [cofe.io/StoriesJesusTold](https://cofe.io/StoriesJesusTold).

## Follow The Star: The Great Invitation

Printed resources for the 2022 Christmas campaign, Follow The Star: The Great Invitation, are now available for churches to order. ★

Discover the booklets, bookmarks, cards and more at [cofe.io/Christmas](https://cofe.io/Christmas).

## Poem for today

### From-Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard by Thomas Gray

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower  
The moping owl does to the moon complain  
Of such, as wandering near her secret bower,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

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