

Church News Ireland

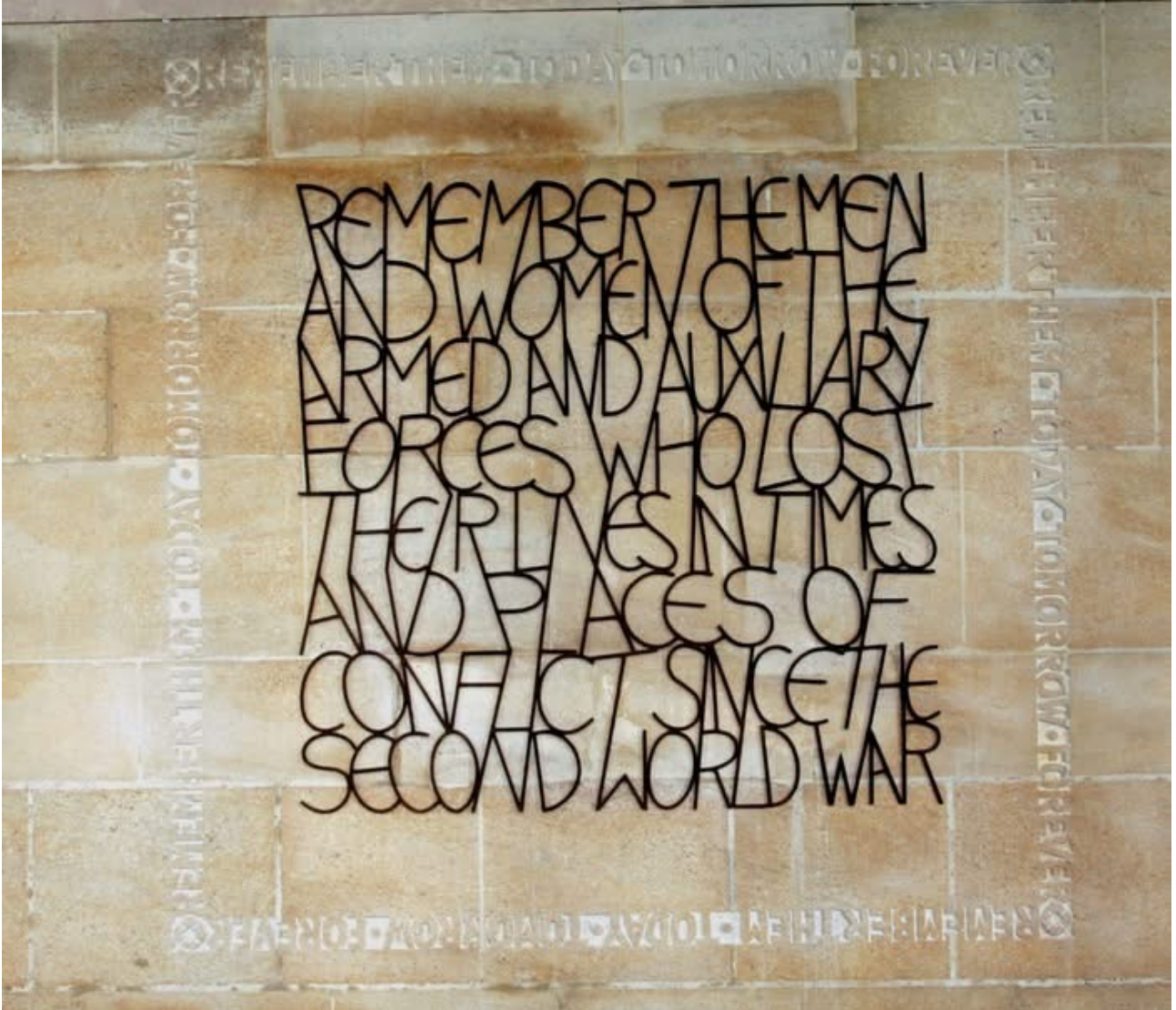


Image of the day – The Abbey remembers

Image of the day

The Abbey remembers

Dedicated this week in 2008: Westminster Abbey's memorial to members of the UK Armed Forces who have lost their lives in conflicts since the end of the 1939-1945 war.

The memorial, in the south cloister, was unveiled by HRH The Princess Royal, and you can read more about it at: www.westminster-abbey.org/abbey-commemorations/commemorations/armed-forces-memorial

New

Cardinal Nichols reflects on last week's historic visit of King Charles to the Holy See

'The events of that day are well known: a private meeting with Pope Leo with an exchange of gifts, a ceremony of prayer in the magnificent Sistine Chapel, a time of further discussion, then another wondrous ceremony in the Basilica of St Paul's Outside the Walls, and finally a formal reception, and the planting of a tree, in the Bede College.



'I was privileged to have front row seats in the two liturgical events, making it a day I shall never forget Read the full story here: <https://rcdow.org.uk/news/cardinals-reflection-on-the-state-visit-of-king-charles-to-the-holy-see/>

Irish Catholic bishops support Government on fossil fuel treaty

Irish bishops support call on Government to back fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty. Trocaire Laudato Si'
Animators Ireland
See statement -

<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2025/10/28/irish-bishops-support-call-on-government-to-back-fossil-fuel-non-proliferation-treaty/>

Anniversaries all round in Down and Dromore

Autumn has been a season of anniversaries in the diocese, with a number of churches marking either the founding of their parish or the construction of their church building.

Throughout 2025 **Moira Parish** have been marking 300 years since the consecration of St John's with a variety of events and initiatives including 300 hours of prayer, 300 acts of service, and 300 hours of praise. The parish celebrated with a special service and lunch on Sunday 14 September when Bishop David gave the address. Bishop Wilson from Moira's link diocese of Ibba, South Sudan was present, as was current parishioner, Bishop Ken Good – a bishop for every century!

On Friday 12 September 2025, **Shankill Parish** began a weekend of 300th Anniversary celebrations with a special service in the church building which was temporarily reopened for the occasion. Shankill Parish choir were in fine voice and relished the different acoustics owing to a lack of carpet! Bishop David gave the address, preaching on the necessity of prayer in revival. The anniversary comes at a crucial time for the parish as they embark on the final phase a £4 million refurbishment and reordering of the building and 'Re-Imagine Shankill' for the next 300 years.

In **Scarva** there was a wonderful celebration of 175 years of worship in St Matthew's Parish Church, on Sunday evening

14 September. The church was almost full, and the congregation enjoyed contributions from the Sunday School and the Church Choir. Bishop David gave the address. After the service, the ladies of the parish provided a lovely supper in the church hall complete with a special anniversary cake. Celebrations continued the following Friday with an excellent anniversary concert in the community centre, Scarva when local musicians, singers and dancers took part. Here's looking to the next 175 years!



St Brendan's, Sydenham (above) held a week of events in October to celebrate the centenary of their founding in 1925. The parish is one of the smallest in the diocese and was originally formed to serve new housing for the shipyard. In 1963 they built a new church which infamously blew down in a storm just two years later! The current building now serves a vibrant church and community and part of the celebrations looked to the future with vision and expectation. Highlights included a fun day, a special community history service with lunch and a performance of the highly acclaimed 'Titanic'

On Sunday morning 28 September 2025, parishioners and friends gathered in **St Patrick's, Donaghcloney**, to celebrate 45 years of worship in the current building and the completion of its reordering. Bishop David preached and in the evening the Revd Ian Linton, rector of Rathfriland and Ballyward, gave the address at a guest service.

Commenting on the weekend the rector, Revd Mark Lennox, said: "It was a truly joyous occasion, and I am so thankful to God for the time, talents, and dedication of those who worked so hard over the past number of weeks refurbishing the church. I pray that over the many years to come many people will come through the doors and encounter the Risen Lord Jesus in a real and personal way."

Warrenpoint Parish Church celebrated its 200th anniversary over the weekend of 4-5 October. Fellowship and Worship. On Saturday the church opened its doors for an engaging open day, welcoming visitors to explore its rich history. Sunday featured a special service and lunch at which Bishop David preached, and the hymns were accompanied by the Warrenpoint Silver Band. This was followed by lunch in the Parochial Hall and an evening concert by the Kerygma Choir. On Monday, the celebrations continued with a harvest gift table, where parishioners shared Harvest goods with the local community. For many years now, Warrenpoint and Clonallon Churches have been open for worship on alternate Sundays. Moving Forward into our 201st year, Sunday worship will begin with Holy Communion at 9.00am, every Sunday, and Warrenpoint Parish Church will be now open for worship weekly at 10.00am.

The parishes of **Maghera, Kilmegan and St Donard's** recently held a ten-day Harvest Home Mission as part of the diocese's Speak Jesus initiative. The programme blended traditional harvest thanksgiving with vibrant outreach - including patronal festivals, a community quiz, a variety concert, and healing services. Bishop David was the main speaker, with Canon Myrtle Morrison and Capt George Newell assisting. The mission concluded with the 200th anniversary celebration of Maghera Church, marking two centuries of worship on the historic site founded by St Donard in the fifth century.

Education

Invite to free meal to young adults in Belfast City centre

If you are a young adult living, studying or working in the City Centre and would like to enjoy a free meal and to meet friends new and old you are invited to St Stephen's, Millfield, on Sunday 2nd November at 5.30pm.

This is a ticketed event just follow the link
www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-stephens-millfield-belfast

Cathedral Calls



Belfast Choral Scholar Installation

Belfast Cathedral recently took the opportunity to both welcome new members of the Cathedral Choir, and this year's new Choral Scholars in particular.

We are thrilled to welcome Teagan (Alto), Joe (Tenor, and previously a boy chorister) and Jonathan (bass) to our Cathedral family.

A special thank you to P&R Agencies, alongside Fynch Hatton, for their generous sponsorship.



Our service of Choral Evensong was followed by a short recital showcasing the Cathedral's new Bluthner grand piano, a generous gift from Mrs Patricia McKinley Hutchinson, which will support and enhance our worship for years to come

Belfast Cathedral host Irish premiere of 'A Season to Sing', for Corrymeela 60th anniversary

To mark the 60th anniversary of the Corrymeela Community, “we are hosting the Irish premiere of 'A Season to Sing', a reimagining of Vivaldi's Four Seasons by celebrated composer Joanna Forbes L'Estrange (L'Estrange Music)’.

IRISH PREMIERE!

A Season to Sing

A choral reimagining of Vivaldi's -
The Four Seasons
By Joanna Forbes L'Estrange

Belfast Cathedral
22 November 2025 at 19:30

Tickets: £15.00

Performed by:
Sounds Connected Community Chorus

Organ, Piano:
Jack Wilson, Master of Music, Belfast Cathedral

Musical Director:
Dave Stewart

Violin:
Hayley Howe

in aid of
corrymeela

60TH
ANNIVERSARY

Buy tickets:

'A Season to Sing' will be sung by our friends at Sounds Connected Community Choir, introduced by the composer herself.

This will be a real treat - don't miss it! Tickets available at the link below:

<https://square.link/u/r9jfcn85>

Sermon at Southwark Cathedral by the Dean

Bishop Paul Colton - A moving and inspirational sermon preached last Sunday in Southwark Cathedral by the Dean, my friend Mark Oakley I am thrilled too that some time ago he accepted my invitation to preach at my retirement Service in St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork next April.

Here's the sermon - "God, I thank you that I am not like other people" - preached by The Very Rev'd Dr Mark Oakley, Dean of Southwark at Southwark Cathedral on Sunday 26th October 2025.

You can read the sermon here: <https://cathedral.southwark.anglican.org/worship-and-music/worship/sermons/god-i-thank-you-that-i-am-not-like-other-people/>

Clergy and ministry

Upcoming Lambeth webinar invite

Words from the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu:

"Goodness is stronger than evil;
Love is stronger than hate;
Light is stronger than darkness;
Life is stronger than death;
Victory is ours through Him who loves us."

This November, Anglicans will discuss the power of reconciliation, as they explore one of the Lambeth Calls shared by the bishops of the Lambeth Conference in 2022.



On the 19th and 20th of November, the Anglican Communion Office will host webinars exploring the Lambeth Call on Reconciliation, as the final part of a series exploring the Lambeth Calls, which originated at the 2022 Lambeth Conference.

The webinar is open to all. Join us to think about how God is calling you to build peace and reconciliation in your context.

Register now: <http://bit.ly/4762Hri>

Events

The Light still Shines festival will benefit four charities



The Light Still Shines

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

OPENING CEREMONY

Thursday 27 November 2025,
at 7pm viewing until 9pm.

Festival Continues

Friday 28 Nov, 11am to 9pm.	Saturday 29 Nov, 11am to 9pm.	Sunday 30 Nov, 2.30pm to 6pm.	Advent Carol Service Sun 30th Nov, 7.30pm
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Lislimnaghan Parish Church

Everyone Welcome

2 miles from Omagh on the Bellany road. Refreshments available throughout the festival in the hall. Proceeds in aid of:

- Care for Cancer, Omagh
- Cancer Focus, Newtownstewart
- St Vincent de Paul, Omagh
- Bishops' Appeal, (which is the Church of Ireland's World Aid and Development Programme).

For further information please contact Sharon McFarland on sha.ron41@hotmail.co.uk.

This November, from Thursday 27th to Sunday 30th, November 2025, Holy Trinity Church, Lislimnaghan, Omagh will present the Christian story, through a Christmas tree event and the amazing support of businesses, churches, schools and community organisations.

The Church's aim is to use The Light Still Shines Christmas Tree Festival as a time of giving and support, helping four very worthy community charities in the process.

Four charities are to benefit from the Christmas Tree Festival at Lislamnaghan Holy Trinity Parish Church. This event is gaining momentum thanks to support from business, churches and organisations across the local community. All are willing to support the nominated charitable organisations and help to raise awareness of their various works.

St Vincent de Paul charity is recognised for its resounding work. Mairead Taggart, its President in the Omagh area, said, “St Vincent de Paul is entirely volunteer-led, and membership is interdenominational and open to all. Our aim is to be generous with our time, our possessions and ourselves while seeking to help those in need. We in turn appreciate the support from this Christmas Tree event”

St Vincent de Paul provides local Community Support Projects via community shops, where they offer volunteering opportunities, providing help to struggling families with the basic needs of heating, food and clothing . Its Befriending programme and active advocacy work respond to people's need, regardless of their situation.

St Vincent De Paul's twinning projects in third world countries look to achieve the shared mission of eradicating poverty in all its forms, through local volunteer activity, humanitarian aid and sustainable development projects. Please visit the SPV website: www.svp.ie/stores/vincent-omagh/

Care for Cancer is a local charity which supports the community of Omagh and its surrounding areas. It offers a range of services to patients, carers and their families. These include a drop-in-centre with resources – both human and physical – whether you require information from experienced volunteers or seek help for transport to hospital appointments. Many issues can be addressed via professional counselling sessions, or offering wellbeing services and bereavement support if required. For information, go to careforcancer.co.uk

Speaking on behalf of the charity, local Chairperson P.J McAleer said, “As a registered local charity, Care for Cancer rely on donations, people’s awareness of the organisation and generous support for our work. We appreciate being a named charity at this Christmas tree festival.”

Every day in Northern Ireland, another 37 people receive a cancer diagnosis. This is one of the most devastating moments anyone can experience, but it does not have to be a lonely journey. Each year, Cancer Focus Northern Ireland helps over 43,000 people through its cancer prevention services and supports more than 4,000 people across a range of free-to-access services.

To achieve this, the charity must raise £4.6 million every year through generous donations and partnerships with individuals, community groups and businesses throughout Northern Ireland. For every £1 donated, 80p is spent on the delivery of services or invested in research. All monies raised remain in Northern Ireland.



The photograph above shows representatives of the charities and Rev Canon Derek Quinn from the Holy Trinity Parish Church, Lislimnaghan, all of which will benefit from the funds raised at the Christmas tree event.

From left to right: Susan Smyth (Sec.) and PJ McAleer Chairperson, Care for Cancer, Omagh; Rev Canon Derek Quinn, Rector, Lislimnaghan Parish Church; Sonia Hassard Chairperson, Cancer Focus NI, Newtownstewart; Jacqueline McMenamin and Mairead Taggart, President of the Omagh Area St Vincent De Paul.

Together with local universities, it is currently scoping some cancer research into health inequalities and links to cancer incidence in Northern Ireland.

Sonia Hassard Chairperson for Newtownstewart Branch, says, “Many cancers previously thought to be incurable are now being treated successfully as a result of important research. At local level, we educate, support and signpost people towards the appropriate help services, and actively fundraise, too. Therefore, we appreciate Lislimnaghan Christmas Tree Festival’s choice to support our charity.” To learn more about Cancer Focus NI work check the website: cancerfocusni.org

The final charity to benefit is Church-based. Annually, Lislimnaghan Church has supported **The Bishops’ Appeal** which is the Church of Ireland’s World Aid and Development Programme. This year it will be working with overseas charities to help provide sustainable aid to areas of conflict and climate change. A particular project, **Sowing the Seed of Hope**, offers an education development programme in **South Sudan** where for £2.50 per head, each child receives a school dinner for a year. The schools receive drought resistant crops, tools and training to increase food production, and this project has already helped 4000 children to remain in education.

Lislimnaghan’s Rector, Rev Canon Derek Quinn – who is also on the Diocese Bishops’ Appeal team – said, I am wearing two hats for this event. We had planned to do fund raising to help with repairs in our 163 year old church, which is constantly in need of repair. It is 10 years since we originally held the first highly successful Christmas Tree Festival. It was felt that our energies to fundraise should help the wider community, too. Everyone enjoys Christmas so a Christmas tree festival, telling the Christmas story, seemed to fit the bill, offering pleasure in its beauty, links

October 31, 2025

communities, providing friendships that embrace the wider locality. The response has been positive. I would like to say a huge 'thank you' to all who have supported our event to date in so many ways. So, do remember to come along between 27th and 30th November, to 'The Light Still Shines' , (A5) Beltany Rd, Omagh.”

Anyone seeking more information should contact Sharon McFarland by email on sha.ron41@hotmail.co.uk. Or check out the festival website: <https://www.facebook.com/TheLightStillShines2025>

Scouts Young Leader Training Weekend

A promotional poster for the Scouts Young Leader Training Weekend. The background is dark blue. At the top right is a green fleur-de-lis logo. The main title 'Young Leader Training Weekend' is in large, bold, green and blue letters on yellow rectangular backgrounds. Below the title, 'Ages 14-17' is written in white. To the right of the title is a circular logo with a green and blue design. At the bottom left is a photograph of a group of young people in Scout uniforms. On the right side, the dates '6-8 February 2026' are written in white. Below the dates, 'Crawfordsburn Activity Centre' is written in white on a green background. At the bottom right, '£30 per person' is written in large yellow letters on a green background.

Young Leader Training Weekend

Ages 14-17

6-8 February 2026

Crawfordsburn Activity Centre

£30 per person

We are excited to announce the upcoming Young Leader Training Weekend at Crawfordsburn Activity Centre from 6-8 February 2026.

October 31, 2025

This event will cover **Modules A-J of the YL Training Scheme**. You'll enhance your leadership skills alongside fellow Explorers, while enjoying the great outdoors.

Find out more: <https://shorturl.at/Dla7a>

In the media

Delay on Belfast crematorium doing great damage

BBC - The delay in redeveloping the crematorium in Belfast is causing "great damage" to bereaved people, the chair of the All Party Group on Funerals and Bereavement has said.

Mercifully no one said it was dead slow...
(<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c70jxz6xl94o>)

NI team ready for hurricane-hit Caribbean

News Letter - Northern Irish volunteers and their dogs prepare for possible deployment to hurricane-hit Caribbean. Subscription.
(<https://app.newsletter.co.uk/story/5380856/content.html>)

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

Church News Ireland

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Link in Monday through Saturday from
early morning

Please recommend to your friends