



The Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan, with farmer Tony Evans at the Marcoss Dairy Farm milking parlour. See report this issue - British church leaders give support to dairy farmers.

Church leaders welcomes Loyalist initiative

Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian church leaders have welcomed yesterday's proposal from the Loyalist Community Council:

The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh, said, 'I welcome this initiative. It has taken Northern Ireland longer than hoped on the journey towards a fully democratically ordered society where all its citizens feel that they belong to a single community which embraces many diverse elements, and I would wish to affirm positive moves that will speed this progression.

'Loyalism is an important element within the totality of Northern Irish society and it is in the interests of all that loyalist people should feel confident about the future, and believe also that Loyalism should make its distinctive contribution to the common good. This will mean addressing and resourcing areas such as educational underachievement and encouraging Loyalism to articulate a vision for a fully integrated future for all the people of Northern Ireland.

'On the basis that the new group announced today seeks to co-operate with others for the common good of all, the Church of Ireland for its part would be willing to play an active role in acting as a conduit for constructive engagement.'

Responding to the proposals made at the Launch of 'the Loyalist Community Council', the

President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Rev. Brian Anderson said:

"I welcome this initiative which seeks to address these real issues in Loyalist communities. If this is a genuine endeavour to seek a way forward in addressing the issues of educational underachievement, to deal with links between paramilitaries and criminality and how loyalist communities engage with the political process, then I welcome it. I would remind the Council that this task must include all the other members of society, including the churches, and not simply those from the paramilitary section of these communities."

The Presbyterian Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian McNie said:

"We acknowledge the efforts made to encourage loyalist paramilitaries to participate constructively in an ongoing process towards a better society. This has to be a society in which more people feel included and engaged and where educational underachievement and other disadvantages are tackled.

"Mindful of those who have suffered and continue to suffer much hurt and pain, it also has to be a society in which violence and criminality

have no place whatsoever. Such activity needs to stop, if communities are not only to live in peace, but to flourish.”

Ireland is still marked by a very strong family culture - Archbishop Martin of Dublin to Rome synod

Ireland in the wake of the marriage referendum is still marked by a very strong family culture, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin told the Synod of bishops in Rome in his most recent intervention.

The Archbishop suggested to the Synod Fathers that it was too simplistic to infer that an authentic Christian culture of marriage has disappeared in Ireland on the basis of the referendum outcome.

He told the gathering that the country is still marked by a very strong family culture.

“The numbers who get married – and who get married in Church – are high and divorce statistics are among the lowest in Europe. Families are strong and generous. That has not changed substantially,” he stated.



Archbishop Diarmuid Martin and Archbishop Eamon Martin (r)

Elsewhere in his intervention, Archbishop Martin said he wished to speak about the social culture of marriage as that is the culture in which young people are grow up in and the culture which influences their understanding of almost every dimension of marriage and family life.

Often, he said, society uses the same words as the Church does, however with a radically different meaning.

“The referendum was debated within a social culture where people struggle to understand abstract moral principles. What they do

understand is the predicament of individuals whom they wish to see happy and included.”

“It is a very individualistic culture, but not necessarily an uncaring one. Indeed those in favour of same-sex marriage based their campaign on what was traditionally our language: equality, compassion, respect and tolerance.”

He said young people today make their decisions on marriage and the family within the context of a flawed and antagonistic social culture.

But the Primate of Ireland warned that “It is, however, not enough to condemn that culture.” Instead he said the Church has to somehow evangelise that culture.

While the Synod is called to revitalise the Church’s pastoral concern for marriage and the family and to help believers to see family life as an itinerary of faith, Archbishop Martin warned that simply repeating doctrinal formulations alone will not bring the Gospel and the Good News of the Family into an antagonistic society.

“We have to find a language which helps our young people to appreciate the newness and the challenge of the Gospel. We have to find a

language which is a bridge to the day-to-day reality of marriage – a human reality, a reality not just of ideals, but of struggle and failure, of tears and joys.”

He noted that even in within a flawed social culture of the family there are those who seek something more and we have to touch their hearts.

“What the Irish referendum showed was a breakdown between two languages. It showed also that when the demanding teaching of Jesus is presented in a way which appears to lack mercy, then we open the doors to a false language of cheap mercy.”

Concentrate on communication, community and communion, Archbishop Michael Jackson tells diocesan synod

Dublin and Glendalough Diocesan Synod 2015 took place yesterday evening, Tuesday October 13, in Taney Parish Centre. Synod began with a celebration of Holy Communion in Christ Church, Taney, during which the Archbishop delivered his presidential address.



In his address, Archbishop Michael Jackson, examined the impact of the Holy Spirit. He said there were three components of Spiritual being and Spiritual activity: communication, community and communion. He suggested that communion brought respect for difference and respect in difference. Church relationships required both if the spirit of the Spirit was to shine through us to others, he stated.

“This is the invitation to spiritual maturity, living beyond party politics and pretensions and living also on the other side of competing church–person–ships at every level of our church life. What is not of God cannot flourish; what is of God needs constant attention, encouragement and creativity if it is not to wither. These are the gifts of the Spirit. All of this I firmly trust we can do – together. It is the expression of the life to which God is inviting us in the hope that we are ready to hear the calling of the Spirit to love, joy, peace in *the time of our lives*, today and tomorrow,” he said.

COME&C PROJECT

Turning to the dioceses’ Come&C initiative, the Archbishop recalled that the Come&C Report was launched at last year’s Synod. The initiative celebrates the lives of people and parishes in churches and communities and connects people and parishes in friendship with one another. At the Come&C Day in September over 200 people gathered in the High School, Rathgar, to explore future possibilities.

“So, what is Come&C? It is the voice of the people in the parishes shaping the vision and witness of the dioceses. It is the commitment of the people in the parishes voicing a shared

future with the community and with their neighbours. It is the combination of this voice of energy with the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion in shaping the range of voices that will, of course, be both the diversity *and* the riches of a diocese which encompasses over one and a half million people even if there are no more than forty–six thousand Anglicans officially and, on our own admission, fifteen per cent of us attend church. You can either be as small as you decide you are or as large as you want to be,” Archbishop Jackson stated.

JERUSALEM PARTNERSHIP

The Archbishop also highlighted the growing partnership with Jerusalem. The Prepare a Place project began in Advent 2014 and the diocesan family responded generously in support of Al Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza City. “I should like to thank members of the United Dioceses on what would seem to be a first strictly *united diocesan* missionary initiative for a very long time. I should like to thank you for a generosity of giving from the heart that amounts to well into six figures. Already the Diocesan Councils have unanimously endorsed the next stage; that is a formal partnership through Us with The Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East,” he said.

He said this was the opportunity of a lifetime for the dioceses to connect in friendship with people who are Anglican, Christian and human beings, like us but in “excruciatingly difficult circumstances”. He added that it also connects us to the theatre of war from which people are fleeing as refugees. Primarily it connects us to the roots of our faith and belief in God, he stated.

WELCOMING REFUGEES

Concluding his address, the Archbishop called on the Church of Ireland to connect to “caritative altruism” – the invitation to think of others when making decisions for ourselves. “It has to do with the response in dignity to those who are our neighbours in a different type of on-going crisis. We have a housing crisis already. We have a Direct Provision crisis already. We have a new crisis for a fresh and different group of people for whom there is no housing and no dignity and no future. And we call them: immigrants, as if they have any option but to flee their own country. People have said to me: Charity begins at home ... and my only response can be: We never know how far it will take us and, in any case, Ireland will be the only home that these particular refugees can possibly call home,” he said.

The text of the Archbishop's address is reproduced in full at:

<http://dublin.anglican.org/news/2015/10/-The-Spirit-of-God-in-the-Time-of-our-Lives-Archbishops-Address-at-Dublin-and-Glendalough-Synod>

Conference of European Churches appoint new General Secretary

The Conference of European Churches – a European-wide ecumenical body which includes the Church of England, Church in Wales, Church of Ireland and the Iglesia Española Reformada Episcopal (the Reformed Episcopal Church of Spain) – has appointed a priest from the Orthodox Church of Finland – Father Heikki Huttunen – as their new General Secretary.

Fr Huttunen has a wealth of ecumenical experience and is known for his lifelong commitment to youth in the Church.

He served the Finnish Ecumenical Council as General Secretary from 2006 to 2015; and the director of youth at the World Council of



Churches from 1985 to 1989. Following his work with the WCC, he served as a parish priest in a new, multicultural community in Espoo near Helsinki. He was a member of the WCC Central Committee 2006-2013 and has represented his church at the last four WCC General Assemblies. He has also worked with Syndesmos, the international youth organisation of the Orthodox Church.

The President of the Conference of European Churches, the Rt Revd Christopher Hill, the former Bishop of Guildford in the C of E, said: “I am delighted at Fr Heikki Huttunen’s appointment. He will come to CEC at a time

when all Europe—not just the EU—is on a political and social balance of greatest delicacy and some danger.

“He will play an important part in helping CEC be a bridge-builder in this continent, the traditional role of the Conference of European Churches. It is very good to have a General Secretary from the Nordic region and from the Orthodox tradition.”

In welcoming Fr Heikki, Bishop Hill also expressed his gratitude to current CEC General Secretary the Revd Dr Guy Liagre for his transitional ministry and especially his achievement in moving CEC to Brussels successfully.

“The task of the Conference of European Churches is to continue its service to the churches as a privileged tool of the Ecumenical movement. CEC's task is to assist and inspire churches in their mission and service amidst changing realities, and help to express the Christian viewpoint in new demanding situations.” said Fr Heikki.

Fr Huttunen holds a master of theology from the University of Helsinki, and has also studied Orthodox canon law, Finnish church legislation, and systematic theology. He is married with two children and speaks a number of European languages including Finnish, English, Swedish, French, and Russian.

Scrutinise Protestant mother and baby homes - C of I bishop

Church of Ireland Bishop Paul Colton was so moved by the experience of a survivor of the Westbank orphanage that he has called for all Protestant homes to be included in the Mother and Baby Home investigation.

Irish Examiner - In a letter to the head of the Mother and Baby Home Commission, Judge Yvonne Murphy, Dr Colton said he had been contacted by Victor Stevenson with an enquiry about Cork Mother and Baby Home, Braemar House.

Although the institution was not formally linked to the Church of Ireland, Dr Colton was so moved at a “human level” by Mr Stevenson’s life story, that he has called on Judge Murphy to call



[Bishop Paul Colton](#)

on Children’s Minister James Reilly to widen the scope of the inquiry to include Protestant Mother and Baby Homes.

“I have been moved by Mr Stevenson’s quest. He was born in 1959 and I in 1960. Putting myself in his shoes, I would want to know what he wants to know; his search for information has motivated me too at a human level.”

While I understand that it does not fall within your powers unilaterally to add Braemar House to the remit of your investigation, nonetheless I do urge the Commission, in any interim report, to recommend to the minister that Braemar House and other such pan-protestant Mother and Baby Homes be included in the scope of scrutiny of your work,” he wrote.

Dr Colton concludes by stating that the experiences of Protestant people who were resident in Mother and Baby Homes needs to be clarified.

“All of this is worthy of being clarified and established. As a matter of parity and justice for people like Victor Stevenson, I do ask that you urge the minister to add Braemar House and other such protestant homes to the remit of your investigation,” concludes the letter.

Mr Stevenson is a survivor of the Westbank orphanage in Greystones in Wicklow and has been campaigning for the inclusion of all Protestant institutions in the current inquiry.

Currently, the inquiry is only examining one Protestant institution — Bethany Home.

Westbank has been excluded despite survivors of the home stating they were not told that other residents were their brothers or sisters, mainly lived on baby food, and were beaten with clothes hangers and electrical cables.

The Westbank overseeing committee members are still refusing to release records to the former residents or to hand them over to a State agency.

As part of the Bethany Survivors' submission to former Children's minister Charlie Flanagan, testimony from Colm Begley outlined how Westbank children all had their names changed with their surnames becoming 'Mathers', which was the surname of Adeline Mathers, the woman who ran the home.

British church leaders give support to dairy farmers

Dairy farmers in Wales have won the support of the Archbishop of the province in the ongoing UK dairy-farm crisis; as British church leaders speak out in support of the country's dairy sector.

Market forces means that many dairy farmers in the UK are forced to sell their milk at a lower price than it costs to produce; while a supermarket price war has seen cheaper milk being imported into Great Britain from as far away as Poland.

Public opinion is with the farmers, and one British supermarket, Morrisons, has this week launched a new "Milk for Farmers" brand which will sell at £1.12 GBP (\$1.72 USD) for four pints – an increase of 23 pence on the standard price of 89 pence. The extra revenue will find its way back into the dairy industry.

With other retailers are watching the initiative closely, farmers' leaders are hoping it will prove to be popular with consumers. "We are pleased that Morrisons has acknowledged the desperate situation that many dairy farmers still find themselves in and recognise that retailers have a big role to play in, helping customers to support the UK dairy sector," Rob Harrison, the dairy board chairman of the National Farmers Union said.

"Research from Mintel revealed over half of people who drink cows' milk, would be prepared to pay more than £1 for a four-pint bottle of milk, as long as it is dairy farmers that benefit. This new initiative will enable them to do just that."

On the day that the Milk for Farmers brand went on sale for the first time, the Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan, visited the Marcross dairy farm in the Vale of Glamorgan. Marcross has been farmed by four generations of the same family; but current owners, Tony and Sharon Evans, fear that it may not survive into a fifth generation.

The farm has 180 milking cows, and loses 5 pence on every litre of milk they produce. They

are facing a projected deficit this year of £100,000.

Marcross Farmer Sharon Evans is a member of the Church in Wales Rural Life Group. She said: “When you look at the cash-flow for the year it is horrific. We are having to face very tough decisions such as whether or not to go to three milkings a day or whether to invest more than half-a-million pounds in a robotic milking system.”

The Evans’ son, Hopkin, added: “Dairy farming doesn’t pay any more but it’s not just something you can turn off. This crisis could last another 12 months. If we lose these cows we lose their link with this land – they have been here for generations too – Marcross is part of their DNA and once that’s gone there’s no getting it back.”

Like many dairy farmers, the Evans’ family have diversified into other businesses to subsidise the dairy. In this case they set up a caravan park in Llandow 24 years ago the Llandow racing circuit 50 years ago.

“It is sobering to think that farmers who just stayed in dairy around 10 years ago without diversifying have now had to sell up,” the

Archbishop of Wales, Dr Barry Morgan, said. “In that context, the enthusiasm of young farmers like Hopkin and the persistence of his parents are genuinely amazing and inspiring.

“While dairy farming is not a huge concern in the diocese of Llandaff [the Archbishop’s home diocese], which is mostly urban, it is nationally as most of Wales is rural.

“It is much more difficult, of course, for farmers who don’t live near large centres of populations, to diversify into something profitable enough to subsidise the farm. If this crisis in dairy continues it will inevitably impact on all of us and that is why we need to act now to protect our farmers and ensure they get a fair price for their milk.”

Archbishop Morgan visited Marcross Farm with the Diocese of Llandaff’s rural life adviser, the Revd the Revd Anthony Beer.

He said: “As a church we are concerned about our neighbours who farm and who are becoming increasingly isolated as they have to put in extra hours. We are doing all we can to support them, such as maintaining links by visiting them on the farms and this year churches in the Llantwit Major area are donating their Harvest Festival

collections to the Farming Community Network charity which helps and advises struggling farmers.”

Mrs Evans added, “It really does mean a lot to have the church alongside. I know we have assets and we are by no means poor, but we are struggling, and it’s not the money side of it that we are afraid of losing.”

The Arthur Rank Centre is an ecumenical initiative to support those working in agriculture in Britain. Its chief executive, Jerry Marshall, said: “The number of dairy farmers has halved over little more than a decade. Prices are at their lowest since 2007 while costs have risen 36 per cent.”

It is a call supported by the Church of England’s national rural officer, Canon Dr Jill Hopkinson. “Churches can support the industry by buying British dairy products. . . Church members could also show their support through choosing to buy milk from supermarkets that pay a fair price to farmers.”

The sector is attracting support from across the denominations. The Revd Elizabeth Clark,

national rural officer for the Methodist and United Reformed churches, said: “British dairy farmers are facing an exceptionally difficult time so we are calling on churches to pray for the industry. Give thanks for the vital food that dairy farmers produce [and] pray for those struggling because of the present low prices.”

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