



Rev Canon John Merrick, Councillor Elizabeth Rogula, Roger Chadwick, Deputy Governor, The Honourable The Irish Society, Very Rev Dr William Morton, DL, Dean of Derry, Mrs Chris Chadwick and Canon David Parrott, Church of St Lawrence Jewry. Back: Members of The Honourable The Irish Society, Councillor Ian Seaton, Councillor Chris Hayward, Alderman William Russell and Edward Montgomery, Secretary and Representative (Ireland).

St Columb's Londonderry twinned with London's historic Guildhall Church

St Columb's Cathedral has been formally twinned with the Guildhall Church of St Lawrence Jewry in London.

Londonderry Sentinel - Among those to attend the historic event held on Sunday, during Choral Evensong, were members from The Honourable the Irish Society, headed by the new Deputy Governor Roger Chadwick, who is also the treasurer of the Church of St Lawrence Jewry. Rev Canon David Parrott, Guild Vicar, was also in attendance for the service on Sunday, and was hosted for the visit here by the Dean of Derry, Very Rev Dr William Morton. To mark the occasion, Canon Parrott, who is also Chaplain to the Corporation of the City of London, was asked to give the sermon.

Describing the twinning as “a marvellous event”, the Dean of Derry said the twinning had a very large degree of significance for the City of Londonderry and for St Columb's Cathedral.

“When you think about it, the respective roles of each church are very similar and it is, therefore, quite appropriate that St Columb's and St Lawrence Jewry are twinned, because they are both in the city centre, there is a distinct civic role and special occasions are launched from both venues, which in our case involved the

launch of the Lighting Strategy, and many different civic occasions where you have civic and public representatives present. These types of events and services are held in each of these churches.

“I think that, in terms of all that has been achieved, and continues to be achieved by The Honourable The Irish Society and also by us in widening our horizons about how we do things in terms of the wider church, that it is an enormously healthy development that we are linked in this way with the church in London.

The dignitaries were formally welcomed to the Cathedral by the Dean of Derry and both clergymen and the members of The Honourable The Irish Society performed the official launch.

Speaking after the event, the Dean of Derry, Dr Morton, said: “It will mean next year, possibly in the Spring, that I would maybe go to London and preach in their church. So, it is going to be a very two-way reciprocal process.

“I am really thrilled about the twinning and the prospect of preaching in St Lawrence Jewry, I think it is a wonderful idea, as is the idea of taking the Cathedral Choir over to London and vice versa.

Charities respond to Irish budget - disappointment on homelessness

There was disappointment among homeless charities over the failure of Ministers Michael Noonan and Alan Kelly to agree proposals to tackle rising rents in time for Budget 2016.

CEO of the Peter McVerry Trust Pat Doyle said, “We are disappointed the Government chose not to do anything of note for homeless individuals, couples and families.”

“We welcome the additional €38 million for TUSLA particularly given the rapidly rising numbers of homeless children. It is also very disappointing that nothing additional is being proposed in the areas of mental health services and drug treatment supports.”

He said that an improving economy will not automatically help the most vulnerable and that the homeless are “simply not important” to politicians.

“That or they have simply ignored the issue. Increasing spending in emergency accommodation will not solve homelessness, investment in housing and areas such as drug treatment, mental health and children and youth

affairs are the solutions to this emergency,” said Pat Doyle.

Minister Noonan said in his Dáil speech: “It is clear that there is a market failure in the provision of new housing across the country but particularly in Dublin. Driven by demographic demands and strong economic growth, there is a requirement for a minimum of 10,000 new units per annum in the Dublin area but the market only delivered 3,300 units in the last year.

He added, “NAMA is aiming to deliver a target of 20,000 residential units before the end of 2020. 90 per cent of these units will be in the greater Dublin area. About 75 per cent of these units will be houses, mainly starter homes.”

He said this would mean an average of 80 new housing units every week.

Mike Allen, Director of Advocacy with Focus Ireland, said that the much needed €17 million will all be paid to hotel owners or to provide modular emergency housing.

“The crucial thing is that there is nothing at all to slow down the shocking number of families becoming homeless. There are now four times as many homeless families – 740 families – as there were two years ago on budget day. That’s

over 1,500 children facing Christmas without a home. There is nothing in the budget to stop that number doubling again in a year.”

He appealed to the public to lobby vote seeking politicians for rent certainty, and adequate rent supplement and measures to stop tenants losing their homes when their landlord gets into difficulties.

The Society of St Vincent de Paul (SVP) was also disappointed lack of measures to improve the private rented sector.

With reference to capital expenditure on social housing, the charity stated that the Government proposals do not provide even sufficient funding to stand still.

“There are at least 89,000 households in need of social housing, as last measured in 2013; the Government’s Social Housing 2020 only provides for 35,000 new homes, and it is far too slow in being implemented. SVP wants to see the 20,000 NAMA units announced in today’s Budget being social and affordable homes,” stated the charity.

Overall SVP welcomed the thrust of the budget but said that it is only giving back a small element of the losses Irish people have endured

in recent years and could have been more targeted.

SVP was pleased with the reductions in USC for low paid workers, increasing the statutory minimum wage, increasing the fuel allowance, the increase in FIS income threshold and the earnings disregard for lone parents on jobseekers transitional payment.

The changes to the early years care and education sector were also welcomed.

“It should result in immediate impact for young families,” said the charity referring to the additional 8,000 places in the Community Childcare Subvention Scheme, extending the free Pre-School to three year olds and introducing two weeks of paternity leave from next July.

“Supporting families in the first critical years of a child’s life reaps long-term social and economic returns,” stated the charity.

Trócaire welcomed the Government’s decision to increase the overseas development assistance budget by €40 million to €640 million.

“This signals a welcome end to the years of cuts to the overseas aid budget that have had a cruel

impact on some of the world's poorest people,” said Trócaire Executive Director Éamonn Meehan.

Trócaire has also called for a road map to outline how Ireland will reach its international commitment of spending 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on overseas assistance. Current spend stands at just 0.35% of GNI.

The Immigrant Council of Ireland welcomed the announcement of €25m for the refugee crisis but it cautioned that the Government must also commit to keep the figure under review.

Brian Killoran, Chief Executive of the Immigrant Council of Ireland said, “Ensuring proper integration of those arriving in Ireland is key.”

He said this will involve providing refugees with access to education, training and employment and the opportunity to participate in their new communities.

Duke sees cross-community work in Clogher churches

During his stay in Fermanagh the Duke of Kent saw at first hand the cross community work between the Graan and Rossorry Parish Church.



Fr Brian D'Arcy and the Duke of Kent enjoy a cup of tea during the visit

Fermanagh Herald - The Duke heard how Fr D'Arcy “crossed Christian divides” 20 years ago along with, Archdeacon Cecil Pringle – a relationship between the two parishes which continues today under the ministry of Dr Ian Ellis.

A number of guests from the Graan Monastery Community, Rossorry Church of Ireland, local schools, businesses and representatives from the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council were introduced to the Duke, before he visited a

memorial erected in memory of American airmen who lost their lives following a plane crash in nearby Folly Field, on December 9 1943.

During a speech to the Duke, Father D'Arcy said, "In the words of your cousin, Her Majesty the Queen, on her historic visit to Dublin; Cead Mile Failte. – We appreciate your kindness when you included us on your very busy schedule here in beautiful Fermanagh."

He further welcomed church representatives and community representatives saying, "They have held our community together in the most difficult years of violence which we have endured. Without these unsung heroes our communities would have perished."

Church of Ireland minister offered to fight parishioner in dispute over rectory

A Church of Ireland rector threatened a parishioner - offering to fight him, the Belfast Telegraph reported.

The altercation was one of a number reported to Church of Ireland authorities concerning the Rev Brian Stewart of St George's in Belfast city



The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, with Rev Brian Stewart (left), rector of St George's Church, in Belfast

centre. It is understood that Rev Stewart has been the subject of at least three complaints.

One recent complaint was made by the wife of another Church of Ireland priest, Maire Foster, who said that Rev Stewart had ordered her into his office at the church and shouted at her for 10 minutes after she challenged him during the

church's AGM in April. He then told her that he wanted her to leave the church.

The next day, he informed her that the monthly Irish language service she ran at the church was being suspended.

While her complaint is currently being investigated, two charitable projects she helps run - Men to Men and The Joseph Project - have been ordered to leave St George's, where they were based.

Two years before Ms Foster's complaint, a remarkably similar complaint against Rev Stewart was made to Bishop Alan Abernethy in 2007 by another member of the church, Colin Armstrong.

Mr Armstrong claimed that a dispute with Rev Stewart ended in the Rector's office, where Rev Stewart shouted at him for 20 minutes and waved his fist in his face.

Afterwards, he alleged that Rev Stewart told him it would be better if he left the church "at least for a little while". Mr Armstrong is autistic and has a history of suicidal depression.

In an interview with the Belfast Telegraph, Mr Armstrong said that Rev Stewart was aware of

his mental health issues, as he had visited him during his stay as a voluntary patient at a psychiatric unit in Belfast between 2006 and 2008. Mr Armstrong waived his anonymity to speak to the newspaper.

Mr Armstrong told the Church of Ireland representative investigating his case, Belfast Archdeacon Stephen McBride, that Rev Stewart had told him about an altercation with another parishioner after he complained about his children - an incident confirmed by Ms Foster, who was present when it happened.

It is understood that, at one point during a dispute over the sale of St George's rectory in 2007, Rev Stewart told the parishioner: "Let's go outside and settle this like gentlemen".

Ultimately, the Church of Ireland investigation found in favour of Rev Stewart, declining to pursue any disciplinary action against him. Summarising his findings, Archdeacon McBride attributed blame for the dispute to Rev Armstrong's "condition", saying it could cause stress to others.

Archdeacon McBride also declined to reopen an investigation into prior complaints made against Rev Stewart, when a delegation from the church visited the Bishop of Connor to make a

complaint about the minister's behaviour during the dispute over the sale of the rectory.

He wrote: "I decided not to re-open what I understand to have been a time of tension in the parish over differing views about the purchase."

A subsequent appeal upheld the archdeacon's conclusions.

Rev Stewart's history of temperamental behaviour appears to pre-date the 2007 complaint made to Bishop Abernethy.

In a letter to the Irish Times, dated March 8, 2001, written in response to another letter the newspaper had printed from Rev Father David O'Hanlon, which was critical of the Church of Ireland, Rev Stewart wrote: "I would respectfully request that a Roman Catholic bishop, preferably a former Gaelic, or rugby forward apply a suitably shod episcopal toe to Father O'Hanlon's posterior ... should there be any difficulties finding an episcopal, or clerical, volunteer in Father O'Hanlon's own Church, then I, as a priest of the Church of Ireland and purely in the interest of better relations, humbly offer my services. I wear a size 12 boot, which should do nicely."

In a statement to the Belfast Telegraph, the Church of Ireland said: "The Diocese of Connor is concerned at the factual accuracy, or otherwise, of assertions put to us by the Belfast Telegraph.

"Since 2009, the diocese has operated a process whereby complaints are investigated. This process provides for a review of any decisions reached following any investigation.

"All complaints are treated confidentially to protect the data protection rights of both complainants and the Church's staff and clergy, as well as ensuring compliance with employment and equality legislation.

"In those circumstances, it is not appropriate to comment further on these matters."

Irish services continue at St George's, Belfast

A report on the Connor diocesan web site state - St George's Parish Church, Belfast, held its Harvest Thanksgiving Service, Altú an Fhómhair, in Irish on Sunday October 11.

The service was conducted by the Rev David MacDonnell, rector of Dunfanaghy in the

Diocese of Raphoe and the Lessons were read by Gordon McCoy and Micheál Ó Mainnín.

The Prayers were led by Caroline Nolan from Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise (the Irish Guild of the Church) and Dáithí Ó Maolchoille.

The singing was led by Wallace High School Honours Choir.

Following the service there were refreshments in the Parish Hall.

The next service in Irish in St George's will be a Carol Service which is planned for December 6 at 5pm. All are welcome.

Dublin diocese must plan for changing situations

We are living in a time of unprecedented change and we must be on our guard against planning for situations that are already changing. This was the warning issued by Dr Kenneth Milne while proposing the report of Diocesan Councils at Dublin and Glendalough's Diocesan Synod in Taney Parish Centre yesterday evening (October 13). He said this year's report of Diocesan Councils highlights the awareness of the need for change and developments where the



dioceses can be seen to be grappling with enormous challenges.

“Society has always been in a state of flux and change. What is unprecedented is the scale of change in our time, and the rapidity with which it is happening. Probably most people would accept that such is the case. I think we must likewise accept that it would be unrealistic to expect that somehow we can avoid fairly uncomfortable change in matters relating to the Church, if we are to serve society,” Dr Milne stated. “We have constantly to bear in mind the danger of planning for a future that is fast becoming the past.”

He said that the most influential change to take place in recent years was in the area of education. Enormous expansion had taken place in third level education and this was reflected in the number of third level chaplaincies mentioned

in the report, he said. He also focused on the work of the Sunday School Society and children's ministry. Dr Milne welcomed the cooperation of the Young Adults Ministry with the Office for Evangelisation and Ecumenism of the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin.

Revolutionary changes in communication were also highlighted. "The assertion that today's revolution in communications is equivalent to the invention of the printing press [may be a cliché]. We know the impact that printing made to religious life, when as literacy spread, every man and woman could read for themselves. We live in a situation today, when every man and woman can be their own publisher and disseminator of ideas. Open to abuse the social media may be, but so is the print media... No task for today's Church can be more urgent than to take advantage of what is happening in communications, not least the social media," Dr Milne stated.

A wide range of issues was raised during the debate on the report. Diocesan Children's Ministry Advisor, the Revd Baden Stanley (Bray), said he was in the process of visiting all the Rural Deaneries in Dublin and Glendalough to get to the heart of what was happening in children's ministry in the dioceses. He thanked

all who were involved in the organisation of the Diocesan Kids' Summer Camp and highlighted the resources provided by the Sunday School Society and the Church of Ireland Children's Ministry, including the Building Blocks Conference which will take place on November 14 in St Andrew's College, Booterstown.

More at

<http://dublin.anglican.org/news/2015/10/-We-have-to-bear-in-mind-the-danger-of-planning-for-a-future-that-is-fast-becoming-the-past-Report-of-Diocesan-Councils-to-Synod>

Openly gay clergy celebrate election victories to CofE General Synod

At least four openly gay clergymen have been elected to the General Synod of the Church of England.

One is married, two are in civil partnerships and the fourth is planning to seal his relationship with a civil ceremony.

Early results show many openly-gay clergy winning election to the synod, the governing



body of the Church, at a time when the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, is attempting to find a way to prevent the total fragmentation of the Anglican Communion over the issue of homosexuality.

One solution will be to change the structure to a looser, more federal organisation in which the more liberal provinces could thrive more easily alongside conservative evangelical churches.

More results are expected throughout the week, including to the House of Laity where several gay activists have gone up against conservative evangelicals. Early results however indicate

significant victories for the liberal wing, after a decade when evangelicals seemed dominant.

The four included Rev Bertrand Olivier, vicar of [All Hallows by the Tower](#), who tweeted: "Very excited to have been elected to [#generalsynod](#) today, and looking forward to working for an [@inclusivechurch](#) in the next 5 years."

Media digest

New Statesman

Profile of the Archbishop of Canterbury under the headline "Archbishop Welby and the hidden price of being Mister Nice Guy".

<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/religion/2015/10/archbishop-welby-and-hidden-price-being-mister-nice-guy>

Tel

Article on report from the [Church Buildings Review Group](#). The group, chaired by the Bishop of Worcester, is part of the Reform and Renewal programme, and has launched a consultation on proposals to improve the support for its 16,000 church buildings. The article focuses on a proposed change in ecclesiastical law to allow some, mainly rural parishes with small congregations, to be designated as "festival churches", and used only for important celebrations such as Christmas or occasional weddings and funerals.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11929992/Church-of-England-considers-Christmas-only-parishes.html>

BBC

Reports the ongoing trial of Vickery House at the Old Bailey. A retired CofE priest now living in West Sussex, Mr House denies eight charges of indecent assault.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-34517336>

BBC

Reports that the Bishop of Gloucester, Rachel Treweek, will be the first female bishop in the House of Lords. Bishop Rachel will enter the upper chamber on October 26th.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-34518156>

Tel (Tuesday)

Reports comments made by the former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Williams. In a newly published book on the legacy of Victorian social reformer Octavia Hill. Lord Williams asserts that children are growing up in a culture with few if any heroes and that the ideas of nobility and honour are quietly disappearing.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11927068/Rowan-Williams-celebrity-culture-as-damaging-to-future-generations-as-pollution.html>

Tel (Tuesday)

The article profiles the history, work and financial acumen of the Church Commissioners, which invests £7bn on behalf of the Church of England.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/personalfinance/special-reports/11927115/How-to-invest-like-...-the-Church-of-Englands-money-men.html>

Guard

Reports the funeral at Bradford Cathedral of Geoffrey Brindley. For more than 50 years Mr Brindley walked the streets of the city dressed in monk's habit and sandals. Report notes his choice of dress and contented air earned him the nickname, the Jesus Man. Many attending the service recalled acts of kindness shown to them by the 88 year old.

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/oct/13/hundreds-gathers-bradford-cathedral-funeral-jesus-man>

Guard

A report published by Catholic group *Aid to the Church in Need* (see below) says that Christianity is in danger of ceasing to be a global faith as thousands flee from violence and persecution in parts of the Middle East and Africa. The report says that in the last two years conditions have worsened for Christians in 15 of the 19 countries the group monitors.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/13/christianity-under-global-threat-persecution-says-report>

Tel

Reports that a leading Christian Archbishop based in Aleppo in Northern Syria has welcomed the intervention of Russia in the civil war and is calling on western governments to support President Bashar al-Assad rather than rebel groups. Archbishop Jean-Clément Jeanbart, says that the Russian engagement has brought hope to the Christian minority in the country. The bishop made his

comments ahead of a visit to the House of Lords, where he gave a speech at event to mark the launch of a new report on the persecution of Christians worldwide.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/11929694/Syria-archbishop-calls-on-West-to-back-President-Bashar-al-Assad-in-war-against-Islamist-rebels.html>

Times

A profile based on archives of the British nurse, Edith Cavell, who was executed by German firing squad 100 years ago this week.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/archive/first-world-war/article4584783.ece>

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