



The new Labyrinth at Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork.

New prayer labyrinth at Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork

A prayer labyrinth will be dedicated at St Finbarre's Cathedral, Cork on Monday next by Bishop Paul Colton.

The Cathedral publicity states - "The Cathedral Labyrinth is a single, winding path, without branches, that leads to a centre. Unlike mazes, where choices of direction have to be made and it is impossible to see the end of the journey, labyrinths offer no choices and lead to a central goal which is visible at every stage of the journey.

"The first labyrinths date to around 4000 BC, appearing on rock carvings and paintings around the world. In Greek mythology the labyrinth was an elaborate structure built to hold the mythical creature, the Minotaur. By the twelfth century labyrinths, centred on the shape of the cross, had become popular in cathedrals and churches across Europe. Known as "Roads to Jerusalem", they were often substituted for pilgrimages to the Holy Land at times when a journey to Jerusalem was too dangerous to undertake.

"The most famous of these, the Chartres Cathedral labyrinth in France, dates from about 1200 AD. With eleven circuits, it is probably the most walked labyrinth in history. The Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral labyrinth is based on this design.

"There are no hard and fast rules about using a labyrinth. Labyrinths remain enigmatic and mysterious and are better experienced than explained. Visitors to the Cathedral can walk the labyrinth whilst praying, considering a problem, meditating, repeating a sacred word, using prayer beads or without any clear intent. Those who are involved in Mindfulness may find the labyrinth of particular use to them. It takes approximately ten minutes to complete."

Archbishop Eamon Martin's message to family of murdered police officer

On behalf of Archbishop Eamon Martin, Dean Colum Curry, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Armagh, delivered the following message at the Funeral Mass of the late Anthony Golden yesterday:

Dear Nicola, Lucy, Alex and Andrew,

I am here in Rome where bishops from all over the world have gathered with Pope Francis to reflect on the meaning and importance of the family in today's world.

I cannot imagine the terrible pain and loss that you are feeling these days.

I'm thinking of Tony's mother and father, sister and brothers.

Nicola I am also thinking of your parents and sister, and all the members of your extended families.



I know also that Tony's colleagues in An Garda Síochána were like a family to him, and the communities of Omeath and Blackrock considered him as one of their own.

I am with you in thought and prayer as you gather today, as a Christian family, to comfort

one another, to thank God for Tony's goodness, and to honour his life.

It was typical of Tony, as a true guardian of the peace, to reach out so unselfishly to someone who needed his help. We continue to pray for Siobhan's recovery.

May God reward him and comfort all of you in your grief.

Funderland NI tracksuit snub 'shows need to tackle sectarianism' - PCI minister

A Presbyterian minister has branded the decision of Funderland to turn a man away because of his Northern Ireland football attire an "outrage".

News Letter - However, Rev Steve Stockman said that it is a symptom of a whole culture mired in sectarianism, and advised that anger should be focused on this root cause.

He was writing after it emerged Stuart Meikle had been turned away from the funfair in Belfast

on Saturday because of its policy of not permitting “team colours”.



NI players celebrate qualifying for the 2016 European Championship finals on Thursday, just days before a fan in a trackout was refused entry to Funderland

In an article published online, Rev Stockman said: “It is wrong someone cannot wear the national team’s sports shirts and tracksuits in a public place.

“So I want to protest against such a thing happening. However, let me ask where we need to take our protest.

“For many years bars and other public places in Northern Ireland have banned sports shirts.

“This ban, however, is not like the middle-class snobby dress code that stopped me playing golf over 20 years ago. This is something deeper and more sinister.

“The fear within public places, in our wee country, is that a sports jersey can give away religious allegiance and cause trouble.”

He called on readers to examine their own attitudes and behaviour in response to what he termed “the Funderland outrage”, to help build a culture where anyone can wear sports attire without it arousing “prejudice or offence”.

In his message late on Tuesday, which has been circulated on social media since, the minister of Fitzroy Presbyterian Church in south Belfast concluded: “So, let us be hopping mad that a man had to sit in his car while his pregnant wife took his young child round Funderland without him...

“But let us aim our protests not at the symptoms of our sectarianism but at the deadly virus itself. Let us attack the right places that will bring long term cure.”

Writing on the website Twitter, the Linfield football player Mark Haughey said: “I also had to turn my Linfield hoodie inside out to enter!”

John Magee, the marketing manager of Funderland, said on the BBC Nolan Show on Tuesday that the fair has had the same policy for 34 years, and that it was introduced at the behest of the RUC.

Mr Meikle put it to him that a Funderland security guard had specifically described his tracksuit as “sectarian”.

Mr Magee said: “It should not happen. I’d never advise the use of the word ‘sectarian’.”

He added: “We apply the policy without fear or favour across the board. Obviously this year it’s particularly sensitive because Northern Ireland have had such a wonderful success ... but our policy has been there a long time.”

Moneyreagh’s Big Birthday Weekend

This weekend Moneyreagh Community Church, one of Down and Dromore’s church plants, will celebrate its 2nd Birthday with a number of fun events for the whole community.



On Friday at 7.00 pm, the Community Centre is the venue for a Curry and Movie Night for all ages when the comedy 'Evan Almighty', will be on the big screen. The movie keeps with the theme of baptism.

On Saturday at 2.00 pm, Moneyreagh United will play a home game so come along and support them. There will be free hot dogs and drinks for the players and supporters.

And the highlight is on Sunday from 10.30 am (with worship at 11.00 am) when the church will welcome two baby girls into Christ's Church in baptism. What a way to celebrate! (Don't miss your bacon buttie either).

Moneyreagh Community Church was the first church in Down and Dromore's 'plantforHim'

initiative. It meets each week at at 11.00 am in the village's Community Centre and also has a midweek programme. It is led by Revd Mervyn Jamison.

www.moneyreaghcommunitychurch.org

Catholic divide deepens as traditionalists call for Synod walkout

The Catholic Church moved closer to a split over homosexuality and marriage after divorce today after traditionalists called for a walk out by “faithful” bishops at the Synod on the Family in Rome, Ruth Gledhill writes in Christian Today.

The Twitter hashtag #synodwalkout quickly began trending after the conservative blog [One Peter Five](#) set up a change.org petition calling on the conservative cardinals and archbishops to stage a walkout. Within hours of being posted early this morning, the petition gained more than 1,600 signatures.

Observers in Rome and on social media began talking of “chaos”, and headlines such as

[“showdown in Rome”](#) began to appear on well-informed conservative websites.

One Peter Five reports: “As the evidence mounts that the Synod’s outcome has been pre-determined, I have joined a number of other concerned Catholics in writing an open letter. In it, we request that those Synod fathers who are faithful to Christ’s teachings, if they continue to be thwarted in their efforts, walk out of the Synod before it is over rather than allow their participation be interpreted as support.”

The conservative blogger adds: “Even at this late hour, we must try to protect the faith.”

More at -

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/plots.to.undermine.pope.as.catholic.church.divides.over.gays.and.marriage/67704.htm>

Abortion law devolved to Scotland despite warnings

Abortion law is to be devolved to Scotland despite warnings that having two different sets of rules within the UK could lead to cross-Border



traffic of pregnant women seeking terminations, writes Simon Johnson in the Daily Telegraph

David Mundell, the Scottish Secretary, said he could find no “convincing constitutional reason” why the controversial move should not go ahead after examining the issue in talks with SNP ministers in Edinburgh.

The UK Government will now table amendments to the Scotland Bill, which is devolving [a swathe of new tax and benefit powers](#), to add control over abortion law.

That would allow MSPs to increase or lower the existing 24-week limit for abortions. Although the Scottish Government last night insisted it had no plans to change the rules, Alex Salmond has

previously suggested it could be reduced to 20 weeks.

The change was pushed through despite [the Church of Scotland having previously voiced concerns about abortion traffic if different rules applied north and south of the Border.](#)

C of E warns against Sunday trading extension

The Church of England's Mission and Public Affairs Council (MPA) has warned that a relaxation of the rules governing the number of hours that large stores can open on a Sunday would "erode common leisure time essential for family life"

Currently, large stores (over 280 square metres in size) in England and Wales can only open for up to six consecutive hours between 10am and 6pm; but they must close on Easter Sunday and Christmas Day.

In his Budget speech in the Spring, the Chancellor George Osborne announced plans to

devolve powers to regulate in this area to local authorities – elected mayors or local councils – subject to a public consultation.

“The Church of England has consistently resisted attempts to make Sunday a shopping day like any other,” the C of E’s MPA said in its response to the consultation. “It has, however, never taken a rigorously Sabbatarian position which condemned all work undertaken on a Sunday, nor has it sought to impose Christian worship, or specific religious understandings of society, on others.”

It said that the C of E’s arguments have been based on three principles “which are shared by many people of other faiths, and of none.” These are the protection of vulnerable members of society, the importance for human well-being of having a rhythm of work and leisure, and the necessity of protecting time when people can undertake elective activities together.

“The consultation document alludes to the religious objections which some hold toward Sunday Trading,” the MPA say. “This does not adequately capture the Church of England’s position.

We are not motivated solely by our own interests or a desire to maximise participation in our own Sunday activities. Nor do our arguments start from revealed doctrines that are not accessible to non-believers.

“Our objections to extended Sunday shopping hours stem from our commitment as Christians, and as the national church, to the common good of all the communities of this country. We believe that a shared day of leisure for a critical mass of the population is a necessity if people are to be able to work together for the common good and that this will be damaged by further extending shop opening hours.

“The fact that the common day of leisure in Britain is Sunday reflects the Christian heritage of the nation. For those who are not Christians, the protection of one day of the week as a time of shared leisure remains important. The point at issue is not that Sunday is a uniquely and intrinsically ‘holy day’ but that society is diminished if all days are treated the same in commercial terms.”

The C of E’s response also suggests that devolving the decision to local authorities would be unfair, saying that mayors and local councils “are not in a position to negotiate on a level play field with some of the larger retail corporations.

“If local decision making is to be meaningful, local areas must be in a position to make decisions which would not be attractive to retailers, as well as decisions that retailers want. A way of testing the proposition is to ask what might happen if a local area wished to restrict Sunday opening to fewer hours than the 1994 Act permits.

“The fact that the consultation document nowhere imagines this possibility implies a covert assumption that the only decision a local area might be permitted to make is to extend hours. If that were the only option, it would be a mockery of local decision making.”

The C of E concludes that “much more thought is necessary before devolution of decision making is meaningful and we cannot support the proposals as currently framed.”

The consultation period on the proposals closed on the 16 September. The C of E’s response is dated September but was published today (15 October).

Media digest

American anti-abortion clinic opens next to Marie Stopes in Belfast - Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/womens-health/11929927/American-anti-abortion-clinic-by-Marie-Stopes-in-Belfast.html>

News Letter

A new US healthcare facility offering practical assistance for women facing unexpected pregnancies has opened in

the same Belfast street as the Marie Stopes abortion clinic.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/bernie-smyth-hopes-pro-life-clinic-can-replace-marie-stopes-1-7011185>

North caught in tangled web 'dealing' with the past - Irish Times comment

<http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/north-caught-in-tangled-web-dealing-with-the-past-1.2392307>

Mail/Guard/Premier

Further articles on report from the Church Buildings Review Group (published Tuesday). 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. Articles focus 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.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3273355/CofE-churches-soon-open-Easter-Christmas-One-four-parishes-fewer-ten-worshippers.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3273355/CofE-churches-soon-open-Easter-Christmas-One-four-parishes-fewer-ten-worshippers.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/14/church-of-england-predicts-rise-part-time-churches-attendance-plummet>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/1-in-4-rural-CofE-churches-has-less-than-10-worshippers-says-new-report>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/1-in-4-rural-CofE-churches-has-less-than-10-worshippers-says-new-report>

BBC/Times

Plans for the biggest grammar school expansion in England for more than 50 years are to be announced today. Ministers are expected to approve that the Weald of Kent grammar in Tonbridge Kent can build an annex at a site several miles away in Sevenoaks. It will result in the 450 places available being allocated by academic selection.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-34535778>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/education/article4586345.ece>

Tel/Ind/BBC/Times/Guard/Scotsman

Reports that the abortion law is about to be devolved to the Scottish parliament from Westminster. The Scotland Bill will be amended to give Edinburgh the power. This could allow MSP's to increase or lower the existing 24-week limit for abortions. Reports note concerns have been raised over pregnant women crossing the border to seek terminations, if the law changes.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/scotland/11931923/Abortion-law-devolved-to-Scotland-despite-warnings.html>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/scottish-parliament-set-to-be-handed-control-over-abortion-laws-a6694296.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-34527208>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/scotland/article4586510.ece>

<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2015/oct/14/devolution-abortion-laws-scotland-labour>

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/top-stories/abortion-law-to-be-devolved-to-holyrood-1-3916933#axzz3obv4SvHq>

Tel

Reports that an American scholar has found the earliest draft of the King James Bible, hidden in a notebook, in a collection of papers in a Cambridge College. The notebook belonged to Samuel Ward, who served as the Sidney Sussex College's master, after working as one of seven men in Cambridge who translated disputed passages for the King James Bible.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11932569/First-draft-of-King-James-Bible-found-in-neglected-notebook.html>

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