



Image of the day
All Saints' Parish Church Antrim and the Sixmile River

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News Reports

The Reality of Educational Disadvantage in Ireland

An ambitious housing programme delivered through funding from Government and HEI's to build student accommodation on campus is urgently needed, says SVP Ireland

Lisa will receive a €200 increase through the SUSI maintenance grant payment in 2022. This is the first rise since 2012. This is a positive development for Lisa as she progresses through her final year of study, however, it will not be sufficient to cover her basic living costs, such as food, heat, and utilities bills. Increasing SUSI maintenance grant rates to bring them in line with the cost of living would hugely benefit students like Lisa. As a first step in Budget 2022, they should have been increased by at least 10% or by €591 for a student in Lisa's circumstances.

Approximately €17.2 million has been allocated to the Student Assistance Fund which was announced by Minister Harris the day before the budget. The SAF is available to help with costs such as books and class materials, rent and other utility bills, food, essential travel, childcare costs, and medical costs. While this is a welcome announcement, and should give a little reassurance to Lisa, as there is likely to be increased demand, as students continue to be impacted by rising accommodation costs and insufficient financial support provided through the student grant for 2021. Also, some universities have a closing date for applications and



do not operate throughout the academic year. Ensuring sufficient funding is allocated to the Student Assistance Fund so that it can remain open throughout the academic year, and until SUSI maintenance grant levels are brought in line with the cost of living would have assisted Lisa through her studies.

Like many other students attending university, Lisa will continue to be faced with high accommodation costs, as Budget 2022 did not introduce measures to make renting accommodation more affordable. She was very fortunate to be able to return to the previous accommodation she had been renting in her second year of study. Some of her friends are commuting from home every day as they could not find somewhere to live near the university. An ambitious housing programme delivered through funding from Government and HEI's to build student accommodation on campus is urgently needed.

[[] <https://www.svp.ie/educationbudget2022>]

Canadian Anglicans & Lutherans will meet for joint Assembly in 2022

Delegates to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada's National Convention and the Anglican Church of Canada's General Synod will gather together next July for Assembly 2022.

Inspired by the theme "Let There be Greening," delegates, special guests and partners will gather for worship, workshops, special presentations and business sessions.

2021 is the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Waterloo Declaration, which brought the two churches into full communion. Anglican and Lutherans may mutually share in each other's celebrations of the Eucharist and Anglican and Lutheran clergy may serve in either church.

Growing numbers of Catholics everywhere except Europe

Vatican census released ahead of World Mission Day reveals growing numbers of Catholics in what Pope Francis often refers to as "the global peripheries," even as the number of believers continues to diminish in Europe.

The number of Catholics in the world grew by more than 15 million from 2018 to 2019, according to a census by the Vatican news agency Fides published on Thursday (Oct.

21). "The increase applies to all continents, except Europe," which saw the number of Catholic faithful decrease by almost 300,000, the survey found.

The data was released ahead of the 95th World Mission Day, which will be celebrated on Sunday in dioceses around the globe following the one-year hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the census, conducted annually among Catholic faithful, Catholics represented 17.7% of the global population in 2019. As Catholicism gained followers in Africa, the Americas and Asia, the church's numbers waned in Europe, the historic basin of Catholicism that is now increasingly becoming a mission territory.

While the number of Catholic priests has grown overall, Europe has seen a consistent decrease in clergy, where the number of faithful per priest grew to more than 3,245-to-1. For the seventh year in a row, the number of religious brothers and sisters has declined everywhere, with Africa as the only exception. Religious sisters experienced the sharpest decline, losing 11,562 members.

Seminarians studying to become priests also shrunk globally, especially in minor seminaries for people between 11 and 18 years old. Bishops diminished by 13, now totaling 5,364 globally.

While clergy members experienced a steep fall worldwide, the number of lay missionaries grew significantly, especially in the Americas and Africa, with only a small decrease in

Asia. Catechists saw their numbers reduced by 2,590, with the Americas and Europe registering the highest drops.

The Fides data accounts for all Catholics until Dec. 31, 2019. Given the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent church closures and deaths, experts at a Vatican news conference on Thursday admitted the numbers may have changed substantially during 2020.

People and places

St Comgall's all prepared for safe return of youth activities

As part of its Covid-safe policy, St Comgall's Parish Church, Rathcoole, is issuing each child and leader in the various parish youth and children's organisations with their own personal tub of stationery resources for use in their activities when they meet.

Priest-in-Charge, the Rev Arlene Moore, expressed thanks to Engage Connor Youth for a grant towards the cost of this, and the members of St Comgall's Select Vestry who picked up the bulk of the tab.

Each tub contains a pack of coloured pencils, a container of felt tips, a small box of crayons, a gluestick, pencil case containing a ruler, pencil, pen, rubber, sharpener, child friendly scissors, and a small roll of sticking tape. Not forgetting a welcome packet of sweeties!



Stationery boxes packed and ready for use by the young people and leaders in the various organisations in St Comgall's, Rathcoole.

Each child and leader will also have an individualised popper wallet to store any worksheets or colouring in pages.

Arlene said: "Other items may be added to the tubs as needed. All contents will be labelled with the child/leader's name to avoid confusion and accidental sharing."

The tubs and their contents will not be taken home, but stay on site to be available for use each week and sanitised after use.



Puppets are helping get the message across

Arlene added: “A child-friendly walkthrough video was also prepared to welcome back all our youth and children’s organisations and to introduce them to the procedures we have in place in line with our Covid policy and risk assessments.

“Clergy, parish readers and organisation leaders alike had fun putting this video together, with the help of several puppet friends dressed and ready to go in their different organisation uniforms.”

Eve of COP26 Bells to ring out

On Saturday 30, on the eve of COP26 churches across the UK are being encouraged to ring their bells for 30 minutes from 6pm.

Bells are associated with the call to worship and celebrations but they also have another historic function: to ring out warning.



Following the most memorable Service of Reflection and reconciliation at Armagh Cathedral, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Belfast (right) with The Dean of Armagh, Very Rev Shane Forster and The Secretary to The Methodist Conference, Rev Heather Morris.

Belfast Harbour Community Awards Fund open for applications

Following a successful launch earlier this year, Belfast Harbour has reopened applications for the Belfast Harbour Community Awards Fund, which has already seen £25,000

awarded to grass-roots community organisations and charities.

Providing grants of up to £2,500 to local community projects, the programme is open to eligible community organisations, not for profit groups, and charities registered in Northern Ireland.

The Community Awards Fund builds on Belfast Harbour's ongoing programme of investment in local communities, and seeks to support them as they recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Projects benefitting from the first round of the Awards Fund included mental health and wellbeing programmes, community events and sports programmes to promote diversity and inclusion, as well as environmental and community garden projects.

Many of the successful recipients utilised their grants to bring people back together and unite local communities throughout the summer, while others invested in the biodiversity of their areas, and teaching young people the importance of sustainability.

Allison Dowling, Communications and Marketing Director at Belfast Harbour, commented on the success of the Awards programme to date: "We are delighted to reopen the Community Awards Fund, and provide more people from local communities with the opportunity to benefit from these grants, which we know have already gone a long way in helping community groups and charities to recover from the impact of the pandemic, and bring people back together.

“There was a tremendous amount of interest and great variety in the types of applications received in the first round of the Awards earlier this year, and we have been delighted to work closely with the organisations and charities involved, and be a part of the incredible work they do in their communities.”

Margaret Murray, Green Club Coordinator at Lámh Dhearg CLG, explains how the Belfast Harbour Community Awards Fund supported the local sports club: “The Awards Fund has allowed us to invest in the Green Clubs initiative at Lámh Dhearg, which protects and promotes biodiversity in the area, and connects people in the local community with their environment.

“I would encourage other local clubs and community groups to apply for the Awards Fund, especially at a time of year when smaller organisations are especially grateful for extra support. The process is quick and simple, and Belfast Harbour offer valued support to successful applicants.”

The Fund is open to projects and initiatives that align with Belfast Harbour’s responsible business priorities of supporting the environment, communities, and employability and skills. To be eligible, projects must be able to demonstrate the ways in which they positively impact their local community; for example, by protecting the environment and biodiversity in their local area, removing barriers to work, or improving the lives of adults and young people in their communities.

In order to be considered, organisations should complete the Belfast Harbour Community Awards application form,

which is available on Belfast Harbour's website, along with details of entry and assessment criteria

[[] <https://www.belfast-harbour.co.uk/news/community-awards-open-again-305/>]

Do you have items in your house you believe to be antiques, but have no idea of their story or value?

If so, the Parish of St John and St Ninian, Newtownabbey, has organised a fundraising event which could shed some light on the worth of your dusty heirlooms.

The Antique Art, Jewellery and Collectables Valuation Event takes place in the parish hall on Wednesday October 27 from 10am to 1pm, and organiser Sam Millar, along with another antiques expert, will be on hand to view your items.

Prior to retirement, parishioner Sam used to run an antiques shop and was involved in setting up the parish charity shop, which operated out of St Ninian's before the closure of the church, and is now open in St John's Parish Hall each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday morning.

All monies raised by the charity shop and Wednesday's Valuation event are channelled back into parish funds.

Anyone bringing an object along will be charged £1 for a valuation. "We will hopefully be able to tell them something about the item, as well as value it for them," said Sam. He is not anticipating coming across some previously



undiscovered Rembrandt or similarly exciting find, but added: “There’s always hope!”

The event is open to anyone interested in bringing an item along. There will

refreshments available (£2.50 for tea/coffee and biscuits) and visitors can also browse in the charity shop.

The parish hall of St John and St Ninian is located at 283 Shore Road, Newtownabbey (opposite the entrance to the Rathcoole Estate) and a warm welcome is extended to all.

If any other local parishes would be interested in running a similar fundraising event, Sam would be happy to assist. He can be contacted by email at s.millar1952@gmail.com.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts and books

Comfort in the Darkness - Bedtime story Programme

Helping children draw close to God through biblical stories of night-time and sleep

Comfort in the Darkness is part of a BRF - Bible Reading Fellowship - initiative

Join Rachel Turner as she shares nine Bible stories with us, accompanied by videos and discussion questions for the whole family.

Sleep, dreams and the night can be mysterious and sometimes troubling. Children can be afraid of the dark, have nightmares and night terrors, sleepwalk, or have insomnia. How do we deal with their concerns and fears and help them to draw close to God at night.

Rachel Tuner's retellings of night-themed Bible stories, exploring God's character and promises, will enable parents to help children grow in peace, confidence and understanding of who God is.

- Product code: 9780857464231
- Published: 23 September 2016; Format: Paperback
- Pages: 144; Dimensions: 130mm wide and 198mm high

<https://www.brfonline.org.uk/products/comfort-in-the-darkness-helping-children-draw-close-to-god-through-biblical-stories-of-night-time-and-sleep>

CAP on Songs of Praise

CAP - Christians Against Poverty - is on BBCSoP (Songs of Praise) this Sunday, 24th October, to celebrate 25 years of CAP. It's not one to miss, there'll be interviews with CAP's UK Chief Executive Paula Stringer and Simon - one of

CAP's brilliant client storytellers who became debt free through CAP. <https://capuk.org/>

That sermon at Armagh

Methodist President, Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu, delivered the sermon at the Service of Reflection and Hope in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh this week (21st October 2021).

Why not tune into the Church Leaders Centenary Podcasts to hear more from the President as he talks to Bishop Sarah Groves. This episode features Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, in conversation with Bishop Sarah Groves of the Moravian Church. Both Dr Yambasu and Bishop Sarah have come from elsewhere to positions of church leadership on the island of Ireland. They reflect on their experiences and the importance of inter-church relationships in helping to bring people together with respect for diversity.

<https://www.presbyterianireland.org/News/October-2021/Church-Leaders%E2%80%99-release-centenary-podcasts.aspx>

You may read the sermon in full at:

<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/11010/dr-yambasus-sermon-from-todays>

Creative Centenaries - the 5 Governor's Wives of Northern Ireland



On 16 November 1932 Parliament Buildings, located in the Stormont Estate on the outskirts of Belfast, was officially

opened by the Prince of Wales as the official base for the Parliament of Northern Ireland. Much excitement was evident among the unionist population for this event, with thousands lining the processional route and thousands more congregating in the grounds of Stormont. Many distinguished guests were also present, including leading social and political figures. Among them was the Duke of Abercorn in his capacity as Governor of Northern Ireland, a position created in 1922 to represent the British monarch.

Rather than being created through the Government of Ireland Act 1920, this position was created through the Irish Free State (Consequential Provisions) Act in December 1922, which also created the position of Governor-General in the Irish Free State. Between 1922 and 1972, five men would be appointed as Governor of Northern Ireland: Duke of Abercorn, Earl Granville, Lord Wakehurst, Lord Erskine and Lord Grey. As all five men were married, five women thus took on the role of Governor's wife.

In many ways, the attitudes towards these women and their public roles were largely influenced by political and religious divides.'

We caught up with Katie Tate, PhD student at Queen's University Belfast to ask what we can learn about Northern Ireland, 100 years on...

Delve into the history of the important yet often over looked experience of the 5 Governor's Wives of Northern Ireland in Katie's new blog post here   <https://bit.ly/30JMvxz>

See - <https://www.creativecentenaries.org/blog/governors-wives-in-northern-ireland>

The project is sponsored by - National Lottery Heritage Fund Northern Ireland | Nerve Centre | Special EU Programmes Body - SEUPB | History at Queen's University Belfast (QUB)

COP26 Church Service

This November, world leaders will gather in Glasgow for the UN climate talks COP26. This is a critical moment – and the church has a crucial role to play in speaking up and praying for our global neighbours living in poverty.

Join Pete Greig, Carol Ng'ang'a, and Celtic Worship in our powerful climate-themed church service on Sunday 7 November.

On the middle Sunday during the COP26 summit, churches across the UK will join in Tearfund's COP26 Church Service by sharing our pre-recorded video. The video content is available in the following segments, so your church can choose how to integrate it into your service:

<https://www.tearfund.org/campaigns/cop26-church-service>

The Rise of World Christianity and the Decolonising of Mission

New on the William Temple Foundation blog: [Dr Harvey Kwiyani](#), CEO of [Global Connections](#), offers his take on the

challenge of decolonising mission. Dr Kwiyani offers his take on the challenge of decolonising mission.

<https://williamtemplefoundation.org.uk/blog-decolonsing-mission/>

Perspective - Green Finance by the Archbishop of Canterbury

The Archbishop gave this speech on Green Finance at the Lord Mayor of London's Dinner this week.

My Lord Mayor, Chair, Sheriffs, Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Lambeth Palace sits on a flood plain. Every hundred years or so the banks of the River Thames, just a few metres away, swell and burst and flood the building. There are far more important things than an Archbishop with wet ankles, which is why we have recently built the library at the bottom of the garden to protect the many precious, priceless artefacts we are blessed to preserve here.

One of these is called 'The Lambeth Apocalypse'. This is not a reference to the current incumbent, but a depiction, dating to 1260AD, of the Book of Revelation. In it, the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse bring famine, pestilence, war and death.

Across London and Europe, indeed across the whole world, many other precious things have been destroyed this year, by heat domes and flooding, by famine and pestilence as

the realities of climate change make themselves devastatingly known.

The changes in our environment have and will affect disproportionately the poorest and most vulnerable people around the world. We know that this causes conflict, forces migration and uproots lives.

Parts of our world will become so hot and so humid they will be barely liveable, leaving billions with nowhere to go. It's only by working together now that we can hope to avert the terrifying consequences we are heading towards. We all know this, of course. I feel as though I'm preaching to the converted here, but that doesn't usually stop me....

Climate change probably joins sex, religion and politics as topics people tend to avoid at dinner parties. But here at the CofE, as you might imagine, we are rather good at these conversations by now.

If we are going to turn the climate crisis around, we will have to work with people with whom we disagree, sometimes profoundly. The problem is too big to be the job of just the government, just business, just charities or individuals. We will all need to work together, to be audacious, courageous, to support others in their (and our) journey to be better.

And those of us with the power and resources should be doing the tricky stuff in the hard places.

I worked in the oil industry for 11 years, and people are always surprised to hear I loved that job. They expect me to say, 'Oh well, yes, I left the oil industry when I repented of

my sinful ways...' But it left me with an understanding that although businesses can behave poorly and do harm – and have -, those with a real concern for the world around them are one of the ways in which God can increase the sum of human well-being.

The Lord Mayor has another oilman as his predecessor – Marcus Samuels, Lord Mayor in 1902. A recent review in the London Review of Books noted how Samuels 'saw how slow and laborious it was to load barrels of oil onto ships. [He] realised that it would be much more efficient if the ship itself was a single big tank. This invention, the oil tanker, led to the modern oil transportation industry, and to the foundation of Samuel's new firm, whose name nodded at the old family business: Shell'.

This innovation wasn't driven by morality or altruism or any of those words we might love to use at the pulpit, but by something rather more pragmatic. We need to incentivise 'doing good' for when boring things like 'moral obligation' or 'the end of the world as we know it' aren't enough of a carrot.

It is easier, for example, to invest in wind turbines off the coast of Scotland rather than sub-Saharan Africa. Financial markets are wonderful forces of discovery – chaotic processes of trial and error that incentivise value-creating businesses, but what we value is not just economic, but social.

How do we get people to make harder choices that focus not just on financial return but build relationships, build goodwill, and generate mutually beneficial results for people

and the planet? How can the majority world access global capital? How do we align morality and expediency?

The Christian answer is found in 1 Corinthians – ‘There are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"’

An applied answer is found in appropriate supporting regulation and public policy as well as innovation and technology. Finance has a massive role to play, but it cannot work in a vacuum of public policy - we need an enabling regulatory environment.

Technological innovation will be vital for many heavy polluting industries: in shipping, we have to reach 100% of zero-carbon boats by 2050, which sounds high impossible. But increased learning and more advanced technology will speed that process of innovation up exponentially, meaning we only have to get to 5% by 2030, which is more than possible.

We need the right fiscal and regulatory environment for investment to flourish.

Yesterday, I was delighted to join some of you at the opening of the Stock Exchange where we launched the new TPI Global Climate Transition Centre that will significantly scale up the breadth and depth of the independent research and analysis undertaken by the Transition Pathway Initiative – TPI. TPI is a unique partnership of the Church of England’s National Investing Bodies, The Environment Agency Pensions Fund, other major asset owners (some

here tonight), the London School of Economics Grantham Research Institute and the London Stock Exchange Group / FTSE Russell.

New asset managers are joining all the time – a special welcome to BlackRock who announced their support yesterday! - and now TPI is supported by 110 funds with USD \$40 trillion in assets under management and advisement – almost half the world's investable capital. Over the past years, TPI has been able to decipher what it means for a company to transition in line with the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

This understanding means investors can hold accountable the companies they own and provide finance to which, ultimately, will be critical to helping them align their portfolios to achieving climate goals. I'm certain that this new Centre will be an important part of the global architecture that will enable investors to play their part following the Glasgow COP.

The coming months will bring many opportunities. Next year we are excited to host the Lambeth Conference, which bishops will join from around the globe, reinforcing relationships and sharing experiences from across the church - particularly the vital importance of the Global South.

At COP26, leaders will be coming together from all over the world. We all know that we are not yet in the position we hoped we would be by now. As the host nation, the UK has the opportunity to lead. All of us, together. Everyone in this room plays a part.

This will not, as Churchill told a Lord Mayor's luncheon at Mansion House in 1942, be 'the end. It is not even the beginning of the end'. We are starting a long journey into an unknown future, but one which we have immense power to shape if we join together and act now.

The French philosopher Jacques Maritain said 'A man of courage flees forward in the midst of new things'. This is what we must do now. And speaking of new things – the Lord Mayor and the Lady Mayoress will shortly be stepping into a new phase of their lives. Over two indescribably challenging years, there could have been no one better to steer the city the Lord Mayor loves so much. We are grateful for his work and dedication, and we pray that his next steps might be just as rewarding, if perhaps slightly more relaxing.

So, it is my honour to ask you, ladies and gentlemen, to raise a glass to The Lord Mayor and The City of London Corporation.

Poem for today

Canal Bank Walk by Patrick Kavanagh

Leafy-with-love banks and the green waters of the canal
Pouring redemption for me, that I do
The will of God, wallow in the habitual, the banal,
Grow with nature again as before I grew.
The bright stick trapped, the breeze adding a third
Party to the couple kissing on an old seat,
And a bird gathering materials for the nest for the Word

Eloquently new and abandoned to its delirious beat.
O unworn world enrapture me, encapture me in a web
Of fabulous grass and eternal voices by a beech,
Feed the gaping need of my senses, give me ad lib
To pray unselfconsciously with overflowing speech
For this soul needs to be honoured with a new dress woven
From green and blue things and arguments that cannot be
proven.

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