



Belfast focus on Methodist Church in Brazil

Rev. Joyce Torres Placa from the Methodist Church in Brazil is in Ireland at present. IMYC and MMS(I) are facilitating her visit, her main activity being the main speaker at IMYC's Autumn Soul.

Joyce was MMS(I)'s speaker at Global Vision a few years ago and really impacted everyone by her presentation about Methodism as it is expressed in Brazil. Joyce has a really vibrant faith and belief in the Methodist tradition of doing things. Hearing her could be a very inspiring experience.

To that end, MMS(I) invites you to an informal evening on Sunday October 30 at The Hub, Belfast, with Joyce, simply to hear about some of the mission work happening in Brazil and then a Q&A to learn a little more.

The organisers state - "This will hopefully be another opportunity for us in MCI to share with and learn from our brothers and sisters in other parts of the world.

"We genuinely believe that such cross-pollination is good for our churches as we explore the way ahead for MCI. Therefore it would be great to have you there as

someone who is interested in such sharing and committed to the future of MCI.

“We hope to see you there!”

Sunday, 30 October, 2016 - 19:00 at The Hub Belfast, BT9 6AY. mms@irishmethodist.org

Bishops invite faithful to join Pope Francis in praying for people of Syria

Irish bishops are inviting the faithful to join with them and with Pope Francis to pray for peace in the Middle East and especially for the people of Syria on Monday 31 October, which is a public holiday in Ireland. This prayer initiative has been organised to coincide with the Holy Father's participation in the ecumenical commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation due to be held in Sweden on 31 October.

The idea behind this event, co-organised by the Catholic Church, Caritas International and the Lutheran World Federation, is to shift relations from conflict to communion with a focus on young churchnewsireland@gmail.com

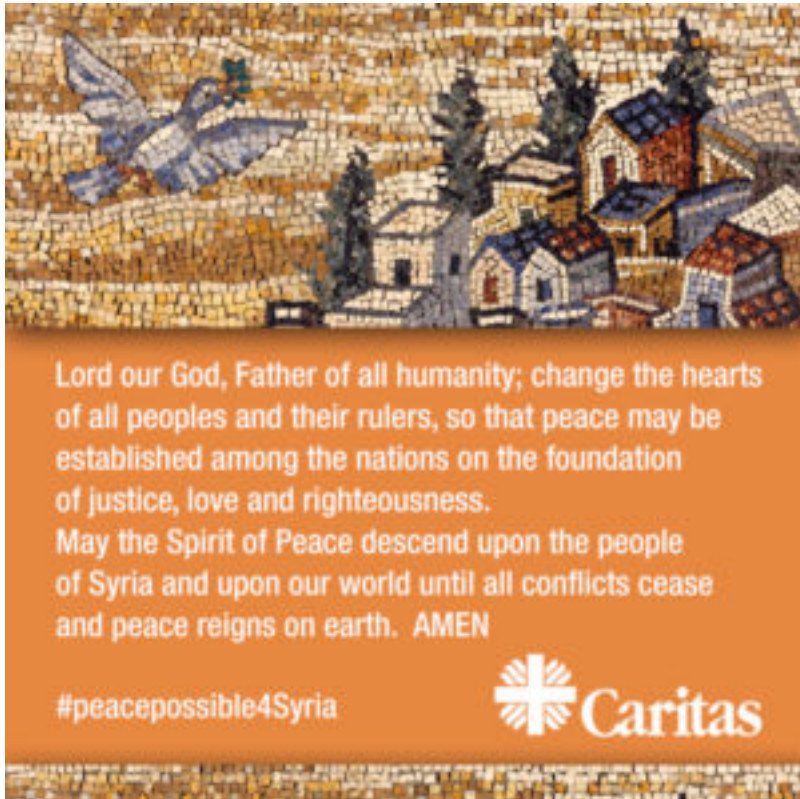


people and the hope which this commemoration will bring.

On Monday next, Pope Francis, alongside Bishop Munib Younan, President of the Lutheran World Federation and the Rev Martin Junge, the Federation's General Secretary, will lead a common prayer service based on the recently published Catholic-Lutheran Common Prayer liturgical guide at 1.30pm Irish time.

Bishops invite the faithful to gather on Monday at a time that most suits their needs and to hold a prayer gathering in parishes, schools, community venues, or at home. A special prayer, which has been designed for use on the day has been made available and is included below. In

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addition, Trócaire, the bishops' overseas development agency has developed a special prayer service for use in parishes on this occasion. This is available to download from catholicbishops.ie.

Commenting on the prayer initiative, Bishop William Crean, Bishop of Cloyne and Chairman of Trócaire said, "Innocent men, women and

children are paying the ultimate price in the continuing conflict raging in Syria, especially in Aleppo, where they are caught in the crossfire. I join with Pope Francis in urging governments to find a political solution to the war in Syria. I encourage the faithful to share the ideals of the Caritas International #PeacePossible4Syria campaign and to pray for peace in the Middle East, especially in Syria and the City of Aleppo.”

Those taking part in prayer gatherings on Monday 31 October are invited to share their particular prayer service using the hashtag #PeacePossible4Syria.

- Caritas International is a confederation of over 160 members who are working at the grassroots in almost every country of the world, reaching out to the poor, vulnerable and excluded, regardless of race or religion, to build a world based on justice and fraternal love. From the founding of the first Caritas in Germany in 1897, to the setting up of Caritas Internationalis in 1951, until today, Caritas has a rich history of listening respectfully to the suffering of the poor and giving them the tools to transform their own lives. The deep moral and

spiritual principles of dignity, justice, solidarity and stewardship still guide Caritas today.

- Watch the Syria: Peace is Possible video and download resources from the website <http://syria.caritas.org/>
- Download the prayer service for Irish parishes, schools and homes from www.catholicbishops.ie
- Download the following prayer for Monday 31 October from <http://syria.caritas.org/>

C of I census of worshippers in November

The Church of Ireland will be undertaking its second census of the worshipping Church of Ireland population in November.

On each Sunday in November, clergy and parish officials will provide worshippers with a card on which they will be asked to indicate, anonymously, their gender and age. This information will allow the Church to ascertain the age profile and gender profile of those attending services in Church of Ireland churches throughout Ireland.

The objective of the census is to enable parishes, dioceses, and the Church to make decisions for the future based on an up-to-date analysis of the Church of Ireland's population. The census allows parishes and dioceses to collect their own more detailed figures if they wish.

The first census, carried out in 2013, provided useful insights into trends in worship attendance and ministry, revealing that the average attendance figure over three Sundays was 58,000 people, or 15.5% of the Church of Ireland population, as defined by the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland census results of 2011.

It is anticipated that another census will be held in 2021, to coincide with national censuses taking place in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Irish input at Lutheran and Anglican dialogue in Latvia

More than forty delegates from the Porvoo Communion of Churches met in Riga, Latvia, to listen to each other, reflect and deliberate on the



theme: *The Spirit of God in the Life of the World (Rev. 3:20 – 22) – What is the Spirit saying to the Churches?*

The conference took place at a significant time. The Porvoo Declaration was first signed 20 years ago and we were able to reflect on what has been achieved. We engaged in reflecting in new ways on how to be a missionary church in the changing and challenging circumstances in Europe. These are due to secularism, the difficulty of communicating the Christian faith effectively and the adjustments needed across Europe arising from recent migration.

Setting the scene

The conference started with a Celebration of the Eucharist in the Cathedral of Riga, celebrated by Archbishop Janis Vanags, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia. The sermon was given by Archbishop Michael Jackson, Church of Ireland, Anglican Co-chair of the Porvoo Contact Group, who set the tone of the conference by addressing the context of Latvia and the changing political landscape of Europe, with its consequent challenges for the churches. He ended his sermon by citing the Collect prayer for the Feast of St Luke; *By the grace of the Spirit and through the wholesome medicine of the gospel, give your Church the same love and power to heal...* [[The full text of the sermon is available here](#)]

Archbishop Janis Vanags received the conference in Latvia, thanking the Porvoo Communion for contributing with interesting and refreshing theological conversations. He gave an account of the current situation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia, as well as the presence of the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia in 2016 in its Synod passed a motion to say that only men can be ordained to the priesthood. It is expected that its relations with the Porvoo Communion will be dealt with in

four years time at its next synod. Archbishop Michael Jackson thanked the Archbishop Vanags for his welcoming words and assured him and the church of the Porvoo Communion's continued prayers. He also highlighted the special component of being hosted in Latvia, being both "at home" and "abroad", alluding to the history of the Lutheran church in Latvia.

See more -

<http://dublin.anglican.org/news/2016/10/Communique-of-the-Fifth-Theological-Conference-of-the-Porvoo-Communion-of-Churches->

Tandragee parishioner conquers 4 peaks in 48 hours raising 40K+ for cancer research

On Saturday, 15th October, just before 12 noon a group of ten exhausted men led by Barry Williamson from Tandragee reached the bottom of Slieve Donard after accomplishing their 4 peaks in 48 hours challenge. It was a physically, mentally and emotionally draining two days but in the end Barry and his team conquered their mountains!

Snowdon in Wales, Scafell Pike in England, Ben Nevis in Scotland and finally Slieve Donard here in Northern Ireland – all completed on schedule.

Barry decided some three months ago that he wanted to find a way to celebrate and honour the memory of his late wife, Alison (age 31), who died in May of this year from a rare form of blood cancer. At the same time he wanted to make a difference in the lives of other people particularly those suffering from cancer and to do it in Alison's name. The 4 peaks challenge seemed the perfect way to achieve his goal and so he enlisted the help of his two brothers, Lee and Paul, cousin Mark, and six friends who all spent the last twelve weeks training for their mammoth task. Barry was keen that they would do the challenge to raise money for Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI which is the only charity in Northern Ireland solely dedicated to fighting blood cancers.

Barry thought that he was being optimistic at setting his sights on raising £20,000 – he has now more than smashed his original target by raising more than double his original projected sum. Over £43,000 has now been donated to Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI in memory of Alison.

Barry said, “I have been overwhelmed by the support I have received from people right across Northern Ireland and indeed around the world! People have been so very, very, kind and generous and I know that the money will help fund much needed research into better treatment for blood cancers. Hopefully one day they will also find a cure. From the very bottom of my heart I want to say a very sincere thank you to everyone who has helped me along the way and all who have given me the encouragement to keep going. I know Alison would have been thrilled at the amount raised”.

The rector of Ballymore, Canon Shane Forster, where Barry is a parishioner, said “Barry is the most amazing individual who despite his own personal pain and sorrow has focused his mind over these last number of months on finding a way to help those in Northern Ireland suffering from blood cancer. His late wife, Alison, was a truly inspirational and courageous young woman and she faced her illness with faith and determination. She never gave up and always remained positive about life. Barry has managed to draw on her courage and strength, to climb his mountains and raise this record breaking amount of money in such a short space of time. In

Ballymore, we are all so very proud of Barry and everything that he has achieved and I know how proud Alison would have been of him too.”

Knights of Columbus urge US Catholics to pray novena ahead of election

The Knights of Columbus is urging its members and other US Catholics to pray a novena from October 30 to November 7, the eve of election day.

“The Church teaches that Catholics are called to form their consciences based on Church teaching and vote in accordance with that well-formed conscience,” said Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, who is CEO of the international fraternal organisation based in New Haven.

“Pope Francis has said in reference to the US election that we should ‘study the proposals well, pray and choose with your conscience,’ and this novena is designed to help Catholic Americans do that,” Anderson said in a statement.

The Knights' novena — nine consecutive days of prayer — asks for the intercession of Mary, the mother of Jesus, under her title of the Immaculate Conception. Individuals, families, councils and parishes are all invited to participate, the Knights said.

Mary Immaculate is the patroness of the United States. In 1791, Archbishop John Carroll of Baltimore, the first bishop of the United States, dedicated his diocese to her. The first US diocese, it covered the entire country. In 1846, the US bishops reaffirmed that dedication and Pope Pius IX ratified it in 1847.

The text of the novena is as follows: “Most Holy Trinity: Our Father in heaven, who chose Mary as the fairest of your daughters; Holy Spirit, who chose Mary as your spouse; God the son, who chose Mary as your mother, in union with Mary we adore your majesty and acknowledge your supreme, eternal dominion and authority.

“Most Holy Trinity, we put the United States of America into the hands of Mary Immaculate in order that she may present the country to you. Through her we wish to thank you for the great

resources of this land and for the freedom which has been its heritage.

“Through the intercession of Mary, have mercy on the Catholic Church in America. Grant us peace. Have mercy on our president and on all the officers of our government. Grant us a fruitful economy, born of justice and charity. Have mercy on capital and industry and labor. Protect the family life of the nation. Guard the precious gift of many religious vocations. Through the intercession of our mother, have mercy on the sick, the tempted, sinners — on all who are in need.”

According to the Knights, the prayer was written for the 1959 dedication of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, which includes a bell tower known as the Knights Tower. The Knights of Columbus donated money for the tower’s construction.

News briefs

+++ Church of Ireland Ordination Newsletter is now available - The 2016 edition of the Church of Ireland Ordination Newsletter is now

available to download. The newsletter is edited by Canon David Gillespie and contains lots of useful information including details of Diocesan Directors of Ordinands, current ordinands and deacons and information on the Church of Ireland Theological Institute.

[You can download the Church of Ireland Ordination Newsletter here.](#)

+++ Art Exhibition and Craft Fair - St.

Dorothea's Parish Church, Gilnahirk is, once again, holding its annual Art Exhibition and Craft Fair in the first week of November. The Art Exhibition will be held in the Minor Hall from Thursday 3 November – Saturday 5 November 2016. As usual there will be an amazing range of paintings, by local artists, on display. All the works of art are original and all will be offered for sale. Viewing times are: Thursday and Friday 2.00 pm – 8.00 pm, and Saturday 11.00 am – 4.00 pm. Refreshments will be available.

Running alongside this Exhibition, on Saturday 5 November there will be a Craft Fair from 11.00 am – 4.00 pm in the Main Hall. A wonderful variety of interesting and unusual goods will be available from the various stalls – great for Christmas shopping. The tea room will also be

open all afternoon offering its usual fine array of home baking and a chance to take some time out with a lovely cup of tea or coffee.

+++ Faith at Work - Is God more than Sunday stuff? - Professor Maureen Edmondson will be the speaker at the seventh annual public meeting in Downpatrick Methodist Church, Scotch Street, on Thursday, November 10, 2016 at 8.00pm. She will try to answer her question 'Is God more than Sunday stuff?' More at - www.downmethodist.info

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

BBC

A video report that the Bishop of Gloucester has launched a social media campaign promoting self-esteem for young people. Pupils from All Saint's Academy in Cheltenham helped to launch the #liedentity campaign. As part of the campaign students were asked if there was anything they did not like about their bodies, and those body parts were digitally removed from photographs. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-37769014>

Tel/Guard

Reports that the Royal Bank of Scotland has received a boost after Clydesdale and Yorkshire Bank made an offer for its Williams & Glyn business, which the state-owned lender has been struggling to sell for seven years.

Clydesdale confirmed that the bank has submitted a preliminary proposal for W&G potentially rescuing a sale process that was thrown into disarray when Santander pulled out of talks last month for the 314 branch network. The reports note that a deal was announced in 2013 with a consortium including the Church Commissioners to try to complete the separation through a stock market flotation under the Williams & Glyn name.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2016/10/25/clydesdale-bids-for-rbss-williams--glyn-business/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/oct/25/clydesdale-bank-offer-rbs-royal-bank-scotland-branches>

<https://www.ft.com/content/e89cbb66-9abc-11e6-b8c6-568a43813464>

Christian Today

Reports that an Anglican bishop in Wales has designed the Royal Mint's first official UK Christmas coin. Bishop of St Asaph Gregory Cameron, besides being a keen artist and coin collector, is also one of the Anglican Communion's leading experts on Eastern Christianity. The Christmas coin depicts the three Magi, bearing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Inspire

Reports that some 60 Christian coders, designers and entrepreneurs have completed an intensive weekend of computer programming to help the church and charitable projects. Co-Organiser James Doc said: "It's been a real privilege to see a group of technologists give up their weekend to build projects with the purpose of transforming lives for God's glory." The C of E sponsored one of the prizes awarded for work over the weekend.

<http://www.inspiremagazine.org.uk/Stories/Personal?storyaction=view&storyid=2329>

Guard

Further report on the bellringer banned from York Minster's bell tower over safeguarding concerns including comment from his lawyer.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/oct/25/york-minster-bellringers-archbishop-john-sentamu-explain-mass-dismissal>

Mail

Further coverage of that the original gothic Coventry Cathedral has been virtually 'rebuilt', thanks to new technology which provides a digital recreation of what it looked like before it was destroyed in a raid by the Luftwaffe in November 1940.

Letters

Spectator

Letter from The Revd Nigel Genders, Chief Education Officer for the Church of England (scroll down), responding to an article by Simon Jenkins on the success of cathedrals.

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/2016/10/putin-is-a-war-criminal-and-its-not-jaded-rhetoric-to-say-so/>