



Image of the day - Whitepark Bay, Co. Antrim

News Reports

New role will support church plant and pioneer leaders in Down & Dromore



Bishop David McClay has invited the Right Revd Darren McCartney to become Warden for Pioneer Leaders and Church Plant Leaders.

This is a new role which Bishop Darren (pictured above) will fulfil alongside his responsibilities as rector of Clonallon and Warrenpoint with Kilbroney and as Area Dean for Mourne.

Darren will be providing pastoral support for the leaders in our church plants and those who head up pioneer ministries in the diocese. He will also help them to identify other support structures that will strengthen their ministries. Bishop Darren joins four other Wardens who have already assumed their voluntary roles in Down and Dromore:

Captain George Newell: Warden for Diocesan Evangelists

As Warden of Diocesan Evangelists, George helps the diocese to identify and recruit those called to the role of evangelist. He is also in overall charge of the training course. George is Leadership and Mission Development Coordinator for New Wine Ireland and part of the Outreach Team at Willowfield Church.

Revd Willie Nixon: Warden for Diocesan Lay Readers

As Warden of Diocesan Lay Readers, Willie is involved in their recruitment, training, and support. As well as taking an active role during the training course, he is responsible for facilitating events where diocesan lay readers can come together for additional training, encouragement and support. Willie is rector of St Patrick's, Drumbeg.

Revd Simon Genoe and Revd Karen Salmon: Joint Diocesan Directors of Ordinands

Our Diocesan Directors of Ordinands, Revd Karen Salmon and Revd Simon Genoe, support those who are exploring ordination and other ministry roles. Together, Karen and Simon run the Exploring Ministry Group which meets four times a year and offers like-minded individuals the opportunity to explore their sense of call together. In addition, Karen and Simon are available to come alongside those who are training for ordination and those considering the possibility of being sent by the Bishop to a Selection Conference. They are also available to talk to rectors in the diocese regarding prospective candidates for ordination. Simon is the rector of Magheralin, and Karen is Curate Assistant in Willowfield Church.

Bishop David McClay says:

“As bishop of a busy diocese, I am very grateful that I can confidently delegate these important tasks to my Wardens, especially as they carry out their roles alongside their own ministries. I want to thank them again for accepting my invitation and ask you to pray for them as they serve the diocese in these various ways.”

Pope Francis confirms Greece-Cyprus trip

In an interview with an Argentine news site, Pope Francis confirmed travel plans for the end of this year and spoke of several international gatherings of world leaders, including the upcoming G20 summit in Rome and the COP26 gathering in Glasgow.

Among other things, Pope Francis confirmed rumors that he is planning to travel to Greece and Cyprus in December and urged world leaders preparing for the G20 and COP26 summits to be creative in how they approach global politics and economics in a post-pandemic world.

As he has done in the past, he also heaped praise on outgoing German Chancellor Angela Merkel, calling her a leader who has made history and a model for women in leadership.

“In the first week of December I am going to Greece and Cyprus,” Pope Francis said in the interview with Vatican

journalist Hernán Reyes Alcaide, correspondent in Rome for the Argentine news outlet Télam.

The Vatican, he said, “is working” on the final schedule for the trip, which could include a stop on the Greek island of Lesbos, which would mark his second visit to the island, following a day trip in 2016 during which he visited a refugee camp and, on his flight back, brought with him 12 refugees, including three Syrian families.

In the interview, published Oct. 22, Pope Francis said he also has ambitious travel aspirations for 2022, hoping to make trips to Africa, Europe, and Oceania.

“For the moment I have in my mind two trips that I have not started yet, and those are the Congo and Hungary,” he said. Pope Francis just traveled to the Hungarian capital of Budapest in September to preside over the closing Mass of



Pope Francis just traveled to the Hungarian capital of Budapest in September to preside over the closing Mass of the 52nd Eucharistic Congress. It was not a state visit, and he was only in the city for a few hours.

He most recently visited Africa in 2019, with a tour of Madagascar, Mozambique, and Mauritius.

Spending Review must reverse aid cuts to South Sudan following unprecedented floods, Christian Aid warns

Christian Aid is calling on the UK Government to show leadership ahead of COP26 and reverse its 59% cut in aid to South Sudan in the Autumn Spending Review following reports that the country is facing the worst flooding in nearly 60 years, caused by the climate crisis, which is pushing vulnerable communities to the brink of famine.

James Wani, Christian Aid's Country Director in South Sudan, described the scale of the flooding as "unprecedented" and warned "when the water does finally recede, people will return to nothing."

According to the UN , more than 700,000 people have been affected by unrelenting floods from weeks of heavy rain. Homes have been swept away, farmlands devastated, and families and livestock have been forced to seek safety.

Christian Aid, together with local partners, is providing emergency life-saving support including blankets, mosquito nets, water purification tablets and cash to flood affected families in addition to seeds, tools and fishing kits to families facing a food crisis.

However, Christian Aid's peacebuilding work in South Sudan was terminated in July because of UK aid cuts while the Climate Finance Delivery Plan published this week has weakened the commitment of richer countries to help the poorest in the world tackle the climate crisis.

The flooding hit an already devastated region. The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) estimates 2.4 million people are at risk of falling into famine with famine already thought to be in areas of western Pibor.

James Wani, Christian Aid's Country Director in South Sudan, said: "The scale of the flooding is unprecedented and is overwhelming areas along the river Nile. The flooding destroys everything. People have lost their crops and their livestock. When the water does finally recede, people will return to nothing.

"South Sudan has experienced flooding for three years in a row, but the intensity keeps increasing. We are only going to see the hunger crisis escalate over the next few months."

Amanda Khozi Mukwashi, Christian Aid's Chief Executive, added: "Conflict, hunger, and pandemic. That is the daily struggle for far too many in South Sudan, but now the desperate situation has worsened still with climate caused floods sweeping away homes and forcing families to flee.

“ When the Government slashed the aid budget to South Sudan, Christian Aid warned there would be a devastating impact on the most vulnerable. The chilling impact of these cuts is now being felt more than ever at this time of need.

“ The Chancellor has time and again missed opportunities to do the right thing at the right time. If the UK wants to be a global leader, it must stand up and be counted by helping those at greatest risk of being left behind.

“With richer countries going back on their commitment to help poorer countries like South Sudan tackle the climate crisis with climate finance, the UK Government must show leadership ahead of COP26 and use the spending review to reverse aid cuts to South Sudan.”

The public can help Christian Aid combat extreme hunger in South Sudan and across the globe by donating what they can at www.christianaid.org.uk .

Archbishop of Canterbury's concern on Ghana's anti-LGBTQ+ Bill

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd Justin Welby, said yesterday:

“I am gravely concerned by the draft anti-LGBTQ+ Bill due to be debated by the Ghanaian parliament. I will be speaking with the Archbishop of Ghana in the coming days to discuss the Anglican Church of Ghana's response to the Bill.

“The majority of Anglicans within the global Anglican Communion are committed to upholding both the traditional teaching on marriage as laid out in the 1998 Lambeth Conference Resolution I:10, and the rights of every person, regardless of sexual orientation, before the law. In Resolution I:10, the Anglican Communion also made a commitment “to assure [LGBTQ+ people] that they are loved by God and that all baptised, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ.” Meanwhile on numerous occasions the Primates of the Anglican Communion have stated their opposition to the criminalisation of same-sex attracted people: most recently, and unanimously, in the communiqué of the 2016 Primates’ Meeting.

“I remind our brothers and sisters in the Anglican Church of Ghana of these commitments.

“We are a global family of churches, but the mission of the church is the same in every culture and country: to demonstrate, through its actions and words, God’s offer of unconditional love to every human being through Jesus Christ.”



“The most important thing I learned is that soldiers watch what their leaders do. You can give them classes and lecture them forever, but it is your personal example they will follow.”
– General Colin Powell



People and places

Prayer Boats sail from Whitehead and Islandmagee to COP26



Two hundred Prayer Boats sailing from the Parish of Whitehead and Islandmagee to COP26 as part of the Christian Aid fleet.

The Parish of Whitehead and Islandmagee is sending a powerful message about climate change to the United Nations climate change conference COP26, taking place in Glasgow at the start of November.

In support of Christian Aid Ireland and the Young Christian Climate Network campaign 'Rise to the Moment,' the parish has crafted 200 Prayer Boats which will form part of an installation at COP26 made up of thousands of boats from around the UK.

The rector of Whitehead and Islandmagee, the Rev Canon Mark Taylor, said: "As a parish, we are aware of, and concerned for, our environment; for our care of God's world in which we live. We have partnered with Jubilee

Community Farm, we try to use sustainable products and reduce our waste and carbon footprint where possible.

“This year, as we prepared for our Harvest Thanksgiving, were aware of the nearness of COP26, less than a month away and in Glasgow! We were also aware of the Christian Aid’s support of the ‘Rise to the Moment’ campaign.

“One thing we could do was to make Prayer Boats to send to Glasgow for COP26. Each small boat is insignificant in itself but together they make a fleet.”

Mark continued: “Each of us may feel insignificant as individuals but together we can make a difference. Many of the young people were inspired by the fact that they can make a difference and influence world leaders. So as part of the service we wrote a prayer on a sheet of paper and then turn that sheet of paper into a boat.”

Mark said that after two Harvest Thanksgiving services and a Messy Church service, and with the support of a parent who ‘borrowed’ the idea to use with her class in school, the parish had handed 200 Prayer Boats to Christian Aid to take to Glasgow to tell those at COP26 to work harder for climate justice. “Together we can make a difference, together we can make our voices be heard,” Mark added.

Government must hold companies responsible - Christian Aid Ireland

“Ireland is failing to protect people from abuse by Irish-based companies operating abroad. As a member of the

Irish Coalition for Business & Human Rights we are calling on the government to introduce a new law to prevent abuses, hold companies responsible & compensate victims” - Christian Aid Ireland

“The uncomfortable truth is that many Irish companies are linked to human rights abuses and environmental harm throughout their global value chains.” - Conor O’Neill.

Walking from Saint Paul’s Cathedral in London to Saint Anne’s Cathedral in Belfast

On Sunday 28th November two men will step off from the steps of Saint Paul’s Cathedral in London on a trek that will cover hundreds of miles to their goal –Saint Anne’s Cathedral in Belfast.

Along the way the two expect to be joined by other military veterans as they cover the miles calling with regimental associations throughout England and the Isle of Man before reaching the impressive Spire of Hope standing tall above Belfast’s Cathedral Quarter.

Former soldier Robert Maxwell and Major Alexander Doubleday are aiming to reach Clive Barracks at Tern Hill in Shropshire where the 1st Battalion Royal Irish Regiment is based, in early December before crossing to the Isle of Man to link up with veterans there and then reaching Belfast before Christmas.

Robert is founder of the Let's Do Veterans Support Charity and Alexander is the Charities President – both instrumental in organising practical events for veterans across the UK.

For Robert, from Clough in Co Down, the challenge is exceptionally personal. His rehabilitation after pioneering “harvesting technique” allowed his right leg to be saved and through those medical advancements many have benefited. Through meeting other veterans he went on to form Let's Do Veterans Support and has led veterans on a number of expeditions firmly believing that practical challenges despite physical and mental handicaps contribute much to former service personnel well being and health.

~We have exciting plans in mind for 2022 after the restrictions of the past months and the Covid epidemic,” he said, “and this Walk Of Hope is our small way of linking up with our comrades across the UK as well as promoting the opportunities, raising profile with hope and with spirit.”

Further information and details can be found on www.letsdoevents.i

Parish pays tribute to Canon Paul Houston on his retirement

Parishioners of the Grouped Parishes of Castleknock and Mulhuddart with Clonsilla said farewell to their Rector, Canon Paul Houston, on Sunday September 26.

Canon Houston retired from full time ministry having been Rector of these Dublin parishes for the past 12 years. He

October 27, 2021



had served over 40 years in ministry in the Church of Ireland.

Canon Paul Houston retired as Rector of Castleknock and Mulhuddart with Clonsilla at the end of September. He is pictured with his wife, Canon Adrienne Galligan (right) and Diocesan Reader, Stella Obe (left).

Parishioners gathered in Castleknock and Clonsilla to pay tribute to Canon Houston who they describe as having been “a guiding hand during his incumbency here through the best of times and worst of times in the life of this parish”.

Canon Paul was born and raised in Belfast and studied Economics and Politics in Queens University. Following brief period as an accountant, he started training for the ordained ministry in 1978, was ordained a deacon in 1981 and a priest the following year.

He was appointed to his first Curacy in Carrickfergus in the Diocese of Connor followed by a second Curacy in Bangor in the Diocese of Down. In 1986 he was appointed Rector of Gilford, also in the Diocese of Down. In 1990 he moved to Carnalea in Bangor and he subsequently moved to the United Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough to the Parish of Clondalkin and Rathcoole in 1999. He has held many roles in the Diocese during his time including two periods as Rural Dean, serving on the Diocesan Board of Education and as Diocesan Chaplain to the Mothers' Union.

In 2014 he was made Canon of St Patrick's Cathedral as Prebendary of Castleknock. He was also a member of the Board of the Biblical Association for the Church of Ireland. In 2011 he married fellow diocesan clergyman, Canon Adrienne Galligan.

Parishioners wished him the very best for the years ahead in his retirement and to mark his time as Rector and his



ministry, they presented him with an engraved Dublin Crystal bowl.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts and books

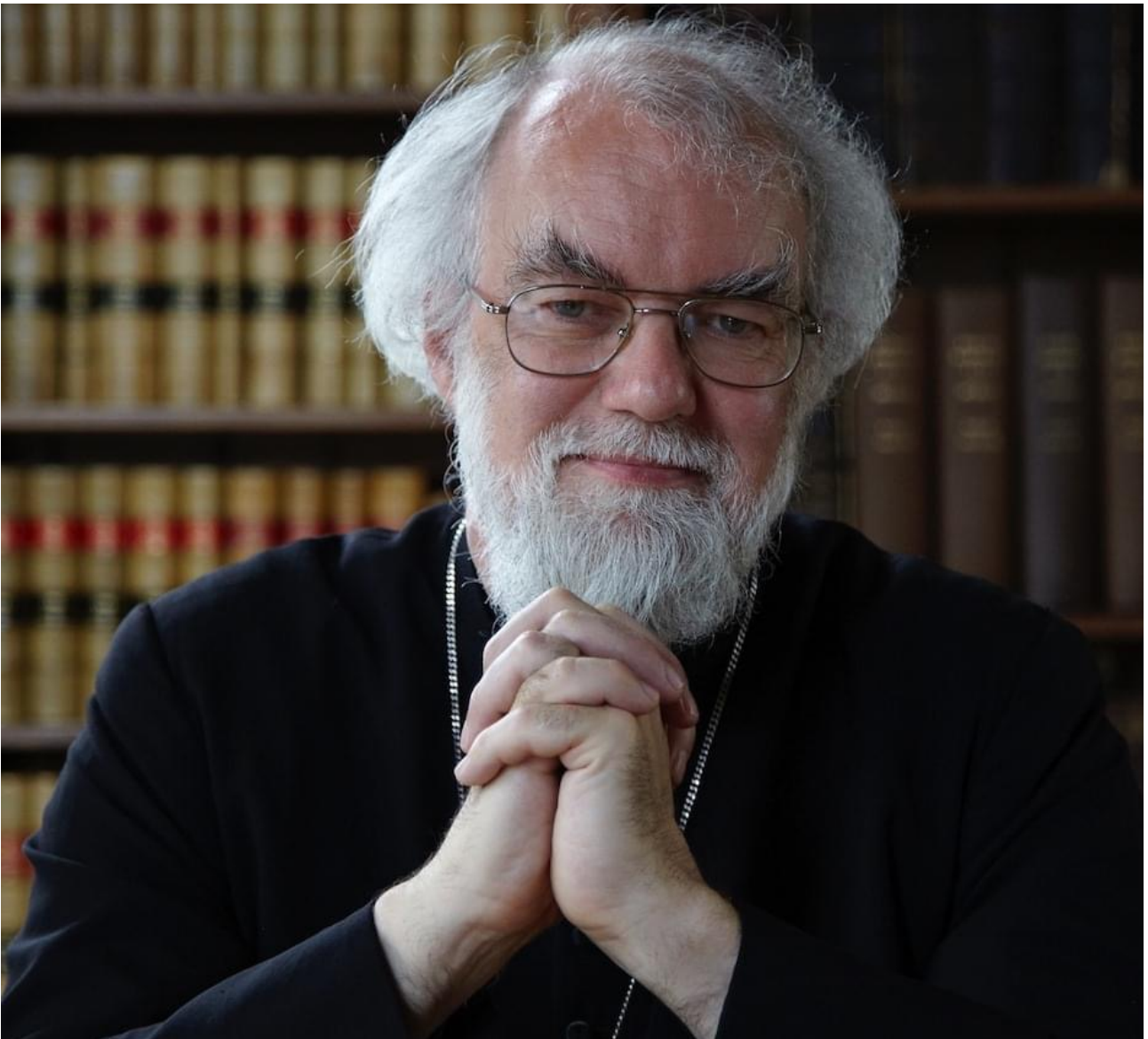
From Darkness to Light live online: Dr Rowan Williams' last service as Chair of Christian Aid

Dr Rowan Williams will be preaching for the last time as Chair of Christian Aid at the charity's annual Service of Reflection at 5.30pm on 2nd November.

Traditionally held at an intimate chapel at Kings College, London, this year, for the second time, 'From Darkness to Light' will be streamed live online and will offer a chance for people to come together and remember loved ones that they have lost.

Nearly 500 people have already registered, and Christian Aid is warmly welcoming anyone who would like to join.

The Reverend Maggie Roderick, a retired Church of Scotland Minister, based in Stirling and also taking part in the service, said: "I have been touched by grief at various points in my life. We can feel utterly submerged and lost. For some, restrictions around funeral numbers have meant finding a different way to channel that loss and grief. Services like the one on the 2nd November, which I'm delighted to be involved in, as a long-time supporter of the



work of Christian Aid, allow a time for reflection and simply some space to remember. That's really important."

Gillian Blake, Christian Aid's Legacy Marketing Officer, said: "This has become a really popular service for us, as people truly appreciate the opportunity to simply pause and create some space to remember. With so many of us losing friends or family to Covid, it's a moment of comfort, hope and solidarity and a chance to reflect on all that's happened over the last year."

Members of the public can register to join the live service at

[caid.org.uk/reflection.]

There will be an opportunity to light a candle in memory of a loved one so listeners are encouraged to have one to hand if they would like to take part.

Racial justice is everyone's business

**Black History Month Special! 27th October 2021
7.30pm – 9.00pm**

The murder of George Floyd in May 2020 proved to be a pivotal moment for racial justice on both sides of the Atlantic; it forced churches as well as society to acknowledge and address existing forms of racism and inequality. It led to a more honest and open debate regarding racial justice.

However, that has not always been the situation. There was a time when very few wanted to talk about this subject, and it was left to those brave men and women who are featured in the publication 'Racial Justice Champions: Vol 1' to fight the good fight!

Join us for the opportunity to hear from several of the Black, White, and Asian Christians who pioneered racial justice in the church and society over the last 25 years.

Expert Panel Includes:

Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal, Glynne Gordon-Carter, Revd Sonia Barron, Sandra Ackroyd, Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Revd

David Haslam, Dr R. David Muir, Revd Wale Hudson-Roberts, Revd Ronald Nathan and Masiwa Ragies Gunda.

Register here - to find out more about their efforts to change the church!

[[] https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/4216330184173/WN_F1AB1e62Q3eYRvfk9OngGw]

Perspective

North's politicians unite to keep abortion border in Irish Sea by Susan McKay

Parties which claim to uphold human rights have abandoned women, Susan McKay writes in the Irish Times.

Sinn Féin leader Mary Lou McDonald has said she would “fail as a legislator” if she did not “have an answer for all of those hard cases”. She has failed.

Sinn Féin leader Mary Lou McDonald has said she would “fail as a legislator” if she did not “have an answer for all of those hard cases”. She has failed. Photograph:

It was quite the “manel” on display last week when the leaders of the North's main Christian churches, and their Council of Churches, gathered in the Church of Ireland's cathedral in Armagh to mark the centenary of partition. Most quoted in the extensive news coverage was the head of the Catholic Church in Ireland, Archbishop Eamon Martin, who churchnewsireland@gmail.org

said he had to “face the difficult truth that, perhaps, we in the churches could have done more . . . to bring healing and peace to our divided and wounded communities”.

The last time I recall these men joining forces to opine was in 2019 when they wrote to political leaders at Stormont urging them to recall the then suspended executive and stop the decriminalisation of abortion via legislation voted in at Westminster.

By coincidence the church service took place on the second anniversary of the North’s getting a British pro-choice law which is one of the most humane in Europe. But feminists marked the occasion with a protest in Belfast, because the law is not being implemented. One placard read, “Girls just want to have fun-damental human rights.”

The North’s Minister for Health, Robert Swan of the UUP, has not commissioned the abortion services required under the law and, throughout the pandemic, women still had to travel for abortions or go through with crisis pregnancies or take unregulated pills. Earlier this month, Belfast’s high court ruled in a case brought by the NI Human Rights Commission that the British secretary of state had failed to comply with his duty to ensure that abortion services were provided “expeditiously”.

[Foetal abnormality](#)

While the church service was taking place in Armagh, Stormont’s health committee voted in favour of a DUP Bill which would effectively deny women their legal rights in some of the worst situations imaginable. The Bill seeks to

amend the law to remove the right to abortion in cases of “severe foetal abnormality”. The law currently allows for abortion after 24 weeks’ gestation in such cases, as well as if there is a fatal foetal abnormality. In reality, tests may only indicate the presence of such abnormalities at about 20 weeks, and medical diagnosis of the difference between severe and fatal is not always possible.

The amendment would force some women to rush an inevitably fraught decision in order to have a termination in the North. Others would have to travel to England. Some, unable to do either, would be forced to carry their pregnancy to full term, or to the point when the foetus dies in their womb.

The Bill’s author is the current First Minister, Paul Givan, who believes that life begins at conception. The DUP has fought to maintain that particular border in the Irish Sea. The two DUP committee members voted for the Bill. The UUP’s one committee member also supported it, dashing any hopes that the party’s new leader, Doug Beattie, would stand up for women’s reproductive rights. The only two members who voted against the Bill were from People Before Profit and Alliance. The SDLP’s one member and Sinn Féin’s three members all abstained.

‘Living nightmare’

The Bill will potentially come before the full assembly for a vote within a few months. At its first stage earlier this year, just 12 out of 87 MLAs voted against it. There has since been a consultation. The NI Human Rights Commission, medical experts and others have advised that it contravenes international human rights laws and standards.

The secretary of state can overrule the Assembly on this. But northern feminists are furious that parties which claim to uphold human rights have abandoned them at this point in what has been a long, hard struggle. Women like Sarah Ewart, Ashleigh Topley and Denise Phelan laid their agony before the public and in the courts. Ewart described how her “very personal family tragedy” had been “turned into a living nightmare”. Green Party leader Claire Bailey last week pressed forward her Bill to stop anti-choice protesters harassing women outside clinics. Topley spoke about her pain on seeing protesters carrying tiny white coffins like the ones in which she and other women had to bury their babies.

A 2017 opinion poll showed 70 per cent of people in the North supported abortion in the kind of extreme circumstances* covered by Givan’s amendment. Sinn Féin leader Mary Lou McDonald said in the past she would “fail as a legislator” if she did not “have an answer for all of those hard cases”. She has failed, then. The SDLP too. It wants to shed its old conservative Catholic image, yet party leader Colm Eastwood recently carried out a reshuffle that put an anti-abortion MLA on the health committee. The party allows its MLAs to vote according to their conscience – thus making it impossible for the women actually faced with these decisions to act according to theirs.*

The church men are not concerned with healing the wounds caused by the denial of bodily autonomy to women. The politicians, with honourable exceptions, don’t trust women. Bernadette McAliskey made a thrilling statement at a rally for choice in Belfast in 2019. It should not sound

controversial and blasphemous, but it is a difficult truth that for women in the North, it does. "This is my body," she said.

Courtesy Irish Times, October 26, 2021

Poem for today

From - Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard By Thomas Gray

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such, as wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign

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May the blessing of God enfold you,
may God's love light your way,
may the grace of Christ guide your footsteps,
and the Spirit empower you each day,



