



**Image of the day - today's Perspective author
The Archbishop of York, Most Revd Stephen Cottrell**

News Reports

President Biden to meet Pope Francis

President Joe Biden and First Lady Dr Jill Biden are due to visit Vatican City and have an audience with His Holiness Pope Francis tomorrow, 29 October.

A White House press release states that they will discuss "working together on efforts grounded in respect for fundamental human dignity, including ending the Covid-19 pandemic, tackling the climate crisis, and caring for the poor."

From Rome, President Biden will travel to Glasgow from November 1-2 to participate in the World Leader Summit at the start of the 26th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26).

Biden met with Pope Francis in September 2015, when he was Vice President - during the Papal Visit to America.

Vocations directors called to focus on evangelisation

Last Saturday 19 priest-directors for vocations from around Ireland attended a video-conference gathering facilitated by Father Stephen Langridge, a priest of the Diocese of Southwark in England.

In the course of his encouraging presentation Father Langridge said: "The Covid-19 pandemic in itself has not so

such made fundamental changes in our Church, rather it has accelerated the changes which were already occurring under the surface. What we must now be asking ourselves is: 'What does the Church today have to offer people who are looking for meaning and belonging in the Ireland of 2021?'

"Our starting point must be the rediscovery of the primacy of evangelisation. At the same time we must be alert to the challenges of which we are all aware: of seeking quick-fix solutions, of clericalism, of activism and of being - as Pope Francis often points out - self-referential and of maintaining Church structures just for those who already attend the sacraments. To anyone hoping to encourage a candidate for priesthood, the following three essentials must be worked on:

1. the building of a real relationship with Christ;
2. a real growth in virtue; and,
3. to be mission-minded and with a heart which seeks to reach out to others.

"The creation of parishes which are mission-minded is essential to any promotion of vocations to the priesthood. In my own experience I found that in a former parish of mine, those attending behaved more like consumers instead of active disciples. In other words, a disciple is Christ-centred while a consumer has stories and seeks to be transformed to make a difference.

"As vocations directors, our focus then should be on transformation and not just information. While we spend a lot of time, resources and energy imparting knowledge and information in schools and colleges - all of which is necessary - the transformation of lives may not be happening at all. Therefore the emphasis for our mission must be on evangelisation.

"Some commentators have expressed how in years gone by, speaking in general terms, many people believed that they had the faith. They behaved accordingly and expected their parish to be a place where everyone would naturally belong. The dynamic, so to speak, was to believe, behave, belong.

"In our times the trend is quite the reverse. The needs now have changed. In today's culture the need to belong is paramount. If people feel that they belong then they may be inspired to seek what faith-filled people possess, namely belief. They will then shape their lives accordingly. So the dynamic has changed today to belong, believe and behave.

"In this context then parishes need to offer fellowship. We need to have a welcoming environment where people feel that faith can make a positive difference to life. The new movements in the Church often offer such fellowship. They can be an important help in parish life to fill this need."

Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan, chair of the Council for Vocations of the Irish Bishops' Conference, thanked Father Langridge for his excellent input. Bishop Cullinan encouraged all to bring his distillation of experience to their prayers, and to work within our vocations teams and

colleagues to ascertain the best way for parishes, diocesan structures and practices to adapt for evangelization to be front and centre in the Church's work.

At the meeting Father Willie Purcell, Ireland's National Vocations Coordinator, said: "Vocations directors appreciate the opportunities to come together and share ideas and strategies on how best to promote a vocations culture in our parishes, dioceses and educational centres. Father Langridge's input gives us great hope in our role as vocations directors. At this time I wish to acknowledge the work of vocation directors who do such important work accompanying young people on their journey towards discipleship and diocesan priesthood."

Bishop Cullinan also thanked all the vocations directors for their work, as well as the staff of the National Vocations Office: Father Willie Purcell and deacon Reverend Eric Cooney.

Portsmouth Diocese seeks urgent conversations with Anglican colleagues in Ghana over criminal sanctions against LGBT+ community

The Diocese of Portsmouth issued a statement regarding “our links with the Anglican Church in Ghana, and the support of its bishops for a bill being considered by the country's Parliament.” The statement reads -

“Our bishop-designate, Bishop Jonathan Frost, our commissary bishop, Bishop Rob Wickham, and the senior staff of the Diocese of Portsmouth said, “As a diocese, we have long-standing, formal links with the Anglican Church in Ghana, which we value. However, we are dismayed to hear that the country’s Anglican bishops have thrown their weight behind the ‘Promotion of Proper Human Sexual Rights and Ghanaian Family Values’ Bill.

"We are seeking urgent conversations with our colleagues in Ghana to ask why - not least in the light of the communique signed by all Anglican Primates in 2016, in which they pledged to reject criminal sanctions against members of the LGBT+ community, and to challenge homophobia.

“We strongly oppose the bill currently being considered by the Ghanaian Parliament, which proposes imprisonment of members of the LGBT+ community for being who they are, and to criminalise those who wish to support them. We believe this to be a fundamental violation of people’s human rights, which we believe will lead to state-sponsored violence that will threaten the lives of those in the LGBT+ community and their friends. As Christians, we also believe this stigmatises people in a way that does not affirm the value of each person as a unique individual, created in God’s image.

“We are committed to our relationship with our Anglican brothers and sisters in Ghana, and there is much mutual respect. Our close relationship prompts us to challenge each other as fellow disciples of Jesus Christ, sharpening each other’s thinking and speaking up against injustice in our respective countries.”

The Statement is made by nine leading clergy and the lay Diocesan Secretary.

[[] <https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/news/2021/10/26/senior-staff-issue-statement-our-links-ghana/>]

People and places

Archbishop of Armagh visits Church's Ministry of Healing – The Mount

The Most Rev Dr John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland paid a visit to the Church's Ministry of Healing – The Mount (CMH) on Monday October 25.

The Archbishop visited at the invitation of the CMH Board which was keen to share with him the progress it is making with regard to the future and to gain from him the blessing of his office as the Board proceed.

David from CMH said: “The event was fruitful in both respects. Archbishop John spent an hour and a half with us. He gave us his most hearty encouragement as we go forward both in our future and the part that we might play in the life of our country which is so much in need of healing in this pandemic and beyond.

“The Archbishop was especially exercised upon how greatly our young people have suffered over the recent past. He expressed his concern for their future in face of so many lost



opportunities in their young life experiences that cannot be restored.”

Archbishop John gave permission to make his visit central to CMH prayers in the week ahead and the Board promised to include him personally within those.

“We thank God for this encouragement as it stimulates us to greater urgency in the affairs of his kingdom and the ministry of Christ’s mercies for healing in our land and amongst its people,” David said.

“We pray for our processes as we look to organise to play our part in those ministries of grace; and we pray for His Grace, Archbishop John as he strives to fulfil his office. Poignantly he reminded us that he was elected to the

Primacy on 11 March 2020 to encounter within a week or so those ravages of lockdown which have affected our people so gravely and constricted his own opportunities for personal engagement which his duties would normally require.

“We follow closely today the Apostle Paul’s instruction at 1 Timothy 2:1-4: “First of all then I urge, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Saviour who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Youghal and Cloyne parishioners fundraising efforts for Christian Aid

A sponsored walk by members of Youghal and Cloyne Unions has raised more than €500 for Christian Aid’s work in some of the world’s poorest communities overseas.

Last month, around 20 parishioners strolled along the new Youghal boardwalk from Redbarn to Front Strand and back. Opened in June, the 7km wooden walkway is Ireland’s longest beachfront boardwalk. The walk was organised by Youghal rector, Rev Andrew Orr.

Christian Aid Ireland Chief Executive Rosamond Bennett thanked the Youghal and Cloyne parishioners for their fundraising efforts:



We are grateful to Rev Andrew Orr, to all the walkers and to the many other parishioners who sponsored them. This fundraising walk comes at a time when Christian Aid Ireland is helping people on the frontline of the global hunger crisis – hunger that is made worse by conflict and climate change.

To help Christian Aid Ireland reach more people affected by hunger, please visit caid.ie/Hunger or telephone 01 496 7040 to make a telephone donation.





150th anniversary of opening of St Columba's Church, Omagh

The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Andrew Forster, has paid tribute to the generation of worshippers in Omagh who were so confident in their faith and in God that at a time of great uncertainty for the Church of Ireland, they proceeded to build a new church, St Columba's, in the heart of the town a century and a half ago.

We have forgotten how turbulent those times were, Bishop Andrew said, in his sermon to the current generation of parishioners in Drumragh, as they gathered this evening to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the opening of St Columba's Church. "150 years ago, this year," the Bishop said, "the government decided 'in their wisdom – and it was

October 28, 2021



absolutely in their wisdom’ – that the Church of Ireland would no longer be the established church of the nation and that it would have to stand on its own two feet.”

It was, Bishop Forster said, a shock of seismic proportions. “They

didn’t know whether we would still be here in 10 years or 20 years. They thought we might struggle and disappear. And do you know what happened 150 years ago, whenever we were going through that time? The good people of Drumragh said we are confident: we are confident in our church; we are confident in our community; and, more than all of these, we are confident in almighty God, and we will build a church that will serve generations to come. And tonight, we celebrate the faith of that generation all those years ago.”

Bishop Andrew said the two great churches of County Tyrone, St Columba’s in Omagh and St Anne’s in Dungannon – in which both he and the Rector of Drumragh, Rev Graham Hare, had served – were both built during those days. “Two great churches that stand on hills, and now, this church, lit up for the whole town to see, saying to the world that we are here, that Jesus Christ says, ‘I will

build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.”

During the service, which was led by Rev Hare, the Bishop dedicated the church’s new internal and external lighting. He reminded the congregation that fifteen hundred years ago, their patronal saint, Columba, was born in Gartán in Donegal. The riches of his birth family meant nothing to Columba when he discovered the riches of faith in Jesus Christ. He built his favourite monastery on the site of St Augustine’s Church on Derry’s walls and from there he planted many other monasteries.

Equipping leaders for ministry in Down & Dromore

Church plant, pioneer leaders and some clergy recently gathered for the second in a series of Ministry Leadership Days in Down & Dromore which have been organised by the diocese.

The programme runs until April 2022 and is part of Bishop David McClay’s commitment to raise up, release and empower Christian leaders within Down and Dromore.

The speaker on Wednesday 20 October was Mark Melliush (pictured above). Mark leads a family of Anglican churches in West London and has been involved in the leadership of New Wine England for over 30 years. He has co-authored two books and regularly mentors young leaders throughout the UK.



Mark describes himself as an evangelist at heart. He has planted five churches and in the morning session shared his wealth of experience of the leadership journey and the qualities needed to stay the course and see churches grow.

Over 30 clergy joined the church plant and pioneer leaders for lunch and an afternoon session entitled ‘Anointing for Leadership’. Mark talked about how to hear clearly from God and how to sensitively exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit in a church setting.

Mark also addressed a group of lay leaders on the previous evening on the topic of ‘Growing in Listening’.

The ministry leadership days have several aims: to provide training to further equip and develop our leaders in their roles; to enable them to maintain and build relationships with other ministry leaders and to inspire and encourage them in their own ministry leadership journey. All of them are being held at the T3 Conference Centre at the House of Vic Ryn, Lisburn.

October 28, 2021

Bishop McClay said, “Leadership is challenging, especially in these days when the landscape has changed so dramatically. I’m delighted that we can offer our leaders the opportunity to listen to excellent speakers and discuss and pray about these challenges together.”

New place of worship opened at Magilligan Prison



Justice Minister Naomi Long is pictured at the official opening of the new House of Worship at Magilligan Prison with (front, l-r) Gary Milling, Governor of Magilligan Prison, and Ronnie Armour, Director General of the Northern Ireland Prison Service, and (back row, l-r) Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu, President of the Methodist Church, Fr Michael Canny, Vicar General of Derry Diocese, Rev Andrew Forster, Church of

Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, and Rev David Bruce, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church.

The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, the Rt Rev Andrew Forster, was recently among Christian church leaders who attended the official opening of a new House of Worship in Magilligan Prison by the Justice Minister, Naomi Long. He was accompanied at the official opening and dedication of the new building by the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, the Rev Dr David Bruce; the President of the Methodist Church, the Rev Dr Sahr Yambasu; and the Vicar General of the Derry Diocese, Fr Michael Canny.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts and books



Parenting podcast - Halloween

You can now listen to Parenting for Faith's making your mind up about Halloween on Facebook Live as a podcast! Rachel shares some

ideas on how we can decide how we want to approach Halloween and answers lots of parents' questions.

Click here to listen to the one that suits you -
[parentingforfaith.org/podcast]

Perspective

Watching and praying in hope for a positive outcome at COP26 by the Archbishop of York, Most Revd Stephen Cottrell

In 2009 the UK Environment Agency asked 25 secular environmental leaders what might 'save the planet'. Second on the list of 50 items, behind only greater energy efficiency, was for world faiths to become engaged on the issue of environmental protection.

As nations prepare to gather for COP26, the most important climate summit since the signing of the Paris Agreement and the biggest diplomatic event to take place on British soil since World War 2, I'm pleased to see the global church taking a more active role in creation care.

In 2015 there was Pope Francis' papal encyclical Laudato Si and the Lambeth Declaration on climate change, not to mention only last month we saw for the first time the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Anglican Communion jointly warning of the urgency of environmental sustainability and its impact on the poor.

That impact was something I witnessed myself three years ago when travelling in a part of Northern Kenya where it hadn't rained for 18 months. Seeing children waving empty plastic bottles at us, begging for water was one of the saddest things I have experienced. Every day the equivalent of 12 jumbo jets worth of people die because they do not have access to fresh water. This horror is only going to worsen without tackling the injustice of the climate crisis.

For me the challenge of the environmental emergency is captured in the Lord's Prayer. We pray "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven." If you look in the Book of Common Prayer you'll notice it says "in earth, as it is in heaven." Somewhere in the last hundred years or so "in earth as it is in heaven" has somehow changed to, "on earth as it is in heaven". It was not an organized change by some church commission, it just happened.

We used to believe, and to know, that we lived in earth, that we were part of it, interdependent with it. And if we had a relationship with the earth it was to be its good stewards, living in it, and with it, and serving it. Then somewhere in the last couple of hundred years we moved to a position from living in the earth to living on the earth. And now I'm separate from the earth. The earth is mine, and I can do with it what I will. And from that, disaster upon disaster has flowed. We've been blind to the consequences of our actions, and we now live in a time where we must take action.

The prayer also suggests a solution to our broken relationship with creation. It continues, “Give us today our daily bread.” Give me enough for today, save me from wanting more than my share. So no, I don't want strawberries on Christmas Day flown in from the other side of the world. I need to live differently, I need to inhabit the planet in a different, more sustainable way.

It's right that we advocate and campaign for better legislation for the environment, that we look for progress at meetings like COP26. We have political power to use our voice for these things. But we also need a change of heart, where we recognise that we live in the earth, where we start to learn to know what enough looks like.

I welcome the interventions from church leaders and the words of the Lambeth Declaration. But we must also remember that the church manifesting a more sustainable relationship with creation is happening in individual churches and homes across the country. There is Arocha's Eco Church scheme which has seen thousands of churches being awarded gold, silver and bronze awards for taking steps to ensure their church acts as better stewards of creation.

The Church of England has made the commitment to be net carbon zero by 2030 – in just nine years time. I am proud of this bold decision, which is aligned with the most ambitious and forward-thinking institutions and ahead of the vast majority of others. If we want to speak prophetically into this debate it's important that we act prophetically too.

It's going to be a big challenge but there is a huge amount happening. Churches are switching to renewable electricity providers, we're reducing our energy waste, fitting solar panels and ground source heaters. It may be a cliché but yes, there's a role for changing to LED light bulbs too. Some of our buildings already have a very small carbon footprint, others are bigger. It's a huge, ambitious and pretty terrifying programme. And I don't know whether we'll get there by 2030. But if we get a long way towards it, it will be a significant achievement. The first step for anyone wanting to help join us is to do a simple audit of your church's energy using a CofE app: churchofengland.org/energy-footprinting-tool

Over the next few weeks we will be watching and praying in hope for a positive outcome at COP26 which will see the world take a major step forward in bringing climate justice to those in need of it. But whatever the outcome in Glasgow, there will be a need for a movement of people with changed hearts that live in the earth and not just on it, that cherishes the gift of 'enough' and that tries to model a way of living which works in harmony with God's creation, not against it.

Courtesy The Church Times, 25/10/2021

Poem for today

Follower by Seamus Heaney

My father worked with a horse-plough,
His shoulders globed like a full sail strung
Between the shafts and the furrow.

The horses strained at his clicking tongue.

An expert. He would set the wing
And fit the bright steel-pointed sock.
The sod rolled over without breaking.
At the headrig, with a single pluck

Of reins, the sweating team turned round
And back into the land. His eye
Narrowed and angled at the ground,
Mapping the furrow exactly.

I stumbled in his hobnailed wake,
Fell sometimes on the polished sod;
Sometimes he rode me on his back
Dipping and rising to his plod.

I wanted to grow up and plough,
To close one eye, stiffen my arm.
All I ever did was follow
In his broad shadow round the farm.

I was a nuisance, tripping, falling,
Yapping always. But today
It is my father who keeps stumbling
Behind me, and will not go away

+ Please share CNI with your friends
www.churchnewsireland.org

