



The Rev Andrew Ker, Mr Robert Williamson, Irish President Michael D Higgins, Bishop Alan Abernethy and Dr Ian Adamson OBE at the grave of Sir Samuel Ferguson in Donegore.

Irish President Visits Poet's Grave in Donegore Parish

The President of Ireland, Michael D Higgins, visited St John's Parish Church, Donegore, on Thursday October 27 to see the grave of Irish poet Sir Samuel Ferguson.

He then travelled a short distance up Donegore Hill to the studio of stained glass artist David Esler where he was shown a window crafted by members of the Dalaradia Group, a community organisation of men who wish to make a positive and peaceful commitment to conflict transformation.

The same group had voluntarily given their time to tidy up the St John's graveyard, including Sir Samuel Ferguson's grave, and to clean all the windows in the church, almost 200-years-old but on the site of an Anglican church dating to the 14th century.

The Irish President was met at the gates of St John's by the curate, the Rev Andrew Ker, Mr Robert Williamson, chairman of Dalaradia, and Dr Ian Adamson OBE, a former Lord Mayor of Belfast and the city's first Honorary Historian.

Among the guests was the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy, Connor Diocesan Development Officer Trevor Douglas, and members of the Dalaradia Group.

They were welcomed by the Rev Ker, and there were speeches by Mr Williamson, and by

President Higgins who spoke of the ‘profound and inspiring legacy’ of Sir Samuel Ferguson.

“I am delighted and honoured to visit such a beautiful church,” the President said. “I remember studying Sir Samuel Ferguson and his work, and have been talking for years about wanting to visit his resting place.”

Guests were entertained with music played on the Mountain Dulcimer by Paul Atcheson–Blair from the Dalaradia Group. This instrument is unique to the Appalachian Mountains in America where many Scots Irish made their homes.

The Rev Ker gave the President a short tour of St John’s, showing him the beautiful war memorial crafted from ceramic poppies used in the Tower of London WW1 centenary display, and the unusual Donegore Parish Roll of Honour, written in 1916, half way through the war!

At the graveside, Dr Adamson said a few words, reflecting on Sir Samuel’s express desire to be laid to rest in Donegore, and the Bishop of Connor said a prayer of thanksgiving for literature, culture and for writers.

Everyone then moved to the David Esler Leadlines studio where the Dalaradia Group gave a preview of a stained glass window project produced by the group under guidance from the Institute of Conflict Research.

The group is made up of men from Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus, Belfast, Larne and Antrim who, in seeking conflict transformation, explore aspects of their historical and contemporary identities on the islands of Ireland and Britain.

Working with the Institute for Conflict Research on a programme 'Back to the Future', the group created the window under the tutelage of master glass maker David Esler. It depicts images of Ulster's rich heritage and culture, in the shape of a cross mounted in a portable stand.

Sir Samuel Ferguson was born in Belfast in 1810 and studied law at Trinity College, Dublin, supporting himself along the way by writing. He practiced law as well contributing articles on topics of Irish interest to antiquarian journals.

His collected poems, *Lays of the Western Gael*, was published in 1865, resulting in an honorary degree from Trinity. In 1867, he retired from the

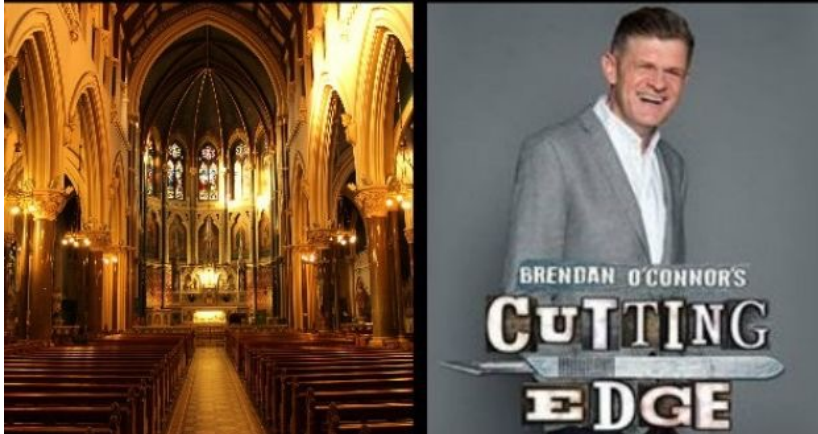
bar to take up the newly created post of Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland. As reward for his services, he received a knighthood in 1878.

Sir Samuel's major work, the long poem *Congal* was published in 1872 and a third volume, *Poems* in 1880. In 1882, he was elected President of the Royal Irish Academy, an organisation dedicated to the advancement of science, literature and antiquarian studies. He died in August 1886.

Rectors reject portrayal of Protestantism as 'watered down Catholicism'

Two [Church of Ireland](#) women priests have taken strong exception to a portrayal of the church as "watered down Catholicism" on Wednesday night's [RTÉ](#) One Cutting Edge programme, Patsy McGarry writes in the Irish Times.

Rev [Gillian Wharton](#), rector of [Boooterstown](#) and [Mount Merrion](#) in Dublin, felt the description was offensive both to [Roman Catholics](#) and members of the Church of Ireland. The programme, she said, included "patronising, ill informed, ignorant



The Cutting Edge programme was said to include “patronising, ill informed, ignorant and insensitive comments” which should have been challenged by host Brendan O’Connor.

and insensitive comments” which should have been challenged by host Brendan O’Connor. He “failed on a number of occasions last night to do so”, she said.

Clergy and laity to whom she had had been upset by the programme, she said

Rev [Ruth Elmes](#), rector of [Tinahely](#) and [Carnew](#) in Co [Wicklow](#), said she believed “the very politeness of the Church of Ireland” allowed “attitudes like those expressed on the Cutting Edge programme on RTÉ last night, prosper”.

While she preferred the quiet life, “sometimes the worm has to turn and the mouse has to roar”. She recalled that the programme included Brendan O’Connor, with panellists Rory O’Neill, [Sarah Carey](#) and [Ciara Kelly](#). Rory O’Neill, she said, “in reference to his childhood rejection of the [Roman Catholic](#) Church on a visit to Knock, says ‘I didn’t become an atheist that day but I took the first step and became a Protestant’.”

Ciara Kelly said “she had four children, two baptised Roman Catholic and two baptised Protestant. ‘Are you going after the cheap fees in a nice Protestant school?’, asked Sarah Carey, to a round of applause.” Rev Elmes recalled how Brendan O’Connor said, “so you reject the [Catholic Church](#) but let them be Protestants because that’s not really a religion?” To which Ciara Kelly responded, “I think most Irish people today are bloody Protestants, cos they watered down Catholicism and dropped the bits that they don’t like.”

[Irish Bishops to discuss new Vatican rules on cremation](#)

New Vatican rules on cremation will be discussed by Irish bishops in December.

In a statement last night, the Catholic Church in Ireland said the Bishops' Conference "will consider this new instruction at its winter meeting" and any changes that are required.

The Vatican this week announced new guidelines on cremation stating that ashes should not be scattered, divided between relatives or kept at home.

The document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith reiterates that burial is preferred, but lays out guidelines for conserving ashes for the increasing numbers of Catholics who choose cremation.

It said remains should be stored in a sacred, Church-approved place, such as a cemetery or columbarium.

The Irish Church last night said the new instructions "are norms which are to be adopted by the universal Church".

It added that the "instruction does not mean ashes will have to be stored in church buildings in Ireland, but it may mean over time the establishment of a columbarium in the grounds of cemeteries owned by Catholic parishes".

There are a number of columbariums in Belfast including at St Patrick's Church on Donegall Street.

The statement said: "The Bishops' Conference will consider this new instruction at its winter meeting in December and keep in view any new pastoral developments that may be required for the reverent laying to rest of ashes.

"In this regard, it will continue to uphold statutory requirements for the proper disposal of human remains.

"It will also include any changes that will have to be made in the next edition of the Order of Christian Funerals, the ritual book for funerals which is approved for use in the dioceses of Ireland."

Vatican cremation directive expected to be ignored

Irish Times

... in **churches** will be widely ignored, a leading **Irish** crematorium has said. ... it said, will not mean that ashes will have to be stored in **church** buildings, ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/vatican-cremation-directive-expected-to-be-ignored-1.2843304>

We believe it is not respectful' – Irish priest and theologian explain new church doctrine on cremation

Irish Independent

An **Irish** priest and theologian have explained that the Catholic **church** believes that

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/we-believe-it-is-not-respectful-irish-priest-and-theologian-explain-new-church-doctrine-on-cremation-35164410.html>

Reunions at Queen's chaplaincy

This November, the Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplaincy at Queen's University is hosting two informal reunion evenings for past students.

Each event will be a chance for former housemates and friends to gather around a buffet-style meal and catch up. Former staff will play host, and there will also be plenty of photographs and memories made available to get conversation going.

With the first of the student houses, No. 22 Elmwood Avenue, having opened in 1955, the chaplaincy has been a home and meeting place for hundreds of past residents over the last 61 years. The chaplaincy has therefore decided to host two events: one on Friday 11th November



for students from the 1990s and 2000s; and one on Saturday 26th November for students from the 1950s to the 1980s.

Both events will be held at the chaplaincy's Hub Café (previously known as the Oasis) and will start at 7.30pm. The reunions are free to attend but, to help with catering, the chaplaincy would be grateful for people who plan to come along to RSVP by emailing: friends@thehubbelfast.org More information is also available on the chaplaincy's website: www.thehubbelfast.org

Church Music Dublin launches revised syllabus

Church Music Dublin launched the revised syllabus of the Archbishop's Certificate in Church
churchnewsireland@gmail.com



Archdeacon Ricky Rountree, Canon Adrienne Galligan and Canon Roy Byrne at the launch of the revised ACCM syllabus in Monkstown Parish Church.

Music recently. The revised syllabus puts greater emphasis on skills in playing and accompanying hymns and worship songs and it was launched in Monkstown Parish Church.

The new syllabus was unveiled during a service led by Archdeacon Ricky Rountree, chairperson of Church Music Dublin. The readers were Canon Adrienne Galligan, a member Church Music Dublin and Canon Roy Byrne, Rector of Monkstown. Past and present students played voluntaries on the organ before and after the service and accompanied hymns and Anglican chant during the service.

Church Music Dublin is an agency of the Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough that provides training, resources and information to musicians and clergy in parish churches. They offer a three-year course (with an optional introductory Foundation Course) leading to the Archbishop of Dublin's Certificate in Church Music.

The purpose of the course is to ensure a continuing supply of trained musicians to provide music regularly or occasionally for church services in local churches. Participants on the course are sponsored by their parishes.

The course covers organ playing, leading and encouraging congregational singing, leadership of small groups such as choirs and music groups and familiarity with the Book of Common Prayer,

the use of the Lectionary and an understanding of the role of music in the Sunday services.

Full details of the course criteria and syllabus are available on the Church Music Dublin website <http://www.churchmusicdublin.org/>

Papal summer residence opens to the public for the first time

Pope Francis is throwing open the doors to the papal apartment — including the bedroom where popes have slept — in the Apostolic Palace at Castel Gandolfo.

The palace was for centuries the summer residence of the Roman pontiffs, but Pope Francis has decided not to use it. Instead in 2014, he opened the palace gardens to the public and last year opened a portion of the Apostolic Palace as a portrait gallery.

Pope Francis “wanted this place — so rich in history and so significant — to be a gift for the people,” Antonio Paolucci, director of the Vatican Museums, said on October 20 at the grand opening of the papal apartment.

“Whoever passes through the gate of the Apostolic Palace of Castel Gandolfo will find pure beauty,” Paolucci said.

Among the rooms open now to the public are the Room of the Throne, the Consistory Room, the Pope’s bedroom and private study.

Unlike his predecessors, Pope Francis spends his summers in Rome rather than at the peaceful residence 20 miles away in the cooler hills. However, Sandro Barbagallo, curator of historical collections at the Vatican Museums, said that the “non-presence of the Pope fits perfectly within the palace’s history.”

“Thirty-three popes have reigned since the Apostolic Palace was first acquired. Of those 33 popes, only 15 have actually resided here at Castel Gandolfo,” he noted.

To celebrate the papal apartment’s grand opening to the public and its historical significance, artists from the Guangzhou Opera House in Beijing performed a short concert titled, Beauty unites us.

Playing both classical and traditional instruments, the eight female artists filled the palace courtyard with the sounds of China while famed calligrapher, Cui Zimo, painted an artistic representation in honor of the Year of Mercy titled *Anima Mundi* (The Soul of the World).

Zimo said his artwork, as well as the presence of the musicians from the Guangzhou Opera House, was “an artistic contribution to the pope’s Year of Mercy,” and he hoped that it would be “a new start to the relationship between China and the Vatican.”

The artwork, he said, was inspired by Michelangelo’s *Creation of Adam*, in which God is depicted reaching his finger toward Adam, “yet their fingers are barely touching.”

Zimo said he suddenly realised “what those hands mean” when he had a chance to meet Pope Francis and shake his hand. “It is love that allows those hands to be together and that small distance (between them) can disappear,” he said.

“This merciful love not only means the coming together of two persons but also (the coming

together of) different peoples and different nations,” Zimo said.

Visitors can purchase tickets to the Apostolic Palace and the papal apartment in Castel Gandolfo through [the Vatican Museums' website](#).

News briefs

+++ A Service of the Word for All Saints - will be broadcast on RTÉ Radio 1 Extra from St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, on Sunday 30 October, led by Canon Marie Rowley–Brooke. The broadcast time is 11.45am. Recordings of services are available [online](#) following the broadcast of the programme.

+++ Carrigaline All Age Sports Service - Carrigaline Union of Parishes in the Diocese of Cork held an All Age Sports Service in St Mary's Church on 23rd October. This Service was the initiative of parishioners Simon and Michelle Woodworth and was led by Richard Dring, Diocesan Lay Reader accompanied by his wife, Organist Hilary Dring. Many diverse items of sporting equipment (Archery Bows, Chess sets, Hurleys, Tennis Racquets, Balls etc), along with Team Jerseys were brought along for Blessing

by the Rector (who was in attendance in her Kilkenny Jersey, Leinster Scarf, Munster Hat and of course Dublin heart!). The children of the parish led the prayers which were written by Simon who is a member of the Parish Healer/Prayer Group.

+++ 50th anniversary of St Mary's, Dundonald

- Around 140 parishioners and guests recently gathered in St Mary's Ballybeen for a thanksgiving dinner to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the church. They were joined by Bishop Harold Miller of Down and Dromore, Bishop Ken Clarke (a former curate of St Elizabeth's, Dundonald) and a very special guest – 89 year old Isabel McCartney. Back in June 1966, the then rector of St Elizabeth's, Canon Herbie Frizelle, asked Isabel to start a Sunday School in a wooden hut in the recently built Ballybeen estate on the edge of Dundonald. In October of the same year, the first service was held to celebrate Harvest Thanksgiving and St Mary's was born! Fifty years later, St Mary's is a thriving, multi-generational congregation situated in the centre of the second largest housing estate in Northern Ireland. The church retains strong links with the local community it continues to serve.

+++ Armagh organ recital - Matthew Lazenby will give the second recital in the Theo Saunders Memorial Organ Recital Series on Sunday 30 October 2016 at 4.15pm in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh.

+++ Murder mystery wedding reception - A 'murder' took place on 22nd and 23rd of October in the Canon Packham Hall in Saint Luke's Parish, Douglas County Cork. Over the two nights about 250 people witnessed the incident. It was the brainwave of Douglas Curate, the Reverend David Bowles who orchestrated it all. Much work went into the production and organisation of the event. The actors were on top form on the top table. There were two incident packed evenings . Only one table on Friday but four on Saturday managed to work out who had done the dastardly deed, and how, and why!

+++ World-renowned Biblical scholar speaking in Belfast - Preacher and author, Professor Don Carson is the guest speaker at All Saints' Church, University Street, Belfast, on Sunday November 6. A research professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Illinois, Dr Carson, whose father was born in Carrickfergus, is one of the most prolific thinkers and servants

of the church in the latter half of the 20th and first half of the 21st centuries. His primary academic and ministry concern has been a recovery of Biblical Theology as a serious discipline in the university faculties across the globe, an answer to both a liberal approach to God's word written and confusion around its overarching message. Dr Carson will be addressing 'What Thomas teaches us about doubt...and faith?' This will be followed by a question and answer session. The evening begins at 8.15pm. For further information, contact the Rev Trevor Johnston on 07776 178248 or trevor@ascbelfast.com

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Tel/Mail

Reports on CofE ministry stats published yesterday. Mail says figures show 'sharp decline' and that attendance has dropped by 14% over 10 years. Tel notes 'a boom in attendance at festive services while Sunday congregations slump to an all-time low'. William Nye, the Church's Secretary General, is quoted, "The Church of England is setting out on a journey of renewal and reform, aiming to reverse our

numerical decline in attendance so that we become a growing church in every region and for every generation."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/10/27/british-families-only-attend-church-at-christmas-new-figures-sug/>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3880696/Church-England-loses-one-seven-Sunday-worshippers-just-decade-new-figures-confirm-steep-decline-ranks-Anglican-faith.html>

Tel/Times/Exp/Even Stand

Further reports of the evidence heard by a tribunal earlier this year following a complaint brought under the Clergy Discipline Measure against the Revd Prof James Day, a priest in the Diocese in Europe. Articles note that the tribunal found his conduct had been 'unbecoming and inappropriate'.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/10/27/bisexual-church-of-england-vicar-sacked-over-orgies-and-prostitu/>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/vicar-dismissed-over-sex-and-sauna-visits-hxpnft7n6>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/726003/Sacked-vicar-Church-of-England-double-life-orgies-porn>

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/church-of-england-vicar-defrocked-after-wife-exposed-secret-sex-and-porn-addict-lifestyle-a3379866.html>

Christian Today

Reports that hundreds of children reliant on free school meals in Milton Keynes have been fed by a church this half term. St Mark's have run the lunch club in four schools across the town this week and are hoping to feed up to 300 pupils and their families. One in five children in Milton Keynes live in poverty, according to the *Vital Signs* report produced by a local community group, and vicar Paul Oxley said his vision was there would be none. Speaking in a C of E podcast, the Revd Oxley says, "Food is a great leveller".

Bradford Tel & Argus

Reports that the Communities Minister Lord Nick Bourne has began a year-long tour of all 42 of England's cathedrals with a visit to Bradford. Lord Bourne said, "My role as faith and communities minister means I want to get out and see the work of inter-faith groups across the country and Bradford is a good example of that.