

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Hillsborough Castle**

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**Hillsborough Castle - the Monarch's residence in Northern Ireland**

## News reports

### **Reflection and prayer for the late sovereign at beginning of Ordination in Omaha**

**Prayers were said at a Service of Ordination in Omagh, on Friday evening, in memory of The Late Queen Elizabeth II.**

The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Andrew Forster, said at the start of the double Ordination Service, in St Columba's Church, that it was appropriate to begin with a moment in reflection and in prayer for the late sovereign.

The Service of Ordination for two new priests for the Diocese, Rev Alexander Chisnall and Rev Johnny Lowden, had been months in the planning, but the death of The Late Queen, the previous day, required a change to the order of service, Bishop Forster felt.

"I know all of us feel a great sadness at the loss of such a distinguished monarch and a special person," the Bishop said. "Her life has been a blessing to all of us. Her life has

been marked by a deep sense of duty and devotion, empowered and fuelled by her love for God and her devout Christian faith.



**The two men who were ordained priests are Rev Johnny Lowden, who was born in Bangor but grew up in Downpatrick, and Rev Alexander Chisnall, from Killiney in South Dublin. Their respective wives, Emily and Hannah, were in church, along with relatives and friends, to see their husbands being ordained.**

“We feel a sadness,” Bishop Andrew said, “in that, I’m sure none of us really met her – we might have seen her, we never met her – but she’s been part of our lives. But that sadness is matched by a huge sense of thankfulness, thankfulness for Her Late Majesty’s goodness, for all that she has been in that constant presence in our nation – the nation’s lives, and right across the Commonwealth and the

world – for the way she has been a constant who has helped us through changing times and challenging times. And this evening, as we give thanks for her long life, and commend her into the hands of God whom she served with such distinction, so we also pray for the King and the Royal Family.”

It had been over 70 years, the Bishop said, since they had used the phrase, ‘God save the King,’ and sung the national anthem as ‘God save the King’. “That’s what we do now, as we pray for the King and for the Royal Family.” The Bishop invited the congregation to stand and join him in a rousing rendition of the anthem.



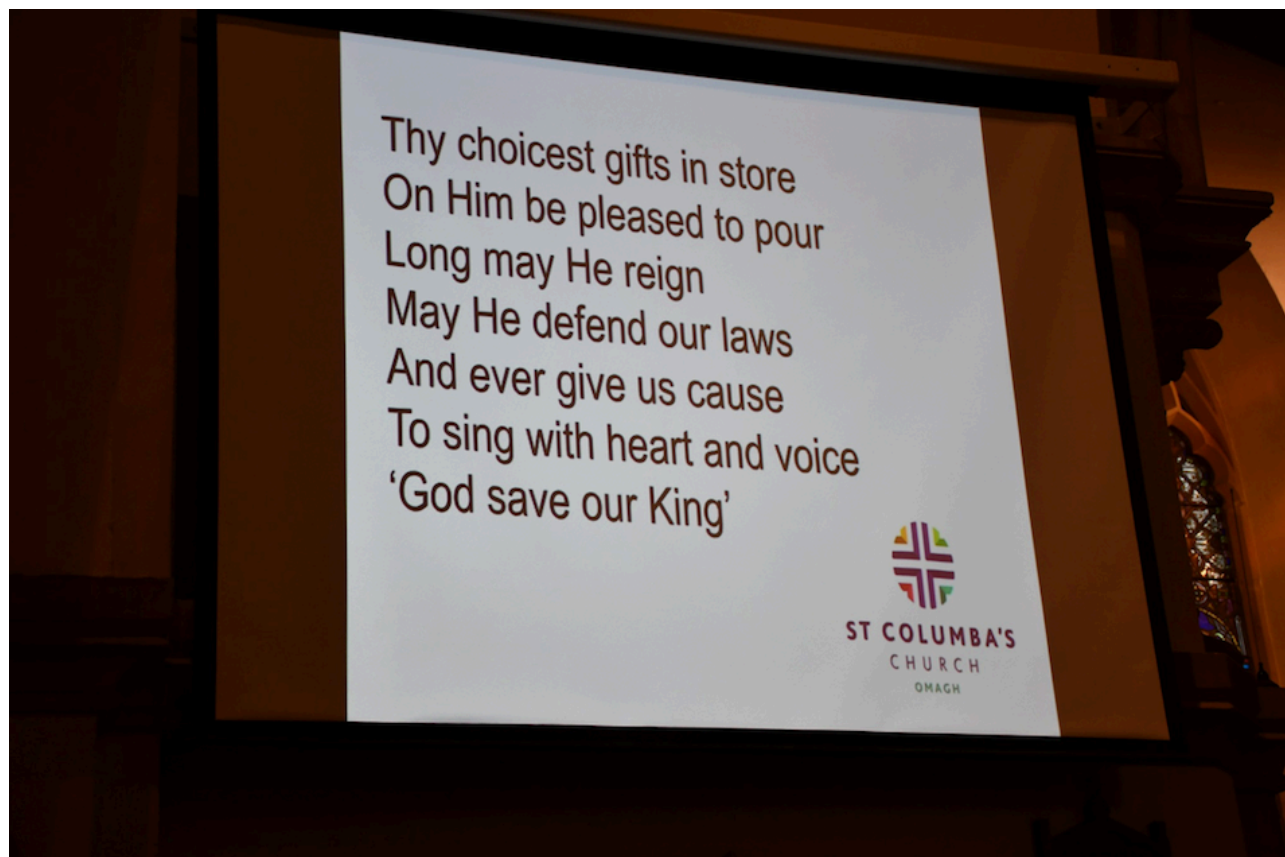
The preacher was the Director of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute, Rev Canon Dr Maurice Elliott. He began by saying how delighted those present were for Rev

Lowden and Rev Chisnall on this very special occasion which, in its own way, was both an ending and a beginning. “In the eyes of the Church,” the preacher told them, “from this evening, you’re no longer to be simply a deacon intern, but you will be both a deacon, still, and a priest.”

Canon Elliott said that in the second reading, in the Ordination Service, 2 Timothy 4:1-8, St Paul spoke powerfully and poignantly about those two ideas of ending and beginning. “He does so, interestingly, with reference to ministry. He does so by way of giving a charge, an order, a command, an imperative to his young protégé. And the essence of what he’s saying to Timothy is from the beginning you need to aim to end well.” In the reading, the preacher said, the apostle Paul – while imprisoned, just prior to his execution – writes his very own epitaph: ‘I’ve fought the good fight. I’ve finished the race. I’ve kept the faith. And because of that, now there is in store for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord will award to me on that day.’ Paul, you see, has finished well, but Timothy, on the other hand, is just getting under way.”

Dr Elliott suggested three pieces of advice which he thought came to us from the apostle. First, if you, too, are going to finish well, Paul says always remember that there is a judgement to come. The judgement seat of Christ was, the preacher said, the ultimate end point. And for those who had placed their trust in Jesus Christ, that was not something of which to be frightened. “Far from it,” Dr Elliott said. “The reason why Paul invokes the theme of judgement here is precisely in order that Timothy will be motivated – motivated to do everything that he can in order to make as many people as possible ready.”

The second piece of advice from the apostle was to always prioritise the centrality of preaching. “Paul continues, look with me at the text: ‘I give you this charge:



Preach the word.’ It’s very striking what he doesn’t say about the nature of ministry. He doesn’t say be a moralist and tell people to live better lives; he doesn’t say be a miracle worker and try to impress others with your ability; he doesn’t say be a worship leader, a justice fighter, a liberator or an empathiser. All of those may have their rightful place within the totality of ordained ministry but none of them is top of the list.

“If the two of you have not yet realised it,” Dr Elliott said, “I guarantee, perhaps even this next week, you will quickly realise how many pressures are going to come against your

time, and for all who serve in ordained ministry one of the biggest challenges is simply to keep the main thing to be the main thing. And Paul says, 'Preach the Word'. Proclaim the good news of grace, of forgiveness, of hope, of everlasting life. Do that when it is convenient, in season, but do it also when perhaps things may be said against it, out of season. Do it when you gather in church from pulpits, but do it also when you sit beside someone's hospital bed or on a sofa in their home."

Finishing well, the preacher said, bears in mind the judgment to come, prioritises the centrality of preaching and is always willing to bear a cross. "You will have many joys, you will enjoy many privileges, but Johnny and Alexander, remember there'll be no shortage of hardship, challenge and sheer disappointment, perhaps all the more so as we continue to come out of this season of global pandemic."

The ordination service was led by Bishop Andrew, assisted by the rector of Drumragh with Mountfield, Rev Graham Hare.

The Archdeacons of Derry and Raphoe, Ven Robert Miller and Ven David Huss, also took part. The readings were delivered by the two new priests' wives, Mrs Hannah Chisnall and Mrs Emily Lowden. The Gospel was read by the Director of Ordinands, Rev Canon Robert Boyd. The Bishop's Chaplain was Rev Carmen Hayes.

After the service, the new priests, their wives, families and friends, and the participating clergy crossed the road to the church hall for an excellent supper prepared by parishioners.

## **Methodist President invited to the Funeral Service of the late Queen**

The Rev David Nixon, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, who participated in the Service of Thanksgiving for the life the late Queen Elizabeth II in St. Anne's Cathedral Belfast, in the presence of King Charles III and Camila, the Queen Consort, has been invited with the other Church Leaders from Ireland to the Funeral Service of the late Queen in Westminster Abbey on Monday 19th September.

Commenting on this invitation, the Methodist President has said:

"I am honoured by this invitation to be present and process at the funeral service for the late Queen and pray that for King Charles III and all the Royal Family that this service will bring them peace and encouragement as they move into the next chapter of their lives"

## **Cross–community service of thanksgiving and reflection in Down Cathedral**

The Diocese of Down and Dromore held a cross–community service of thanksgiving and reflection in Down Cathedral on Thursday 15 September. It was a solemn but uplifting occasion as the diocese, local clergy and civic leaders came together to remember and give thanks for the life and reign of Her Late Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.



His Majesty King Charles III was represented at the service by the Lord–Lieutenant of County Down, Mr Gawn Rowan Hamilton.

The Bishop of Down and Dromore, the Rt Revd David McClay, brought words of welcome while the bidding was given by Revd John Auchmuty, Canon Chancellor (representing the Dean and Chapter). At this point in the service the congregation observed a one–minute silence for personal contemplation, prayer, and reflection.

After the Penitence (Minor Canon Revd Adrian Dorrian), Psalm, and first reading (Very Revd Geoff Wilson) Mrs Margaret Saunders aged 90, was invited to share personal reflections of The Queen.

Margaret was one of the last young ladies to be ‘Presented at Court’ to King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (The

Queen Mother), the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret and Prince Philip.



Margaret (above) recalled, “It was Spring 1949, and I joined a long line of girls waiting to enter the Throne Room at Buckingham Palace. I stepped forward and curtsied to the King and Queen. It was an awe–inspiring experience to be in this throne room and meet the people you had heard about but never met. Afterwards we were served afternoon tea. We were honoured guests and treated as such.”

Margaret’s husband, Teddy, was a vicar in the centre of London, and his parish included the gardens of Buckingham Palace, if not the palace itself. They met The Queen and most members of the Royal Family at weddings, funerals and other occasions during those years. She also recalled the thrill of being personally introduced to the Queen and Prince Philip when they paid a visit to a Church School.

It was, however, The Queen's deep personal and lifelong faith that made the most impact on Margaret. "It was the most important thing in her life," she said, recalling Christmas broadcasts filled with "faith, wisdom and strength," and "a life so well lived".

The Hymn, Make Me a Channel of Your Peace, was followed by the second reading given by Rachel Norris, a pupil of Down High School, and the Nunc Dimittis, sung by the Choir. The Lord-Lieutenant read the Gospel.

Bishop McClay in his address, began by urging the congregants to follow the command of scriptures in praying often for the King and those in authority over us – something for which the Prayer Book makes ample daily provision – "that we might live a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way".

The bishop went on to draw parallels between Queen Elizabeth and King David who was chosen by God and called to a task. He reflected on the Queen's remarkable life of service and a faith that sustained her in the challenges she faced.

"The Queen's life of devotion was a lifestyle that she chose and continued to choose. She also chose to be a bridge-builder and peacemaker," he said. 'Her own life circumstances did not shape it but rather her choice and her responses.'

He said, "The Queen, like King David, also understood that Christ alone is the hope of men and women, and Christ



alone is the nation's hope. He was her peace, and he can be our peace too."

Concluding, Bishop McClay said, "As we go forward this evening, let us renew, or for the first time make, a commitment to love and follow Jesus with our whole heart and life and to love others as ourselves, that our leadership would be marked by integrity and the knowledge that God will skill our hands for the task to which he calls us."

Another moment of solemn reflection followed the sermon when piper Samuel Gill walked from the narthex into the midst of the congregation playing *Flowers of the Forest*, a lament often used in acts of remembrance.

The prayers were led by local clergy: Revd Sabrina Cooke, Curate—Assistant, Revd Owen Patterson, Downpatrick Presbyterian Church, The Reverend Rosalind Taggart, Downpatrick Non—subscribing Presbyterian Church and Canon Bro Eric OSB, Holy Cross Abbey and Ecumenical Canon.

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Sionán Mullan, a member of the Cathedral Choir, sang A Clare Benediction before the Bishop led The General Thanksgiving Prayer after which the congregation joined in the National Anthem.

The Organ Voluntary was Crown Imperial by William Walton, written for the Coronation of King George VI. The cathedral organist Michael McCracken and the Cathedral Choir led the music.



## **Diocesan and civic Service at St Columb's Cathedral, Derry**

St Columb's Cathedral will host a diocesan and civic Service of Reflection and Thanksgiving for The Life of Her Majesty

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Queen Elizabeth II on Thursday 29th September at 7.30pm. The service will be led by the Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart. Leaders from the main local Churches will take part and the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Andrew Forster, will preach the sermon. The service offers an opportunity for everyone in our community to remember The Late Queen with thankfulness. All are welcome.



## Ballymena Parish Service of Thanksgiving

Following a Service of Thanksgiving For the Life of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in St Patrick's Church, Ballymena, 15th September, are The Rt Rev Bishop of

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Connor George Davison and other local clergy. Also included Church Wardens, Organist and Bellringers.



## **The Choir when Queen Elizabeth worshipped at Belfast Cathedral**

**A choir member kindly forwarded this photograph of the Lay Clerks and Choristers who sang at the live televised nationwide service in Belfast Cathedral when Queen Elizabeth became the first monarch to be present at worship there. Her Majesty was accompanied by HRH Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh.**

The choir was trained and conducted by former chorister and lay clerk, Brian Hunter MBE. (Front left). The organist was Mr Ian Barber (Front right).

Amongst those in the choir are David Martin (behind Churchwarden on rhs). This former chorister is now one of the longest-serving senior lay clerks at Westminster Abbey where he has sung most of his career.

Third from the left in the back row is the organ scholar who now is in frequent demand at Armagh Cathedral, Canon Peter Thompson. The lady churchwarden is Mrs Phyllis Forster, whose son, a former chorister, is the present Dean of Armagh.

The choristers were mainly recruited from Belfast Royal Academy, Methodist College, Belfast and the Royal Belfast Academical Institution (Inst) - Two of the three in the front row are Instonians. However, they are under the watchful eye of the former Head of Music at MCB, Dr Joe McKee (Second from right back row).

Present at the service were Lady Carswell, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Belfast, the leaders of the churches including Monsignor Tom Toner, administrator of St Peter's Cathedral, and civic representatives.

**CNI**

# Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

## CAFOD offers remembrance prayers for Her Majesty the Queen

“The loss of Her Majesty The Queen is deeply sad, we at CAFOD continue to hold the Queen and her family in our prayers...

The Queen dedicated her life to public service, championing many causes to help the most vulnerable during her reign.

This includes personally supporting the Disasters Emergency Committee's (DEC) East Africa Crisis Appeal in 2017, which CAFOD was involved in.

We know that many people will want to remember the Queen and her family in their prayers at this difficult time. With that in mind, you may wish to use the prayer intentions below for private prayer or to pray with your friends, colleagues or loved ones. There are more remembrance prayers available [here](#).

### Pray for The Queen

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon her.  
May she rest in peace.  
Amen.

## **A remembrance prayer**

God of our longing,  
hear our prayers  
protect our dreams,  
and listen to our silent hopes.

Deal gently with our pain,  
speak to our sadness,  
and remove the barriers  
that imprison our spirit.

Shed your light  
where shadows are cast,  
that we may feel your warmth  
and know your presence.

Give us courage  
to hold fast to our vision  
that we may build our world  
and create our future.

Amen.

Annabel Shilson-Thomas/CAFOD

## **A prayer for The Queen's family**

Bless those who mourn, eternal God,  
with the comfort of your love  
that they may face each new day with hope  
and the certainty that nothing can destroy

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the good that has been given.  
May their memories become joyful,  
their days enriched with friendship,  
and their lives encircled by your love.

Amen.

Vienna Cobb Anderson, from Prayers of Our Hearts (1991,  
Crossroad Publishing Co.)

## Poem for today

### Beyond the Red River by Thomas McGrath

The birds have flown their summer skies to the south,  
And the flower-money is drying in the banks of bent grass  
Which the bumble bee has abandoned. We wait for a winter  
lion,  
Body of ice-crystals and sombrero of dead leaves.

A month ago, from the salt engines of the sea,  
A machinery of early storms rolled toward the holiday  
houses  
Where summer still dozed in the pool-side chairs, sipping  
An aging whiskey of distances and departures.

Now the long freight of autumn goes smoking out of the  
land.  
My possibles are all packed up, but still I do not leave.

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I am happy enough here, where Dakota drifts wild in the universe,  
Where the prairie is starting to shake in the surf of the winter dark.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

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