



Faith leaders gathered in Assisi plead for world peace

Pope Francis has warned humanity against “the deafening silence of indifference and selfishness” before the cry of those who live under the threat of bombs and plead for peace.

The Pope was speaking at an ecumenical prayer ceremony with representatives of other Christian

denominations in the Lower Basilica of St Francis during the closing of the World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi, where he had travelled on Tuesday to participate in the event organised by the Sant'Egidio Community.

The theme of the three-day international meeting this year was 'Thirst for Peace. Religions and Cultures in Dialogue'.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the First World Day of Prayer for Peace that St John Paul convened back in 1986, an historic event which saw world leaders of different religions come together for the very first time to pray for peace.

Elsewhere in his comments, Pope Francis spoke of the 'thirst' of Jesus in which we can "hear the voice of the suffering, the hidden cry of the little innocent ones to whom the light of this world is denied, the sorrowful plea of the poor and those most in need of peace."

"The victims of war, which sullies people with hate and the earth with arms, plead for peace; our brothers and sisters, who live under the threat of bombs and are forced to leave their homes into the unknown, stripped of everything, plead for peace".

And before concluding with a prayer for full communion between all Christians, the Pope said that like Jesus, the victims of war are “frequently given the bitter vinegar of rejection. Who listens to them? Who bothers responding to them?”

The Pope travelled to Assisi by helicopter and after his landing near the Basilica of St Mary of the Angels where Bishop Domenico Sorrentino of Assisi and the local authorities greeted him, the Pope travelled by car to the Holy Convent of Assisi.

Here he was welcomed by Father Mauro Gambetti, Custodian of the Holy Convent, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I, a Muslim representative, Dr Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Syro-Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, Efrem II, a Jewish representative and the Supreme Head of Tendai Buddhism (Japan). They then moved to the Cloister of Sixtus IV where the representatives of Christian denominations and World Religions were waiting.

Pope Francis greeted all participants at the World Day of Prayer for Peace before having lunch in the refectory of the Holy Convent, a lunch that was also attended by and refugees from Syria.

During the afternoon Pope Francis met individually with Bartholomew I, a Muslim representative, Archbishop Justin Welby, Patriarch Efrem II and a Jewish representative.

From 4pm local time Prayers for Peace took place in different venues.

The Ecumenical Prayer of Christians took place in the Lower Basilica of St. Francis, after which all the participants are meeting with the Representatives of other religions who have prayed in different places before moving to the podium in the Square.

A closing ceremony took place at 5.15pm in St Francis Square with messages read by Pope Francis, a victim of war, Patriarch Bartholomew I, a Muslim representative, a Jewish representative, Japanese Buddhist Patriarch and by Professor Andrea Riccardi, Founder of the Sant'Egidio Community.

The World Day of Prayer for Peace concluded with the signing of an Appeal for Peace, the lighting of two symbolic candles and the exchange of a sign of peace.



Participants of the meeting at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey

WCC and Roman Catholics to focus on peacebuilding and migrants

A Joint Working Group of The World Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, co-chaired by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin, has identified peacebuilding and the protection of migrants and refugees as core areas for joint work. The focus was agreed at the two bodies' Joint Working Group, which met last week at the

Château de Bossey in Switzerland for its annual meeting.

The Joint Working Group (JWG) was established in 1965 to monitor “the collaboration of the two bodies in the areas of faith and order, mission and evangelism, justice and peace, ecumenical formation, and interreligious dialogue,” the WCC said.

“Increasingly JWG meetings advance not only the agenda of the working group itself but also the growing collaboration at the operational, programmatic level, with WCC programme staff working directly with Vatican dicasteries.”

At its meeting last week, the JWG decided to focus on two specific areas: peacebuilding and dialogue in areas of conflict and the plight and prospects of migrants and refugees. These issues “align neatly with current missional priorities of Rome and the WCC’s pilgrimage of justice and peace,” the WCC said.

“In this iteration, the JWG, led by co-moderators Metropolitan Nifon of Târgoviște, of the Romanian Orthodox Church, and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, the [Roman Catholic] Primate of Ireland, is also exploring a new methodology,

creating specific groups focused on the two main streams of its work.”

Archbishop Martin said that the new groups will determine “what we can say to the parent bodies about opportunities for deepening engagement on these issues,” so that they will have real impact in the life of the church itself.

“In this way we hope not only to monitor the ecumenical collaboration of the churches at local and international levels, but also to encourage and recommend to our parent bodies, ways to facilitate its further development and evaluation,” Metropolitan Nifon said.

In their [communiqué](#), members of the JWG said: “Dialogue and cooperation regarding challenges the churches are facing together are increasing and showing fruits. The JWG is witnessing growing cooperation between the Pontifical Councils for Promoting Christian Unity, the Pastoral Care for Migrant and Itinerant Peoples, for Interreligious Dialogue and for Justice and Peace with the relevant projects in the WCC. The present composition of the JWG members reflects this reality and the willingness of the JWG to accompany such cooperation and to deepen it even further.”

Former Irish president backs challenge to Church teaching on contraception

Ireland's former President Mary McAleese has thrown her support behind a statement by a group of Catholic academicians, challenging the Church's teaching on contraception.

McAleese endorsed a forthcoming statement by the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research, which was released on September 20 in New York, signed by 100 scholars. (A rebuttal, signed by over 400 scholars who support Catholic teaching, will soon follow.) McAleese said that the ban on contraception has caused harm "particularly on the poor, on women, on children, on relationships, on health, on society, and not least on the Church itself." She claimed that the Church's teaching "has no basis in divine law."

More at -

<https://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=29387>

Catholic heavyweights clash over teaching on contraception

Irish Times

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/catholic-heavyweights-clash-over-teaching-on-contraception-1.2798788>

Organ Scholars commissioned in Belfast service

Two organ scholars were commissioned at a service in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, on Sunday September 18.

Miss Tara Devers and Miss Miriam King had both successfully completed their three years of study as part of the Down & Dromore and Connor Organ Scholarship Scheme.

During the service two other young people were enrolled on the organ scholarship course. One is Miss Caroline McCartney and the other is Miss Kristine Donnan. A further 12 scholars are entering years two and three of the scheme.

The preacher at the service was Bishop Alan Harper.

The Organ Scholarship Scheme celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2015. Scholarships are intended to train musicians in the service of the Church, in the Anglican tradition, both at the



Mrs Miriam King and Miss Tara Devers, front, received their Organ Scholarship Certificates at St Anne's on Sunday September 18. Also pictured are some of the members of the Organ Scholarship Board, Canon David Humphries, Rev (soon to be Canon) John Auchmuty, Lady Brenda Sheil, Rev Julie Bell, Prof Alan Hibbert, and Mr Gerald Hill. Also included are guest preacher Bishop Alan Harper and two of the organ tutors, Mr Michael McCracken and Dr Joe McKee.

organ and in leading a choir. Tuition in choral training is an integral part of the course.

Tutors are Mr Michael McCracken, Mr Ian Mills and Dr Joseph McKee OBE.

The Organ Scholarship Board usually awards six scholarships annually, dividing them between the two dioceses.

The Getty Kids Hymnal: In Christ Alone

Keith and Kristyn Getty have commented their most recent project. They write, "We are thrilled to be launching a new project called the Getty Kids Hymnal: In Christ Alone. Earlier this year we became challenged about teaching our own children hymns old and new and have been amazed to see how much even little children can hold on to, so we asked our Getty music band and a Nashville children's choir to come into the studio to record 12 hymns.

"We are so excited to teach children the Bible, encourage them to sing [and sing in harmony!] and to also encourage artistic creativity through songs from teaching old hymns, unique musical arrangements and artistic challenges for the Children themselves. We've included some of our more familiar songs such as "In Christ Alone" and "Hear the Call of the Kingdom" as well as traditional hymns, including "Jesus Loves Me,"

Doxology," and "I Stand Amazed," and new hymns recorded specifically for this project.

“C.S. Lewis, on his essay on writing for children, talked about how children do not learn like a train going from one station to the next and leaving things behind, but rather the way a tree grows by adding one ring at a time. Children don't have to understand everything initially, but the challenge is to make every ring of learning healthy and robust. We hope these hymns are helpful to you around your homes, in your cars and as you make music as well as in your churches with the hope that we will write on children's hearts words they can carry with them for life. Grace and peace,” [Keith and Kristyn Getty](#)

Find more information and preorder the hymnal here: GettyMusic.com/gettykidshymnal

News briefs

+++ An Evening with Graham Kendrick - St Colmanell's Parish Church, Ahoghill, is hosting An Evening with Graham Kendrick on Friday October 7 at 7.30pm. Tickets are £15. This is an opportunity to enjoy an evening with the writer of

many popular hymns. For information on tickets please ring the rectory on 028 2587 1240.

+++ New Chief Executive of Protestant Aid -

The Chairman, Arthur Vincent, and the Board of Protestant Aid have announced the appointment of David Webb as Chief Executive in succession to Robin George who retired recently after 27 years' service. A member of Kiltarnan Parish, David (41) is a qualified Solicitor and partner in the law firm Whitney Moore. Educated at St Andrew's College and UCD, he also holds a Higher Diploma in Business & Information Technology from UCD. He takes up his position in October and will assume responsibility for the various charitable activities of Protestant Aid, under the direction of the Board, including the sheltered housing at Brabazon Trust and St John's House on Merrion Road. His appointment comes at an opportune time, with Protestant Aid undertaking a €10 million re-development at St John's House (in conjunction with the Trustees of St Mary's House and the Molyneux Home) to create a 56-bed nursing home.

+++ Archbishop Tutu thanks well-wishers -

The Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, Desmond Tutu, has turned to social media to



Archbishop Desmond and Mrs Leah Tutu

thank well-wishers after he was once-again hospitalised. Archbishop Tutu was discharged from hospital on Wednesday after a three-week stay, which included surgery to treat a series of recurring infections. On Saturday he was re-admitted as a precaution after signs of infection around the surgical wound. On Monday afternoon Archbishop Tutu [tweeted](#): “Thank you all you tweeters and facebookers for the love and prayers for my good health. Love is the best medicine. God bless you all!” The 84-year-old was a key figure in the fight against Apartheid – a role he continued in post-Apartheid South Africa as chair of the country’s Truth and Reconciliation

Commission. In 1984 his work was recognised by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize.

+++ Don't call me an evangelical, Tony Campolo - Many church leaders are dismayed at the strong support that Donald Trump has gleaned in the presidential election campaign from those who call themselves 'Evangelical Christians'. Evangelist Tony Campolo tells the Inspirational Breakfast show that frankly he's embarrassed by the evangelical support of Trump and why he no longer wants to be referred to as an Evangelical.

+++ Irish College of Preachers - The Irish College of Preachers annual conference took place recently at CITI. The guest speaker was Archdeacon David Huss, Rector of the Donegal Group of Parishes, in Raphoe Diocese. David focused on the Sermon on the Mount, in anticipation of the Revised Common Lectionary readings for 2016/17, which feature the Gospel according to Matthew. 20 lay and clerical people from across the Church of Ireland heard David open up the Master Preacher, Jesus, with clarity, depth and decisiveness. The conference was a great help to preachers. One of those who attended put it like this: "I am fired up now and

ready for the challenge of preaching the Word of God.” The Irish College of Preachers is organised by the Rt Revd Ferran Glenfield, Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh, and the 2017 conference is set for 13–15th September in CITI.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Pope Francis denounces use of religion to foment violence

Irish Times

Among the many speakers over the three days of Assisi meetings was **Irish** Nobel Peace Prize winner, Mairead Maguire, who addressed a seminar on ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/world/europe/pope-francis-denounces-use-of-religion-to-foment-violence-1.2798724>

Marriage changes threaten 'religious liberty'

Sky News Australia

Coalition backbencher Andrew Hastie says '**religious liberty**' could be ... 'Suicides in **Ireland** actually went down,' he told Sky **News** in New York of the ...

<http://www.skynews.com.au/news/politics/federal/2016/09/20/marriage-changes-threaten--religious-liberty-.html>

Mail/Christian Today

Reports that Pope Francis met with war refugees and religious figures including the Archbishop of Canterbury on Tuesday in Assisi, for a day of prayers for peace, openness toward refugees and calls for religions to marginalize fundamentalism (see above). Archbishop Justin decried how despite much wealth, people in Europe experience "dissatisfaction and despair, in the breakdown of families, in hunger and inequality, in turning to extremists."

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-3798682/Pope-slams-deafening-silence-indifference-war-victims.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-3798682/Pope-slams-deafening-silence-indifference-war-victims.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-3798682/Pope-slams-deafening-silence-indifference-war-victims.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

Guard

Further coverage of the fine of £34m levied by Financial Conduct Authority on day-day lender CFO Lending. The article notes that the Archbishop of Canterbury "declared war" on pay day lenders in 2013 and the regulators that have taken up the fight by punishing bad lending behaviour.

<https://www.theguardian.com/money/2016/sep/20/archbishops-criticism-payday-loans-causes-reform-industry>

Tel/Christian Today/Premier/Guard

Reports that the C of E is reaching out to young women and black and ethnic minority Christians and asking them to consider becoming ordained priests

(see above). More women are also needed to enter seminaries if the Church is to achieve its target of a 50 per cent increase in candidates for ordination by 2020. A report conducted by Church's Ordained Vocations Working Group shows that if ordinations increase as hoped there would be 7,610 stipendiary priests by 2035 but only 6,300 if the current ordination rate is maintained, a 15 per cent drop. The Bishop of Guildford, Andrew Watson, who chairs the Working Group, said, "It's encouraging to see most of the dioceses really rising to this challenge, as they reshape their vocations teams and put new and more proactive vocations strategies in place."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/09/20/race-to-save-a-much-loved-british-endangered-species-the-local-v/>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Church-pledges-to-increase-numbers-of-vicar-training-places-by-half>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/20/church-england-appoints-national-minority-ethnic-officer-black-clergy>

BBC

Reports that a 17 year old and a 13 year old who dragged a vicar out of her car in a "shocking attack" as she left a church service have been sentenced. Revd Irene Wilson was leaving Holy Trinity Church in Hull in August when her vehicle was targeted. Revd Wilson said it had "affected myself and the work that I do".

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-humber-37421385>

Exp

Further coverage of the visit of Rachel Treweek, Bishop of Gloucester, to All Saints Academy in Cheltenham to find out what young people think of their body image. Her visit followed a recent Children's Society report which said many teenage girls worry about their appearance because of pressure on social media. A spokesman for the Bishop said, "Of the seven girls present not one was happy with their physical appearance, while five of the six boys were more confident about how they looked."

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/712457/Britain-female-bishop-Rachel-Treweek-shocked-teenage-girls-unhappy-body-image-issues>

Durham Advertiser

Reports that the funeral for the former Bishop of Durham, David Jenkins will take place at Durham Cathedral on Wednesday, September 28. David Kennedy, Vice Dean and Precentor of Durham Cathedral is quoted.

http://www.durhamadvertiser.co.uk/news/14754163.Funeral_details_for_former_Bishop_of_Durham_Dr_David_Jenkins_announced/?ref=rss

Christian Today/Premier

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

Further reports that armed police will patrol Canterbury Cathedral as security is tightened following attacks in Europe. Officers will stand guard outside the place of worship after an increase in the number of international terror attacks and a rise in national threat levels, although Kent Police stress there was no direct threat to the Cathedral or other sites.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Armed-police-to-protect-Canterbury-Cathedral>

Guard

Reports that Royal Bank of Scotland's attempts to spin off 315 branches have received another setback after one of the highest-profile bidders pulled out. Santander has withdrawn from talks again in a blow to the latest efforts by the bailed-out bank to dispose of the branches. The article notes that as the result of a complex deal agreed by RBS in 2013, the abandonment of the flotation means that the bailed-out bank is paying millions of pounds to a private equity consortium which includes the Church Commissioners.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/sep/20/rbs-suffers-fresh-setback-in-williams-glyn-spin-off-deal>

Mail

Picture story of the £1.7 million restoration of Durham Cathedral and the work of the stonemasons working on 12 tonnes of new stone.

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3798537/Durham-Cathedral-s-1-7million-restoration-continues.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3798537/Durham-Cathedral-s-1-7million-restoration-continues.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3798537/Durham-Cathedral-s-1-7million-restoration-continues.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

Comment

Nature: Religion and science can have a true dialogue writes Kathryn Pritchard, who works for the Archbishops' Council.

<http://www.nature.com/news/religion-and-science-can-have-a-true-dialogue-1.20627>

Blogs

C of E Communications: I can find myself in these statistics

<http://cofecomms.tumblr.com/post/150675594232/i-can-find-myself-in-these-statistics>

Diocese of Manchester: Inclusive church

<http://www.manchester.anglican.org/news/1976/inclusive-church>

Psephizo: How soon will God act?

<http://www.psephizo.com/biblical-studies/how-soon-will-god-act/>

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