

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – French gothic on Nob Hill

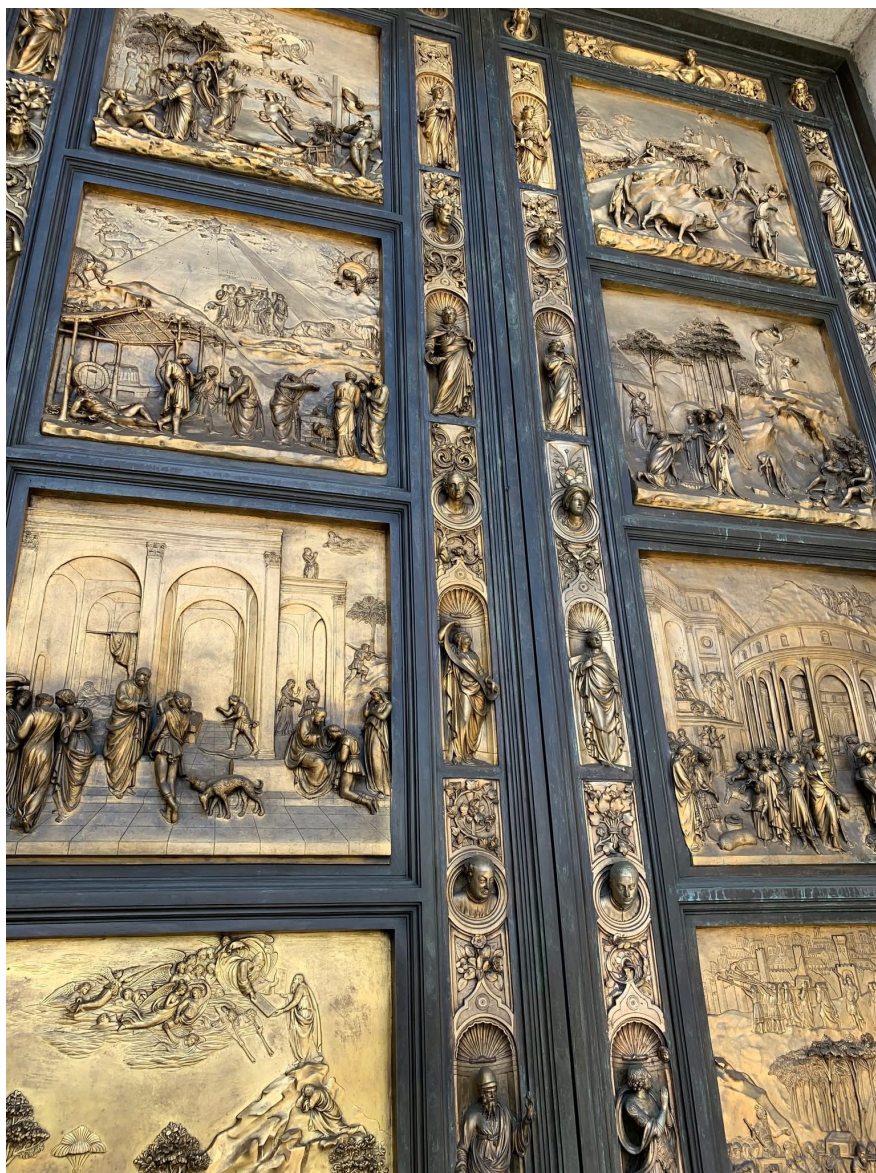


Image of the day

French gothic on Nob Hill

The construction of San Francisco's Grace Cathedral (Episcopal) was begun in 1928 but the Depression delayed completion until decades later.

One highlight is a replica of the Gates of Paradise doors by Lorenzo Ghiberti for the Florence Baptistry. The San Francisco copy was made from gelatin molds taken from the originals and brought to the city in 1964.

See -

<https://gracecathedral.org/the-cathedral/>



Clogher Diocese appoints new Diocesan Secretary

**Miss Joyce
Clingan, who has
just taken early
retirement as
Principal of Queen
Elizabeth II Primary
School, Kilskeery
is to be the new
Diocesan
Secretary.**



She is already familiar with many people across the diocese as Chair of the Clogher Diocesan Board of Religious Education.

Joyce, who takes up her new post in October, succeeds Mr. Glenn Moore, who has taken on a new part-time role as Diocesan Advisor.

The post of Diocesan Secretary manages the administrative service to the Bishop, the Diocesan Synod and the Diocesan Council in support of the Church's ministry.

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Joyce is a parishioner of Sallaghy Parish Church where she is a church organist and member of the Select Vestry as well as the Freewill Offering Secretary. She is also a former Sunday School Superintendent.

Joyce has been teaching for 36 years, with early years spent teaching at Portstewart Primary School and Hezlett Primary School, Castlerock



Funeral of The Duchess of Kent

The Funeral of Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Kent will take place at Westminster Cathedral on Tuesday, 16th September at 2pm. Ahead of the Funeral,

The Duchess of Kent's coffin will rest in the private chapel at Kensington Palace.

Her Royal Highness's coffin will be taken by hearse to Westminster Cathedral on Monday, 15th September, where the Rite of Reception and Vespers will take place, on the eve of the Requiem Mass. Thereafter, it will rest overnight in the Lady Chapel.

On Tuesday, 16th September, The King and Queen and Members of the Royal Family will join The Duke of Kent and members of The Duchess's family at the Requiem Mass. Afterwards, the coffin will be taken by hearse to the Royal Burial Ground at Frogmore, Windsor.

Flags will be half-masted at all official Royal Residences flying the Union flag on the day of the funeral.

This will be the first Royal funeral at Westminster Cathedral since its construction in 1903. It will mark the first Royal Catholic funeral in centuries.

Twin Cities Salvation Army response to Annunciation Catholic School tragedy

Saturday marked 10 days that the Twin Cities Salvation Army has provided continued support to those affected by the Annunciation Catholic School tragedy.

“Our local Emergency Disaster Services volunteers have shown up daily at an off-site family center to serve meals, offer comfort, and stand alongside families during this



painful time. Today alone, our team prepared meals for about 600 students, parents, teachers, and others.

“The Salvation Army is honored by this opportunity to serve. We thank all of our volunteers and donors for their love, strength, and hearts for service in moments like

these.”

Shutters come down for last time at WAVE in Glengormley

Wave Trauma Centre write - The staff working with survivors of HIA and the Mother & Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses have moved into a fabulous new space in Nevara, 4 Chichester Park Central, Antrim Road, Belfast. Just round the corner from the Belfast Centre! It's fabulous.

Our thanks to Lynne for coordinating the move and the development of the centre- she has chosen well. And to Catherine for getting the IT and phone system up and running over the last few days. Thank you also to the respective teams who worked to get everything moved in order that service disruption was minimised. They have been brilliant.

We are nearly there and it's amazing. So a new journey begins in Nevara giving people who engage with these staff teams a sense of place & space. It's a peaceful & restful centre.

It's going to be good...

Evangelicals clash with Trump over foreign aid cuts

A growing rift has emerged between President Donald Trump and one of his most reliable voting blocs: evangelical Christians.

At issue is the administration's decision to cut billions in foreign aid and shut down the agency responsible for distributing it.

For decades, members of the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) have partnered with the US government to deliver humanitarian relief abroad. Now, as Politico reports, the group is lobbying lawmakers on Capitol Hill in an effort to reverse the funding cuts.



Dublin diocesan pilgrimage at Lourdes

Evangelical support was pivotal in Trump's 2024 victory. Data from Arizona Christian University shows Christians accounted for 74% of the electorate, with 56% voting for Trump. By contrast, Vice President Kamala Harris won 60% of the non-Christian vote. Christians outnumbered non-Christian voters by more than five to two, securing Trump's

return to the White House. According to the Pew Research Centre, white evangelical Protestants remain among his most loyal supporters.

The outcome of the NAE's lobbying campaign will serve as a test of evangelical influence within the Republican Party, which they have long supported.

Aid groups warn that the cuts are already having devastating consequences. "Due to US government cuts, World Vision has been forced to stop emergency humanitarian programmes in all regions of the world, over 20 countries, leaving over a million people without emergency assistance," Margaret Schuler, chief impact officer for World Vision, told Politico.

Earlier this year, Christian humanitarian organisations expressed strong opposition to the administration's plan to reduce foreign assistance-related grants by 92 per cent. The State Department framed the move as a \$60 billion cost-saving measure.

Despite criticism, the administration has defended its policy, arguing that the cuts will eliminate "waste and abuse" within USAID.

New £3million Presbyterian church opened in Co Antrim rural hamlet

A new Presbyterian meeting house costing £3million situated in a rural townland was opened and dedicated last Friday night at a special service conducted by

Presbyterian church moderator the Rev Dr Trevor Gribben. - Billy Kennedy writes in the News Letter

Buckna Presbyterian congregation, located near Broughshane in the foothills of Slemish mountain, and eight miles from Ballymena, began an ambitious new church building project in October 2022 and the initiative was completed in May this year.

The congregation's original building dates back to 1756 and is 269 years old. The congregation was established by Presbyterian settlers from Scotland in an area where the people continue to have a very traditional, distinctive Ulster-Scots culture.

The Project in Pictures

<https://bucknapresbyterian.org/building-project/the-project-in-pictures>

The Buckna worshippers began the transition of moving buildings in January this year and, over the months, previous ministers were invited back to speak at special services. Later, other special services were held and these involved former manse children and those with a notable connection to the congregation.

The church family in Buckna held their final service in the old building on Sunday June 22. This was followed by the congregation walking from the old building to the new – a distance of a quarter of a mile.

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Later that evening, the congregation met for the first time in their new building. Regular services have continued in the new building since, with the congregation meeting for Sunday worship at 11.30am and 6.30pm. The Rev Stephen Kennedy, a native of Bessbrook in South Armagh, is currently minister of the congregation. Stephen has been minister in Buckna since February 2018. The official opening service for the impressive new building was live-streamed on the congregation's YouTube channel this weekend.

Sign up at belfast@christian-aid.org

Ulster Rugby Collection 2025/26

Will you join our
Christian Aid volunteer
team to fundraise at
Affidea Stadium?



Friday 26th September 2025 at 6.30pm

Ulster Rugby vs Dragons RFC

Friday 20th March 2026 at 6.30pm

Ulster Rugby vs Connacht Rugby

Buckna church belongs to Ballymena presbytery, which has 30 other congregations in the mid-Co Antrim area. Buckna has 240 families and the new church building, with adjoining hall space, has accomodation for up to 400 worshippers.

The word 'Buckna' comes from a Scots gallic word 'Bochnach', meaning 'hilly'.

In raising the money for their new church, the Buckna families have been "extremely generous" throughout the building project, said Rev Stephen Kennedy. Rev Kennedy added: "It has been a privilege to be involved in such a significant project and it has been a joy to see the Lord at work through it. The congregation has been exceptionally generous over the past number of years and the project has also brought a great sense of unity. Our new building is a brilliant, modern resource and will help us as we seek to reach out to those who do not know the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour."

Moderator the Rev Dr Trevor Gribben praised the faithfulness of the Buckna congregation. "Tonight, has been a very special and joyful time of fellowship, worship, and giving thanks to God for what He has done in this place, both down the centuries and in recent years. It has been a privilege to be just a very small part of Buckna's journey, but their journey also speaks to something deeper, something that's relevant to all people. No matter what the statistics look like, no matter what social media might say, no matter how many times the church might be ridiculed and ignored, we have hope and a future in Jesus Christ, and He will continue to build His Church."

Dr Gribben added: "Speaking to the minister Stephen, he told me that there was a verse that his congregational team often returned to during this long process, and it was 2 Corinthians 8:9. It says - 'For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich'.

"Buckna has been richly blessed in a way that we all hope secures gospel work in this area for generations to come. God's grace is the same today as it was in Jesus time, and I know that this new meeting house has not just been built for those who worship here now, but for those outside its walls who have yet to come in,"

Education

Official Opening of Rainey Endowed's New Astro Turf Pitch

What a fantastic day at Rainey. Huge thanks to everyone who made this incredible facility a reality — from our staff and Board of Governors to our amazing sponsors

Speeches from our Principal Mr McCullough, 1st XI Captain Evie, and Ulster Hockey CEO Marc Scott set the tone, and Marc had the honour of cutting the ribbon.

A special thank you to Shirley McKay, Ulster Hockey Talent Manager, ex Irish International, 2018 World Cup Silver Medalist, 2020 Olympian, Highest Capped Irish Athlete for



organising and coaching an Ulster Select team to give our 1STXI a brilliant match to mark the occasion. Thanks to the umpires, friends & family for all the support. A day to remember.

BRA gratitude for the Mary Ann McCracken Foundation bursaries

As a member school of the North Belfast Area Learning Community, we are hugely grateful to the funders of the Mary Ann McCracken Foundation bursaries which has enabled us to support some of our Sixth Form leavers as they prepare for university.

This funding has made a real difference to our pupils, helping to ease the financial pressures of the transition and giving our young people the confidence to take their next steps.

We are so grateful for this investment in their futures and to the administrators in Clifton House who have recognised the need in the local community.

Supporting Futures: The Boys' Model Bursary Fund

Did you know our school has a dedicated Bursary Board working behind the scenes to support our boys as they take their next big steps after school?

The Boys' Model Bursary Fund offers bursaries of up to £3,600 for pupils progressing to university and up to £1,200 for those entering the world of work through Higher Level Apprenticeships or HNDs.

These bursaries are more than just financial support — they're a vote of confidence in our boys' potential. Whether it's helping with course fees, travel costs, or essential equipment, this fund ensures that no boy is held back by financial barriers.

We're proud to say that this support has made a real difference — empowering our pupils to pursue their dreams, achieve their goals and thrive in their chosen paths.

If you would like to know more visit our school website:
www.bbms.org.uk

Cathedral Calls

Armagh Cathedral gives thanks for witness of new saints

Armagh Cathedral Parish said yesterday it rejoices as Blessed Carlo Acutis and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati are declared Saints

The Cathedral Parish commented - Two young men from different times, yet united by a deep love for Christ, the Eucharist, and service to others.

- Carlo, the “cyber-apostle,” reminds us that holiness is possible in everyday life, even online.
- Pier Giorgio, “the man of the Beatitudes,” shows us that faith calls us into action, justice and friendship with the poor.



On this historic day, we give thanks for their witness and pray:

Lord, bless young people across the world with the courage of Carlo and Pier Giorgio. May they know your love, find joy in your Gospel and discover the adventure of living for you.

Saints Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati, pray for us!

Clergy and ministry

Quiet Day for Diocesan Readers in Cashel, Ferns and Ossory



On Saturday 6th September the Bishop led a Quiet Day for some of the Diocesan Readers in Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory.

Gathering with them and the Warden of Readers, Canon Helen Oxley in the chapel at the Bishop's House in Kilkenny, he focused his thoughts on the appointed Old Testament reading from Jeremiah for the following day, the image of the potter interacting with clay on the potter's wheel. The readers then discussed and reflected on the other appointed readings. Following Holy Communion, the group enjoyed lunch and conversation around the large dining table at Bishop's House. In the afternoon a session was led by Dr Jacqui Wilkinson on presenting the message of the gospel through the metaphor of mirrors and windows. The day



ended with a word of encouragement and thanks from the Bishop for the faithful ministry of all readers in the Diocese.

Connor Service to celebrate ministry of Parish and Diocesan Readers

A service will be held in Belfast Cathedral on Sunday September 21 at 3.30pm celebrating the ministry of Parish and Diocesan Readers.

This is open for all Readers (Parish and Diocesan) and a warm welcome is extended to parishioners from throughout the diocese to share in the occasion.

Cork's Bishop Paul Colton to retire after 25 years leading Church of Ireland diocese

Bishop Paul Colton, who famously officiated at the wedding of David and Victoria Beckham, will retire at the end of this school year.

Cork's Bishop Paul Colton has announced his plans to retire.

In a letter to all secondary schools in his diocese, Bishop Colton, the longest-serving Church of Ireland bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross in over 400 years, confirmed he will retire by the end of the school year.

He wrote: "You may have heard that I recently started speaking about my own retirement as Bishop. An exact date has not yet been set.

"However, by the time the school year ends I will no longer be your bishop or involved in the governance of schools in the diocese."

Bishop Colton famously officiated at the wedding of Manchester United legend David Beckham and former Spice Girl Victoria Adams near Dublin in July 1999.

This came just months after he was enthroned as bishop of the diocese.

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He was the first Church of Ireland bishop to openly support same-sex marriage.

Ordained in 1984 and consecrated bishop in March 1999, Bishop Colton was enthroned in St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork, on April 14, 1999.

He studied law at UCC and Cardiff University, specialising in church law and the interface between the laws of religious communities and the laws of states.

In his letter, he concluded: "No doubt, once a date has been set I will have one last opportunity to meet you all in your own school setting." Courtesy The Irish Examiner.

Events

Autumn is approaching and so is the new term for Altnagelvin Hospital Choir

We commenced practices again for our Winter season on Thursday 4th September at 7.30pm in MDEC, Altnagelvin Hospital .

Would you like to sing with us ? 🎵

We are open to new members in all voice parts and you don't need to be a member of staff to join our choir , you just need to love singing ! There is no audition 😊 It is helpful if you can read music but we do use lots of learning aids if you don't.

Please do get in touch if you are interested at :

altnagelvinhospitalchoir@gmail.com

Happy singing ! 

In the media

Church Scout leader admits sex abuse offences

A former scout leader decorated by the Queen has been warned he is facing a jail sentence after he admitted a catalogue of historic sexual abuse offences, Paul Higgins writes in Sunday life.

Standing in the dock of Craigavon Crown Court, 67-year-old Wilson Alexander Reid had 10 of the 15 charges put to him again.

Reid, with an address on the Ferris Bay Road in Islandmagee but who is originally from Portadown, entered guilty pleas to eight counts of indecent assault and two of committing an act of gross indecency with a child, all committed against a single victim between November 1, 2001, and August 31, 2006.

While prosecuting counsel Ian Tannahill asked for five further charges of indecent assault to be marked as left on the books” he emphasised that the pensioner's guilty pleas “are accepted on a full-facts basis”.

Adjourning the case to allow time for the completion of both a presentence report and a victim impact statement, Judge Donna McColgan KC freed Reid on bail in the meantime.

Revealing that the pervert scoutmaster “is already on the sex offenders register,” the judge warned Reid the fact he was walking out of court “is absolutely no indication of the ultimate outcome”.

Reid, a former scoutmaster at St Mark's Church of Ireland in Portadown, left Northern Ireland for Scotland after the abuse allegations came to light.

His scout work was recognised by the Queen and he was the recipient of a string of awards.

Heritage

Allen Gardiner Day

6 September is in the Anglican calendar in honour of the man who founded what became the South American Mission Society (SAMS) and who sacrificed his life as one of its first missionaries.

From a Christian upbringing in Berkshire, his embarking on a naval career and the death of his mother led him to turn away from his faith. But on a voyage to Cape Town, Ceylon, India, Malaysia and China, a spiritual crisis resulted in his emphatic conversion to Jesus Christ.



He yearned to share Christ on his travels. After leaving the navy and suffering the death of his wife, Julia, he set out to evangelise Zulus in South Africa and became the founder of Christianity in Natal. He was an integral part of the meeting at which Durban was proclaimed a town and a plaque records how he laid out and named the town after the then Governor of the Cape.

Wherever he went, Gardiner faced opposition from the authorities, secular and religious. With his second wife

Elizabeth he began to focus on South America but his desire to share Christ with Chilean Mapuches – which included a family journey of 1,000 miles overland by pack mule from Buenos Aires to Santiago and Concepción – again met with hostility. In 1842 he made his base in the Falklands and contacted Patagonian Indians. This led to the formation of the Patagonian Missionary Society two years later after other societies, including CMS, were unable to agree to his request to take responsibility for this new ministry.

Another unsuccessful mission followed, this time to Bolivian Indians of the Gran Chaco, so the indomitable Gardiner turned back to Patagonia and spearheaded a bold but tragic attempt in 1850 to 51 to evangelise the Indians of Tierra del Fuego. Six men, including three Cornish fishermen, accompanied him, but fierce weather, Indian hostility, and a series of errors and logistical problems led to disease and death on the island.

News of the courageous sacrifice of Gardiner and his companions and their inspiring journal entries ignited interest in England for mission to South America, inspiring both donors and missionaries to respond to the call.

Apparently convicted of his error in dehumanizing the Yaghans, Darwin himself donated to the mission on repeated occasions.

In 1856, the Rev. George Pakenham Despard, general secretary of the Patagonian Missionary Society, led the next venture. His motto was “Hope deferred, not lost,” and he set sail in the first of three ships owned by the society, all named after Gardiner. Gardiner’s only son, Allen W. Gardiner, arrived in Patagonia in the same year as a missionary. Despite many early setbacks, in 1864 the

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Patagonian Missionary Society became the South American Missionary Society because of their expanding work on that continent. In 2010, the South America Missionary Society merged with the Church Missionary Society, which now continues its work.

Poem for today



I Love Reading Books

by Kevin Seales

I read books, because they take me places
Inside when I look, I see so many faces
Detective stories, there are so many cases

Oh how I love reading books

When I'm at home, I read two or three books
My mom says, she thinks that I'm totally hooked
You would be too, if you would only look
Oh how I love reading books

My dad says, Kevin why don't you slow down
There's plenty of books here, from the ceiling to the ground
You read them like candy, you gobble them by the pound
Oh how you love reading books

I find them fascinating, exciting, a tool
I learn about a lot of things that I don't learn in school
I'd rather read books than learn how to be cool
Oh how I love reading books

In these books I learn so many things
Look at the knowledge that these books can bring
I even read one book, and it taught me how to sing
Oh how I love reading books

So if someone says, that reading books is for girls
They don't understand that reading rocks my world
It lifts me, spends me, sends me in a twirl
Oh how I love reading books

If they don't see now, they will in due time
I'll let them read one of these great books of mine
And after they finish, they won't be so blind
Then they'll say, I love reading books.

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Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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www.churchnewsireland.org

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early morning

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