

State aid for digitisation C of I Parish Registers



Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Josepha Madigan viewing some of the RCB Library's records with the Librarian and Archivist, Dr Susan Hood, and Dr Michael Webb, Chairperson of the Library and Archives Committee.

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The Representative Church Body Library has welcomed the announcement of a €100,000 capital grant towards the digitisation of Church of Ireland parish registers as part of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Gaeltacht's digitisation scheme. The funding was announced by the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Ms Josepha Madigan TD, during a visit to the Library yesterday. As part of the visit, Minister Madigan viewed a number of original registers, the earliest of which is dated 1619.

Minister Madigan remarked: 'I am delighted to provide funding for the Representative Church Body Library's project to digitise Church of Ireland Parish Registers, as part of the wider cultural digitisation scheme. This digitisation project will make it possible for people all over Ireland and indeed the world to access these unique records as they represent an important body of evidence about the Church's history. Digitisation of this type also provides a vital channel to connect with our Diaspora – which is estimated to be up to 70 million people worldwide – and in turn encourages cultural tourism.'

Dr Susan Hood, RCB Librarian and Archivist, said: 'The RCB Library is most grateful for this significant commitment to the project to digitise Church of Ireland parish registers. With the right imaging equipment and technical support, which this funding makes possible, we can commence the massive task of making these records accessible and discoverable for all, by creating digital surrogates of original records (some of which are the oldest such records). Most importantly this will ensure the long-term preservation of the originals. It is extremely good news not just for the

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Library, but the Church at large and indeed the generations of clergy and record keepers who have kept these records safe.'

The project will, over time, be extended to include register collections currently in local parish custody, and ultimately to index the content and share information from these sources with a worldwide audience in collaboration with the Department through the state website:
www.irishgenealogy.ie

St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick, celebrates 850th year with Service of Thanksgiving

On Saturday afternoon, 8th September (the Feast of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin, a Service of Thanksgiving was held for 850th Anniversary of the foundation of Saint Mary's Cathedral, Limerick.

The Service, held in the Cathedral, was the liturgical highlight of this year's celebration which will pay particular attention to the role of the Cathedral within the life of the City of Limerick.

The guest preacher was the Right Revd David Chillingworth, former Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church. The Bishop of Limerick, the Most Revd Dr Brendan Leahy, and the Mayor of Limerick, Councillor James Collins, participated in the Service, along with representatives from various groups within city.

Saint Mary's, which was gifted to the Church by Donal Mor O'Brien, the last King of Thomond, has been a site of

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Christian worship since 1168 and it is one of the oldest buildings in Limerick City. The Service formed part of this year's festivities which is celebrating and promoting the Cathedral within Limerick and beyond.

Speaking in advance of the service, the Dean, the Very Revd Niall J. Sloane, said: 'The Cathedral is looking forward to this special event in which we will have an opportunity to give God thanks for 850 years of Christian witness within the City and Diocese of Limerick. I'm delighted that a number of former bishops of Limerick will be joining us for the Service along with public and civic representatives. All are welcome to attend.'

The sermon is available here.

Clogher Commissioning Services for childrens' ministry

Sunday School teachers and those involved in children's ministry in Clogher Diocese, have attended Commissioning Services in Monaghan and Lisbellaw.

The services were organised by the Clogher Diocesan Board of Religious Education in St Patrick's Parish Church in Monaghan on Sunday, 2nd September and in Lisbellaw Parish Church on Sunday 9th September.

The Bishop of Clogher, the Right Revd John McDowell led the Act of Commissioning and celebrated Holy Communion using the Kenyan Rite.

The speaker at the Monaghan service was the Rector, Canon Ian Berry and the speaker at the Lisbellaw service

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Attending the Commissioning Service for those involved in Children's Ministry

was Jeff Gawn, Scripture Union Schools' Worker in Fermanagh and Fivemiletown.

Sunday School teachers from throughout the Diocese read lessons and led prayers at both services.

Ordained former Green Party leader warns of homelessness, climate change

Former leader of the Green Party and Minister of State, Trevor Sargent, has warned that Ireland must do more to tackle homelessness.

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Speaking to media about the homelessness crisis following his ordination at the Church of Ireland's Christ Church Cathedral in Waterford on Saturday, Rev Sargent described homelessness as a mirror to Irish society.

“As long as we tolerate homelessness, it is a reflection on our politics which is a result of how people vote – and that needs to be thought about very seriously,” he said.

As a priest, he said he saw himself “ordained to play a role in providing whatever respite and solution there can be to this issue”.

Asked about his decision to move from politics into ministry, the former government minister said that while the two paths might seem contrasting, there was, in fact, an element of service and pastoral care present in teaching, politics and ministry.

Rev Sargent taught for 30 years in Cork and Balbriggan before he got involved in politics. He was elected as a TD in 1992 and led the Green Party between 2001 and 2007. He lost his seat in the 2011 election, after serving as a Minister for State for Food and Horticulture.

“In a way it is not such a contrast as it might appear from the outside. It is also a fuller type of service because one is dealing with the sacred, with silence, with people who are in distress – in a very confidential way and a very personal way, as well as being at the heart of praying for a better society.”

He stressed that climate change is a key area for the Church of Ireland and paid tribute to Pope Francis and *Laudato Si* for giving people licence to be “active and quite

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strident in doing what needs to be done to ensure the next generation is not [seeing] islands submerged as a result of climate change”, as is happening in the Pacific Ocean.

The 58-year-old Church of Ireland priest is involved in Eco Congregation Ireland, along with Rev Andrew Orr, who gave the homily at the ordination service on Saturday. Eco Congregation Ireland is an organisation charged by all the churches to assist in driving the change in every parish in the country.

His first Holy Communion service took place at 10am on Sunday morning in Waterford Cathedral. Afterwards he travelled to his own parish of Tramore to celebrate Holy Communion for his parishioners, his parents and family.

Although Rev Sargent’s wife is Roman Catholic, he said she and her family, particularly her recently deceased mother Marie, who was a sacristan in the Catholic parish of Curracloe, were “very supportive” of his move into ministry. Ms Neville’s mother, who died in June, was at his ordination as a deacon in Shillalagh, Co Wicklow, in August 2017.

The ecumenical input into his faith was signalled by the presence of people such as the Roman Catholic parish priest of Curracloe, as well as the Roman Catholic administrator of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Waterford, Fr Edmund Cullinan, who was the first person to call on Rev Sargent in Tramore. “That is an indication of the level of outreach and goodwill that exists between different traditions in Waterford,” Rev Sargent said.

In Tramore, he will be involved with a surf and youth ministry project where young people learn how to surf to a very high standard while also learning about faith.

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Asked about the 2016 census figures which show membership of the Church of Ireland is on the rise, Rev Sargent said one factor was the Church's involvement in tackling climate change and other ecological challenges which had given it a "relevance among people who mightn't have seen the Church as meaningful from their point of view in the past".

As chairperson of Cumman Gaelach na hEaglaise, he also highlighted that attendances at Irish language services are on the rise, thanks to those interested in Celtic spirituality.

"We will be introducing a service in Irish," he explained. The church is also looking at introducing a healing service and a number of other initiatives such as a Taizé service in Dunmore East.

"Having been to Taizé and appreciated the ecumenical nature of Taizé, I felt this would be something that would be immensely nourishing for Waterford, given the multicultural nature of the city."

New stats show growing interest in Book of Common Prayer

There is clear evidence of growing interest in The Book of Common Prayer according to the Prayer Book Society (PBS).

It said its 23rd annual three-day conference at Cirencester's Royal Agricultural University later this month is a sell-out with more than 130 delegates attending - the highest number to date.

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Latest figures show that more than 260 people joined as new members of the PBS last year, an increase of more than 40 per cent on the previous year, bringing the total to more than 3,000. The number of corporate members - including churches, schools and businesses - rose by almost 50 per cent from 25 to a total of 67.

PBS describes itself as encouraging the rediscovery and use of the majesty and spiritual depth of Thomas Cranmer's Book of Common Prayer (BCP) at the heart of the Church of England's worship.

Commenting on the growing enthusiasm for The Book of Common Prayer, PBS chairman Prudence Dailey said: "The Prayer Book is as relevant today as it ever was and increasingly it is being appreciated by young adults. We are seeing growing interest in the society's activities among those in their twenties and thirties."

She revealed that the society's work among ordinands suggests that many in the new generation of young clergy will be enthusiastic about using the BCP for services.

One ordinand commented: "It is more than just the beauty of the language of the Prayer Book which appeals to me. I like the fact that it is quite literally a book of common prayer which not only belongs to all people but contains prayers for every stage in their journey through life."

The Prayer Book Society's annual conference takes place from 20th- 22nd September.

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News briefs



At the Ordination of Priests for Connor Diocese in Christ Church, Lisburn, on September 9 are, from left: the Rev Clifford Skillen, Bishop's Chaplain; the Rev Derek Harrington, ordained for Parish of Christ Church, Lisburn; the Rev John Rutter, Rural Dean, who preached; the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy; the Rev William Jeffrey, ordained for the Parish of St Mark, Ballymacash; the Rev Canon William Taggart, Registrar; the Rev Ian Mills, ordained for the Grouped Parishes of Larne and Inver with Glynn and Raloo; the Very Rev Sam Wright, Dean of Connor; and the Ven Paul Dundas, Archdeacon of Dalriada and rector of Christ Church, Lisburn.

+++Three priests ordained in Connor - Three priests were ordained for Connor Diocese at a packed service in Christ Church Parish Church, Lisburn, on Sunday September 9. They were the Rev Derek Harrington, the Rev William Jeffrey and the Rev Dr Ian Mills. Derek served his internship in the Parishes of Derg and Termonamongan, Diocese of Derry and Raphoe. He was ordained for the Parish of Christ Church, Lisburn. William was deacon intern in the Parishes of Killaney and Carryduff, Diocese of Down and Dromore, and he was ordained for the Parish of St Mark,

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Ballymacash. Ian was deacon intern in the parish of St John the Baptist, Agherton, Diocese of Connor, and he was ordained for the Grouped Parishes of Larne and Inver with Glynn and Raloo. The new priests were ordained by the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy. Preacher at the service was the Rev John Rutter, Derriaghy Rural Dean.

+++From Clogher to Meath - The ordination to the Priesthood of Revd Alison Irvine took place on Sunday, 9th September in St. Mary's Church, Maynooth by the Bishop of Meath and Kildare, the Most Revd Pat Storey. Friends and family from Fermanagh, Tullamore and other places joined the packed congregation to wish her well. She grew up in Garvary Parish in Clogher Diocese. Her father, John, a Diocesan Reader and her brother, Adrian, a Parish Reader in Clogher Diocese were among those who robed for the service. The preacher was Revd Katharine Poulton, Rector of Julianstown, who reminded those gathered of the journey Alison has made to ordination - from her student days at Manchester University, through a career with the trade union movement. She recently served her year as deacon-intern with Revd Isaac Delamere (Tullamore). Alison now begins her ministry as Curate Assistant in Dunboyne and Rathmolyon Unions, where the rector is Revd Eugene Griffin.

+++Kilmore ordination - Last Sunday evening, 9th September, the Revd David Moses was ordained as a priest in the Church of Ireland by the Rt Revd Ferran Glenfield, the Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh, in St Fethlimidh's Cathedral, Kilmore. Mr Moses has been appointed as Bishop's Curate to the Drumgoon Group of Parishes

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(Cootehill, Ashfeld, Dernakesh and Killesherdoney). He is married to Catherine and they have three grown-up children: Sarah, Rachel and Jonathan. In the past year, David has been Deacon Intern in the parish group of Monaghan, Tydavnet and Kilmore, working with the rector, Canon Ian Berry. Before beginning his training for ordained ministry he was a sheep and pig farmer. He also served as a Diocesan Lay Reader in Armagh Diocese for 27 years. During the Service, readings were given by Sarah Cathers (Armagh Diocesan Reader), Muriel Treacy (Parish Reader from the Monaghan Group), and Audrey Reilly (Kilmore Diocesan Reader from the Drumgoon Group) representing the churches that have supported David on his journey to ordained ministry. Archbishop Masimango Katanda, Primate of the Anglican Church of the Congo, was also in attendance. Canon Ian Berry preached. A Service of Welcome will take place for Mr Moses on Friday 15th September at 7.30pm in Drumgoon (Cootehill) Church of Ireland.

+++Belfast church foodbank - Sunday Sequence (on BBC Radio Ulster) yesterday reported on the use of deconsecrated church buildings in Belfast. This included a visit to St Christopher's in inner East Belfast with the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society's Primrose Wilson and an interview with Louise Ferguson (Boring Wells) on its continued mission as a food bank serving the area. *The feature is available at this link from 1 hour and 17 minutes, with the interview starting at 1 hour 23 minutes.*

+++Second organ video released - Church Music Dublin has released the second video in its series on organ registration, which is now available below and also online

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here. The video, presented by Simon Harden, was filmed in association with Pipeworks and covers suitable registration for the *Prince of Denmark's March* by Jeremiah Clarke.

