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Brexit: What will be missed most is the Intangible togetherness – Archbishop Jackson to British Irish Association



The run up to Brexit has created untold confusion for the ordinary person and lasting distrust towards those who carry both the responsibilities and privileges of

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statesmanship in the political realm, the Archbishop of Dublin said in a sermon during last weekend's annual meeting of the British Irish Association.

Preaching at an ecumenical service of readings and prayers at Pembroke College, Oxford, on Sunday morning (September 9), Archbishop Jackson said that for the ordinary person the full effects of Brexit had not yet sunk in.

“The debate, in my opinion, is being conducted at too celestial a level for people who have no option but to balance earthly budgets and weigh up earthly deprivations. While the many seek to understand, in the face of an elite who are understandably obliged to keep their cards close to their chests, the thing that will be missed most of all is the intangible togetherness caused by cultural and community capital now in danger of being eroded,” he stated.

The Archbishop added: “Economics does indeed dominate our world; but it does not inspire as many of us as its gurus think; it is something that most of us endure and hope to survive. For a short period of twenty years in the history of an offshore cluster of islands, we have had the chance to explore and to express our cultures together in a way that had become, if I may use the word, un-Bordered. My question is this: Are we in danger of having squandered these twenty years out of carelessness and callousness combined? The security of Western Europe, with the Irish Border as the contemporary expression of the perpetual conundrum called The Irish Question, must be paramount but ought not to be paranoid over the next number of weeks and months”.

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He reminded the congregation that territory, landscape and fields as a concept and as a reality were shared in the language and the literature of politicians and church people. Drawing on the reading from Jeremiah 32.6–15 he said that by buying a field Jeremiah encouraged the besieged people of Israel to make a go of an as yet unseen future, to establish themselves there and to create and build up family life rather than mourning for themselves and accepting from themselves “the narrative of negativity, the malaise of malfunction and the victory of victimhood”.

The Archbishop added that the Parable of the Sower pointed to the futility of sowing on inappropriate ground if one is interested in a fruitful harvest.

Pointing to the World Cup Finalists, the Irish Women’s Hockey Team, he said that women from Northern Ireland played for Ireland alongside women from the Republic of Ireland. They did everyone in Ireland more than proud while making history, he said adding: “Their togetherness was unmistakable”.

He expressed his disappointment and dismay at “the squandering of opportunities for togetherness in the face of both wilful and hapless divisiveness” both in the political arena and in the church world. Looking to his own church

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he said that people were easily pushed to the experience of exclusion by an institution that prided itself on punching above its own weight while at the same time not doing enough blue-sky thinking for the good of those outside its walls.

“It would be charming to suggest that we are faced with a choice. The fact is that the choice has been made and we are faced with the consequences and out-workings of choice. Brexit asks of us all that we seek urgently for generosity in the egg-timer of history. Because that, in fact, is all we inhabit,” the Archbishop concluded.

[You can read Archbishop Jackson's sermon in full here.](#)

Floral Aslan in festival at CS Lewis' home parish

A striking image of Aslan, the lion from CS Lewis' Narnia adventures, is being created in flowers as part of a flower and cultural festival in Lewis' childhood church in East Belfast.

The festival will be opened by Lady Christine Eames, wife of a former rector, at 12 noon on Friday 28 September at St Mark's, Dundela, and will run to Sunday 30 September. It will showcase the work of artistic director Barbara Megarry and the finest of Northern Ireland's floral artists from the Northern Ireland Group of Flower Arranging Societies (NIGFAS), many of whom have won awards at the Chelsea Flower Show.

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Valentina, Carla, Catherine and Arthur assist flower arrangers Johann Henderson and Hannah Nelson with their floral recreation of Aslan from 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe'.

Alongside 17 stunning floral creations on the Harvest theme 'A seed is sown',

NIGFAS members have been passing on their skills to Rainbows, Brownies and children of the parish who have been planning a life size lion which they will make using tiny chrysanthemums and carnations.

NIGFAS member Johann Henderson said: "We are pulling out all the creative stops for this event. It is a joy to work with the children, although one had to be reassured that the lion wouldn't eat her!"

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The weekend's events include a concert by Ashfield Girls School, Ashfield Boys School and Strathearn Chamber Choir, dramatic readings by St Marks Players, and talks by local 'Lewis' expert Mr Sandy Smith. A children's art competition, craft stall and refreshments will also be on offer, and the lion door knob which reportedly inspired the Narnia books will be on public display.

St Mark's Church has been a landmark on the Hollywood Road for 140 years and urgent roof repairs have been completed just in time for the festival. The Rector, the Revd Helene T Steed, is excited to welcome visitors from across Northern Ireland: "The floral designs are spectacular, and, with some thought-provoking quotations and time for quiet contemplation or to enjoy the musical entertainment, we hope our festival will truly have something for everyone."

Find out full programme details and make a group booking by visiting the parish website.

Get out and mix at Dublin's Festival of Culture and Faiths this Sunday

The MEASC annual Festival of Culture and Faiths takes place this Sunday, September 16, in Herbert Park, Dublin, from 12pm to 5pm. Hosted by Dublin City Interfaith Forum with Dublin City Council, MEASC draws on and celebrates the diversity of contemporary Irish society.

This free family day out, celebrates the diversity of Dublin's communities, offering a bridge between our various cultures

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Dublin City
Interfaith Forum

MEASC Summer FESTIVAL

A festival of **culture, faith,
community, family fun** and entertainment

FREE ADMISSION

We look forward to seeing you in
Herbert Park
on Sunday 16th September, 2018,
for a community festival, celebrating the rich
diversity of cultures, faiths and communities in Dublin
12.00pm - 5.00pm

Craft Bazar | Food Market | Performers | Cultural Activities

"Bridging the gaps between
cultures and faiths"

Dublin City
Interfaith Forum
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Rotunda Hospital, The Pillar Room,
Parnell Square, Dublin 1
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and faiths in a fun day full of music, food, song, dance and culture.

MEASC, which means 'mix' in Irish, is now in its second year. The one-day festival aims to showcase the beauty and richness of faith and culture from the city's diverse faith communities.

Apart from bringing faith traditions together, it is

most importantly lots of fun and a good family day out, with games and workshops for children, and for adults too.

This year, the festival will host Syrian refugee families from different accommodation centres and offer children and adults alike an opportunity to reconnect with familiar culture, arts and foods, from home and abroad.

There will be a craft bazaar, food market, performances and other cultural activities on the day.

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For information on Dublin City Interfaith Forum see:
www.dublincityinterfaithforum.org



Welsh bishops to explore “formal provision” for same-sex couples

The Bishops of the Church in Wales have been given the go-ahead to explore formal provision for same-sex couples in church.

Members of the Church’s Governing Body agreed with the bishops that the current situation of no formal provision was “pastorally unsustainable”. They voted with a clear majority in favour of the bishops looking at new approaches which could be brought back to the Governing Body for approval at a later date.



The Archbishop of Wales, John Davies, said that bishops in the Province are “united in the belief that it is pastorally unsustainable and unjust for the Church to continue to make no formal provision for those in committed same-sex relationships”.

The private ballot followed a presentation to the meeting from the Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, Bishop Mark Strange, on the process that church went through before it decided to accept same-sex marriage. There was then a question session with Bishop Mark and an open discussion on the bishops’ request.

The Archbishop of Wales, John Davies, said, “The bishops are united in the belief that it is pastorally unsustainable and unjust for the Church to continue to make no formal provision for those in committed same-sex relationships. Although today’s outcome does not change the present

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doctrine or practice of the Church in Wales on marriage, I am pleased that it provides an important steer to the bishops in exercising our ministry of pastoral care and spiritual leadership.”

Mothers’ Union deliver food and water to flood-stranded families in Myanmar

Members of the Mothers’ Union in The Church of the Province of Myanmar are helping alleviate suffering caused by flooding in the country. According to Reuters’ Relief Net, almost 79,000 people from four townships in the country’s Bago Region had to flee their homes after the Swar Chaung dam was breached at the end of August. This was the latest of five serious flooding events that have hit Myanmar in the past two months. In total, some 100,000 people have been forced to leave their homes since July.

“We don’t want to face this anymore,” the Community Development Coordinator for the Diocese of Hpa-an, Naw Lynn, said. “It’s the worst it’s ever been. It is a very desperate situation.”

Mothers’ Union members and young people from the diocese are delivering food, clean water and bags of rice to those whose homes have been flooded as well as people who are stranded and are unable to leave their homes. The only way to get around the area at the moment is by boat because all the roads are badly flooded. “Boats are very expensive to buy so one of our branches has made a boat from bamboo until they are able to purchase another boat,” Naw Lynn said.

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Mothers' Union coordinate efforts to bring food and clean water to communities affected by floods in Myanmar.

MU members are raising money from church collections throughout the diocese and plan to continue assisting the communities long after the relief effort in helping them with the rehabilitation process.

The Mothers' Union in Myanmar celebrated its centenary in 2014. Today it has more than 8,600 members and is described as “a strong, dynamic and engaged group of members reaching out to their communities.”

A spokeswoman based at the international headquarters of the Mothers' Union said that “Their outreach work includes projects such as: savings and credit groups, care for the elderly, vocational skills training, parenting programmes,

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orphan care programmes, health aware programmes and campaigning against gender based violence.”

GAFCON chair urges peaceful separation between conservative and liberal Anglicans

The conservative Anglican GAFCON grouping has called for a 'structural separation' between churches that hold traditional beliefs on sexuality and those that accept same-sex marriage, with a view to avoiding costly litigation over assets.

Writing in his monthly [newsletter](#), GAFCON chair Archbishop Nicholas Okoh hits out at The Episcopal Church in the US, which he says has spent more than \$60 million in lawsuits against conservatives since 2000. He says conservative Anglicans in Brazil who have formed a breakaway province are also 'persecuted'.

After the decision in May by the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia (ACANZP) to allow for the blessing of same sex relationships, several New Zealand parishes have said they can no longer remain part of the Province. However, Okoh said, GAFCON is 'proposing a fresh approach in order to minimise conflict'.

He says GAFCON deputy general secretary Secretary for Asia and Oceania , the Archbishop of Sydney, Dr Glenn Davies, has met ACANZP bishops and and suggested 'distinctive co-existence', described as 'a proposal for structural separation which acknowledges the reality of



**The Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria,
Nicholas Okoh**

irreconcilable differences about the nature of the bible and the gospel, but calls for it to be done peacefully'.

'Those whose first resort is to litigation betray a love of power and money,' Okoh says.

He continues: 'It is for ACANZP as an autonomous province to decide if it will accept this proposal, but in practice much will depend on the attitude of the Archbishop of Canterbury.'

Okoh says so far 'good disagreement' has been 'a way of accommodating false teaching by treating primary issues as

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if they were secondary and presenting those who hold to a good conscience as schismatics'.

'Now GAFCON is proposing a way of handling disagreement which has theological integrity but minimises the hurt and distress that has been all too evident in the Americas,' he says.

At issue for parishes that vote to leave their denomination is the ownership of their buildings and other assets. TEC and other Anglican Churches argue they do not have the right to take them with them when they leave as they belong to the wider denomination and were often paid for by central funds.

