



Colombanus link - Down and Connor priests invested as Hon Canons of Bobbio Cathedral, Italy

Events are taking place this year to mark the historic fact that St Columbanus died 1400 years ago in Bobbio in 615AD.

On Saturday 29 August, the eve of the 18th annual celebration of St. Columban's Day, within

the setting of a prayer vigil held in the Co-Cathedral of Bobbio, in the presence of pilgrims from a number of countries throughout Europe as well as pilgrims from Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong, Father Joseph Gunn, Parish Priest of Bangor, and Father Joseph Rooney, Judicial Vicar of the Diocese of Down and Connor, were invested as honorary Canons of the Co-Cathedral of Bobbio, by the Bishop of Piacenza-Bobbio, the Most Reverend Gianni Ambrosio.

Their investiture highlights the religious heritage shared by the people of both dioceses. It invites all Christians in Ireland and particularly in Bangor to rediscover the living tradition of Columbanus. It points to the religious, monastic and cultural significance of Columbanus, a figure who preceded both the schism between the Churches of East and West and the sixteenth century Reformation.

In a civic ceremony on Sunday 30 August, in the presence of mayors from towns associated with St Columbanus and the Ambassador of Ireland to the Holy See, Emma Madigan, Bishop Noel Treanor was conferred with the honorary citizenship of Bobbio by its Mayor, Roberto Pasquali.

These events took place within the broader context of a Diocesan pilgrimage led by Bishop Noel Treanor which left Ireland last Monday 24 August and which visited the sites associated with St Columbanus.

C of I clergy visit to Chile and Peru

Bishop Ken Clarke is currently on a visit to Chile and Peru on behalf of SAMS UK and Ireland.

This week the Bishops from Chile, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay meet together in Santiago, Chile and +Ken has been asked to give 4 talks.

This gathering will be followed by a meeting of the Executive Council of the Province. Archdeacon Andrew Forster joins +Ken on Thursday for the Council Meeting.

On Friday 3 members of The Church of The Cross, Bluffton, Hilton Head, arrive. This team of 5 will meet with different Chilean church leaders, and visit several churches over the weekend.

On Monday (7th September) they fly to Lima, Peru where again they will have several days of

important strategic meetings with church leaders. Pray for 3 things...

A spokesperson for SAMS (South American Missionary Society) requested prayer for the meetings, "That they will discern the best ways of developing fruitful mission partnerships.

"That they will have "listening ears" to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church today... and be channels of encouragement.

"That they will enjoy protection, good health and maximise the time.

A good friend of SAMS UK and Ireland is Bishop Henry Scriven of CMS England, and he will also be present this week.

<http://www.samsukireland.com/>

East Antrim venue for CE convention

The 101st Irish National Christian Endeavour Convention will be held next month in Carrickfergus Methodist Church.

The theme of the event on September 19 will be 'One More Step' and guest speaker will be Rev Mark Russell.



Rev Mark Russell with his wife, Libby, and their family.

Rev Russell, along with his wife Libby and family, lived in the town before taking up his current appointment as minister of Leckpatrick Presbyterian Church.

Preceding the main convention on the Friday night will be activities for young people in St Nicholas Church of Ireland halls.

On Saturday there will be seminars and a also treasure hunt for children while the seniors will attend a meeting addressed by Rev Dr Paul

Bailey. Children can also enjoy a fun day in First Carrickfergus Presbyterian Church halls.

A committee, made up of representatives of CE Societies and personal members from throughout east Antrim, has put a lot of preparation into organising the convention.

The event will conclude with all ages coming together for the closing service at 7.30pm, when the address will be given by Rev Mark Russell.

Rosemary McDaniel will be installed as All Ireland President of CE at that service.

Mrs McDaniel, who grew up on a small farm between Cullybackey and Rasharkin, was educated at the local primary school at Laboy and Cambridge House in Ballymena.

She and husband Trevor met while undergraduates and, following their marriage in 1978, set up home near Ballygawley.

Reconnecting the Disconnected

People leave their local church for a variety of reasons.... What are we doing to bring them back?



You are invited to attend the presentation -
Reconnecting the Disconnected

To allow as many as possible to attend, the 2-hr
presentation will be delivered 3 times on
Thursday 24th September 2015:
10.30 am - 12.30 pm; 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm; 7.00
pm - 9.00 pm

Please note: The same content will be delivered
at each session.

The cost to attend Reconnecting The
Disconnected is £10 per person.
This cost includes a Delegate Information Pack
on the day, plus Tea / Coffee.

Venue: Ramada Hotel, Shaw's Bridge, Belfast
Contact Paul Scott, Church Resources.
Email: info@churchresourcesonline.com
<http://www.churchresourcesonline.com/>

Arklow Children's Ministry training morning

Sunday Club leaders will be brimming with ideas after a Children's Ministry Training Morning planned for September. Facilitated by Lynn Storey and Lydia Monds, the workshop will take place in St Saviour's Parish Hall, Coolgreaney Road, Arklow, on Saturday September 5 from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm.

All involved in children's ministry are invited to attend the workshop which will focus on Harvest and Advent themes. They will explore different Bible story telling ideas, creative prayer ideas, songs, memory verses, crafts, activities and games. They will have suggestions for all ages.

Lynn and Lydia have vast experience with children and young people. They are active members of the Sunday School Society for Ireland and the Church of Ireland Children's

Ministry Network and facilitate training sessions throughout Ireland.

Contact - sss@ireland.anglican.org.

Crew wanted for Connor Kids Big Adventure

Kids Big Adventure is organized by Ripple Connor- Connor diocese's children's ministry and is a fun afternoon for primary aged children and their leaders held annually in October.

The organisers state - "It's a chance for children's groups from churches throughout Connor to come together, learn about Jesus and enjoy getting to know each other. This year we will run the event twice –over 2 consecutive Saturdays to try to make it accessible to as many churches as possible. The two venues are Cloughfern Parish in Whiteabbey, October 10 and St. Patrick's Parish, Ballymoney October 17"

Kids Big Adventure has a full programme of activities lasting for 3 hours, which takes lots of organization so we are planning to develop a crew who could give up their time to support us in this ministry amongst children.

Details are at - <http://www.rippleconnor.org.uk/crew-members-needed-for-kids-big-adventure/>

Mossley Parish community family day



Mossley Parish organised a fun filled day for families in the local community on Saturday August 22.

There was lots of singing, a show put on by the fantastic Puppet Team from Magheralin Parish ,

hotdogs, workshops including African drums, crafts, face painting, tattoos, a nail bar and a bouncy castle.

Organiser Maureen Steenson and her team were delighted with how the day worked out and expressed thanks to the Puppet Team from everyone at Mossley.

“Over 65 children attended our Family Fun Day along with their parents and friends making it a great success,” said Maureen.

The Magheralin Puppet team is led by Alan and Sharon Waters who have a real passion for this ministry to children. As well as performing with their puppets, they offer training to churches who would like to develop their own Puppet Ministry. If you are interested in finding out more about then contact Jill Hamilton at jill@connor.anglican.org

Sr Stan celebrates 30 years of homeless charity Focus Ireland

Focus Ireland Life President Sr Stanislaus Kennedy was joined by Mundy, the High Hopes choir and former Voice UK star Sharon Murphy



at a special event held last week to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the homeless charity.

It was in September 1985 that Focus Ireland first opened its coffee shop, advice and information centre in Temple Bar as a direct response to the lack of services for people who were homeless in Dublin at that time.

Speaking at the event in Meeting House Square – just across the road from the Focus Ireland Coffee Shop – Sr Stan, who is a member of the congregation of Religious Sisters of Charity, highlighted the importance of the charity’s work over the years.

“Focus Ireland supported over 11,500 people last year who were homeless or at risk of losing their home. This was a 15% increase from the 10,000 we supported in 2013,” Sr Stan recalled.

She continued, “While it is a sign that things are getting worse for many, it is important to highlight that organisations like Focus Ireland are there to help support people who need it. However, as recent figures show the homeless crisis is continuing to escalate with more and more families losing their homes. This worrying trend highlights that a lot more needs to be done to tackle this growing issue.”

Sr Stan went on to describe how Focus Ireland’s services are helping people affected by homelessness, “I know from speaking to them every week how important it is for them to have someone there to listen to them, to lend a helping hand when sometimes all other doors have been shut to them.”

“The great support we get means we are able to run 70 vital lifeline services around the country and also provide a permanent place to call home for up to 650 households who were homeless or at risk. This means we are able to run services to support young people when they leave care by providing aftercare outreach services and also

accommodation for some of these young people.”

The event at Meeting House Square featured performances from Irish singer/songwriter Mundy and former Voice UK star Sharon Murphy.

The High Hopes choir also performed. The choir, which is made up of people affected by homelessness, was the subject of a three part documentary called High Hopes which aired on RTE television in 2014.

The choir teamed up with Mundy to perform a special rendition of his hit ‘Mexico’. Sharon Murphy also took to the stage with the High Hopes choir, performing a stunning version of Bob Dylan’s ‘Forever Young’.

Speaking at the concert, choir member Josie Lynch described how proud she was to take part in the event.

“I’m so happy to be here singing with the High Hopes Choir. Fifteen years ago, I was homeless and had nobody to turn to. Focus Ireland housed me and gave me the help and support that I needed to turn my life around. It’s nice to be here today to recognise the work of the charity

who have helped so many people over the past 30 years.”

Focus Ireland CEO Ashley Balbirnie paid a special tribute to all the donors, businesses and funders who have made the work of Focus Ireland possible over the years.

“We want to pay a sincere thank you for all the great support we have received since 1985. I know from Sr Stan that this work has touched thousands of lives over 30 years. It’s a fitting time to congratulate all the people who have approached Focus Ireland over the years for achieving what they have in their lives and thanking them for placing their trust in our organisation to support them at their time of need.”

Pope will visit Kenya, Uganda, and the Central African Republic in November

Pope Francis will visit the capitals of Kenya, Uganda, and the Central African Republic when he makes his first visit to Africa in November.

The full details of the Pope’s trip are still being arranged but an official schedule is due to be made public in October.



In an interview with Vatican Radio, Archbishop Charles Daniel Balvo, the apostolic nuncio in Kenya, said that the papal tour will begin in Nairobi.

The Pope will travel next to Kampala, Uganda; his trip will conclude in Bangui, in the Central African Republic.

Archbishop Balvo explained that the Kenyan bishops have chosen as their theme, “To stand strong in the faith”.

He recalled that one of the tasks that Jesus gave to St Peter (and just before he denied that he had known Jesus) was to strengthen his brothers in the faith.

“I think the Holy Father wants to do that, to strengthen his brothers and sisters in the faith, his presence to be a kind of something that will push people to encourage to live their faith not only interiorly in their life of prayer but also in their life in influencing society so that the society in Kenya can also be even more filled with the values, which come from the gospel for our faith.”

Separately, a spokeswoman for the Catholic Waumini communications in Kenya, has told Vatican Radio’s English Service for Africa that the Chairman of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB), Bishop Philip Anyolo, on 27 August, officially announced the coming of Pope Francis to Kenya

According to Rose Achiego, this was announced in a letter to the Christian faithful issued on behalf of the bishops in which Bishop Anyolo said, “The Holy Father has accepted our invitation and will visit Kenya in November 2015.”

Media digest

Journal.ie - An Irish group has made the Catholic Church acknowledge Filipino children fathered by priests

http://www.thejournal.ie/group-justice-priests-change-children-2285945-Aug2015/?utm_source=twitter_self

Irish Times - Walk of hope in bid to stop closure of Dundalk Dominican church

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/walk-of-hope-in-bid-to-prevent-closure-of-dominican-church-in-drogheda-1.2335201>

Independent - 3 charts that show what Catholics and Protestants really think about the moral issues splitting Christianity in two

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/three-charts-that-show-where-catholics-and-protestants-stand-on-the-issues-dividing-the-churches-10478790.html>

Coleraine Times - Buy your own church!

St Gobbins **church** can be bought as part of the Bradden at Portbradden which is on the market with offers of 375,000.

<http://www.colerainetimes.co.uk/news/local-news/buy-your-own-church-1-6932429>

Huff Post/Tel

Further reports about the former Director of Public Prosecutions, Sir Keir Starmer saying that the law should be changed to allow assisted dying. A CofE spokesperson is quoted.

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/08/29/sir-keir-starmer-urges-assisted-dying-law-change_n_8059044.html?utm_hp_ref=uk&ir=UK
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/11832470/Former-chief-prosecutor-says-laws-must-change-to-allow-people-to-die.html>

Observ

Article on changing attitudes to dying and spirituality which looks at the emergence of an 'Ideal Death Show' in Winchester and death cafes. It says in some parts of the UK, funerals conducted by civil celebrants outnumber those presided over by religious officials, and there is a growth in the number of natural burial grounds.
<http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2015/aug/29/death-cafes-embrace-last-taboo>

Mail on Sun

Black Dog columnist mentions comments by the Bishop of Willesden, Pete Broadbent, about the Labour leadership campaign.
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/columnists/article-3215742/BLACK-DOG-beast-shows-softer-side.html>

Sun Exp

Report about Princess Diana's memorial and

grave on an island on the Althorp estate in Northamptonshire.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/601680/Princess-Diana-island-grave-18th-anniversary-of-her-death>

Sun Mirror

Article on interview with Terry Waite, former envoy to the Archbishop of Canterbury who talks about hope getting him through his years as a hostage and how it will help the Ebola crisis. It looks at his work with Y Care - a charity working in 22 foreign countries, with a focus on Liberia and Sierra Leone.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/terry-waite-hope-through-hostage-6347489>

BBC

Item by philosopher John Gray who discusses whether atheism has to be anti-religious.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-34054057>

Mail on Sun

Report that Home Office figures show the number of people claiming asylum in the UK reached its highest level for a decade with more than 32,000 applications for refugee status made last year.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3215610/Asylum-open-door-UK-hits-10-year-high-green-light-one-three-visa-applications-32-344-refugees-year-s-EU-border-chaos.html#ixzz3kH7tQBV0>

Sun Tel

Country diary piece on a walk with the Revd Peter Owen-Jones, presenter of two BBC programmes on faith and pilgrimage. It mentions he is currently the vicar of the benefice of Glynde, West Firle and Beddingham in the Diocese of Chichester. It also talks about his latest projects, including a book called 'Pathlands' and an independent film on the story of our relationship with the land.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/earth/11831655/Country-Diary-Poohsticks-with-the-Reverend.html>

Sun Tel

Report on the discovery of a memorial brass engraved in 1551 and originally from the disused church of St Andrew at Frenze in Norfolk, which had an earlier image engraved on the back. It says it throws new light on the reputation of St Edmund, the martyred king who gave his name to Bury St Edmunds.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/11831753/The-oppressive-Danish-king-impaled-by-St-Edmund-of-the-East-Angles.html>

Sun Tel

Report on comments from Schools Minister, Nick Gibb who has said he wants to give siblings an automatic right to attend the same state school for the first time. It states the proposed changes will go out to a consultation before being considered by MPs and peers in Parliament.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/11832063/A-right-for-siblings-to-attend-the-same-school-guaranteed.html>

Blogs - Archbishop Cranmer

Lower than ermine? Why is Ann Widdecombe not in the House of Lords?

<http://archbishopcranmer.com/lower-than-ermine-why-is-ann-widdecombe-not-in-the-house-of-lords/>

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