



Image of the day - St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin

Reports

Mullingar parish symposium on ‘brexit, borders and the common good’



Sorca Clarke TD, Minister Robert Troy TD, Archbishop John McDowell, Bishop Pat Storey, Prof Katy Hayward, Minister Peter Burke TD and Canon Alastair Graham (l to r). Photo courtesy of John McCauley.

A wide spectrum of political and community leaders came together for a symposium entitled Brexit, Borders and the Common Good, in Mullingar.

Among those attending were government ministers, TDs and local representatives, members of the public service, churches, community and voluntary groups, as well as

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young people. The purpose of the event was to enable respectful and informed discussion around the issue of Brexit. Taking place on the morning of 27 September, the venue was All Saint's Church of Ireland, Mullingar.

The two distinguished speakers were Archbishop John Mc Dowell (Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of the Church of Ireland), as well as Professor Katy Hayward, (Professor of Political Sociology at Queens University Belfast). She is an acknowledged expert on Brexit, as well as being author of the recently published book, *What Do We Know and What Should We Do About the Irish Border?* The Symposium was chaired by Bishop Pat Storey, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Meath and Kildare.

Due to Covid-19 attendance had to be by invitation. A wide spectrum of opinion on the matter was invited.

Brexit and the Northern Ireland Protocol has raised fears in parts of the Loyalist/Unionist community in the north and the 'Irish Sea Border' seems to have become a lightning rod to raise fear and damage confidence.

Speaking of his hopes for the symposium Canon Alastair Graham, rector of All Saint's church and organiser of the event, had this to say. "In light of developments in the north regarding Brexit it seemed both appropriate and important that those of us in the midlands of Ireland would be informed of the situation. To help us in that we were delighted to have the privilege of hearing from two such distinguished speakers."

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Photo courtesy
of John
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In her
presentation
Prof Hayward
observed that

“Where there is
uncertainty fear can grow.” and that “... uncertainty and fear
around Brexit has not yet passed.” She also said there was
“... a sense that the tectonic plates are shifting.”

Prof Hayward noted that Brexit had raised existential
questions for communities with regard to “territory, identity
and borders”. Towards the end of her presentation, being
conscious of diminishing levels of trust, she posed a
question – “Is there a way of preventing a deepening of
divisions?”

Archbishop McDowell began his presentation by saying that,
“Brexit, and now Covid-19, have exposed divisions in our
society to such a degree that we are in danger of no longer
being able to understand and act in the common good.”

He noted that “More of our society than we think depends on holding back on our individual or group aspirations ... and saying that there are some things which can only be good for me if they are also good for you too.” He went on to say, “If we don’t start to think about that we will have a society forever divided into winners and losers. We win a political argument and say ‘right, that’s it’ we know what to do. But in a properly working democracy the people who are not in the majority are not going to go away. What am I going to do about that? Am I going to keep on poking them in the eye ... or am I going to say, in the long term we are going to have to occupy the same space together, so we’re going to have to find something we can all gather around”.

Speaking specifically to young people present the archbishop said, “Your vocation is to be the prophets of this country. Prophets are usually associated with predicting the future, but that wasn’t their public role in Israel. Prophets call communities back to their true vocation. They renew the vision of what it is to belong to a nation.” He continued, “They help to answer the questions around how do we want to live? What sort of a nation do we want to be”.

After the speakers made their presentations there was an opportunity for those attending to ask questions

Introducing the symposium Bishop Storey said, “There have been many events organised, and conferences held over the years, and I hope this occasion will make an important contribution to building the reconciliation and understanding that is needed.”



Archbishop Cottrell speaks of ‘sleepless nights’ over parish-system accusations

Accusations that the leadership of the Church of England is seeking to dismantle the parish system have given the Archbishop of York “sleepless nights”.

In a lecture, “The Dream for the Church”, delivered in St Martin-in-the-Fields, in London, on Monday, Archbishop Cottrell said: “I, too, want to save the parish. But the best way to save the parish is to grow the Church. And the best way to grow the Church is to proclaim the gospel. And the best way to proclaim the gospel is to so live your life in Christ that the beauty and radiance that we see in Christ shines in our lives and makes a difference in the world; it is the pursuit of holiness and the transparent, transformative indwelling of Christ that will save the parish.

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“Though we will need to ensure that the necessary resources and back-office functions of the Church are also focused to serve that same single purpose of making Christ known through his Church, that is through us. . . All this is happening in the life of our Church at the moment, and the things that are happening in the national Church and reviews into effectiveness and governance, are seeking to support it.”

Idowu-Fearon reflects on role as Secretary General of Anglican Communion

The first African to serve as Secretary General of the Anglican Communion plans to return to Nigeria after stepping down in August 2022, to work with the educational institute he founded in 2004: The Kaduna Centre for the Study of Christian-Muslim Relations.

Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon spoke of his plans at a press conference last week, in which he also expressed optimism for the long-term future of the Anglican Communion. “This church belongs to God. As long as God is alive,” he said with a chuckle, “there will always be the Anglican Communion of churches.”

Idowu-Fearon, the fifth Secretary General since the office was established in 1971, was appointed in April 2015 and assumed his duties in September. His appointment was met with some skepticism, according to a cover story in *The Living Church*, because of unsubstantiated media reports



that he had supported making homosexual activity a criminal offense.

Episcopal Church leaders rallied to his side, with endorsements from then-Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori and her predecessor, Frank T. Griswold. For his part, Idowu-Fearon said at the time, “I have never supported the law in Nigeria that criminalizes the gay community and I will never support it.”

From the beginning he said he was committed to being a bridge-builder in the Anglican Communion, saying that when he started, “a good number of primates were no longer attending Primates’ Meetings.”

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“Today there are three major primates – watch my lips, I’m not saying provinces; primates – who have not been attending the Primates’ Meetings. But at least in one or two of these provinces where they come from, there are many who would love to be together with us within the Communion.”

He declined to identify the primates or their provinces. The primates of Nigeria, Kenya, and Uganda have been unwilling to participate in Anglican Communion meetings in recent years because of the continuing presence of the U.S.-based Episcopal Church, which consecrated a gay bishop in 2003, and approved liturgies for same-sex marriage in 2015.

Idowu-Fearon said he was thankful for the creation of four new provinces of the Anglican Communion while he has been in office, which will bring the number of autonomous provinces to 42 as of September 24. That’s the date of the first synod of the Anglican Church of Mozambique and Angola, spanning two non-contiguous, Portuguese-language countries.

Other new provinces in the past several years include Sudan (formerly part of the Province of Sudan and South Sudan); Chile, a move necessitated by what Idowu-Fearon described as “massive, massive evangelism and church growth”); and Alexandria (formerly part of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East, and encompassing Egypt and nine countries in North Africa).

As Secretary General, has led the staff of the Anglican Communion Office (ACO), and has overseen a significant

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staff reduction in 2021. In January, an independent review recommended that the ACO move away from managing programs to operate more as a secretariat, forming connections and sharing knowledge among the 42 provinces.

The Rev. Dr. Will Adam, deputy secretary general, told the news conference the ACO currently has 17 employees. Gavin Drake, director of communications and IT, later said the ACO had lost seven positions in the review. ACO headquarters, at St. Andrew's House in western London, also houses 10 additional employees of the Lambeth Conference Company and the Anglican Alliance, which are separate organizations.

Idowu-Fearon's interest in Islam dates to his seminary days, before his ordination as a priest in 1971. "I do not see a Muslim as someone who is going to Hell, as I have no right to do that," he said at the press conference. "I see the Muslim as a human being. We are all created by the same God."

Christian-Muslim relations are a life-and-death matter in Nigeria, a majority-Muslim country of 211 million people that has long been plagued by violence. An average of 17 Christians were murdered for their faith every day in the first 200 days of 2021, according to a report by the International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law in Nigeria.

"The work of reconciliation between Christians and Muslims in my situation in the northern part of Nigeria is a frontline ministry, and I want to go back to that, to use education for peacebuilding," said Idowu-Fearon, who before joining the

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leadership of the Anglican Communion was the Archbishop of Kaduna in the northwest part of the country.

The Anglican Church of Nigeria reports membership of 18 million people, making it the second-largest province in the Anglican Communion, behind only the Church of England. According to self-reported statistics from the 42 provinces, slightly more than half of the world's Anglicans live in Africa.

Idowu-Fearon gave formal notice of his planned August 2022 retirement to the Anglican Communion's Standing Committee a week before the press conference. The announcement was a bit of a formality, as he began his seven-year term as Secretary-General on September 4, 2015, and he is not eligible for another term. He will be 73 at the time of his retirement – which he said he preferred to think of as his “resignation,” as he does not plan to retire from Christian ministry.

News briefs

Faith in Action at ReStore!

Rachel Toland volunteers in Habitat ReStore Newtownards every week, and finds joy in serving her local community.

Habitat ReStore enables local people to improve their homes at low-cost, diverts tons of reusable waste from landfill, and supports people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to learn new skills.



Rachel has volunteered in ReStore Newtownards since it opened in 2019. She originally connected with Habitat after volunteering with her local church, Gilnahirk Presbyterian. Now she gives her time once a week to serve her local community in Habitat ReStore.

Rachel said, “I volunteer every week because of the knowledge that we are being God’s hands and ministering to people in need.”

“You don’t need anything but a smile and an encouraging attitude to volunteer in ReStore! Every day makes me appreciate what I have and it brings me such joy to volunteer every week. I get such enjoyment from learning of new skills and it’s a privilege to work alongside other

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volunteers and be part of their life journey, while benefiting those who may be struggling.”

Volunteers usually help out for a shift of four hours every week. Tasks vary from customer service and administration to fixing donated items and helping with collections in the lorry.

Jenny Williams, Chief Executive of Habitat for Humanity Ireland said, “We so much appreciate all that volunteers bring to our work. We believe that everyone has something to give and something to gain in building community and we see that happen at ReStore; people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities work as a team.”

If you have a few hours to spare each week and want to help the local community we would love to hear from you. Apply online at www.habitatni.co.uk/restore or call ReStore at 028 9263 5635.

ReStores are based in Newtownards, Lisburn, Ballymena and Newry and stock donated new and used building and home improvement materials, including bathrooms, kitchens and plumbing supplies. All ReStores are open Monday to Saturday, 9.30am-5pm.

[New conference facilities at the Benburb Priory](#)

A very successful reopening and launch of the new hybrid conference facilities at the Benburb Priory has taken place this month.

Click the link below to view.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vtje1AWurg>

churchnewsireland@gmail.org



Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenants of Armagh, Belfast, Antrim and Co Londonderry at the Service to mark The Centenary of the Royal British Legion at St Anne's Cathedral. Cadet Corporal Tamzin McMullan on duty on this most moving and dignified occasion

Belfast Cathedral service for RBL 100

On Sunday as part of Northern Ireland District of the Royal British Legion. Celebration of RBL100 a short act of remembrance was held at Belfast was memorial. Followed by a parade to St Anne's cathedral. The parade was lead by the pipes and drums of the 2nd battalion of the Royal Irish Regiment. A service was then held lead by various members of all the main churches.

Government must honour commitment to refugees - Bishop Nulty

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Government must honour its commitment to take in refugees and end the desperate system of Direct Provision Centres – Bishop D Nulty

<https://catholicbishops.ie/2021/09/24/government-must-honour-its-commitment-to-take-in-refugees-and-end-the-desperate-system-of-direct-provision-centres-bishop-denis-nulty/?swcfpc=1>



Council of European Bishops' Conference

Archbishop Cushey catches up with Archbishop Eamon (Armagh) and Cardinal Vincent Nichols

(Westminster) at the Council of European Bishops' Conference in Rome.

Quote -

The Bible teaches us: “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you”. It's not easy at all, but it's a teaching that leads to more life for everyone – we should pursue it - [Archbishop of Canterbury](#)

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Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars

Keith & Kristyn Getty's "It Is Well With My Soul" is featured in the upcoming film, 'Sabina: Tortured for Christ'

CNI reported earlier this week the release of the official cinematic music video for "It Is Well With My Soul," a new single from Keith & Kristyn Getty in anticipation of their upcoming album.

This new arrangement of a classic hymn is featured in the upcoming film, 'Sabina: Tortured for Christ, The Nazi Years', releasing worldwide November 8-10. Watch stunning scenes of the North Coast of Ireland and exclusive footage from the Sabina



churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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film bring the hymn's timeless lyrics to life!

Set during World War II, "Sabina" takes viewers on a journey through Romania to discover why Sabina Wurmbrand, a Jewish Christian, would risk her life to offer a kind hand to German soldiers—enemies who killed her entire family. The film conveys the realities of religious persecution during that era and the cost of following Christ when faith is forbidden. The Gettys say this inspiring film represents the importance of hope in the midst of great loss.

Richard Wurmbrand, (1909 - 2001) co-founder of "The Voice of the Martyrs", led an underground Christian ministry to those who suffered under Nazi and Communist oppression in his homeland of Romania. His Christian witness led to 14 years of imprisonment and torture in a Communist prison

Sabina Wurmbrand, (1013 - 2000)The Voice of the Martyrs' co-founder, advanced God's kingdom in Romania amid Nazi and Communist oppression. She carried on intense missionary work with her husband, Richard, continuing the work during his imprisonment. She suffered three years of prison and forced labor for her bold faith.

You may listen to "It Is Well With My Soul" at -
[[[https://va.lnk.to/itiswell?
mc_cid=010b8cbc86&mc_eid=33d184a477](https://va.lnk.to/itiswell?mc_cid=010b8cbc86&mc_eid=33d184a477)]

Videos from the film "Sabina" may be viewed at -
[[[https://www.sabinamovie.com/?
mc_cid=010b8cbc86&mc_eid=33d184a477](https://www.sabinamovie.com/?mc_cid=010b8cbc86&mc_eid=33d184a477)]

Bible Society wins at the Chelsea Flower Show

Christian charity the Bible Society has been awarded a gold medal in the best sanctuary garden category at the prestigious Chelsea Flower Show.

Titled Psalm 23, the display is inspired by the famous Bible verses which begin 'The Lord is my shepherd'.

It includes sections based around the green pastures, still waters and the valley of the shadow of death.

Speaking about its success, designer Sarah Eberle said: "We are judged against a brief, it's Psalm 23. The line 'He restores my soul' is probably the most important line in regard to the garden.

"I think it does that and I think the public see that. They all feel quite calm when they stand there. It's soothing.

"It is hard to do at a busy show, to reach people's hearts, as well as their minds."

The garden was created during lockdown in Tadley in Hampshire. After the show it will find a permanent home at Winchester Hospice.

The Bible Society is also encouraging others to build community gardens so others across the country can reflect on the Psalm.

Paul Williams, CEO of Bible Society, said: "I hope the gold medal enables us to inspire more people to have a go at interpreting the Psalm in this way so that their local

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communities can engage with the Psalm through the garden."

There are five videos on the garden on the Bible Society's site at -

[[] <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-RBsOU-Kfoaed2LEMpP3SA>]

Prayers, and reflections by phone

The Methodist Church in England asks - Do you know someone who is not on the internet but who would like to hear prayers, reflections and our podcast? We have all of these free by phone. More details here:

[[] ow.ly/OfZs50GenhL

[[]

Poem for today

A Beautiful Night in September by Francis Duggan

The moon did appear from behind dark clouds
Only again for to steal out of sight
And boobook owl called in the Parkland
His voice echoing in the calm night.

Lovers arm in arm under the street lamps
They stop to embrace as they walk along
And the nesting magpies are fluting
They warble a beautiful song.

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A beautiful night in September
And balmy the calm evening air
The Spring is Mother Nature's young Season
And than her there is none so fair.
Were I a poet I'd capture some of this beauty
And on paper in words jot it down
Of this beautiful night in the Springtime
In a park of a southern town.

The moon behind the clouds is hiding
And the flute of the magpie sounds melodious and clear
And young lovers out arm in arm courting
And the cry of the boobook I hear.



Speaking to the Soul

Bible verse, short comment and prayers each day on this site



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