



**Image of the day - St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork  
Final 150th Anniversary Celebration Service**

## Reports

### **Final 150th Anniversary Celebration Service held at St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork**

**On its Patronal Festival last Sunday, St Fin Barre's Cathedral closed a year of celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the consecration of the present building with a Festive Choral Evensong.**

Present were members of the Cathedral Chapter, ecumenical guests and representatives of the Army and Navy, as well as the Deputy Lord Mayor of Cork Mary Rose Desmond and An Taoiseach Micheál Martin.

Recorded video greetings were played during the service from the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland, the Most Rev. John McDowell, and from the Archbishop of Dublin and former Dean of Cork, the Most Rev. Michael Jackson.

At the beginning of the service Nicholas O'Neill, the winning composer of the 150th Anniversary Composition Competition, was interviewed via a Zoom call and discussed his canticles with Director of Music Peter Stobart. His Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis on B flat were premiered during the service by the Cathedral Choir, accompanied on the organ by Assistant Director of Music Robbie Carroll.

The Very Rev. Nigel Dunne, Dean of Cork, said in his sermon:

“On 21 January 1862, following years of debate about the unsuitability and poor repair of the eighteenth century cathedral and its medieval tower, the Chapter of St Fin Barre’s ... resolved to ‘... raise a monument of Christian zeal, love and piety to the Almighty giver of all our blessings ... and thus leave a witness to the faith, liberality and self-denial of our present age, to our children’s children.’

“So, although we might be a bit wary of words like zeal and piety nowadays, ... I think we are in a very different space, one where words like inclusion, welcome, love, community, outreach, prayer, sanctuary, and mindfulness have all come to the fore – not least in relation to the way we express our Christian life and witness here at St Fin Barre’s in the 21st century.”

## **Catholic diocese in Northern Ireland opens redress scheme for survivors of 'abhorrent' child abuse**

**The Diocese of Dromore in Northern Ireland is establishing a redress scheme for survivors of sexual abuse by priests in the diocese.**

The scheme is to provide financial redress, as well as offer a personal apology, counselling, and pastoral support for survivors and victims of abuse by any church representative

in the diocese, where a 2011 report found 35 allegations made against 10 priests.

The Diocese of Dromore, which includes parts of Antrim, Down and Armagh, said it “apologises unreservedly” for the hurt and damage caused by any priest or church representative acting under its authority.

“The Diocese of Dromore finds such behaviour towards children and vulnerable people abhorrent, inexcusable and indefensible,” it said in a statement.

“Having met with a number of survivors, and having examined the various existing legal claims against the diocese, Archbishop Eamon Martin wishes to facilitate a resolution process to enable the provision of financial and other supports for survivors without undue further delay,” the diocese said.

The scheme will be open to any victims and survivors of child sexual abuse by representatives of the diocese.

A panel will assess applications to the scheme that report sexual abuse, including grooming, that occurred while the applicant was a child.

“It endeavours to ensure a process which is victim-centred and aims to provide victims with recognition and reasonable compensation without the need for lengthy investigation and litigation,” the diocese said.

“The Diocese understands that redress may take varying forms. As well as enabling the provision of financial redress,



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the Scheme includes the possibility of a personal apology on behalf of the Diocese and other ways of providing pastoral support. The Diocese will also support the provision of counselling via the Towards Healing service,” it said.

“The Diocese is willing to commit whatever resources it has available for the purpose of redress to this scheme, even if that should exhaust those resources.

“The scheme will respond to applications where there are allegations of sexual abuse (including sexual grooming), which may or may not have been accompanied by physical and/or emotional abuse, and which occurred when the applicant was under the age of 18. All applications will be



assessed by an independent panel, appointed via an independent process managed by a third-party organisation.

“In assessing applications the panel will have regard to all the available information and make its decision on the balance of probabilities and on a majority basis. The process will fall outside the civil litigation process and be comparable to a mediation. It is anticipated that the process will be informal in nature but is intended to be binding on the parties should a resolution be agreed.”

In 2011, reviews into the handling of child sexual abuse in six dioceses around Ireland found that the Catholic Church’s response to allegations was often inadequate.

The report from National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church identified 35 allegations in the Dromore diocese made against 10 priests, some of whom had died.

None of the priests with allegations against them had been convicted of an offence against a child.

The report found that the allegations had been reported to state authorities but that it had not always happened promptly.

A priest in the diocese who worked at a school in Newry, Malachy Finnegan, was accused of sexual abuse by 12 people.

The accusations, which were detailed by a BCC Spotlight programme in 2018, are said to have spanned four decades before his death in 2002.

Church's press statement at -

[[] <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2021/09/29/diocese-of-dromore-launches-redress-scheme/> ]

## **Historic Greyfriars Kirk to celebrate 400 years with Festival of Science, Wisdom and Faith**

**A world-famous church in the centre of Edinburgh will hold a Festival of Science, Wisdom and Faith as part of their celebrations marking 400 years as a congregation.**

Greyfriars Kirk in Edinburgh, known around the globe for the story of Greyfriars Bobby, the loyal Skye terrier, will commemorate its ties to scientific figures with a series of talks and discussions by experts on the weekend of 22 - 24 October.

The event is being supported by the Royal Society of Edinburgh and was inspired by the church's connections to people such as James Hutton, known as the father of modern geology, who is buried in the graveyard.

The church first opened its doors on Christmas Day in 1620 and had planned a programme of events throughout last year to mark their special anniversary, but instead rescheduled the Festival of Science, Wisdom and Faith to this year.



Cap - Parish associate Gillian Couper in Greyfriars Kirkyard with a sign marking some of the famous people buried there.

Rev Richard Frazer, who is the minister at Greyfriars Kirk, said: "When scientific truths appear to challenge our settled ideas we shouldn't bury our heads, but find the ways in which truth and faith come together.

"Over these last 400 years the Greyfriars community has been committed to holding our developing understanding of the world alongside faith.

"James Hutton, buried in Greyfriars Kirkyard, introduced the concept of 'Deep Time' which challenged settled understanding of the age of the earth.

"There has been a strong movement in the Church of Scotland not to denounce such insights, but instead see [churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)



developments as opportunities to be enriched by scientific endeavour.

"There are those who say that science supersedes religion, rendering faith redundant. But reverence for the natural world, restraint of destructive appetites and finding answers to sustaining the earth community are spiritual and moral challenges too.

"Indeed, many scientists say that the challenge of the current Climate Emergency cannot be answered by science alone but must be an effort of collective moral will.

"This Festival, on the eve of COP26 in Glasgow, is a contribution to what we see as the urgent need to find the wisdom for survival in a fragile world under threat."

The programme will feature experts speaking on universal themes:

Geologist Professor Stuart Monro FRSE, who was instrumental in establishing Dynamic Earth, will speak about James Hutton's incredible legacy and how it shapes our present.

Witches of Scotland, a group who are seeking an official pardon and a national monument for more than 2,500 people convicted under Witchcraft Acts in Scotland, will explore how the events from hundreds of years ago still shape us now.

Dr Rebekah Widdowfield, Chief Executive of the Royal Society of Edinburgh will chair a panel looking at how

different forms of knowledge and expertise can come together to help address the big issues facing society, particularly in a post-pandemic world.

Professor Wilson Poon FRSE, who is the University of Edinburgh's chair of natural philosophy, will discuss the perception of a historical tension between science and religion, and the need for wisdom in education in the 21st century.

Professor Liz Grant, Director of the Global Health Academy at the University of Edinburgh, will speak on the science and practice of compassion and how it impacts society.

Environmental campaigner and spiritual activist Alastair McIntosh will weave climate science and exploration of its nature into a developing narrative illustrated by real-life and mythical stories.

Professor Dame Jocelyn Bell Burnell, President (interim) of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, said: "This year's Festival offers online and in-person experiences that will connect audiences with experts and practitioners in different fields working together to explore perceptions.

"We all have a part to play in finding a sustainable future for the world to flourish and I urge everyone to get involved."

On the Sunday, there will be a special service at Greyfriars themed around the Bible quote 'We cannot do anything against the truth' (2 Corinthians 3:8).

Parish Associate Gillian Couper said: "We are really excited to be welcoming people to enjoy these events both at the Kirk and by livestream to enjoy these events.

"Greyfriars is a place for hospitality and service, strongly committed to social enterprise and community action.

"We're grateful to our ecumenical partners, Augustine United Church and St Columba's by the Castle, Church of Scotland's Society, Religion and Technology project and many others who have encouraged and inspired us in the development of this festival.

"We hope the events will be thought-provoking, interesting and fun, and perhaps help each of us to think about how we can contribute to the debate and action, in some small way."

## **Anglican Church of Ceylon wants urgent action about deterioration of human rights in Sri Lanka**

**The Anglican Church of Ceylon, with support from the Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations, is calling on urgent action from the Human Rights Council.**

The Anglican Church of Ceylon is increasingly concerned by the deterioration of human rights in Sri Lanka. They have highlighted the polarisation of institutions and society, the politicisation of the vaccination efforts, the militarisation of politics and other institutions, and government crackdowns on peaceful protestors.



The second anniversary of the Easter Sunday bomb attacks in April 2019 was marked by Catholic priests and nuns marching while holding images of the victims next to Saint Sebastian's Church, one of the attacked churches, in Katuwapitiya, Sri Lanka.

Their case is being presented to the 48th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council by the Anglican Communion's Permanent Representative to the UN, Jack Palmer-White. The Anglican Communion Office at the UN submitted a report to the Council with specific recommendations for the government of Sri Lanka based upon the concerns of the Church of Ceylon.

The report looked at ethno-nationalistic sentiments that favour the majoritarian ethnicity and religion and calls out the politicisation of Covid vaccination efforts. The report said

that: “the government has done little to address the false accusations on social media that Muslims were deliberately spreading the virus and corresponding calls to boycott Muslim businesses.”

It recommended that the government continue the process of constitutional reforms, “including consideration of a new Bill of Rights that will, amongst others, guarantee the right to life and the right to non-discrimination on any ground”.

It also highlighted concerns over military personnel continuing to be appointed to government posts, and the lack of accountability from the ruling party, particularly in the investigation of the Easter Sunday attacks of 2019. The report recommends an end military involvement in civilian functions.

The report said: “the cornerstone of any democracy must be the ability to entertain opposing views. The current approach of the government does not reflect values that contribute to a society built on universal equality and dignity. From the perspective of the Church, which is apolitical and aims to be a source of integration, this approach directly conflicts with its presence and ministry in this diverse country.”

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system made up of 47 States. The Council is responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe. The 48th session of the Human Rights Council began on 13 September and continues to 8 October.



## News briefs

### C of I General Synod

The Church of Ireland's General Synod will be meeting in an online format from today (Thursday, 30th September) and continuing on Friday and Saturday.

The General Synod website includes a guide for new members, the timetable, members' agenda, the Book of Reports, and motions and Bills to be debated. It will also include an audio feed when business is under way and videos of the General Synod service and the Presidential Address.

[[] <http://synod.ireland.anglican.org/2021/welcome> ]

### Welcome Area dedicated at Inch Parish Church

Rt Revd David McClay dedicated a new Welcome Area at Inch Parish Church at a special service on Sunday morning 26 September.

The area provides a safe and welcoming space for visitors, nursing mothers and small children. It will facilitate the serving of light refreshments after services and can also be used for small gatherings and meetings.

The Welcome Area project was a long time in process from conceptualization and design to execution and completion,



and, in paying tribute to all those involved the rector, Revd Stephen Smyth said:

“I do want to say thank you to all the people who have been a part of this project and have contributed so willingly of their time and talents. It is always difficult to name individuals with the risk of oversight, but I would acknowledge the contributions of Roderick Downer (Conception), Warren Cannon (Design), Liz Baker (Soft Furnishings), Stephen Prosser (Cabinet Maker), Andrew Taggard (Painter), Mark Davey (Electrician) and Norman Gibson (Project Manager).

“I also want to acknowledge and thank all those people who have contributed monetarily to the project: members of the Select Vestry, members of the parish and the Church of Ireland Priorities Fund, who gifted us £6,000.”



Pictured above L–R: Councillor Terry Andrews, Mr Warren Cannon, Ms Liz Baker, Rt Revd David McClay, Mrs Patricia Cross, Revd Stephen Smyth and Mr Stephen Cross.

The Inch Parish Church Select Vestry unanimously decided to name the space “The Cross Welcome Area” in memory of the late Patrick Cross who was a faithful servant of the parish and friend to all.

Revd Smyth concluded by saying, “This name also reminds us of the central motif of the Christian faith – the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ who died for our sins and rose again that we might have eternal life. We pray that the Cross will always be the central focus of church life in Inch Parish, and “The Cross Welcome Area” will stand as a constant reminder of that focus.”

### Quote

I dream of a church where the first words that Saint Benedict wrote when he produced his rule might become central to the life of every parish church, chaplaincy, fresh expression or church plant: “We are going to establish a school for the service of the Lord.” Archbishop of York





## Heritage

### The Angel on St Fin Barre's Cathedral

The Church of Ireland Cathedral of St Fin Barre's, with its three soaring spires, is one of the most iconic buildings in Cork. Designed by the English architect William Burges, its foundation stone was laid in

1865, and it was consecrated just five years later, in 1870.

Burges had a history of winning commissions for projects that were never realised, and was so delighted that his proposal for St Fin Barre's actually went ahead that he gifted one of its most prominent features, the Golden Resurrection Angel on the choir roof, to the people of Cork.

The life-sized angel is copper-gilded, and its wings are pierced so the winds can blow through them. Most famously, it holds two four-foot long trumpets aloft.

"The angel is one of the most iconic and best-loved pieces of statuary in the city," says the Dean of St Fin Barre's, Nigel Dunne. "It's one of more than 1,500 artworks associated with the cathedral. I've been here since 2007, and I still haven't found them all."

“A popular legend has it that, when Judgment Day is at hand, the Golden Angel will blow her trumpets to alert the people of Cork. Burges, a noted opium smoker, may well have started this rumour himself.

“He was eccentric, but a fascinating character,” says Stewart Dorney, a senior guide at St Fin Barre’s. “He designed every last detail of the cathedral, and ensured that the Golden Angel is looking out towards the east, towards the spot where St Fin Barre is said to be buried. But it’s also in line with the labyrinth on the cathedral grounds, which he originally designed for Lilles Cathedral in France.

“The idea is that you could be walking through the labyrinth, caught up in your worries, but when you look up, you’ll realise there’s a higher dimension, represented by the Golden Angel overlooking the city.”

The choir roof on which the statue is perched was itself inspired by Saintes Cathedral, again in France. “The difference between St Fin Barre’s and Saintes Cathedral is that we don’t have flying buttresses,” says Dorney. “But the choir area here was all inspired by Saintes. Burges felt that the only true architecture was the Gothic architecture of the 13th century, particularly the early French Gothic, and a lot of his work harks back to that.”

Six of the cathedral’s 32 gargoyles protrude from the choir roof. “They’re these mythical beasts that signify temptation coming into people’s lives,” says Dorney. “But they have also the functional value of directing rain water away from the eaves.”



Burges worked with the English sculptor Thomas Nicholls to model each of the gargoyles in plaster. They were then carved in limestone by a team of local stonemasons, led by Robert McLeod. The same team produced the elaborate stone carvings on the western façade, which include representations of the Twelve Apostles, the Wise and Foolish Virgins, and the Resurrection of the Dead.

As work progressed on the cathedral, the budget ballooned. Burges' initial estimate of £30,000 was dwarfed by the final cost of at least £100,000 by the time the spires were topped off in 1879. Fortunately, the Bishop of Cork, John Gregg, was supportive of Burges' extravagances. Local legend has it he played the brewer William Crawford off against distiller Francis Wise to ensure that each would pay for the construction of one of the two western spires.

A major refurbishment of St Fin Barre's was undertaken in the late 1990s, at a cost of €5 million. In December 1998, there was consternation when the Golden Angel's trumpets were stolen. "There was scaffolding up against the gable," says Dorney, "and the rumour is that a couple of UCC students scaled it and made off with them."

A public appeal was made for the trumpets' return, and two days later, an anonymous caller to local radio station 96FM alerted the authorities to where they'd been dumped, in the grounds of a church at Glanmire. The trumpets had been damaged, but were soon repaired, and the Golden Angel was restored to glory. Burges completed other commissions during his stay in Cork, including the Church of the Holy Trinity in Crosshaven, but there is no doubt but that St Fin Barre's was his pride and joy. Before his death in 1881,

aged 53, he asked that his remains be interred in the cathedral, but legal complications prevented his wishes from being carried out, and he was buried instead with his mother at West Norwood, London.

He is commemorated at St Fin Barre's with a plaque that bears his name, under the legend, "Architect of this cathedral."

Just as the Golden Angel continues to watch over the city, so too do Corkonians keep a wary eye on her wellbeing. There are several versions of the legend. The most popular refers to her blowing her trumpets, but others warn that if she ever comes off her perch, or her golden glow turns green, these too are signs the end is nigh.

For now, thankfully, St Fin Barre's is welcoming visitors, and its busy schedule of services and organ recitals suggests that Judgement Day is nowhere near imminent.

## Poem for today

### 21st September 1870 by Charles Kingsley

Speak low, speak little; who may sing  
While yonder cannon-thunders boom?  
Watch, shuddering, what each day may bring:  
Nor 'pipe amid the crack of doom.'

And yet-the pines sing overhead,  
The robins by the alder-pool,

September 30, 2021

The bees about the garden-bed,  
The children dancing home from school.

And ever at the loom of Birth  
The mighty Mother weaves and sings:  
She weaves-fresh robes for mangled earth;  
She sings-fresh hopes for desperate things.

And thou, too: if through Nature's calm  
Some strain of music touch thine ears,  
Accept and share that soothing balm,  
And sing, though choked with pitying tears.



## Speaking to the Soul

Bible verse and prayers for today - see post on site

