



Ambassador Emma Madigan with Pope Francis along her husband Laurence and son Conor.

Irish Ambassador attends ‘inspiring’ papal address

Ireland’s Ambassador to the Holy See, Emma Madigan, has spoken of the “impressive and inspiring” address delivered by Pope Francis to the Diplomatic Corps on January 9.

Ambassador Madigan joined with representatives from over 180 missions with links to the Holy See to hear the annual address from the Pontiff, which touches on those key areas of concern for the Pontiff in 2017.

“He is a speaker who brings great sincerity to what he says,” Ambassador Madigan said, adding that the address had been “wide-ranging [and] touched on many serious issues. The Pope was very strong and direct on terrorism, and on the subject of migration.”

On these issues, Pope Francis said during his address of terrorism: “We are dealing with a homicidal madness which misuses God’s name in order to disseminate death, in a play for domination and power. Hence I appeal to all religious authorities to join in reaffirming unequivocally that one can never kill in God’s name. Fundamentalist terrorism is the fruit of a profound spiritual poverty, and often is linked to significant social poverty. It can only be fully defeated with the joint contribution of religious and political leaders.”

On migration he stressed that “The issue of migration is not one that can leave some

countries indifferent, while others are left with the burden of humanitarian assistance, often at the cost of notable strain and great hardship, in the face of an apparently unending emergency...So I am grateful to the many countries which offer a generous welcome to those in need, beginning with various European nations, particularly Italy, Germany, Greece and Sweden.”

Ambassador Madigan pointed out, however, that the Pope was keen to end his address on a positive note, emphasising as he often does, the themes of hope and peace in commencing a new year. Quoting from that passage which struck her most, Ambassador Madigan said the Pontiff had stressed that “Peace is gift, a challenge and a commitment [that] can only come about on the basis of a vision of human beings capable of promoting an integral development respectful of their transcendent dignity”.

Derry Bishops on the death of Dean Victor Griffin

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Derry has expressed sympathy with the C of I community

on the death of Dean Griffin. Bishop McKeown stated -

I express, on behalf of the Catholic community in the Diocese of Derry, deep sympathy to the Church of Ireland community of the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe as well as the wider Church of Ireland family, on the death of Very Reverend Dean Victor Griffin.

Dean Griffin served for many years in Derry, from his ordination in 1948 through to 1969, both in Saint Augustine's Church and, as Rector, in Christchurch. Upon retirement as Dean of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, Dean Griffin returned to the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe, residing in Limavady.

Dean Griffin was committed to justice and peace issues, both globally in his opposition to apartheid in South Africa and locally in his work for peace on this island.

Through his death, Ireland has lost a faithful Christian minister. May he rest in peace

The C of I Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Ken Good, has paid tribute to the Very Revd Victor



The late Dean Griffin (front left) with Archdeacon Samuel Simpson, Bishop Good and Canon Walter Quill at a lunch for retired clergy at the See House last June.

Griffin. 'It was with considerable sadness that I learned of the death of Dean Griffin on Wednesday,' Bishop Good said.

'As a Curate and Rector here in the Diocese of Derry and then as Dean of the National

Cathedral in Dublin, he proved to be a formidable and inspirational churchman.

'Dean Griffin was a man of great faith and humanity. Displaying a willingness to speak prophetically and courageously, he was fearless in answering God's call and yet, to those who knew him, he had a pastoral and sensitive heart. He will be greatly missed.

'I extend my deepest condolences to Dean Griffin's son, Kevin, to the wider family circle and to his many friends.'

Annual Interdenominational Service as Gaeilge

The Annual Interdenominational Service as Gaeilge will be held in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, on Friday, 20 January 2017 at 8pm, organised by Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise and Pobal an Aifrinn.

The service will be celebrated during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, with hymns, prayers and readings. The choir of Gaelscoil na Cille, Co. Meath will sing hymns and a consort of Christ

Church Cathedral choir will sing canticles and an anthem.

Clergy from various churches will be present, and Rev Tony Murphy will preach this year. Refreshments will be available in the medieval cathedral crypt after the service.

Fáilte roimh chách

An tSeirbhís Idirchreidmheach
Beidh Seirbhís Idirchreidmheach trí Ghaeilge á reáchtáil in Ardteampall Chríost, Baile Átha Cliath 8, Dé hAoine 20 Eanáir 2017 ag 8pm ag Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise i bpáirtíocht le Pobal an Aifrinn.

Ceiliúradh ar Sheachtain na hAontachta Críostaí a bheidh i gceist leis an tSeirbhís seo, agus beidh iomainn, paidreacha agus léachtaí ann. Beidh iomainn á gcanadh ag cór Ghaelscoil na Cille, Co na Mí. Cloisfear cainticí agus aintiúin eaglasta ó choimhdeach chór Ardteampall Chríost.

Beidh cléir ó eaglaisí éagsúla i láthair, agus an tUrr Antóin Ó Murchú a bheidh mar sheanmóirí i mbliana. Cuirfear sólaistí ar fáil i lusca (crypt)

meánaoiseach an Ardteampaill i ndiaidh na Seirbhíse.

Archbishop Of Canterbury Urged To Discipline Cathedral Over Koran Reading

The Archbishop of Canterbury has been urged to discipline a Scottish Episcopal cathedral over a reading of the Koran that denied Jesus was the son of God.

Justin Welby was asked to intervene by the conservative grouping GAFCON UK on Thursday after a service last week at St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow, contained a recitation from the Islamic holy book.

The reader, Madinah Javed, went beyond the allocated passage translated in the service sheet to include verses which explicitly denied Jesus was God's son – a key Christian belief.

It is not clear whether this was authorised by the cathedral's Provost, Rev Kelvin Holdsworth.

Justin Welby, as head of the Church of England, has no strict authority over the Scottish Episcopal Church. But as the spiritual leader of the worldwide Anglican Communion, he can attempt to exert moral pressure over them at the next conference of global Anglican leaders.

A statement on the cathedral's website defends the reading but declined to comment specifically on the declaration Jesus was not the son of God.

"We listened with interest to the story that Muslims tell of the annunciation of Jesus in the Koran," Provost Holdsworth wrote.

"Such readings have happened a number of times in the past in this and in other churches and have led to deepening friendships locally, to greater awareness of the thing we hold in common and to dialogue about the ways in which we differ."

Rev James Paice, a member of the GAFCON UK Taskforce, said he along with other Anglicans in the generally more conservative global south, "are appalled at the lack of discipline by the Scottish Episcopal Church at this continued syncretism and confusion over mission."

Paice's open letter follows outrage from conservative Anglicans and comes after a similar call for punishment by the conservative former Bishop of Rochester, Michael Nazir-Ali.

"The authorities of the Scottish Episcopal Church should immediately repudiate this ill-advised invitation," he said in a statement.

He also called for the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, publicly to distance the Church of England and the wider Anglican Communion from the event.

"Christians should know what their fellow citizens believe and this can include reading the Koran for themselves, whether in the original or in translation. This is not, however, the same thing as having it read in Church in the context of public worship," he said.

Similiarly Rev Dr Gavin Ashenden, chaplain to the Queen, has called for Holdsworth to apologise and hinted he should quit his post.

"Some people will wonder if he has sufficient theological astuteness to remain in such a

responsible office in times as fraught as these?" he wrote in a **blog post**. "Our interfaith relations require both integrity and competence. The strategy in Glasgow appears to have been short of both."

Christian Today has contacted the Cathedral and the Scottish Episcopal Church for a fuller response but they declined to comment further.

A spokesman for Lambeth Palace said they would pass on the complaints to St Mary's Cathedral but the Archbishop had no jurisprudence because the cathedral was outside the Church of England.

Christian Aid : Extremely cold weather life-threatening for refugees in Serbia

Refugees in Serbia are experiencing life-threatening conditions as temperatures in the south of the country have plummeted to -30°C.

Marija Vranesevic, Programme Manager at Philanthropy – Christian Aid's partner

organisation in Serbia, commented:
‘Refugees are being exposed to life-threatening conditions because of the extremely cold weather we are currently experiencing. They are also at risk of disease, as well as a flu epidemic.

‘While most refugees are now staying in heated buildings, some are still outside of the camps. These people are particularly vulnerable. Every day we are seeing more and more refugees arrive. We are witnessing a visible increase in levels of anxiety and depression among the refugee population.

‘The provision of food is becoming a major challenge for agencies. In this cold weather, people need access to hot, nutritious food, as well as adequate shelter and heating.’

Earlier today it was reported that two Iraqi men have died in Bulgaria after walking through the snow for 48 hours without access to food or water. In Greece, where temperatures have reached -14⁰C, an Afghan refugee has also died.

Tom Viita, Head of Advocacy at Christian Aid, said: 'It's wholly unacceptable that refugees are freezing to death, while European leaders turn a blind eye to the suffering of people on their doorsteps.

'European countries last year pledged to relocate 66,000 refugees from Greece. Yet almost a year on, only twenty per cent of them have been relocated. Across Europe the political will to act is falling desperately short of the human need.

'People need immediate protection. Governments and agencies need to pull together to stop people needlessly dying, and work to find effective longer-term solutions that honour everybody's human dignity, regardless of origin.'

Christian Aid partners in Serbia and Greece are currently providing hot meals, water and sanitation facilities, and cash assistance to refugee communities. In the sites in which our partners work, refugees have been moved into heated buildings.

In addition, our partners are providing legal protection services to unaccompanied children, and families, on the Greek mainland, and housing support to some of the most vulnerable refugees awaiting relocation to other countries in Europe. Christian Aid and our partners continue to provide support to refugees and displaced people in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, South Sudan, and many other countries throughout the world.

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News briefs

+++ Rebel Prods last copies - Rebel Prods:
The Forgotten Story of Protestant Radical Nationalists and the 1916 Rising has almost sold out but a final 30 copies remain available for direct sale through the Church Ireland online bookstore, priced £22.50/€25 (at the link below). The book was the work of the late Dr Valerie Jones, and all profits from the author royalties are being donated to the Irish Cancer Society. *Rebel Prods* is the first overall study of the role of Protestant radical nationalists in planning, and participating in, the Easter rebellion and reveals that a far larger number were involved than previously known. Rejecting the unionism of their

communities, Protestant nationalists were radicalised in similar ways to their Catholic counterparts before 1916, through kinship and friendship networks and the Gaelic League, and held important roles in the IRB, the Irish Citizen Army and Cumann na mBan. To avail of this final offer and secure one of the last remaining books of the print run, go to: <https://store.ireland.anglican.org/store/product/120/rebel-prods-the-forgotten-story-of>

+++ Post in Continuing Ministerial Education and Lay Training - Applications are sought from suitably qualified persons for this full-time position with the Church of Ireland Theological Institute in Dublin. The Theological Institute, which is responsible for ministerial formation and lay training in the Church of Ireland, is seeking to expand its delivery in the areas of Continuing Ministerial Education and Lay Training. The ideal candidate will be rooted in the worlds of ministry and theological training, be a skilled organiser and have a passion for equipping the Church. This is a unique opportunity for candidates with the right blend of vision, experience and competence to play a key role in the transformation of a significant part of Church life. Details and application form available at

www.ireland.anglican.org/vacancies. Closing date for applications: Thursday 2 February 2017.
www.theologicalinstitute.ie

+++ Director for Scripture Union NI - The General Director will head up the Scripture Union Movement in Northern Ireland. We are looking for a leader with wisdom, vision and a passion for Biblical Engagement with children and young people. Are you someone who could:

- Bring inspirational leadership to staff and volunteers?
- Develop and deliver effective strategy?
- Be passionate about helping children, young people and adults engage with the Bible?
- Understand the challenges of leading the movement given the church, educational and societal contexts of Northern Ireland?

Contact [Joanne Coulter](#) for a job description and application form. A copy of the [job description](#) is available online. Closing date for receipt of all applications is Thursday 9th February at 12 noon. This post was previously advertised. All applicants should be in full agreement with the [Aims, Beliefs and Working Principles](#) of Scripture Union.

+++ Nigerian Christians face turbulence, persecution and wickedness - The Archbishop of Jos in the Anglican Church of Nigeria has spoken about how Christians are finding refuge in God “in the face of turbulence, persecution and wickedness” in the north of the country. Archbishop Benjamin Kwashi made the comments at the opening service at the annual retreat of Anglican bishops in the province, which is being held at St Peters Chapel at the IBRU International Ecumenical Centre in Agbarha-Otor. He said that the “forces of evil are still at work but Jesus has already defeated powers of hell, of darkness of wickedness and of evil.” Archbishop Benjamin asked the church to “intensify their prayers” for churches in the northern part of Nigeria. Persecution is biting very hard, he said, adding that “the devil has failed because God cannot be defeated.”

+++ US Diocese acquires solar farm -The diocese of Vermont in the US-based Episcopal Church has acquired a \$1 million (USD, approximately £825,763 GBP) solar array farm at its headquarters in Rock Point, Burlington. The 35-tracker 147 kW solar array was installed five years ago by AllEarth Renewables and was acquired by the diocese for \$269,700. It will provide more-than-enough energy to power the

diocese's 146-acre facility at Rock Point, which in addition to the diocesan offices, includes the Rock Point School, the Bishop Booth Conference Centre, and the bishop's house. Additional electricity generated by the farm will provide an annual estimated income of \$40,000.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

If elderly soldiers are in the dock, what about elderly IRA?

News Letter

What an extraordinary few days it has been for bail policy in Northern Ireland.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/if-elderly-soldiers-are-in-the-dock-so-must-be-elderly-ira-men-1-7767031>

DUP minister Paul Givan reverses cuts to Irish language bursary

Irish News

The DUP's Communities Minister has said he has found the money to keep an Irish language bursary open, weeks after a decision was made to cut funding

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/2017/01/12/news/paul-givan-reverses-cuts-to-irish-language-scheme-882006/>

If Hope and history rhymed for Arlene Forster but she didn't hear them

Irish Times

Eamonn Mallie writes

<http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/eamonn-mallie-hope-and-history-rhymed-for-arlene-foster-but-she-did-not-hear-them-1.2934254>?

A secular State is best for religious and atheist citizens

Irish Times

Michael Nugent of Atheist Ireland writes...It funds

Church of Ireland schools that insist that Evangelical parents must prove their Church is genuine before their child can attend school.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/a-secular-state-is-best-for-religious-and-atheist-citizens-1.2930240>

FT/Business Green/Professional Pensions/Responsible Investor/Pensions Age

Coverage of the Transition Pathway Initiative, co-chaired by the Church of England's National Investing Bodies, which was launched yesterday (see above). The Initiative brings together asset owners and asset managers to assess the progress companies are making towards reducing their carbon emissions. Adam Matthews, Head of Engagement for the Church Commissioners and Church of England Pensions

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Board is quoted. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change also carries a [news report](#) on its website.

<https://www.ft.com/content/4a3d7d04-d750-11e6-944b-e7eb37a6aa8e>

<http://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/3002275/church-of-england-unveils-low-carbon-investment-tracker>

<http://www.professionalpensions.com/professional-pensions/news/3002342/pension-funds-join-forces-in-major-climate-change-initiative>

<https://www.responsible-investor.com>

<http://www.pensionsage.com/pa/Pensions-funds-and-asset-managers-join-to-develop-climate-change-initiative.php>

BBC

Reports the committee stage of the Higher Education and Research Bill in the House of Lords (Scroll down). The Bishop of Birmingham introduced an amendment on behalf of the Bishop of Portsmouth, on "the need to maintain diversity of provision". This includes "providers of a denominational character". He told the House "there are over 100,000 students enrolled across the 16 Cathedrals Group institutions" -

universities and university colleges with Church foundations.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/uk-politics-parliaments-38577267>

ITV

Reports that a York church, St James the Deacon, opened its doors to give people the opportunity for quiet prayer and reflection following the death of seven-year-old Katie Rough, who died on Monday after being found with life-threatening injuries in the Woodthorpe area of York.

<http://www.itv.com/news/calendar/2017-01-11/york-church-to-open-its-doors-following-death-of-young-girl/>

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