



# CNI

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## **Churches Urged To Keep Taking Action Against Human Trafficking - ICC**

The Irish Council of Churches (ICC) yesterday gathered for its 92nd Annual Meeting. As an outworking of the ICC's commitment to enabling Churches to understand each other, work together and connect in Christ, the Meeting took place in a Salvation Army church. On a day which brought together over 100 delegates from leadership, senior clergy and lay people from across the island of Ireland, Major Anne Read, Anti-trafficking Response Coordinator for the Salvation Army, gave a keynote address focussing attention on the challenge of modern-day slavery – human trafficking.

Major Read spoke powerfully about the 'dehumanisation of people today across the world and in our own communities in the UK and Ireland'. She reminded delegates that human-trafficking involves 'tricking vulnerable people across borders and within countries through

physical and verbal threat, sexual and labour exploitation and domestic servitude’ and the numbers are constantly growing.

She encouraged Churches and partner organisations across society to reach out to victims on the margins in order to eliminate this offensive commodification of people. She said that ‘God’s big plan is the restoration of humankind into His image and likeness so that all may be fully human people of God.’

On the day that the Modern Slavery Bill became law in the United Kingdom, Major Read called for an audacious ambition: simply ‘Stop the Traffic’.

Major Read’s keynote was supplemented by dialogues on the social outreach of the Salvation Army, including Homelessness, Dementia, Care for the Elderly and Specialist Family Care.

At the close of the Meeting, ICC President Revd Dr Donald Watts stated that Major Read, in her remarks, took us to some of the darkest, deepest and most upsetting areas of human life. However, he also noted but that she and the other Salvation Army centres we had seen throughout the day presented to us in such a

way that delegates would leave with a great deal of hope as we enter into Easter week.

## **Irish Churches' Peace Project rebuilding trust and overcoming obstacles - church leaders**

At the international conference of the Irish Churches' Peace Project in the Hilton Belfast Templepatrick, the leaders of the participating churches issued the following statement:

“Against the backdrop of continuing political instability, the experience of the Irish Churches' Peace Project (ICPP) highlights the contribution of local leadership in rebuilding trust and overcoming remaining obstacles to peace in our society. Notwithstanding the considerable achievements of the peace process, seventeen years on from the Good Friday Agreement there is still significant untapped potential for the development of new relationships in local communities across Northern Ireland and the border region. We welcome the commitment of the European Union to further peace funding, as advocated by the Northern Ireland Executive and the Irish Government.

Our pastoral experience makes us acutely aware that we cannot afford to be complacent about the enduring impact of division in our society, which manifests in multiple, often inter-connected, forms of exclusion. The threat to social cohesion arising from growing socio-economic inequality is a particular concern, notably in its implications for the younger generations. As the ICPP enters the final phase of its work we will be reflecting together on how we can continue to build on the new relationships that have been established to facilitate a truly inclusive dialogue about the kind of future we want for our local communities.

We have been greatly encouraged by the enthusiasm and openness local churches have brought to this project, building on existing models of good practice in partnership with statutory agencies, the Community and Voluntary sector and political leaders. With funding for peace-building work increasingly scarce, the time and energy of volunteers can make a crucial difference. We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of all those who have taken up the challenge of the Irish Churches' Peace Project. The work of peace is central to the Christian call to love of neighbour and as Christians we have a particular responsibility to be agents of reconciliation in our

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communities, seeking to bring a message of hope and healing to those who are suffering.”

The Church leaders participating at the ‘Faithful Peacebuilding’ conference were - Archbishop Richard Clarke, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh, Bishop Donal McKeown (representing Archbishop Eamon Martin), Catholic Bishop of Derry and chair of the Irish Churches’ Peace Project, Rev Peter Murray, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, Rt Rev Dr Michael Barry, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and Rev Dr Donald Watts, President of the Irish Council of Churches.

Along with the Church leaders there were 150 participants in attendance from across Northern Ireland who are currently taking part in the work of the Irish Churches’ Peace Project.

The Irish Churches’ Peace Project, launched in 2013, is an initiative of the island’s four largest churches: Catholic, Presbyterian, Church of Ireland, Methodist; and the Irish Council of Churches. The Irish Council of Churches vision is to build a peaceful and stable society, with a better and shared future. The Irish Churches’ Peace Project seeks to promote reconciliation in our communities through the Churches working

together for the transformation of Northern Ireland and the border region.

The ICPP is a £1.3m programme funded through the EU's PEACE III Programme which is managed by the Special EU Programmes Body. Additional funding is being provided by the Northern Ireland Executive through the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister and by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government of the Government of Ireland. The project will run until June 2015.

## **Rowan Williams to give Belfast lecture on Fundamentalism, Christian and non Christian**

Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury 2001 – 2012 and current Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, will give a lecture in Saint George's Parish Church, High Street, Belfast on Friday 24 April at 7.30 pm.

Dr Williams has said, "We hear a great deal about fundamentalism these days. The word is often used just to mean extreme religious conservatism; but it is a more complex idea, and this lecture will attempt to discuss something of its history within Christian thinking, and whether

it can apply outside this framework. I'll be suggesting that one of the strange things about this apparently ultra-conservative trend is that its origins are in a thoroughly modern frame of thought. We may need to think of the opposite of fundamentalism not as 'modernism' or 'liberalism' or 'moderate' faith, but as various forms of thoughtful traditionalism." (Dr Rowan Williams)

Chaired by Dr Bert Tosh, former senior producer of religious broadcasting, BBC NI. Tickets available at the door: £5 minimum donation. Please arrive early to be sure of a seat.

## **Collegium, Galway's newest choir, performs concert tomorrow**

The project chamber choir Collegium, regrouped under conductor Mark Duley, will perform its new programme 'Juxta Crucem: Music for Good Friday' in St Patrick's Church, Newport, on Sunday, March 29, at 6pm.

This is an opportunity to pause and collect your thoughts whilst listening to pieces which were written in very different times, namely in the 16th and 20th centuries, including Palestrina's Stabat

Mater, excerpts from Victoria's Tenebrae Responsories, as well as works by Francis Poulenc and Orlandus Lassus.

Collegium is Galway's newest choir, and the latest ensemble to be added to the panoply of choirs that form St Nicholas Schola Cantorum – bringing the total number to five. Collegium takes its title from the ancient designation of the church, dating back to 1486, and is made up of Galway's finest choral singers. Most members sing in one of the Schola's other choirs and many also sing in other Galway choral ensembles. Membership is by invitation or audition.

The choir is project-based, in that it doesn't meet regularly for weekly rehearsal but comes together for a short period of intensive rehearsals leading up to a concert performance.

Conductor Mark Duley was born in Hawkes Bay, New Zealand, and studied at Auckland University, the North German Organ Academy and Amsterdam's Sweelinck Conservatorium, where he was an organ pupil of Jacques van Oortmerssen. He came to Ireland in 1992 and



has held several major posts in the country, including organist and director of music at Christ Church Cathedral Dublin, chorus master to the RTÉ Philharmonic Choir and artistic director of the Irish Baroque Orchestra.

As conductor and organist he has appeared with most of the major Irish ensembles, including RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, the National Chamber Choir, the Irish Baroque Orchestra, Opera Theatre Company, Orchestra of St Cecilia, and his own chamber choir Resurgam.

Tickets (€12) plus concessions available at the door. The concert will commence at 6pm sharp, so the audience is asked to be seated by 5.45pm at the latest.

## **Connor MU Diocesan Festival Service marks 70th anniversary**

Connor Mothers' Union's Diocesan Festival Service in St Anne's Cathedral on Sunday March 22 marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of MU in the diocese. The Dioceses of Connor and of Down and Dromore separated in 1945, and Connor MU became a separate organisation in its own right.



***Diocesan President Valerie Ash, third from left, with former Presidents, from left: Moira Thom, Sheila Hughes, Roberta McKelvey, Norma Bell, and Paddy Wallace.***

Maintaining the link between past and present, the current Diocesan President, Valerie Ash, read the Old Testament lesson and Sheila Hughes, who was President from 1978-1983, read the New Testament lesson.

The intercessions were led by Rae Scott, North Connor Area Chair, and Roslyn Graham, Connor Young Members' Representative.

The preacher at the Festival Service was the Very Rev Raymond Ferguson, MU All-Ireland Chaplain, who emphasised the importance of such a service in any diocese. It was, he said, 'an important rallying occasion ... important for diocesan structures and also for the branches which undergird those structures ... important for MU members who can be relied upon to rally to the banner and answer the call.'

Referring to the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Dean Ferguson gave thanks for 'those who guided and shaped the changes 70 years ago ... the faithful, unsung members who have carried on the work in parishes right down to the present day [and] all who have handed the baton on to us.'

## **Armagh archbishops joint Holy Week message**

+Eamon Martin, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Armagh, and +Richard Clarke, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh have issued the following joint message -

We join in wishing you all, wherever you may be, a blessed Holy Week and a joyful Eastertide.

We invite you to enter with real spiritual

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seriousness into the powerful story of Holy Week so that you can experience personally and profoundly the joy and happiness of Easter.

Easter Day is far more than a happy ending to the sad tale of Good Friday. Rather it is the celebration of the ultimate victory of God over all that damages, terrifies and destroys us.

On Good Friday it seemed that the worst that the world can do was victorious over the best that there can ever be. The crucifixion was the rejection of all that it is to be truly human. It was the refusal to believe that only in Christ can men and women find their truest identity and fullest humanity. It was the attack of darkness on the reality of a total Love.

All around us today, we still see powerful signs of that same darkness in our world. It is found in the horrors of cruel and vicious inhumanity to those who are seen as *other*; in the day to day debasement of the dignity of those who are unable to defend themselves; in physical violence, murder, war and persecution. It issues in the extreme selfishness of some individual lives that have fallen away catastrophically from any generosity and forgiveness.

But in the compassionate cry of abandonment from the cross, Good Friday reminds us that God is to be found not among those who can destroy others most effectively, but rather totally with those who are at the receiving end of the envy, spite and viciousness of others.

Saint Paul describes the resurrection of Christ as the “first fruits” – the evidence that there will be a harvest of hope, and a final victory of love over hatred, injustice and futility.

May we together follow trustfully with Jesus Christ on the way to the Cross, and share fully with him in the joy of his resurrection. Christ is risen. He is risen indeed, Alleluia!

## **Radio Ulster School Choir Of The Year Finalists**

Pond Park Primary School, Lisburn is one of the schools to win a place in the final of the BBC Radio Ulster School Choir Of The Year.

They impressed the judging panel at the Whitla Hall , made up of Richard Yarr, Senior Producer Classical Music, BBC Radio Ulster, Ciaran Scullion, Head of Music, Arts Council for Northern Ireland and Dominic Peckham,

orchestral and choral conductor and will compete in the junior category.

The choir will now compete against 64 others, in the live final at the Ulster Hall which takes place on Sunday April 26.

The BBC Radio Ulster School Choir of the Year series which is part of the BBC Music NI event is presented by John Toal and Kerry McLean, and the series is recorded at six venues across Northern Ireland.

The schools taking part were Methodist College, Belfast, Ballyhenry Primary School, Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus Model Primary School, Carrickfergus, Fairview Primary School, Ballyclare, Our Lady's Girls Primary School, Belfast, Pond Park Primary, Lisburn and St Joseph's Primary School, Antrim.

In the Senior category, the following schools will be competing for a place in the grand final:  
Royal Belfast Academical Institution;  
Carrickfergus Grammar; Grosvenor Grammar School, Belfast; Methodist College, Belfast and St Dominic's Grammar School.

The competition is produced in association with the Ulster Youth Choir, and supported by the Arts Council for NI.

## **Holy Week lectures at Canterbury Cathedral**

The Archbishop of Canterbury will reflect on prayer, reconciliation and evangelism in three lectures at Canterbury Cathedral during Holy Week.

The lectures, on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evening next week, will mirror Archbishop Justin Welby's [three priorities](#) for his ministry.

The first lecture, 'The Risk of Prayer', will focus on the renewal of prayer and the Religious (monastic) life, which the Archbishop has described as having always been a vital precondition for the Church's renewal throughout history.

In the second, 'The Cost of Reconciliation', he will explore the Gospel call for all Christians to be peacemakers, and consider the profound sacrifices involved in loving others despite deeply-held differences.

In the final lecture, 'The Celebration of Witness', the Archbishop will offer his vision for every Christian to be inspired and enabled to share their faith in Jesus through words and actions.

All are welcome to attend the free lectures, which will take place in the Cathedral's Nave and be followed by a service of music, scripture and prayer sung by the Cathedral Choir. The lectures begin at 7.30pm each evening.

Videos of the lectures will be available from Easter Sunday on the [Diocese of Canterbury website](#).

For more information, [visit the Canterbury Cathedral website](#).

## **Open Day at The Hub at Queen's University**

The Hub – the Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplaincy at Queen's University, Belfast, is holding an open day on Saturday April 18 from 12-3pm.

This will be of interest to anyone considering applying to live in the chaplaincy for the 2015/16 year.





There will be a chance to see around the residential houses, have a cup of tea or coffee in the Hub Café, and get the answers to any questions you may have.

Situated in the heart of Queens University campus The Hub has accommodation for up to 50 residents across the houses owned by the Church of Ireland and Methodist Churches.

From mid-September to early June these rooms are occupied by University Students. The Hub places a high value on the sense of community in living together, sharing meals, social activities, and a wide range of activities centred on exploring the Christian faith together. Over the years students from the centre have travelled far and wide together on Easter and Summer

outreach teams, whilst during each year many of the activities are student led.

Each house has a House Warden whose role it is to try and ensure that everyone gets along, pays the cooking bills, provides food that is edible, and clears up afterwards!

The Student Committee is elected by the students in residence to plan social events for students in residence and non-residential students alike.

Many students spend at least two years of their time at University living in the centre,

Further details, and a form which should in before attending the open day, are available on [The Hub website](#).

## **Rector of Holywood to return to Cornwall**

The Revd Roger Elks, Rector of Holywood, will conclude his ministry there on 4 May after 14 fulfilling years in Northern Ireland. Roger was appointed to Holywood in 2001 after serving as a vicar in Cornwall.

He, his wife Liz and their youngest daughter Sarah will be moving back to Cornwall where he plans to take a break from parochial ministry and assist Liz in her speech therapy training.

## **St Patrick's, Broughshane, service on BBC Radio Ulster**

The Palm Sunday service in St Patrick's Parish Church, Broughshane, will be broadcast live on BBC Radio Ulster at 10.15am on March 29.

## **Important weekend of celebrations by Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigades**

Last weekend (20–22 March) was a hugely important one for the Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade. For the past year the Brigade has been preparing to commemorate those from within its ranks who bravely fought for King and Country during the Great War.

On Friday evening, the Mayor of Lisburn, Andrew Ewing, hosted a Presentation and Book Launch at the Island Civic Centre. Four lads, one from

each of the Brigade's four sections, were presented with their prizes as winners of a Commemorative War Badge Design Competition – Harry Smyton (The Martins) from Seagoe , Archie Clayton (Y Team) from Dobbin, Calvin Patterson (JTC) and Ward Patterson (Seniors) from Ballinderry.



***Guests at the Brigade's Annual Service – The Revd Canon Rajkumas Santharaj, Dean Robert Townley, CLCGB Governor, Liz Butterfield, Chief Executive Officer, Audrey Simm, Mayor of Craigavon, Colin McCusker, and his family, Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, Deputy Governor, Darryl Hewitt and Rector of Seagoe Parish, Revd Canon Terence Cadden.***

Calvin Patterson's entry was chosen as the overall winner and his design has been made into a woven badge that will be worn on uniform until 2018.

A new book, 'Ready and Willing – Irish Church Lads in the Great War', written by Johnny Conn, a former Captain of the Carnmoney Parish Company, was presented to the Mayor by Dean Robert Townley. The purpose of the book is to create a permanent record of the remarkable contribution made to the Great War by Irish Church Lads. Details of how to obtain 'Ready and Willing' can be viewed on the CLCGB Ulster Regiment website.

On Saturday night an Anniversary Dinner was held in the Brownlow Hotel, Lurgan. Several Anniversaries were being celebrated – the Ulster Regiment, the 2nd Battalion and the Seagoe Girls Company were all marking their 70th Birthdays. The Archbishop of Armagh was Guest of Honour; also in attendance from England were the CLCGB Governor, Liz Butterfield, the Brigade's CEO, Audrey Simm, and The Hon. Treasurer, John Smith.

The highlight of the weekend was the Annual Parade when hundreds of lads and girls marched to Seagoe Parish Church for a Service

led by the Rector, Canon Terence Cadden. This was the biggest parade for many years and during the Service a new War Memorial Banner was dedicated by the Archbishop, The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke. The Mayor of Craigavon, Colin McCusker, and his family were in attendance.

## **Ireland's Vatican ambassador finds new Roman home**

Ireland's renewed relationship with the Vatican took another important step forward last week with the formal establishment of the new residence of the ambassador to the Holy See.

Irish Catholic - A St Patrick's Day reception, attended by the Vatican foreign minister Archbishop Paul Gallagher, was one of the first official engagements in the new residence.

Ambassador Emma Madigan, who presented her credentials to Pope Francis in November, has been charged with re-establishing upgraded Ireland-Holy See relations after the Government reversed a controversial decision not to appoint a resident ambassador to the Vatican.

The new residence, which the ambassador will use to host talks and engagements with senior officials of the Roman Curia and other diplomatic occasions, is situated just across the Tiber river from the Vatican in the shadows of the iconic Pantheon.

The Irish Catholic understands that Department of Foreign Affairs officials were particularly keen to have a site that was a short distance from the major offices of the Roman Curia.

The new residence is located in the Piazza Rondanini, at the heart of Rome's centro storico district and is considerable in size meaning it will be an ideal location for lectures and other cultural events for the wider diplomatic community.

Since her arrival in Rome almost six months ago, Ambassador Madigan has prioritised areas of mutual concern between Ireland and the Holy See including development, human trafficking and peacemaking in troubled parts of the globe. Minister Simon Coveney was the first cabinet member to visit the new residence in the context of celebrations in the eternal city to mark St Patrick's Day.

The Holy See currently has diplomatic relations with 180 sovereign states. Embassies are not

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situated within Vatican City, but at various locations throughout Rome.