



SPARKS are flying in Garvagh Parish cross-community programme - See News briefs

Volunteers needed for World War One art installation in Dublin

Saint Patrick's Cathedral has announced plans for an art installation to coincide with the centenary of the end of World War One. It will feature 30,000 messages which have

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been left at the Tree of Remembrance by visitors to the Cathedral since July 2014. These messages will be hung from the Cathedral's ceiling and will be on display for 2 weeks at the start of November 2018. Each leaf symbolises one Irish man or woman who was killed during World War One. The Cathedral is hoping to recruit volunteers to help with the creation of this new installation.

Background

On the 28 July, 2014, The Tree of Remembrance was added to Saint Patrick's Cathedral. The date coincided with the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War One which was one of the most destructive wars in Irish history. The Tree was inspired by the barren and desolate battle fields of World War One. Despite being inspired by World War One it was designed to be used as an interactive platform for personal remembrance. Visitors to the Cathedral are invited to leave a message on or near the tree for someone who has been affected by conflict.

These messages range in content; some are written in memory of those killed in wars in the past while others reflect upon conflict occurring in our world today. The messages are written in a variety of different languages and are written by visitors from all over the world. The messages are written on pieces of card in the shape of a leaf. The leaves which are added symbolise the return of life and hope to an otherwise barren and bleak tree.

By November 2018 the Cathedral predicts that it will have received around 220,000 leaves. By chance, this figures matches the number of Irish men and women, who most historians agree, fought in World War One (July 1914–



The Tree of Remembrance in St Patrick's Cathedral.

November 1918). As the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One approaches the Cathedral is preparing events to mark this important occasion.

Leaves of Remembrance project

From now until November 2018 Saint Patrick's Cathedral will prepare a new temporary art installation to be exhibited in the Cathedral to mark the centenary of the end of World War One. The installation will use messages which have been left at the Tree of Remembrance as the centrepiece for this response. These messages, which are in the shape of leaves, will be hung from the ceiling of the Cathedral. They will be installed in late October/ early November and remain in situ for a week either side of Remembrance/ Armistice Sunday (11th November).

220,000 leaves will be mounted and displayed throughout the building. These leaves symbolise the men and women who directly participated in World War One. 30,000 of these

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leaves will be hung from the ceiling of the Cathedral on transparent wire symbolising the men and women who never returned home from this war.

Between July and November 2018 the Education Department will lead the development of this installation. 30,000 leaves will be strung with transparent wire so that they can be hung within the Cathedral. This work will be relatively straight forward to carry out but extremely time consuming. It has been estimated that approximately 300 hours worth of work will be required to carry out this piece of the project.

The Education Department is asking for support in order to deliver this project. Volunteers will meet on one afternoon per week, between 14.00 and 16.30 to work on stringing these leaves with transparent wire. No prior experience/knowledge is required but this activity may suit those who enjoy knitting, needlework, sewing or other related activities. The Cathedral will provide some refreshment each evening along with an opportunity to meet new people and engage in an exciting project. Simply contact Andrew or Ciara in the education department on 01-4539472 or email education@stpatickscathedral.ie to get involved! All welcome!

Pope yet to confirm he will meet abuse survivors, says Archbishop

The Catholic Archbishop of Dublin Dr Diarmuid Martin has said “time is very tight” for [Pope Francis](#) to meet survivors of church abuse during his visit to [Ireland](#).

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The Irish Times reports, Dr Martin said he was pushing the [Vatican](#) to have the pope meet a cross-section of survivors of industrial schools, Magdalene laundries, mother and baby homes and those who suffered from clerical sex abuse.

However, he said Pope Francis will spend only 36 hours in Ireland.

When asked what plans the pope has to deal with the issue of the clerical sex abuse, he responded: “He will obviously speak about various forms of abuse not just clerical abuse, the abuse in the institutions, the laundries and the mother and baby homes. It would be great to meet some of the victims or survivors from that group, but the time is very tight.”

Speaking after launching an exhibition at the OPW centre in the [Phoenix Park](#) on the previous Papal visit in 1979, [Archbishop Martin](#) said he had no definitive response from the Vatican as to whether or not Pope Francis would meet abuse survivors.

The Archbishop expressed optimism that the pope would address the issue when he visited Ireland on August 25th and 26th. Clerical abuse survivor Colm O’Gorman described the pope’s visit as “particularly galling” for people like him.

More than 5,500 UK churches convert to renewable energy

As temperatures soar around the world raising concerns about climate change, more than 5,500 churches have put

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their faith in clean energy – with church leaders encouraging more to follow suit.

Fifteen Anglican cathedrals including Salisbury, Bristol, Sheffield and York Minster are among the buildings now using 100% green electricity tariffs.

The places of worship that have seen the light of renewables come from across the denominational spectrum and include the Church of England as well as Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Quaker and Salvation Army congregations.

Based on the average annual church electricity bill of £1000, a figure provided by national church buying group 2buy2, British churches have diverted more than five million pounds from fossil fuels to clean energy providers.

The Bishop of Salisbury, Nicholas Holtam, the Church of England's lead bishop on the environment, was delighted that so many churches had embraced renewable energy.

He said: "Climate change is one of the great moral challenges of our time and so it's fantastic to see churches doing their bit to ensure they reduce their impact on the environment. They are also giving a boost to clean energy which is essential to reduce harmful carbon emissions. "It's very encouraging to see more churches walking the walk and making concrete steps to ensure our common home is greener and cleaner, thanks in part to the Church's shared energy basket 'Parish Buying' now sourcing 100% renewable energy. Hopefully the number continues to grow.

“Climate change is an enormous injustice and is hurting the poor first and worst. Switching to responsible sources of electricity may seem like a small thing on its own, but when joined together it can make a real difference.”

The number of Cathedrals now running on 100% renewable electricity is thanks to the Church of England’s procurement group Parish Buying turning their bulk electricity basket to 100% renewables.

Other churches have turned to renewable electricity through the [Big Church Switch campaign](#), a partnership between Christian Aid, Tearfund and the Church of England’s Environment Programme. Parishes can sign up to the scheme run by 2buy2 which then pools the combined buying power to negotiate the cheapest possible tariff. Often the renewable energy tariff is cheaper than the fossil fuel powered one they were on before.

Former Archbishop of Canterbury and Chair of Christian Aid, Dr Rowan Williams, said: “The Church of England recently took a positive step in agreeing to sell its shares in fossil fuel companies not on track to meet the aims of the Paris climate agreement. Churches are part of a global network and so are often very aware of the plight of our brothers and sisters suffering from droughts, floods and extreme weather around the world.

“The UK Government also claims to care for people living in poverty around the world which is why it would be good to see it commit to setting a net zero emissions target for 2050. That would be in line with the Paris Agreement and

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ensure Britain remains a green and pleasant land at home and a climate leader abroad.”



Irish Catholic Leaders, Pro-Lifers not backing down following amendment repeal, proposed abortion law

Catholic leaders and hospitals in Ireland are refusing to comply with the government in light of the nation's vote earlier this year repealing their constitutional amendment that barred abortion nationwide.

In May, Irish voters scrapped the 8th amendment of their national constitution, removing protections for the unborn

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and already the Irish government is looking to make institutions that object to doing abortion procedures on moral grounds perform them anyway.

Irish Minister of Health Simon Harris [said last week](#) that every publicly-funded health service provider in the island nation must offer "women's health services" such as abortion and that "conscientious objections is for individuals, not institutions." Shortly after the repeal referendum passed, Ireland began considering proposals that would allow abortion at 12 weeks for any reason and up to the six-month mark for a broad range of reasons by the end of 2018.

Yet pro-life advocates and religious leaders are resisting the government's moves.

"Minister Harris said that state funded hospitals are expected to follow the law. Of course they are but at the same time there is no reason why the law should not contemplate conscientious objection for individuals and institutions, as it happens in other countries," Angelo Bottone of the pro-life [Iona Institute](#) said on its website last week.

If the government does not allow conscience rights, a Catholic hospital might have to refuse public funding and reduce its activities, he argued, and that diminishes their ability to provide other needed medical services.

Writing in Irish News on Tuesday, Father Patrick McCafferty of Belfast explained in an [editorial](#) that faithful Catholics "will make no compromise on the issue of abortion with the spirit of this evil age."

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"The Church faithfully upholds an exacting standard towards which God calls human beings to aspire. The same God is loving, patient and merciful with human beings when they sin and when they fail."

That those standards are viewed unfavorably by the public does not make them less true, he explained.

"Abortion is a matter of life or death. To intentionally terminate the most defenceless among us, is indicative of what is at the heart of human society, which must be rejected and opposed at every turn."

"The hostility and mockery of the world holds no surprises for those who strive to be faithful to Jesus Christ and His Church. We will not draw back in any way from maintaining the standards of His Gospel," he said.

Belfast, Northern Ireland, which is part of the United Kingdom, but British abortion law [does not apply there](#) because of the 1967 Abortion Act — legislation that legalized abortion access across the U.K. yet was never enforced in Northern Ireland.

Meanwhile, the Irish bishops have put forward a new "Code of Ethical Standards for Healthcare" document that asserts Catholic hospitals cannot perform abortions. The code applies to up to 20 hospitals connected to religious orders, according to the [Catholic Herald](#).

Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar has said that religious bodies are "entitled to come up with their own ethical guidelines but the ones that should be followed in publicly funded hospitals are those of the medical council and that is what I would very much expect to happen."

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"My view is that we should separate the Church and state; that the Church should no longer be at the centre of public life, but it shouldn't be excluded from it either," he said.

Later this month, the World Meeting of the Families will occur in Dublin, a gathering at which Pope Francis is slated to attend. Talk of protecting unborn life and the formation of councils regarding how to do that is expected to take place. Christian Post report, August 1.

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+++Castlerock Parish Hall damaged - Damage has been caused to the Church of Ireland hall, Main Street Castlerock on the 1st August 2018 between the hours of 6 & 7pm. A police spokesperson said "Three young males, approximately 16 to 17 years, were observed on bicycles in the area around this time. The door of an outbuilding to the rear of the Hall was damaged and contents were taken from the building to make what would appear to be bicycle ramps."

+++Festival of Flowers in Riverstown - If you are planning a summer outing a warm welcome is extended to a Festival of Flowers and Memorabilia to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Taunagh Parish Church, Riverstown, Co Sligo, which runs from August 17-19.

+++SPARKS fly in Garvagh - Garvagh's annual cross-community SPARK Week is in full swing, and once again this year the organisers of the week-long programme have

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had to cap the number of participants because the scheme has proved so popular.

“We can scarcely keep up with demand,” said the Rector of Errigal and Desertoghill, Rev Canon Paul Whittaker, whose brainchild the programme is. “This is our sixth year and every year since we started, our SPARK Week has grown in popularity. 2018 has been no exception. We’ve had far more applications than we could cope with, so we’ve had to limit the number of young people registered to take part to 40. Sadly that means that some young people have been disappointed.”

SPARK (Servants Pursuing a Radical Kingdom) is part-funded by the Church of Ireland Priorities Fund and supported by businesses in the Garvagh area. It’s based at St Paul’s Church of Ireland and brings young people from across the community together to build new friendships and help their local communities in Garvagh and Glenuillin.

We are radiating Christ’s love. Hopefully, as a result of this, many more people will come to experience the transforming power of Jesus Christ.

“The event is cross-community,” Canon Whittaker said, “and we look forward to seeing our young people building relationships with those of different faith backgrounds in Garvagh and the surrounding area. Although the event is very much Christian-focused, we’re delighted to have two Muslim teenagers taking part this year. That, for me, is a measure of the impact SPARK’s having in Garvagh, and of how the programme is appreciated right across our community.”

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The week-long event begins each day with breakfast in the parish hall at 10am. Afterwards, the young people walk to the adjoining church for worship and teaching. “Our theme this year is on the Apostle Peter,” Canon Whittaker says, “and how he followed Jesus. After church, we return to the hall for arts and crafts. We have lunch. Then we go out into the community, doing litter-picks, painting fences and sheds, and weeding and cleaning public areas around the village. There’s an evening fun programme on the Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and we’ll finish with a Thanksgiving Service on Sunday morning.

“Our Diocesan vision in Derry and Raphoe is ‘Transforming community, radiating Christ’. SPARK is our way of sharing in that mission. We are transforming. We are radiating Christ’s love. Hopefully, as a result of this, many more people will come to experience the transforming power of Jesus Christ.”



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