



**Albert McIntyre from Mount Merrion Parish Church**

**Belfast Civic award to 81 year old church volunteer**

Congratulations to 81 year old Albert McIntyre from Mount Merrion Parish Church who recently won the Marie Matthews Participation Category at the Age Friendly Belfast Older Volunteer Awards 2017.

This is the fifth year of the awards and there were 153 nominations from 43 different organisations. The Marie Matthews Participation Award aims to recognise a volunteer who embodies the true spirit of volunteering, either through volunteering for a number of groups or through actively encouraging others to be involved.

Albert was nominated by his rector, Revd Adrian Green, for his ceaseless and energetic work each week with infants, children and teens, adults, and people of his age and older. Albert was delighted to be nominated and never expected to win, hence his slightly shocked expression as he received his award from the Lord Mayor of Belfast Cllr Nuala McAllister and Deputy Mayor Cllr Sonia Copeland. The award ceremony was on 12 December in Belfast City Hall and Albert was accompanied by his daughter, Amanda, and son, Gary, both of whom are immensely proud of their dad's achievement.

Commenting on Albert's award his rector said, "Albert is a selfless individual who is always ready to help others, often putting himself out to do so. Whenever there is an event on, Albert can be found helping out; from greeting people, to washing cars, shifting furniture and tidying up. His 'can do' attitude is a positive example to those much younger in age and he is the sort of person who sees a need and then just gets on to fulfil it without bringing it to others' attention. I am delighted that Albert's hard work, over many years, has received the recognition it justly deserves."

## **Broadcast service on Sunday from St Columba's Church, Knock**

The baby lying in the manger is the focus of carols, cards and nativity plays – but are we missing something? The theme for the last Sunday in Advent is the hope this child offers for the future.

Sunday service comes from St Columba's Church, Knock, Belfast, and is led by the Rev Dr Janet Unsworth. The preacher will be the Rector, the Revd Canon John Auchmuty.

The music is led by the Chapel Choir of Methodist College, Belfast, directed by Ruth McCartney. The Organist is Dr Joe McKee.

BBC Radio 4 (at 8.10am) & BBC Radio Ulster (at 10.15am)

## **Launch of Archbishop Clarke's book, 'Shouldering the Lamb'**

A new book by the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, was launched last week. *Shouldering the Lamb: Reflections on an Icon* is published by Dominican Publications and was launched in St Mary's Priory in Tallaght Village on Wednesday December 13.

*Shouldering the Lamb* contains 11 meditations on the ancient figure of the shepherd carrying a lamb across his shoulders. Archbishop Clarke views this image from many angles and reflects on how any carrying of another in the loving service of God and humankind is an echo of the God who is Love.

The reflections are not just for the ordained, but will speak to the needs of anyone whose life includes an element of identifying with the fear



**Archbishop Richard Clarke speaking at the launch of his book 'Shouldering the Lamb'. Also pictured is Bernard Tracey OP, the publisher.**

or pain of others. This can never be from a safe distance and will involve occasions when the care-giver must accept being carried without succumbing to a sense of being, in any way, a burden.

Speaking at the launch, poet, playwright, novelist and radio producer Aidan Mathews, described the book as a meditation on the privilege and precariousness of priesthood. He said this privilege and precariousness were emphasised by the general culture which, "far from shouldering the shepherd, let alone the lamb, has been pretty well cold-shouldering

pastors and all their presumptions since well before the start of the third millennium”.

Mr Mathews said that the greatest peril for the “professional or career Christian” was to disguise the fragility of his or her faith. “Now I’m not suggesting that priests swap sins with their penitents, which was, in fact, the early practice of Francis Xavier, but when there’s a pregnant pause, a sort of caesura, between our home-grown feelings at the angle-poise in the study and our homiletic flow at the lectern in the church, we are doing what Bishop Synesius of Cyrene incorrectly boasted about to a correspondent in the fifth century: “In private, I philosophize”, he wrote. ‘In public, I mythologize.’ That is a hairline fracture in prayer and practice that can only fester,” he stated.

He concluded by quoting a letter he had received from a priest who said of his life of service: “I have worked in the gloom of people’s grief, moved about amid the noise and confusion of their conflict, and talked when I could make myself heard. I have eaten my bread salted with their tears, my fingernails dirty from the grime of our broken lives, and I have laughed and celebrated the arrival of every new-born infant come among us in splendid individual perfection. I have coaxed and encouraged the

fragile, loved the sight and the smell of them in all their idiosyncrasy, and considered myself blessed when they groaned in the night and cried out for help. The Lord Jesus was always there in the sweat and the muck and the fever of the struggle that we share.”

Archbishop Clarke explained that the origins of the book lay in a visit to a primary school when a child asked him how much his cross cost. The cross, which depicted the shepherd Christ with the lamb over his shoulder, was made of pewter and he had told the child that it was fairly cheap. “Afterwards I asked myself why I had said any cross is cheap... the symbol on the cross became more and more entrancing and enticing,” he recalled and later, when the Bishop of Connor asked him to lead a retreat for his younger clergy, he took it as his theme.

“It is not intended as a primer for clergy. It is intended to express that all of us in our own way are called to shoulder – shoulder others and the needs of others and at times to be shouldered,” Archbishop Clarke said. He thanked all who assisted in bringing the book to publication.

The publisher, Bernard Tracey OP, explained that part of the mission of the Irish Dominican Province was to facilitate the search for the

eternal truth. “We have a sense of calling to illuminate rather than to shine... It is great to have people of different traditions to join us in our exploration,” he said. He added that Archbishop Clarke saw poetry of a sensitive means of accessing the divine.

*Shouldering the Lamb* is published by Dominican Publications and costs €12. It is available through their website at [www.dominicanpublications.com/component/hikashop/product/113-shouldering-the-lamb](http://www.dominicanpublications.com/component/hikashop/product/113-shouldering-the-lamb)

## **Bishop of London appointment shows female Archbishop of Canterbury is 'possible'**

The appointment of a woman to become the next Bishop of London proves it is not unconceivable that a future Archbishop of Canterbury could be female, a campaign group claims.

Women and the Church were among numerous groups and Anglican leaders to congratulate the current Bishop of Crediton Rt Rev Sarah Mullally on news she shall succeed Rt Rev and Rt Hon



Richard Chartres KCVO, who retired earlier this year.

Spokesperson, Rev Jody Stowell told the Daily Telegraph: "Perhaps those who were thinking '[a woman will] never be an archbishop' are now thinking that all things are possible."

Speaking on Monday, Bishop Sarah admitted her appointment might be "difficult" news for conservative elements of the Church of England, but she pledges to be "respectful" of those opposed to female bishops for theological reasons.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Rev Justin Welby congratulated Bishop Sarah and praised "extraordinary experience and profound gifts".

The Archdeacon of London, Ven Luke Miller told Premier he and Bishop Sarah disagreed on the issue of female bishops but he pledged to work with the next Bishop of London.

"I have always taken the view that the sacramental ministry of women is not something possible for the Church of England [but] we have come to the conclusion in the Church that this is something we can hold together on."

Rev Stowell from Women and the Church went on to say: "This has been a very clear marker for the direction of travel of the Church in terms of wanting to have full gender equality."

## **Cardinal Nichols congratulates first female Bishop of London**

Cardinal Vincent Nichols has congratulated Rt Rev Sarah Mullally on her appointment as the Anglican Bishop of London, the first woman to hold the post in the see's history.

In statement issued after Downing Street announced the appointment yesterday, Cardinal Nichols offered his prayers and said he looked forward to their "partnership" in spreading the word of Christ to London.

"Today I congratulate the Rt Rev Sarah Mullally DBE on her appointment as the Bishop of London. I assure her of my prayers as she prepares to take up leadership in the thriving Diocese of London.

"I look forward to our partnership in making Christ known in this diverse and unsleeping city."

## **Bishop calls for Christmas Day online sales boycott**

Bishop of Chelmsford, Stephen Cottrell, says he would support a ban on online shopping on Christmas Day.

Major retailers such as John Lewis and Amazon are planning online Christmas sales for as early as Christmas day itself.

Bishop Stephen said only essential services should run on Christmas Day so people spend time with their families.

In The Mail on Sunday he said: “How you shut down the internet for a day I don’t know, but if anyone has an idea I would certainly back it in the House of Lords”

Christian CEO Trevor Single from the Family Matters Institute discussed Bishop Stephen’s comments on Premier and said: “At Christmas time it is a great time to get together with your family and build on that rather than individuals focusing on ourselves and on our phones. “Wouldn’t it be great if we could just switch our phones off for a little while?”

He gave some suggestions for how to spend time with family when it might be more tempting to retreat: “get people to put suggestions of what they’d like to do on a piece of paper and put it into a jam jar and get one of the party to draw that one piece out and everybody says ‘let’s go and do that’.”

## **Anti-Communist cardinal and Irish ‘Rosary Priest’ declared venerable**

Pope Francis advanced the sainthood causes of Holy Cross Father Patrick Peyton and St John Paul II’s mentor, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński.

The Pope approved the decrees recognising their heroic virtues during an audience on December 18 with Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes.

The Pope also recognised the miracles needed for the beatification of: Jesuit Father Tiburcio Arnaiz Munoz of Spain; Father Jean-Baptiste Fouque of France; and Sister Maria Carmen Rendiles Martinez of Venezuela. He also recognized the martyrdom of Father Teodoro Illera del Olmo, a member of the Congregation of St. Peter in Chains, and 15 companions, who



**Archbishop of Warsaw Cardinal Wyszyński (left), with Cardinal Wojtyła, soon to become Pope John Paul II, 1978**

were killed during the Spanish Civil War in 1936 and 1937.

Fr Peyton, known worldwide as “The Rosary Priest,” was a Catholic media pioneer in the 1940s, using radio and later television to produce popular programs featuring Hollywood stars and other celebrities to promote family prayer.

His ministry produced more than 600 radio and television programs and 10,000 broadcasts. The priest also conducted rosary crusades for



**Father Patrick Peyton, the Rosary Priest, with Pope John Paul II**

millions of people in dozens of countries. He had two especially famous mottos: “The family that

prays together stays together” and “A world at prayer is a world at peace.”

Fr Peyton emigrated from Ireland to the United States in 1928 when he was 19, with his heart set on becoming a millionaire after his dream of becoming a priest was thwarted when a seminary turned down his scholarship request.

He found a job as a sexton in the cathedral of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and he and his brother joined the seminary and were ordained in the Congregation of the Holy Cross in 1941.

Fr Peyton’s first assignment was as chaplain in Albany, New York, where he launched a project to promote praying the rosary and family life. He had a special devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary after attributing his recovery from tuberculosis to her intercession.

He founded Holy Cross Family Ministries, which includes Family Rosary, Family Theater Productions, Father Peyton Family Institute and Family Rosary International.

Fr Peyton died in 1992. After the Pope’s decree recognizing his heroic virtues, in general, a miracle is needed for his beatification and a second one for his canonisation.

Cardinal Wyszynski was Primate of Poland from 1949 until his death from cancer in 1981. He was Poland's youngest bishop when he was installed as Archbishop of Warsaw and Gniezno during the imposition of communist rule.

Despite Vatican misgivings, Cardinal Wyszynski signed the first church accord in 1950 with a Communist government, which promised the church protection in return for encouraging "respect for state authorities."

Although the accord was quickly violated, he defended the intentions behind it in posthumously published diaries, compiled while he was imprisoned without formal charges from 1953 to 1956 by Poland's ruling Communists.

"I was of the opinion the modern world needed the martyrdom of work, not of blood," the cardinal wrote.

"It seemed possible, as well as indispensable, to establish several points in a 'modus vivendi' if the church was to avoid a new – perhaps accelerated and drastic – annihilation," he wrote.

In later years, Cardinal Wyszynski vigorously defended human rights and reminded Vatican



diplomats they should secure local religious freedoms before signing top-level international agreements.

Acknowledged by Poland's ex-Communists and anti-Communists as one of their country's greatest modern leaders, Cardinal Wyszynski was credited by former President Lech Walesa with laying the groundwork for the rise of the Polish trade union, Solidarity, and the eventual fall of Communism in Eastern Europe.

Among his proteges was the future St John Paul II. When then-Fr Karol Wojtyla was appointed auxiliary bishop of Krakow, the cardinal presented him to a group of priests, saying "Habemus papam" ("We have a pope").

"In the light of later events, one could say those were prophetic words," the Pope wrote.

Cardinal Wyszynski also told him at the 1978 conclave, "If they elect you, do not refuse it."

The newly elected Pope John Paul told the cardinal there would have been "no Polish pope" without his "faith, heroic hope and limitless confidence in the Mother of God."

Among the other decrees on December 18, Pope Francis recognized the heroic virtues of

three priests, three religious women and one Italian laywoman.

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