



Tenor, flautist and Irish dancers lined up to entertain Pope

Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli and 'Riverdance' will form the centrepiece acts of the World Meeting of Families' festival at Croke Park on August 25, which Pope Francis will attend.

July 16, 2018

The Irish Independent reports that among other national and international artists on the two-hour spectacle is Irish flautist James Galway.

'Riverdance' first showcased at the interval of the 1994 'Eurovision Song Contest' and wowed audiences with the skills of dance duo Michael Flatley and Jean Butler, performing to an uplifting score by Bill Whelan.

Since then, the show is believed to have been seen by as many as 25 million people in more than 450 venues around the world.

Up to 15,000 overseas visitors from 114 countries are booked to attend the World Meeting of Families (WMOF) in Dublin between August 21 and 26.

A spokeswoman for WMOF 2018 said: "Festival of Families in Croke Park will be one of the highlights of the World Meeting of Families 2018. It will have a great line-up of community-based artists as well as some well-known local and international artists."

However, Brenda Drumm added: "We plan to release full details of the Festival of Families event shortly. Until then any reference to any particular acts or artists is speculative."

It is believed the full programme is almost ready to be unveiled and may be launched next week or, at the latest, the week afterwards.

In a previous interview, World Meeting of Families organisers told the Irish Independent, "We want people to

July 16, 2018

leave uplifted by the music and the presence of the Pope and the prayerful atmosphere."

The Pope (81), is not expected to attend the full two hours, but will leave after about an hour.

Derry won't return to the 'terrible years', vows bishop after nights of violence

Derry shall not be drawn into a repeat of the "terrible years of awful suffering and loss", the city's Catholic bishop has said following six consecutive nights of unrest.

Donal McKeown warned that "violence and destruction... do not advance any cause", as police blamed dissident republicans for rioting and murder attempts.

Bishop McKeown told a community rally on Friday evening: "Tonight, we have gathered, not to condemn anyone, but to build bridges.

"We want a city where everyone feels they have a future.

"We have lost too many people because they had lost hope in the future."

Bishop McKeown continued: "Those of us who have gathered here have come because we love this city and all its people.

"We seek the welfare of all.



"But we are determined that this great city will not be drawn back into a repetition of the terrible years of awful suffering and loss."

Bishop McKeown also told the rally: "We will speak out against those who promote only destruction and despair."

"Nothing can be built with petrol bombs or stones thrown in anger."

"The foundation for a happy future will be built on dialogue and inclusion."

Episcopal Church in the US widens access to trial same-sex marriage rites

The [Episcopal Church in the United States](#) has moved a step closer to ensuring that all its dioceses offer [marriage rites to same-sex](#) and opposite-sex couples, even where the bishop has objected.



Presiding Bishop, the Most Revd Michael Curry (left), and the Bishop of El Camino Real, the Rt Revd Mary Gray-Reeves (right), congratulate the Bishop of Cuba, the Rt Revd Maria Griselda, after the House of Bishops voted unanimously to readmit the Episcopal Church of Cuba as a diocese of the US Episcopal Church, on Tuesday last week.

At its General Convention, the House of Deputies overwhelmingly backed a redrafted compromise resolution to ensure that everyone can access the two trial marriage rites, which were approved in 2015, in their home churches.

There are currently eight dioceses in the Episcopal Church where the gender-neutral rites have not been authorised by the bishop.

This resolution was already a compromise on the original one put forward by the Task Force on the Study of Marriage, which would have changed references to marriage in the Prayer Book to make it gender neutral, and

July 16, 2018

included the two trial rites in the Prayer Book ([News, 6 July](#)). This was a step too far for many, and several bishops warned that doing so would “deepen the breach” in the Church.

An amended resolution was put forward last week in an attempt to avoid more schism. It was passionately debated by deputies at this week’s Convention, and several more amendments were made.

The Revd Susan Russell from Los Angeles said that everyone should be clear that the resolution contained “costly compromises that come with very real pain”. Some would be pained by a resolution that fell short of giving “full and equal claim” to all the sacraments to baptised LGBTQ persons, she said. Others would “experience this action as a bridge too far away”.

But William Murchison from Dallas said that the convention was being asked to “throw out a historic Christian understanding and supplant it with a new one, untested, unproved, but now, all of the sudden, necessary to be believed and practised”.

The redraft of the motion gives rectors or clergy in charge of a congregation the ability to provide access to the trial-use of the marriage rites for same-sex and opposite-sex couples. The original resolution proposed that bishops who objected provided “delegated episcopal pastoral oversight” to these congregations on request.

If the bishop has a theological objection to same-sex marriage, the redrafted resolution says that they must ask

July 16, 2018

another bishop to provide pastoral support to the couple wishing to use the rites, and to the member of the clergy and congregation. This was not the same as delegated pastoral oversight, which was meant for congregations whose relationship with the bishop is broken on all levels, the California deputy Christopher Hayes, who proposed the amendments, said.

The amended resolution was backed with large majorities by both clergy and laity. It will now go to the House of Bishops.

Other resolutions that suggest changes to the Prayer Book have also been debated by bishops and deputies. The House of Bishops adopted a proposal for what it calls “liturgical and prayer book revision for the future of God’s mission through the Episcopal branch of the Jesus movement”, which includes using inclusive language for divinity and humanity.

The resolution calls for the creation of a “Task Force on Liturgical Prayer Book Revision” to be made up of ten lay people, ten clergy, and ten bishops, appointed by the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies. The members ought to reflect “the expertise, gender, age, theology, regional, and ethnic diversity of the Church,” the resolution says.

The 74th General Convention has also backed resolutions on immigration, condemning President Donald Trump’s policy of detaining children as “inhumane and unjust”.

July 16, 2018

A thousand Episcopalians took buses from the Convention centre to take part in a vigil outside an immigration detention centre that houses 500 women.

The Presiding Bishop, the Most Revd Michael Curry, said in a sermon during the vigil: "We do not come in hatred, we do not come in bigotry, we do not come to put anybody down, we come to lift everybody up. We come in love."

'Pure Genocide': Over 6,000 Nigerian Christians Slaughtered, Mostly Women and Children

Church leaders in Nigeria have said that Christians are experiencing "pure genocide" as 6,000 people, mostly women and children, have been murdered by Fulani radicals since January.

"What is happening in Plateau state and other select states in Nigeria is pure genocide and must be stopped immediately," said the Christian Association of Nigeria and church denominational heads in Plateau State in a [press release](#) last week.

The church leaders said that "over 6,000 persons, mostly children, women and the aged have been maimed and killed in night raids by armed Fulani herdsman," which is prompting their cry to the government of Nigeria "to stop this senseless and blood shedding in the land and avoid a state of complete anarchy where the people are forced to defend themselves."

The press release also pleaded with the international community, as well as the United Nations, to intervene in the Fulani attacks, fearing they might spread to other countries as well.

"We are particularly worried at the widespread insecurity in the country where wanton attacks and killings by armed Fulani herdsman, bandits and terrorists have been taking place on a daily

July 16, 2018

basis in our communities unchallenged despite huge investments in the security agencies," they added, saying President Muhammadu Buhari has failed to bring attackers to justice.

They referenced several mass-scale attacks this year, including the [slaughter of over 200 people](#), mostly Christians, at the end of June in raids carried out by the herdsmen on local area farmers near the city of Jos.

Although some international news media has sought to characterize the killings as a land conflict between community groups, the church leaders, along with major persecution watchdog groups such as Open Doors USA and International

**“ LET US NOT BE
COWARDS WHO HIDE
THE TALENT THAT
GOD HAS GIVEN US
ON THE DAY OF OUR
BAPTISM! LET US LIVE
THE BEAUTY AND THE
RESPONSIBILITY OF
BEING A PROPHETIC
PEOPLE!”**

—BLESSED OSCAR ROMERO
14th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B), 8 JULY 1979

romerotrust.org.uk

The Archbishop
Romero Trust

July 16, 2018

Christian Concern, have all said that Christians are being deliberately targeted.

"We reject the narrative that the attacks on Christian communities across the country as 'farmers/herdsmen clash.' The federal government has been so immersed in this false propaganda and deceit while forcefully pushing the policy idea of establishing cattle ranches/colonies on the ancestral farming lands of the attacked communities for the Fulani herdsmen as the only solution to the problem," the press release declared, accusing the government of also pushing such a narrative.

"How can it be a clash when one group is persistently attacking, killing, maiming, destroying; and the other group is persistently being killed, maimed and their places of worship destroyed? How can it be a clash when the herdsmen are hunting farmers in their own villages/communities and farmers are running for their lives?" the church leaders asked.

"How can it be a clash when the herdsmen are the predators and the inhabitant/indigenous farmers are the prey? Until we call a disease by its real name and causatives, it would be difficult to properly diagnose the disease for the right curative medications."

There have been different reports on the number of Christians killed in Nigeria since the start of the year.

The International Society for Civil Liberties and the Rule of Law, Intersociety, [stated](#) on Tuesday that a combined total of 1,750 Christians, along with non-Muslims, have been killed both by the Fulani herdsmen, and by Boko Haram radicals, who are a separate terror group.

Intersociety also warned of a genocide in its statement.

"Nigeria is drifting to [a path of] genocide through killing, maiming, burning and destruction of churches and other sacred places of worship, and forceful seizure and occupation of ancestral, worship, farming and dwelling lands of the indigenous Christians and other indigenous religionists in Northern Nigeria," it said.

July 16, 2018

Roman Catholic Bishop William Avenya of Gboko separately told charity [Aid to the Church in Need](#) that the world cannot wait for a full-on genocide before deciding to intervene.

"Please don't make the same mistake as was made with the genocide in Rwanda," he pleaded, referring to the massacre of Tutsi people in Rwanda, where close to 1 million were killed in 1994.

"It happened beneath our noses, but no one stopped it. And we know well how that ended," Avenya said.

News briefs

+++Prayer request - Pray for the Presbyterian Church's **International Meeting Point** during the summer months which are extremely busy, with many families attending the centre with their children. **Sharon Heron** is a deaconess serving in the International Meeting Point, Belfast and



July 16, 2018

Windsor Presbyterian Church, Belfast. Sharon writes, "We are so thankful to God for amazing opportunities to share the gospel with people from all over the world." Pray that many of the young Christians will continue to grow and bear fruit in their lives. Sharon comments, "Many of whom have massive baggage and life can be very difficult." Pray for strength and grace for the team, for wisdom & courage in all they do.

bit.ly/2cgVbSa

+++Prayer request - CMSI Staff - Pray today for **Jenny Smyth**, who is currently in **Burundi** on a partner visit with **Archbishop Michael Jackson** and **Rev Dr Paddy McGlinchey**. Pray that this will be a fruitful time and that Jenny will be encouraged and inspired by this experience.

+++Irish Methodist World Development & Relief - The 2018-2019 Prayer Focus will be available this week.. **President Rev Billy Davison** commends the use of this publication as an effective tool for private and public prayer as we remember the various areas and aspects of our Church on a regular basis.



+++Mothers' Union seeks Christmas ideas - "We're already thinking about Christmas at Families First HQ! If you have any "tried and tested" Christmas **#baking** recipes please share them with us at

July 16, 2018

familiesfirst@mothersunion.org and they could be featured in our November/December issue!

+++Relics of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux - will return to **Newry** Cathedral on Sat 11th August. Part of **WMOF**. When the Relics visited in May 2001, thousands of people came to venerate. Relic will be accompanied by relics of the her parents, Sts Louis and Zélie Martin. <https://bit.ly/2mfqMpP>

+++WCC condemns intended demolition in Bedouin village - “The WCC joins many in the international community who are condemning the threat to demolish this village, and calls for an immediate stop to any demolition already underway.” Read the statement at: [https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-condemns-intended-demolition-in-bedouin-village ...](https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-condemns-intended-demolition-in-bedouin-village...)

+++ Post at Belfast Cathedral - The Cathedral is seeking to appoint a Visitor Welcome Assistant to join its team welcoming visitors from Belfast and further afield. This post is a part-time – six months temporary position. To learn more, [visit the cathedral website here](#).

Over the past few years, St Anne’s Cathedral has gained a growing reputation as a major tourist attraction in the City of Belfast. This post offers the opportunity to get involved in an exciting and expanding team, and support the Cathedral as it opens its doors to visitors both local and from around the world. The role will require flexible working on a rotational basis between 9am and 5pm. To request an application form please contact admin@belfastcathedral.org. Deadline for completed applications is Monday 30 July 2018.

July 16, 2018



July 16, 2018