



Daniel O'Donnell, Nathan Carter, Riverdance set to perform for Pope at Croke Park



**Daniel O'Donnell and Nathan Carter on The Late Show
country special**

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The music line-up for the World Meeting of Families 2018 Festival of Families celebration in Croke Park has been revealed.

Families from 116 countries will join Pope Francis on Saturday August 25 to watch Daniel O'Donnell, Riverdance, and Nathan Carter perform.

Also on the bill are Dana Masters, Celine Byrne, The Begley Family, the Holy Family Deaf Choir & Deaftones, PAddy Moloney, The Priests, Bridgie and Missy Collins and Moya Brennan.

Hollywood actor and musician Patrick Bergin will also perform and five families will share their stories with Pope Francis.

The spectacle will also include an orchestra of more than 50 musicians, over 700 Irish, Sean Nós and contemporary dancers, including 500 from Irish dance schools across the country, a 1,000 strong choir, 100 community groups, and 300 flag bearers.

Tyrone Productions, who count Riverdance, Last Orders with Gay Byrne, and Nathan Goes to Nashville among the previous productions, will be producing the event.

The themes of homelessness, migrants and refugees, and the importance of the family will be reflected in the music and artists.

Pope Francis will also deliver an address to the families in the stadium and will hear five family testimonies from families from Ireland, Canada, India, Iraq and Africa.



The themes of the family testimonies will focus on forgiveness in family, strength in family, hope in family life, the intergenerational nature of families today and the impact of technology on family life.

Pope Francis will make a pastoral visit to Ireland for the 9th World Meeting of Families which is taking place in Dublin from 21 – 26 August. www.worldmeeting2018.ie

Read more: [Knock booked out while 285,000 apply for Pope at Phoenix Park](#)

Only seminary in Northern Ireland to close

St Malachy's Seminary, the only Roman Catholic seminary in Northern Ireland, is to close in September, Church authorities have announced.

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The Diocese of Down and Connor said it took the decision after Queen's University Belfast – where seminarians study for their degrees – closed its Department of Scholastic Philosophy and progressively withdrew modules in the subject. This placed a “great strain on the required philosophical training of clerical students”, the diocese said.

From September this year, all seminarians will be relocated elsewhere to continue their training.

Bishop William Crolly founded the seminary in 1833, just four years after Catholic Emancipation.

“The closure of the diocesan seminary is a sad moment for all, not least for all those who have worked closely alongside the formation team and who have contributed immensely to the formation of the seminarians,” the diocese said.

“The diocese of Down and Connor is deeply indebted to all those who have contributed to St Malachy's Seminary over the years. In particular, it thanks the current formation team under the direction of Fr Michael Spence, the Rector of the Seminary.

“The diocese also recognises the huge contribution of diocesan priests and the Jesuit Community in Belfast who, over the years, have shared their insight, expertise and provided ongoing spiritual direction and assisted with human development programmes for the seminarians.”

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Archbishop Cahal Daly was a former Professor of Scholastic Philosophy at Queen's. Over the years many friendships were formed cross - community with seminarians at the university.



Prince of Wales to give evidence about disgraced bishop at sexual abuse inquiry

The Prince of Wales is to give evidence to the child sexual abuse inquiry as it examines how allegations against a disgraced former Church of England bishop were handled.

A written statement from Charles will be read on July 27 during the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) investigation into the Anglican Church as it focuses on Peter Ball, a published timetable said.

Now 86, the former bishop of Lewes and then Gloucester was jailed for 32 months in October 2015 for sexually abusing 18 young men over 30 years. He was released in

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February last year after serving half his sentence behind bars.

The inquiry is examining how the Church of England handled allegations of sexual abuse and has previously focused on the Diocese of Chichester - where Ball and several other convicted paedophile priests once officiated.

In the week-long case study beginning on Monday, the inquiry said it will investigate "whether there were inappropriate attempts by people of prominence to interfere in the criminal justice process after he was first accused of child sexual offences".



The former bishop of Lewes and then Gloucester

Ball's court case heard that a member of the royal family - who has never been named - was among a host of public figures who supported him when he avoided charges in 1993.

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He boasted of his links to royalty and was said to be a confidant of the Prince of Wales, with an independent review finding he used his connections to boost his position.

Previously Clarence House reportedly said it did not believe the correspondence between Ball and the future king - whose Highbury country residence sits in the Diocese of Gloucester over which the bishop once presided - had any bearing on the issues before the inquiry but did not object to them being shared for consideration.

Ball's sentence came 22 years after the abuse allegation first surfaced. He eventually admitted misconduct in a public office and two counts of indecent assault.

The court heard that Ball convinced some of his victims to strip naked to pray and even suggested they submit to beatings between 1977 and 1992.

The first of his victims to come forward took his own life in 2012 after hearing that Sussex Police had reopened the case.

Former Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey - who will also give evidence next week - resigned as honorary assistant bishop in the Diocese of Oxford after an inquiry found he delayed a "proper investigation" into Ball's crimes for two decades by failing to pass information to police.

An independent review entitled An Abuse Of Faith, led by Dame Moira Gibb, said he "betrayed his Church" and its followers, adding: "The Church at its most senior levels and

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over many years supported him unwisely and displayed little care for his victims."

Rev Graham Sawyer, who was abused by Ball as a teenager and waived his right to anonymity, is also among those due to give evidence next week, as well as retired judge Lord Anthony Lloyd of Berwick, a former member of the House of Lords.

New members of NI Education Authority board

Former DUP assembly member Nelson McCausland has been appointed to the Education Authority board.

Mr McCausland, who was an MLA for 14 years before losing his seat last year, was yesterday announced as one of two new appointments to the body.

The Department of Education said yesterday that Mr McCausland, a former Culture minister and Social Development minister at Stormont, would be joining the board having declared that during the last five years he has undertaken political activity for the DUP, "holding office both at local branch level and as a MLA".

Mr McCausland, who is from Newtownabbey, is a member of the Ulster Scots Community Network and a member of the Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund committee of NI Screen "for which he receives no remuneration".

The appointment comes eight years after Mr McCausland wrote to the Ulster Museum's Board of Trustees urging them to reflect creationist theories of the universe's origins.

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Also announced as a new member of the board was Sarah Kelly, former Principal of St Joseph's Boys School in Derry and Thornhill College, also in Derry.

The department said Mrs Kelly, who is from Derry, brings to the board "experience of managing budgets, staff management and developing policies.

"She is a former board member of Youth Life and is a founding member of Pathways to Work.

"Mrs Kelly has declared that she has not undertaken any political activity during the last five years and is currently serving on the Board of Governors of Galliagh Nursery school".

Mrs Kelly's appointment commenced on July 2 while Mr McCausland's commenced on July 10.

The annual remuneration for the position is £8,800 per annum plus travel and subsistence allowances.

Thursdays in Black gender-violence campaign re-launched

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has unveiled new designs for its Thursdays in Black campaign against rape and sexual violence. The new logo, which is available on a range of resources to help people in the fight against gender-based violence, was agreed at the WCC's Central Committee meeting last month. The idea behind Thursdays in Black is to encourage people to wear black clothing on



Thursdays as reminder of the need to act against sexual violence in all its forms.

“Clothes and clothing feature in Scripture,” the Anglican Communion’s Director for Women in Church and Society, Canon Terrie Robinson, said in response to the renewed campaign. “Job clothed himself in justice like a robe and a turban. We are urged to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility and gentleness. We ‘put on’ Jesus Christ at our baptism.

“A commitment to wearing black one day every week means getting into a rhythm of constantly ‘showing up’ as a visual, challenging and urgent reminder that rape happens and must stop. It’s also a commitment to being activist – in prayer and deed – against the abuse of power.

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“Thursdays in Black is a movement that is here to stay until everyone is aware of the historic and present reality of rape and sexual harassment – and until everyone has got the message and knows what must change in order to end and prevent it.”

The WCC says that the new design “aims to emphasise the journey and solidarity of the global campaign against rape and violence and give new momentum to a movement that recognises the resistance and resilience of women in the face of violence.”

The design is available with or without the WCC’s logo so that organisations can add their own logo to it “to promote their commitment to the campaign,” the WCC said.

“Thursdays in Black was born in the 1980s during the WCC’s Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women, as a recognition of women’s resistance movements worldwide,” WCC’s Director of Communication, Marianne Ejdersten, said. “It has since grown into a people’s movement within and beyond the churches. With the new design and many options for its application, we hope that everyone can find a way to express their solidarity with women and against violence.”

Each week, women and men from many parts of the world post expressions of their commitment to the campaign on social media under the hashtag #ThursdaysinBlack Some share prayers, some pick up on recent news to explain why they are part of this movement, others publish photos of themselves wearing black clothes and/or the Thursdays in Black badge to literally lend their face to the cause.

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- *The WCC has produced a number of resources for Thursdays in Black, which can be downloaded from their [website](#).*

Bishop cycles across Canada



Diocese of Qu'Appelle Bishop Rob Hardwick has reached Ottawa on his mammoth cycle journey across Canada to raise funds supporting indigenous ministries within the Anglican Church of Canada, and to promote healing and reconciliation. His journey, beginning in May in Victoria, British Columbia, will take him through the summer to St. John's, Newfoundland, a distance of over 4300 miles.

It's the 10th anniversary of Canada's official apology for its residential school system and 25th anniversary of the Anglican Church of Canada's apology for its part in the

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schools. This inspired Bishop Rob's journey. His diocese, the Diocese of Qu'Appelle, located in the Canadian West in the territory of Saskatchewan, managed the longest running residential school from 1886 to 1946. The school, Gordon's School in Punnichy, Saskatchewan, was eventually shut down in 1996, and was the last residential school in the country to close.

Bishop Rob says the bike ride is partly "an act of penance" for him and his diocese. "It's not been asked for, but I just feel it's an offering," He said. "In some way, the pain of the journey, the efforts of the journey, will bring about greater unity, healing and reconciliation."

Over this journey, Bishop Hardwick hopes to raise \$800,000 to support indigenous ministries within the Anglican Church of Canada and \$1.2 million for evangelism and mission work in the Diocese of Qu'Appelle, including funding a medical centre in its companion diocese of Muyinga, in Burundi.

ACNS formerly reported on Bishop Rob's plans for his journey in December 2017. You can read that article [here](#).

Bishop Rob is documenting his journey on Living the Mission: Bishop's Ride [Facebook page](#). Donations can be made through the Anglican Church of Canada's [website](#).

News briefs

+++Derry institution - Rev Paul Lyons, formerly Rector of Greenisland in the Diocese of Connor, will be instituted as Rector for the Parish of Camus-Juxta-Bann. Rev Lyons succeeds Rev Canon Mike Roemmele, who retired last Christmas. The Service of Institution will begin at 8pm. [St](#)

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[Mary's Parish Church, Macosquin](#), Dunderg Road,
Coleraine.

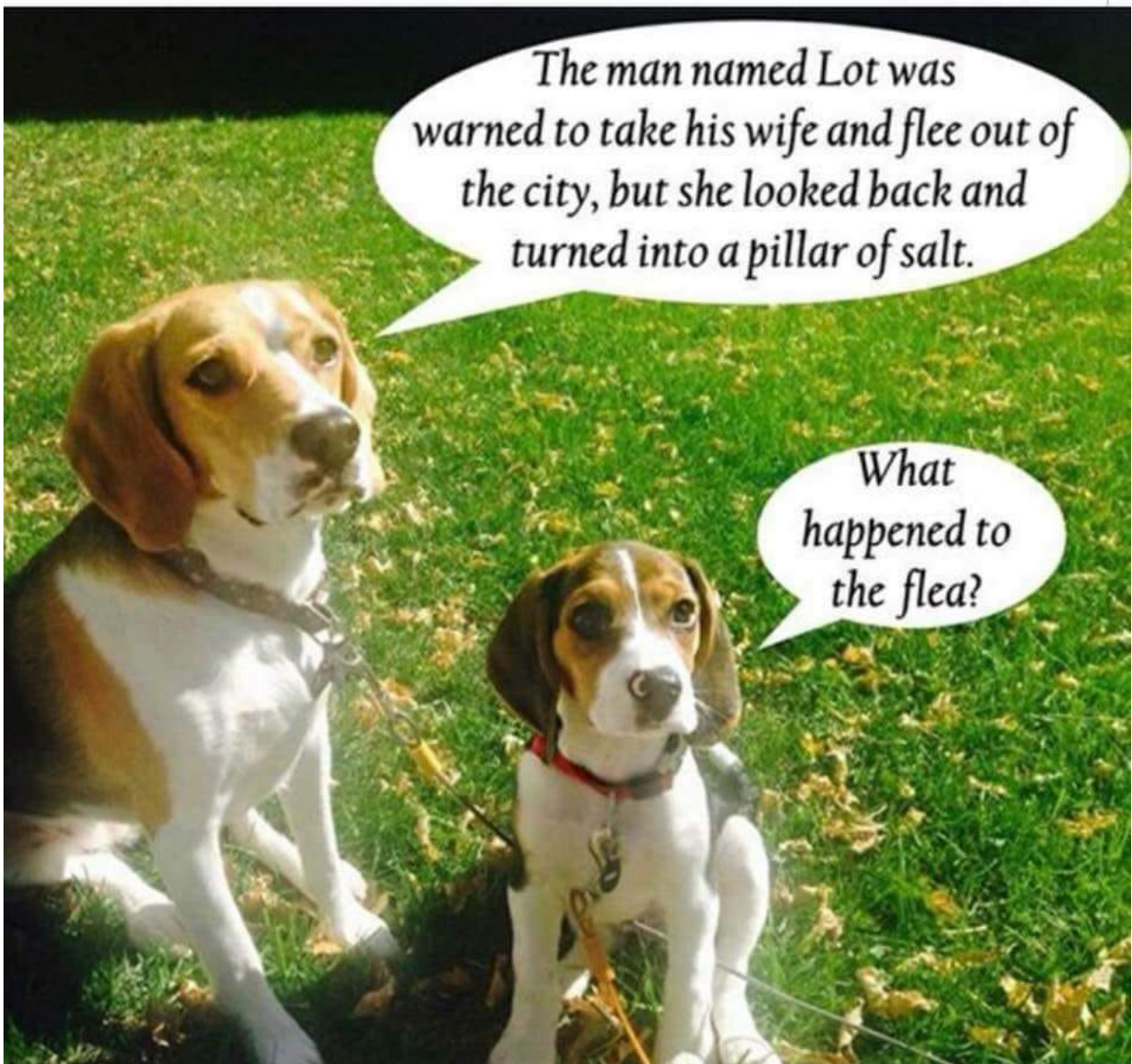
A promotional poster for a Christian Aid benefit concert. The background is a dark red curtain. In the top left corner is the Christian Aid logo, which consists of the word 'christian' in a small font above the word 'aid' in a large, bold, white font, with a white arrow pointing to the right. To the right of the logo, the words 'Stand Together' are written in a large, white, serif font. Below this, the words 'benefit concert' are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, followed by '27 October | Ulster Hall' in the same font. Further down, the text 'Early bird: £10 unreserved seating' and '£13 reserved seating' is displayed in white. Below that, the phrase 'Book today!' is written in a large, bold, white font. In the bottom right corner, the website 'caid.ie/concert' is written in a small, white, sans-serif font.

+++Stand together concert - Christian Aid is holding a benefit concert on Saturday October 27 in Belfast's Ulster Hall. Stand Together will feature more than 100 performers and musicians including Downshire Brass, The Victory Rollers, the Belfast Operatic Company, Joyful Sounds, and a Salvation Army children's choir. Early bird ticket offers are available until August 20. Visit www.caid.ie/concert for more details or to book tickets.

+++Armagh Canon to retire - A former Portadown Times reporter who went on to spreading 'the Good News' as a Church of Ireland minister will preach his final sermon in September. Rev Canon Neville J. Hughes, Rector of the Parishes of Mullabrack & Kilcluney, Markethill announced his retirement to his parishioners on Sunday. Canon Hughes was appointed to the Parishes in February 2000 and Instituted as Rector on May 19, 2000. "I really don't know where the 18 years have gone," said Canon Hughes. "I
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count it a privilege to have been the Rector of two tremendous Parishes and have a great many memories of all that has been done over those years. "I will miss all of the people whose lives have been entwined with mine in times of great joy and sadness." Canon Hughes started work at the age of 16 and will be formally retiring on October 15 - just a few weeks before his 66th birthday. He started work as a Trainee Reporter in The Portadown Times before moving into local government with the former Craigavon Development Commission and later the Housing



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Executive, which he left in 1996 to transfer from Non-Stipendiary Ministry to full time Ministry.

+++Launch of Knock prayer book - Just in time for Pope Francis' official visit next month, Ireland's National Marian Shrine in Knock, Co. Mayo, has launched its first ever exclusive collection of prayers.

The beautiful Knock Prayer Book is a collection of brand new prayers composed by Fr Richard Gibbons, rector at Knock Shrine for over five years, and carefully chosen traditional prayers that are firm favourites with pilgrims. Illustrated by stunning images capturing life at Knock Shrine, these prayers have a special affinity to Our Lady and the story of Knock, as well as to what Knock means to all the pilgrims, visitors, volunteers and parishioners that make up its story. The Knock Prayer Book was launched on Saturday in St John's Rest & Care Centre by Archbishop Michael Neary, who described the collection as a "thoughtful, awe-inspiring and encouraging" book in which Fr Gibbons had brought "all his pastoral experience to bear in composing the prayers". The Knock Prayer Book is published by Columba Books and is available in bookshops or on www.columbabooks.com for €14.99.



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