

**The essential daily
brief on the Irish
churches**



New moderator Dr Michael Barry

“Serve others, don’t attack them” says new Presbyterian Moderator

Presbyterian Moderator, Newry native, Dr Michael Barry has called on the Presbyterian Church to become ‘a people of service and outreach’ always putting the needs of others first and by serving them, seek to make a difference in the world.

Newry Times - Dr Barry was speaking at the opening session of the Presbyterian Church’s General Assembly held this evening, Monday 2 June at 7.00pm in Assembly Buildings in Belfast after he was installed as Moderator in succession to Dr Rob Craig.

Dr Barry, minister of the Sandys Street congregation in Newry for the past 28 years, welcomed the 1,000 delegates and invited guests as the Assembly returned to Belfast.

In his first address as Moderator, Dr Barry clearly calls for the Church to be a people of service reaching out to the needy and being servant-like in their attitudes to others, both in and outside of the Church.

“To be a servant means that we are constantly watching out for the opportunity to serve other people. We should be aware of their need, and we must be willing to adopt any position in order to meet it,” he stated.

“We must be willing to sacrifice whatever we have or whatever we are in order to help them. To serve in this way is to care deeply for people. We must show the people outside that we love them more than we love ourselves.”

In the light of recent racist attacks in Belfast and other cities, Dr Barry condemned such behaviour, demanding healthier attitudes to the diversity that exists in our society.

“We see ‘me first’ in the attacks on people who are perceived to be different in some way. The Honorary Consul for Poland lives in Newry and he has expressed his concern to me about the attacks on Polish people.

“And of course it is not just people from Poland, and it is not just because of a person’s nationality. All such attacks are an affront to us as a democratic and civilized country. That is behaviour that must stop immediately,” he insisted.

“We must never do or say anything that would give the slightest comfort to those who would verbally or physically attack people they do not like. We are to treat all people with respect and dignity because they have been created in the image of God.”

Dr Barry went on to say, “The Bible is very clear that we are to be loving and caring to all people. When people demand their rights are they not demanding their way?”

“There are those who demand the right to march and those who demand the right to protest. But where does such behaviour take us when there is no respect for the other person? We saw the answer to that last year in the rioting that blotted this city – behaviour that must not be repeated this year.”

The new Moderator challenged those gathered at the Opening Night to reach out beyond the Presbyterian family when being the people of service and outreach that they are being called to be.

“In case you think that we should only show kindness to other believers the Lord Jesus told His followers to love their neighbour, and showed that our neighbour is everyone, not just our own folk. We cannot discriminate. We must not choose who we are going to love, who we are going to reach out to,” he added.



Trinity College Dublin Chapel Choir trip to Frankfurt

Frankfurt’s historic Old Nikolai Church (Alte Nikolaikirche Evangelische Sankt Paulsgemeinde), situated on the picturesque Römerberg, was full to capacity on Thursday 29 May. The sell-out event was a concert by Trinity College Dublin’s Chapel Choir who were in Germany’s financial capital for a series of engagements at the end of May and beginning of June.

The concert featured music by Thomas Tallis, William Byrd, J. S. Bach, Robert Steward and George Hewson and was in aid of the landmark medieval church which underwent extensive renovation in recent years.

Then, on 31 May the Chapel Choir made the short journey to the beautiful spa town of Bad Vilbel which lies to the northeast of Frankfurt. There they sang at a Saturday evening service in the Church of the Resurrection (Auferstehungskirche) – where they were welcomed by Ingo Schütz, one of the local pastors. As well as leading psalms and hymns, the Choir sang

“Super Flumina” by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina and “Verleih uns Frieden” by Felix Mendelssohn.

Finally, on Sunday 1 June the Chapel Choir led worship at the 11.00am Eucharist at the Church of Christ the King in Frankfurt. Christ the King is a member of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe and the Rector is Fr. John Perris. There is a strong link between the Frankfurt parish and Trinity College as the current Director of Music there, Mr. Simon Harden, is a former TCD Organ Scholar. Music on Sunday morning included “A New Commandment” by Thomas Tallis and “Lift Up Your Heads” by John Amner.

The TCD Dean of Residence, the Revd Darren McCallig, said: “We want to thank all those who made us so welcome in Frankfurt on our recent visit. In particular, our thanks go to Mr. Simon Harden, our former Organ Scholar, whose local knowledge and contacts were indispensable.”

He added, “Anyone coming to study in Trinity College this autumn is very welcome to audition to join the choir. Most recruitment takes place during Freshers’ Week, but applications are welcome at any time of the year. Contact details are on the Chaplaincy website: www.tcd.ie/chaplaincy”

Eucharist for Pentecost from Cork on RTE Radio

On Sunday, June 8th, RTÉ Radio 1 Extra will broadcast a celebration of the Eucharist for Pentecost by the Revd Brian O’Rourke with residents from St Luke’s Home, Cork.

The service will start at 11:45 and may be listened to on the RTÉ player – www.rte.ie/radio

For more information on RTÉ religious programmes, visit www.rte.ie/tv/religion www.rte.ie/digitalradio/radio1extra

Free concerts to support Cathedral Choir school

St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin, is holding a number of free concerts in the coming months in order to raise money for the Cathedral Choir School. The first is on the 13th June at 18.15.

Admission is free but if you would like to make a donation the money will be put to good use! More info at <http://www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/media/file/Choral>

Charles Woods Summer School, Armagh

The provisional timetable for the Summer School which starts in Armagh on 17th August is now available at

<http://www.charleswoodsummerschool.org/?page=timetable-of-events>

Nuncio sees ‘green shoots’ in Irish Church after 20-year winter

Young people are helping lead a rebirth of the Catholic Church in Ireland, according to the country’s papal nuncio.

Archbishop Charles Brown described the rebirth as the spring after 20 years of winter, saying he sees “green shoots”.

“You see a renewed enthusiasm among young Catholics in Ireland now,” said Archbishop Brown, who was appointed as papal ambassador in November 2011.

He said the new generation of Catholics, some of whom are studying for the priesthood at St Patrick’s College, the national seminary in Maynooth, or the Pontifical Irish College in Rome, will “lead the Church forward into the next decade”.

Young Catholics represent what is best in the tradition of Vatican II, “the idea of communicating the ancient unchanging faith in a new, vibrant and attractive way”, he told the American Catholic News Service.

Archbishop Brown, the oldest of six children, was born in New York and studied history at the University of Notre Dame. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of New York in 1989 and was assigned for two years to St Brendan Parish in the Bronx, before studying sacramental theology in Rome and then being recruited to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

He worked for the congregation until his appointment as nuncio. Among his tasks was handling child abuse cases. He also worked with then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, who later became Pope Benedict XVI.

His appointment came amid strained relations between the Irish government and the Vatican over revelations of clergy sexual abuse in the Church, leading to the closure of Ireland’s Vatican embassy.

“I was surprised when he asked me because I hadn’t trained as a diplomat,” Archbishop Brown said. He recalled feeling “more trepidation” at first than he revealed to others.

“You look at the great history of the Church in Ireland, the saints, its 15 centuries of faith, and you realise how inadequate you are to play a role in the continuation of that,” Archbishop Brown said.

“Those are moments that pass. The biggest challenge is not to focus on ourselves and difficulties but keep our eyes focused on Christ, God made man. Then all things are possible.”



Methodist Conference 2014: Be Inspired - Be Informed

The Annual Conference of the Methodist Church is taking place in Christchurch, Leeson Park, Dublin on 11 - 15 June. The new President will be Rev Peter Murray whose theme for the Connexional year from June 2014 will be “Moving Out Together”

The Methodist Church in Ireland is on an exciting journey – stepping out and seeing where God is leading us and seeking to deal with the real challenges before us. There are representatives from each Circuit appointed to the Conference, but we want to encourage many others to be able to attend so that the membership of the church is as engaged as possible in the life of the church. Do come along for whatever you can!

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin ordains Father Seamus Mc Entee

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin yesterday (Tuesday) ordained a new priest for the Archdiocese of Dublin on the feast day of St. Kevin.

Fr. Seamus Mc Entee has been ministering as a deacon in a number of Dublin parishes for the past year as he prepared for ordination. Brought up on a farm in Rathcoole in Co. Dublin 48 year old Fr. Mc Entee worked and studied for many years before entering the seminary.

In his homily this morning (*full text below*), Archbishop Diarmuid Martin said this was a “day of rejoicing for the entire presbyterate of the Archdiocese, represented here by the Metropolitan Chapter and by many priests. It is a day of rejoicing for Seamus’ family and friends, for Saint Patrick’s College Maynooth and for all those who guided the formation of Seamus.”

Archbishop Martin also said that the Diocese needed more priests; “We need more priests. I could look at statistics of all kinds which indicate how great the need for priests is in this Archdiocese today. I could speculate and reflect on the seriousness of the fall in the number of priests. It is part of my responsibility to look at hard facts and see how we can respond best to the pastoral needs of the diocese in the light of the current challenges.”

A former pupil of St. Patrick’s Community College in Naas, newly ordained Fr. Mc Entee studied business and marketing management in the College of Marketing and design in the 1980’s before emigrating to London, where he worked for three years in HR and retail. During the 1990’s he spent five years with the Missionaries of Charity, a religious order founded by Blessed Mother Teresa. During this time he studied Philosophy and worked with the Order in Mexico and in Rome.

Before beginning in Maynooth he spent over 10 years working in sales in the motor industry in Dublin. He joined St. Patrick’s seminary in 2009. He says he was inspired by a recurring desire to follow God and to serve His people, “to share the love and mercy of God that I have experienced in my life”. Much of this inspiration he attributes to his time spent with Mother Teresa’s order and in working with the poorest of the poor.

During his formation for the priesthood Fr. Mc Entee worked in a variety of pastoral roles here and abroad. He spent time working with prisoners in Mountjoy, with schoolchildren preparing for Sacraments, in the National Rehabilitation Centre in Dun Laoghaire and with Crosscare the social care agency of the Archdiocese, working with those most in need. As a result of chaplaincy studies he spent time in VA Harbor Hospitals in New York ministering to patients and staff.

Fr. Mc Entee was joined in the celebration of his ordination in St. Marys Pro-Cathedral today by his mother, Mary, sisters Wynne and Marie, brothers Terry and Liam and nephew Stephen. Canons of the Archdiocese, members of the Metropolitan Chapter were also present. This ordination takes place on the Feast day of Saint Kevin who brought Christianity to Glendalough.

There are 8 men currently studying for the priesthood for the Archdiocese in Maynooth and Rome

Two Dublin seminarians, Paul Glennon and Chris Derwin were ordained to the diaconate in a ceremony in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth on Sunday last.



The 'Messy Fiesta Group' at the Training Day

Messy church spreads in Cork

A great training event Messy Church Fiesta took place in the Cathedral Hall in Rosscarbery on Saturday 24th May.

The day was led by Jane Leadbetter of Messy Church which is part of Bible Reading Fellowship.

Messy Church

- is a way of 'being Church' for families involving fun
- is a church, not a craft club, that helps people encounter Jesus as Lord and Saviour
- is found across the world
- values are about being Christ-centred, for all ages, based on creativity, hospitality and celebration

There are now four churches in Cork, Cloyne and Ross involved in 'Messy Church' –Skibbereen, Rosscarbery, Clonakilty and Carrigrohane - and some others about or planning to start Messy Church.

Unique York Minster Service To Welcome New Diocese

On 8 June (4pm), York Minster will be packed for a unique Church of England service in which the Rt Revd Nick Baines will officially become the first Anglican Bishop of Leeds for the new Diocese of West Yorkshire & the Dales, and in which 3000 people from across the region will join together to celebrate the creation of the diocese.

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu, will be preaching and presiding at the service. He says, "The occasion of the Inauguration of the new Diocese of Leeds (West Yorkshire and the Dales), on Pentecost Sunday, will be a fantabulous party. "New Diocese, First Bishop!" It is with great joy that we will be welcoming and witnessing Bishop Nicholas Baines becoming the first Bishop of the new Diocese of Leeds, in West Yorkshire and the Dales. At Pentecost we celebrate the inauguration of the Church when God the Father poured out the Holy Spirit on a group of Jesus' friends who were frightened but were faithful followers who went on to change the world. That call remains the same for us all, especially in the new Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales. In the midst of our excitement or our fears about the future, God the Father pours out the Holy Spirit to renew our lives as well as enabling us to tell others about Jesus Christ and to participate in transforming our communities. Let the Holy Spirit fill us, empower us and send us out with grace and wisdom. We have lift off!"

Bishop Nick Baines (who is the former Bishop of Bradford), says, "I am excited and daunted by the task that will be inaugurated on Pentecost Sunday. In the power of the pentecostal Spirit we will show that we have the nerve and vision to do something new - with all the risks and opportunities this brings."

The service is unprecedented in that it will combine both a Eucharist and the legal hearing in which Nick Baines officially becomes the Bishop of Leeds. All parishes will be represented and the Lord Lieutenants of North and West Yorkshire will also be in attendance.

The service will include an eclectic range of the best of Church music, including a brass band and several Cathedral choirs. Canon Sam Corley from Bradford Cathedral, says, "We have no less than four cathedral choirs - from

Bradford, Ripon, Wakefield and York Minster - together with an eight-piece brass ensemble and a worship band from St George's Church in Leeds. It's been quite a spatial challenge fitting them all in, but I can guarantee that the music will be truly stunning."

The service will last around one and a half hours and at the end everyone will be given a packed lunch provided by Morrisons.

In July, in another first, Bishop Nick Baines will be enthroned three times - in each of the diocese's Cathedrals: Bradford, Ripon and Wakefield.

BNP and National Front incompatible with teaching of C of E

The House of Bishops of the Church of England have voted to make membership or support of the British National Party (BNP) or National Front (NF) a potential disciplinary offence for its clergy.

The formal declarations by the House of Bishops mean that a complaint of misconduct can be made under the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003 against any cleric of the Church of England who is a member of, or promotes or expresses or solicits support for, the BNP or NF.

The declarations will be laid before the General Synod of the Church at its July meeting in York and will come into force at 5.30pm on 11 July 2014 unless 25 members of the General Synod give notice that they wish a declaration to be debated. If such notice is given, the expectation is that the declaration would be debated at the Synod's July group of sessions in York, and it could not come into force unless approved by the Synod.

The declarations state that on May 19 2014 the House of Bishops resolved to declare that the constitution, policies, objectives, activities or public statements of the National Front and the British National Party are incompatible with the teaching of the Church of England in relation to the equality of persons or groups of different races.

Once a declaration comes into force support for the political party concerned by clergy of the Church of England would be unbecoming or inappropriate conduct. The declarations from the House of Bishops, which were made under section 8(4) of the Clergy Discipline Measure 2003, implement in relation to the clergy of the Church of England, a policy of the General Synod agreed in February 2009 following a Private Member's Motion from Vasantha

Gnanadoss: “That this Synod, noting that in 2004 the Association of Chief Police Officers adopted a policy whereby “no member of the Police Service, whether police officer or police staff, may be a member of an organisation whose constitution, aims, objectives or pronouncements contradict the general duty to promote race equality” and “this specifically includes the British National Party”, request the House of Bishops to formulate and implement a comparable policy for the Church of England, to apply to clergy, ordinands, and such employed lay persons as have duties that require them to represent or speak on behalf of the Church.”

Stepping into evangelism - Church Army's new resource

Church Army has launched a practical resource to equip individuals and churches to share their faith through words and action.

The Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, welcomed [Stepping into evangelism](#) as “a gift from God, via Church Army, to enable each of us to live out the most freeing, exciting and life-giving of mandates that God offers: to be witnesses to Jesus Christ. Nothing quite brings energy and renewal to a church than seeing people come to faith.”

The booklet contains hands-on advice, tips, discussion and exercises to help people engage in day-to-day evangelism. With evangelism being one of the Archbishop of Canterbury's top three priorities, it is hoped the resource will be a blessing to the wider Church.

Speaking of Stepping into evangelism Archbishop Welby added: “When Pharaoh kept the people of God slaves he instructed them to make bricks but didn't give them the straw they needed to make them. Our God is entirely the opposite – God charges us with a task then gives us what we need.”

The chapters address why evangelism is a priority for God and include methods for evangelism for both individuals and whole churches, as well as exploring the role of fresh expressions of church, the church calendar and community events.

Church Army Chief Executive, Mark Russell, said: “Evangelism can be a scary prospect for many people or just another thing to add to life's to-do list. Others may see it as merely a growth strategy for the church.

“Yet, evangelism is so exciting when viewed from God's perspective! It is God's vision to see lives changed, hearts renewed, creation restored and

people transformed into followers of Jesus. And the best news about all of this is that he wants us to be involved. We hope Stepping into evangelism will be a real encouragement and blessing to the Church.”

Stepping into evangelism also bolsters the Evangelical Alliance Confidence in the Gospel campaign, which asks whether churches in the UK are as confident in the good news message as they should be, and seeks to help them create a more gospel–confident culture.

The Alliance identified that while mission is clearly at the heart of what many churches are doing, talking about our faith as Christians is proving increasingly difficult.

Results of the research carried out into this showed that: “There is a high perception that non–Christians are not interested in talking about spiritual things, despite almost 90 per cent having experience of conversations which turn to spiritual or religious questions. This all indicates a clear lack of confidence”.

Points for action included building relationships in the workplace, moving out of the Christian ‘ghetto’ to befriend people who are not Christians and improving the public image of the Church.

Christian Aid responds to Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone

Christian Aid is responding to an outbreak of deadly Ebola, that started in Guinea in March and has now crossed the border into Sierra Leone, resulting in five confirmed deaths and a further 31 suspected cases.

Christian Aid partner the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone (MCSL), which works in the Eastern province of Kailahun district where all confirmed cases have occurred, is collaborating with the Council of Churches, Sierra Leone (CCSL) and the district health authorities to prevent the disease from spreading further. Communities living in remote areas in the Kailahun district and in three further vulnerable districts - Pujehun, Koinadugu and Kambia - are at particular risk.

As part of an ACT Alliance-funded rapid response, MCSL is helping to raise people’s awareness of the disease, its symptoms and ways to prevent it by using radio, flyers in local languages and town criers on the streets.

Ebola is a highly contagious disease that kills up to 90 per cent of those it infects. It is transmitted through human-to-human contact and although there is no cure or vaccine, it is preventable. The initial infection comes from contact with a contaminated animal and symptoms include fever, vomiting, muscle aches and diarrhoea.

Michael Tettey, Acting Development Secretary of Methodist Church, Sierra Leone, said: 'We will also be working with selected Peripheral Health Units in the district to form and equip Ebola task force teams who can work on a community level, going house-to-house to spread knowledge. It is vital we do all we can to prevent the spread of this deadly disease.'

'It's a race against the clock to respond quickly and contain it as there is no cure and the mortality rate is so high.'

South Sudanese Episcopalians unceasing in prayers for peace

Hundreds of South Sudanese Episcopalians united in prayers for peace at a two-day gathering held last week in Kenya's Rift Valley.

The group, many of them refugees of the decades-long civil war in Sudan or more recently displaced by a politically fueled conflict in the south, was led in prayer and fasting by Sudanese bishops Nathaniel Garang Anyieth of Bor, Joseph Maker Atot of Pacong and Abraham Yel Nhial of Aweil.

Garang urged South Sudanese "to pray for the nation and unite as one people," adding that "it is only through prayer to God that the land can be healed," according to the [Christian Times](#). Yel challenged the prayer gathering not to accept political divisions and called on the international community and neighboring countries to continue praying and supporting South Sudan.

Such prayer has been a central force in Sudan's quest for peace.

Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori was [joined](#) last month by heads of the North American Lutheran and Anglican churches in calling the church to prayer for South Sudan.

"Prayer at the very least changes our own hearts," Jefferts Schori said during an [interview](#) with ENS. "It joins us to people who are in the midst of radical

suffering; it's a reminder that we are all connected, that we are all children of the same God."

During the past five months, South Sudan has faced its greatest challenge since becoming the world's newest nation in July 2011, when it seceded from the north in a referendum on independence following almost half a century of civil war.

A separate conflict erupted last December after South Sudan President Salva Kiir accused his sacked former deputy Riek Machar of plotting a coup. Despite a [May 9 peace deal](#) between the two leaders, fighting has continued, but hope is resting on a fresh round of talks expected to begin soon in Kenya.

Bishop Anthony Poggo of the Diocese of Kajo Keji, in Central Equatoria, told Episcopal News Service that despite a great deal of disappointment among South Sudanese concerning the recent violence, "we continue to walk together with those who are directly affected and we continue to share in prayer."

Poggo was speaking by telephone from the Church of England's Diocese of Salisbury, which has been in partnership with the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan for more than 40 years.

It was the first time Poggo had left South Sudan since the fighting began in December. He had been attending the Consultation of Anglican Bishops in Dialogue, a group of African and North American bishops who've [committed](#) to reconciliation in the Anglican Communion and to walking together as a family despite deep cultural and theological differences.

"We as South Sudanese people have gone through much in the past and many of us pray a lot for God's intervention and we continue to have the same hope we have always had," said Poggo. "We strongly believe that this crisis will come to an end which is why we continue to be involved at various levels. Reconciliation is the key message of the church and we do that as part of our prayerful ministry to our people."

Poggo said he has faith that the anticipated peace talks in Kenya will be successful in bringing an end to the conflict because "the leaders have agreed that others need to be involved. It's not only our politicians who are involved. It includes other stakeholders."

No region in South Sudan has escaped the impact of the recent conflict, which has left 1.5 million people displaced and 5 million in need of urgent humanitarian aid.

Poggo's Diocese of Kajo Keji has provided shelter to thousands of internally displaced people.

"We have intervened, with the help of our partners, to offer support for emergency needs and basic medical needs and offering shelter," he said.

"We trust in God, we believe that God is the same God that we prayed to during the 50 years of civil war who answered our prayer. We have to put our trust in God. I believe that everything happens in accordance to his purpose."

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, during a [recent interview](#) with Episcopal News Service, said, "As we pray, our hearts and minds are shaped by the wisdom and power of the spirit of God, and as we pray we engage with God in the struggle against human evil.

"We must be battering at the gates of heaven in prayer" for South Sudan, he added. "Remorseless, unceasing prayer."

For further information about the crisis in South Sudan and resources for prayer, study and action, visit: www.episcopalchurch.org/sudan.

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