

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

**Conservative  
Catholics  
should be  
voting for DUP,  
says Edwin  
Poots**

**Senior DUP  
members believe  
the party could  
grow by attracting  
conservative Catholic voters.**



*Edwin Poots MLA (right)*

Edwin Poots said that the party's uncompromising opposition to abortion and gay marriage brings it into line with Catholic moral teaching.

Liam Clarke in Belfast Telegraph - The revelations come as the Belfast Telegraph continues its series on a major new academic publication on Northern Ireland's biggest political party.

The Democratic Unionist Party: From Protest To Power, by Professor Jonathan Tonge, recorded interviews with several of the leading figures within the DUP.

Health Minister Mr Poots told the researchers that the party could reach out to Catholics as well as Protestants.

He said: "I actually think there is an educated, conservative Catholic vote out there, which the DUP is probably best placed to pick up. They want to ensure their kids get a good education, they are supportive of the doctrines of their church.

"The doctrines of their church largely coincide with the DUP. So conservative Protestantism and conservative Catholicism have an awful lot in common."

Mr Poots pointed out that, although the SDLP opposed abortion, the party was in favour of gay marriage, while Sinn Féin was in favour of both gay marriage and abortion in some circumstances.

Paul Givan, the DUP chair of the justice committee, takes the same view. "How can you vote for Sinn Féin and the SDLP if you are opposed to gay marriage?" he asked. "Sinn Féin certainly, their stance on abortion wouldn't be in line with the Catholic Church."

But the author of the book has his doubts that the DUP can attract votes from Catholics.

"There is an assumption amongst DUP members that most Catholics adhere to the social and moral conservatism of their church when, like many in the Protestant community, their faith, or at least adherence to church teaching, may be waning" he warns. More at -

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/politics/conservative-catholics-should-be-voting-for-dup-says-edwin-poots-30333074.html>

## **Presbyterians issue call to Education Minister to be fair to the controlled sector**

**The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has issued a call to the Minister for Education to deal with the ongoing and obvious inequitable and unjust treatment of the Controlled sector in Northern Ireland.**

A debate took place in the Church's General Assembly which is being held this week in Belfast. A resolution was passed that the General Assembly note with deep concern the continuing disadvantaged position of Controlled Schools throughout Northern Ireland due to a lack of a dedicated advocacy and support body and call upon the Minister of Education to take steps to resolve this injustice and ensure equality of treatment for all schools.

Convener of the Board of Education Rev. Dr. Colin McClure said, "There has been so much focus and energy expended over these last few years on the Review of Public Administration, perhaps most notably about setting up ESA – the Education and Skills Authority, that we should not lose sight of the disadvantage and vulnerability of those for whom we have a responsibility i.e. controlled schools.

“Educators need the curricular and administrative support of the professional staff, provided in Northern Ireland by the education and library boards. We appreciate the strain under which this latter group of people have been working because of persistent uncertainties.

“The challenges facing educators have been dense and formidable. The uncertainties and distractions have been lurking menacingly. Despite our concerns, in so many places our children and young people have been given nurturing, life-enhancing opportunities by devoted professionals.

“In controlled schools, Protestant boys and girls appear to be getting least from education from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds.”

Secretary to the Board of Education Rev. Trevor Gribben told the General Assembly, “As Churches we are merely seeking the same support for Controlled Schools as other sectors have enjoyed for some time. This is a plea for equality of treatment, a plea for the ending of an injustice. We have for decades pointed out this disadvantaged position of Controlled schools and asked for parity for all sectors of schools.

“We say to the Minister that whether the way forward is through ESA or a restructured single Education Board, the Controlled Sector urgently needs a support body. It needs a body which will provide it with coherence and the ability to represent the full family of Controlled schools.”

The following resolution, which was passed by the General Synod of the Church of Ireland and will be presented to the Methodist Conference next week, was unanimously passed by the General Assembly.

“That the General Assembly note with deep concern the continuing disadvantaged position of Controlled Schools throughout Northern Ireland due to a lack of a dedicated advocacy and support body and call upon the Minister of Education to take steps to resolve this injustice and ensure equality of treatment for all schools.”

*The General Assembly is the decision and policy making body of the Presbyterian Church with representatives from every congregation in Ireland meeting in Assembly Buildings, Belfast from Monday, 2nd June until Thursday, 5th June.*

*The Reports referred to can be read at [www.presbyterianireland.org/resources](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/resources).*

## Full House Eager to Hear About Creating a Culture of Discipleship

**Ireland is moving towards a significant cultural change but we must be more intentional about discipleship if we are to harness that change for the Kingdom of God. That was one of the key messages delivered to the 120 people who attended the ‘Creating a Discipleship Culture’ event in the Church of Ireland College of Education in Dublin on June 4.**



*Lavinia Heasley, the Revd Adrienne Galligan and Jacqueline Mullen.*

The conference was addressed by members of 3DM and Network Church Sheffield who aim to equip churches and church leaders to do discipleship, create missional communities and raise leaders. Introducing the event, Network Church Sheffield leader, Paul Maconochie, referred to the Great Commandment and the Great Commission – love God, love your neighbour and make disciples – and asked if people were doing all three.

Later he explained how missional communities work and likened them to lay-led extended family-type groups of about 30 people. Each group builds its own momentum by bringing people to faith. Missional communities work in an incarnational discipleship culture, he said explaining that the leaders first make the changes necessary to enable them to live the lives they were called to live. They then gather a core group – like an extended family – around them.

“Well functioning extended family is something that Ireland needs to be teaching the rest of Europe. To me it looks like Ireland is the last country that still has a functioning extended family culture and that’s what we need to learn and use,” he commented. Paul said that leaders must look for other



potential leaders who want to be disciplined. Once there are leaders coming through, then there is leadership DNA to create missional communities...

...Archbishop Michael Jackson opened and closed proceedings. Introducing the day he said that often in ministry, active discipleship was crowded out by the wear and tear of administration and appeasement of others. "The wear and tear of leadership for the sake of leadership has the double effect of eroding one's own sense of following God because we can begin to delude ourselves that we are leading God; and of failing to watch out for other disciples as they too struggle in roles of leadership and service which they carry out in the secular world and in church life. Leadership without discipleship leads to a dislocation in human and in Christian happiness; and to the missing of opportunities for missional service in the spirit of the whole of life experience which Jesus Christ came to earth to share with God's creation," he said. More at -

<http://dublin.anglican.org/news/2014/06/Full-House-Eager-to-Hear-About-Creating-a-Culture-of-Discipleship.php>

## £1/2m funding boost for Cathedral Hall

The **Cathedral** Hall in Enniskillen which is to undergo a major renovation is to receive public funding of over £500,000.

Impartial Reporter -The Church of Ireland St. Macartin's Cathedral Parish, has been undertaking a fundraising campaign,

"Hall Together Now" since the beginning of 2013 with a view to raising £200,000 over the two-year period up to the end of this year.

Now their application to the Social Investment Fund from the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister, requesting financial support for the refurbishment has been successful with news that



**Dean Kenneth Hall**

an award of £543,000 has been promised.

Under the terms of this grant aid, the purpose of the Fund is to deliver social change with the aim of making life better for people living in targeted areas by reducing poverty, unemployment and physical deterioration.

Dean Kenneth Hall, delighted at the news they are to receive this funding, said many of the activities which take place in the Cathedral Hall help to address these problems.

“The Economic Appraisal that was carried out in support of our application indicated that over 60 groups and organisations use the hall each year attracting 27,000 people. Many of these organisations and groups, through their activities, help to address those social issues targeted under the Social Investment Fund,” he said.

He added: “This is good news for the parish but even more so for the community because so many people use the halls for community events. We are seen as a church not only for ourselves (Parish) but for the community. The church and halls are open for all.”

These organisations include the Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Service holding blood donation sessions in the Hall.

He explained how they had also identified major repair work to the Cathedral building as well. Now with the public funding for the Cathedral Hall renovations, they can divert some of the money raised themselves towards addressing essential roof maintenance work.

He estimates that the work to the Cathedral will cost in the region of £250,000 to repair the roof and also for interior re-decoration.

Looking at how both major projects would have been beyond their normal fund raising activities, Dean Hall said this was why they had looked at public funding and after a comprehensive economic appraisal, found that they were delivering many programmes and activities through the large number of organisations which use the Cathedral Hall. More at -

<http://www.impartialreporter.com/news/roundup/articles/2014/06/05/405426-12m-funding-boost-for-cathedral-hall-/>

## **Cathedral Girls Choir Sings At Holy Cross Monastery**

**Members of Belfast Cathedral Girls' Choir travelled to Holy Cross**

**Monastery, Rostrevor, on Wednesday 4 June to sing Choral Evensong.**



*The Girls' Choir, Dean Mann, Master of the Choristers David Stevens, Organist Ian Barber and their hosts outside Holy Cross Monastery*

They had been invited by Prior Mark–Ephrem and the Benedictine community and despite it being exam time virtually all the girls were able to travel to this important centre of reconciliation, prayer and ecumenical endeavour. The girls, accompanied by Master of the Choristers David Stevens, Dean John Mann and Cathedral organist Ian Barber arrived in Rostrevor with just time to robe and find their seats.

Dean Mann said: “As soon as the choir girls opened their mouths in the ‘Aston’ Preces we understood how they can now fill St Anne’s with sound, and we can be very proud of them, wherever they are called upon to go.

“Four psalms were appointed on Wednesday evening, and, with no chance of a rehearsal, there was some sight reading practice thrown in! No major problems were apparent!”

The girls quickly settled into the rhythm of the familiar prayers and

responses. Howard Goodall's The Lord is my Shepherd was beautifully sung, and attention in prayer then turned to the Ugandan Martyrs of the 19th Century, both Roman Catholic and Anglican, who were remembered in Ireland in the calendar that day.

“As we thought of and prayed for present day martyrs for their faith, the challenge to Christian commitment and discipleship was there for us all,” said the Dean. “The beauty of reading and singing daily offices is that several times a day, though some may think it just becomes routine, the act of raising the heart to God in familiar psalms and oft-repeated prayers is a constant anchoring of the soul.”

Following Evensong, the Cathedral group was fed on pizza, quiche and chocolate fudge cake. “The monks mingled with us all and visitors from Armagh and elsewhere,” said Dean Mann. “From memory, the plainsong setting of Before the ending of the day from Compline was chanted to end the meal.”

## **Pope Francis asks the Irish faithful and people of goodwill to pray and to unite in support of peace in the Holy Land**

**Cardinal Seán Brady, as President of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, received an urgent message from His Holiness Pope Francis requesting that all bishops, priests, men and women religious and all laypeople in Ireland be invited to participate this weekend in heartfelt prayer to unite in support of peace in the Holy Land.**

Pope Francis has issued this request to Apostolic Nuncios around the world asking that they invite their local Church to participate in a similar spiritual initiative.

Cardinal Brady said, “When Pope Francis was on pilgrimage in the Holy Land last month he invited President Shimon Peres of Israel and President Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine to come to his home so that, with him and together, they might beseech God for the gift of peace. This important



moment will take place this Sunday 8 June, on the Solemnity of Pentecost, at the Tomb of Saint Peter in Saint Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. This prayerful gathering will also involve the participation of His Holiness Bartholomew, Patriarch of Constantinople."

Cardinal Brady continued, "I encourage the faithful of Ireland, and all people of goodwill, to support this request from Pope Francis, trusting that the Lord's promise may be fulfilled: 'I say to you, if two or three of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven' (*Mt* 18:19).

## Church of Ireland events this week

**Irish Times - Today (Saturday) the Cork, Cloyne & Ross Diocesan Synod will be held in Rochestown Park Hotel while in Dublin the Taney parish fete will take place in the church grounds in Dundrum beginning at 1pm.**

Tomorrow (Sunday) morning RTE will broadcast a celebration of the Eucharist by the Revd Brian O'Rourke with residents from St Luke's Home, Cork. At 3pm in St Macartan's cathedral, Clogher, the Bishops of Clogher, the Rt Revd John McDowell and the Most Revd Liam McDaid, will lead a Pentecost Sunday Ecumenical Gathering while at the same time in Co. Dublin the annual Ecumenical Service will be held at St Columcille's Well, Ballycullen, preceded by a nature talk at the holy well at 2.30pm. In St Canice's cathedral, Kilkenny, the annual series of Chapter Room Concerts begins at 4pm with a recital by Laoise O'Brien (recorder) and Michael O'Toole (guitar).

Due to unforeseen circumstances Sunday School Society for Ireland AGM has been rescheduled for Monday at 12 noon in Church of Ireland House, Dublin. All members are welcome to attend.

For more information, please contact [chair@sundayschoolsociety.ie](mailto:chair@sundayschoolsociety.ie) or 021 435 8226.

On Tuesday, in a paper entitled 'Children and Childhood: an Archival Perspective', Dr Susan Hood will showcase some of the collections in the RCB Library at the Irish Childhood conference in Drumcondra.

The second in Stuart O'Sullivan's series of Chopin lunchtime piano recitals, which is part of the Limerick City of Culture programme, will be held in St Mary's cathedral, Limerick, on Wednesday.

Next Friday the Dublin Garden Festival at Christ Church Cathedral begins and continues until the following Sunday. The cathedral will be filled with an array of floral arrangements by some of Ireland's leading floral artists while gardening advice will be available from well-known figures such as Helen Dillon, Gerry Daly, Dermot O'Neill and Diarmuid Gavin. In the cathedral grounds there will be horticultural displays, urban gardens, a petting zoo and craft demonstrations. For the weary there will be gourmet food and afternoon tea. The Festival will be open from 9am to 9pm on Friday and Saturday and from 12.30pm to 7pm on Sunday.

## **Obit - Bishop John Baker**

**The former Bishop of Salisbury, John Baker, who has died aged 86. It states he was Bishop of Salisbury from 1982 to 1993, having previously been rector of St Margaret's church, Westminster, and Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons. He took an active interest in peace in Northern Ireland.**

This obituary in the Daily Telegraph says Baker was the most able theologian among the bishops of his time, and applied his learning to a wide range of subjects. He was chairman of a committee charged with examining the theological and moral aspects of nuclear warfare, and when its report, *The Church and the Bomb* (1982), advocated unilateral nuclear disarmament by Britain he found himself at the centre of a heated public debate.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/10878612/The-Rt-Rev-John-Baker-obituary.html>

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