

Dublin Mayor visits Christ Church Cathedral's pop up café



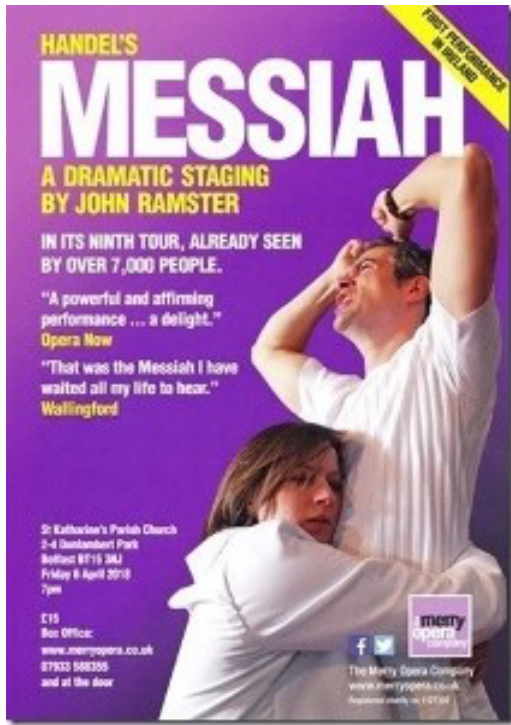
Our Table welcomed Dublin's first citizen to its pop up café in Christ Church Cathedral on Thursday (March 8). The Lord Mayor of Dublin Mícheál MacDonncha joined Our Table's founder and director, Ellie Kisyombe and Dean Dermot Dunne for a special Our Table lunch on his birthday.

Ellie and her team put on a great spread in the cathedral's crypt for their visitor with her speciality Malawian roast maugu soup taking centre stage. Ellie told the Lord Mayor about the Our Table project, which highlights the deficiencies of the Irish Direct Provision system and aims to spark conversations over food.

She also outlined some of the traditions surrounding hospitality in Malawi. Following the lunch the Lord Mayor said he was very impressed with the project and commended the pop up café to all Dubliners for its excellent food and hospitality. He added that Our Table highlighted conditions in Direct Provision which he stated must end. Our Table runs a pop up café in the grounds of Christ Church Cathedral on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 11am to 3pm. Check out what they have on offer at <https://www.facebook.com/OurTableDublin/>

Merry Opera Company dramatised staging of Handel's Messiah in Belfast church

St Katharine's Parish Church, Belfast, will host the first ever performance in Ireland of a



dramatised staging of Handel's Messiah by the Merry Opera Company.

The concert will take place on Friday April 6 at 7pm.

The Merry Opera Company has already completed

eight tours in Britain and St Katharine's is part of the group's 2018 tour.

Comments from previous audiences include: 'Going to a traditional performance of Messiah will never be the same again' and 'A powerful and affirming performance.'

The rector of St Katharine's, the Rev Canon William Taggart, said: "What a better way to round off Holy Week and Easter Day by being present at this performance."

Tickets are £15 and are available from Canon Taggart on 07933 588355. They can also be bought online from the Merry Opera Company website. A limited number of seats will be available on the night.

St Katharine's is located at Dunlambert Park, Belfast, BT15 3NJ.

Dublin & Glendalough Refugee Housing Appeal tops €115,000

Donations to the Dublin & Glendalough Refugee Housing Appeal have now reached €115,000.

Parishes and individuals throughout the United Dioceses have been supporting the project enthusiastically and are working hard to raise funds to make a difference for people who are emerging from Direct Provision.

Already €80,000 has been handed over to the Irish Refugee Council (IRC) for their housing project. Their holistic programme provides transitional accommodation for people who have been given refugee status in Ireland. This takes pressure off the individuals who find it almost impossible to access private rented accommodation in today's market and in turn




takes pressure off organisations who work with homeless people.

The IRC programme also provides individually tailored supports to help people access education, employment, support services, health services and build social connections.

The fundraising target for the dioceses is €300,000 in three years and Archbishop Michael Jackson has thanked everyone who has played a part in reaching the current total. “I wish to thank all those who have contributed to the Diocesan Housing Appeal. The appeal enables every one of us to make a positive difference. Cooperation with other relevant agencies

SO HOW ARE PEOPLE GETTING ON?

<p>ONE PERSON SECURED A SCHOLARSHIP WITH THE LAW SOCIETY</p>  <p>ONE PERSON IS STUDYING A BA IN MAYNOOTH</p>	<p>ONE PERSON IS WORKING AT FACEBOOK</p>  <p>2 PEOPLE ARE ON OUR EMPLOYMENT PROJECT AND HAVE SECURED WORK WITH AIR B&B AND THE BEACON HOSPITAL</p>	<p>SEVEN PEOPLE ARE BUSY LEARNING ENGLISH</p>  <p>ONE YOUNG PERSON IS NOW ABLE TO FINISH SECONDARY SCHOOL</p>  <p>NINE CHILDREN STARTED SCHOOL FOR THE FIRST TIME IN IRELAND</p>
<p>ONE PERSON FINISHED A SPRINGBOARD COURSE IN UCD</p>		

enables us to make every contribution a significant contribution. In thanking everyone for generosity to date I wish to offer encouragement to all to help us meet our target of €300,000 inside three years,” he stated.

Nick Henderson, CEO of the Irish Refugee Council said that the funds raised provide vital support for the project.

“The amount raised represents a fantastic effort and is an invaluable contribution to this project. It means that we can expand and develop the project to house and accommodate more people and also offer other holistic supports. This fundraising call is also a two way process and we would be delighted to meet and engage with

church groups, schools and communities to talk about the project, its impact and also our wider work.”

Geoffrey Perrin of Diocesan Councils, who is a member of the subcommittee coordinating the appeal, said they are very encouraged by the response so far.

“The committee is working on a number of ideas which we hope to roll out to parishes and schools this summer and autumn. It is very clear to us that not just is this an imaginative project, it is trying to address one of the major problems in our society today and is somewhere where the church can really contribute,” he said.

The Revd Abigail Sines, Dean’s Vicar of Christ Church Cathedral, which was recently designated Ireland’s first Cathedral of Sanctuary, is also a member of the subcommittee.

“It is heartening that the people of the United Dioceses have chosen to give generously in this past year towards a project which makes a direct impact on the lives of those so desperately in need of a welcome and a place to call home. Alongside contributing to these fundraising efforts, we in Christ Church have worked toward our Cathedral of Sanctuary

designation, seeking ways to engage with those in the asylum process and living in Direct Provision to welcome them to our city,” she commented.

So far the IRC project has seen 49 people accommodated, of whom 31 are children, in 11 properties.

To contribute to the appeal, cheques can be sent to: the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough, Church House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6 (marked Housing Appeal). Donations can be lodged directly to: DIOCESAN FUNDS OF DUBLIN AND GLENDALOUGH, Bank of Ireland, College Green, Dublin 2, BIC: BOFIE2D, IBAN: IE50 BOFI 9000 1769 3548 78, Reference: Housing appeal.

Diarmuid Martin accepts McAleese criticisms of restrictions on women

Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin has agreed with claims by Mary McAleese that the main reason for negative attitudes to the church in [Ireland](#) relates to its restrictions on women, Patsy McGarry reports in the Irish Times

“Her challenge to the internal culture of the Church today was brutally stark. Some may find it unpleasant or unwelcome. I must accept the challenge with the humility of one who recognises her alienation,” Dr Martin said of the former president’s comments.

In the keynote address to a Voices of Faith conference in Rome on Thursday marking International Women’s Day Mary McAleese quoted the Archbishop.

“Just four months ago the Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin felt compelled to remark that “the low standing of women in the [Catholic Church](#) is the most significant reason for the feeling of alienation towards it in Ireland today,” she said.

In response, Dr Martin said he agreed. “Probably the most significant negative factor that influences attitudes to the church in today’s Ireland is the place of women in the church. I am not saying that just because of the comments in these days by President McAleese. Indeed, I was happy to note that President McAleese quoted that exact phrase of mine in her speech.”

Speaking at book launch in Dublin on Thursday night, Dr Martin said a second challenge to the

Catholic Church in Ireland today was its attitude to young people. He recalled a survey of young people in one Dublin parish as “one of the most disappointing documents that I read since becoming archbishop.”

The young people felt unwelcome in their parishes, he noted. “I quote, without any comment and leave judgement to yourselves: ‘A number of young people noted that it was people in parishes (priests and parishioners) who were the greatest obstacles for young people getting involved’.”

Faith, he said, “is not a negative reaction or simple rejection of a changing world.”

In the past “the Church and the Irish Church in particular was a highly moralising Church. Jesus did not write an arid rulebook as an inspiration for his followers. Jesus did not think that belief in him could be attained through imposition,” he said.

“Faith in Jesus is no ideology. It is about a faith which enables each individual to attain robust gospel wisdom, a freedom to renounce security for ourselves in order to live for others as Jesus did and then finding joy and fulfilment in living the Gospel,” he said.

Church in the future “will have much less to do with management and structures. It will be about men and women who have the ability to speak the language of faith authentically in a world where that language may be alien and to speak in a way that attracts,” he said.

The Christian community will succeed “not through polemics and denunciations, but through living its life in a way which wins the respect, the goodwill and the confidence of ‘all the people’,” he said.

24 Hours for the Lord prayers in Catholic churches this weekend

In dioceses throughout the country this weekend, members of the Catholic Church are being encouraged by their bishops to participate in the ‘24 Hours for the Lord’ prayer initiative of Pope Francis so as to experience the Lord’s loving mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and to find opportunities for prayer. 24 hours of continuous Confession will be provided in designated churches and details will be available on diocesan websites.

During their Spring General Meeting which took place in Maynooth this week, the bishops

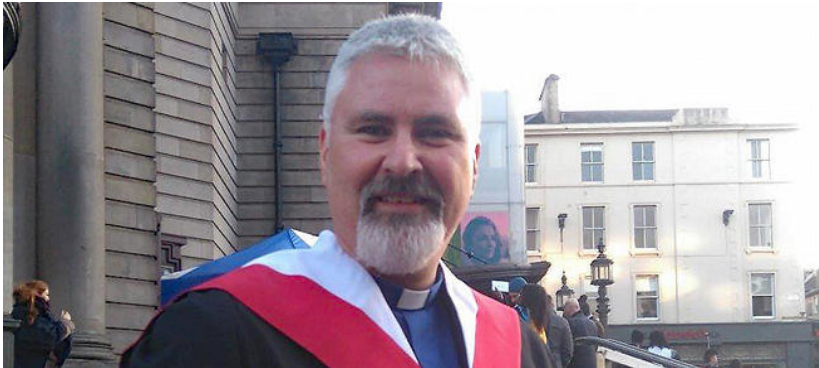
encouraged the faithful to participate, as part of our Lenten journey, in the '24 Hours for the Lord' initiative in their diocese. Catholics are also encouraged to read Pope Francis' message for Lent 2018 on the theme *Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold* (Mt 24: 12). The message is available with additional online resources on <https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2018/02/13/lent-2018/>.

As we journey through the season of Lent let us remember "God never tires of forgiving us" (Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium The Joy of the Gospel*). The call to renewal in our Christian life is a central part of our preparation for Easter and bishops ask the faithful to offer up their fasting, prayer, reading of Scripture and works of mercy during Lent for the grace of spiritual renewal.

This weekend during the '24 Hours for the Lord', bishops ask the faithful to offer prayers for the protection of life from the moment of conception until natural death on Saturday, and on Sunday, which is Mothers' Day, in thanksgiving for mothers and motherhood in Ireland.

CNI

Former nightclub boss set to lead Scottish church



A former nightclub owner has swapped nights out in the capital to lead a Church of Scotland congregation in Fife.

Rev Mike Weaver, 49, used to co-own Los Locos, a venue which prides itself on being Covent Garden's longest happy hour bar but after resisting a call to ministry for ten years, he decided it was finally time to ditch the nightclub business.

Explaining what led that decision, he said in a statement: "My 20's saw me with little time for



church, instead concentrating on the world of work, sport, motorbikes and life in general. Over time, I fell out of love with the nightclub business.

"The late nights, the drunks and all that goes with it made me realise that the industry was not one I felt comfortable working in so I left in 2008. God had been working in my life since an Alpha course in 2000, after which I slowly sensed a calling into ministry.

"I strenuously sought to resist the call, and managed to do so for almost about a decade."

Rev Weaver enrolled in New College in Edinburgh to study divinity in 2012 and after

graduating in 2015, and completed placements in a number of churches.

He has been ordained as the minister of Gillespie Memorial Church in Dunfermilne, which is his first full-time charge.

Rev Weaver, who was raised in the Methodist Church and has lived in the south of France and Australia, said his ambition was to lead a congregation in "faithful obedience" to the Gospel and making Jesus known to more people.

Death of Irish American who converted Dublin church into distillery

Pearse Lyons, the Irish-born entrepreneur who founded the hugely successful Alltech animal nutrition group, has died in Kentucky at the age of 73.

Mr Lyons had been unwell since November when he entered hospital in the US for routine heart surgery. He suffered complications during his recovery and died on Thursday.

His son, Mark Lyons, who is chairman and president of the group, said he is “deeply saddened”, but vowed to continue his father’s work.

“He saw farther into the horizon than anyone in the industry, and we, as his team, are committed to delivering on the future he envisioned. He planted seeds that will produce a bountiful harvest for the world in the years to come,” said Mr Lyons.

The Irish-born entrepreneur acquired St James' Church in James Street, Dublin where Pearse Lyons Distillery is now located.

Pope Francis will visit Baltic nations to mark their centenaries

Pope Francis will visit Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia on September 22-25 as the three Baltic nations celebrate their 100th anniversaries.

The Vatican confirmed the trip on Friday, saying Francis would visit Vilnius and Kaunas in

Lithuania, Riga and Aglona in Latvia, and Tallinn in Estonia.



Lithuania has the largest Catholic community in the Baltics, accounting for more than 75% of the nation's nearly three million inhabitants.

The three Baltic nations declared their independence from Russia in 1918 but were incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940 and remained part of it until 1991.

Francis has only one other confirmed trip for the rest of 2018, to Geneva in June.

He is widely expected to come to Ireland in August for the World Meeting of Families.

Help CNI grow...

**... Please commend
CNI daily news to your
friends....**

www.churchnewsireland.org

CNI

**For daily headlines by
Twitter
click on logo at CNI
home page**