



# CNI



## **Honour St Patrick by welcoming migrants and feeding the hungry, say Catholic bishops**

The Irish bishops' communiqué following their spring meeting has a strong focus on the growing hunger crisis in the developing world and on the plight of refugees and immigrants.

After thanking Ireland's pupils, schools and families for their continuing support for the Trócaire Lenten campaign, the bishops expressed deep concern for those across the world facing growing levels of hunger,

[churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

particularly in Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen.

“Food stocks have been exhausted and famine has already been declared in parts of South Sudan, while a state of national disaster has been declared in Somalia and this has been compounded by drought and conflict,” the bishops said. “In a world of plenty, people are dying because they do not have enough food to eat. It is unacceptable that, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, starvation remains a reality for so many on the planet, with women and children being the most vulnerable.”

The bishops encouraged all people of goodwill to support Trócaire’s 2017 Lenten campaign, which this year is on the theme ‘Humanitarian need across the world’. This can be done by requesting a Trócaire box from your local parish or by donating online at <https://www.trocaire.org/getinvolved/lent>.

At their meeting at St Patrick’s College, Maynooth, the bishops prayed through the intercession of our national patron for the faith and well-being of Irish people everywhere. They said: “The plight of Patrick, himself a migrant, has been faced by many Irish people who have struggled to live and integrate into new cultures.

Patrick was called to serve and bring God to a people far from his homeland and became a pioneer in an inhospitable climate. As Saint Patrick's Day is a Holy Day of Obligation for Catholics in Ireland, the best way to remember our saint is to attend Mass."

### **Support for Joy of Bells' initiative**

Another event in March that the bishops commented upon is the 'Joy of Bells' initiative in support of migrants and refugees, which is being promoted by the Church of Ireland Dean of Waterford Cathedral Maria Jansson and the former President of Ireland Mary McAleese. They said: "We are encouraging parishes to ring their church bells on Sunday March 19, at 11 am if possible, to proclaim our Christian witness and to make a proclamation of faith, trust, love, reconciliation and joy that every migrant is welcome."

The bishops also invited the faithful to pray for Pope Francis's intention for March 'that persecuted Christians may be supported by the prayers and material help of the whole Church'.

Additionally, they called on people to be generous in supporting the Good Friday collection on 14 April, which is in aid of the people and places of the Holy Land. They

especially encouraged any Irish pilgrim visiting the Holy Land to join with the local Christian communities in celebrating Sunday Mass in Jerusalem in the West Bank.

## **New Editor sought for the C of I Gazette**

The Church of Ireland Gazette has been an integral part of the life of the Church of Ireland for over 150 years carefully chronicling the many local manifestations of the Church's witness, analysing matters of concern and keeping its readers abreast of developments in the Anglican Communion and the worldwide Church.

Founded in 1856 as the Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette, the paper was initially a monthly but adopted a weekly format in 1880 and in 1900 it changed its title to the Church of Ireland Gazette.

As the longest running Church of Ireland publication the Gazette is a vital source for information of the Church's past and its files, which are held in the RCB Library, are regularly consulted by academics, local historians, genealogists and the simply curious. However, many of the issues are fragile and a programme

has been developed by the Library to make them available digitally which will not only conserve the originals but make the information in them more readily available to a wider readership. So far, the Gazette for the years 1911–23 is available via the Church of Ireland website, and work is continuing to expand this digital resource.

Of course the Gazette, like other similar publications depends to a significant extent of the energy and integrity of the editor. The Gazette has been well served in living memory by Cecil Copper, Houston McKelvey, Gilbert Wilson and Andy Willis, and notably by W.B. Wells, who provided a first hand account of the events of Easter Week, 1916.

The current editor, Canon Ian Ellis, has been careful in his stewardship of the Gazette, preserving the paper's independence, fearless asking difficult questions from those in authority and, at the same time ensuring, as far as resources permit, the Gazette's eclectic coverage of the life of the Church at home and abroad. Canon Ellis will retire from the editor's chair next month and a successor is being sought. Applications should be sent to Church of Ireland Press, 3 Wallace Avenue, Lisburn, Co.

Antrim, BT27 4AA by 31 March. - C of I notes,  
Irish Times

## **‘Everybody Welcome’ training launched in Down & Dromore**

Dates have just been announced for the brand new ‘Everybody Welcome’ training evenings.

These one-off training sessions are aimed at anyone within church who has a desire to see people welcomed better. They will be interactive and practical but also short and sweet! The aim is to raise basic skills and awareness around church welcome that will be followed up with a more in-depth training course over 6 sessions in the autumn.

Commenting on the course the Diocesan Development Office, Andrew said; ‘We are very excited to be able to offer these ‘taster’ training evenings across the diocese. They are for anyone interested in helping their church become a place of better welcome and are for everyone, not just those doing welcome in any official capacity. If you want to come along you’ll be made most welcome!’

There are a number of dates and venues that should hopefully suit most areas:

Choose from any one of the venues below.  
From 7:30–9:30pm

Tues 28th March *St. Donard's*  
Bloomfield Rd, Belfast

Thur 30th March *Movilla Abbey*                      Movilla  
Rd, N'Ards

Tues 9th May *Saul*    Saul Rd,  
Downpatrick

Tues 16th May *Donaghcloney*                      Main St,  
Donaghcloney

Wed 17th May    *Hillsborough*                      Main St,  
Hillsborough

Each evening is a one-off and is free to attend.

For more information contact your Rector or  
Andrew on [andrew@downanddromore.org](mailto:andrew@downanddromore.org) or  
07950 846621.

## **Abaana children's choir wins hearts at The Hub**

The Hub, Belfast, was swinging to the sounds of the Abaana New Life Children's choir on Pancake Tuesday, February 28. The choir of 20 Ugandan children and three adult performers

sang, danced and won the hearts of all who were present at the home of the Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplaincy at Queen's University, Belfast.

Scott Baxter from Bangor, Co Down, Abaana founder and director, spoke of the growing partnership between Abaana and The Hub following the visit in 2015 of a team of chaplaincy staff and students. This June a second team will head out to Uganda to work for two weeks in two projects set up by two local charities – Abaana & Waakisa Ministries.

At the event last week, Church of Ireland chaplain the Rev Barry Forde, introduced Valerie Duff from Waakisa Ministries, a pregnancy crisis centre for Ugandan women, with whom the chaplaincy has also built connections. The choir spent the afternoon in the Hub café, laughing and playing with the students, before enjoying pizza for tea, (and pancakes for supper!), along with the families and children of the Church of the Resurrection, the worshipping community at the heart of the chaplaincy. The evening celebration itself was filled with songs, stories, and moving video content highlighting the great need in Uganda that Abaana, and Waakisa, are seeking to address.





Abaana's vision is to see the children in Africa have their needs met, their rights upheld and their dreams fulfilled through raising awareness and motivating people to give sacrificially so that lives are transformed and the love of God is shown in a practical way.

Through building schools, developing a child sponsorship program, developing the New Life Homes centre for homeless boys, Abaana is seeing this vision become a reality.

This year Abaana have sought to reverse the trend of sending team to Uganda by bringing a choir of children to the UK and Ireland. So far, it has proved to be a resounding success as the

children have captured hearts and Abaana has raised funds, awareness and a queue of sponsors for its ongoing work.

The choir will be singing in both Lisburn Cathedral and St Mark's, Ballymacash, as part of its tour. Full details of the times, dates and venues for future performances can be found online at [www.abaana.org/choirdates](http://www.abaana.org/choirdates).

## **Bidding for success: Maintaining and repairing places of worship**

The Ulster Historic Churches Trust (UHCT) and the National Churches Trust (NCT) are hosting a practical training event, led by professionals, on maintaining and repairing places of worship.

This takes place at Gracehill Moravian Church, Church Road, Gracehill, BT42 2NL, on Friday March 31 from 10am-3.30pm.

The event will explore the importance of maintenance and early diagnosis of potential issues as well as looking at what help is out there to prevent minor problems becoming major ones.

Participants will be among the first to find out about UHCT's new Maintenance Pilot Scheme

and learn about funding sources available to Places of Worship including NCT's new grant programme targeted specifically at Places of Worship in Northern Ireland. Recent innovations that make maintenance easier, such as the use of drones, will also be reviewed.

In the afternoon there is an optional session with the Heritage Lottery Fund team (you can opt in/out on the booking form). HLF is one of the largest funders of maintenance and repair work to Places of Worship in the country. Members of the local team will talk about their various grant programmes as well as giving some 'top tips' on what makes a strong bid to them. There will also be a Question and Answer session.

Tickets for the event are £15 which will include refreshments, lunch and the event pack.

Booking can be made by clicking [here](#).

## **Field Trip to visit Presbyterian Churches in Mid-Ulster**

The Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland itinerary and programme for Saturday, June 17, 2017-

9.00 am

Coach departs from Malone Presbyterian Church  
(Car park available)

10.00 am

**Castledawson** Presbyterian Church for Talk and  
Tour followed by Morning Coffee  
(Car park available)

11.15 am

1st **Magherafelt** Presbyterian Church for Talk  
and Tour

12.00 noon

Union Road, Magherafelt Presbyterian  
Church for Talk and Tour followed by Lunch

2.00 pm

**Moneymore** for Talk and Tour of 1st and 2nd  
Presbyterian Churches

3.30 pm

**Coagh** Presbyterian Church for Talk and Tour

5.00 pm

**Claggan** Presbyterian Church for Talk and Tour  
followed by an Evening Meal

8.00 pm

Coach arrives back at Malone Presbyterian  
Church  
(via Castledawson)

Cost – £30 for the ‘Wheels and Meals’ option,  
£16 for the ‘Meals Only’ option.

Participants with special dietary requirements  
should advise the Society of these  
by Wednesday 7 June 2017.

To book a place or for any related enquiries –  
please contact  
The Librarian, PHSI, 26 College Green, Belfast  
BT7 1LN,  
by email to [phsilibrarian@pcinet.org](mailto:phsilibrarian@pcinet.org)  
or by telephone on 028 9072 7330.

## **Record number at Down & Dromore confirmation weekend**

A record 195 people from 19 different parishes  
were expected at this year’s Down & Dromore  
confirmation weekend. They were to fill  
Castlewellan castle to the point where 4  
separate dining rooms will be needed to feed  
them!



The weekend was aimed at young people aged from 11–16 and had the 3 aims of teaching on prayer, the bible and who Jesus is. This was done through main teaching and worship and also several smaller groups of 15 young people led mostly by young leaders. The weekend also had a lot of outdoor activities a boys versus girls “Saturday Night Live”, movies, games, disco, ice cream shop and an alien invasion!

Tim Burns, who as Youth Officer organizes the weekend, said; ‘We are used to having large numbers on this weekend but this year has proved a wee bit more stressful trying to squeeze everyone in! It is the fun of being together from so many different churches but also what we will learn and experience from God over the 28 hours.’

## **Presentation of ‘Revolutionary’ Vatican’s Women’s Consultation Group**

The “Women’s Consultation Group,” a permanent body within the Pontifical Council for Culture, has been created and is ready to offer in an unprecedented way the unique contributions of women.

The group of 37, with the exception of a few who couldn’t escape work, was presented during a “meeting point” held in the Holy See Press Office on Tuesday, of this week.

Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, president of the Pontifical Council for Culture, was speaking along with Consuelo Corradi, coordinator of the Women’s Consultation Group and vice rector for research and international relations at the

LUMSA University of Rome, and the Iranian theologian Shahrazad Houshmand, member of the Consultation Group.

A further twenty women, also members of the Consultation Group, were also present. On the same occasion, the monographic issue of the dicastery's journal, "Culture and Faith", edited by the Women's Consultation Group, was presented.

Journalists had the chance to speak with Cardinal Ravasi and those present, including many women who, despite being very diverse from one another, agree that having this entity as a resource will help to ensure that women's voices and points of view don't fall on deaf ears, but rather are appreciated and acknowledged.

Iranian theologian Shahrazad Houshmand told how this is revolutionary, because never before did the Vatican have a group of this nature, which is consulted for their unique insights, especially for upcoming events.

She also clarified that "we are not feminists," and how they look forward to having a dialogue with male colleagues and priests, in order to learn from one another. She stressed that if they



were removed from the reality of the men and others, it wouldn't be right nor effective.

Consuelo Corradi, the group's coordinator, stressed how this initiative is not at all about bringing "something ideological," but women "in their concrete realities."

This diversity, she suggested, particularly in terms of vocation, career, background, etc, will offer possibilities to better touch the world's Catholics, through the unique insight of women.

An issue of the dicastery's journal, "Culture and Faith," edited by group, was also presented.

## **News briefs & Upcoming events**

**+++ Candle lit film on Sun, Sea and Soil -** Tonight, Monday the second in the series of candle-lit film evenings entitled 'Sun, Sea and Soil: Our Planet in the 21st Century' will be held in the Music Room of Christ Church cathedral, Dublin, at 6.30pm. Koyaanisqatsi, a cult American film examining the relationship between humans, nature and technology will be introduced by film writer and critic, Daniel Fitzpatrick.

**+++ Eucharists in Irish** - On Thursday evening at 7.30pm in St Mary's church, Carrigaline, there will be a celebration of the Eucharist in Irish at 7.30pm when the preacher will be the Bishop of Cashel, Ferns & Ossory who is Patron of Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise. On St Patrick's Day, the Primate, Dr Richard Clarke, will be the celebrant at the Eucharist in St Patrick's cathedral, Armagh, while in St Patrick's cathedral, Dublin, the Dean, Dr William Morton, will preach at the Patronal Eucharist. In St John's church, Sandymount, there will be a bi-lingual Eucharist at 11am.

**+++ Comic engagement with millennials in Cork, Cloyne & Ross** - On Saturday 25th February Mark Palmer, comedian, entertained a crowd of nearly 60 at the Celtic Ross Hotel, Rosscarbery, County Cork. The event, organised by Cork Diocesan Youth Council, was preceded by dinner. This was the third in a series of events for the 20s and 30s age group – and was hugely successful. Mark Palmer is originally from South Africa and is now based in London. He travels the world as a stand up comic and is in Dublin for a number of events in comedy clubs and in churches. He also told the audience about his Christian faith.

**+++ Fatima Centenary Year in Carryduff** - The Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Carryduff is hosting a Novena on the 13th of every month at 6.30pm. March 24, 2017 @ 6:30 pm – December 8, 2017 @ 7:00 pm. The Novena includes the Fatima Novena Prayer, the rosary, a time for adoration and benediction. All are warmly invited to join. Knockbracken Dr., Belfast BT8 8EX

**+++ St Anne's Dunmurry Parish Mission** - March 18, 2017 @ 6:30 pm – March 26, 2017 @ 12:00 pm . St Anne's Parish, Kingsway, Belfast BT10 0NE

**+++ A St Patrick's Day Sung Eucharist** - in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast at 9am on March 17 will be followed by breakfast in the Cathedral Hall.

**+++ The Salvation Army has a new ecumenical and interfaith web page** - Outline of their new Territorial Ecumenical Vision and Strategy:

**Vision**

To express our unity with other churches in harmonious relations and in sharing in the life and witness of the Body of Christ 'so that the world may believe' (John 17:21).

## **Strategy**

The strategy has three main objectives:

- 1 Deliver Effective Communication
- 2 Provide Helpful Resources
- 3 Enable Missional Partnerships

Please click [here](#) to visit the Salvation Army's Ecumenical and Interfaith webpage in order to view the action steps associated with this strategy, as well as a wealth of other ecumenical resources.

**GET CNI HEADLINES EACH DAY**

**on Twitter or Facebook**

**Click on logo at CNI Home page**

**[www.churchnewsireland.org](http://www.churchnewsireland.org)**

**+ Please share CNI with your friends**