

International gathering of evangelists and missioners issues global call to discipleship



Participants at the World Council of Churches' Conference on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME) have issued a "Call to Discipleship".

The call came in a statement from more than 1,000 people, all of whom are engaged in mission and evangelism in different Christian traditions across the world, who had gathered in Arusha, Tanzania, for the conference.

“Despite some glimmers of hope, we had to reckon with death-dealing forces that are shaking the world order and inflicting suffering on many,” the statement reads. “We observed the shocking accumulation of wealth due to one global financial system, which enriches few and impoverishes many.”

The statement said that millions of people are being marginalised and excluded by the “global imperial system” which had “made the financial market one of the idols of our time and has strengthened cultures of domination and discrimination”.

In contrast, the statement says that “discipleship is both a gift and a calling, to be active collaborators with God for the transforming of the world” and lists a number of ways that a call to transforming discipleship may be fulfilled, saying: “we are called to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ – the fullness of life, the repentance and forgiveness of sin, and the promise of eternal life – in word

and deed, in a violent world in which many are sacrificed to the idols of death and many have not yet heard the gospel.”

The statement was issued on the final day of the CWME, which ran from 8-13 March.

The World Council of Churches includes many Anglican, Orthodox and Protestant denominations.

The Roman Catholic Church is not a member, but Pope Francis sent a message to the conference endorsing its theme “Moving in the Spirit: Called to Transforming Discipleship”, saying that it “powerfully reminds us that the Lord’s mandate to bring the Gospel to all people is not a matter of power and influence in the world. Rather, it is a pressing call to discipleship which manifests itself in unfailing love of neighbour, whoever that may be.

“By transforming people, beginning with each one of us, the Gospel transforms the world. This work of the Holy Spirit within us begins in baptism, that transforming moment which unites all Christians in Christ, a unity that needs to be ever more visible, ‘so that the world may believe’ (John 17:21).

“I pray that the Holy Spirit will fill your hearts with the joy of the Gospel, the Good News of salvation in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ,” the Pope said. “To evangelise is to offer a convincing witness to this extraordinary truth. I pray that the Conference will remind Christians of the magnificent, unique and challenging responsibility we have to share this transforming message. God’s word is unimaginable in its power. The Gospel speaks of a seed which, once sown, grows by itself, even as the farmer sleeps.” In a video message to the CWME, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said that there was “no question about the importance of world mission and evangelism.” He continued: “Everybody is talking about transformation. . . And I know in my own life, the biggest transformation is to be born again. That’s the truth. And it is the Holy Spirit who does that. It is not us. We can’t twist people’s arms to it. We can’t make it happen: it is the Holy Spirit moving who does that.”

Two concerts from Belfast Cathedral to mark St Patrick’s Day
Belfast Cathedral provides a stunning backdrop for the BBC’s St Patrick’s Concert which will be broadcast on St Patrick’s Night at 9.00.



St Patrick's Day Concert host Lynette Fay at the recording in Belfast Cathedral. The concert will be broadcast on BBC Two Northern Ireland and BBC Radio Ulster on Saturday March 17 at 9pm.

The concert, recorded on Tuesday night, was hosted by Lynette Fay and will be broadcast simultaneously on BBC Two Northern Ireland and BBC Radio Ulster on Saturday March 17 at 9pm.

The show features the Ulster Orchestra, under the baton of conductor David Brophy, with guests including Beoga, Karl McGuckin, mezzo soprano Carolyn Dobbin and vocal group Ardú, who

performed with Brian Kennedy, and exciting new talent, 19-year-old singer/songwriter Roe.

Before Tuesday's recording, producer Feargal O'Kane said: "We are thrilled to be staging this concert in the scenic setting of St Anne's Cathedral."

On St Patrick's Night, the Cathedral hosts a concert by the New Irish Orchestra and special guests. Tickets are available from Newtownbreda Baptist Church at www.newtownbredabaptist.com

St Patrick's Day in Belfast Cathedral starts at 9.00 am. in the company of the choir as the Saint's Day is celebrated with a Choral Eucharist. Music at the service will have an Irish theme.

The Dean of Belfast, the Very Rev Stephen Forde, said: "This atmospheric service will be a wonderful opportunity for visitors to Belfast on St Patrick's Day to join the Cathedral community to reflect on the life of Ireland's Patron Saint while enjoying some beautiful Irish music from our choir and musicians. A warm welcome is extended to all." The Cathedral and gift shop will be open to visitors all day on March 17 with guided and self-guided tours available.



Young people invited to contribute to pre-synodal meeting in Rome through social media

Ahead of this year's synod of bishops on 'Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment', which will take place in Rome in October, Pope Francis has invited young people across the world to offer their contributions through social media.

More than 300 young people from all over the world and of different faiths will gather at the

Maria Mater Ecclesiae College in Rome from 19 to 24 March to present the results of the initiative to Pope Francis and offer their thoughts and ideas ahead of the synod.

Speaking recently on the results of the Synod Questionnaire, Cardinal Baldisseri, General Secretary of the Synod of Bishops, said, 'The Synod's questionnaire—said Secretary Baldisseri—was filled out by approximately 221,000 respondents. Of these, 100,500 answered all the questions: 58,000 girls and 42,500 boys.

'Almost 51,000 of the respondents, for 50.6% of the completed questionnaires, are young people between 16 and 19, and this shows that the youngest are more sensitive to the initiative.

'The continent with the strongest representation is Europe, with 56.4%, followed by Central and Southern America with 19.8%, and Africa with 18.1%. Among the respondents who completed the Questionnaire, 73.9% say that they are Catholics who consider religion important, while the remaining are Catholics who do not consider religion important (8.8%), non-Catholics who consider religion important (6.1%), and non-

Catholics who do not consider religion as important (11.1%).’

Young people aged between 16 and 29 are invited to join the conversation by joining the ‘Synod2018’ Facebook group and by using #Synod2018 on Twitter and Instagram.

For more information on the upcoming synod on ‘Young People, the Faith and Vocational Discernment’, please see www.Synod2018.va.

Churches and community welcome new rector of Cobh

On Sunday afternoon, 11th March, in the presence of a large congregation of parishioners, visitors, clergy and readers from Cork, Cloyne and Ross, in Christ Church, Rushbrooke, Cobh, County Cork, the Reverend Paul Arbuthnot was instituted as incumbent of Cobh and Glanmire Union of Parishes.

The Bishop, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, presided. Among the invited guests were representatives of the Mayor of Cork County, the Naval Service, An Garda Síochána, the Cobh branch of ONE, and clergy from the local Roman



At the Institution in Cobh and Glanmire were (l-r) John C. Jermyn (Assistant Diocesan Registrar); the Reverend Tony Murphy (Rural Dean); the Reverend David McDonnell (Preacher); the Reverend Elaine Murray (Bishop's Chaplain); the Reverend Paul Arbuthnot (Incumbent of Cobh and Glanmire); the Very Reverend Nigel Dunne (Dean of Cork); the Bishop; and the Venerable Adrian Wilkinson (Archdeacon of Cork, Cloyne and Ross)

Catholic Parish, including St Colman's Cathedral, Cobh. The Rector of Dunfanaghy in the Diocese of Raphoe, the Reverend David McDonnell, was the preacher.

The Lisburn Three are freed raising funds for school and street outreach in Uganda



Roy Totten, left, and Abaana's Neville Jones were released before Dean Sam Wright, who faced a solitary time until his bail conditions were also met.

The Lisburn Three – the Dean of Connor, the Very Rev Sam Wright, Roy Totten, MBE, and Neville Jones of Abaana Ministries – have all been released from Crumlin Road Gaol.

They are just short of raising their combined bail target of £5,000, but with online donations open until early June, it can be presumed this shortfall will be made up and the powers-that-be were right to let the men off leniently for, of course, good conduct!

The bail dosh will now be diverted into the costs of constructing a new toilet block at the Dr Andrew McAvoy Primary School in northern Uganda. A team of young people from Lisburn Cathedral, where Sam is Dean, will be travelling to Uganda this summer.

First to be released was Roy, a parishioner of Glenavy and Board Member at Belfast Cathedral. He was followed to freedom some time later by Neville, a Lisburn Cathedral parishioner and Assistant Director of Abaana.

Dean Sam had a longer incarceration, and was spotted pacing the walls of his bare cell nervously. But his exemplary conduct, befitting a Dean of Connor, earned him the respect of his gaolers and he was finally released back into the community on the Monday evening.

His longer hair and the stubble on his chin were the only outward signs of his long imprisonment.

Mentally, though, the effect of this experience on the Dean will take longer to determine!

As well as building the much needed toilets at the Dr Andrew McAvoy Primary School, the young Lisburn Cathedral team will hold a three-day holiday bible club at the school, and work with street children in Kampala, the capital city of Uganda.

You can still sponsor [Sam](#), [Roy](#) or [Neville](#). Meantime, the three men have expressed gratitude to all those who believed in them and whose generosity helped FREE THE LISBURN THREE!

To learn more about Abaana, or the work the Lisburn Cathedral team will be doing in Uganda this summer, please contact Neville Jones on 07796936768 or by email neville@abaana.org.

Bishops reaffirm commitment to child safeguarding at Spring General Meeting

At the Spring General Meeting of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference, which concluded last week in Maynooth, bishops met with



representatives from the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland and reaffirmed their commitment to child safeguarding.

Bishops welcomed Mr John Morgan and Ms Teresa Devlin, the chair and CEO of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland to the meeting to discuss the ongoing work of the national board.

In their statement following the general meeting, bishops said, 'Irrespective of improved standards, vigilance and greater awareness,

bishops agreed that the Church can never become complacent concerning the safeguarding of children.'

'Bishops reflected on the immense suffering caused to children and vulnerable persons by abuse. They emphasised the shared responsibilities of Church and statutory authorities for prompt reporting, robust risk assessment, concrete action to prevent further abuse, and meaningful outreach to victims in support of the healing process and to assist their search for justice.

'Bishops reiterated their commitment to both the review process of dioceses undertaken by the National Board and their full cooperation with any inquiry required by statutory bodies.'

For more information on the work of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland, please see www.safeguarding.ie.

The full text of the Bishops' Conference statement following the Spring General Meeting, which also addressed prayer for the protection of life from the moment of conception until natural death; updates on preparations for the World Meeting of Families 2018; Trócaire's 2018

Lenten Campaign on humanitarian crises around the world; Saint Patrick's Day, Saturday 17 March; Lent and preparation for Easter, can be found on www.catholicbishops.ie.

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