



## **Vigil walk between two green lit Armagh Cathedrals on eve of St Patrick's Day**

A unique event in the city of Armagh took place yesterday evening to mark the eve of Saint Patrick's Day. Both of the city's cathedrals are dedicated to the island's Patron Saint, Saint Patrick, and both were illuminated in green to mark the occasion.

A Vigil walk between the two illuminated cathedrals began at 9/00pm at the Church of

Ireland Cathedral and moved to the Roman Catholic Cathedral.

Archbishop Richard Clarke led those gathered in prayer at Saint Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral at 9.00pm and then guided the group in torchlight to Saint Patrick's Roman Catholic Cathedral where it was welcomed by Archbishop Eamon Martin. This symbolic expression of the unity of the Churches was a reflection of Saint Patrick's own journey of uniting the Irish people with Christianity.

## **What St Patrick means to me, Archbishop Clarke**

For me, one of the joys of Patrick's Day - particularly in Armagh - is the sense of the day uniting people, writes Archbishop Richard Clarke in The Irish News.

The city of Armagh has two cathedrals named for St Patrick, both the Church of Ireland and Roman Catholic cathedrals, and both Archbishops are very much involved together in the celebration of the day.

At a deeper level, however, there is more to our celebration of St Patrick.

At a time of mass migration across the globe, I become increasingly aware that Patrick was a migrant and, on his first visit to Ireland, an unwilling one.

In modern parlance, we would say that he was "trafficked". And trafficking is still with us today, and on an increasing scale, an evil scourge that destroys the lives of thousands of people, year in and year out.

We should not be under any illusion that our part of the world is somehow spared from this use of other people as disposable commodities who have no rights, and who are given no hope of a better life by those who see them only as a means for profit.

Yet, Patrick the trafficked slave, is somehow able to rise above this deprivation. With courage and faith, he returns to Ireland - again as an exile - but with a new purpose and determination to bring his Christian faith to those around him.

The special prayer - the collect - for St Patrick's Day used by the Church of Ireland throughout the island of Ireland thanks God for choosing St



***Dr Richard Clarke, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh***

Patrick to bring those people of Ireland who were in darkness into a true light, and knowledge of God.

It was painful and difficult for a man who had been so badly treated as a trafficked slave, but we should be thankful that in his exile Patrick selflessly gave all of himself to bring Christian peace and love into the lives of those around him.

A St Patrick's Day that is worthy of the name should join us together in thanking God for all

those who have given us our individual understanding of the Christian faith.

Equally we should feel a real determination to treat those who are exiles here in Ireland here today with the dignity and care that they each deserve as children of God.

:: Dr Richard Clarke is the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland

## **Archbishop Eamon Martin's message for Saint Patrick's Day 2017**

On this Feast of our Patron Saint, I send warm greetings from the Cathedral City of Saint Patrick in Armagh to Irish people everywhere. Today unites the Irish at home with our relatives and friends who live abroad and with the hundreds of thousands of others who are happy to celebrate this day with us.

Conscious that our National Apostle first encountered Ireland as a migrant, I offer special greetings to the 'new Irish' – the many migrants who have made their home among us. Céad míle fáilte romhaibh!

This Saint Patrick's Day, prompted by the situation of thousands of displaced people around the world, let us think about Patrick the 'unlearned refugee' (as he once described himself), the slave in exile, Patrick the undocumented migrant. Many of our compatriots remain undocumented in various countries around the world and in some cases feel vulnerable and treated with suspicion.

As Irish people, we cannot think of Patrick without acknowledging the enormous humanitarian and pastoral challenges facing growing numbers of people who find themselves displaced and without status in our world. This is so shockingly exemplified by the refugee crisis here in Europe. I invite you to pray for refugees and for all displaced families at this time and, wherever you are, to encourage the hospitality and welcome for which we, Irish, are famous the world over.

In 2017, when we think of the treacherous journeys many migrants are forced to make, we are powerfully reminded of those who commit their lives to the protection of humanity. I salute the tremendous work of the Irish navy which has helped rescue thousands of migrants from



the Mediterranean. Today I especially bring to mind the bravery, commitment and dedication of the women and men of our own search and rescue services at home. Our prayers are with the families of the crew of Coast Guard Helicopter Rescue 116: Captain Dara Fitzpatrick, Mark Duffy, Ciaran Smith and Paul Ormsby.

Saint Patrick's experience of isolation and captivity as a teenager transformed and shaped his whole life and his relationship with God. His lonely time as a slave on the hills of Ireland became a transforming experience, where he felt

embraced by the fatherly love of God. The more he prayed, day and night, the more he came to realise that God was calling him to conversion and close friendship with Him.

Having once been 'like a stone lying in the mud' he now felt as if God had picked him up and placed him at the very top of the wall!

Much later in his life Patrick, now a bishop, became the object of character assassination and faced a vote of no confidence because of the sins and mistakes of his youth. Once more, in his exile and isolation, he felt the presence and protection of God who loved him as the 'apple of his eye'.

No wonder our Patron Saint was able to feel great empathy with the struggles of his people, especially those of his new converts in Ireland who were themselves captured and sold into slavery by the human traffickers of his day. Centuries later Saint Patrick continues to inspire Irish people everywhere to speak and work for an end to similar exploitation where it is happening today.



Guím idirghuí Naomh Pádraig ar ár lucht imirce scaipthe ar fud na cruinne. Ba dheoraí NaomhPádraig é féin tráth. Tuigeann sé ar n'uaigneas agus ar m'briseadh chroí. Guím beannacht, ráth agus séan ár bPatrúin oraibh uilig.

- Archbishop Eamon Martin is Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland.

## **Shamrocks from Armagh in Kabul**

The Shamrock Presentation parade is a highlight of [The Royal Irish Regiment](#)'s year and originates back to the turn of the 20th century when Queen Victoria instructed all ranks of her Irish Regiments to wear, as a distinction, a sprig of shamrock in their head dress, to commemorate the gallantry of her Irish soldiers during the Boer War in South Africa.

On 5 March 1900, after news of the particularly bloody Boer War battle, Queen Victoria telegraphed the following message to her victorious troops, "I have heard with the deepest concern of the heavy losses sustained by my brave Irish soldiers."



***he Royal Irish Regiment's wolfhound mascot with the shamrocks for Kabul***

On 14 March 1900 Queen Victoria issued the following instruction: "Her Majesty the Queen is pleased to order that in future, upon Saint Patrick's Day, all ranks of her Irish Regiments shall wear, as a distinction, a sprig of shamrock in their head dress, to commemorate the

gallantry of her Irish soldiers during the recent battles in South Africa."

A regimental spokesman said, "The Shamrock has made its way from Armagh, via 1 R IRISH to Kabul. Home or abroad, all members of The Royal Irish Regiment will receive and wear their Shamrock with pride."



## **Presbyterians host dementia and faith workshop**

With people living with dementia on the increase, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) hosted a special workshop in Belfast yesterday (16 March) to look at how people in faith communities can work together to make life easier for people with dementia and their carers.

The initiative is part of the Reframing Dementia Project, which aims to change the way people think about dementia and is supported by Dementia Services Development Trust. Working across Ireland, and with people of all faiths, the project is led by two of the workshop's key speakers, Professor June Andrews FRCN, OBE, [churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

an international specialist in improving dementia care and Mark Butler, an expert on organisational change and director of the Dementia Festival of Ideas.

Explaining the purpose of the day, Lindsay Conway, Secretary to PCI's Council for Social Witness said, "Working closely with other churches and faith-based organisations, we want to discuss how dementia impacts on church life and how best to equip and give practical support to clergy, pastoral care workers, carers and professionals to work more effectively in a faith setting with people living with dementia.

"Today's workshop is part of a process that will ultimately lead to the publication of a special resource that will better equip those pastoring, supporting and working with older people with dementia, as it is important to remember that if faith and religious observance is an integral part of a person, it must be an integral part of their care, even if they have dementia.

The workshop will explore some of the major issues for congregations including:

- What do churches need to be ready to respond to dementia

- What can churches do to support carers, and what do we need to make that response?
- How can churches support people who live or work in care homes, or whose family is in a care home?
- How to support people to maintain worship at this time?

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Professor Andrews said, “Our early work has been inspired by the safeguarding work in the Church of Scotland and has been supported by new ideas from the Catholic Church where Pope Francis has said that, ‘We must reawaken our collective sense of gratitude, appreciation and hospitality, helping the elderly know they are a living part of their communities...’

“Experience has demonstrated that every parish has people with dementia, families who are struggling with it, and people who would like to help but are not sure what they can do that will be practical and make a difference. This project will help people especially where they are poor, sick and alone. It will also give support to families who are struggling with this problem.



***Speaking at yesterday's Dementia and Faith workshop (LtoR) Lindsay Conway, Secretary to the Council for Social Witness with speakers, Professor June Andrews, Presbyterian Moderator Dr. Frank Sellar, who gave a reflection to open the workshop, former Chief Nursing Officer for Northern Ireland, Professor Martin Bradley and Mark Butler.***

“It will work by undertaking activities that support leaders in the parish, including priests, ministers and parishioners to understand the practical implications of old age, frailty and dementia, while providing guidance, and where needed training, on what kind of support makes a difference, focussing on what you can do within existing resources.”

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland currently provides residential care and supported housing to some 280 older people across 12 locations in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and many of its staff have taken advanced courses in caring for people with dementia.

Lindsay Conway concluded by saying, “We are committed to providing the best possible care for all our residents, those attending our church services and organisations, including those with dementia.

“As a faith-based provider of services and residential care for older people, today’s workshop and the resources that will ultimately come from it as part of the Reframing Dementia Project, will greatly help us to support those we care for.”

In connection with the Reframing Dementia Project, Professor Andrews and Mark Butler are holding another free event ‘Imagine a New Old Age’ at the Imagine! Belfast Festival of Ideas and Politics on Saturday 25th March, 6pm-8pm, at The Mac in Belfast.

## **Church of Ireland anti-racism initiative draws global support**

Mary McAleese is to launch event calling for parishes to ring their bells against xenophobia, Patsy McGarry writes in The Irish Times.

Support continues to grow throughout Ireland and internationally for next Sunday's "Joy of Bells" initiative in opposition to racism and xenophobia.

Former president of Ireland Mary McAleese will launch the event, initiated by the Church of Ireland's Dean of Waterford Maria Jansson, at Christ Church Cathedral in Waterford at 11am on Sunday to coincide with St Patrick's weekend.

The Catholic bishops have encouraged parishes to ring their church bells next Sunday "so that, in ringing, they proclaim our Christian witness and proclamation of faith, trust, love, reconciliation and joy and that every migrant is welcome."

The Dublin Council of Churches has unanimously urged members to join in next Sunday "as a sign of welcome to immigrants and a rejection of physical and mental barriers," said Pastor Martin Sauter of Dublin's Lutheran



# STAND



## To Support Refugees

Church. The council includes 13 different Christian denominations.

### **Support**

Also supporting the initiative are the Irish Council of Churches, the Church of Ireland primate Archbishop Richard Clarke, both Archbishops of Dublin Diarmuid Martin and Michael Jackson, Rabbi Zalman Lent of the Irish Jewish Community, the Catholic primate of England and Wales Cardinal Vincent Nichols, former Archbishop of Canterbury/head of the worldwide Anglican Communion Archbishop Rowan Williams, and Cardinal Joseph Tobin of Newark, New Jersey, US.

Support has also come from elsewhere in Europe, Africa, the Americas, Australia, and the

Middle and Far East. Details are available at [christchurchwaterford.com](http://christchurchwaterford.com).

### **Personal suffering**

That the bells will ring next weekend “is not a coincidence”, Mrs McAleese has said. “The name of St Patrick is known throughout the world and is synonymous with Ireland but what is not always so well known about him is that he was an immigrant to Ireland and by any standards, despite considerable personal suffering, one of the most successful in history,” she said.

“The bells will be ringing a message of love, hope and inclusion that we hope will bring comfort to the men, women and children whose lives are blighted by the hatred and bigotry of those who would deny them their dignity and rights as human beings. The bells will ring out as a challenge to all Christians to honour the great commandment to love one another,” she said.

## **Order now: C of I to reprint Book of Common Prayer**

A Working Group has been established by the Standing Committee of the General Synod to



arrange a reprint of the Book of Common Prayer, which is now completely out of stock.

A revised edition of the Book of Common Prayer will be going to press in 2018, and will include the various changes and additions that have been approved by meetings of the General Synod since 2005. It is intended that the pagination will remain unchanged (as far as this is possible).

However, the Working Group is hearing from parishes of an urgent need for copies of the Book of Common Prayer at the present time, and so is asking members of the clergy to tell them of this need, in order that the desired number of copies can be made available by the short-term reprint. This will be a reprint of the basic pew edition. It is hoped to keep the euro

price as it currently stands (c. €20), depending on the number of copies printed; fluctuations in the exchange rate may affect the sterling price.

The Synod Officer, Dr Catherine Smith, would be grateful, therefore, if any clergy whose parishes would like to order the Book of Common Prayer in 2017 and the first half of 2018 would contact her by email by 31st March to let her know how many copies they require, so that the Working Group can order the appropriate number from the publisher. Dr Smith can be contacted by email at [catherine.smith@rcbdub.org](mailto:catherine.smith@rcbdub.org)

## **Academic Administrator appointed at C of I Theological Institute**

Ms Rhiannon Carey Bates has been appointed to the post of part-time Academic Administrator at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute

Ms Carey Bates has previously worked in the Secretary's Office in the University of Dublin, Trinity College, where she also recently submitted a PhD in Medieval History. She will commence her employment with CITI on 20 March.

The Director of CITI, Revd Canon Dr Maurice Elliott, said 'Robust processes within

increasingly complex administrative systems and strong communications both internally and externally are key drivers towards the enhanced delivery of all training programmes. We are confident that Rhiannon will quickly play her part in the consolidation and expansion of these, and are delighted to welcome her as a member of the Institute team.'

## **Presbyterians launch special East Africa appeal**

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland has launched a church-wide special appeal to support the international relief effort in East Africa, following the worst drought to hit the region in over half a century, and will be releasing an initial £60,000 (€69,100) to its aid partners in the region.

With millions of people at risk of food shortages and possible starvation, Presbyterian Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Frank Sellar has written to all ministers and congregations across Ireland, to launch a special appeal for the East Africa Crisis. Launching his appeal Dr. Sellar said, "Parts of South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia have all suffered two seasons of prolonged dry spells and crop failures leaving a shocking 16 million

people at risk. Famine was declared in parts of South Sudan in February – making it the first official famine in any part of the world in the past six years.

“Given the scale of this disaster, and following consultation with colleagues, I am launching a special Moderator’s Appeal today towards the emergency relief effort. I would take the opportunity to encourage our members to respond in a generous and timely way, just as they have on many previous occasions.”

The Church is immediately releasing £60,000 (€69,100) to be distributed to PCI’s partners, Christian Aid, Tearfund and the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan’s Relief and Development Agency (PRDA). All are already engaged in longer term sustainable development work in the affected regions, and all are now well-placed to direct additional efforts to the unfolding crisis.

Despite this challenging situation, these agencies and the PRDA will ensure that contributions are used wisely in the provision of immediate relief of those struggling the most in East Africa.

Dr. Sellar concluded by saying, “In Nepal last year I had the privilege of seeing first-hand the very real and practical results of our giving following the 2015 earthquake and our subsequent appeal. I would encourage you to continue to pray and to give generously to this new urgent request, so that we may play our part in saving lives and restoring hope to the many caught up in this catastrophic situation.”

Donations can also be made via  
[www.presbyterianireland.org/donate](http://www.presbyterianireland.org/donate)

## News brief

**+++ Bishop's condolences at helicopter crew loss** - The Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry, the Rt Rev Patrick Rooke, has expressed his condolences to the families of the helicopter crew who lost their lives off the Co Mayo coast. ‘It is so sad’, he said, ‘that those dedicated to the rescue of others should themselves be lost in such tragic circumstances. The hearts of all those across the community in the West go out to their loved ones at this most difficult time for them.’

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