

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



Members of the Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocesan Education Committee with Professor Brian Bocking: I-r Ms Fiona Giles, the Reverend Brian O'Rourke, Ms Olwen Anderson, Professor Brian Bocking, the Bishop, Canon Paul Willoughby, and Mr Noel Locke.

**Cork education
highlighted**

The Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, welcomed principals of schools under his patronage, and chairpersons of boards of management, to St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork on Thursday, 20th March.

Professor Brian Bocking, Professor of the Study of Religions at University College Cork delivered a paper *Religion among the religions: promoting religious literacy in the 21st Century*.

Afterwards the Bishop and Mrs Colton hosted everyone to a meal at the Bishop's Palace. The event was also attended by Dr Ken Fennelly and Ms Eimear Ryan from the Board of Education of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland.



School Principals from Cork, Cloyne and Ross, Chairperson of Boards of Management, and guests, following the lecture at St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork.

Jesus College sings Evensong in Belfast

Choral Evensong at 5 pm this Sunday in St George's Parish Church, Belfast, will be sung by Jesus College Choir from Cambridge, who are on a short Irish tour.

If you aren't a regular, this is a great opportunity to learn why so many people get addicted to Choral Evensong. If you're in the city anyway, why not pop in?

Service and events

Tomorrow evening, on the eve of St Macartin's Day, the Archbishop of Armagh will preach at Choral Evensong in St Macartin's cathedral, Enniskillen.

In Christ Church cathedral, Dublin, at Evensong, Canon Robert Deane, Rector of the Swords group of parishes, will be installed as Canon Treasurer and the Revd David Gillespie, Rector of St Ann & St Stephen's, as 12th canon. In St George's church, Belfast, Evensong will be sung by the choir of Jesus College, Cambridge.(see report above for time)

On Tuesday the final lecture in the series, 'Introducing Christ Church' will be given by Canon Roy Byrne who will talk about the cathedral's collection of

silver. The lecture begins in the Music Room of Christ Church cathedral, Dublin, at 1.05pm.

From Friday until Tuesday 1 April a fully staged production of Benjamin Britten's *Noye's Fludde* will be performed in St Mary's cathedral, Limerick, as part of the Limerick City of Culture. More details may be had at www.limerickcityofculture.ie

Among the Lenten events next week will be a lecture tomorrow (Sunday) evening in All Saints church, Mullingar, where the politician, Seamus Mallon, will reflect on 'Was there a Christian perspective to the Peace Process?' Wednesday will bring another Quiet Day in St Anne's cathedral, Belfast, while in All Hallows' College, Drumcondra, on Wednesday evening at 7.30pm Dr Kenneth Milne, educationalist and historian, will speak on 'Hope and the Wisdom of Age'. - *Church notes, Irish Times*

Details of 35th Navan Choral Festival announced

Entries are sought for the 35th anniversary Navan Choral Festival, which takes place from Thursday 8th May to Sunday 11th May next in three venues – Newgrange Hotel, St Mary's Church of Ireland, Navan, and Simonstown Gaels GFC Clubhouse. Closing date for entries is 31st March.

Meath Chronicle - The festival has seen a huge increase in entries in recent years and some 60 choirs are expected to take part comprising of some 1,600 competitors battling it out for honours at one of Ireland's most prestigious choir festivals. The competing choirs will come from the four corners of Ireland adding a much needed boost to businesses in Navan. They will compete in competitions for solo singing, school choirs, youth choirs, adult choirs and church choirs, as well as piano solo and solo singing. -

The undoubted highlight again this will be the National Choir of the Year Competition, proving that Navan Choral Festival stands at the forefront of choral singing here in Ireland. This is sponsored by Navan Rotary, which will be held on Sunday evening 11th May, in the Newgrange Hotel at 7.15pm, with free admission to the public.

All information, syllabus and entry forms are on www.navanchoralfestival.com, or contact Ernest on (087) 244 3739 -

See more at: <http://www.meathchronicle.ie/whatson/roundup/articles/2014/03/20/4020321-details-of-35th-navan-choral-festival-announced/#sthash.xKMtXbxF.dpuf>

Belfast Community Gospel Choir Quiz championship

Have you got what it takes to be crowned BCGC Quiz Champion 2014?

BCGC are holding a fundraising quiz on Friday 11th April at 8pm in the Holiday Inn, Ormeau Ave, Belfast!

The Choir states - "Hosted by Liverpool's finest Quizmaster, Johnny Bongo, it's sure to be a lot of craic and just a little bit manic! Plus there's lots of fab prizes to be won.

"With limited places available make sure to secure your team today by buying tickets on our website. Tickets are £5 plus a £0.50 booking charge."

http://www.bcgc.biz/th_event/american-dream-quiz-night/



City fare well to actor Jimmy Ellis

News Letter - The people of Belfast have paid tribute to one of their favourite sons at the funeral of Z-Cars actor Jimmy Ellis.

Crowds applauded outside City Hall as the cortege paused for a few minutes on a slow journey around landmarks close to the star's heart.

Earlier actors Jimmy Nesbitt and Adrian Dunbar were among mourners who offered support to the actor's family at a service at St Mark's church in the Sydenham area of east Belfast where he grew up.

Ellis, who is survived by his wife Robina, son Toto, daughter Amanda and three grandchildren, died from a stroke in Lincoln Hospital on March 8 aged 82.

His son said his father was a "generous hearted man" who was always proud of his Belfast roots. More at -

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/video-jimmy-nesbitt-among-guests-at-james-ellis-funeral-1-5952339>

The preacher at the service was a former rector of St Mark's, Rt Rev John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher. The text of his homily can be found at -

<http://ireland.anglican.org/news/5041>

Major examination of the budget breakdown for all N Ireland schools

A full breakdown of the budget allocated to all Northern Ireland schools for this incoming academic year has been revealed by The Detail yesterday.

Kathryn Torney writes in The Detail - Education Minister John O'Dowd has defended his department's new funding scheme for schools – which has resulted in a reduced budget for over 300 schools (27%) compared to last year, alongside a specific increase in financial support for the only Irish-medium post-primary school.

Questions have already been asked about the difference in per pupil funding levels between the nursery/primary and post-primary sectors. The average amount allocated per pupil attending nursery and primary schools is almost £1,000 less than for post-primary pupils.

The Minister has stressed that his reform is based on the principle of tackling social disadvantage “wherever it is”.

“The changes are not about favouring one sector over another,” he told The Detail.

Pupils entitled to free meals have consistently under-performed in school examinations in Northern Ireland compared to their non-free meals peers. Protestant boys entitled to free meals are known to significantly under-achieve when it comes to school exams.

The Minister hopes that redirecting school funding could improve the academic outcomes for all deprived pupils.

New data released to The Details shows a higher concentration of deprivation within Catholic maintained schools compared to schools in the controlled sector. More at -

<http://www.thedetail.tv/issues/309/school-budgets-2014/budget-breakdown-for-all-northern-ireland-schools>

New Educate Together school for Tramore

Parents in Tramore who have been campaigning for an Educate Together school, have responded with delight to the announcement by the Minister of Education & Skills, Ruairi Quinn TD, that a school will open in the town in September 2014.

Waterford Today - The announcement has been welcomed both locally and nationally and is the result of over five years campaigning by local parents and the national organisation of Educate Together.

Responding to the announcement, Paul Rowe, CEO of Educate Together said: "We are delighted to see a new school opening in Tramore to meet the demonstrated demand for educational diversity in the town."

Paul continued, "This is a positive development not just for parents seeking an Educate Together school in Tramore, but also for the wider community as it will compliment existing school provision in the town."

Said Declan Power, Chairperson of the Tramore Parents' Group, "We are delighted with the news that a new Educate Together School is to be opened in Tramore in September 2014. We have been campaigning since 2010 and on behalf of the Educate Together Start Up Committee I would like to thank everyone who has offered support throughout the campaign, especially the parents of almost 100 children who expressed an interest and pre-enroled their children".

Said Corinne McLoughlin, parent and Enrolment Officer for the school, "This is fantastic news for Tramore. Parents of the town and surrounding areas will now have a greater choice of primary education with the addition of an Educate Together Primary School"

CCD Bellringers success

The Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, bellringers team won the bellringer competition last Saturday to take the Lindoff Cup, for best ringing on 8 bells in a test lasting 10 minutes against strong opposition.

This qualifies the team to compete in the all-Ireland Murphy Cup competition, to take place this year in Limerick, European City of Culture, on May 17.

Taking part last Saturday were - Leslie Taylor, Tony Reale, Vyvyenne Chamberlain, David Hogan, David Taylor, John Clarke, Gary McGuire, Nigel Pelow.

€100,000 gift is answer to prayers from silent Benedictine monks

An anonymous donor from the Netherlands has pledged €100,000 to save an Irish monastery.

Irish Independent - The incredible donation came after a silent Catholic order spoke out about their "critical financial situation" in an appeal for funds to save their cash-strapped priory at Stamullen in Co Meath.

The Benedictine Monks of Perpetual Adoration said they needed €750,000 to buy the 170-year old buildings where they have lived since coming from America at the invitation of the Bishop of Meath, Dr [Michael Smith](#), two years ago.

The monks are hopeful their home will be saved after receiving donations from all over the world.

"The donor from the Netherlands asked to remain anonymous but she pledged €100,000 in order to get the ball rolling. We cannot believe it. We cannot believe how good people have been and all donations, big or small are significant and gratefully received," said Dom Mark.

Since coming to Ireland just two years ago, the monks have received over 20 applications from men wishing to become Benedictines.

More at -



Brother James, Dom Mark Daniel Kirby and Brother Benedict. Photo: Barry Cronin

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/100000-gift-is-answer-to-prayers-from-silent-benedictine-monks-30109079.html>

Vocations crisis sees Church prepare for lay ministers

The prospect of priests not receiving remains at Church or officiating at graves at funerals is contained in the Killaloe Pastoral Plan to 2020 as the Church there grapples with the growing vocations crisis.

Irish Examiner - Against the background of declining vocations, the plan states: "We have to plan for a situation where members of the local community will lead liturgical celebrations on weekdays and also on Sundays when no priest is available."

The plan also states that, on any given weekend, Masses will not be held in all of the existing churches, but will be scheduled for parish clusters. The plan also states that roles previously performed by priests such as "visiting the sick, bringing communion to the housebound, receiving funerals at the church and officiating at graveside" will be done by lay ministers.

The plan states: "We need to continue making significant shifts in thinking and practice, if we are not to find ourselves struggling beyond our capacities in the middle of the next decade." Currently, the diocese has only one seminarian who is due to be ordained a priest in the summer of 2015 and diocesan spokesman Fr Brendan Quinlivan said yesterday: "After that, we have no one, but I know that our director of vocations is in talks with a number of people who have expressed an interest in joining the priesthood."

More than half of the 82 priests in the diocese are over 66 years of age, with the priests serving 56 parishes stretching from Loop Head in west Clare to Kinnity in Offaly. More at -

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/vocations-crisis-sees-church-prepare-for-lay-ministers-262752.html>

Justin Welby makes great strides, but his greatest challenge is yet to come

A year after enthronement, the Archbishop of Canterbury has proved many doubters wrong

Daily Telegraph - It could have been like one of those moments in a country parish where a trendy new vicar rolls up with plans to rip out the Victorian pews to make way for a drum-kit and an overhead projector. The arrival of Justin



Welby, a former businessman whose brand of Christianity is marked with the zeal of the convert, as the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury had the potential to ruffle more than a few feathers in the established Church.

Within months of his enthronement, a year ago today, he seemed on course to do just that. He had overhauled his staff, with a series of new appointments. He had persuaded rival factions to take part in something akin to drama therapy sessions to confront their differences over women bishops, and he had delivered a blistering address to the General Synod on how it needed to face up to a sexual “revolution”.

But a year into the job – which combines the work of a medieval prelate, a FTSE chief executive and a world-weary inner-city rector – he has scored a series of successes that would have seemed unthinkable in the past. After decades of argument and years of tortuous legislative twists and turns, the Church of England is on the brink of finally approving the admission of women into the episcopate.

Instead of attracting the usual headlines about an embattled primate seeking to quell divisions, he has successfully shifted attention, at home at least, to matters such as payday lenders and food banks. And remarkably, in a country where fewer and fewer inhabitants profess any religious faith, his views on everything from banking reform to military action in distant countries is actively sought out and reported. Even what might have been his first major public gaffe – the revelation that the Church had an investment in Wonga, the lender he publicly pledged to try to put out of business – he turned to his advantage with a plain-spoken admission of embarrassment.

More at -

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/10711762/Justin-Welby-makes-great-strides-but-his-greatest-challenge-is-yet-to-come.html>

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