



Church and cathedral bells are due to be rung on March 19th at 11am in locations around the world in protest at anti-immigrant sentiment.

Waterford leads Joy of Bells protest at anti-immigrant sentiment

Former Irish president Mary McAleese is to launch a 'Joy of Bells' initiative at Waterford's Church of Ireland Christ Church Cathedral on March 19th in protest at anti-immigrant sentiment sweeping the western world.

Responding to an idea by Dean of Waterford Maria Jansson, Ms McAleese will speak at the 10am Eucharist service there and launch a ringing of the Cathedral bells at 11am (or as near as Church services permit) in opposition to what Dean Jansson has described as “the incredible fear out there” being generated towards immigrants and refugees.

Ms McAleese said: “The Dean of Waterford cathedral has taken a timely, simple but profound initiative which I hope will be copied by many churches throughout Europe and other parts of the world.”

She continued: “The event at Waterford’s Christ Church Cathedral will take place over St Patrick’s weekend. That is not a coincidence. 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. “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.”

Dean Jansson said that “as a woman and a Christian I feel we have to make an appropriate response to the cacophony of hatred which gets more frightening every day across Europe.”

In the weeks between now and March 19th the dean will be encouraging other churches and places of worship across Ireland and Europe to join with Waterford in ringing their bells in joint protest.

She recalled how “a couple of years ago a well organised fascist demonstration was set up in the area surrounding Vasteras cathedral in Sweden. As the rally began, with swastikas and hate-filled speeches, the doors of the cathedral closed and the cathedral bells tolled loud and clear over the city, drowning out the sounds of hate and racism.”

“Bells sound alarm but also a gathering of people for good. Drown the sounds of hate with the call for justice. Make a loud noise that those who are made invisible by hate will hear our solidarity. This invitation is extended to all to raise a different voice in our world,” Dean Jansson said.

“At a time when there is worldwide fear and disquiet, we will use this opportunity to peal a very different message, inviting communities at home and abroad to ring their bells on that day in protest and in hope.”

Christians across the world are invited to ring their bells on March 19th in protest and in solidarity and to spread the word far and wide about this appeal.

If you would like to join in this peal, please complete the form on the [Christ Church Cathedral Waterford website](#), which will publish all locations the week preceding March 19th.

Archbishop Martin of Armagh “nervous” of any reconstruction of the border

The Primate of All Ireland has admitted that the bishops are “a bit nervous about the impact that the reconstruction of a border wall could have on the peace process”.

In an interview with Vatican Insider, Archbishop Eamon Martin said the European Union’s

principles of peace, reconciliation and harmony had shaped the peace process in Ireland.

Asked about the consequence of a return of a border in the wake of Britain's vote for Brexit, he warned that the freedom of movement would be at stake.

“As one Church, we want to have assurances that the possibility to move between the North and the Republic will remain the same as today,” he said.

In addition to the uncertainty over Brexit across the island of Ireland, Northern Ireland is going to the polls on Thursday this week.

On 22 February, the North's bishops issued a statement appealing to politicians to “reject the temptation to retreat into partisanship” at this time of growing divisions in political life locally and the negotiation of change in the UK's status in the European Union.

In his interview with Vatican Insider, Archbishop Martin said the bishops wanted to “calm things down”, especially in view of the identity stigmatisation which has emerged in recent weeks and the return to anger.

“We want to say as bishops our firm ‘no’ to a harsh language and remind our politicians that their vocation is to work for the common good and exercise their leadership through the careful practice of compromise and agreement.”

He added that they were also warning politicians to be careful not to sacrifice the progress made in the past 20 years thanks to the Good Friday Agreement.

According to the Archbishop, the Church wants to be a peaceful voice of reconciliation amid the risk of returning to the old divisions that have inflamed the past.

Asked what he believed might happen after the elections, Archbishop Martin said he did not know.

“Maybe little will change: Westminster’s power devolution will continue while agreements will be reached in Brexit’s negotiations. It is certainly ‘not simple’ what is happening before the elections. However, what will happen after it is more important.”

“Our document aims at encouraging people to vote because the real danger is that such a tense climate might discourage the ‘good’

people from voting. We want them to vote because it is their right.”

The Primate of All Ireland also described the abortion debate as “open and ongoing in both parts of the country”.

The Church is due to address the Citizens’ Assembly in Dublin on the Constitution’s Eighth Amendment on 5 March.

Archbishop Martin told Vatican Insider, “We will reiterate what we previously stated on the Day for Life on 2 October: the Eighth Amendment is valuable because it invites us to – what Pope Francis calls ‘the revolution of tenderness’. He is telling us that the life of the unborn child is not something we can dispose of nor decide upon.”

Connor Youth partnering with Glenavy Parish for Streetreach 2017

Streetreach is the Youth Council’s local missional opportunity for young people aged 15 and over. The aim of this Streetreach is to bless people and communities in the name of Jesus. This is achieved through partnering with parishes in the diocese to enable young people to serve locally



and encourage a local parish in their own mission.

Streetreach will run from Tuesday July 4 to Friday July 7.

Christina Baillie, Diocesan Youth Officer said: “We are really excited to be partnering with Glenavy Parish for this diocesan opportunity.

“Streetreach has had a massive impact for the young people who have taken part over the past two years when we partnered with churches in north Belfast.

“The opportunity has made connections across the diocese and really enhanced the community feeling amongst the young people.

“I want to thank the Rev John Rutter and the parish for agreeing to host the team over the summer.”

Any young people from across the diocese can attend and registration forms will be released soon. Streetreach costs £25 with an option to fundraise an additional £25 for resources for the team. It is a residential experience with the team staying together, and this is included in the cost as well as meals for the duration.

Christina added: “We would invite any young people to apply, whether they attended last year or haven’t experienced anything like this before, all young people will be very welcome.”

Sporting skills tested at the Big Connor Contest

Young people from across Connor Diocese put their sporting skills to the test at the Big Connor Contest organised by Engage Connor Youth Council on Saturday February 25.

Diocesan Youth Officer Christina Baillie described the contest, held in Glenavy Parish Halls, as ‘an amazing, competitive, intense, pizza filled, exhausting event.’



Young competitors in the Big Connor Contest held in Glenavy on February 25

The young people were competing for the Big Connor Contest Shield and the competition attracted participants from Ballymena; Ahoghill; Lisburn Cathedral; Lambeg; Glenavy; St Peter's, Belfast; Lower Shankill Parishes; All Saints', Antrim; St Paul's, Lisburn, and the Church of the Resurrection, Belfast.

During the day they pitched their skills against each other and tested their teamwork in

dodgeball, uni-hoc, and volleyball, and battled to be the quickest group to 'Escape The Room.'

The Youth Council ran all the fiercely contested sports with groups playing throughout the day, as well as a Chill Room with some space to play X-Box or enjoy a treat from the chocolate fountain.

The team from St Paul's, Lisburn, was the overall winner, with Lisburn Cathedral and Lambeg in second and third places.

Christina said: "Connor Youth Council would like to thank Glenavy Parish for hosting us, in particular Richard, Lindsey and Andrew for all their help."

Bruhns, Buxtehude and Bach will feature in Armagh recital

Neale Agnew will give the March recital in the Theo Saunders Memorial Organ Recital Series on Sunday 12 March 2017 at 4.15pm in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh.

From a young age, Neale has been involved in every aspect of choral music, as a singer, conductor, accompanist and organ soloist. His passion for church music began when a

chorister in First Presbyterian Church, Bangor at eight years of age. Today he is Director of Music in Fisherwick Presbyterian Church, Belfast and has held that post since 2005.

As a primary school teacher, Neale is keen to involve young people in music-making and to promote high standards of performance in church music and worship. He has worked with many of Ulster's leading choirs and choral societies and his interest in liturgical music has given him opportunities to perform at venues throughout Ireland, in England, Germany, Austria and in the USA.

Neale is a Past President of the Ulster Society of Organists and Choirmasters and is on the Advisory Committee of the Incorporated Association of Organists.

Speaking of his choice of programme for the Armagh recital, Neale mentioned three composers in particular. "Although perhaps less familiar to many local audiences, the Danish-German organist, violinist and composer Nicholas Bruhns was a giant of North German Baroque music. He studied with Dietrich Buxtehude who regarded him as his best pupil. The Praeludium in E Minor is a concise but eventful work, the high-spirited pedal solo and

exuberant opening chords illustrating the composer's energy and temperament.

By contrast, O Mensch, bewein dein Sünde groß, (O man, bewail thy sins so great), is a beautiful chorale prelude setting by J S Bach, based on the Lutheran passion hymn which seems suitable for this season of Lent.

Alfred Hollins was blind from birth, but became a well-known organ recitalist, spending much of his life in Edinburgh. In 1901, he gave the opening recital on the Walker organ in Fisherwick church Belfast, where I am currently Director of Music.”

The Dean of Armagh, the Very Revd Gregory Dunstan said, “It was in Fisherwick that I heard some of the best congregational singing in my life! It will be a great pleasure to welcome Neale to Armagh, and to hear a programme ranging from the great north German Baroque to the closer to home and more contemporary.”

As with all the recitals in this series, admission is free. The retiring collection will go towards the cost of a new piano for the Cathedral Choir's rehearsal room.

Presbyterian Historical Society's new programme

The PHSI has issued its 2017 - 2018 programme. Details of March - May meetings follow. See www.presbyterianhistoryireland.com for details of the society.

Thursday 23 March 2017

Fitzroy Presbyterian Church, Belfast

7.15pm Annual General Meeting

8.00pm The Original Secession Church in Ireland
1841-1956

By the Very Rev Dr Godfrey Brown

Tracing the beliefs, problems and demise of this group of Seceders who did not join the union of Synods in 1840.

Wednesday 26 April 2017

2.00pm Visit to Culturlann, former

Broadway Presbyterian Church, Belfast

with a reflection from Mrs Mildred Poots, a former member, about growing up in the church.

Thursday 4 May 2017

8.00pm Union Theological College, Belfast

The Robert Allen Lecture -

Professor J E Davey and the Heresy Trial, 1927
By Dr Andrew Holmes, Queens's University
Belfast

An overview, within a broad cultural, intellectual and theological context, of the heresy trial of J. Ernest Davey, Professor of Church History, Presbyterian College, Belfast, who was accused of being a 'modernist'.

Thursday 18 May 2017

Ministering in the Troubles
(Details to follow later.)

A discussion and question time with a number of Irish Presbyterians who worked for peace.

C of I Historical Society April conference in Armagh

The Church of Ireland Historical Society's spring conference will take place at 11am on Saturday, 1 April 2017 in Armagh Public Library. Tea and coffee will be served from 10.30am. As always, all members of the public are welcome to attend.

Speakers include Dr Coleman Dennehy (University College London), Dr Patrick Little (History of Parliament Trust, London) and Ms Barbara McCormack (Maynooth University). The research paper will be delivered by Ms Kathryn Sawyer who is pursuing her PhD at Notre Dame, Indiana.

Dr Dennehy will talk about the role of the clergy in the Irish House of Lords in the early modern period. Ms Sawyer, who is the recipient of the Society's W.G. Neely Prize for 2016, will present a paper on prayer and social order in Ireland, 1660-1689. Dr Little will discuss the challenges facing the Church of Ireland between 1647 and 1650. And, finally, Ms McCormack will speak about the collections of St Canice's Cathedral which are now preserved in the Special Collections at Maynooth University (see programme below or download it via our [archives](#) link). It promises to be an exciting day.

Anyone and everyone is more than welcome to come to our event. We would ask non members of the Society to pay €10/£7 to assist in conference expenses. The registration desk will be located at the top of the stairs upon entering the library. Those wishing to join the Society can pay online by going to our [membership](#) page

(this includes lunch, access to the Society's podcasts, book discounts, and many other offers). Annual membership is set at €40. Students can avail of our special discount rate of just €15/£12 for annual membership.



Fahan parishioners generosity to local institutions

Parishioners in Fahan Upper were in a generous mood recently as they handed over cheques worth more than €1,300 to local institutions. The Donegal and Foyle Hospices each picked up cheques for €410, while the Nazareth House in Fahan received a contribution of €550.

The money was raised at a Christmas Decoration Festival held in St Mura's Church, Fahan, in the run-up to Christmas. The festival featured decorations made by twelve local churches, each depicting a Christmas carol. The carols were sung at a closing community service at which the nativity story was retold.

The Rev Judi McGaffin has thanked those who took part in the festival for their commitment and those who contributed to the collection for their generosity. She said the Foyle and Donegal Hospices, and the Nazareth House in Fahan were deserving recipients which did an incredible amount of good for the people of the North West.

News briefs & Upcoming events

+++ Fraudulent C of I text messages and emails - A release from the C of I Press office states: It has come to our attention that a number of fraudulent text messages and emails are being circulated purporting to be from the Church of Ireland – which is also described by the sender as the 'Church of Ireland Charity Organization' and 'Ireland Church'. The message is followed up by an email which claims that the Church of Ireland is awarding €200,000 in cash and a travel visa to Europe to random mobile

phone numbers across 16 countries in West Africa. This message and email is not from the Church of Ireland and/or any body connected with the Church. The Church of Ireland does not allocate funding in this way and the email appears to be a fraudulent attempt to obtain personal and banking details and/or monies from the recipient. If you have received this message or email, please delete it.

+++ Lisburn parish prayer room open - A prayer room based on the Lord's Prayer has been set up in the side chapel of St Mark's Parish Church, Ballymacash. The prayer room will be open for private prayer and reflection daily from 10am until 2pm until Tuesday March 7. All are very welcome to drop in.

+++ Wicklow Alpha course - Wicklow Parish is starting an Alpha course on Monday March 6 in Jackie B's Cafe, Unit 3, Supervalu Complex in Wicklow at 8.00 pm. Alpha provides an opportunity to explore life and the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment. All are welcome but please email kintheadj@gmail.com to book a place as space may be limited.

+++ Cork Banner Workshop - Children's Ministry in Cork , Cloyne & Ross are holding a Banner Workshop in the Parish Hall, Carrigaline on Saturday 18th March from 10am until 2pm. Contact 087-2363100 if you are interested in coming along

+++ Cork school aids Dublin homelessness - Forth year students from St Francis Capuchin College in Rochestown, Cork on a visit to the Capuchin Day Centre for Homeless People in Dublin where they presented Bro. Kevin Crowley with a box of socks. Also pictured Bro. Martin Bennett and Fr Bryan Shortall.

+++ Down & Dromore Clergy Quiet Day - Serving and retired clergy gathered in St Ignatius' Carryduff on Shrove Tuesday for the annual Quiet Day. The day centres around worship and reflection before Lent begins and Bishop Harold invited Revd Canon Dr Maurice Elliot, Director of the Theological Institute to give the address. Maurice spoke on the theme 'Discipleship revisited, refocused and renewed'.

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