



Methodist President to preach at Saul on St Patrick's Day

Nick Harding is the speaker at the Festival Service in Down Cathedral. He's a lively and fun communicator and has visited the diocese on several occasions.

Nick is the Children's Ministry Advisor for the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham where he

trains, resources and advises parishes. He's also the author of several practical books on children's work and all-age worship.

Revd Dr Laurence Graham is the Methodist President for 2017/18 and will preach at the Service of Holy Communion at Saul Church.

Laurence was ordained in 1997 and ministered in Longford before spending 13 years on the Cork South and Kerry Circuit. During this time he completed his PhD at Queens though Union College analysing the methods of mission of the early church.

He moved to minister at Dublin Central Mission in 2015 and is also Ministerial Secretary of World Mission Partnership (formerly Methodist Missionary Society). He is involved with ongoing projects in Haiti.

The service at Saul begins at 9.15 am and is followed by the pilgrimage to Down Cathedral which leaves at 10.15 am.

Arrangements for transport to Saul

- From 8.00 am private buses will leave from the Mall for the communion service and pilgrimage.

- The last bus for the communion service leaves at 8.45 am
- The last bus for the pilgrimage leaves at 9.45 am
- The last bus from Saul to the Cathedral leaves at 10.40 am

NI Tearfund Director guest speaker at Belfast Cathedral lunch on Thursday

Ruth Koch, Northern Ireland Director of Tearfund, is guest speaker at *Lunch? Let's Connect* taking place on Thursday March 8 in Belfast Cathedral.

This monthly lunchtime event aimed at bringing together business professionals with a desire to meet, network and be inspired by a speaker, takes place in the grand surroundings of the Nave.

Ruth is a native of Yorkshire and lived in London before taking up this role with Tearfund in Northern Ireland in October last year.

She has worked with Tearfund since 2010 when she was appointed Specialist Volunteer Manager looking after local Tearfund volunteers. Ruth



moved on to be the head of UK Volunteering leading a team of committed volunteer managers who worked with community fundraisers and Tearfund speakers, training and supporting speakers to inspire the church about God's work around the world.

She worked with the UK Churches team before moving over to Tearfund's advocacy team to equip Christians and churches in the UK to tackle the root causes of poverty. *Enough Food IF*, in which NI supporters played a significant role, was aimed at the G8 meeting in Enniskillen,

and is one of the many campaigns Ruth has worked on.

To register yourself and a guest for this event visit lunch.belfastcathedral.org where your online order will guarantee two seats at the 'long table' which runs up the aisle of the Cathedral, or simply let us know you'll be attending with an email to admin@belfastcathedral.org.

Redeeming Our Communities active on Belfast's Shankill Road

Redeeming Our Communities (ROC), is working with St Michael's Parish Church, off Belfast's Shankill Road, to hold an event bringing the community together to talk.

The mission of ROC, which is based in the Vine Centre in Crumlin Road, is to help churches engage with community, spread the gospel and see lives changed for Christ. Learn more at <https://roc.uk.com/>

St Michael's will be hosting a ROC Conversation on Wednesday March 21 at 7pm, when local people can come together with church representatives, statutory and voluntary organisations and local community groups to



talk about how all can work together for the benefit of the local community.

Register at roc.uk.com/lowershankill or call Keeva Watson on 9035 1020.

Bangor Parish seeking interns looking for a Kingdom adventure

To coincide with an exciting year of mission, Bangor Parish Church, is offering an internship programme from September 2018 to June 2019.



Looking for a
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ADVENTURE?**

**INTERNSHIP AT BANGOR
PARISH CHURCH
2018/2019**

Finishing studies or wanting
to get some hands on
ministry experience?
Our programme of serving,
discipleship and mentoring
may be for you.

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FOR SEPTEMBER 2018
DEADLINE 25TH APRIL 2018
INFORMATION AND APPLICATIONS
ONLINE

07964553634
matthew@bangorparishchurch.org.uk
bangorparishchurch.org.uk



If you are looking for an exciting Kingdom adventure, this could be the programme for you. Each week interns will meet for a time of worship, discipleship and mentoring, and there will be serving opportunities in evangelism (Alpha, door-to-door, street work and literature), ministry to the poor and vulnerable through the pioneering of some exciting projects, prayer

ministry, worship, youth, children, young adults, men's ministry and women's ministry.

The nature of this role would require that the applicant is a Christian and not a recent convert.

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 25 April 2018 at 12 noon.

Download an [information pack](#) and [application form](#). For any further information please contact: Matthew Gault, Missions and Operations Coordinator

Mobile: 07964933624

Email: matthew@bangorparishchurch.org.uk
www.bangorparishchurch.org.uk

New rector for Julianstown

On Friday evening the Bishop of Meath & Kildare, the Most Revd Pat Storey, will institute the Revd Katharine Poulton to the incumbency of Julianstown. Ms Poulton, who has been Dean of Ossory since 2010, succeeds the Revd Peter Rutherford who is now Rector of Kinsale. In St Peter's Church, Kiltegan, at 7.30 pm the Bishop of Cashel, Ossory & Ferns will institute the Revd Robert Jones as Rector of the Kiltegan union of parishes in succession to Canon Stella Durand who has retired from the stipendiary ministry. Mr

Jones has been Rector of St John's, Malone, in Belfast from 2013.

C of I Affirming Catholicism Quiet Day

The members of Affirming Catholicism will host a Quiet Day on Saturday 10 March in St Mary's church, Navan, Co Meath. It will be led by Revd Grace Clunie, Priest in charge at Lisnadill, in the diocese of Armagh, and the Director of Celtic Spirituality in Navan. She is also a teacher and writer on Celtic Spirituality and will offer a quiet reflective day as in preparation for Easter. There is no charge but participants should bring a packed lunch. Tea and coffee will be provided. To book email affcathire@gmail.com or telephone Margaret Ainsworth at 01-2885932.

Derry venues for annual Irish Methodist Conference

The main Conference venue will be at Kilfennan Presbyterian Church, the installation Service for the President & Lay Leader will take place in Carlisle Road Methodist Church and the Ordination Service will be at St Columb's Cathedral.

The President Designate is Rev. Billy Davison.
The Lay Leader Designate is Lynda Neilands

Click [here](#) for more details. The Conference will be held from Wednesday, 13 June, 2018 - 09:00 to Sunday, 17 June, 2018 - 17:00
info@irishmethodist.org

‘Happiness lies in accepting how God has made us’: priests issue statement on gender

The Confraternity of Catholic Clergy has issued a statement on “gender ideology”, which they say is an urgent challenge for those involved in pastoral ministry, the Catholic Herald reports.

Around 500 UK priests and deacons are members of the CCC, which also has international branches.

In the statement, the Confraternity say that priests are increasingly meeting “individuals in our parishes unable to



accept the sex in which they were born” — that is, suffering from “gender dysphoria”.

The statement is intended to help priests support those afflicted by gender dysphoria with “sensitivity and honesty”.

The priests say there is widespread confusion partly because “To suggest that a person cannot change their sex is immediately met with charges of hatred and bigotry”.

Nevertheless, they say, the answer to gender dysphoria is “is not to be found in rejecting their bodies or medically ‘correcting’ them, but in addressing the emotional and social factors that really give rise to this disassociation”.

They write: “While bodily defects can occur, even concerning sexual organs, they are clearly recognised as such and legitimately corrected. This is distinct from ‘gender ideology’ which states that our souls, or our psychological and spiritual faculties can be at variance in their sex, or ‘gender’ to that of our healthily functioning bodies.”

Speaking to the Catholic Herald, a leading priest member of the Confraternity said that there seemed to be a “lack of guidance for pastors and Catholic institutions” on transgender issues, possibly because “gender ideology” had grown so quickly in recent years. “Never has there been such an evident moral

challenge to Christian anthropology with so little response,” the priest said.

He added: “There are already Catholic institutions that have accommodated themselves to principles of gender ideology and risk abandoning key foundations of our understanding of what it means to be human.”

Catholic schools have a particular need for good guidelines, he said, as they come under pressure to conform to “secular notions of gender”.

The CCC statement emphasises that the current state of public debate does not help those experiencing gender dysphoria. “Proponents of gender ideology often seek to advance their cause through polemic and propaganda which do nothing to help people who are often deeply troubled and whose situation requires patience and kindness,” the statement says.

It points out that many who undergo gender reassignment surgery “will later regret it”.

The priests warn that teenagers, in particular, may be rushed into irreversible treatments at a vulnerable time in their life when they should be offered “a time of waiting, prayer and reflection, which will make possible a change of direction.”

“True and lasting happiness lies in accepting who it is that God has made us, for His plans for us are always plans of infinite love,” the statement says.

Pope institutes new celebration of Mary, Mother of Church

Pope Francis inserts the Memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, into the Roman Calendar on the Monday following Pentecost Sunday.

Pope Francis has decreed that the ancient devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, under the



Pope Francis with an ancient icon of Mary in the Basilica of St. Mary Major

title of Mother of the Church, be inserted into the Roman Calendar.

The liturgical celebration, *B. Mariæ Virginis, Ecclesiæ Matris*, will be celebrated annually as a Memorial on the day after Pentecost.

In a decree released on Saturday by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Cardinal Robert Sarah, its Prefect, said the Pope's decision took account of the tradition surrounding the devotion to Mary as Mother of the Church.

He said the Holy Father wishes to promote this devotion in order to “encourage the growth of

the maternal sense of the Church in the pastors, religious and faithful, as well as a growth of genuine Marian piety”.

The decree reflects on the history of Marian theology in the Church’s liturgical tradition and the writings of the Church Fathers.

It says Saint Augustine and Pope Saint Leo the Great both reflected on the Virgin Mary’s importance in the mystery of Christ.

“In fact the former [St. Augustine] says that Mary is the mother of the members of Christ, because with charity she cooperated in the rebirth of the faithful into the Church, while the latter [St. Leo the Great] says that the birth of the Head is also the birth of the body, thus indicating that Mary is at once Mother of Christ, the Son of God, and mother of the members of his Mystical Body, which is the Church.”

The decree says these reflections are a result of the “divine motherhood of Mary and from her intimate union in the work of the Redeemer”.

Scripture, the decree says, depicts Mary at the foot of the Cross (cf. Jn 19:25). There she became the Mother of the Church when she “accepted her Son’s testament of love and welcomed all people in the person of the

beloved disciple as sons and daughters to be reborn unto life eternal.”

In 1964, the decree says, Pope Paul VI “declared the Blessed Virgin Mary as ‘Mother of the Church, that is to say of all Christian people, the faithful as well as the pastors, who call her the most loving Mother’ and established that ‘the Mother of God should be further honoured and invoked by the entire Christian people by this tenderest of titles’”.

Then, in the Holy Year of Reconciliation in 1975, the Church inserted into the Roman Missal a votive Mass in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church.

With the present decree, Pope Francis inserts that celebration into the universal Church’s liturgy as a Memorial on a fixed date.

The Congregation for Divine Worship has published the official liturgical texts in Latin. Translations, the decree states, are to be prepared and approved by local Bishops’ Conferences before being confirmed by the Congregation.

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