



Presiding Bishop Michael Curry to preach at wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, shown here preaching on Palm Sunday at St. George the Martyr Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem, was invited by Prince Harry and Meghan Markle to preach during their May 19 wedding.

The US Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Michael Curry will preach at next weekend's wedding of Prince Harry – and the U.S.

actress Meghan Markle, Kensington Palace announced May 12.

Prince Harry, the grandson of Queen Elizabeth and sixth in line to the throne, will marry Ms Markle at St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle next Saturday, May 19 in a service conducted by the Dean
churchnewsireland@gmail.org

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of Windsor, David Conner. Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby will officiate.

The invitation from the couple to Curry to preach at the service is a departure from tradition for British royal weddings. While previous royal weddings have involved clergy from other Christian churches saying prayers for the couple, sermons are usually given by senior Church of England clergy. The service will be televised around the world, and it is likely that the presiding bishop, who refers to himself as the CEO of the Episcopal Church – the chief evangelism officer – won't resist the opportunity to talk about what he calls the Jesus Movement.

“The love that has brought and will bind Prince Harry and Ms Meghan Markle together has its source and origin in God, and is the key to life and happiness,” Curry said. “And so we celebrate and pray for them today.”

Prince Harry was born on Sept. 15, 1984 and was baptized at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, three months later. After completing his formal education, he spent a gap year in Australia and South Africa before training for military service. He served with the British Army in Afghanistan as an officer in the Royal Horse Guards and 1st Dragoons of the Household Cavalry, in the U.S.-led operation to remove the Taliban from power following the September 11 terror attacks in New York and Washington. His service in Afghanistan came to an end after his presence there was revealed by an Australian magazine; but he returned there a few years later in a deployment with the Army Air Corps. In 2014, he launched the Invictus Games for injured ex-service personnel; and is patron of a number of organizations, including the HALO Trust, which is working to remove mines from Qasr el Yahud – the site on the west bank of the River Jordan at the traditional site of the baptism of Jesus.

Meghan Markle was born on Aug. 4, 1981 in Los Angeles, California. Her parents, Doria Ragland and Thomas Markle, divorced when she was six years old. In her acting career, she has appeared in a number of roles, including in the films *Get Him to the Greek*, *Remember Me*, and *Horrible Bosses*. But she is best known



Prince Harry poses with Meghan Markle in the Sunken Garden of Kensington Palace, London.

her portrayal of the character Rachel Zane in the hit U.S.-legal drama series *Suits*. Her character, a paralegal who trained to become an attorney, was the love interest of phoney-lawyer Mike Ross. Markle married Trevor Engelson in 2011; but the couple divorced in 2013, long before Markle met Prince Harry.

The couple have met Archbishop Justin Welby on a number of occasions as part of the preparations for the wedding; and Markle asked Welby to baptize her. It has been widely reported that she was baptized and confirmed by Welby at St. James' Palace in London in March.

“It was very special,” Welby told ITV News. “It was beautiful, sincere and very moving. It was a great privilege. . . You know at the heart of it is two people who have fallen in love with each other, who are committing their lives to each other with the most beautiful words and profound thoughts, who do it in the presence of God.”

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Previous royal weddings have involved a range of preachers. When Queen Elizabeth married Prince Philip in Westminster Abbey in November 1947, the service was conducted by the Dean of Westminster, Alan Don, while the wedding itself was officiated by Archbishop of Canterbury Geoffrey Fisher. The sermon was preached by Archbishop of York Cyril Garbett.

Prince Harry's mother and father, Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer, took the unusual decision of marrying at London's St. Paul's Cathedral in 1981. They were married by Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, who also preached. In 2005, after Diana's death, Prince Charles married his second wife Camilla, now Duchess of Cornwall, in a civil ceremony at Windsor Guildhall. This was followed by a Service of Prayer and Dedication at St George's, Windsor, conducted by Archbishop Rowan Williams. There was no sermon in that service.

Prince Harry's older brother, Prince William, married his wife Catherine at Westminster Abbey in 2011. The Dean of Westminster, John Hall, presided while Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams conducted the wedding. London Bishop Richard Chartres, dean of Her Majesty's Chapels Royal, preached the sermon.

St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle is located within the area of the Church of England's Diocese of Oxford; but it is outside the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop. It is one of a small number of Church of England churches known as Royal Peculiars – which means that it is under the direct control of the monarch, rather than the diocesan bishop or archbishop. Among the other Royal Peculiars are Westminster Abbey, the five chapels that make up the Chapels Royal, and the Chapel of St Mary Undercroft, in the Houses of Parliament.

Church of Ireland Archbishops reflect on General Synod

The [Church of Ireland](#) Archbishops have repeated their opposition to proposed unrestricted access to abortion in the first 12 weeks of

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pregnancy should the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution be repealed on May 25th, Patsy McGarry writes in the Irish Times

Speaking at the church's General Synod in [Armagh](#), the Primate

Archbishop [Richard](#)

[Clarke](#) said he found the proposal “ethically unsustainable”.

He said “if outcome B will happen as a result of action A, and you find that outcome B is something that is ethically undesirable you therefore cannot separate action A from outcome B”.

Archbishop of Dublin Michael Jackson spoke about his “anxiety” over the proposal.

Asked by reporters about the claim of previous Archbishop of Dublin John Neill that, in holding this view, both Archbishops Clarke and Jackson were breaking with a long-held Church of [Ireland](#) stance that issues such as abortion should not be dealt with in the Constitution, [Archbishop Jackson](#) said “as we looked at the conflation of Constitution and legislation we felt the situation had changed”.

[Archbishop Neill](#), he said, was “entitled to his opinion” but that “we, having considered it, came up with the position we came up with”.

Archbishop Clarke added that “as the Archbishops of today we are entitled to come to a judgment”.

The 12-week clause “has now been conflated with the constitutional change. Had it not been, I think we would be in a different place. But it has been,” he said.



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‘Bereavement’

On Brexit, Archbishop Jackson felt a “sense of bereavement”. As someone who had been bishop of the cross-Border [Clogher](#) diocese for a decade he said, however, he sensed “that there is will to do the least worst Brexit”.

Archbishop Clarke said “we’re going to have to live with it”. He added: “The prayer has got to be that whatever way Brexit affects Ireland, it will not do damage to what are actually at present relationships between North and the south of the island which are really relaxed.”

On restoration of the institutions at [Stormont](#), he said: “Everybody, it seems to me, is crying out for it.” He asked, “Why on earth can there not be sufficient language used that can actually breakthrough and get the institutions up and running?”

In his presidential address to the General [Synod Archbishop](#) Clarke said the Church of Ireland must be a place not only where people may be safe, but also where they may find safety.

“We know that for many people on this island, the idea of the church claiming to be a place of safety seems risible and contemptible. We must ensure that such contempt can never be justifiable in the future. It is not only a matter of our reputation in the eyes of society. It is an unequivocal demand of the Kingdom of God,” he said.

‘High standards’

The civil authorities in both [Northern Ireland](#) and the Republic “rightly demand very high standards of compliance in safeguarding young people, and we seek to mirror this in our safeguarding of children. From this General Synod onwards, there will also be a code underpinned in church law, again fully compliant with civil law.”

This was “not an option, it is an imperative,” he said.

The church was facing challenges “in ensuring rigorous compliance, not only with our safeguarding protocols but also with other requirements of the civil authorities, in the areas of charities

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law and also of data recording and protection. I know very well that for clergy, in every part of the Church of Ireland, this is now a matter for real stress.”

He pleaded for members of the laity who had talent in such areas to assist in this matter as such was “extremely necessary at present”.

Report of the Board of Education presented to General Synod

Proposing the report Mrs Helen McClenaghan, on behalf of the Board of Education NI, highlighted developments in Northern Ireland, and delivered the good news that the long-held ambition of controlled schools to have an advocacy body comparable to those for other school sectors had been realised with the establishment of the Controlled Schools Support Council.

“The sterling work on behalf of schools already achieved justifies the faith placed in it by schools and the Churches. Dr Hamill, Secretary to the board, and a CSSC member, is an invaluable conduit of information between the board and the council. No time for complacency; we must be vigilant that the Department of Education does not trim the resources allocated to CSSC as a cost cutting measure,” she said.

Mrs McClenaghan also paid tribute to the Revd Amanda Adams who represents the church on the Education Authority as a transferor representative. She said they were privileged in the high quality of the leaders of schools, principals and governors.

Synod members viewed a video produced by Dr Hammill aimed at encouraging current governors and promote efforts to recruit successors to the current governor cadre as need arises.

The board is undergoing a review process to see how it can be reinvigorated. Among its ambitions are to bring coherence to the educational objects of parishes, diocesan boards of education and the board itself.

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She said the review would need the involvement of clergy and laity. “Think of what you can do at parish level to offer pastoral support to teachers as they face so many and varied challenges. Could the teaching of RE and the conduct of the Act of Collective Worship be sustained or enriched if parishioners’ faith, life experiences and creative talents were made available to the schools?” she asked.

Mrs McClenaghan asked all who represent the Church of educational bodies to play a role in ameliorating the worst consequences in the disabling environment of financial stringency affecting individual schools. Some weeks into the 2018–2019 financial year almost 50% of schools did not have approved budgets because the governors had concluded they could not deliver education to meet the needs of their pupils within the amounts allocated, she said. Consequently the Education Authority would not approve their spending proposals because they exceeded their budgets.

She suggested starting a public campaign to help education and asked all people to raise their voices for education.

Canon Brian O’Rourke presented the Republic of Ireland part of the report. He drew Synod’s attention to the Amendment to the Equal Status Act will remove the ‘Baptism Barrier’. However, he said minority schools could set their own criteria to apply when oversubscribed. He said that this was a significant legislative allowance. He said that the board would consider the implications of this and issue guidance in the coming weeks.

He also drew Synod’s attention to a Capitation Grant Campaign which drew together all primary schools. He said that the Capitation Grant was decreasing putting primary schools under

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financial pressure and showed a video to Synod members. He urged parents and grandparents to look up the video on YouTube and share it with their local TDs.

Speaking to the Republic of Ireland section of the report Canon John Clarke thanked the staff of the board of education for their hard work and thanked Bishop Burrows for joining Bishop Rooke on the Board of Education.

Jackie Wilkinson (Cork, Cloyne and Ross) welcomed the admissions policy to safeguard the ethos of Church of Ireland schools and said that good RE could support the ethos of schools. She gave background to the certificate of RE which she teaches in the Church of Ireland Centre in DCU, which includes the teaching of the Follow Me programme. The Certificate in Religious Education is for teachers who have not been trained in CICE. They volunteer to have 15 input hours for this course. Next Thursday she said another 10 teachers will be finishing their course bringing to 50 the number of teachers who have upskilled themselves to teach RE for schools. She thanked the General Synod Board of Education for facilitating the teachers in coming on the course.

Archdeacon Ricky Rountree asked if it was time that the model of patronage moved on from individual bishops being patrons for their own dioceses, shouldering a large load. He suggested patronage could move to one large incorporated body which would relieve the bishops and improve efficiency and would also create a stronger lobby group.

The report of the Board of Education was presented to General Synod on Saturday May 12.

Celebratory evening in recognition of the late Canon Liz McElhinney

The Revd Stephen McElhinney said: “My mother’s special ability was to notice; she had a unique ability to connect with people but also to notice the world in which she lived, which left her invigorated physically, mentally and spiritually.”



Game Of Thrones star Ian McElhinney is to join his family and the public for a celebratory evening in recognition of the life and ministry of his cousin's wife, **the late Canon Liz McElhinney (above)**.

The TV star will read some of her 20 poems that have been published in a booklet titled *Solid Joys, Lasting Treasure*, which has illustrations by the author's artist son David. The booklet will be included in the admission charge of €10 for those attending the evening.

Liz McElhinney passed away last June from motor neurone disease. The proceeds from the evening will support the work of the Irish Motor Neurone Association in the Republic of Ireland. Extra copies of the booklet and a CD of the collection of the poems, read by Ian McElhinney, will also be on sale on the evening at a reduced rate.

In his preface to the collection, another of Liz McElhinney's sons, the Revd Stephen McElhinney said: "My mother's special ability was to notice; she had a unique ability to connect with people but also to notice the world in which she lived, which left her invigorated physically, mentally and spiritually."

The collection title is taken from the well-known 18th century hymn by John Newton, "Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken". Very many

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lives were touched by Liz McElhinney during her ministry and so the evening is for the whole community and friends.

As well as the poems, there will be music from the All-Ireland Award-winning Mercy Convent School Choir, Roscommon, the local cross-community choir Cór Comáin conducted by Derek Mahady, soloist Nicola Brown and a traditional music group led by Revd Sean Hanily. The former Bishop of the Diocese Ken Clarke, a close friend of the McElhinneys, will compere the evening. Accompanist for the event will be Carl McCambley, Musical Director of Shankill Parish, Lurgan.

Liz McElhinney was widely known across the Diocese of Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh, having grown up in it and ministered in three different parishes in the diocese. Many of the older members of the Roscommon Group, which includes Lanesborough and Ballinlough, remember her father Canon Maguire, who was Rector there and of Edgeworthstown. Liz McElhinney's first clerical position was as Rector of Calry Parish in Sligo. Following retirement, she spent three years ministering fortnightly in the Kildrumferton Group in Cavan before returning to Roscommon as Priest-in-Charge.

During this period in Roscommon, she was diagnosed with MND (Motor Neurone Disease). Following her return to Lurgan, she focused on writing reflective and inspirational poems over a period of 15 months. "These poems are a testimony to Liz's ever deepening faith and attest to her love of God, of people and of nature. They form a core part of the concert," the organisers state.

The event will take place on Friday 18 May at 8 pm, in the Kilbride Community Centre, (kindly granted) Fourmilehouse, Roscommon (four miles from Roscommon on the Boyle Road).

Sarah Mullally installed as 133rd Bishop of London at St Paul's Cathedral

Dame [Sarah Mullally](#) has been installed as the 133rd bishop of London at St Paul's Cathedral – becoming the first woman to hold the post.



Bishop Mullally was invested on International Nurses Day – Florence Nightingale's birthday – in a nod to the new bishop's former career as a nurse and chief nursing officer in England.

She performed the tradition of knocking three times on the Cathedral's Great West door with her pastoral staff, a

spokesman for the Diocese of London told the Press Association.

In her sermon, the bishop preached on the theme of 'being subversive for Christ', and noted that 150 years ago this week, suffragettes placed a bomb underneath the same seat upon which she had been enthroned as Bishop of London.

She also addressed challenges facing London including escalating knife crime, and made reference to historical sexual abuse within the Church.

Mullally called for a culture that 'challenges deference and the abuse of power' and for victims of abuse to be listened to.

She added: 'We need to speak up for the whole of London, to work to challenge the violence and the crime that have led mothers to clean their own children's blood from our pavements.

'Could there be a starker image or a more urgent wake-up call for all who love this city, who believe it can have an even better future?'

Mullally was bishop of Crediton after working in leading NHS hospitals in the capital including St Thomas's and the Royal Marsden. She became chief nursing officer in 1999 and was

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ordained as a priest three years later, and in 2005 she was made a dame in recognition of her services to nursing.

The diocese of London bucks the trend of decline in the CofE, with growing congregations though despite a diverse theological landscape it remains predominantly conservative with numerous Anglo-Catholic and evangelical parishes.

Two years ago, Mullally became the first woman bishop to lead an ordination service when she ordained four clergy, three of whom were women.

When she was appointed to Crediton she told the Daily Telegraph it was important not to obsess about empty pews. 'I think that the Church does need to take seriously the change in the Church's membership and that is important but part of that is also to recognise that there are really good examples where the church engages with individuals that isn't around the pews,' she said.

Lichfield diocese welcoming and honouring LGBT+ people

The bishops of Lichfield Diocese are calling for a Church where LGBT+ people feel welcomed and honoured.

In [a letter](#) sent to all clergy and lay ministers in the diocese, the Bishop of Lichfield, the Rt Revd Dr Michael Ipgrave; the Bishop of Stafford, the Rt Revd Geoff Annas; the Bishop of Wolverhampton, the Rt Revd Clive Gregory; and the Bishop of Shrewsbury, the Rt Revd Mark Rylands, emphasise that “everyone has a place at the table.”

The letter updates clergy on discussions underway in the national Church on the ‘radical Christian inclusion’ called for by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, and draws attention to the work being done on a major new Teaching Document.

In Lichfield Diocese, Bishop Michael has convened a [consultation group](#) for LGBT+ Christians to share their views and concerns, and this has met several times.

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The letter concludes: “We want Lichfield to be a diocese in which people of any sexual orientation or gender identity feel welcomed and honoured in our churches.”

It focuses on the pastoral dimensions of the issues involved and says: “... as bishops we are committed to encouraging people with differing views to meet, pray and talk together.” The letter does not address the blessing of same-sex relationships or same-sex marriages.

The bishops highlight the practical consequences of ‘radical Christian inclusion’ locally including the importance of access for all to Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, the affirmation of LGBT+ people in roles of leadership and the importance of mission to and alongside LGBT+ people.

“Our basic principle is that all people are welcome in God’s Church: everyone has a place at the table,” the bishops say.

The Diocese of Lichfield has almost 600 churches in an area with a population of over two million which includes Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, the Black Country and most of Shropshire.

