

Marsh's Library's stolen prayer book is returned ... just 170 years later



Aerial view of St Patrick's Cathedral and Marsh's Library

Marsh's Library, the oldest in the country, has just had the Book of Common Prayer, which was first bound and published in 1666, returned to it after someone pinched it from Dublin city centre reading room in 1840, The Irish Examiner reports.

The library's keeper, Jason McElligott, revealed it is just the eighth time any of the 1,200 books removed from the building over the centuries has found its way back home, highlighting the treasures still missing from its collection.

Even leaving aside the questionable morality of stealing a prayer book, Mr McElligott said it was "an unusual thing". As he puts it, "uptight librarians" working in the library over the centuries have meticulously charted the books that went missing, and most were from the racier end of classical literature, or novels, history books, or tomes on travel.

Unlike a typical library, no books were supposed to leave the premises. This one did, only to be found in the Church of Ireland rectory in Monkstown by Rev Roy Byrne last week.

"He saw the library stamp and contacted us and said: 'I think this might belong to you.' Where it has been in the intervening 170 years, we just don't know," said Mr McElligott.

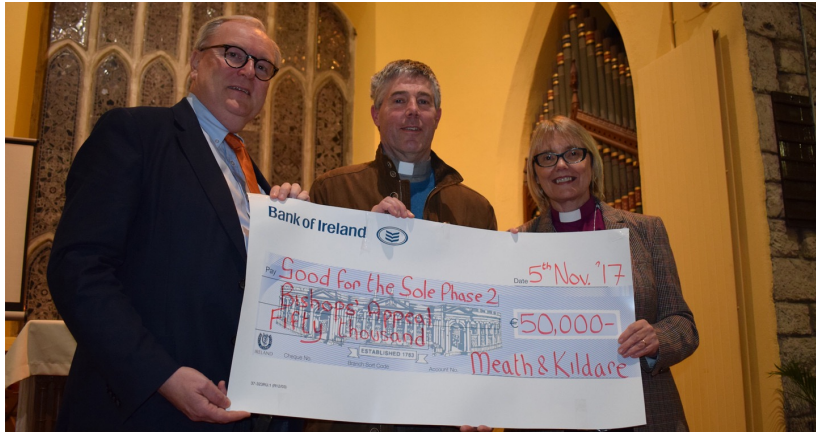
The prayer book- which features family notes regarding births that predate its theft - its is worth €500 to €750, and an exhibition running at the library highlights the prices some of its missing items could cost if they ever turned up. A copy of Robert Boyle's The Sceptical Chymist, published in the 1670s, was stolen from the library in 1767. Another copy of the book was sold last year for a cool €410,000.

“The money isn't the main thing. It's the cultural value,” said Mr McElligott.

Good for the Sole: Meath & Kildare raise 75.000 for Leprosy Mission

A very special celebration took place on the evening of Sunday 5th November, in All Saints' Church Mullingar. The event was to celebrate the successful conclusion of the Dioceses of Meath and Kildare's Good for the Sole project.

Good for the Sole has been run in partnership with the Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal and the Mission to End Leprosy. The special service included video, interviews, singing as well as a presentation by Ken Gibson, CEO of the Mission to End Leprosy. The evening ended with coffee and cake for everyone. It is commonly thought



Ken Gibson (CEO, The Mission to End Leprosy), Rev William Steacy (Bishop's Appeal, Meath and Kildare) and Bishop Pat Storey hold a cheque for funds raised in phase 2 of 'Good for the Sole' .

that leprosy no longer exists, but this unfortunately is not the case.

One of the effects of leprosy is often damage to a person's feet. The disease causes them to lose sensitivity in this area, making the individual more prone to injury. The Mission to End Leprosy has been involved in developing a cost-effective sandal that can protect the wearer from such harm. One pair of sandals can be manufactured and distributed at a cost of €2.50. In its first year, the Good for The Soul project set out to raise enough money to buy 10,000 pairs of sandals in

www.churchnewsireland.org

NEWS November 8

Karigiri in Tamil Nadu, India. That target was reached.

During the second year of the project it was decided to raise funds for foot surgeries. These took place at a hospital supported by the Mission to End Leprosy in Karigiri. Life changing surgery can be completed for €50. The dioceses set a target of raising €25,000 that would fund 500 surgeries. During that phase of the project €50,000 was raised, enabling 1,000 foot surgeries to take place. In total, during the two years of Good for the Sole over €75,000 was raised – hence the celebration! For the past two years parishes and individuals across the dioceses have used great imagination to raise funds – knowing that every Euro would make a difference. Everything from coffee mornings, dances, quizzes and even sponsored dog walking all helped reach the target. A special cookbook, Food for the Sole, was even produced. With a print run of 5,000 copies it is a popular gift that changes lives.

Bishop Pat Storey talked of the hard work of so many that helped the project reach its target. She said: “By sheer hard work and imagination parishes and individuals across the dioceses of Meath and Kildare have raised funds that will change people’s lives. It is truly inspiring to think

of the effort and commitment of so many over the past two years”. She continued: “We thought the task we set ourselves was a daunting one. It was knowing the damage that leprosy causes and that something could be done about it that kept us going. What is inspiring above all else is to hear about the work done to combat this disease, as well as the daily courage of those who suffer from it.”

A team from Meath and Kildare also raised their own finance to visit the hospital in Karigiri, where so much life changing and pioneering work takes place. Their moving accounts of what they witnessed, featured on the diocesan website and Facebook page, helped to inspire fund raising at home.

Scottish and US-based Episcopal Churches celebrate historic bonds of communion

The Presiding Bishop of the US-based Episcopal Church (TEC), Michael Curry, has delivered a sermon at St Andrew’s Cathedral in Aberdeen to celebrate the historic links between two of the earliest churches in the Anglican Communion outside England. TEC traces its roots back to 1784 – the year after the Americans defeated the

British in the American War of Independence. The Church's first US-bishop, Samuel Seabury, was required by the Church of England to swear an oath of allegiance to the Crown before they would consecrate him. He refused, and bishops from the Scottish Episcopal Church (SEC) agreed to conduct the consecration.

“Our bishops today trace their succession to Samuel Seabury . . . so our roots really are here in Aberdeen, Scotland. Indeed, Scotland is our mother church, so it was good to come home and give thanks to our mother church and to affirm our continued partnership in Jesus Christ,” Presiding Bishop [Michael Curry said in an interview](#) on Monday with the *Episcopal News Service*.

The historic bond that St Andrew's Cathedral shares with the Episcopal Church includes an invitation for the presiding bishop to nominate someone to be installed as an honorary canon. Sunday's serviced marked the installation of the Revd Dr Canon Charles (Chuck) Robertson - canon for ministry beyond the Episcopal Church – as the honorary canon.

“The affection for our church and our affection for the Scottish Episcopal Church is longstanding and deep,” Curry told *ENS*. “And now we must take that affection into concrete



The ornate crests of the American states on the ceiling in the nave of St Andrew's Episcopal Cathedral in Aberdeen symbolise the deep connection between the Scottish and US-based Episcopal churches.

work that helps to change the world into something akin to God's dream for it, and so Canon Robertson being made an honorary canon was a symbolic way of incarnating that in a human person."

The service on Sunday was attended by civic leaders and dignitaries and people from other churches and faith communities, as well as people from across the Scottish Episcopal

Church. Today (Monday), Curry and Robertson took part in a symposium exploring the social history and common interests of the Scottish and American Episcopal Churches. Later, the visitors will travel to Edinburgh to take part in a clergy conference and a visit to the Scottish Parliament, which may include a meeting with Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon.

“The Scottish Episcopal Church is proud of its role in the coming into being of what is now the world-wide Anglican Communion,” the Primus of Scotland, Bishop Mark Strange of Moray, Ross and Caithness, said, “and I am delighted to welcome the Presiding Bishop in his first visit to Scotland when we can share our past, present and future bonds of communion and concern for the people we serve in our respective provinces.”

Church to draft lonely clergy care plan

New proposals to tackle loneliness and isolation among Church of England vicars and priests are going to be drawn up over the next 18 months.



A new group has been formed and tasked with drawing up a Covenant for Clergy Well-being after concerns over stress levels.

The Covenant will be modelled on the Armed Forces Covenant, a Government initiative which encourages employers to be more supportive of veterans and their families.

The Church agreed to take action following a meeting of its governing body in July (pictured below) which heard how work pressures are hampering clergy member's lives and ministries.

Lay and ordained members of the General Synod will contribute to the Covenant, as will individuals with health and education expertise.

General Synod member, Canon Simon Butler said: "Such was the interest in serving on this Working Group and the strength-in-depth of the



insights and skills offered to the Appointments Committee that we could have easily populated the Working Group twice over.

"This can only bode well for our work in developing a Covenant for Clergy Well-being that draws on all that the church is learning about how attending to the well-being of the clergy is vital to the mission and ministry of the whole church."

Work on the Covenant will begin this month, with the aim to have proposals ready for when General Synod meets in July 2019.

New minister in Swanlinbar

On Sunday 5th November, a service was held in Swanlinbar Parish Church to welcome the Revd Simon Donohoe as the new Minister-in-Charge of the Swanlinbar Group of Parishes (Swanlinbar, Kinawley, Tomregan and Templeport).

Simon was born and raised in South Dublin where he came to know the Lord Jesus through the ministry of Crinken Church and Crosslinks holiday clubs. He is married to Abigail and they have two daughters under three.

Simon trained at Oak Hill College in London but has always planned and prayed to return to Ireland. Whilst in England he served in churches in Wimbledon, Wilmslow, Wimsford and Cheadle.

Archbishop Clarke urges church to show hospitality, sincerity, engagement and enchantment

The Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke, delivered his Presidential Synod Address on Saturday (4 November) at the 2017 Armagh Diocesan Synod in the Alexander Synod Hall,

Church House, Armagh. He spoke on four themes – hospitality, sincerity, engagement and enchantment – relating to how the Church reaches out to its neighbours.

Archbishop Clarke said: ‘In a world where people feel increasingly alone and bereft of dignity and worth, it should surely be within a Church community that they can find that they do matter, in the eyes of God’s people, and so they may come to understand that they matter, infinitely, to God.’ He referred to the response of local churches and other faith communities to the Grenfell Tower fire in London, and the command to be ‘engaged with the world around us ... fully and even sacrificially’.

The Archbishop concluded by speaking on the ‘immensely deep need in people ... to be captivated by something beyond themselves’ which can ultimately be met by ‘the magnetic love of Christ calling people out of themselves, their misery and fear and anger, towards his love.’

Extracts from the address are below:

Last year at this synod, I spoke of the Anglican Communion’s understanding of “Five Marks of Mission” as fundamental to what we are, and what we hope to be. These five marks are – (1)



to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom, (2) to teach, baptise and nurture new believers, (3) to respond to human need by loving service, (4) to transform unjust structures of society and to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation, and (5) to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth. I asked that every parish would regard the five marks as being in some way a yardstick to its own life and witness. In other words, I suggested that every activity we undertake as Christian communities should be measured against these marks of mission and, if they have absolutely nothing to do with them or, more seriously, if any parish activities are even taking us in an opposite direction to the five marks of mission, then we must certainly question why we are doing them. This year I continue with that challenge to you, and I want

now to develop this thinking in a slightly different mode.

We know that we live in a world that may be a “developed world” in one sense but is now one which is bewildered, frightened and angry, a world in which many people feel more isolated and alienated than has been the case for generations. The opportunities for reaching out to those many people around us who are disillusioned with life, lonely and hurting are plainly there, staring us in the face. What do we need to show, as Christian communities, to such children of God that may make them seek God’s face again (or even, perhaps, for the first time)? Briefly, I am going to suggest four words that I would like you to take back with you to your own parishes, and seek to relate them to those marks of mission of which I have spoken.

The first is the deeply biblical principle of hospitality. How “at home” would an individual or family feel if they entered, stranger or newcomer – perhaps nervously and tentatively – into one of our parishes? Would they feel that they were an object of suspicion or comment, or might they feel that they were being welcomed just as they were? The great French essayist, Michel de Montaigne, wrote that real hospitality accepts people as they are. The bad host makes

people feel uncomfortable or makes them accept that they must adhere to certain expectations or particular rules before they are truly welcome. We have no right to consider whether people will “fit in” or whether they will be any use to us before we decide whether or not we really want them. This is not only unworthy, it is sacrilege. Christ did not go to the cross simply for “people like us” or people we regard as worthy of our friendship and care.

In a world where people feel increasingly alone and bereft of dignity and worth, it should surely be within a Church community that they can find that they do matter, in the eyes of God’s people, and so they may come to understand that they matter, infinitely, to God. Hospitality is more than perfunctory welcome – it means bringing people into our hearts, and not simply exchanging polite platitudes with them at the back of the church, utterly indifferent as to whether we ever see them again or not.

The second word is sincerity. I am very conscious that it is a word that has become rather jaded. Indeed if we hear of someone that they are “very sincere”, our reaction is probably to run a mile as it seems inevitable that he or she will be rather heavy-going!

So we must redeem this word ‘sincerity’. The origin of the word is commonly believed to come originally from a Latin construct, sine cera, which means “without wax”. In classical times wax was sometimes used to disguise defects in objects such as statues or pottery, and to guarantee something as being “without wax” meant that there was no cover-up, no pretence. We should not have pretensions about ourselves, either as individuals or as communities. We are all deeply flawed, and we are all in need of correction and forgiveness. It has been said that Christian witness is one beggar in the gutter telling another beggar where food might be found. That is what we are. When we pretend to ourselves or to others that we are somehow in a more elevated place than they are, and that such people should be happy to be drawn up to our level – morally, spiritually or any other way – we are extremely waxy, like a melted and twisted candle, totally cum cera rather than sine cera. The witticism (usually attributed to George Burns), “If you can fake sincerity, you’ve got it made”, has a horrible truth at the heart of it. People, however, are not fools. They are very quickly drawn far more to genuineness, to integrity, and to self-awareness than to pretentiousness and self-deception. If we can only offer image and self-love, we have nothing of any value to give to those around us.

A third word is engagement. The word has a number of nuances, but here I mean – in effect – the opposite of disengagement. You and I are called to be committed to and involved in the life, the needs and the cares of the world around us. It is very easy for Christians to separate their religion from the everyday life of the world; it is also supremely dangerous. In what we know as the “high-priestly prayer”, that prayer of Our Lord in John’s Gospel, chapter 17, his prayer is that his followers will be fully in the world, in the darkness of the world as well as its joys. If we as disciples live only in a ghetto of our own making, we are actively shutting people out of the Church, and so we are shutting out Jesus Christ himself.

On the night of the terrible fire in the Grenfell Tower in London in June, the first people on the scene to bring help and comfort (other than the fire and police services) were men and women of local faith communities. I learnt more recently that there is a computerised system that ensures that when more than six fire appliances are called to a fire, or a terrorist outrage or any other disaster, the Salvation Army will automatically be called for help. They were there first on the night of the Grenfell fire, but very quickly local faith groups of every kind were combining to give shelter, food, blankets and just straightforward

comfort to those who had escaped from the tower block. More movingly, by the next morning the west London synagogue had sent a huge consignment of clothes, food and other necessities to the local mosque. The faith response to Grenfell is, in Christian terms, not simply good neighbourliness, important though this undoubtedly is. It is the command of faith that if we are not engaged with the world around us – fully and even sacrificially – we have left Christ outside the door of our churches. How can we then expect anyone else outside our doors to take us seriously or wish to be part of us?

The fourth and final word may be the most unexpected, enchantment. We may associate enchantment with the world of Harry Potter or the novels of Philip Pullman, but that should perhaps teach us something. Even those, such as Pullman, who are deeply antagonistic to religious faith of any kind, realise that an immensely deep need in people is to be captivated by something beyond themselves. Enchantment comes from the idea of the entrancing song that can carry people to another place of wonder, a place beyond themselves. This is not about stunts or artificial trickery but about the magnetic love of Christ calling people out of themselves, their misery and fear and

anger, towards his love. The Scottish poet, Edwin Muir, in telling phrases about the religion of his childhood speaks of how there the “Word made flesh” was reduced to words, and how God became “three angry letters in a book”. Religion was presented to Muir as a youth as a vehicle of bare words and stark logic. As he puts it,

the logical hook

On which the Mystery is impaled and bent

Into an ideological argument.

There is an inherent and unmistakeable beauty in true faith – the beauty of holiness. If men, women and children in the grip of pain, fear and loneliness are to be helped on their journey into the Kingdom of God, it will not be by clever argument or strident threats. It will be when they come upon that beauty of Christ the good shepherd, that magnetic enchantment of faith, in the life of the Church wherever they may encounter it.

Hospitality, sincerity, engagement and enchantment – let each of them be what people can see in us as the Body of Christ in this diocese of Armagh.

CNI

**Help CNI grow...
... Please commend
CNI daily news to your
friends**

www.churchnewsireland.org

CNI