

Belfast Cathedral hosts service for all creatures great and small



Belfast Cathedral choir boys Liam and Joseph welcome Bernese Mountain Dog Xin to St Annes ahead of this Sundays special pets service. Xin is owned by Master of the Choristers, David Stevens

All creatures great and small will be the centre of attention this Sunday when St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast holds a special service for animal

lovers. Owners are invited to bring along their dogs, cats, rabbits and even horses to the 3.30pm service which will also include a blessing for each of the pets.

The inspiration behind the animal-themed ‘pets’ service’ has been the well-documented love that St Francis of Assisi had for animals. Dean’s vicar, Rev Canon Mark Niblock, said: “October 4 was St Francis of Assisi Day and this service, new to St Anne’s, is inspired by his love of animals.

“This is also the time of year when churches celebrate the harvest, and we want to reflect on the important place animals play in our lives at this service of thanksgiving and blessing.”

The short service will feature what the cathedral describes as “appropriate” organ music as well as the Cathedral Girls’ Choir. It will also include a number of readings.

Canon Niblock said that in the past it was fairly common practice for people to bring their animals along to church services, so this “forward step” on the part of St Anne’s is also a reflection on the past.

He said: “This is an opportunity for people from Belfast and beyond to bring their pets along to engage with St Anne’s and have some fun.”

Owners have been reminded that the welfare of the animals is their responsibility, and that all pets must be kept under control. Free parking is available beside the cathedral for anyone attending the special service. Report courtesy of the News Letter.

Homelessness in Dublin an ‘international scandal’, says C of I Archbishop

Homelessness in Dublin is a local, national and international scandal, [Church of Ireland](#) Archbishop [Michael Jackson](#) has said.

The city was “now a place where people who were promised housing two years ago can expect to die on the street in increasing numbers – and we were told two years ago that what happened to [Jonathan Corrie](#) would never happen again,” he said. “This is a scandal of local and national proportions and a matter also of international scandal,” he continued.



Archbishop Michael Jackson: People who were promised housing two years ago can expect to die on the street'

In December 2014 Mr Corrie (43), who was from a Church of Ireland background, was found dead in a doorway on Molesworth Street in Dublin, near [Leinster](#) House.

Archbishop Jackson was delivering his presidential address at the Dublin and [Glendalough](#) diocesan synods at [Christ Church, Taney](#), Co Dublin.

He told delegates “our calling is to embrace a duty of care and a ministry of service to what is now a conurbation of at least 1.3 million people and a sprawling workplace into and out of which

people from at least 11 nearby counties commute daily.

“It is a geographical area where new towns and new housing are planned and underway within the boundaries of historically existing parishes and I appeal to people in those parishes, as our response develops, to help with initiatives of response.”

As a church, he said, “we have a clear choice: either we confine ourselves to the relatively, or should I say comparatively, small number of people who are members, that is officially members, of the Church of Ireland” or “we take the maxim . . . that the whole world is our parish.”

He reminded delegates the Church of Ireland “has no agreed or coherent definition of membership per se; this also means that exclusivity cannot logically or theologically be part of our spiritual DNA.”

They were fortunate to have “a range of good ecumenical relations right across these united dioceses (of Dublin and Glendalough)” and “that Dublin has a progressive and innovative Inter [Faith Charter](#), thanks to the recently outgone lord mayor [Brendan Carr](#). ” Dublin was “the first city

in [Europe](#) to develop and to implement this,” he said.

More broadly, in the context of secular society, he said co-operation and compliance “is good for us as we seek to offer a genuinely public service as part of our Christian presence and Christian contribution to the society of which we are citizens – rightly,” he said.

Such co-operation had meant, for example, that what “people of commitment and competence have brought about in regard to university and hospital chaplaincy over the past two years in these dioceses is quite remarkable,” he said. Report courtesy of Patsy McGarry and The Irish Times.

Individualism is the enemy of reasoned debate, Synod told

“Wise, unhurried, simple and trustworthy” leadership is needed more than ever from both Church and state rather than the “considerable amount of chaff” that is flying around the world today, the Bishop of Clogher has said.

Speaking in his opening address to the Clogher Diocesan Synod 2017, the Rt. Rev. John McDowell said that, a year ago, he had identified



The Right Rev. John McDowell, (second left), Bishop of Clogher with guests from left, Rev. William Newell, Fivemiletown Methodist, Eileen Gallagher and Monsignor Peter O'Reilly.

“growing inequalities” both between and within nations as a very ominous background against which to view contemporary political and social developments.

He said: “I am no less wary this year of what is going on around us in the wider world and cannot help feeling that a quality of leadership -

wise, unhurried, simple and trustworthy - is needed more than ever both in church and state, rather than the considerable amount of chaff that is flying around in parts of the world today.”

Guests at this year’s Synod, which was held in St. Macartin’s Cathedral Hall on Thursday evening, included David Ritchie, the Chief Officer and Secretary General of the Representative Church Body of the Church of Ireland, and Simon Henry, of the Church of Ireland Youth Department.

The Bishop also welcomed a trio of representatives from some of the other churches in the area - Rev. David Cupples, of Enniskillen Presbyterian Church, Rt. Rev. Monsignor Peter O’Reilly, the parish priest of St. Michael’s in Enniskillen, and Rev. William Newell, of the Methodist Church.

In a wide-ranging address, Bishop McDowell warned against an individualism which he said was becoming “so prevalent”.

He said: “One of the principal tasks of a leader is to communicate reality to those who wish to take his or her lead, and the reality that I observe all around me, not just in Church but in every sphere of life, is a mood of impatience with other points of view, of an increasing narrowing of

vision and of a drawing back from the sort of commitment that creates sustainable and worthwhile communities.

“It is hardly an exaggeration to call these developments the triumph of individualism and I sometimes think that the word “individual” should be banned from Christian conversations and replaced by a word like “person” to reflect the complexity and value which each of us has - what we share as much as what we need.”

Report courtesy The Impartial Reporter.

Serial anti-abortion protester promises court not to harass, pester or assault volunteer at a family planning clinic

A serial anti-abortion protester has promised a court she will not "harass, pester, annoy, molest or assault" a volunteer at a family planning clinic.

Moirá Brennan, a member of Precious Life, gave the undertaking at Laganside Courts in Belfast on Monday "in lieu of an injunction", after Marie Stopes volunteer Saoirse Johnston sought a harassment order against her.

The court had granted an interim harassment order to Ms Johnston in March after a series of confrontations with Ms Brennan at the family planning facility in Belfast city centre in December 2016 and January 2017.

Ms Brennan, of Lisheegan Road in Ballymoney, Co Antrim also agreed "not to communicate or attempt to communicate with (Ms Johnston) in any way (and) not to incite any third party to do".

The 48-year-old was convicted in 2015 of assaulting an employee of the Family Planning Association as she left the clinic.

After approaching her victim in May 2014 and attempted to put graphic anti-abortion leaflets into her handbag, she hit the woman with a clipboard.

Ms Johnston said was forced to apply for the order after suffering repeated harassment at the hands of Ms Brennan and others while helping out at the clinic.

She volunteers as a "client safety escort", walking any clients who are upset by protesters who maintain a vigil outside.

Volunteers wear 'bodycams' to document any abuse from demonstrators. CCTV cameras also monitor the site. Report courtesy The Irish News.

Bullies among clergy contributed most to fall of Catholic Church in Ireland, says priest

The bullying of the people by some clergy played a greater role in Catholic church decline in [Ireland](#) than clerical child sexual abuse, a leading Dominican priest has said.

“They had little or no respect for individual people – and not just for minors,” said Fr [Tom Jordan](#), editor of *Spirituality* magazine.

Referring in the current issue to a remark by an unnamed “acute observer of the church in Ireland,” he said “the failure of the church in recent times was due not so much to the abysmal behaviour by some clergy in sexually abusing minors but that some clergy were bullies.”

One of the glaring deficiencies of church practice in recent times was the failure of leadership to respect the individual.



An exception was Pope Francis, widely recognised as “a good man driven by the basic insights of the gospel of Jesus Christ – mercy, justice, peace, love, reconciliation”.

“Consider the number of priests silenced or removed from office because of their expressed views, and without being afforded an opportunity of defending themselves.”

This is understood to be a reference to the five Irish priests disciplined over recent years by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome.

He said there were also members of religious orders, who professed obedience to a fraternal

and democratic way of living, who were ignored and disrespected by those elected to lead.

“Failure to respect the individual undermines the whole organisation and leads to paralysis of mission, and weakens the mandate and witness of the church.”

Respect was “due to all because all are made in the image of God,” he said.

Recent events worldwide focused attention “on the reality and quality of leadership,” he said. In the West one could be forgiven for asking “where has it all gone wrong?” he said.

An exception was [Pope Francis](#), widely recognised as “a good man driven by the basic insights of the gospel of [Jesus Christ](#) – mercy, justice, peace, love, reconciliation,” he said. Report courtesy of Patsy McGarry and The Irish Times.

Former long-term paramilitary prisoner is speaker at healing services

David Packie Hamilton will be speaking at in Divine Healing Ministries. “David is a former long-term paramilitary prisoner whom I got to

know during the years that I worked as Church of Ireland chaplain in Crumlin Road prison,” Brother David Jardine, director of DHM, writes.

Brother David commented, “He was converted in his prison cell in January, 1980, and immediately everyone could see a radical change in him. During the years since then David has remained a faithful Christian, often in difficult circumstances. He is a gifted speaker who always brings humour into his addresses. He will be speaking at the following services: -

- Monday, November 6 at 1pm in St George’s, High Street, Belfast.
- Monday, November 6 at 8pm in St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast.
- Tuesday, November 7 at 8pm in St Finnian’s Church, Cregagh Road, Belfast

“These services are all healing services. David will address the theme ‘**How Healing comes**’. I would be grateful if you could support some of these services, either by attending or by praying for them. You will not be disappointed. David is a very gifted speaker.”

CNI

Assurances given on future of Donegal C of I hospital chapel

The Irish health service has given formal assurances to a Donegal Church of Ireland cleric that it will not be removing a chapel for his denomination from Stranorlar Community Hospital. Rev Adam Pullen, the local Church of Ireland cleric who ministers to patients in the chapel, hailed the outcome of the meeting as a success.

The story first came to light last month in Northern Ireland when Donegal Catholic priest Fr John Joe Duffy contacted the News Letter to express “horror” that the Catholic chapel was being retained in the hospital while the Church of Ireland chapel, which had been there for 50 years, was being removed.

After community outcry in Donegal, the HSE gave assurances it would consult with the Church of Ireland. A formal meeting with Rev Pullen took place on September 29 which he has now described as “constructive and helpful”. Rev Pullen added that it was “a timely opportunity to share our concerns and the upset that had been within the parish and wider community”.

The cleric was assured that there had been no formal consultation on the changes, that he would be included when they do begin and that the chapel would be retained in the hospital, which is undergoing renovations.

The HSE said that a “review report” about hospitals in the area had been completed by Rhatigan Architects on behalf of the HSE, in order to comply with current health standards. The architects recommended the relocation of the Church of Ireland chapel. “There is no question of downgrading or eliminating access to religious facilities in the hospitals,” the HSE said.

It confirmed HSE officials have now met Rev Pullen. “They assured Reverend Pullen that there will be consultation at the design stage re provision for all religions services within the hospital.” Report courtesy of the News Letter.

Inishowen Gospel Choir taking its award-winning singers to Lettermacaward

The Inishowen Gospel Choir is to perform for the Church of Ireland in Lettermacaward.



A spokeswoman said: "We are continuing our efforts to bring musical events to the historic Church of Ireland in Lettermacaward.

"After two classical concerts in 2016, and springtime 2017, we are proud that we could invite the Innishowen Gospel Choir to come to us on October 21 at 8pm.

"Founded in 2005 by two friends, who wanted to bring the sounds and spirit of gospel music to their community, the Inishowen Gospel Choir has performed at events from local concerts in the north west of Ireland, to world-renowned music festivals such as Glastonbury and Electric Picnic.

"The choir has retained its community-based character and energy, which combined with musical excellence, has seen it perform with some of the best-known names in the Irish music scene, including Kila, The Henry Girls, Liam Ó Maonlaí, Duke Special, Declan O'Rourke, Bronagh Gallagher, Foy Vance, Cara Dillon and Moya Brennan.

"Based in Carndonagh, Co Donegal, the choir is musically directed by Dr Neil Burns and Dr Anna Nolan.

"The Inishowen Gospel Choir's musical diversity and energetic performances have kept audiences entertained for over ten years."

She added: "The choir has performed at hundreds of events from carol services to choral festivals and from weddings to presidential visits.

"A unique blend of spiritual, gospel, soul, roots, rock and folk has helped the Inishowen Gospel Choir become a regular feature at music festivals throughout Ireland.

"The choir is also no stranger to the airwaves having performed live on RTÉ Radio 1 from Electric Picnic as well performances on Today FM, Highland Radio and BBC Radio Foyle.

"After the performance in the Church everybody is invited for tea and light refreshments in Elliott's lounge. That is a good occasion to meet and chat to the members of the choir." Report courtesy Donegal Now.

Donegal bride drives to church in dad's tractor and leaves in hubby's at farm-themed wedding

A BRIDE drove her dad's tractor to her wedding and left after the ceremony in her husband's.

Lucinda Boyce married Gary Mulhern at St Mary's in Ramelton, County Donegal.

She said: "I grew up on Daddy's farm, and then with Gary being a farmer too, we wanted to bring farming into our wedding so we thought we'd do it with the transport.

"I left my own house and drove myself and Daddy in his tractor, and when the ceremony was over we left in Gary's tractor — well, it's our tractor now!"

And there was a farming theme too when Gary popped the question.



Lucinda said: “Gary asked me one day to come out and help him feed the sheep. I thought nothing of it, I drove to the middle of the field and got out of the jeep by the sheep feeder.

“When I turned around he was down on one knee. It was something different, a lot of my friends get taken away but I just get taken out to a field in [Donegal](#) Town.

“It was very different, it was something that was very unique to us, it’s something that suited us and it really fit in with our everyday lives.

“Driving around the town that day we were getting so much support from people — especially when I was driving in my wedding

dress, it's something that doesn't happen every day!"

Before the big day, both tractors were polished for five to six hours each to get them ready.

Lucinda said: "Soon after the wedding, everything was back to normal, one of them was out bringing home peat and the other was spreading fertiliser on the farm." Report courtesy The Irish Sun

Cathedral to display "the most dangerous book in Tudor England"

St Paul's Cathedral in London is set to display one of only three-known surviving copies of "the most dangerous book in Tudor England" as part of an event to mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. In 1536, William Tyndale was executed for his work in translating the New Testament into English, and King Henry VIII's officials and Church leaders set about searching for destroying copies of what was the first English-language Bible. But within a few years it was available within every church in the country.

The publication of Tyndale's Bible in 1526 "opened up for the first time the whole of the



The opening page of St John's Gospel from one of only three known surviving copies of William Tyndale's New Testament – the first English-language Bible – from the library of St Paul's Cathedral in London.

New Testament in English and helped to bring continental Reformation ideals to the people of England,” St Paul’s Cathedral, which owns one of only three known surviving copies, said. “Tyndale wrote that the Church authorities banned translations of the Bible in order ‘to keep the world still in darkness, to the intent they might sit in the consciences of the people, through vain superstition and false doctrine . . .

and to exalt their own honour . . . above God himself””.

Tyndale travelled to Cologne in Germany to get the Bible printed and had to smuggle copies into England. Church officials were furious. The Bishop of London issued a prohibition notice and, as a public demonstration of its unlawfulness, held a Bible-burning ceremony at St Paul's Cathedral on 27 October 1526. The cathedral also played a part in Tyndale's execution: it was a Canon of St Paul's who planned Tyndale's arrest in the German city of Antwerp.

“As an artefact, it is something that is hugely precious,” Cathedral librarian Jo Wisdom told BBC News. “Of course it has added excitement of being contraband – it was imported in bales of wool, disguised so that nobody would know exactly what it was if it fell into the hands of the customs.”

On its website, St Paul's Library entry for the book says: “Although Tyndale was executed the words in which he expressed the content of the New Testament live on. Roughly eighty percent of the King James New Testament used today is Tyndale's work. The following phrases appear in print for the first time in Tyndale's translation:

‘broken-hearted’; ‘eat drink and be merry’; ‘signs of the times’; ‘flowing with milk and honey’”.

St Paul’s copy of the book entered its library collection through a bequest. The true significance of the volume, which helped change the literary, religious and political landscape for ever was only realised in the nineteenth century.

The Bible, which was rebound in the 19th Century, will be on display next week during an evening hosted by the Canon Chancellor of St Paul’s, Mark Oakley. “*Souls at Stake: Tyndale, the Bible and the 21st Century*” is one of a series of events at the Cathedral to mark the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. It will feature contributions from the broadcaster and author Melvyn Bragg, who has produced programmes written books about Tyndale and the King James’ Bible, and theologian Dr Jane Williams, the assistant dean and lecturer in Systemic Theology at King’s College. - Report by ACNS

“*Souls at Stake: Tyndale, the Bible and the 21st Century*” takes place from 6.30 pm to 8 pm on Tuesday 24 October. [Click here](#) to order free tickets.

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