



Fr Peter McVerry: ‘Evictions are a return to famine times’

Fr Peter McVerry has said the country is returning to famine times by evicting families and that the Government is not willing to “take on” vested interests to solve the housing crisis, the Irish Examiner reports.

“Unless we prevent more people coming into the system, then trying to house homeless people is

like trying to empty the bath water with the tap still running.

“It should be made illegal to evict people into homelessness, particularly families. That’s what we did during the famine years and we’re still doing it today in 2017,” said Fr McVerry.

The homeless campaigner was asked why more action is not being taken by the Government to solve the housing crisis despite many solutions being tabled by voluntary bodies.

“Basically, I think, this whole question of housing, you have to take on vested interests. You have to take on the banks. You have to take on the greedy landlords. You have to take on the vulture funds.

“You have to take on big vested interests. I think that is what this conservative Government is not prepared to do,” he said.

Fr McVerry was speaking at the launch of a report by the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, analysing the Government’s 15- month-old Rebuilding Ireland plan.

Rebuilding Ireland is described by the report as being a “flawed philosophy”. The campaigner



Fr Peter McVerry

tabled several measures that can be taken to tackle homelessness.

“We need a huge expansion of the mortgage-to-rent scheme. It’s been very unsuccessful so far but with 50,000 mortgages in mortgage arrears of more than two years, we have a catastrophe of homelessness coming down the road unless we address that problem because most of those houses will be repossessed,” he said.

“Under current policy the occupants will be turfed out.”

Fr McVerry also said that the 183,000 boarded-up houses and apartments around the country are the “supply” side of the equation.

PJ Drudy, emeritus professor of economics at Trinity College Dublin, was one of the authors of the report. He also listed immediate steps that could be taken to ease the housing crisis.

“How do we increase the supply and reduce prices if the market is not resolving the problem? It’s very simple.

“You can increase the supply by producing significant numbers of social housing units,” said Prof Drudy.

He estimated that 10,000 social housing units should be built per annum.

“If you do this it will have the immediate effect of reducing rents in the private sector because the three sectors of owner-occupation, private rented, and social housing are interlinked,” said Prof Drudy.

He also talked about “cost-rental” homes to cater for people who do not qualify for social housing but who are unable to afford their own property.

“There is a solution and that is for the Government to go for cost-rental homes. That would be a situation where the Government organises to build and own homes that would be rented out, not just to people on social housing lists but to the guard, the teacher, the professor, the journalist, and they’d pay a reasonable, regulated rent well below market rents and that would pay off the mortgage.”

“That is a great possibility in my view. The money is borrowed and paid back over a long period of time at a low-interest rate. That is the route we should be travelling. It would have an immediate impact,” he added.

Armagh primates to open new £1.4m library and museum at Benburb Priory

A new £1.4m library and museum at Benburb Priory will be opened next week by Ireland's two Archbishops of Armagh, Alf McCreary reports in the Belfast Telegraph.

The facility will celebrate over 1,000 years of history and will house several unique historical collections of national and international

importance, including Servite, Marian and O'Neill collections and archives.

It will be opened by the leader of Ireland's Catholics, the Most Revd Eamon Martin, and the Church of Ireland primate, the Most Reverend Richard Clarke on Thursday, October 26.

The money to fund the development was raised over an eight-year period, and the new centre in east Tyrone is based in the refurbished stables at the centre of the priory estate.

Its exhibits also include a collection of Irish literature, and a wide range of religious books. The archives date back over 150 years, and include the complete records of the Servites, one of the five original Catholic mendicant orders, in Britain and Ireland.

Fr Colm McGlynn, the Prior of Benburb, said: "The development of the library and museum is a further extension of the community outreach which has been central to the priory since its establishment here in 1949, and it will enhance and broaden the experience and knowledge of visitors to the priory, which is open to all.

"The Servite Community is very grateful for the funds which made this important project

possible and for the dedication and hard work of the Project Team."

Professor Gerry McKenna, chair of the Management Board, said: "This represents a major development not just for the priory, Benburb village and the wider community but also for the local, national and international community of individuals, researchers and groups - including schools - who are interested in the heritage represented within its collections."

He added: "The establishment of the Stables Coffee Shop will also be a focal point for greater social interchange within the village and between visitors from near and far."

The priory, which is owned by the Servites, is a cross-community centre, and the new library and museum has been developed with this ethos.

The priory estate is of considerable historic interest. It was originally a Plantation estate, which was later bought by the distiller James Bruce in the late 19th century. Bruce built the manor house and stables and also remodelled Benburb village.

After a period of relative disuse, the estate was used in the Second World War as a field hospital

for British, Belgian and US troops. It was bought by the Servites in 1947, and a priory and seminary was opened in 1949.

The priory has evolved over the years in functional terms, and since the 1980s it has been a major community centre and meeting place for over 30 community groups. It has over 20,000 visitors annually.

Archbishop Jackson key speaker as Council of Christians and Jews celebrate 75th anniversary in London

The Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ) is celebrating its 75th anniversary this month. The year-long celebrations began yesterday (Tuesday October 17) with an address by the Archbishop of Dublin, The Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson, at CCJ's AGM at St John's Wood Synagogue in London.

The Archbishop of Dublin, Michael Jackson, has used [a speech](#) to the Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ) to talk about how people encounter what he termed "the other." Respect for the other was needed for people of distinct faiths to engage in encounters with one another, he said.



Archbishop Michael Jackson addresses the Council of Christians and Jews on its 75th anniversary year

And he argued that today's mass migrations were once again bringing people together who might not otherwise have met, saying: "Neutral territory and public space have become contested once again in ways that are all too familiar to Jewish people in history and today".

The CCJ is Britain's oldest inter-faith organisation. Archbishop Michael made his comments in an address at the organisation's AGM at St John's Wood Synagogue in north London. He argued that while it was fashionable

to blame social media for the slide towards a loss of respect for human dignity, diminishment and demonisation of the other were ancient human instincts.

“The Jewish people have consistently been the recipients of this diminishment as – in the early twentieth century and before the Shoah – were the Armenians. Encounter, storytelling and truth-telling for us together . . . make the journey between the dialogue of life and the dialogue of ideas possible in such a way as to respect the experience and analyse the ideas.”

Being an inter-faith partner required being true to yourself and then being true to others, he said, suggesting that the principle could be expressed as: “Finding the self in God and in the other”.

The Council of Christians and Jews was founded by Archbishop of Canterbury William Temple and Chief Rabbi Joseph Hertz during World War II. It was a response to the increasing persecution of Jews by the Nazis and was supported by other Christian leaders. An announcement in *The Times* newspaper on 1 October 1942 said: “The following statement is issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council



and the Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Empire:-

“The present German Government has consistently attempted to undermine and destroy those traditional religious and spiritual values of mankind in which it recognizes its most dangerous enemies. The course of the war has seen a steady intensification of these attempts, and German conquests have enormously extended the area in which these policies can be ruthlessly applied.

“In the forefront of their efforts to create division within every community, the Nazis have always placed anti-semitism [sic], which is repugnant to

the moral principles common to Christianity and Judaism alike. We cannot afford to ignore the effects of the steady propagation of this evil throughout the world. It is not only a message to the unity of every community in which it takes root, but it is the very negation of those values on which alone we believe that a new and better world can be established.

In these circumstances, we are agreed that it would be for the general benefit to form in this country a council of Christians and Jews, which might draw to itself the support in this matter of all men and women of good will. Such a council has now been formed, and, as its joint presidents, we have been gratified by the influential and wholehearted response which has been immediately forthcoming.”

After setting out the Council’s aims, which include tackling religious and racial intolerance, the promotion of mutual understanding and good will between Christians and Jews, and the promotion of fellowship between Christian and Jewish youth organisations, the statement goes on to say that: “His eminence Cardinal Hinsley, Archbishop of Westminster, endorses the condemnation of anti-semitism [sic] and has, since the composition of this statement, joined the council as a joint president as a mark of his

strong protest against all persecution of the Jewish people.”

Yesterday’s speech by Archbishop Michael launched a year of celebrations of its anniversary, which is themed around Psalm 133: “How good it is to dwell together”.

The chair of CCJ, the Bishop of Lichfield, Dr Michael Ipgrave, said: “We are delighted to celebrate CCJ’s 75th anniversary. CCJ was founded in 1942 during the dark days of the Second World War and the Holocaust. It was the first national interfaith network and we remain the leading nationwide forum for Christian / Jewish engagement.

“Our original vision, challenging antisemitism and prejudice in whatever guise, and educating to improve relations within communities, is as relevant today as it was in 1942. This special anniversary will showcase the growth and importance of CCJ in every generation.”

Today, the CCJ announced the appointment of an Anglican deacon, the Revd Patrick Moriarty, as its joint honorary secretary. Moriarty is the head teacher of the Jewish Community Secondary School in New Barnet, London.

In a statement, CCJ said: “Patrick is a passionate advocate for Jewish-Christian relations and views this as ‘something that I seek to live out in my life, in the unique position of being an ordained deacon in the Church of England and the head teacher of a Jewish Secondary School. Having lived all my life as an Anglican amongst the Jewish Community, studied and taught both Christianity and Judaism, and served as a leader of religious / educational institutions of both faiths, I have a honed sensitivity to what unites and separates these two theologies and communities, and a deep yearning for them to grow in appreciation, understanding and respect love for each other’”.

- *The [full text](#) of Archbishop Michael Jackson’s speech can be read here.*

Christian Aid supports eco-lodge made famous by new Daniel Radcliffe film

An eco-lodge supported by Christian Aid is set to make an appearance in a new film starring Daniel Radcliffe.



'Jungle', which debuts this week, is based on the real-life story of Yossi Ghinsberg who survived getting lost in the Amazon Jungle.

Ten years after Ghinsberg escaped, he set up an eco-lodge with the indigenous community of San José de Uchupiamonas that helped rescue him.

The lodge, Chalalan, is supported by Christian Aid through its collaboration in ACRE (Access to Capital for Rural Enterprises).



The group supports small and medium sized enterprises and helps them to become investment-ready and to access the long-term capital they need to grow.

Made using local materials and solar-powered electricity, the lodge employs 40 people and invests in health and education projects that benefit the 750 people living in San José. Its visitors are taken on jungle treks by indigenous guides who share their knowledge about the wild life and stress the importance of protecting the forest that is threatened by deforestation and the effects of climate change.

Ghinsberg said: "Chalalan is a beautiful, sustainable and profitable project made by and

for the local people. I wanted to give something back and this was the best way I knew how. It is an enchanting place and anyone who wants to experience the Amazon is in good hands here. "

Ghinsberg said working with the film's director and Radcliffe has been 'overwhelming'.

He added: "I never imagined that my story would be told in this way. Any attention that Chalalan receives as a result of this, is just fantastic."

Christian Aid said it hopes the film will "help shine a light on Ghinsberg's humanitarian efforts in Bolivia and on the importance of supporting enterprises in poor rural settings."

RTE Service for Remembrance Sunday

The RTÉ1 Service for Remembrance Sunday (broadcast at 11am) will be led by the Very Revd Nigel Crossey, Dean of Kilmore, with a choir and congregation from St Fethlimidh's Cathedral, Kilmore.

CITI Advent Carols and Readings

An evening of Advent Carols and Readings with the students and staff of the Church of Ireland

Theological Institute will take place on Wednesday, 6th December at 7pm at Kill o' the Grange, Kiln Lane, Kill of the Grange, Deansgrange, Co. Dublin.

Parking is available at the church. We would be delighted if you could join us as we prepare to celebrate the Christmas season. Please bring a friend. Refreshments will be served afterwards, and a reply by email would help us with catering arrangements. Replies should be sent to Daphne Metcalfe: daphnemetcalf@theologicalinstitute.ie

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