



St Patrick's Cathedral celebrates Swift's 350th birthday next month

This year Saint Patrick's Cathedral celebrates the 350th birthday of Jonathan Swift, popular author and Dean of the Cathedral from 1713–1745. The Jonathan Swift Festival, which will run from November 23–26 with a special concert on November 30 (Swift's birthday), has been organised by the Cathedral to mark the anniversary. The festival includes a broad variety of events with something for everyone, from

Swift experts to those looking to learn a little more.

The festival kicks off on November 23 with a [launch night](#) at which a light animation will go live and afterward and an exclusive opportunity to see the building after-hours to visit the grave of Swift himself. At 20.00 there is a [free film screening](#) in the building in association with The Irish Film Institute of Words upon the Window Pane and there will be a special guest to open the film on the night.

On Friday the 24th Pat Liddy will be [giving tours of the city](#) with a Swift theme. In the early evening is an amazing opportunity to [visit the hospital](#) (St Patrick's Hospital) which Swift founded and see behind the scenes. Later that evening you have a choice between music or science. In Christ Church Cathedral traditional musician Pádraig Ó Nualláin will be singing [ballads from Swift's Dublin](#). In the Science gallery Dr René Gapert will give a [talk on the findings](#) from a recent study on Swift's skull. Using "CSI" style techniques, a reconstruction of Swift's face will be unveiled along with some findings from the study.

Saturday the 25th has lots of opportunities to be inspired by Swift's writing and create your own

works. In the morning, the wonderful Fighting Words will deliver a [creative writing workshop](#) for families in the Cathedral; in the afternoon Manchán Magan will deliver a [Travel Writing Masterclass](#) at the Irish Writers Centre.

On Sunday the 26th the Cathedral hosts a [Service of Commemoration](#) and celebration of the life of Jonathan Swift. This will feature a rare opportunity to see the choirs of Christ Church and Saint Patrick's Cathedral in action together and a special guest speaker will be asked to deliver the address. The festival closes in style with a [beautiful candlelit dinner](#) in the nave of the Cathedral. The food will be straight out of the 17th century and will be made using a recipe book from the era. Speaking at the dinner will be writer and folklorist Deirdre Nuttall, whose ancestor compiled the recipes.

There are many more events taking place over the weekend so check out the Swift Festival website www.jonathanswiftfestival.ie.

Derry cleric calls on church to allow married priests

Well-known Derry priest, Fr Paddy O'Kane says Catholic priests should be allowed to marry, The Irish News reports.

The parish priest in the city's Holy Family parish, said that while many priests are happy to be celibate, marriage should be an option.

Fr O'Kane said the Irish church was facing a vocations crisis and that only eight students entered the national seminary at Maynooth to train for the priesthood this year. When he went to Maynooth in 1966, he was one of 80 student priests.

“Priest-less parishes are appearing all over Ireland and may be here in this diocese (Derry) before long. The church needs to adapt to these changing times. We may have to take another look at celibacy and women priests,” he wrote in his Derry News column.

Fr O'Kane said the concept of a married priesthood already existed in the Catholic church and pointed out that a number of former married Anglican ministers converted to Catholicism after their church introduced women priests and bishops. Fr O'Kane said these men continued in their priestly ministry despite being married with families.

He said that while he found his priesthood very fulfilling, he had at times missed having a family and experienced loneliness on occasions.

“There have been times I have only held on to my faith by a hair’s breadth,” he said.

Fr O’Kane suggested the church may change its view on a married clergy.

“In fact, Pope Francis may soon fulfil the Brazilian bishops’ recent special request to allow married priests to resume their priestly ministry, according to liberation theologian, Leonardo Boff.”

Fr O’Kane added: “If the many thousands of priests who have married are once again allowed to practice their ministry, that would be a first step to improving the situation (vocations crisis) but at the same time also in impulse for the church to free itself of the fetters of celibacy.”

Ordination in historic Saul church

Family, friends and colleagues were there to witness the joyful occasion of Berni McAvoy’s ordination as deacon in Saul Church on 21 October.

Because she has been undergoing medical treatment, Berni was unable to be ordained along with her classmates in September, but the preacher on that occasion, Canon Dr Christina

Baxter, returned specially to give the address in Saul. Bishop Harold Miller conducted the service.

Berni originally trained as a primary school teacher and prior to ordination training worked in community outreach and pastoral care in St Jude's Ballynafeigh. Her sponsors were the former rector of St Jude's, Revd Norman Jardine, Canon Myrtle Kerr of the Christian Renewal Centre, Rostrevor, her sister, Ann, and a close friend from her 20 years in Scotland, Kay Haggarty.

Berni has been ordained to serve her intern year in St Clements, Templemore Avenue.

New C of I Chaplain at University College Cork

The Dean of Cloyne, the Very Reverend Alan Marley, is to be the new Church of Ireland Chaplain at University College Cork. Alan will leave Cloyne Union of Parishes after Christmas to take up his new position.

Alan Marley started in full time ministry with the Church Army; commissioned to be Chaplain to the Oxford House in Bethnal Green, East London



in 1982. He then moved to France and lived and worked for two years as a volunteer at the Taizé Community. Returning in 1987, he trained for ordination at the Queen's College, Birmingham, completing his degree in Theology at the University of Birmingham.

Ordained in 1989, he served his curacy in the parish of Blandford Forum, Dorset, in the west of

England. He then moved into sector ministry becoming the Chaplain at Aylesbury Prison, a long-term institution for Young Offenders.

In 1997 he moved to Cork, Cloyne and Ross and became Rector of the Fermoy Union. In 2003 he was appointed as the Rector of Cloyne Union and Dean of Cloyne.

University College Cork, founded in 1845, has more than 20,000 students (including 14,000 undergraduates) and 2,800 members of staff (of which nearly 800 are faculty). In 2017 it was named as the *Sunday Times* Irish University of the Year. It is situated on the south bank of the River Lee close to Saint Fin Barre's Cathedral, in that part of the area where it is said that St Fin Barre founded his monastery, around which the town and city of Cork grew.

Archbishop of Canterbury boosts links to the Commonwealth of Nations

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has appointed a Special Representative to the Commonwealth – an association of 52 independent nations, most of which used to be

part of the British Empire. The Revd Flora Winfield, the Anglican Communion's former representative to the United Nations in Geneva, will take up the new role ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in April 2018.

Formed mainly of former British colonies, many Commonwealth countries have a strong Anglican presence and the Archbishop is keen to strengthen ties to the organisation. "Given the historic links and shared values between the Anglican Communion and the Commonwealth, I am delighted that Flora will be using her extensive experience and skills to ensure proper representation between the Archbishop of Canterbury's office and the Commonwealth in the run-up to and during the Head of Government meeting," he said.

Prior to her previous role, as the Anglican Communion Representative to the United Nations Institutions in Geneva, Canon Winfield served as the Archbishop of Canterbury's secretary for Anglican Relations, as the secretary for international affairs at Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and as assistant secretary general of Religions for Peace.



Cathedrals to trial contactless donation boxes

Donation boxes accepting money via contactless bank cards are to be trialed at a dozen Church of England cathedrals in an attempt to boost giving.

Bristol, Guildford (pictured below), Liverpool, St Paul's and St Edmundsbury are among twelve landmarks participating in the pilot scheme, due to start later this year.

Rev David Potterton from Romsey Abbey, which is also taking part, told the Sunday Telegraph: "We hope that giving everyone, particularly people who aren't carrying cash anymore, the opportunity to donate will increase the abbey's visitor donations substantially."



Guildford cathedral by night

The announcement comes after a report by UK Finance last week concluded that charities missed out on £160 million during the past twelve months because fewer people are carrying coins and notes.

Guildford Cathedral in Surrey said its 30,000 visitors annually offer donations of £10,000 per year - an average of 30p per person.

Like most other cathedral, the landmark is free to enter but secure containers, dubbed 'honesty boxes', encourage guests to make a suggested donation.

Matt O'Grady from Guildford Cathedral told the Sunday Telegraph: "We definitely don't want to impose a fee; in our case, we think that would be a barrier to people coming here."

During the summer, contactless payment terminals were passed around with traditional collection plates at approximately 40 Church of England congregations, as part of a separate pilot scheme.

National stewardship officer at the Church of England, John Preston told the Financial Times at the time: "We're aware that younger generations - and there are many people now who don't carry cash - want to give in different ways".

"Enabling them to give in a way that suits them is something we'd like to try."

Anglicans and other Christian leaders demand action on Climate Change

Five Anglican archbishops have joined other Christian leaders in calling for governments to implement the promises they made at the Paris

Climate Change talks. Political leaders from 197 nations will gather in Bonn, Germany, next month for the next phase of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP23); and the Christian leaders are urging them to “keep the promises they made in the Paris Agreement, to restore the natural balance.”

The letter was signed by five archbishops: Thabo Makgoba of Southern Africa, Winston Halapua of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, Albert Chama of Central Africa, Philip Freier of Australia; and Francisco De Assis Da Silva of Brazil; and two bishops: Dr Jwan Zhumbes of Bukuru in Nigeria, and Dr Robert Innes from the Church of England’s Diocese in Europe.

The letter has been co-ordinated by Renew Our World – a Christian partnership bringing together the Anglican Alliance, Tearfund, Micah Challenge, EU-Cord, Eficor, Paz y Esperanza, and the Jos Green Centre in Australia, Brazil, Europe, India, Nigeria, Peru, the UK, US, and Zambia.

Renew Our World say that next month’s COP23 meeting is “the crucial next step for our world to take urgent action on climate solutions, before it’s too late. We already won the commitment of almost every country in the landmark 2015 Paris



The then-UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon is briefed on the final draft of the Paris COP21 climate change agreement in November 2015. Ahead of next month's COP23 talks in Germany, Christian leaders are calling on governments to implement the promises they made in Paris.

Climate Agreement. But now it is time to hold our governments accountable to those commitments, and make sure we turn the Paris Agreement into reality. We must make sure our leaders keep their promises.

“This year is critically important, especially since President Trump indicated he wants to withdraw the US from the agreement. Now is the crucial time for our world to band together, focus, and rise to meet our commitments to protect people and planet.”

Andy Bowerman, co-executive director of the Anglican Alliance, which co-ordinates relief and development work amongst the provinces of the Anglican communion, commented: “I’m sure that after their [engaging and moving conversations at the Primates’ Meeting](#), it was an easy decision for each of the archbishops to sign the letter.

“They, along with all of the archbishops who met in Canterbury, understand the deep consequences of not acting now on climate change.”

The letter has also been signed by more than 580 other Christian leaders, including Bishop Efraim Tendero of the World Evangelical Alliance; the human rights activist Dr Denis Mukwege; Pete Greig from the 24-7 prayer movement; US singer Nichole Nordeman; and Laura Vargas from the Inter-religious Council of Peru.

It says: “as Christians across the globe we are calling for action on climate change. The changing climate is causing great damage to

people and planet right now, and we are particularly concerned about hunger and poverty hitting the most vulnerable communities, who did least to cause it.”

They are calling on world leaders to

- Set targets for the world to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions fast enough to limit global warming to the safe level of 1.5 degrees.
- Invest in 100% clean energy, particularly using local grids so it reaches those in poverty beyond the reach of national electricity grids.
- Support more sustainable, low emission agriculture, to stop communities going hungry, and help them cope better with more floods and droughts caused by climate change.
- Publish national country plans in 2020 showing how each nation will move to zero emissions.

“This is our generation’s challenge, a significant part of how we love our neighbours,” the letter says. “We’re committing to respond as Christians by living more sustainably, praying,

and raising our voices; we're asking every member of the church – the world's largest network – to join in, alongside many others, and every national leader to lead the way.”

- *You can put your name to the open letter by [signing the online petition](#).*

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