

Changing the terms of Christian public engagement, Catherwood memorial event



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A CHANGING WORLD

‘Changing the terms of Christian public engagement’ is the theme of the Annual Public Theology Event in memory of Sir Fred Catherwood. Christians are too often on the back foot in public debate. Michael Schluter will set out fresh thinking to enable Christians to

change their approach to engaging in the public square.

Dr Michael Schluter CBE is an economist and author, and speaks around the world to both Christian and secular audiences. He has co-founded many different organisations including the Jubilee Centre (Cambridge), Relationships Foundation, Relational Schools, Allia and Keep Sunday Special Campaign (which famously defeated Mrs Thatcher in 1986 on the issue of Sunday shopping and still operates today).

he Catherwood Lecture in Public Theology has been held since 1998. This year's event will present a paradigm shift in thinking from the individualism of Western culture to one which is built on biblical foundations. It will be of special interest to people who want to engage in Christian-based reform of their organisations and wider society. Come and engage in how we might begin to transform organisations in a way which feeds upwards into policy and downwards into families and communities. Bookstall available with some of Michael's books and publications

The event is on November 2 2017, from 6.00-9.15pm at Skainos, 241 Newtownards Road, Belfast. BT4 1AF (Metro route 3A and

street parking). Programme - Hot Meal available from 6.00-7.00pm –please book. Outline Programme: Start at 7.00pm. After a short introduction Michael will speak for 45-50 minutes. There will then be group discussion on the issues raised in different contexts (e.g.

Business and Commerce, Schools, Health Sector Organisations and Churches) and then a time for more general questions and wider discussion.

Suggested contribution for meal and evening £10.00 each. Please confirm your attendance by emailing info@contemporarychristianity.net by October 30 (to assist with catering)

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Launch of Cork Diocesan Church Music Scheme

On Thursday, 5th October nearly 200 people of all ages and interests, attended the launch in St Fin Barre's Cathedral, Cork, of a new Diocesan Church Music Scheme. The scheme was the brainchild of the Music Department of the Cathedral led by Mr Peter Stobart (Director of Music), supported by Ms Phoebe Chow

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Schoolchildren from St Luke's School, Cork with the Bishop of Cork, the Dean of Cork, Ms PHoebe Chow and Mr Peter Stobart at the launch of the new Cork, Cloyne and Ross Diocesan Church Music Scheme. Photo: Sam Wynn

(Assistant Director of Music), and the Dean of Cork, the Very Reverend Nigel Dunne.

The three-pronged scheme, working with schools, musicians and organising events, is designed to create opportunities for improving both music and religious education through music, in the Diocese. Launching the scheme, the scheme, the Bishop of Cork, the Right

Reverend Dr Paul Colton, quoted Bono who said 'Music can change the world because it can change people.'

Bishop Colton said: *“This new and innovative scheme, put together in an exciting way in this Cathedral at the heart of this small Diocese reaches out in an ambitious and creative way to bring about change: change in schools, in our worship, in our friendships and in the opportunities it creates for so many people to be involved in the life of the Church and the Diocese.”*

At the heart of the launch were the schoolchildren from St Luke's School, Mahony's Avenue, Cork, one of the 8 schools where Peter Stobart has already been working. They sang 'Laudamus Te' from *Gloria* by Vivaldi, accompanied on the organ by Ms Phoebe Chow. Everyone remarked how amazing it was that such a piece had been learnt by heart by the children in just four weeks since the start of school term.

The proceedings were opened by the Dean of Cork, the Very Reverend Nigel Dunne, who welcomed everyone, and who thanked the Bishop for securing the funding for the scheme

through bodies that he chairs: the Diocesan Board of Education, and the City of Cork Church School Board, as well as Ashton School, Cork.

There are 21 Church of Ireland primary schools in Cork, Cloyne and Ross, and 3 Church of Ireland second level schools. Ms Phoebe Chow, the recently arrived Assistant Director of Music introduced herself and Mr Peter Stobart, Director of Music, set out in detail what the scheme is all about.

Full information about the scheme is available here: [Diocesan Church Music Scheme - Information](#)

Reformation theme of Armagh Cathedral Organ Recital

Revd Dr Peter Thompson will give the next organ recital on Sunday 22 October 2017 at 4.15pm in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh.

Peter is the Cathedral's Assistant Organist and is keen to support the musical life of the Cathedral in this way. In explaining his choice of programme for this recital, he said, "Each passing year sees several significant anniversaries, and 2017 is no different. The 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's famous

ninety-five theses has become a key moment in dating the beginning of the Reformation. This year is also the 200th anniversary of the birth of the French organist Lefébure-Wély, and the 80th anniversary of another renowned Frenchman, Louis Vierne. Each of these events will be marked in the forthcoming recital, which will include the monumental Chorale Fantasia on the most well-known Lutheran hymn, Ein Feste Burg, by the 16th century German composer, Michael Praetorius, and some reformation-inspired music by the Danish-born Dietrich Buxtehude. A selection of pieces by both French composers will illustrate their diverse approaches to music, culminating in the well-loved Finale from Vierne's First Symphonie."

Peter continued, "One of the joys of playing the organ is its versatility. From the intricate counterpoint of Praetorius to the dance-rhythms of Buxtehude, the light, almost at times frivolous touch of Lefébure-Wély to the symphonic majesty of Vierne, this programme will showcase the many colours of the wonderful instrument we possess in Armagh."

The Dean of Armagh, the Very Revd Gregory Dunstan, said, "Peter's love of the organ is infectious. As the music and occasion require, he can play with immense exuberance or the

most profound sensitivity. The programme that he has chosen will demonstrate the range not only of the organ but also of his skill.”

Admission to the recital is free with a retiring collection most welcome towards the further endowment of the Cathedral choir through the Archbishop’s Choir Fund.

Mr NykkÖ-Mickaël Grégoire will give the next recital on Sunday 26 November 2017.

Presbyterian Church marks 500th anniversary of the Reformation

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation is to be marked by the Presbyterian Church with three public events across Ireland this month.

'Faith at the Crossroads: Rediscovering the Reformation' will be held in Dublin on October 17 and repeated in Derry and Belfast on the following consecutive nights. They are free and open to all.

Presbyterian Moderator Dr Noble McNeely said that the special worship services would celebrate the Reformation's impact, legacy and enduring importance.

"As a Church and as Presbyterians, we have a rich heritage that comes directly out of the Reformation and the reformed, or Protestant tradition," he said.

"While this in itself is one significant reason to mark what Martin Luther did in 1517, there are also deeper and more profound reasons to give thanks."



October 31 marks the 500th anniversary of Luther nailing his Ninety-five Theses on the door of All Saints' Church in Wittenberg, an act which is widely regarded as triggering the start of the Reformation, as the Protestant schism from the Roman Catholic Church became known.

Dr McNeely explained that at the heart of the Reformation was "Luther's momentous discovery that a person's salvation - that is, being made right with God as if we had never sinned - was secured by simply believing in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross".

"Salvation wasn't achieved by doing good works, or by any other means, but trusting in Jesus' death and God's grace alone," he said.

"As a result, this enabled men, women and children to know their sins had actually been forgiven - wonderful reasons to celebrate."

Rev Damien Burke, minister of Drogheda Presbyterian Church, one of 97 Presbyterian congregations in the Republic, is one of organisers of the Reformation events.

"In looking at how to commemorate this significant event in European and church history, we wanted to combine worship and discussion with a sense of reflection as well," he said.

"Faith at the Crossroads' isn't a lecture, but a celebratory event that combines these three elements."

New Irish Arts will lead worship and Dr Conrad Mbewe, pastor of Kabwata Baptist Church in

Zambia, "will bring us a global perspective of the Reformation," said Rev Burke.

"During the evening a panel will reflect on some of the key aspects and legacy of the Reformation, its emphasis on personal reading of scripture and freedom of conscience for example, and how it sowed the seeds of democracy and religious freedom in Western Europe," he said.

:: 'Faith at the Crossroads: Rediscovering the Reformation' takes place at 7.30pm on: October 17 in Abbey Presbyterian Church in Dublin; October 18 at the Waterside Theatre in Derry; and October 19 in Assembly Buildings, Belfast on 19th October.

Swedish theologian to speak on Reformation at at Cork Clergy Conference

In this 500th anniversary year, this year's Clergy Conference in Cork, Cloyne and Ross will, appropriately, have a Lutheran visitor from the Church of Sweden, and a Reformation focus as its theme.

Today the Church of Sweden, with which the Church of Ireland has historic links, including through the Porvoo Communion of Churches, is the largest evangelical Lutheran denomination in Europe.

The Church of Ireland, like the rest of the Anglican family of churches, regards itself as an Ancient Catholic, as well as a Reformed Church.

The speaker at this year's Ballylickey event, will be the Reverend Dr Jan Eckerdal who is a



The Reverend Dr Jan Eckerdal

Diocesan Chaplain with responsibility for theological training in the Diocese of Strängnäs, Church of Sweden. Jan's overall theme will be *The Lutheran Thread of the Church Catholic*.

Over the two days of the conference, he will deliver four papers.

The subjects of Dr Eckerdal's four papers this year will be:

- *Anglicanism and Swedish Lutheranism: Two Kindred Spirits?*
- *Martin Luther: The Monk who changed Europe*
- *Sola Gratia, Sola Fide, Sola Scriptura*
- *What is a 'Folk Church'?*

Dr Jan Eckerdal as a PhD in Systematic Theology at Uppsala University. Jan's published books and articles are especially centered on the modern ecclesiological heritage of the Church of Sweden and on missiology in a post-Christian culture. Jan lives in the small town Nyköping, south of Stockholm.

Kilkenny city church hosts Voices Of Hope

A survivor of the Miami Showband Massacre, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Ossory and the chairwoman of the board of Governors of Kilkenny College are among the speakers at the annual Voices of Hope in St Canice's Catholic Church during October.

This year Fr Jim Murphy and his team are focusing on young people and 'Faith In Our Schools'.

The series began last Wednesday night with Linda Rainsberry, who formerly practised as a solicitor and has since been fully engaged as a mother.

She is the chairperson of the Board of Governors of Kilkenny College. Linda set out the current pressures; societal and political that are threatening faith based education and will introduce the "Faith in our schools" group. Linda explored the task of responding to these pressures in terms of what faith based schools do, or at least should offer.

On Wednesday, October 11, Church of Ireland Bishop of Ossory, Cashel and Ferns, Michael Burrowes will talk about the value of faith based schools and the distinctive contribution and values of Church of Ireland schools.

The following Wednesday, Eithne Woulfe, a St Louis sister and a former school Principal who currently has responsibility for the education brief with the newly formed Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland, will deliver a talk. She has completed research of faith-

based and equality issues as they pertain to education and schooling in Ireland and France. In the context of “seeds of hope” and Ireland being at a “frontier space” in terms of searches for meaning, values, individual freedom and belonging and what might a Catholic Education perspective offer in these contexts.

On Wednesday, October 25, Stephen Travers, a member of the Miami Showband and a survivor of the massacre 1975 will speak.

He is part of the ‘Faith and Reconciliation Platform’ established to give victims, regardless of political, religious or cultural background, an opportunity to speak for themselves; to tell their story so that the terrible consequences of political violence will never be forgotten and the mistakes of the past never repeated.

Holy Family icon tours Down and Connor parishes

An icon of the Holy Family which has been created for the World Meeting of Families event in Ireland - which Pope Francis is due to attend - has been touring parishes across Down and Connor this week.

The icon has been specially commissioned by the World Meeting of Families, ahead of the five-day event in Dublin next August.

It is accompanied by petition boxes, where families can write their intentions, with contemplative communities around Ireland due to pray for the intentions collected during the coming year.

The World Meeting of Families said it is hoped that the icon will "encourage reflection and prayer as part of the journey of preparations".

The icon was unveiled and anointed by Archbishop of Dublin, Dr Diarmuid Martin, at Knock in August.

Last Saturday, it arrived at the Down and Connor 'Faith and Life' convention at Our Lady and St Patrick's College in east Belfast, and travelled to the Holy Family Parish in the north of the city on Monday.

It then moved to Corpus Christi in the Springfield area of west Belfast, before heading to Maghera Parish in Newcastle, Co Down, yesterday, Friday.

It will leave Down and Connor today, Saturday, and travel to the Diocese of Elphin in the west of Ireland.

Speaking at the 'Faith and Life' convention at the weekend, Cardinal Kevin Farrell said that the Pope is expected to attend the Festival of Families event and a Mass to conclude the gathering in Dublin next year.

History Circle to start in Meath diocese

“History - from Greek ἱστορία, historia, meaning "inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation", is the study of the past as it is described in written documents.”

Do you have an interest in history? Have you ever wondered about what went on in your community or parish fifty years ago, a hundred years ago or even longer?

A History Circle is being set up in the dioceses to see who might be interested in hearing about aspects of our past, sharing our knowledge with one another, or hearing of interesting stories from around the dioceses. Come along and explore this with us on Monday 6th November, 2017 in the Diocesan Centre, Moyglare, Maynooth, Co Kildare. We will meet from 7.30pm – 8.30pm/9pm over a cup of tea or coffee.

We are delighted to have Dr Susan Hood, Librarian and Archivist at the Representative Church Body Library with us on our first evening. The dioceses was recently featured in 'Archive of the Month' at the library and Dr Hood will speak to us about some of the many, many interesting things there are to know about the history of the people and places in the dioceses of Meath and Kildare.

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