



Visiting the Sam Maguire Community Bells ringing room in St. Mary's Church, Dunmanway on Saturday 9th September for the service of thanksgiving and first official ring of the bells were (Back row l-r) Ger Lane and Tracey Kennedy (GAA, Cork County Board), Aogán O'Fearghail (GAA President) and the Rev. Cliff Jeffers. (Front row l-r) Fr. Ted Collins (PP Dunmanway), Bishop Paul Colton, Cllr. Declan Hurley (Cork County Mayor) and Bishop John Buckley. Report below

Reformation focus for Union Theological College seminars

With the 500th anniversary of the Reformation taking place at the end of next month, the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Union Theological College is to devote its autumn seminar series to 'The Unfinished Reformation'.

Over consecutive Monday evenings in Belfast, starting on 25th September six speakers from both the Reformed and Roman Catholic tradition will look at different aspects of the Reformation in four thought-provoking seminars.

With the College's teaching staff providing three of the speakers, those attending will also hear from Dr. Francis Campbell, the UK's former ambassador to the Holy See and current Vice Chancellor of St Mary's University, Twickenham. Father Tim Bartlett, Secretary General of the World Meeting of Families will take a joint seminar with Rev. Trevor Gribben, General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and Clerk of the General Assembly. The title of their talk will be 'Presbyterians and Catholics: Areas of common concern.'

Union College principal Very Rev. Professor Stafford Carson said the seminars are an opportunity to follow up on some of the issues raised in the College's Luther 500 Conference in January, especially around the key question, 'What is the continuing relevance of the Reformation for churches today?'

"One of the slogans of the Reformation was 'The Church reformed and always reforming' and we will look at what areas has the church continued to be reformed since the 16th century and in what areas does it still need to be reformed?

"The speakers that we have brought together will help us reflect on these questions from their different perspectives. I hope in running this series it will create a greater awareness of the Reformation, its meaning and on going legacy, especially in Ireland. In helping us to do that, I want to extend a very warm welcome to all our special guest speakers who I believe will make a valuable contribution to that understanding," Professor Carson said.

"We also wish to affirm that the insights of the Reformers have a continuing relevance for key Christian doctrines and continue to provide the Presbyterian Church in Ireland with important

biblical guidelines as it undertakes its mission and ministry in the contemporary world.”

The autumn series ‘The Unfinished Reformation’ will be held in Union Theological College, Belfast on four consecutive Monday evenings from 25th September to 16th October 2017. Starting at 7.30pm each seminar costs £7.50; alternatively an all ticket bundle is available for £25. For details and registration see www.union.ac.uk.

Statue of Our Lady of Fatima comes to west Belfast parish

A statue of Our Lady of Fatima, blessed by Pope Francis, visited a parish in west Belfast this week, the Irish News reports.

St Michael the Archangel Church on Finaghy Road North hosted the statue until today.

Pupils at nearby St John the Baptist Primary School visited the church to learn about the Fatima apparitions and received roses to bring home to the sick.

Presenting roses to statues of Our Lady has been a long-standing Catholic tradition, with

roses often also blessed and brought to the sick and housebound.

It is the latest statue to visit Ireland to mark a century since the Virgin Mary first appeared to children in the Portuguese town on May 13 1917.

The apparitions continued once a month until October, and later were declared worthy of belief by the Catholic Church.

The statue travelled to Ireland with members of An Teaghlach Naofa (The Holy Family) prayer network, and is also accompanied by statues of the three children.

Orla Sheehan, from the group, said it is due to travel around Ireland and will next visit St Peter's at The Rock, near Stoneyford, at the end of the month, before heading to counties Clare and Galway.

"The message of Fatima is more important now than ever because of the way the world is and we all have to pray that people come back to God," she said.

For further information see www.anteaghlachnaofa.ie and the Facebook page 'Fatima comes to Down and Connor'.

‘Sam Maguire Community Bells’ in Dunmanway ring out their message of hope and reconciliation

The 'Sam Maguire Community Bells' in Dunmanway, County Cork rang out their message of hope and reconciliation for the first time at a special celebration of thanksgiving on Saturday, 9th September. The bells project, the visionary idea of the local Church of Ireland rector, the Reverend Cliff Jeffers, have brought the local community and many others from further afield together, in common purpose in the wake of last year's commemorations of 1916, and in anticipation of the coming centenaries in Ireland of the War of Independence and the Civil War.

Sam Maguire, a member of the local Church of Ireland parish in Dunmanway, is a figure rooted in the history of that period, and his name is linked with modern day celebrations in the world



Pictured holding the Sam Maguire Cup are the Rev. Cliff Jeffers; Cllr Declan Hurley, Cork County Mayor; Jo Richardson, Dunmanway, and George Maguire, Dunmanway who is a direct descendant of Sam Maguire. Photo: Andy Gibson.

of sport; his name is given to the All-Ireland Football Trophy.

The bells - six restored and two new ones engraved with Sam Maguire's name and dates (1877 to 1927) - were installed during the summer and, at the ceremony on Saturday, 9th September, the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, was

joined by the Bishop of Cork and Ross, the Most Reverend Dr John Buckley, and the Reverend Greg Alexander of the Methodist Church in Ireland, as well as Archdeacon Adrian Wilkinson, the Very Reverend Ted Collins, P.P., and local Lay Reader, Sam Jennings.

The large local attendance was led by the Mayor of the County of Cork, Cllr. Declan Hurley, Jim Daly, T.D., Minister of State at the Department of Health, Margaret Murphy O'Mahony, T.D. and Michael Collins, T.D. The President of the GAA, Aogán O'Fearghail was also present, read a prayer, and after the Church Service delivered an oration at the graveside of Sam Maguire. He referred to the vision of the project as it is articulated by the Reverend Cliff Jeffers as 'an opportune time to begin a process of healing, reconciliation and forgiveness' and to Sam Maguire as 'a complex character' who throughout his life found himself as 'an outsider'. The President of the GAA then laid a wreath on Sam Maguire's grave.

The theme of reconciliation had been set also in Bishop Colton's sermon (found [here](#)). Referring to the historical background of the period and to the forthcoming centenaries he said that Christians are called (in the words of Saint Paul) to 'a ministry of reconciliation.'



Aogán O'Feirghail, GAA President, laid a wreath on the grave of Sam Maguire. This is the 90th anniversary of Sam Maguire's death.

Bishop Colton said: *Let us be under no illusions about the huge significance of what the Rev Cliff Jeffers and this community here in Dunmanway have put in place; what we are opening today. In a prophetic way, from within this place (contentious in its own history) they have put down a marker of what the character of the coming centenary commemorations should be - reconciliation. This project has set a tone that others, locally, regionally and nationally might do well to note and to emulate as we prepare: a note of reconciliation; a note of cooperation and*

partnership; a note of dialogue; and a note of opportunity of community building for the future.

Each of the bells has been named with a theme telling the story of Sam Maguire and his hometown. The themes are Sport, Wars and Revolution (Peace), Agriculture, The People of Dunmanway, Migration, Religious Traditions, Education and Arts, and finally Industry and Commerce.

'I was quaking when I went to the Bishop with this slightly mad idea,' says the Reverend Cliff Jeffers, 'but he supported me.'

Cliff Jeffers said: *The purpose of the project is to bring together the local community by telling the story of Sam Maguire, his hometown and the faith of his church. We could not have done it without the generous support and funding from the GAA, Dr. Mike Pomeroy, Cork County Council, Ketlec Trust, The Priorities Fund, All Churches Trust and donations from the local community. IN fact, very often it was the letters accompanying the small donations from people in the local community telling of their stories and memories that were particularly moving.*

After last year's 1916 centenary commemorations, the Rev. Cliff Jeffers raised the question of how West Cork would face the

challenge of the centenary of the Irish War of Independence and Irish Civil War, both of which had had a great impact on the local area. Many local families from different backgrounds were deeply affected by the violence of this war.

Although nearly 100 years have passed since these events took place, the retelling of them is going to rekindle memories of past injustices which need to be dealt with both sensitively and honestly in order to bring healing and not further division. Now is an opportune time to begin a process of reconciliation, healing and forgiveness. After Saturday's commemorations, everyone was welcomed to the local GAA Club - Doheny GAA - where tea was served and speeches of thanks were made by the Mayor of Cork County, the President of the GAA, David Taylor of the Irish Changeringers' Association, Bishop John Buckley, the Reverend Cliff Jeffers and Bishop Colton. The only note of discord on the day (a humourous note) was at Doheny GAA when Bishop Colton referred to his own local GAA Club: Castlehaven!

Pair admit burglaries at church premises across N Ireland

Two men yesterday (Thursday, September 14) admitted a raft of charges over the burglaries of

churches, a parochial house and other properties across Northern Ireland, the News Letter reports.

First to be arraigned at Downpatrick Crown Court was 37-year-old Owen Maughan who pleaded guilty to nine offences across two indictments. Maughan, previously with an address at the travellers camp on the Glen Road in west Belfast but now at Maghaberry prison, pleaded guilty to aggravated burglary of the parochial house at St. Peter's Cathedral in Belfast on 13 July 2015 where, armed with a firearm or imitation firearm, he stole cash, jewellery and other household items and the false imprisonment of Fr. Peter Carlin.

Involving two intruders with one armed with a handgun, it was reported at the time that Fr Carlin had to receive treatment for minor injuries when he was assaulted before the men made off with cash.

Standing handcuffed in the dock and pausing momentarily before entering guilty pleas to each of the counts, Maughan also confessed to aggravated burglaries at St. Michael's Church on Finaghy Road north, a property on the Circular Road in Dungannon and a house on Park Lane in Newcastle, attempted burglaries at St.

Colmcille's Church in My Lady's Road in Holywood and a house on Main Street in Castlewellan, burglary of the private staff area of the Around a Pound shop in Newcastle, and allowing himself to be carried in a stolen Hyundai car, all committed between 22-24 July last year.

Following those guilty pleas, prosecuting lawyer Samuel Magee asked for nine other charges, seven counts of robbery and two of possessing weapons with intent to commit robbery, to be "left on the books."

Patrick Maughan, from Birchdale Manor in Lurgan, was arraigned later and he also admitted offences arising from the burglaries at St. Colmcille's church, St. Michael's church, the Circular Road in Dungannon, Newcastle and Castlewellan.

He also pleaded guilty to further offences of dangerous driving on roads between the Ormeau Road in Belfast and Umgall Road in Antrim, the attempted possession of a firearm, resisting police, possessing class B cannabis and failing to stop after a road traffic accident.

Other charges of robbery and having weapons were left on the books.



The offences on which the Maughans are jointly charged arise from a number of burglaries within a short time period on 22 July in Dungannon, Holywood and west Belfast and then other incidents in Co Down on July 24.

Father Denis Ryan, a 70-year-old priest from Australia providing holiday cover at St Michael the Archangel, was threatened at about 7.50pm at the parochial house on Finaghy Road North when two men forced their way in. They ransacked the house, normally home to parish priest Fr David Delargy, before making off with cash and keys after triggering an alarm in the adjoining church.

Later that night at about 10pm, a former Catholic church sacristan and his wife were threatened and held at gunpoint during an aggravated burglary at their home on the Circular Road Dungannon.

The couple live next door to the parochial house for Dungannon parish – leading to speculation that they may have been targeted by mistake.

Two men, one armed with a gun, threatened the couple before fleeing with a sum of money and jewellery. The Maughans were arrested after the police chased a stolen Hyundai car from the Saintfield Road in Co Down to the Seven Mile Straight in Co Antrim.

The car had been stolen by the pair during a burglary at Park Lane in Castlewellan and had been reported stolen following other alleged incidents of attempted aggravated burglary, false imprisonment and robbery and Newcastle and Castlewellan.

Remanding the pair back into custody, Judge Piers Grant adjourned passing sentence until next month when he receives pre-sentence probation reports.

Cardinal Nichols: Brexit can mean new opportunities



Cardinal Vincent Nichols has said that Brexit is not about Britain “becoming an isolated unit, but finding a different place in the world and in relation to Europe”.

Cardinal Nichols, who argued last year that leaving the European Union would create “complex problems” and lead to “further division”, said that while there was much uncertainty around negotiations, he saw “an emerging popular view which says we are not

turning in on ourselves but looking for more opportunities”.

He was speaking to The Tablet ahead of the release of his new book, Hope in Action. The book, published by SPCK, draws together speeches and homilies on subjects ranging from trafficking to extremism.

In the interview, Cardinal Nichols said that Christianity provided a certain foundation for hope. Secularisation, therefore, meant “young people are losing the tools with which to construct a vision of hope,” he said. “That’s not good news to anybody.”

He observes a “growing gap between what people think and what political leadership says we should want”. This can help lead to “populism”.

GAFCON accuses church official of 'provocative, inaccurate and misleading' comments

GACFON, the worldwide conservative group of Anglicans, has hit back at the secretary general of the Anglican Communion after he claimed the

Archbishop of Nigeria had **reneged on his decision to "walk together"** with other Primates who he disagrees with on the issue of sexuality.

Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon was speaking after **Archbishop Nicholas Okoh said he would not be attending the upcoming Primate Conference** because of his perceived lack of progress on the subject.

Archbishop Josiah said he was saddened by the actions of the Nigerian church leader.

Next month, leaders from the 39 Anglican provinces will meet in Canterbury at the request of Justin Welby.

It'll be the first meeting of its kind since the January 2016 meeting where the US Episcopal Church was disciplined over its decision to allow clergy to conduct same-sex marriages. GAFCON says the comments by Archbishop Josiah were not only provocative but also inaccurate and misleading.

It says the Primates only agreed to walk together if the discipline of the US Episcopal Church was upheld meaning its leaders were banned from decision making boards or representing the Anglican Communion.

"Unfortunately, this agreement was not enforced and The Episcopal Church has been allowed to take part in decision making regarding 'matters pertaining to polity and doctrine'.", the GAFCON Primates said in a statement.

"They have also represented us in ecumenical meetings. This has led to a further breakdown of trust and confidence."

"In light of this reality, we discussed the Archbishop of Canterbury's invitation to the upcoming Primates' Meeting. The conscience of some does not allow them to attend. Some intend to go in defence of the Gospel and some are continuing to discern what the Lord is asking of them in this hour.

"We have all agreed to pray that the outcome of the upcoming meeting will be decisive and lead to coherent and responsible action regarding the issues which continue to tear apart the fabric of the Communion, issues that have eternal consequences."

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