

Autumn Lecture on Wednesday evening (September 13). The Biblical Association of the Church of Ireland engaged five different speakers to bring their perspectives on the Five Marks to the lecture which took place in Castleknock Parish Centre.

The Revd Jack Kinkead, Priest in Charge in Wicklow, spoke on the first mark: Tell – to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom. The Revd Lesley Robinson, Rector of Clontarf, addressed the second: Teach – to teach, baptise and nurture new believers. The third mark: Tend – to respond to human need by loving service, was taken on by Philip McKinley, Church of Ireland Chaplain in DCU. Rector of Castleknock, Canon Paul Houston, spoke on the fourth mark: Transform – to transform unjust structures, challenge violence and pursue peace and reconciliation. Chief Officer of the RCB, David Ritchie, spoke on the fifth mark: Treasure – to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Each speaker had nine minutes to expound on their mark of mission and associated passage of Scripture. Their contribution will provide the basis for BACI's 2018 Lent Bible Study which is taken up not just by parishes and groups

throughout the Church of Ireland but across the Anglican Communion.

Introducing the evening, the Revd Dr William Olhausen, chair of BACI said that the Five Marks of Mission were not only of significant importance to the Anglican Communion, but in Dublin & Glendalough there has been a focus on finding a deeper connection between parishes and individuals and the Five Marks.

In his presentation, the Revd Jack Kinhead described the first mark of mission as the linchpin on which all five hung and a summary of what mission is about. He said his faith had been shaped by his reading of the Scriptures but before that it was shaped by other people who proclaimed the Good News of the Kingdom. Referring to the Sending out of the 70 [Luke 10] he said the passage dealt with the themes of self preservation, the importance of the integrity of mission, the upward struggle, why so cruel God?, the harvest is plentiful but the labourers few. He suggested that it was important to remember that the mission was God's. "We proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom. It is not our message it is the Lord's... The mission is God's and there is a sense of freedom in that. Telling can be the hardest thing but there are many good ways of telling. The more involved in

the community the church is the more proclaiming happens,” he said.

The Revd Lesley Robinson noted that the Five Marks of Mission were an attempt to identify five ways of seeing the Church’s tasks in the world. Focussing on the Commissioning text [Matthew 28: 16–20] she said that baptism was the ‘entry level’ to the Church but that in the Book of Common Prayer there was a real sense of baptism being a journey.

She said Jesus wants disciples and disciples are learners. “Any of us can have a role in nurturing and taking the initiative to share the basics of Christ’s life and leave the rest to God. It’s about modelling Christ rather than telling about Christ. The goal of education in the church is to form communities of believers,” she explained. She added that discipling others involved teaching others to read the Bible, how to pray for what really matters, teaching people to recognise and deal with temptation, teaching people to integrate with others and to recognise and develop their God given gifts.

Philip McKinley looked at the third mark – Tend – in global terms and took as his text Jeramiah 29: 4–7) which he said contained a big post apocalyptic vision. Jeramiah gives the Israelites

the tools to rebuild their society, which had been destroyed, from the ground up. This could be compared to Aleppo, the Rohingya and other catastrophes we see today.

He outlined Jeramiah's four pillars as being: build houses and settle in them; plant gardens and eat the produce; increase in number and seek the prosperity of the city. "This is significant because this meets the fundamental qualities that all humans need. You can take each of these pillars and each is a door into a myriad of questions," he said. Building houses was the start of civilisation as before that people were nomadic. This idea continues to dictate how we live today with the boom/bust, ghost estates, homelessness, displacement and nationalism. Planting gardens opens the discussion of global warming, climate change, food waste, consumption, sustainability and detachment from the natural world. Increasing numbers invites us to look at what we hand on to future generations. Seeking prosperity for the city brings us to think of not just bricks and mortar but human interaction.

Canon Paul Houston looked at the Church's role in transforming unjust structures with the help of three texts [Isaiah 58: 1–10, Micah 6: 6–8 and Amos 5: 21–24]. He posed the question 'What

are people offering God and what does God value?’ While the people in the passages were fasting and presenting burnt offerings what God wanted was them to fight for justice, he suggested. He said that people needed a sense of solidarity, a sense that they were not just individuals but individuals in community.

He looked at the role of the people coming together in solidarity to challenge unjust structures and effect change in Eastern Europe and South Africa and said the Churches played an enormous part in that change. “The basic question is whether Christians should be involved in politics and I believe they should. They should speed on the work of God, love their neighbour and give priority to the needs of the poor. Should we escape or engage? Escape means turning our backs on the world. Engagement means turning our faces towards the world in compassion,” he said.

In looking at the final mark, to treasure creation, David Ritchie, said that in creation we were considering God’s gift and asked why and how we should protect it. Pointing to Scripture he said that in Genesis it was stated: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and God saw that it was good”.

He suggested that we often missed the idea that creation was good. Referring to Psalm 8 he said that to love creation means loving its creator. “If we have been given such a splendid creation, why do we end up with scenes like [flooding and disaster]?” he asked. “Because we have not taken seriously the responsibility we have been given. We need ideas and we need to consider our own spheres of influence.” He added that it was not just about global action but about what we could do ourselves and how we personally could influence others.

He outlined the Representative Church Body’s carbon engagement project with the Church of England and other RCB initiatives including the stipulation that any trees cut down must be replaced by two and new bee projects. But he said individuals and parishes must all look at their impact on the environment and encouraged all parishes to support Eco Congregation. “As Christians we miss the real point of why we should treasure creation – it’s an expression of thankfulness to the Creator,” he said.

Varadkar doubts public would support abortion recommendations

Taoiseach [Leo Varadkar](#) has said he does not believe the country would support the



Tánaiste Frances Fitzgerald and Taoiseach Leo Varadkar at the Fine Gael think-in at the Hotel Minella, Clonmel. “I honestly don’t know if the public would go as far as what the Citizens’ Assembly have recommended.”

recommendations of the Citizens’ Assembly on the issue of abortion, The Irish Times reports.

Mr Varadkar, Tánaiste [Frances Fitzgerald](#) and Minister for Foreign Affairs [Simon Coveney](#) were questioned at the [Fine Gael](#) think-in on Friday on their views on the body’s proposals, which include access to terminations with no restriction on reasons.

The three Government Ministers insisted there was a need for a respectful and thorough debate on the issue of abortion.

However, each stressed their belief that the recommendations would not receive the support of the majority of the public.

Mr Varadkar said: “I honestly don’t know if the public would go as far as what the Citizens’ Assembly have recommended.

“Public opinion polls have indicated that they wouldn’t, but that may change during the course of the debate, and having observed the Citizens’ Assembly and how that debate evolved, we have become aware of the availability of abortion pills and how they work.

“It is actually quite possible that people’s views may change as we have the debate.”

The [Oireachtas](#) committee examining the eighth amendment is to hold its first public meeting next week with the chair of the assembly [Mary Laffoy](#).

The 21-member committee is being asked to assess each of the proposals made by the assembly.

Fine Gael TDs will have a free vote on the committee and in the Dáil and Seanad on the recommendations that arise from their deliberations.

Mr Varadkar said members would be allowed to campaign on either side of the argument if a referendum arose.

More at -

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/politics/varadkar-doubts-public-would-support-abortion-recommendations-1.3222812>

Community rallies to support Parishioners in vandalised Derry church

Politicians from across the community mingled with parishioners of Christ Church, Londonderry, yesterday morning (Sunday) as the congregation gathered for their first service since last week's vandalism attack, in which the church organ was almost destroyed.

Archdeacon Robert Miller recalled the words of the Danish poet and author, Hans Christian Andersen, when he told the congregation: 'Where words fail, music speaks'. "Alas," Archdeacon Miller said, "this morning I find myself being left to speak in the absence of music".

The incident happened sometime between Sunday afternoon and Tuesday evening. The perpetrators smashed their way into the church through a stained glass window and cut wires and cables in the instrument's inner workings. The damage will require an estimated six-figure sum to repair. Today in church, the Parish's Director of Music, Ben McGonigle, accompanied the choir on the church's grand piano instead of the organ.

Following this week's open invitation from Archdeacon Miller for people to show their support for Christ Church by joining them for Sunday worship, scores of people from across the community attended the church's regular Sunday morning service, which was led by the Pastoral Director, Rev Katie McAteer.

Among those present were Sinn Fein MLA Karen Mullan and her party colleagues Councillors Patricia Logue and Eric McGinley; the former SDLP MP Mark Durkan, and party colleagues John Dallat (MLA) and Cllr Angela Dobbins; Independent Councillors Gary Donnelly and Sean Carr; and former Ulster Unionist Deputy Mayor, Alderman Mary Hamilton. The Administrator of St Eugene's Cathedral, Fr Paul Farren, also attended the service.

Archdeacon Miller – who is Rector the Group of Parishes to which Christ Church belongs – preached the sermon. In it he said that sometimes, in difficult times such as this, the expression was used that these things were sent by God to try us. “I don’t believe that,” the Archdeacon said. “I don’t believe in a God like that, who sends pain to test those whom he loves”.

There were lots of things that we did not know or could not know about this vandalism, the Preacher said. It seemed a Godless action of a person or persons who had fallen short of how God wanted them to live. “God did not send this vandalism to test my congregation any more than the suffering in your life is sent by him. Whilst we can’t know why it has happened, what we can know is that God can redeem the brokenness that we experienced and the evil that destroys our peace.”

The Rector said many in the congregation – himself included – had felt God’s love lived out in the responses of their sisters and brothers in Christ across the city and beyond. “I’ve said to people in the past that sometimes in life when difficult things happen I accept them in faith. I accept them in faith based on things that I do know. And what I do know, this morning, is that

as we gather together – parishioner and citizen alike – that God loves us. It is in this love that I want to remind all of us today, and indeed I speak also of myself, that God can turn around any terrible situation of destruction. Yes, a material building has been vandalised in a terrible way, and the vandals also have diminished themselves by such thoughtless and uncaring behaviour in destroying that which we hold dear – sacred even – but I have a message for them, this morning. There is a way back from this destruction. Your own lives don't have to be destroyed, and you can turn away from the hurtful and destroying behaviour and seek to become better. In fact, I believe that is God's hope for you”.

Referring to yesterday's readings, Archdeacon Miller said the gospel was rooted and found its foundation on forgiveness and the danger of 'unforgiveness'. He said many would know that he had co-written a book with Fr Paul Farren called 'Forgiveness Remembers'. "There seems a certain irony about it this morning, as I stand in the pulpit, The reason we wrote the book is that we know from personal experience and from our years of ministry that forgiveness is not easy; it is, however, non-negotiable and essential." Archdeacon Miller said that the day after the vandalism was discovered he had been asked in

an interview whether he had forgiven the vandals. “My answer was to say that it is a journey that I have yet to begin to make, but a journey I am going to have to make.”

Photograph gallery at -

<http://derryandraphoe.org/news/item/1223-community-rallies-to-support-christ-church-parishioners>

Appointments in Down & Dromore

Revd Craig Cooney, to become Minister-in-Charge of Hope Community Church, Craigavon. Craig is the former minister of St Catherine’s Church, Dublin. The date of the institution will be announced in due course.

Revd Gerardo Gimpel, to become Curate Assistant in Shankill Parish, Lurgan, from 1 October 2017. Gerardo is currently Curate Assistant in Knockbreda Parish, Belfast.

Mr Rory Blake-Knox as Leader-in-Charge of the Moneyreagh church plant (Moneyreagh Community Church).

SVP youth in Knock

Young people were called to action at the launch of the St Vincent De Paul's schools' programme at Knock Shrine on 14th September. The participants were urged to use their voices and power to tackle social justice issues.

“We are excited about this conference. It is an opportunity for young people in the region to hear more about the work of the Society and to get involved in whatever way they can,” said Michael Mc Cann, President, West Region St Vincent De Paul (SVP) which hosted the event.

The 10 senior cycle students who attended from each school around the West Region (Mayo, Roscommon and Galway), went back to their respective schools as social justice advocates. They will help with the Young SVP youth development programme in their schools and help their fellow students to get involved.

The newly appointed Youth Development Officers, Helen Ralph (Mayo/Roscommon) and Paddy Daly (Galway) will support this.

“It was very positive, very very powerful. The students were engaged. The speakers were very inspiring,” Paddy Daly told catholicireland.net.

With up to 300 participants attending, he added: “it was the day after the Junior Cert results, and we were delighted that so many turned up.”

The young participants had presentations on social justice issues followed by round table discussions. Speakers on the day included Fr Peter Mc Verry SJ, Joanne O’ Riordan, John Lonergan and Dr Cara Augustenborg.

Paddy Daly said that Joanne O Riordan stole the show as she was uplifting, funny and inspiring and full of ‘can do’. Everyone wanted a ‘selfie’ photo with her. She was born with a rare condition known as Total Amelia and has no limbs. She is only one of seven people in the world living with this disability, but she never looks at herself as being different. Joanne Riordan has often stated that when she looks at her life she says, “I’m unique”.

Fr Peter McVerry, who is well known to many for his work with the homeless, is both an activist and advocate for those who have no voice in society. He gave the students practical suggestions about how to help the homeless including stopping to talk to someone begging on the street.

Dr Cara Augustenborg is Chairperson of Friends of the Earth Ireland, and an environmental

scientist who lectures on climate change and the environment on UCD's MSc programme on World Heritage Management and Conservation. In 2008, she went on the Arctic expedition sponsored by Ben & Jerry's Climate Change College and the World Wildlife Fund and witnessed the effects of climate change first hand.

She spoke about the recent Electric Picnic in Co Laois and how her organisation tried to help reduce waste. However, many just walked away and left tents and lots of rubbish behind. She emphasised that as an American she can see how beautiful Ireland is, and cannot understand how people can destroy that.

John Lonergan was Governor of Mountjoy Prison until his retirement in 2010. He has written a memoir, *The Governor: The Life and Times of the Man who ran Mountjoy*. He spoke about pride in one's place and community especially as Mayo was to play in the All Ireland. Many students asked him about prison and if he managed to inspire any prisoners.

“My sense of young people is they are willing to listen if you have something to say. They give you a listening ear, you don't get dismissed when you are talking about social justice and

fairness and goodness. They have very good hearts,” Paddy Daly said after the conference.

There were also practical interactive presentations such as how to create a mobile beach, where sand and seaweed can be brought into a setting like a nursing home in an effort to bring the beach to the people who cannot go themselves.

A wind phone was made. This was a re-creation of an empty old-fashioned phone box where someone can go simply to speak and unburden themselves. The conference participants signed their names in the box symbolizing their willingness to listen.

Survey finds most people who call themselves Anglican never read the Bible

Most people who call themselves Church of England Christians never read the Bible. That is one of the findings of a survey commissioned by the Church of England to help revamp its evangelism efforts.



Figures show that 60 per cent of self-declared followers of the Church admit they never read the Bible. Meanwhile, 36 per cent say they never attend church and one in three says they never pray.

The figures from ComRes survey show that many who claim to be Christian do not actually take part in many of the activities normally associated with the faith.

While 51 per cent of those who took part in the survey said they were Christians, only six per cent of those polled read the Bible, prayed and attended church at least once a week. Those who said they were followers of the Church of England were the least observant.

Rachel Jordan, the Church's national mission and evangelism adviser told Premier the survey

has given the Church a real sense of the scale of the task ahead.

She said: "What we were trying to work out is what our team is and who is really with us. Then you can see more of the scale of the task.

"We can see that a lot of people have an affiliation to us but they don't put anything in practice so we are going to work hard to relate to them."

Jordan also told Premier the Church wants to work out how to connect with non-Christians. She added: "The good news is that of those who were not Christian, 67 per cent of them knows one of us who are an active Christian. So that gives us a chance to actually influence them."

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