

# 'Instability is erasing hope from people's lives' - Church leaders



Church leaders have expressed their concern at the rising number of people struggling to cope on low incomes and the anxiety that the current political instability brings to the most vulnerable members of society. Following consultation with <u>churchnewsireland@gmail.com</u> Page 1 representatives of faith-based charities, the following statement was issued on behalf of Rev. Brian Anderson, President of the Methodist Church in Ireland; Archbishop Richard Clarke, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh; Archbishop Eamon Martin, Catholic Archbishop of Armagh; Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian McNie, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; Rev. Dr. Donald Watts, President, Irish Council of Churches -

"As Northern Ireland's elected representatives continue to negotiate the future of our political institutions, an awareness of their shared responsibility for the common good needs to be at the heart of the discussion. Threats to the peace process are most keenly felt in those areas that benefited least from the progress of recent years. A long-term vision, which includes effective measures to address poverty and socio-economic inequality, is essential to rebuild trust and advance the work of reconciliation.

"As Church leaders, committed to the principles of Scripture and the teaching of Jesus, we believe it is right to bring a Christian perspective to the concerns of our community at this time. As the writer of Proverbs states, *Speak up for*  those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute (Proverbs 31:8).

"For the rising number of people struggling to cope on low incomes, the current political instability brings further anxiety. In addition to uncertainty about the impact of Welfare Reform, cuts to essential public services and the failure to agree a budget for future service provision have significant implications for the most vulnerable members of our society. As Christians we have a responsibility, not only to give generously to address immediate social need, but to work with political leaders and the wider community to change the structures that are trapping people in cycles of poverty.

"Local communities are ready to be active partners in tackling the root causes of social exclusion and are best placed to inform and shape this work. In community and faith-based organisations, volunteers are working quietly and effectively to provide a safety net for the most vulnerable and marginalised, including the basic necessities of food, shelter and much-needed emotional and psychological support. As demands continue to rise, charities are stretched beyond capacity and facing difficult decisions about the future. "The unacceptable level of child poverty, affecting over 100,000 children, roughly 6% of Northern Ireland's population, constitutes a real crisis. Supports that have proved to be effective in recent years in addressing inequality and closing the gap in crucial areas such as educational disadvantage are now being withdrawn through lack of funding. The failure to invest adequately in the future leaders of our society is a cause of deep frustration among young people, leaving many feeling disconnected from political processes.

"Our politicians have a critical opportunity to restore hope to those who are struggling and all those who feel disillusioned with the political institutions. The generosity and solidarity demonstrated by local communities in response to the refugee crisis reflects the kind of society we want to live in. Increasing levels of poverty are taking us further from that vision, threatening social cohesion. We urgently need a change in direction, based on sustainable investment in local communities, that will bring us closer to a more equal, just and inclusive society."

## Discovery Gospel Choir album launch



The important role that cultural activities can play in integration was highlighted by <u>Discovery</u> <u>Gospel Choir</u> at the launch of its new album, 'Look Up'. The choir, regarded as Ireland's most multicultural choir since it was founded in 2004, launched the album at the Sean O'Casey Theatre in East Wall.

Speaking at the launch, Aisling McCormick, Musical Director with Discovery Gospel Choir, said: "When we were established, our founders very deliberately reached out to migrant communities, and our membership remains extremely diverse to this day. Many of those who joined the Choir down through the years were newly arrived in Ireland and found they made strong social connections through the Choir and were better able to integrate into life here. This type of inclusive cultural activity is extremely important in integration. It allows people from different backgrounds to meet and get to know each other in a social setting, and to explore common areas of interest".

The diversity of the choir's membership is reflected on 'Look Up'. It features songs from as far afield as Haiti, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and the Polynesian Islands, with tracks performed in 11 different languages, including Swahili, Romanian and Haitian Kreyól, as well as English and Irish. "For this album, our members were encouraged to suggest songs from their native countries, with the result that we have created a truly unique and international collection of gospel music," Aisling added.

'Look Up' is Discovery Gospel Choir's first studio album, and was recorded after a successful FundIt campaign last year. The album was produced by Shea Fitzgerald, best known for his work on the soundtrack of the Academy Award– nominated animation, 'Song of the Sea', as well as with artists such as Paul Brady and Kíla.

Kíla frontman Rónán Ó Snodaigh makes a special guest appearance on the Discovery

Gospel Choir album, contributing an original Irish–language track, 'Ciúin', accompanied by a poem written by Cormac Ó Snodaigh. He also performed with the Choir at the launch event in East Wall.

Other highlights of the album include:

- 'Alleluia Maranatha', a uniquely Africaninfused Romanian song, performed by Congo Brazzaville singer, Prosper Mbemba; and
- The Ladysmith Black Mambazo–inspired 'Heal My Sorrow' – an original composition by Discovery founder, Philip McKinley.

At the launch, Discovery Gospel Choir announced details of tour dates in Dublin, Belfast and Cork over the coming months. Further information is available on <u>www.discoverygospelchoir.com</u>.

# Trad for Trócaire launches 6<sup>th</sup> annual campaign

Musicians across the country are getting ready for 'Trad for Trócaire' week, which takes place from Friday 25 September to Friday 2 October.

Trad for Trócaire is a partnership between the Catholic aid agency and Comhaltas Ceoltóirí

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Éireann that celebrates Ireland's deep musical heritage and our long history of goodwill towards people facing poverty.

The campaign began after the devastating Haiti earthquake in 2010 when well-known trad band, The Usual Suspects, busked from Dublin to Galway collecting donations to help Trócaire carry out vital emergency work and rebuilding projects.

Soon after, Trócaire and Comhaltas joined forces spreading the generosity of Ireland's traditional Irish music community far and wide. This year Trócaire has reported an outpouring of concern from trad musicians for Syrian refugees and is asking people to support their local 'Trad for Trócaire' 'seisiún' to aid people living through poverty and conflict.

"This year, we have had an overwhelming response from trad musicians and members of Comhaltas, who are concerned about the suffering of refugees that they are seeing on their TV screens," Katie Bolger, Trócaire's Community Fundraising Officer told CatholicIreland.net.

She added, "This crisis has moved people to reach out to their communities and to see what they can do to help people in the world, who are struggling through war and poverty."

"Some musicians are holding two sessions this year, one to support Trad for Trócaire, which funds Trócaire's long-term overseas development projects and a second to fundraise for our work with refugees from Syria and Iraq."

Speaking about the fundraising Kate said, "An average 'Trad for Trócaire' event raises €320/£264. This is enough money to provide two clean water pumps for a whole community, as well as giving two family's access to equipment needed for creating a sustainable garden." "In 2014, people held hundreds of 'Trad for Trócaire' sessions all across the country and raised a total of €65,000/£48,500."

2015 marks the sixth year of 'Trad for Trócaire'. Since its inception in 2010, over 1,500 Trad events have taken place across Ireland and also in the UK and USA.

Over €560,000 has been raised by musicians and Trad fans – young and old alike.

This money is now supporting communities in many countries across the developing world who are suffering daily with extreme poverty and injustice.

To organise a session or find out when local sessions are taking place log onto www.trocaire.org/trad or call Katie Bolger, Community Fundraising Officer in Trócaire, on 01 6293333.

## Paraguay mission has big impact on Flute Band Church members

The Paraguayan city of Concepción had never seen anything quite like it! A bunch of men parading through its streets playing hymns in a



The Flute Band Church team at the Church of San Pablo, Concepción, Paraguay.

blood and thunder style on flutes and drums – while waving a large Northern Ireland flag!

This was mission Flute Band Church style – and the team of nine from Muckamore Parish found that while they may have made some things structurally better for the community of the Church of San Pablo (St Paul), it was their own lives which were perhaps most deeply touched. The band travelled to Paraguay with SAMS, the South American Mission Society, in July (after the Twelfth!). Led by the Rev William Orr, rector of Muckamore, Killead and Gartree, the group travelled via New York and Brazil and reached Concepción after a six hour bus ride.

Their first day, a Saturday, was spent clearing land and doing repairs on a house that doubles as a church on Sundays. They took part in a parade, and Saturday evening ended in the church for a short service attended by 38 children.

The musicians played again – the team comprised both flautists and drummers – and the children were told the story of the Prodigal Son.

Band members were back in action again in church on Sunday and afterwards they enjoyed football with local teenagers, which William said was a 'great experience and very humbling."

They continued working at Villa Alta, the house / outreach centre, repairing a very leaky roof and building a large sheltered patio. They added outdoor lighting, and brought plumbing into the house so it had a flushing toilet and working shower and hand basin. This was tough manual work, clearing land, digging mud and stones, clearing a sewer, woodwork and painting.

When the jobs were complete, they went door to door, inviting local people to come and celebrate at Villa Alta.

The group then travelled to Horcueta, to clear church land they dubbed 'the Jungle.' This involved more hard labour but the local people were keen to help out.

The team spent a day with the native Indian community in the Chako where they got to know local families, and organised fun and games for the children.

They had help with translation and other activities from Lisburn woman Natasha Conway, who works with SAMS in Argentina, and from Clare Holmes, another SAMS missionary whose outreach work is primarily with children and young people.

Team member Andrew Chestnutt preached in church on their second Sunday in Paraguay, and each evening the band members held noisy parades along the streets, much to the delight of the local children. The trip was funded by the individual team members with help from fundraising activities including a golf day, go-kart racing, a breakfast, church café and a worship band night. They also wrote to Orange Lodges and Royal Black Perceptories in the Co Antrim area who financially supported the mission trip, as did a couple of Apprentice Boys Clubs.

When the nine men prepared to board their bus back to the airport, the entire church community turned out to see them off. There were tears on both sides.

At a SAMS debrief meeting in Muckamore on September 15 with SAMS Mission Director, Bishop Ken Clarke, team members reflected on the challenges they faced, how God had used then while they were away, their highlights, what had shocked them, and how their experience has affected them.

# Dedication Service at Derry food bank

A religious service has been held at a food bank in Derry-Londonderry to thank local people for supporting the charity.



The Pantry Project – a cross-community initiative – has provided food to more than two and a half thousand men, women and children who have experienced hardship. The project was started two years ago by the Churches Trust, the organisation founded by the leaders of the city's main Christian churches to 'Stand Together with Those in Need'.

On Thursday afternoon, the two local bishops and other clergy joined staff and committee members at the charity's food depot for a Dedication Service. Children from Drumahoe Primary School also took part, representing pupils from local schools which have supported the project since it was launched. The chairman of the Churches Trust, Father Michael Canny, told those present that as Christians they were alert to the love, light and peace of Christ that surrounded them. It made them more acutely aware of the needs of others and of the tremendous inequality in the world today. He said the object of the Pantry Project wasn't to create a dependency among those who received help, but rather to offer them hope that their situations could be improved.

Speaking on behalf of the trustees, the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Ken Good, described the Pantry Project as a significant project which was meeting real need in the North West. He thanked the committee members and volunteers who collected and distributed food to individuals and families in need, and especially all those in the community who generously donated groceries to the food bank.

The Dedication Service included readings from Matthew's Gospel and Acts, as well as hymnsinging. Prayers were read by some of those involved in working with or supporting the Pantry Project. Among the other clergy who took part in the service were the Rev Katie McAteer (who's on the project's Steering Group); the Rector of Glendermott and Newbuildings, Rev David Creighton; the Minister of Carlisle Road <u>churchnewsireland@gmail.com</u> Page 16 Presbyterian Church, Rev Paul Gallucci; and the Minister of Ebrington Presbyterian Church, Rev Paul Linkens.

# MU President Elect for Clogher Diocese

Mrs Irene Boyd, Branch Leader of Colebrooke and Cooneen MU has been elected President of Mothers' Union in Clogher Diocese. Her Term of Office begins on 1st January 2016. Dr Margaret Knox is the present President and will have served three years in January.

Irene was born in Co. Monaghan and moved to Co. Tyrone, with her parents and two brothers, when she was six years old. After secondary education in Dungannon, she attended Stranmillis Teacher Training College. Her career as a Primary School teacher took her to Castlederg, Omagh, Ballygawley and finally Fivemiletown. She was awarded early retirement in 2007.

She enjoys travelling and visiting other countries of the world, especially catching up with family and friends. Irene is married to Robert, a sheep farmer, and lives outside Fivemiletown. When she retired she was pleased to be free to join Colebrooke and Cooneen Mothers' Union and participate in their many and varied activities. The work and witness in each Branch, between Branches and in the Diocese has widened her experience of Mothers' Union involvement in the community and world-wide. She was appointed Branch Leader this year. Irene is a member of the Select Vestry of Colebrooke Parish and also a Diocesan Pastoral Assistant.

As Irene takes on the role of Diocesan President, she does so with a certain amount of tripidation, but remembers the words of 1 Thessalonians 5 v 24: "He who calls you will do it, because he is faithful."

# RC and C of I bishops annual meeting

The annual meeting of representatives of the Irish Episcopal Conference and the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of Ireland took place in Dublin on 17th September 2015. This was the fourth in a series of such meetings encouraged by the International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission. The bishops reflected together in an atmosphere of shared prayer on a number of issues. Particular emphasis was placed on the response of the Irish churches to the developing refugee crisis in Europe. There was also consideration of the forthcoming commemoration of the events of 1916, and the place of the churches in contributing together to national reflection and debate.

The bishops shared their perspectives concerning current social and educational matters, North and South.

The Church of Ireland participants were: Archbishop Richard Clarke (Armagh) Bishop Pat Storey (Meath and Kildare) Bishop Harold Miller (Down and Dromore) Bishop Michael Burrows (Cashel, Ferns and Ossory) Bishop John McDowell (Clogher) Bishop Kenneth Kearon (Limerick and Killaloe)

The Roman Catholic participants were: Archbishop Diarmuid Martin (Dublin) Bishop Tony Farquhar (Down and Connor) Bishop John Fleming (Killala) Bishop Liam MacDaid (Clogher) Bishop Brendan Leahy (Limerick) Bishop Denis Nulty (Kildare and Leighlin) <u>churchnewsireland@gmail.com</u> Fr. Des Hillery (Administrator in Killaloe during the episcopal vacancy)

# Clerical appointments and ceremonies

#### **Chapter of St Patrick's Cathedral**

The Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, the Very Revd Victor Stacey, has appointed Canon Peter R Campion as Precentor in succession to the late Canon Robert C Reed; and the Revd Niall J Sloane as Chancellor in place of Canon Patrick H.A. Lawrence, who has retired. Their installations will take place as evensong on Sunday 4 October at 3.15 pm.

Canon Peter Campion is Chaplain to the King's Hospital School. He is currently Precentor of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin.

The Revd Niall Sloane is Rector of Holy Trinity, Killiney and is currently a Minor Canon of St Patrick's Cathedral.

### **Clogher canons installed**

On Sunday evening there was a Service of Acknowledgement and Admission for the Revd Geoffrey Bridle and the Revd Henry Blair as <u>churchnewsireland@gmail.com</u> Page 20 canons in **St Macartan's cathedral, Clogher,** where the preacher was the Bishop of Clogher.

#### Derry institution fills a two year gap

There were joyful scenes in Eglinton on Friday evening as Rev Paul Hoey was instituted as Rector of Faughanvale, ending a two and a half year vacancy in the parish.

It was an evening of mixed emotions for the congregation in St Canice's Church: optimism among the people of Faughanvale who looked forward to the future with hope; and sadness for those who had travelled from Rev Hoey's former parish, Clondevaddock, and were losing a hugely popular rector.

The mood of expectation in Faughanvale was captured at a reception afterwards by the Rector's Church Warden, Willie Robb. Acknowledging the widespread problem of declining church attendances, Mr Robb assured the new incumbent that they weren't expecting miracles, "although I have been told you have performed a few in your day". Describing himself as a "fan of the mother tongue", the Church Warden wished Rev Hoey "Fáilte romhat" – which means 'welcome' in English. Earlier, in his sermon, the Archdeacon of Raphoe, Ven. David Huss, said he felt like a football manager whose player had been transferred to another club. He wondered what transfer fee had been paid to "lure Paul away" across the Foyle, from the Raphoe Diocese and the great county of Donegal.

Archdeacon Huss said the arrival of a new rector was a time of great change and great stress for both parishioners and clergy. There was laughter when he said that he had known some rectors who had literally torn out their hair; "That won't be a problem on this occasion".

The preacher told parishioners that – as they moved into the Year of Opportunity, with its focus on 'mission, generosity and children's ministry' – their new rector would preach, pray and pastor, but he would also push. "Paul will be here to gently push people into new goals, to take new opportunities in the parish". Archdeacon Huss felt it could be a moment of "ripe opportunity" for Faughanvale if its parishioners were willing to be "pushed just a little" to do the Lord's work.

## Padre Pio's teaching still relevant -Archbishop Martin at Knock



Archbishop Eamon Martin celebrates Mass in Knock.

The Primate of All Ireland, Archbishop Eamon Martin has paid tribute to St Padre Pio describing him as "a lamp of God's mercy".

In his homily in Knock for the annual Padre Pio pilgrimage, the Archbishop of Armagh highlighted the Italian Saint's commitment to poverty, chastity and obedience as a Capuchin, his acceptance of ecclesiastical discipline, his suffering, his hours spent hearing confession, his construction of a hospital to alleviate illness, his intense prayer.

All of these, he said, are "indicators of someone who had mercy burning within him".

Recalling Padre Pio's empathy with the seven sorrows of the 'Mater Dolorosa', Archbishop <a href="mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com">churchnewsireland@gmail.com</a> Page 23 Martin set out his reflection on the seven modern-day 'dolors' or 'sorrows'.

The first he identified as the abortion of millions of innocent unborn children in the world, and "how this seems to be taken so much for granted, even though every human life is precious".

The second he said was neglect of the earth – 'our common home' – as Pope Francis called it in his encyclical, *Laudato Si*. "That so many people on this planet suffer poverty, are exploited and starved of the world's resources, calls each of us to conversion, to make some sacrifices and never to waste or take for granted what we have," the Primate said.

His third example of a modern-day 'dolor' or sorrow is the displacement of people as refugees through war and persecution. "Let us commit ourselves and our parishes to embrace refugees and migrants to Ireland with open arms and Christian charity," he urged.

Human trafficking is his fourth modern-day sorrow.

"Millions of people – particularly women and children – are trafficked like slaves around the world each year and exploited for cheap labour

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and prostitution including, sadly, even here in Ireland. We must act and be ever vigilant to prevent human trafficking."

The fifth modern day dolor he identified as the sorrow of addiction which affects too many of our people – be it addiction to alcohol, drugs, gambling or, increasingly nowadays, addiction on the Internet, for example to gaming or pornography.

"All kinds of addiction disrupt relationships and drain the joy out of daily life. Pray for addicts and support recovery programmes," Dr Martin commented.

His sixth sorrow is the quest in many countries to pass legislation that will allow assisted suicide or euthanasia.

"I think our energies should be directed towards quality hospice care so that the elderly are never made feel a burden and terminally ill patients, and so that their families are always entitled to the best of dignified support in their final days."

As his seventh dolor of the modern world, he chose indifference which, he suggested, in many ways links the other 'sorrows' together. "It is that 'I don't really care?' attitude which sadly is more and more common today – indifference to the problems of the world, to the sins against the sacredness of human life, to modern forms of enslavement, to the waste of the earth's resources, to the plight of the poor and the suffering," Archbishop Martin said.

Indifference, he warned, turns us more and more in on ourselves. It makes us more selfish and demanding, so conscious of our individual rights and personal autonomy, that we don't really care about our responsibilities to others, especially the weakest and most vulnerable.

Indifference says, "It's my money, my land, my relationship, it's my body, it's my life and I shall do what I want with it. I think the root of indifference is not wanting Jesus into your life in any meaningful way which would make a difference to how you live or what you do."

Pope Francis, the leader of the Catholic Church in Ireland said, offers a key to unlock the indifference to the Gospel that is at the root of so much suffering and sorrow in the world, through the Jubilee Year of Mercy, which begins on 8 December next.

### Media digest

# Irish News - Refugees `not welcome' graffiti painted on church

Graffiti declaring "no refugees welcome" has been painted on the wall of a Co Derry church.

The red slogan appeared on the wall of the Salvation Army Community Church in Coleraine, below an official sign that reads "all welcome".

http://www.irishnews.com/news/northernirelandnews/ 2015/09/21/news/refugees-not-welcome-graffiti-paintedon-church-268205/

# Belfast Telegraph - Parishioner's home is ransacked while she attends church service

An elderly parishioner's delight at being present at a special ceremony to welcome a new clergyman was shattered when she returned home to discover her home had been ransacked during a break-in. The woman had gone to St Canice's Church of Ireland in Eglinton, Co Londonderry, for the institution of Rev Paul Hoey. http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/parishioners-home-is-ransacked-while-she-attends-church-service-3154

# Irish Examiner - Archbishop Eamon Martin calls on all parishes to embrace refugees

http://www.irishexaminer.com/breakingnews/ireland/ archbishop-eamon-martin-calls-on-all-parishes-toembrace-refugees-696817.html

### Times/Guard/Mail/BBC/Standard/Express/ Scotsman

Further reports on the Archbishop of Canterbury's offer of accommodation for refugees at Lambeth Palace. A spokeswoman for Justin Welby is quoted as saying a four-bedroom cottage in the palace grounds was currently being redecorated and could provide room. Articles also note that the rent for the refugees would be paid for by charitable funds under the Archbishop's control.

http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/world/europe/ article4563101.ece

http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/sep/ 20/archbishop-of-canterbury-to-host-refugees-atofficial-london-residence

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3241941/ Archbishop-Canterbury-throws-opens-doors-

Lambeth-Palace-migrant-families-says-Jesusrefugee.html

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-34306514 http://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/

archbishop-justin-welby-offers-syrian-refugees-

sanctuary-at-official-london-residence-

a2951556.html

http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/606689/ Syrians-migrants-heading-UK-minister-refuseshow-many http://www.scotsman.com/news/world/13-dieafter-ferry-collides-with-migrantdinghy-1-3893052

### Guard/Mail

Reports on a flypast and thanksgiving service at Westminster Abbey to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/20/ battle-of-britain-dead-westminster-abbey-serviceprince-charles

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3242136/ Prince-Charles-meets-Heir-joins-veteran-Battle-Britain-pilots-aircrew-Westminster-Abbeymemorial-service.html

### BBC

Report that Jeremy Timm, a lay Reader in the Church of England, and of Howden Team Ministry in East Yorkshire, has left the Church because he will not be able to carry out his ministry once his same sex marriage has taken place. The BBC quotes a statement from the office of the Archbishop of York saying guidance is clear in expecting the same of Readers as the Church of England does of its clergy. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-englandhumber-34307063

#### Tel/Mail/Guard

Reports on the Pope's visit to Cuba. The Pope urged clergy to embrace poverty at an evening prayer service in Havana.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/thepope/11878994/Pope-Francis-goes-off-script-in-

Cuba-to-deliver-passionate-homily-on-

<u>poverty.html</u>

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/

article-3242767/Two-Cuban-dissidents-say-

detained-way-pope.html?

ITO=1490&ns\_mchannel=rss&ns\_campaign=149 0

http://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2015/sep/ 20/pope-francis-celebrates-mass-havanarevolution-square-live

### Comment

#### Mail

Comment article says solving the problem of 20,000 Syrian refugees coming into Britain will take more than a gesture by a small group public figures such as Bob Geldof, Yvette Cooper and

the Archbishop of Canterbury who have offered accommodation for refugees. <u>http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/</u> <u>article-3242642/DAILY-MAIL-COMMENT-</u> <u>Gesture-solutions-unanswered-questions.html</u>

#### Ind

On Pope's visit to Cuba – says his obvious liking for Cuba must not lead him to avoid all criticism of the regime <u>http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/editorials/a-</u> <u>pope-in-havana-francis-should-make-use-of-the-</u> <u>respect-he-enjoys-in-cuba-10510267.html</u>

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