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## Revd Kelvin Holdsworth for Changing Attitude Autumn Lecture



Following on the Episcopal Church of Scotland's vote earlier this year to allow, under certain

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**NEWS** September 23

conditions, the marriage of same-sex couples in its churches, Changing Attitude Ireland has invited the Provost of St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow, the V Revd Kelvin Holdsworth, to address its AGM on October 28<sup>th</sup> on the subject "Full LGBT acceptance in the Church? - Charting a way forward in Scotland and Ireland".

All are warmly invited to the lecture before the AGM in the Molesworth Hall, behind St Ann's Church, Dawson Street, Dublin 2.

The schedule is as follows:

2pm Holy Communion.

2.30pm Lecture and discussion.

3.30pm. Tea / coffee.

4pm AGM.

The V Revd Kelvin Holdsworth will also be preaching at the 11am Sung Eucharist in Christ Church Cathedral on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October.

## **C of I University chaplain in new TV series**

Dublin City University's Church of Ireland Chaplain, Philip McKinley, is to feature in a new television series starting on RTE One on Thursday September 28 at 10.15 pm.

*Ministry of Hope* is an uplifting and compelling series, sharing moments of joy, exhilaration and crisis with the men and women whose job it is to bring faith, hope and love to strangers in three very different Irish institutions.

This powerful and inspiring observational series follows three Irish chaplains over a whole year, as they reach out to people at their moments of greatest vulnerability, to counsel, inspire and care for them.

Margaret Sleator was the first ever lay chaplain in Dublin's Mater Misericordiae Hospital when she started 13 years ago. Catherine Black is the rookie chaplain in Shelton Abbey Open Prison in Arklow, Co Wicklow. And Philip McKinley is the Church of Ireland member of a new multi-denominational chaplaincy team serving 17,000 students from all over the world at Dublin City University.

Their jobs are to give guidance, support and inspiration: to patients facing illness and death; to prisoners seeking redemption; and to students struggling with campus life. Their vocations are all steeped in deep faith. But, in an increasingly secular Ireland, the programme asks why we still rely on religious chaplains to shepherd us through life's challenges?

In the first episode of *Ministry of Hope*, Margaret Sleator supports Sean O’Keeffe whose wife, Margaret, is critically ill in the Mater hospital. With their son, Jack, Sean is praying for a miracle, but the chaplain must also prepare them for the worst. In DCU, Philip McKinley helps first year students like 19 year old Aisha Siwar settle into university life at the start of term. Meanwhile, in Shelton Abbey Open Prison, Catherine Black counsels 33 year old David whose release date is approaching fast, knowing that the outside world can be just as challenging as prison itself.

Philip McKinley was appointed in 2015 as part of a brand new multi-denominational chaplaincy team to serve DCU’s hugely diverse population of students. He’s a layman with a passion for music, which has become a useful focus for activities in the Interfaith Centre at the heart of the Glasnevin Campus.

Some students seek out the chaplains for counselling in moments of crisis, while others simply come to the Interfaith Centre for the friendly welcome and the free student lunch. For Philip, “Hospitality is a huge part of chaplaincy. You can never under-estimate the value of welcome and warmth and a place where you are

not judged; where somebody just smiles and says Hi”.

For many young people, the transition from school to university can be a daunting experience, especially if they are living away from their homes and families for the first time. In DCU, the chaplains are particularly mindful of 1st year students like 19 year old Aisha Siwar. “It’s really scary ‘cause you’re so used to being spoon-fed,” she says. “You’re literally going from asking the teacher to go to the toilet to making every decision yourself. It feels like you can get lost in the crowd, ‘cause everybody else is coping.” Philip adds, “That transition of going from family environment to independent living is one of the biggest changes. If you can get over the first five weeks, then you’re normally able to make it through the rest.”

Philip grew up in a Dublin rectory, the son of Canon Horace McKinley, and went to St Columba’s College, in Rathfarnham. Even so, it was never Philip’s intention to follow in his father’s footsteps. “I was rough around the edges,” he says. “I was not a model student at all. So, there is a wonderful sense of justice that somehow I have now become a chaplain.”



## Pope sends money to quake-hit Mexico

Pope Francis is sending £150,000 to families in areas of Mexico worst hit by this week's earthquake which has claimed at least 273 lives.

His invention came after a 7.1-magnitude tremor struck on Tuesday lunchtime, toppling scores of buildings in central states and in the capital, Mexico City.

In a statement, the Vatican said: "The donation, which is intended to show the pope's solidarity and spiritual closeness to those affected by the disaster, is a small part of the financial support being sent to Mexico through many bishops conferences and Caritas organisations."



Described by the Church as an "initial contribution", the payment will be made via the Holy See's new Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development department.

Searches for those missing in the disaster have entered their fourth day, with delicate efforts to rescue people thought to still be alive under debris.

Three people have been rescued from a seven-storey office block which collapsed in Mexico City. Officials previously said approximately 14 people could still be trapped inside.

The office for the President of Mexico Enrique Pena Nieto confirmed on Thursday there had been 137 deaths in Mexico City, 73 in Morelos state, 43 in Puebla, 13 in Mexico state, six in Guerrero and one in Oaxaca.

Navy Assistant Secretary Enrique Sarmiento announced reports of a girl alive underneath the rubble of Enrique Rebsamen school in southern Mexico City were false.

## **Church archivists in launch of digital records at Public Record Office NI**

Yesterday Dr Susan Hood, Librarian and Archivist of the RCB Library in Dublin, will participate in a launch event of digitized church records at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in Belfast.

The one hour event was streamed via the PRONI website:<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/proni-youtube>

Digitised records dating from 1642 from 15 churches are now available to view onsite in PRONI. Dr. Susan Hood for the Church of Ireland



will be joined by the Revd Robin Roddie, Archivist for the Methodist Historical Society.

Dr Hood said, ‘The Church of Ireland is particularly indebted to PRONI for taking on the task of digitizing the registers of its parishes in Northern Ireland, thereby making them more accessible and discoverable for others. We hope that this positive collaboration will continue so that more collections of registers can be captured digitally in due course.

“PRONI’s significant holding of church records are extensively used by those undertaking family and local history research. PRONI is undertaking an ongoing project to digitise church records which are still held by churches.

“Some of those records that we have copied were previously available on microfilm but the microfilm copies are now worn or damaged. The digitisation is undertaken in-house by PRONI’s experienced reprographics technicians. The project is only possible because of the co-operation of churches who agree to deposit their records with us on a temporary basis and agree to make them publically available in a controlled manner.”

## **New Catholic model secondary school opens in Portadown**

Catholic secondary education is experiencing a resurgence in Portadown - with the opening of a new-model school, the Irish News reports

St John the Baptist College, a non-selective co-educational college, opened this month.

The school educates children from ages 11 to 14 only at present. After that they will transfer to schools in Craigavon, Lurgan or Armagh for GCSEs and A-levels.

While this appears similar to the Dickson Plan, in which Catholic schools are no longer involved, it will remain free from academic selection.

It is operating on the site of the former Drumcree College.

Drumcree was the last remaining Catholic secondary in Portadown, having itself been created through the merger of two schools. Pupil numbers were low, however, with only around a quarter of available places filled.

There were fears that with Drumcree struggling that Catholic secondary education in the town would end.

However, enrolments have spiralled already at the new school - the numbers of Year 8 pupils in St John the Baptist are close to 80, up from 28 at the old school.

It is anticipated that St John the Baptist will continue to grow and develop into an 11-19 school, delivering a full range of subjects at GCSE and A-level, as a predicted population growth takes place.

For now, children will leave after three years.

Pupils may then transfer to any post-primary school at Year 11, although a "managed KS4 pathway" has been developed with Lismore Comprehensive College in Craigavon and St Ronan's College in Lurgan.

Principal Noella Murray said strong engagement with the community and reaching out to newcomer children and those from various backgrounds had helped boost numbers.

"We have children from 11 schools coming to us this year. When we started there were just two.

We have gone out and formed strong links," she said.

"Some rural schools had stopped but we have gone out to them and reversed the trend. We want children to come here by choice, not because they have to. We are producing a quality education. "In the last 10 years, there has been an influx of newcomer families. This year we are attracting newcomers but also local children. We are a fully inclusive school in terms of ability and background."

The school is operating a nurture unit, introduced a wide range of extra curricular activities and opened its doors to parents and the community at weekends. It is also working with gifted and talented pupils who may wish to take GCSE exams early. "We are moving in the right direction. The message to the community is this school is open for business," Ms Murray said.

## **New Irish Choir & Orchestra in Ballyclare churches' concert for Earl Haig Fund**

In partnership with churches in Ballyclare, the New Irish Choir & Orchestra (founded by Keith

Getty – In Christ Alone) will be presenting 'Greater Love' at Ballyclare High School on Saturday November 11 at 7.30pm.

This production, created by New Irish Arts, follows the stories of Irish men and women whose lives were affected by the First World War.

The production mixes stories with songs and imagery, and will be a memorable, timely focus during the ongoing 100th year commemorations of the 1914-1918 war.

All proceeds will go to support the Earl Haig Fund. Tickets cost £10 and can be purchased by contacting the Rev Jonny Campbell-Smyth, rector of St John's Ballyclare and Christ Church, Ballynure, on 07808 479649.

## **Honoured: Paddy McGowan bringing pilgrims to Lourdes for 40 years**

A Northern Ireland man who has taken more than 7,000 pilgrims to the Catholic shrine in Lourdes has had his efforts rewarded by the mayor of the French town, the Belfast Telegraph reports.



Despite being 80, Paddy McGowan still travels to France at least three times a year - something he has done for the past four decades.

Mr McGowan, from Omagh in Co Tyrone, said he had witnessed at first-hand the transformation in many of the pilgrims.

"I took my first trip to Lourdes in 1976 and now I take a group out three times a year, sometimes four," he said.

"I have been told that French authorities have put the figure at 7,000, but I think it is probably more.

"Lourdes is a very special place, it is the most remarkable Marian shrine in the world and people who go there come away with great peace of mind, reconciliation, and numerous people have had cures which have never been documented.

"I have witnessed people that I took on pilgrimage who had been told there was nothing more medically that could be done for them, who went back to the hospital for check-ups and the consultants told them there was nothing wrong with them."

It was on his last pilgrimage that he was given his award.

"The management of the hotel where we were staying told me someone was coming to see me in the evening but I didn't put too much thought into it," he said.

"It turned out the group had gathered in the hotel with the mayor and deputy mayor of Lourdes to present me with the medallion. It is really only given to ambassadors; I am not an ambassador, but the authorities decided I was worthy of it. I couldn't believe it."

While organising pilgrimages to Lourdes for 40 years is an achievement in itself, it is not Mr

McGowan's only contribution to the community. He received an MBE from the Queen for his 25 years of service to the Northern Ireland Fire & Rescue Service

This was in addition to 41 years driving buses for Ulsterbus, serving as a councillor on Omagh District Council for 30 years, and serving as a Justice of the Peace.

He has also just served a year-long term as Sheriff of Omagh.

Mr McGowan added: "My grandson counted up everything I have done and told me I should be 125. It has been a busy life and I wouldn't have it any other way, but maybe one of these days I might retire when I get old."

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