

## C of I Bishop Pat Storey mistaken for secretary



### Pat Storey became the first Anglican bishop in the UK and Ireland in 2013

The UK and Ireland's first woman bishop has had her trials breaking through the stained glass ceiling, BBC NewsNi reports

But the most Rev Pat Storey can share a laugh about the disbelief she encounters in daily life.

In a talk on women and leadership in Dublin, she recalled the male bishop who assumed she must be the secretary.

Speaking to the BBC on Friday, Mrs Storey said: "It has happened to me several times in different banks.

"They always make those assumptions. They assume the bishop is a man."

Mrs Storey, 57, who is originally from Belfast, was elected by the [Church of Ireland as Bishop of Meath and Kildare, in the Republic of Ireland in 2013.](#)

She is the third most important person in the Church of Ireland.

Being a woman in high office has its funny sides, she told her audience at Dublin City University earlier this week.

"Recently I went to the bank to lodge a cheque. I handed it over to the cashier who took one look at it, passed it back over the desk to me and said: 'The bishop will have to sign that himself.'

"I smiled at her, passed it back over the desk and said: 'I am he'.

"She was, of course, mortified. People always are."

When she went to renew her driving licence recently, the young man behind the desk looked at her address and said: "Wow, you're married to a bishop."

She explained that she was the bishop and he was, she said, very apologetic.

Then there was the Celtic bishops' conference when she was with a group of about 12 senior church members sitting down to a meal.

A UK bishop came bustling over, pinpointed her and said he was sorry to disturb but his room did not seem to have been booked?

Another Irish bishop intervened immediately and said that Mrs Storey was not the secretary.

**'I thought it was funny and not misogynistic'**

"The UK bishop immediately stretched out his hand to shake mine and said: 'Oh, I am so sorry - you must be one of the wives?'

"At this point, the Irish bishop beside me nearly had apoplexy. Again, the bishop concerned was

utterly mortified. Of course he was. We all would be.

"Isn't it interesting that in this day and age, a woman at the senior level table is either bound to be the secretary or the wife," she told her audience. Speaking to the BBC, the bishop said: "I thought it was funny and not misogynistic. People make assumptions."

She said that she prefers to treat such assumptions with humour: "You don't need to be brutal to other people in the midst of it. So I try not to take myself too seriously."

She said that the main focus of her speech was about what women bring to leadership. "On a serious note, I was saying that leadership is changing and that women are coming to the senior top table," she said. "It is early days. We bring what it means to be a woman and we represent 52% of the population. As women, we bring something different."

# CNI

## **Call for Government and C of I to relieve hardship for Bethany survivors**

Survivors of Dublin's former Bethany mother-and-baby home have called on the Government and the Church of Ireland to immediately relieve the hardship being suffered by former child residents, RTE News reports.

Last year the Government rejected the Mother and Baby Home Commission's recommendation that it should pay redress to those who, as children, were unaccompanied while living in the home.

Survivors of the former Protestant-run home attended the annual commemoration at Mount Jerome cemetery in Dublin today.

They came from as far away as England and west Cork to pay their respects at a memorial stone bearing the names of the 227 children buried secretly in unmarked graves by the Protestant-run home in nearby Rathgar

The children's identities were discovered by the survivors' campaign.



The memorial stone was erected by a group led by Bethany survivor Derek Linster, who organised today's event.

After years of searching Joyce McSharry, another Bethany survivor, found a document drafted by a firm of solicitors which proves she had been illegally adopted from the facility in 1951, aged seven months.

She says her mother was given no choice but to sign her over to another family and to agree to pay a fine if she approached her daughter again in childhood.

Ms McSharry says the purportedly "legal" document also shows the so-called adoptive parents were permitted to place her wherever

they saw fit if the arrangement could not be sustained, but prohibited them from returning her to her natural mother.

Ms McSharry never met her mother again. Instead she ended up rescuing her from a pauper's grave in the English town of Weston-Super-Mare.

She says she appears to have become a loner after fleeing to Britain but treasured until her dying day seven photographs of her infant offspring who she had christened Jacqueline Anne. Ms McSharry was re-christened by the family to whom she was given.

Ms McSharry says her health has broken down since discovering her mother's tragic past and her husband has had to give up his job in order to care for her.

A recipient of Disability Benefit, she regularly has to beg for funds to make an annual visit to her mother's grave in England.

Protestant Aid and PACT/Here To Help, formerly the Protestant Adoption Society, have refused her request for financial aid and have referred her to the social services which she says do not understand the urgency of her needs.

Following today's ceremony Mr Linster, who in 1998 founded of the Bethany Survivors' Group, told RTÉ News that other survivors have become so weak and impoverished that they have been unable to pursue information about their origins in the way Ms McSharry has done.

He said the survivors should have been helped by the State and the Church of Ireland 18 years ago when survivors established the truth about conditions in the home.

Bethany survivors were explicitly excluded from applying to the State's Institutional Redress scheme established following revelations by RTÉ television's late Mary Raftery about conditions in industrial schools. The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Micheál Mac Donncha attended today's commemoration at which the Church of Ireland's Canon David Gillespie led the service.

The Mother and Baby Home Commission is expected to deliver its final report next February.

## **Joy and excitement as 2,000 Dublin pilgrims leave for Lourdes**

There was a palpable excitement yesterday in Dublin airport as capacity numbers of sick pilgrims left aboard ten flights bound for Lourdes





with the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to the French shrine, CatholicIreland Net reports.

The pilgrimage began yesterday and runs until Tuesday next, 12 September. The group, led by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, included 200 sick pilgrims, as well as parishioners, students, priests, volunteers, musicians and medical teams.

“The silence of Lourdes helps us to move beyond thinking about ourselves and begin to

see others differently. Illness and physical or mental frailty are not looked on as reducing the dignity of anyone,” said Archbishop Martin, who is making his 14th pilgrimage to Lourdes as Archbishop of Dublin.

“Here in Lourdes it is the sick and the weak who have pride of place and who become central in our interaction. This is the experience of our helpers, young and old, veterans of the pilgrimage and those who are here for the first time.”

Prayer and silence help us to relate with others in a different way, he added. “It is that experience which brings our helpers back to Lourdes year after year.”

Organisers of the pilgrimages to the French Marian shrine were taken aback at the level of demand this year, the highest for many years.

Around 70 volunteers arrived in Lourdes in advance of yesterday’s departure, preparing for the arrival of the sick, who will be staying at the Accueil Notre Dame, a clinic close to the Grotto in Lourdes, with many of the facilities of a modern hospital.

Among the pilgrims this year are a group from the Deaf community accompanied by Chaplain



Fr Gerard Tyrell and six signing volunteers to assist with the group's needs.

In addition, over a hundred secondary students from schools throughout the Archdiocese are travelling – including for the first time students from Coláiste Chill Mhantáin and Maryfield College in Drumcondra.

A further 300 young adults are joining the Youth Group, and there are 45 nurses and 8 doctors. Both Crosscare – the social care agency of the Archdiocese of Dublin – and the Diocesan Child

Safeguarding and Protection office are represented among the pilgrims.

The first Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes took place in 1949. According to the Dublin diocesan website, the fare for the five-day event was £33. Pilgrims, including 38 sick people, left on Monday morning 8 August 1949, after Mass celebrated by Archbishop John McQuaid. All had been fasting since midnight. They then took special trains to Dun Laoghaire to embark on the steamer SS Princess Maud for Holyhead. The pilgrims continued on to London for an overnight stop, travelling the next day to Folkestone and Boulogne and then by non-stop train to Bordeaux. “Here, there was a short stop for Mass in the Cathedral and then on to Lourdes, arriving several hours later. The journey took almost two and a half days,” says the site. The mode of transport may have changed since that first pilgrimage, but the enthusiasm of the pilgrims is just as strong.

## **Trump administration give backing to Christian baker in gay cake row**

The Trump administration has given its backing to a cake artist in court over his refusal to make a gay marriage cake.



Jack Phillips from Masterpiece Cakeshop has opened a case at the US Supreme Court.

He was told in 2014 by the Colorado Civil Rights Commission that it was unlawful to refuse the work and that he should re-educate his staff.

Two years earlier he had declined an order claiming his faith meant he could not design a cake promoting same sex marriage.

He's now fighting his case at the US Supreme Court.

Acting Solicitor General Jeff Wall, acting for President Trump, filed papers at the Supreme Court defending Phillips.

In them, he warned a decision against Phillips could create an “intrusion” against the

First Amendment “where a public accommodations law compels someone to create expression for a particular person or entity and to participate, literally or figuratively, in a ceremony or other expressive event.”

Mr Phillips is being defended by religious freedom charity Alliance Defending Freedom. It says the government cannot coerce Phillips to create artistic expression that communicates a message with which he fundamentally disagrees.

"Nobody should be forced to choose between their profession and their faith," said Kristen Waggoner, Senior Counsel for ADF. Phillips gladly serves anyone who walks into his store, but, as is customary practice for many artists, he declines opportunities to design for a variety of events and messages that conflict with his deeply held beliefs. "In this case, Jack told the couple suing him he'd sell them anything in the store but just couldn't design a custom cake celebrating their wedding because of his Christian faith."

## **Oxford ordinand work - shadows Rector of Larne**

When ministry student Jacob Mercer, who is training at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, was looking for



**Oxford ministry student Jacob Mercer outside St Cedma's, Larne, where he is completing a summer placement.**

a student placement for the summer, the parishes of Larne and Inver with Glynn and Raloo were the obvious choice.

Jacob and his wife Rebecca have strong links with the area, as Connor Diocesan Reader Peter McCausland, who did a placement as a Lay Reader in St Cedma's, Larne, is Rebecca's father!

Jacob will be entering the final year of his BA in Theology and will be ordained into the Church of England in June 2018. He arrived for his placement in Larne on August 20 and will remain until September 24.

He, Rebecca and their nine-month-old son James are currently living with the McCauslands in Templepatrick while Jacob works with the rector of Larne and Inver with Glynn and Raloo, the Ven Stephen Forde, Archdeacon of Dalriada.

After graduating from Cambridge University with a degree in English, Jacob worked for a year as a ‘mover-of-chairs and cooker-of-food’ at his university church in Cambridge. It was here he got his first experiences of teaching the Bible and being involved in other aspects of Christian ministry.

Following his marriage five years ago, Jacob moved to Wimbledon where he worked for Emmanuel Church. He writes in the Larne parish magazine: “By now I was convinced that there was no better thing I could do than serve a church somewhere by teaching, pastoring and caring for the congregation.”

After selection for ordination training, Jacob and Rebecca moved to Oxford in 2015.



Jacob said the placement in Larne particularly interested him because the family ties mean he may consider moving from Church of England to Church of Ireland after he is ordained.

“I have been over to Northern Ireland many times, but I did not know a lot about Larne,” he said. “I have enjoyed getting to know the people connected with St Cedma’s and the other churches in the group. Everyone has been warm and welcoming and very hospitable.”

With five Sunday services across the churches in this large parish, Jacob has been busy, particularly while the curate, the Rev Philip Benson, was on holiday.

He has been leading services and preaching, visiting parishioners through the week, taking part in church meetings and shadowing Archdeacon Forde –

“Basically seeing the day to day life of the rector,” Jacob said.

He added: “St Cedma’s is more traditional than the churches I have worked with in England. It has been helpful to me in terms of being involved in a church different from the ones I have been used to.”

## **Court of Appeal hearing set for 11 September in Northern Ireland humanist marriage case**

On Monday 11 September, the Court of Appeal will reconvene to conclude its hearing of the ongoing case to secure legal recognition for humanist marriages in Northern Ireland. The case involves humanists Laura Lacle, a model and public speaker, and Eunan O’Kane, a footballer with the Republic of Ireland and Leeds United. The couple, backed by Humanists UK, won their case at the Belfast High Court in June, and had a legal humanist wedding ceremony later that month. But the Government of Northern Ireland is now attempting to prevent any further legal humanist marriages from occurring.

Humanists UK Chief Executive Andrew Copson commented, ‘It was a privilege and a joy to attend Laura and Eunan’s legal humanist marriage and hear them share their vows in a ceremony reflecting their humanist beliefs and their love. The idea that other couples should now be prevented from having that same right and opportunity is reprehensible. Humanist

marriages are already legal in Scotland and the Republic of Ireland, and we can't see why non-religious people in Northern Ireland deserve anything less. We hope this appeal fails, the High Court decision in Laura and Eunan's favour is allowed to stand, and government officials in Northern Ireland call a halt to their crusade against our equal rights.'

The past few weeks have also seen the release of the latest statistics on the number of marriages by religion or belief in Scotland - the one part of the UK where humanist ceremonies are currently recognised. There were 4,912 humanist marriages in 2016, up from 4,621 the year before - representing over a third of all religious or belief-based marriages. The Church of Scotland performed 3,675 marriages, compared with 4,052 the year before, while the Roman Catholic Church performed 1,346 marriages, compared with 1,438 the year before.

The case is being taken on human rights grounds, targeting the discriminatory law that means that religious people are able to have legal marriage ceremonies in line with their beliefs, but humanists have not been able to do likewise.

A previous Court of Appeal hearing happened on 19 June, three days before Laura and Eunan's wedding took place, with the Northern Ireland Government challenging a High Court ruling in the couple's favour.

However, at the 19 June hearing, the Court found a loophole in the law to enable Laura and Eunan to have the humanist ceremony they want, without reaching a final judgment in their case, or setting a precedent for other couples also seeking humanist marriages.

Laura and Eunan's wedding ceremony took place on 22 June. They had a legal humanist ceremony, the first ever in Northern Ireland, conducted by a Humanists UK celebrant who was authorised by the General Registrar Office through The Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 to conduct the ceremony.

This is not under threat from the further court hearings. However this fact does not prejudice the wider outcome of the case, namely whether the current law discriminates against humanists, and whether other couples can have legal humanist marriages: all of which is to be determined following this further hearing by the Court of Appeal.

## **Hurricane Irma exposes Trump's wilful blindness on climate change says Christian Aid**

- Report predicts Miami to be world's most financially exposed city to coastal climate change

President Trump's reckless attitude to climate change is being shown to be folly as Hurricane Irma tears towards Miami.

Last year a Christian Aid report showed that Miami tops the list of most vulnerable cities to climate change induced coastal flooding.

Mohamed Adow, Christian Aid's International Climate Lead, said: "We're starting to see what happens when climate breakdown occurs on a global scale. As well as Hurricane Irma we currently have two other hurricanes in the west Atlantic, Jose and Katia, not to mention the destruction from Hurricane Harvey in Texas.

While we're seeing the richest country on earth struggling to cope with the devastation of extreme weather, don't forget the 40 million people affected by floods in South Asia, an area without anywhere near the same infrastructure or resources to cope.

“Trump’s promise to withdraw from the Paris climate accord and undoing President Obama’s Clean Power Plan is the exact opposite of what we need to see in the face of this lethal reality.

“As seas get warmer, providing more energy to tropical storms, the people of Florida and the Caribbean will continue to suffer until leaders like Trump start to reduce the carbon emissions which drive climate change.”

The city of Miami is particularly vulnerable with more than \$3.5 trillion of assets at risk from flooding by 2070. In its report [Act Now or Pay Later: Protecting a billion people in climate-threatened coastal cities](#), the charity showed American cities would face the financial brunt of coastal flooding by 2070 with New York coming third with \$2.1 trillion. In between them was Guangzhou in China at \$3.4 trillion and India’s Kolkata was fourth at \$2 trillion.

Mr Adow said: “The cost of the reckless climate policies espoused by Donald Trump will be paid in the lives of people living in these places and the trillions of dollars lost in places like Miami and New York, not to mention the economic disruption and the money needed to rebuild cities suffering from floods and storm damage.

“That is why if we don’t invest now in low carbon infrastructure to decarbonise our economies we will end up paying for it later.”

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