

Belfast Cathedral to welcome two literary greats this September



C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien set to perform at Belfast Cathedral

St Anne's Cathedral will play host to two literary greats this September as it welcomes a unique three person theatre production featuring David Payne and Marc Whitmore.

After the huge success of “An Evening with CS Lewis” which visited Belfast last year, this new production entitled “Wardrobes and Rings” will transport you back to Oxford in 1963, to the Eagle and Child pub, where legendary authors J.R.R Tolkien and his great friend C.S. Lewis meet for what turns out to be the very last time.

With great humour, wit, and fascinating stories, these remarkable lives are explored in this memorable piece of theatre.

Simon Corder, Business Manager at Belfast Cathedral says this is an event not to be missed, *“We’re very fortunate to bring this production to Northern Ireland as part of the UK wide tour this autumn for what I’m sure will be an amazing night. What better place to celebrate the lives of two of the most notable authors than here in Belfast, the home city of C.S. Lewis. If you’re a fan of Narnia, the Lord of the Rings, The Hobbit or even The Screwtape Letters this will be a fantastic evening”*

Wardrobes and Rings takes place at Belfast Cathedral (St Anne’s), Donegall Street Saturday September 23rd. Tickets for the event are £12 and are available from the Belfast Cathedral Welcome Desk or online at www.belfastcathedral.org/ or www.bigchurchlive.com/events

Cork's Three Faiths Forum condemns violence



A Cork group has condemned acts of violence and exclusion done in the name of religion. The members of the Three Faiths Forum (TFF) in Cork said in a statement:

“We call on all citizens of goodwill to promote a culture of peace and of co-existence in our land, and to do all we can to reduce isolation, fear, racism and tensions in our Irish society today.”

The group highlighted that there is too much religious bigotry and “religious framed violence” in many parts of the world, but also in Cork in recent times.

“This violence and bigotry [are] rooted in prejudice and misunderstanding and [are] made more complex when religious rhetoric is used for political and economic interests,” they stated.

“We believe that it is an imperative that people of faith come together and explore how our various faith traditions can help foster a spirit of openness, dialogue and inclusion within our society.”

The TFF includes members of the three Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – and has been meeting since May 2016. Since then the membership has grown and the group celebrated Earth Day in Bishop Lucey Park in April 2017.

TFF acknowledges that violence has been committed in the names of its members’ faiths, both in Ireland and abroad. It called on all people of goodwill, of faith or of none, to work towards a society in which all people feel that they belong and that their diversity is appreciated and valued.

The group includes sisters, priests, ministers and lay Christians, including members of the Little Sisters of the Assumption (LSA), SMA Justice group, the Presentation Sisters (PBVM), the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles, (OLA) and Monkstown parish.

One member is Sr Kathleen McGarvey, OLA Provincial Leader, who was involved in dialogue with Muslims during her time in Kaduna, Nigeria and who founded the Women's Interfaith Council (WIC).

Now in Ireland, Sr Kathleen is currently involved with a number of interfaith groups. In a recent article she explained that there are 70,000 Muslims in Ireland. Many have immigrated from different parts of the world, and some are Irish.

She urged people to help Muslims integrate into Irish society and said: "Nowadays in our schools, hospitals, shops, universities and all public spaces in Ireland we meet Muslims and people of other faiths every day. This is of course a very important form of dialogue as it is at that local level that we form opinions about people and label people, develop friendships or hurts, form prejudices or stereotypes," she wrote in the OLA Friday Focus on 24 June to mark the end of Ramadan.

She explained that there are many initiatives across the country which are helping to promote dialogue, for example the Three Faiths Forum in Dublin and in Cork, the Sisters of Faith for Peace based in Dublin and the Dublin City Interfaith Forum. There are events in the Islamic cultural centre in Clonskeagh and in the mosques in Milltown and Blanchardstown. The Lantern Centre, also in Dublin, has done a lot to welcome people of all faiths and to help people grow in their understanding of diverse faiths.

Carrickfergus parish group home from mission work in Uganda

A 16-strong team from Holy Trinity, Woodburn, Carrickfergus, arrived home from Uganda on July 20 after a two week mission trip with the charity Fields of Life.

The team, led by parishioner Carol Mulligan, left Dublin on July 6 and travelled to the rural area of Gulu via Addis Ababa, Entebbe and Kampala.

Among their tasks was the completion of a kitchen for the newly built school in the village. They also led Bible Clubs and delivered training in health and hygiene, sports and crafts.



The team from Holy Trinity Woodburn in Gulu, Uganda.

The team had the opportunity to visit the slums with Pastor Deo and was involved in commissioning Bore Wells on behalf of the Fittis family and the congregation of Holy Trinity Woodburn. Adam Fittis had the honour of being part of the commissioning of the well in memory of his grandfather Tommy.

Accompanying Carol to Gula were: Davy Mulligan (co-leader); Clare Mulligan, Lauren Baird, Drew Buchanan, Callum Burnside, Adam Fittis, Owen McAuley, Fiona Moody, David

Sprott, Avril Waller, Clive Waller, Christopher Wootton, Helen Wootton, Vic Wootton and Elaine Wright – Elaine works in the Connor Diocesan Office at Church House.

Bishop's concern as curbs on alcohol promotion are watered down

Irish society needs a public debate on how and why alcohol has maintained such an influence on our culture, plus an objective analysis of alcohol's effect on our well-being, says Bishop Eamonn Walsh, who is vice chair of the Irish Bishops' Drugs Initiative.

Prompted by an *Irish Times* editorial noting that the drinks industry was working to frustrate efforts in the Dáil to introduce legislation that would, for the first time, treat the issue of alcohol promotion as a public health issue, Bishop Walsh wrote to the paper yesterday to say that “the human devastation caused by alcohol has been a blight on our society for countless years”.

He says that the fact that debate on the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015 has been deferred until the autumn exemplifies the powerful influence of



the drinks industry on our legislators. In particular, he comments: “The removal from this Bill of a ban on sports sponsorship, limits on advertising, point-of-sales display controls and minimum pricing is of deep concern to us.

“We live in an era where the drinks industry’s well-resourced marketing and lobbying campaigns achieve huge success in identifying and influencing key target audiences, especially our young people.

“For example, up to recently, it was appalling to see young people playing sports with jerseys emblazoned with alcohol logos, effectively being used as beer mats by the industry. Such blatant

promotion continues at an adult professional level.”

He notes that excessive alcohol consumption affects individuals, families and society at large. “The 1,500 hospital beds that are occupied nightly by patients with alcohol-related illnesses, evidences the human damage, whilst also placing an inordinate burden on our health service, which itself is creaking at the seams.”

In recent years, the drinks industry has claimed to be promoting responsible alcohol consumption through such activities as the Drink Aware information services. But Bishop Walsh finishes his letter by saying: “When the drinks industry begins to invest its vast resources into addressing the actual damage caused to individuals by alcohol, only then will its supposed concern about consumption be taken more seriously.”

Church of England criticised over its response to clergy abuse claims

The Church of England has been criticised for the way it responded to clergy abuse survivors.

Several abuse survivors have claimed contact with victims was cut by the Church on the

advice of its insurer, Ecclesiastical. The insurance group have denied the allegation.

One independent reviewer said that for one victim, 'financial interests were allowed to impact practice', according to [BBC News](#). The Church of England has said it was taking on board the criticisms, and endeavoured to separate its pastoral care from insurance matters.

One survivor, a middle-aged man named Gilo, told the BBC's Victoria Derbyshire programme that he had been raped by London clergyman the Rev Garth Moore in the 1970s. After several unsuccessful attempts made several attempts to contact the Church, they eventually examined his claim, and on the advice of Ecclesiastical reached a compensation settlement of £35,000.

However, Gilo claimed that after this was agreed, the Church cut all pastoral contact with him – he said this was on the advice of Ecclesiastical.

'I think because of the relationship that the Church has with the insurers, the pastoral response is so fused with the legal response it's really effectively led by the insurers,' Gilo said.

'When that insurer has got such significant presence of senior clerics on its board across

the years, then you're into an area of moral responsibility.'

Ecclesiastical denied that contact was cut based on its counsel.

An independent review was undertaken by Ian Elliott, a child safeguarding specialist, who made similar criticism of the Church's relationship with its insurer. He said Ecclesiastical's advice had 'directly conflicted' with the Church's pastoral obligations.

'That's not the direction or advice that is compliant with a compassionate pastoral response which is the stated policy of the Church,' Elliott said.

Ecclesiastical's compliance director John Titchener protested that Elliot's report was based on 'factual inaccuracies', and said he had not been consulted in the investigation.

The Church of England however has accepted the criticism of the investigation, with Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby agreeing to take on its recommendations.

A Church of England spokeswoman said: 'The Church of England is absolutely committed to its pastoral response to alleged victims and

survivors and published new guidance in 2015 emphasising that this needs to be separated as far as possible from the management processes for the situation, and from legal and insurance responses.

'That superseded all previous advice and ensures that the pastoral needs of survivors must never be neglected and pastoral contact can continue whatever legal issues exist.'

Ecclesiastical gave the following statement to Christian Today following the BBC broadcast.

'We have great sympathy for the survivors who have suffered such awful abuse and it is hugely disappointing that their view of us has been damaged by factual inaccuracies relating to our company in the Elliott Report,' the statement said.

'The assertions in the Report misrepresent the facts and we have the documentary evidence to prove it. We were not asked to participate in this review and were not given the opportunity to set the record straight. Contrary to what the Elliott Report claims, we did not advise the Church of England to withdraw pastoral care from the survivor. We have always been clear that

pastoral care and counselling can and should continue in parallel with an insurance claim.

'We are an independent insurer that is authorised and rigorously regulated in the same way as any other insurer. We are entirely independent of the Church of England. Like other companies, we have representatives of our customer groups on our Board, from heritage, charity and the arts, as well as one cleric. As a non-executive director, she has no operational involvement in the day to day running of the company.

It added: 'We are renowned for the care and empathy we demonstrate in handling and investigating claims, and this approach is embodied in our own Guiding Principles for the handling of PSA claims, which have been praised by survivors' lawyers.'

CNI

Help CNI grow

**Please commend
CNI daily news to your
friends**

www.churchnewsireland.org

CNI