

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – the Roses at Tralee church

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On Sunday 20th August, 2023, the Church of St John the Evangelist, Tralee welcomed the reigning 2022 Rose of Tralee Rachel Duffy, the New York Rose Roisin Wiley, the Minister for Education Norma Foley TD and a large congregation to the annual Rose Service conducted by the Rector, the Reverend Canon Jim Stephens.



A most appropriate and well received sermon was preached in his inimitable style by Rt Rev. Michael Burrows, the Bishop of Tuam, Limerick and Killaloe on the theme of “And Mary all silent sat listening to me” from the second verse of the song.

“The Rose of Tralee” song is attributed to William Pembroke Mulchinock (1820 -1864) who is buried in the grounds of the church and who is commemorated by a plaque on the house where he lived and died across the road from the church.

The New York Rose Roisin Wiley (above) was subsequently chosen as the 2023 Rose of Tralee at the televised selection on Tuesday 22nd August 2023 at the Munster Technological University, Tralee.

People and places



Mothers' Union President visits Madagascar

Mothers' Union Worldwide President, Sheran Harper (second from left above), arrived in Antananarivo, Madagascar.

She was greeted with a warm welcome by members at the airport.



In the photos are Mary Sumner House Regional Development Lead Naomi Herbert; PCDC DR Congo Marthe Vira; Mama Bishop Dibo Elango Estelle Zonal Trustee for Zone F and Marie Pierrette Bezara

Trip Expert award for Christ Church Cathedral Dublin

CCCD has announced its receipt of a prestigious Trip Experts' Choice Award.

This unique accolade relies on expert reviews from 100+ reputable sources, including leading travel guides, magazines, and newspapers. It highlights the cathedral as one of Dublin's finest attractions. It is a remarkable achievement, with less than 2% of businesses receiving such recognition.

Hymn Festival and Opening Concert for the Charles Wood 30th Festival



Choir of St Patrick's C of I Cathedral, Armagh

A wonderful Hymn Festival and Opening Concert for the Charles Wood 30th Festival took place on Monday.

The Lowry Singers, Priory Singers and Isabelle Demers ensured a superb start to the week, in front of a packed congregation and audience at St Patrick's C of I Cathedral, Armagh. These events commenced a programme which included the Northern Ireland International Organ Award and an evening with John Rutter.

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Priory Singers



VIPS were welcomed by the Dean and the Festival organisers



Talent from St John's College, Cambridge wins Northern Ireland International Organ Competition 2023

Friends at St John's posted - Congratulations to George Herbert! It was obvious this young man would go on to great things when he kept his cool under immense pressure two years ago at St John's College, Cambridge ... now he's won the Northern Ireland International Organ Competition 2023.

In Dec 15, 2021 St John's posted - 'The show must go on' was the attitude of all involved in our Advent Service after Director of Music Andrew Nethsingha (now DOM at Westminster Abbey) caught Covid and six choristers fell ill. Organ Scholar George, 20, stepped in to conduct the choir live on BBCRadio3. See -

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<http://joh.cam.ac.uk/st-johns-chapel-and-community-pulls-together-advent-carol-service-put-jeopardy>

2nd Place: Theresa Heidler (Germany)

3rd Place: Jonathan Lee (Australia)

Bach Prize: Theresa Heidler

The Dame Gillian Weir Medal: Philipp Henning (Germany)

Highly commended: Philipp Henning and Tingshuo Yang (Luxembourg)



Ordained to the diocese of Kerry

Fr Mark Moriarty, newly ordained to the diocese of Kerry by Bishop Ray Browne, is pictured with his parents Marjic and Brian and his brother Paul after celebrating his first Mass in St John's Church, Tralee, on Friday August 18.

Photo: John Cleary.

Guest speakers include Fr Hayden Williams OFM Cap, Fr

News reports

Bishop who married Harry and Meghan in hospital for internal bleeding

Bishop Michael Curry, the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the US, returned to hospital for internal bleeding.

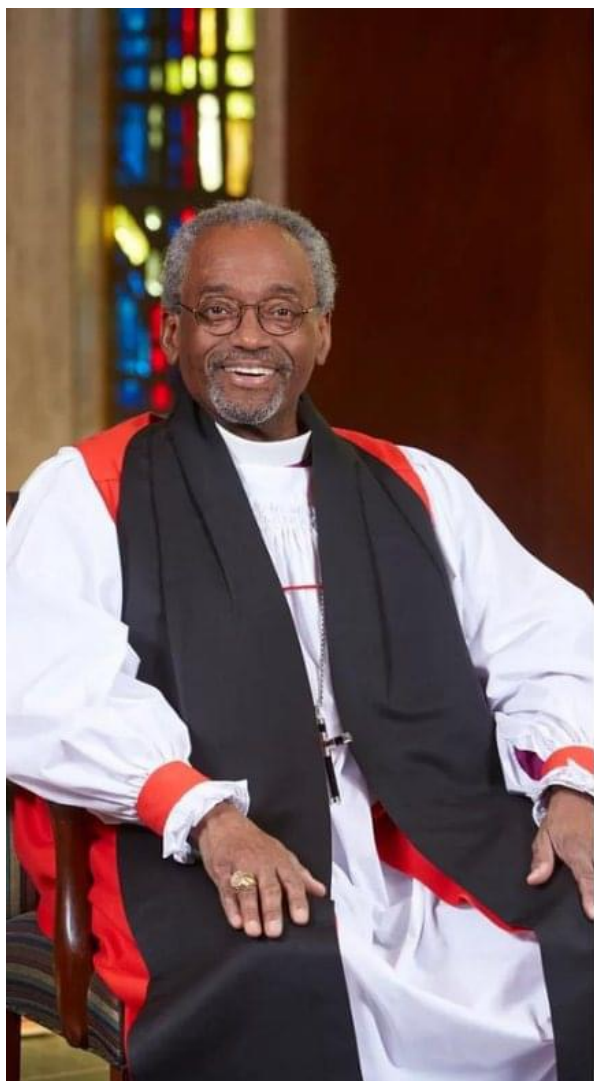
It's the second time this year that the senior cleric who preached at Harry and Meghan's wedding has suffered from the condition, as well as irregular heartbeats. In May, he was treated for atrial fibrillation (AFib).

Now, in a statement, the Episcopal Church said Bishop Michael's medical team is "weighing the potential benefits and risks of surgery to remove his right adrenal gland and an attached mass, which appears to be the source of the internal bleeding".

The church is urging Christians to pray for "the doctors' discernment".

Bishop Michael said: "I am so grateful for your prayers."

"I expect that the work of the medical team will lead to healing that will make a difference. Fervent prayer plus good medical care is a powerful combination. In all things God is good."



—— ” ——
Folk lived because of
Esther. Justice was
done because of Esther.
Folk were freed
because of Esther. We
need some new Esthers
for our world today!
—— ” ——

THE MOST REV. MICHAEL B. CURRY
XXVII PRESIDING BISHOP

#EYE23

Since his earlier hospitalisation, Bishop Michael maintained a scaled-back schedule while working from his residence in Raleigh, North Carolina. In the month of July he made notable appearances at two events: the Episcopal Youth Event (above) and the 'It's All About Love' festival, both of which took place in Baltimore, Maryland.

Only humans can talk to God – so don't fear AI, Christians told by former Moderator

Christians should not be afraid of artificial intelligence (AI) as it cannot talk to God, the former head of the Church of Scotland has claimed.

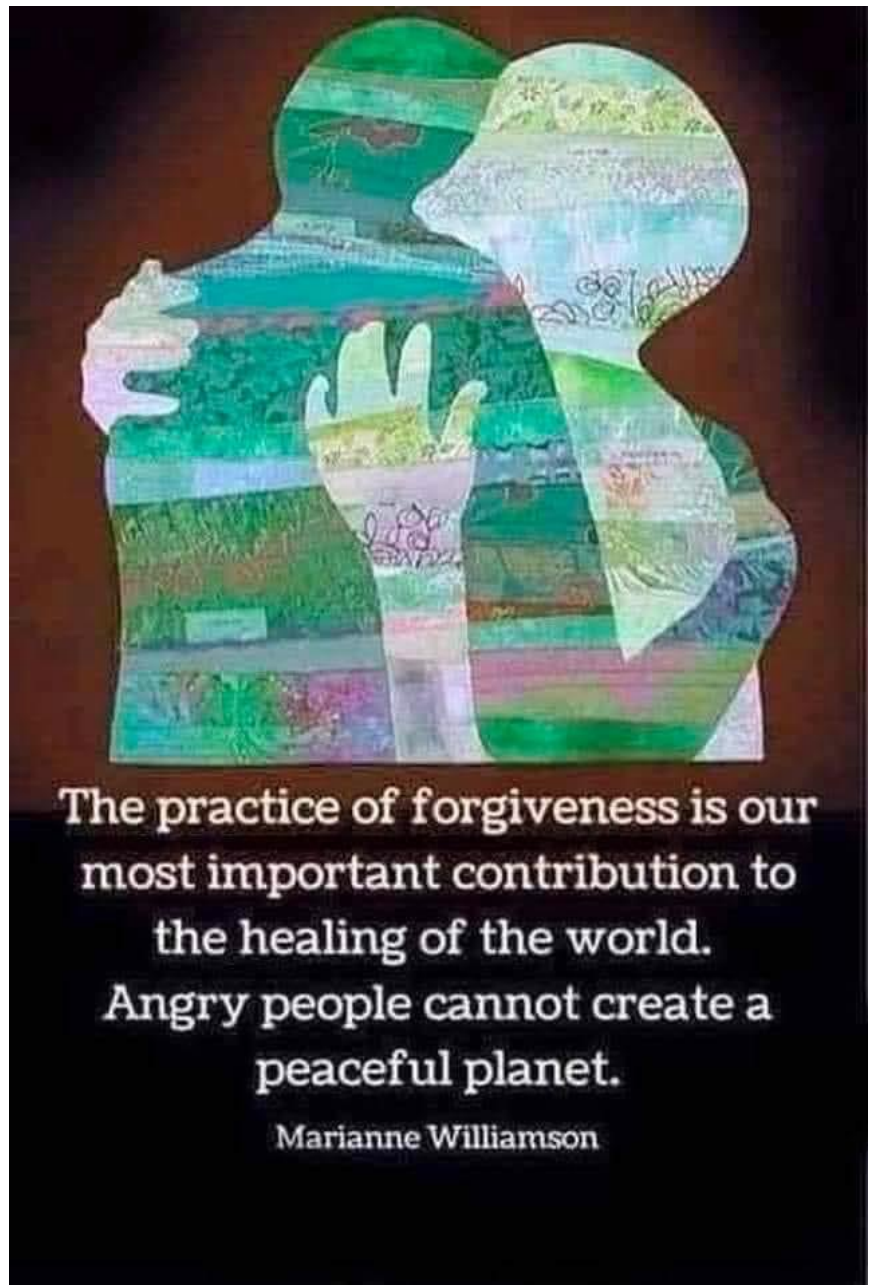
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The Very Rev Albert Bogle said AI was “not alive or even intelligent” and cannot replicate what “humans do in an act of worship”. He argued that congregations and presbyteries would be “foolish” not to consider embracing technological advances to spread the gospel of Jesus.

He noted that the first artificially created service was held in

Germany in June, with 98 per cent of its content attributed to AI, but argued that the “human two per cent gave it meaning”. In the Church’s magazine, Life and Work, next month he said that Christian worship occurs “only when hearts and minds are joined together by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit”.

Christian theologians are grappling with an array of new ethical and philosophical questions posed by AI, with some



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in the Church of England having previously expressed concern that the technology is “akin to playing God”.

Tesla entrepreneur Elon Musk has warned that “out of control” development of AI could “pose profound risks to society and humanity”.

Along with thousands of academic and tech industry leaders, he signed an open letter in March warning it could lead to the development of “nonhuman minds that might eventually outnumber, outsmart, obsolete and replace us”.

Concern has grown after the success of ChatGPT. Microsoft, which has invested in the technology, said the latest version of the software, GPT-4, was approaching human-level intelligence.

Rev Bogle wrote: “AI will help us share our digital mission but it can never shape it. It is God’s mission from beginning to end and we in the Church are called to be his agents of mission.”

More than 300 attended the AI-generated service in Furth, Bavaria, which included virtual avatars delivering sermons written by ChatGPT.

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In the media

Same-sex blessing controversy underlines deep divisions within German Catholic Church

Irish Times - Priest censured for including same-sex couple in a blessing of 25 couples as church continues to lose members at a record rate, by Derek Scally in Berlin

Catholic priest Herbert Ullmann spent most of July on a cycling holiday around Lake Constance in southern Germany. Throughout it all, he had a nagging feeling that something was brewing back home.

Returning a fortnight ago to his western German parish in Mettmann, half an hour east of Düsseldorf, Fr Ullmann found out he was headline news. The reason? The response of his church superiors to his “mass of blessing for all loving couples” last March.

It was a ceremony with a “concentrated, calm, warm atmosphere”, he recalls, with one obviously same-sex couple among around 25 heterosexual couples attending.

“It was about blessing and showing respect for all forms of responsible partnerships among people of goodwill,” he told The Irish Times.

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While other German Catholic bishops have turned a blind eye to similar services in their dioceses, many widely reported in the media, things worked out differently for Fr Ullmann.

Someone attending the ceremony in March tipped off the Vatican, he believes. How is so he sure?

More at -

[\[https://www.irishtimes.com/world/europe/2023/08/16/blessing-controversy-underlines-deep-divisions-within-german-catholic-church/\]](https://www.irishtimes.com/world/europe/2023/08/16/blessing-controversy-underlines-deep-divisions-within-german-catholic-church/)

Dunmurry mosque: PSNI treating erection of Nazi flags outside muslim place of worship as hate crime

News Letter - The PSNI said it had received a report of a number of flags having been erected in the Ashley Park area of Dunmurry, Philip Bradfield writes

Police said enquiries are at an early stage, however at this time, they are treating the report as “a racially motivated hate crime”.

A spokesperson for the PSNI said the flags have now been taken down. They did not say who removed them but it reported that members of the local community removed them.

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Jamal Iweida, imam and chairperson of Iqraa Mosque on the street, said the flags were noticed by parents bringing their children to a summer school.

“We feel that we have been watched by some people or some group,” he told the BBC.

“And we, of course, are worried about if this will lead to further actions.”

Mr Iweida said he was “disgusted” and worried “about the safety of the children”.

SDLP West Belfast councillor Paul Doherty said the flags were put up overnight.

“It’s absolutely disgraceful that these flags, a symbol of hate all over the world, have been erected outside a mosque in the Dunmurry area of west Belfast,” he said.

“I’d like to send my solidarity to all those who worship at the Iqraa mosque and school and praise the local residents who have quickly spoken out against this and made it clear that the people who put up these flags do not speak for them.

“This is a welcoming area and a diverse community and any attempt to intimidate someone because of their faith must be condemned in the strongest possible terms. People of all backgrounds live together in this area with no issue and the actions of those who put up these flags cannot be allowed to harm community relations.

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“It is truly staggering to see flags of this nature erected in west Belfast. This is an area that strongly rejects fascism and I cannot understand why anyone would target a place of worship in this way. I’d urge anyone with any information about these flags to come forward to police. These flags must be removed immediately and the people behind this held responsible for peddling hate in our community.”

Hundreds of Ireland’s pubs call last orders

Daily Telegraph - Pandemic and high taxes blamed for record rate of closures amid fears for country’s tourism sector

For the millions of tourists who flock to Ireland each year, a pint of Guinness in a traditional Irish pub is a must.

But that rite of passage could be under threat because the hostelrys, famed for their cosy interiors and live music, are closing faster than ever, industry bosses said yesterday, in a sobering warning.

Almost a quarter (22.5 per cent) of Ireland’s pubs, nearly 2,000 in total, have called time for good since 2005, a report from the Drinks Industry Group of Ireland (DIGI) found.

An average of 152 pubs have shut down every year since 2019, with more than 450 going out of business since the outbreak of the pandemic.

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Coronavirus, high excise duties and rising energy prices are blamed for the venues closing so quickly.

‘Listening to music in the Irish pub is the number one reason tourists would return’

Irish pubs are one of the country’s most prominent cultural exports around the world and a huge draw for tourists to the island.

“The pub is the number one reason why people come to Ireland, while listening to music in the Irish pub is the number one reason tourists would return,” the DIGI said.

Anthony Foley, an economist, analysed the figures for the DIGI.

He said Irish pubs were “a significant component of the tourism infrastructure and the tourism experience, which is based on hospitality and service provision”.

“There are now 1,937 fewer locations for visitors to find and benefit from services such as food and entertainment,” Mr Foley added.

The greatest impact has been in rural Ireland. While 3.4 per cent of pubs in Dublin closed between 2005 and 2022, County Limerick lost slightly under a third of all its venues.

Roscommon lost 30 per cent of its pubs, with Cork recording a similar level of closures.

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But the loss of the venues will not only hurt the tourist trade, but also affect communities and increase the risk of loneliness among the elderly.

Ireland's remaining 6,680 pubs are "at the cultural and social heart of their communities, supporting social relationships and community cohesion and social capital, reducing the risk of isolation", Mr Foley said.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books



Van Morrison Trail

On this week in 2016 Connswater Community Greenway launched the Mystic of the East Van Morrison Trail.

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Van himself returned to The Hollow. See -
[<https://www.vanmorrison.com/about/van-morrison-trail>]

Join Charles Wood Singers on BBC Radio 3

Choral Evensong in St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh has been recorded for broadcast on Wednesday 30 August at 4pm

Featuring the world premiere of 'Let All The World' by Bob Chilcott commissioned for Charles Wood Festival 2023 - 30th Festival

Aspal online learning

Aspal is the online learning platform for those involved in Ministry at parish and diocesan level throughout Ireland. Courses are taken by individuals and groups at a time and location that suits them.

St Patrick's Pontifical University are delighted to be a partner with the Adult Faith Development team in Ossory and Benefact Trust in delivering Aspal.

More information is available at aspal.ie

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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