

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Advent Derry

December 3, 2024

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Image of the day – Advent Derry

There was a large congregation in St Columb's Cathedral, on Sunday evening, for one of the highlights of the festive season, the traditional candlelight Advent Procession.

The service, which is based on the Great Advent Antiphons, is held in deep affection by a devoted congregation, many of whom return year after year to listen to readings, hymns and anthems on the theme 'Darkness into Light'.

The Christmas trees lining the aisles in preparation for tomorrow's opening of the Cathedral's Christmas Festival lent a festive atmosphere to the special occasion. As is



customary, though, the church was plunged into darkness for the beginning of the service, representing the darkness before creation and the darkness of sin.

The four Cathedral Choirs – directed by Nicky Morton and Louis Fields – began singing in the gallery of the Cathedral, gradually making their way by candlelight from the west end of the church to the chancel, symbolising our journey of faith towards Christ.

This evening's service was led by the Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart, assisted by the Cathedral's Pastoral Assistant, Rev Canon John Merrick.

The lessons and readings were read by People's Churchwarden, Miss Muriel Hamilton; Diocesan Reader Mr

David Bell; and Parish Readers Ms Jacqui Armstrong and Mrs Heather Fielding.

News

Christmas Tree Festival continues near Magilligan, Derry

The trees in the festival are sponsored by local businesses, schools and groups – and it is their

The Purpose and Symbolism of the Advent Wreath

The circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of the soul, and the **everlasting life we find in Christ**.

The white candle is placed in the middle of the wreath and lit on Christmas Eve. This candle is called the "Christ Candle" and represents the life of Christ. The color white is for purity—because Christ is our sinless, pure Savior.

THE CANDLES

1ST WEEK	HOPE
2ND WEEK	FAITH
3RD WEEK	JOY
4TH WEEK	PEACE

ADVENT SEASON
COME LORD JESUS!

SPREAD theLIGHT

imagination and concept of a tree which is the attraction – the sponsors have been asked to supply a tree with a design which reflects their business, school or group.

The opening hours are as follows:

Monday 2nd to Wednesday 4th; 12 noon to 5 p.m.;

Thursday 5th to Saturday 7th; 12 noon to 8 p.m.

Tamlaghtard Parish Church can be found on the Duncrun Road in Magilligan – this is the road which begins opposite



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the old Bellarena Primary School (now known as "The Auld School"), and runs to the old Magilligan Railway Station (near Benone corner).

The Church is 1.5 miles from The Auld School. If using google maps

<https://goo.gl/maps/MwCjfiGfnLyDRPZ37>

If using satnav search for postcode BT49 0JD

Individuals are welcome – “but we would ask that group bookings are planned with us in advance where possible. Please contact Mrs Nicola Clyde on 078 0732 5114”





At a Christmas market near you?

And Malahide is somewhat ahead in the seasonal clergy fashion stakes

Inspiring Armagh MU Diocesan Prayer Breakfast

The special guest speaker was Melanie Douglas who started with everyone singing **Be Still**, for the presence of the Lord.

**WICKLOW'S
FIRST EVER
CHRISTMAS TREE
FESTIVAL
&
LIGHT SHOW**

IN AID OF
NUN'S CROSS CHURCH RESTORATION PROJECT
&
WICKLOW HOSPICE

DECEMBER
Fri 6th. to Sun 8th.
4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Nun's Cross Church, Killiskey, Ashford,
Co. Wicklow A67 WP83

24 Novel Christmas Trees
Musical Guest Artists
Outdoor Light & Sound Show
Winter Wonderland Trail
Santa's Grotto
Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

TICKETS
General Admission €10
Family Ticket €20
Group Ticket €100

AVAILABLE AT
<https://wicklowchristmastreelightshow.eventbrite.ie>

Our Lady's Hospice & Care Services
Harold's Cross Blackrock Wicklow
Respite Rehabilitation Dementia

SUITABLE FOR ALL THE FAMILY

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Kilbroney Parish, Rostrevor - The Rev Karl Teggarty with the Benedictine monks from Holy Cross at the traditional Advent Carol Service 2024.

She told of her childhood and then her unhappy marriage and how God helped her cope and spoke to her during those difficult years.

Rev Alan Cross (Diocesan Chaplain) and Claire Smyth led prayers. On behalf of the Diocese, Claire presented tokens of appreciation to Melanie and Rev Alan. Thanks were expressed to Tanya at the Royal Hotel and their staff, The Archbishop, Melanie Douglas and everyone who contributed to a very uplifting and inspiring event.

Drumbo graveyard's new extension consecrated

On Sunday 1st December Bishop David McClay having been requested by the Rector, Rev Mervyn Jamison, Wardens and Parishioner's of Ballylesson Church in the Parish of Drumbo consecrated a new extension to the graveyard.

This new Section will have 120 burial plots for parishioners with a small number available to non-members of the church.

Cathedral Calls

Advent Choral Evensong and Installation of Archdeacon of Ferns at St. Edan's Cathedral

On Advent Sunday, St Edan's Cathedral in Ferns was the venue for the Diocesan Advent Carol Service, during which the Venerable Alec Purser was installed as Archdeacon of Ferns.

The service, enriched by the beautiful music of the Ferns Diocesan Choir, was attended by parishioners, people from neighbouring parishes and diocesan clergy.



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The installation was conducted by the Dean of Ferns, the Very Revd Dr Paul Mooney, formally placing the Venerable Alec Purser in his stall. Mr. Henry Percival was the organist and choir director.

In his reflection, the Bishop spoke about the significance of Advent as a season of preparation and hope, focusing in particular on the image of light.

Following the service, the congregation gathered for refreshments in St. Mogue's Cottage.

Clergy and ministry

Fr Brendan McMullan

Raymond Lennon writes - One of the kindest, most gentle former teacher and priest - Fr Brendan McMullan - has gone to his rest.

Musician, thoughtful, prayerful, humorous and loving, he was a friend, as my teacher at St Malachy's College and later Curate at St Peter's



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Cathedral where I was Organist.

With his brother, the late Fr Kevin (a priest also) he inspired me enormously. As I watched him conducting the College Choir one night, I decided that I wanted to be like him in that role.

Later we became associates but, most of all friends.

One last thing. He was a most devoted lover of Gaelic. So, I'll pay my respects to him here in his beloved Irish.

“Ceol na nAingeal go cluinfidh sé”.
Choirs of Angels welcome him.

David Milne

**Canon
Stephen
Neill writes
- So sad to
hear of the
death of
David Milne**



Was a chorister of his in St Bart's and a piano student though In my case a poor student - A lovely man of great passion and though he could appear fiery on the outside was a most warm and compassionate person - May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

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Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

BBNI podcast - Fathers are more important than you think

Season 3, Episode 6 Podcast with Rob Fraser-Binns: Fathers are more important than you think out now

The BBNI Podcast is back and for season 3 and this week Rob Fraser-Binns, from Legacy Fathers, joins David on the BBNI Podcast to discuss fatherhood and the importance of fatherhood. He shares about the new partnership with BBNI, the Legacy Badge. For more information about Legacy, including the Legacy Badge, their programmes, and ways to support their work, visit www.legacyfathers.org.

Watch & Subscribe or on YouTube:

<https://lnkd.in/ehSM5cX6>

Listen & Subscribe on Spotify:

<https://lnkd.in/eDMWJwDE...>

Listen & Subscribe on Apple:

<https://lnkd.in/ehCMqpst>



In the media

Preacher Slammed for ‘Appalling’ Remarks at Irish Memorial, Accusing Israel of Viewing Itself as a ‘Master Race’

An Irish cleric has come under fire for delivering an antisemitic memorial sermon in which he suggested that Israelis and Jews see themselves as a “master race” that justifies “eliminating” other groups “because they don’t count.” Debbie Weiss writes in The Algemeiner.

Reverend Canon David Oxley delivered the sermon last week at **St. Patrick’s Cathedral in Dublin** during a Remembrance Sunday service attended by [Irish President Michael Higgins](<https://www.algemeiner.com/2024/02/05/el-al-not-returning-flights-to-ireland-morocco-due-to-war/>) and other high-ranking dignitaries.

Ironically, Oxley had previously revealed familial ties to the Nazis in a sermon delivered at the same event five years ago.

In last week’s remarks, Oxley contended that Israel’s war against the Hamas terrorist group in Gaza represented “the horrible blasphemy of the master race in action.”

“This takes different forms in different times and places, but it is the same horrible idea, that one group of people is intrinsically more valuable than any other. Once that is accepted, then the elimination of others follows as a matter of course — because they don’t count,” he said.

Oxley’s comments sparked strong condemnation from both Israeli officials and Jewish leaders in Ireland.

Israel’s embassy in Ireland said Oxley had “hijacked” the memorial service in favor of an “outrageous and dangerous ... libel on the State of Israel.”

The statement [published on X](<https://x.com/IsraelinIreland/status/1857493706712179135>) also said the diatribe was “divorced from reality” and “willfully ignored the complexities of the Middle East.”

Ireland’s Chief Rabbi Yoni Wieder condemned the Anglican establishment for allowing such remarks, saying it was “an abrogation of moral and religious leadership that such a speech could be delivered by a representative of the Church of Ireland.”

“This type of inflammatory, hateful rhetoric has been used by politicians here countless times over the past year, and we’ve seen it constantly across mainstream Irish media. Now it’s gone beyond politics and journalism and is coming from a senior religious figure, a minister in a Christian Church,” Wieder told The Algemeiner.

“The anti-Israel narrative in Ireland now regularly spills over into overt antisemitism,” he added.

In an open letter addressed to Oxley, Wieder condemned the preacher's "appalling" accusations.

"You fail to grasp the depth of offense invoked by suggesting that Jewish people have adopted the same murderous outlook that was perpetuated against them by the Nazis," Wieder wrote.

He also slammed the Anglican cleric's failure to make any mention of the threats posed by the Hamas and Hezbollah terrorist groups, which "are explicitly committed to destroying Israel and murdering Jews."

"You claim Israel has a policy of targeting schools, hospitals, and mosques, yet you fail to mention that [Hamas purposefully positions itself within](<https://www.algemeiner.com/2024/06/27/israel-issues-detailed-response-refuting-un-human-rights-office-accusations-indiscriminate-bombing/>) and beneath such civilian infrastructure — and they do so precisely because they know it will deter attacks against them. Hamas have openly stated that it is their strategy to place civilians in harm's way," the chief rabbi continued.

Wieder called the destruction in Gaza as well as the loss of life "an unbearable humanitarian catastrophe."

"You and I are united by a desire to see an end to this heartbreaking tragedy. But the situation is also fraught with complexities, which cannot be ignored. Would it not be more honest to acknowledge this, rather than to proffer an simplistic and partisan perspective?" he wrote.

During a 2019 address at the same event, Oxley reportedly disclosed his wife's ties to the Nazis, according to a report published this week by the British Jewish Chronicle, which cited an article published at the time in the Irish Independent.

In that sermon, also delivered in the presence of the Irish president, Oxley shared that his wife, Amalia, was German and that her family included members who fought for the Third Reich.

“It's not everyone who can boast that their mother-in-law had Adolf Hitler as a godfather. It's not everyone who would want to,” he quipped, before going on to praise the Irish citizens who opposed Nazism.

Oxley told the Jewish Chronicle that his comments, which did not represent the Church of Ireland, contained “no hatred” and he stood by them.

“In delivering my sermon, I speak only for myself. I do not speak on behalf of the Church of Ireland, or of St Patrick's Cathedral. As our church does not believe in infallibility, it is quite conceivable that I am mistaken. No one is obliged to agree with me. However, I am prepared to stand over my remarks,” he said.

“There was no hatred in my sermon, except a hatred of all theories that make one group of people more valuable than another, so that some become expendable,” Oxley added.

A 2021 [report] by antisemitism researcher David Collier found that traditional Christian attitudes play a significant

role in shaping antisemitism in Ireland, with Christian NGOs often playing a role in perpetuating and spreading these sentiments.

(https://embassies.gov.il/dublin/NewsAndEvents/Documents/Collier%20Antisemitism%20in%20Ireland%20_final_online.pdf)

Much of the antisemitism in Ireland appears to be driven from the top down. Regrettably, this certainly seems to be the state of affairs at the moment. Words carry weight, and political and religious leaders in particular ought to remember this,” Wieder said.

He also condemned the Church of Ireland for not distancing itself from Oxley’s comments.

A spokesperson from St Patrick’s Cathedral told the Jewish Chronicle: “In St Patrick’s Cathedral we continue to pray daily for peace in all the countries of the Middle East. We pray fervently for an end to all wars and the human suffering that they bring. Everybody, of all faiths, is welcomed in St Patrick’s Cathedral.”

In Europe, Ireland has been among the fiercest critics of Israel since Oct. 7 of last year, when Hamas-led Palestinian terrorists invaded the Jewish state from neighboring Gaza. The terrorists murdered 1,200 people, wounded thousands more, and abducted over 250 hostages in their rampage, the deadliest single-day massacre of Jews since the Holocaust. Israel responded with an ongoing military campaign in Hamas-ruled Gaza aimed at freeing the

hostages and dismantling the terrorist group's military and governing capabilities.

Earlier this month, the Irish parliament passed a non-binding motion saying that "genocide is being perpetrated before our eyes by Israel in Gaza." As the measure passed, Irish Foreign Minister Micheal Martin said that the government intended to join South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) before the end of the year.

Around the same time, Ireland accepted the appointment of a full Palestinian ambassador for the first time, confirming that Jilan Wahba Abdalmajid would step up from her current position as Palestinian head of mission to Ireland.

In May, Ireland officially recognized a Palestinian state, prompting outrage in Israel, which described the move as a "reward for terrorism." According to The Irish Times, Ireland is due to have its presence in Ramallah in the West Bank upgraded from a representative office to a full embassy.

Israel's Ambassador in Dublin Dana Erlich said at the time of Ireland's recognition of "Palestine" that Ireland was "not an honest broker" in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

More recently, Irish Prime Minister Simon Harris last month called on the European Union to "review its trade relations" with Israel after the Israeli parliament passed legislation banning the activities in the country of UNRWA, the United Nations agency responsible for Palestinian refugees, because of its ties to Hamas.

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Recent anti-Israel actions in Ireland came shortly after the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (Impact-se), an Israeli education watchdog group, released a new report revealing Irish school textbooks have been filled with negative stereotypes and distortions of Israel, Judaism, and Jewish history.

Antisemitism in Ireland has become “blatant and obvious” in the wake of Hamas’s Oct. 7 onslaught, according to Alan Shatter, a former member of parliament who served in the Irish cabinet between 2011 and 2014 as Minister for Justice, Equality and Defense.

Shatter told The Algemeiner in an interview earlier this year that Ireland has “evolved into the most hostile state towards Israel in the entire EU.”

Just last month, an Irish official, Dublin City Councilor Punam Rane, claimed during a council meeting that Jews and Israel control the US economy, arguing that is why Washington, DC does not oppose Israel’s war against Hamas.

[\[https://www.algemeiner.com/2024/11/29/preacher-slammed-appalling-remarks-irish-memorial-accusing-israel-viewing-itself-master-race/\]](https://www.algemeiner.com/2024/11/29/preacher-slammed-appalling-remarks-irish-memorial-accusing-israel-viewing-itself-master-race/)

Poem for today

A Song for Simeon

By Thomas Stearns Eliot

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Lord, the Roman hyacinths are blooming in bowls and
The winter sun creeps by the snow hills;
The stubborn season has made stand.
My life is light, waiting for the death wind,
Like a feather on the back of my hand.
Dust in sunlight and memory in corners
Wait for the wind that chills towards the dead land.
Grant us thy peace.

I have walked many years in this city,
Kept faith and fast, provided for the poor,
Have taken and given honour and ease.
There went never any rejected from my door.

Who shall remember my house,
where shall live my children's children

When the time of sorrow is come ?
They will take to the goat's path, and the fox's home,
Fleeing from the foreign faces and the foreign swords.

Before the time of cords and scourges and lamentation
Grant us thy peace.

Before the stations of the mountain of desolation,
Before the certain hour of maternal sorrow,
Now at this birth season of decease,
Let the Infant, the still unspeaking and unspoken Word,
Grant Israel's consolation
To one who has eighty years and no to-morrow.

According to thy word,
They shall praise Thee and suffer in every generation
With glory and derision,
Light upon light, mounting the saints' stair.

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Not for me the martyrdom, the ecstasy of thought and
prayer,
Not for me the ultimate vision.
Grant me thy peace.

(And a sword shall pierce thy heart,
Thine also).

I am tired with my own life and the lives of those after me,
I am dying in my own death and the deaths of those after
me.

Let thy servant depart,
Having seen thy salvation.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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**Link in Monday through Saturday from
early morning**

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