

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Eglinton parish thrift shop profits–share now a Christmas tradition**

## Image of the day

### Eglinton parish thrift shop profits-share now a Christmas tradition



Rita Hull (third from left) receives a cheque on behalf of St Vincent de Paul from Rev Canon Paul Hoey. Also included (from left) are Danielle Conway, Roberta Sinclair (coordinator of New Beginnings) and Elaine Way (the shop's administrator).

**The distribution of cheques from the proceeds of sales at the Parish of Faughanvale's thrift shop, New Beginnings, has become part of the Christmas tradition at St Canice's Church in Eglinton and this year has been no exception.**

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The shop, on the Benbow Industrial Estate, just outside the village, reinvests in the local community through the St Canice's Hall Restoration Appeal – which aims to replace the parish hall destroyed in the devastating flood six years ago – and by supporting local charities.

The Rector, Rev Canon Paul Hoey, was joined at this week's cheque presentation by the coordinator of New Beginnings, Roberta Sinclair, and by its administrator, churchwarden Elaine Way. Roberta says the shop is supported by people from right across the local community

and the chosen charities are likewise representative of the wider community.

This year's beneficiaries were the Northwest Methodist Mission, Londonderry Orphan Society, Bishops' Appeal, St Vincent de Paul and Foyle Search & Rescue. Representatives of the latter two organisations were there in

Bangor Abbey  
Celebration  
of  
Christ's Nativity  
in  
Words and Music  
Christmas Eve  
9.30pm

Proceeds  
to:

Chest  
Heart &  
Stroke

Followed by  
Tea/Coffee &  
Mince Pies.

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person at New Beginnings' premises, this lunchtime, to collect their donations. Canon Hoey thanked all of the charities for the tremendous work they do. "It's a drop in the ocean, I know," he said, "but it's something to encourage you. It's so easy for churches to get caught up in thinking we're only here for ourselves but we see it as important to be here to thank you and to support you in the really important work that you are doing."

## People and places



Bags and bags of generosity from the parishioners of St Michael's Catlecaufield and St Patrick's Donaghmore to the residents of the homeless hostel in Dungannon, delivered this week so that they will all have a gift at Christmas

## **Copy of Kilbride Parish history sought**

**Some years ago the history of the Parish of Kilbride was written by Rev. Roy Cox and published by Universities Press.**

It was entitled Mills, Ministers and Moggies and it gave a very detailed account of church life through the years as well as the history of Doagh and the surrounding area. The book is no longer available so would anyone have a copy that they would be willing to sell to current parishioners? If so please do get in touch with us via Messenger or through the contact page on the church website - [www.kilbrideparishchurch.org](http://www.kilbrideparishchurch.org)

## **Service of Memories in Irvinestown**

**On Sunday evening December 10 there was a "Service of Memories" attended by about 80 and held in St Tighernach's Church, Derryvullen North. This was organised in conjunction with the Irvinestown Orange Community Group.**

A special Christmas Tree was placed in the church and people could decorate a bauble in any way they felt so as to honour the memory of a loved one who has passed away and whose loss is keenly felt at Christmas time.

The Service was one of reflection, memories and scriptural assurance.

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The praise was met by organist, Margaret Gray, with members of the Choir, readers were Anna Moffit and Joe Graham. Two baubles, representing all the baubles, were presented to me by Frances Hunter and Irene Gibson to be placed on the tree

It was so poignant to see the tree filled with baubles, representing so many loved ones and memories. The fellowship continued afterwards in the hall over tea/ coffee and enjoyable treats. This tree is remaining over the Christmas period and will be a focus for memories.



## Dublin Black Santa is underway

The 2023 Black Santa Sit Out at St. Ann's Church, Dawson St. was officially launched by Archbishop



**Michael Jackson and the Deputy Lord Mayor of Dublin Cllr Clare O'Connor with the Vicar of St Ann's Canon Paul Arbuthnot and the brilliant Choir of Kildare Place National School.**

If you are in the city centre this week drop by St Ann's to say hello to Black Santa and the team.

There will be choirs there every lunchtime.

You can donate in person with cash or card or online.

Read all about it on the Dublin diocesan website here:  
<https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2023/12/18/black-santa-2023-sit-out>

## **Vic-Ryn in Lisburn is set to host Christian Endeavour national convention**

**Christian Endeavourers throughout the Irish CE Union are looking forward to coming to Lisburn's Vic-Ryn Centre for the 108th Irish National CE Convention on Saturday, September 23, at 7.15pm when Mr Ken McGall, an elder in Second Broughshane Presbyterian Church, will be installed as All Ireland President of CE.**

Ken has been in CE from the age of 17 and has held various posts at Society, Local Union and Irish Union levels; at present he is a member of Irish Christian Endeavour Executive. He is married to Jean who is involved in CE as a Junior leader in 2nd Broughshane and also holds the post of Treasurer in Irish CE. His vision for his Presidential year would be to encourage leaders and members to serve Christ, remembering the CE motto, "For Christ and the Church". Mrs Carole Dillon, who helps run the various CE Societies, in Priesthill Methodist Church is a former President of the Irish Christian Endeavour Union and is currently its Training Convenor.

## **Carolfest 2023 brings Enniskillen local schools together to sing carols**

**Pupils from Holy Trinity Primary School, Enniskillen; Enniskillen Model Primary School and Enniskillen Integrated Primary School came together to sing Christmas Carols for each other and the congregation.**





Carolfest 2023 was invited to Enniskillen by Dean Kenneth Hall, of St Macartin's Cathedral, and the Monsignor Peter O'Reilly of St Michael's Parish Church. The two church leaders hosted the late Queen Elizabeth II during her visit in 2012 - an occasion which has gone down in history as it was the first time a monarch had been in a Catholic church on the island of Ireland.

The service was led jointly by both Dean Hall and Monsignor O'Reilly, who shared the Bidding and Blessing. It began in St Macartin's Cathedral at 11am on Wednesday December 13 and then, retracing the late Queen's steps in 2012, the schoolchildren, teachers, parents and grandparents and all attending walked from St Macartin's, crossing the road to St Michael's, singing as they went - one service of unity in two locations.



The Dean and Monsignor lead the schoolchildren across the road.

Enniskillen Carolfest 2023 is organised by The St Anne Trust formed in 2015 to foster cross-community relations and build friendships through the medium of music. It began with a single service held annually in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, but last year the festival expanded to include St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh and the Parish Church of St Phillip and St James, Holywood.

Trust Chairman, Mr Joseph Watson, said: "Choral singing enriches cultural diversity. This event provides opportunities for shared experiences, mutual appreciation and it enriches cultural diversity. Musical traditions can be shared without losing their distinctiveness.



Some of the schoolchildren singing in St. Michael's Church.

“It provides something for everyone, and it can establish a real sense of shared identity and a new sense of participation, which is very important. This Carolfest seeks to play a part in expelling sectarianism and build peace and mutual understanding amongst our people.”

Dean Hall said: “The churches have expertise in forgiveness, justice, truth, and repentance - the components of reconciliation. We in Enniskillen see the need to examine and to re-define our role and purpose as being ‘open and available’ churches in order to give a new incentive for reconciliation work at a local level.

“The churches have so much common ground in their acceptance of the basic tenets of the Christian Faith and we gain enormously from bringing to and sharing with each

other the riches of our own traditions and denominations. This service should further encourage the work that is already taking place.”

Monsignor O'Reilly said: “Following the 2012 visit of The Queen for her Diamond Jubilee, her footsteps became iconic. That ‘Crossing of the Street’ summed up so much of the goodwill that already existed in Enniskillen.

“Now, in the Community Carol Festival encouraged by the St Anne Trust, we have another opportunity to give expression to that goodwill. Feelings follow footsteps. I hope that this service will be the occasion of the warm feelings that can come from working together for a better community, a better world.”

## **Anniversary Mass of Private Seán Rooney Óglaigh na hÉireann / Irish Defence Forces**

**Attending the anniversary Mass for the late Private Seán Rooney RIP, along with close family members, were: Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces, Lieutenant General Seán Clancy; Department of Defence Secretary General, Jacqui McCrum; Assistant Secretary, Bernie Maguire, and chaplains to the Irish Defence Forces.**

Archbishop Eamon Martin in a homily for the first anniversary Mass of Private Seán Rooney said -



At the blessing of the picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Holy Family Church in Dundalk, Co Louth, Archdiocese of Armagh: Father Declan Shannon, Chaplain to Forces (CF); Father Michael Hinds CF; Archbishop Eamon Martin; Head Chaplain Father Paschal Hanrahan HCF; and, Father Richard Delahunty CSsR

“Last year, we were honoured at the funeral with the attendance of Uachtarán na hÉireann; An Taoiseach; Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces, and many political and civic and leaders; but what stands out in my memory is the witness that you – Seán’s family and loved ones – gave to all of us – with your dignified presence and your powerful words. And then there was the outstanding example of Seán’s army colleagues, including his comrades from 27

Infantry – although tearful and broken hearted they still took care to afford full military honours to Seán.

“I prayed that day that you all would be graced with strength to get through the weeks and months ahead; here we are, a whole year later, joined together once more in memory of Private Seán Rooney – son, grandson, brother, fiancée, brave soldier, national hero.

“My thoughts and prayers turn naturally this morning to our Irish peacekeepers still on the ground along the Lebanese border, doing their best to keep the peace and protect life. The current horrific situation in Gaza ripples out like a deadly earth tremor, even as far as Southern Lebanon. Our soldiers take their stand for peace and life, there in the middle of growing hostilities, increased tensions and lethal threats. Let us not forget them and keep them and their families in our thoughts and prayers this morning and especially as Christmas approaches. Let us pray and work for an immediate ceasefire, the return of all hostages and the freeing up of humanitarian corridors to provide access to the aid that is so desperately needed”.

Full text of homily at -

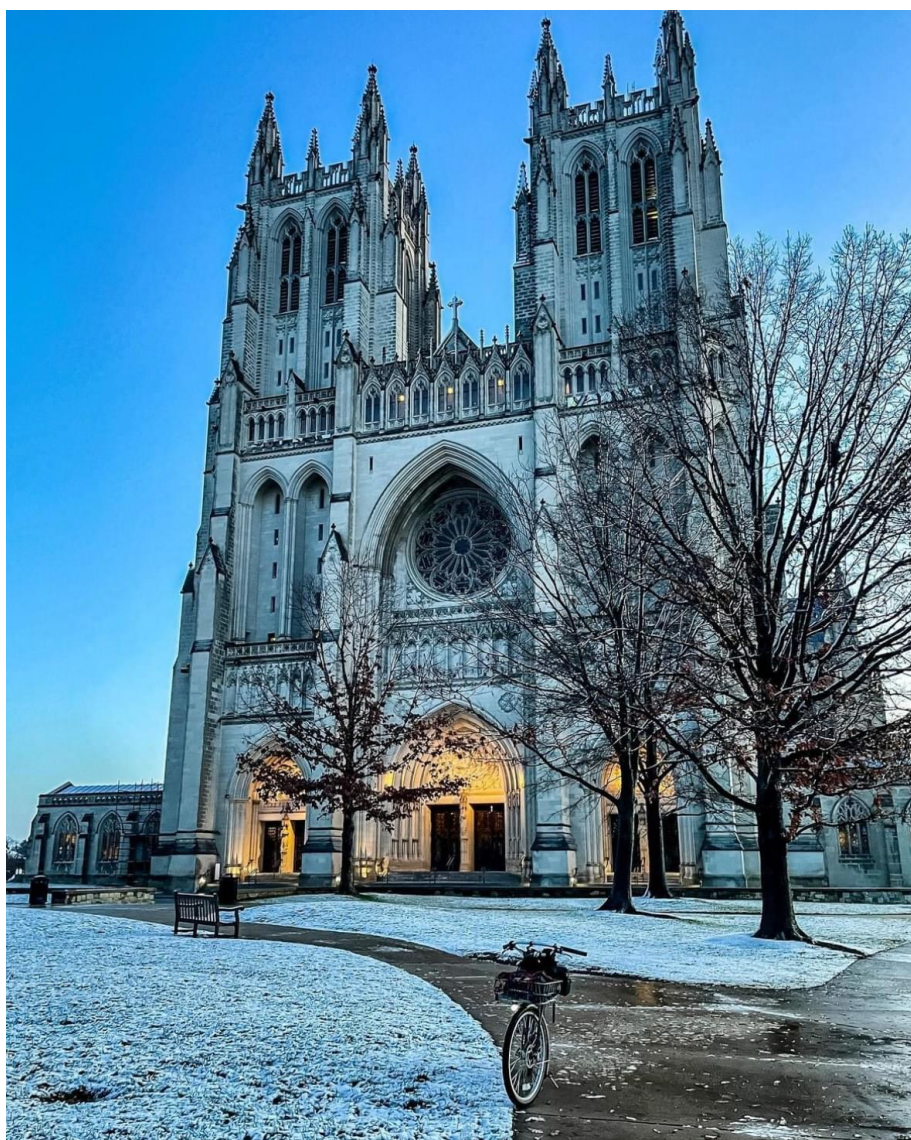
<https://www.catholicbishops.ie/2023/12/12/archbishop-martin-our-soldiers-take-their-stand-for-peace-today-i-bless-an-image-of-our-lady-of-guadalupe-in-memory-of-private-sean-rooney-rip/>

# Church News Ireland

## News reports

### A Sign for You - A Christmas message from Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry

**"Hello to my family of faith in The Episcopal Church, to all of our ecumenical and interfaith friends, and to all people of love and goodwill.**



I want to first thank you all for your prayers and well wishes this year as I have weathered some health issues. Please know that I'm doing well, following the doctor's orders.

Photo -  
Washington  
National  
Cathedral

I'm also ever more aware of the power of the messages of Advent to watch, to wait, and to listen to the pregnant voice of silence, as one version of

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the Bible says. And out of that watching, waiting, and listening, following the way of Jesus of Nazareth and his way of love, the Spirit of God being our helper."

Watch below/read full message online: <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/publicaffairs/presiding-bishop-michael-currys-christmas-message-2023-a-sign-for-you/>



## Briefing diplomats on the battered state of the Christian Presence in the Holy Land

**Don Binder writes - In my role as Undersecretary to the Heads of the Churches, I was pleased to moderate a forum on Monday afternoon between our Council and more than three dozen Ambassadors, Consuls General, and other diplomats on the State of the Christian Presence in the Holy Land.**





His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III opened the assembly with an introductory address, followed by remarks by the other Heads of the Churches, including Archbishop Hosam. Free discussion followed.

Among the topics covered were the recent IDF attacks against Holy Family Church and Ahli Anglican Hospital in Gaza; fraudulent construction deals in the Armenian Quarter; threats against the Christian schools; and expanding restrictions against worship at Christian holy sites.

The gathered diplomatic corps expressed their support of the churches' religious freedom rights and pledged to intervene on behalf of the local Christian communities through their respective governments.

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We thank them for standing in solidarity with us and pray that their efforts will indeed combat the recent rise of radical extremism in Israel and promote justice, peace, and religious freedom for all the faiths represented in the Holy Land.

## Poem for today

### The Truce of Christmas

GK Chesterton

Passionate peace is in the sky--  
And in the snow in silver sealed  
The beasts are perfect in the field,  
And men seem men so suddenly--  
(But take ten swords and ten times ten  
And blow the bugle in praising men;  
For we are for all men under the sun,  
And they are against us every one;  
And misers haggle and madmen clutch,  
And there is peril in praising much.  
And we have the terrible tongues uncurled  
That praise the world to the sons of the world.)

The idle humble hill and wood  
Are bowed upon the sacred birth,  
And for one little hour the earth  
Is lazy with the love of good--  
(But ready are you, and ready am I,  
If the battle blow and the guns go by;

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For we are for all men under the sun,  
And they are against us every one;  
And the men that hate herd all together,  
To pride and gold, and the great white feather  
And the thing is graven in star and stone  
That the men who love are all alone.)

Hunger is hard and time is tough,  
But bless the beggars and kiss the kings,  
For hope has broken the heart of things,  
And nothing was ever praised enough.  
(But bold the shield for a sudden swing  
And point the sword when you praise a thing,  
For we are for all men under the sun,  
And they are against us every one;  
And mime and merchant, thane and thrall  
Hate us because we love them all;  
Only till Christmastide go by  
Passionate peace is in the sky.)

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

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