

Church News Ireland

Media review



A Christmas miracle in Syria

Following the first Friday prayers since Bashar al-Assad's ouster, in Damascus' central square, Syria,

January 17, 2024

RNS — Assad was the King Herod of our time. Like Herod, he slaughtered the innocent, Thomas Reese writes. There is also a listen facility.

At a time when most of the international news is full of gloom and doom, the fall of the Assad regime in Syria is a happy surprise, almost a Christmas miracle. Bashar al-Assad, the last scion of the family that ruled Syria for 50 years through fear and terror, is gone.

Assad was a King Herod of our time. He arrested, tortured and killed thousands of Syrians and forced millions more into exile. He used barrel bombs and chemical weapons against his own people. Cities harboring opponents to his regime were leveled with no regard for the cost in civilian deaths, children or adults. Nowhere was safe, not churches, not hospitals. Like Herod, he slaughtered the innocent.

Assad was aided and abetted by Russia, Iran and Hezbollah, Iran's proxy in Lebanon. The West imposed economic sanctions to try to squeeze him out of power, but in latter years was more concerned about quashing the Islamic State group and al-Qaida than the plight of the Syrian people under Assad. American troops are still in Syria to attack Islamic State group fighters. We also support the Kurds in Syria, who have been one of our most loyal and effective allies. More at -

[\[https://religionnews.com/2024/12/16/christmas-miracle-in-syria/?](https://religionnews.com/2024/12/16/christmas-miracle-in-syria/?utm_source=RNS+Updates&utm_campaign=55e74009d5-EMAIL\CAMPAIGN\2024\12\16\11\55&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c5356cb657-55e74009d5-12793078)

[utm_source=RNS+Updates&utm_campaign=55e74009d5-EMAIL\CAMPAIGN\2024\12\16\11\55&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c5356cb657-55e74009d5-12793078](https://religionnews.com/2024/12/16/christmas-miracle-in-syria/?utm_source=RNS+Updates&utm_campaign=55e74009d5-EMAIL\CAMPAIGN\2024\12\16\11\55&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c5356cb657-55e74009d5-12793078)

[1\]](#)

Israel shutting its embassy in Dublin is a very welcome move, even if it only has symbolic impact

News Letter Editorial: It is pleasing news that Israel has decided to close its embassy in Ireland.

It would be all the better if Israel would open a consulate in Belfast, where it has many friends.

The decision to close the embassy in Dublin is likely to have little impact on a country so rabidly anti Israel.

Some critics of Ireland hope that its contempt for the Jewish state will see it downgraded in the eyes of the incoming Trump administration in the United States. But Irish exceptionalism – its arrogance and its ability to do as it pleases internationally – makes such an outcome unlikely.

Ireland has actually sought to make it easier for South Africa's legal action against Israel in the International Court of Justice to succeed, by asking the court to broaden its definition of genocide.

Ireland's political leaders were sluggish in condemning the Hamas mass murder of Jews on October 7 2023, and have since shown cross-party solidarity in their relentless condemnation of the Israeli response to that calculated Islamic extremist invasion and massacre of civilians. Leading the charge is a party that has spent decades

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defending terror in Britain and Ireland, the Irish nationalist extremists of Sinn Fein.

Under the previous UK government, there was the possibility that it would highlight and exploit Ireland's position towards Israel with US leaders. Now we have a Labour government that has, in effect, allowed a Republic of Ireland that is suing Britain on legacy to dictate its new policy on dealing with the fallout of the Troubles.

A new government that will seemingly implement the will of an International Criminal Court that has equated the savages of Hamas with that first world democracy, Israel, defending itself against an act of total war.

Israel's closure of its embassy in Dublin is most welcome as a symbolic move, but sadly will have little effect.

Outcry after primary school tells parents pupils 'required' to attend all religious ceremonies

Irish Examiner - A Church of Ireland primary school is to review its ethos statement after it told parents pupils were "required" to attend all school religious ceremonies.

St Andrew's National School in Lucan, Co Dublin, told parents in a message issued via Aladdin school software service that students were "are required to participate in all subject areas and attend all school religious ceremonies".

"As part of the culture of this school, children are informed about Santa Claus, Halloween, and the expectation that surrounds this. We do not permit any other view within school," it read.

"Every child in Ireland has a constitutional right to attend any publicly funded school without attending religious instruction," said David Graham, of Education Equality.

Education Equality is a volunteer group campaigning for secular education on the basis children should have equal access to schools regardless of religion.

"Children also have the right not to be forced to attend religious ceremonies against their will, in line with their human right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion," Mr Graham said.

"The Department of Education is clearly failing in its duty to provide effective guidance, oversight and enforcement to ensure that these rights are upheld in the schools it funds. Meanwhile, the Government appears blind to the growing disconnect between schools' religious ethos and contemporary Irish society."

When contacted by the Irish Examiner, a spokesman for the school's board of management said it noted the concerns raised about the message. "The message in question contains a quotation from the school's ethos statement. The ethos statement will be reviewed in full by the board of management of the school at its next board meeting. We have no further comment to make at this time."

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Education Equality is calling on the Government to compel schools to confine religious instruction and worship to a period at the end of the school day, outside core hours. Doing so would uphold families' human and constitutional rights to freedom of religion and belief, according to the group.

Mr Graham added: "Having failed to deliver on the commitments in the last programme for government in 2020, the next government must convene a citizens' assembly on the future of education without delay. Irish society has changed — our schools must too."

The 2020 programme for government stated it would "establish a citizens assembly on the future of education, ensuring that the voices of young people and those being educated are central".

[<https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/arid-41537813.html>]

Former Archbishop of Canterbury quits amid claims he mishandled abuse cases

Daily Telegraph - Lord Carey surrenders his permission to officiate after BBC contacts him about help provided to child abuser who returned to priesthood

Lord George Carey, 89, has given up his permission to minister after being contacted by the BBC about assistance he provided to enable a child abuser to return to the priesthood.

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On Monday, the BBC reported that Stephen Cottrell, the Archbishop of York, was under pressure to step down after he let priest David Tudor stay in post despite knowing he had been jailed for sex abuse.

It was also reported that Lord Carey – who was in post between 1991 and 2002 – agreed that Tudor could return to ministering in 1993.

The Telegraph can now reveal that Lord Carey contacted the Diocese of Oxford on Dec 4 to surrender his permission to officiate (PTO).

Tudor's 1988 conviction for indecent assault was subsequently quashed on a technicality after the Court of Appeal found the judge had misdirected the jury.

** The following year, the Church stopped Tudor from ministering for sexual misconduct, but the BBC revealed that, as Archbishop, Lord Carey allowed him to return only a few years later. The priest was only banned from ministering for life in October following a Church tribunal.

'Disgusting that they supported him'

On Monday, BBC's File on Four detailed how Lord Carey enabled the abusive priest to remain in the Church.

One woman, who was sexually abused by Tudor between the ages of 13 and 15 when he was a vicar and school chaplain in Redhill, Surrey, told the programme the impact the abuse had on her life was made worse by the Church's response. She said: "It's absolutely disgusting that they

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supported him, that they welcomed him back into the Church.”

The BBC has also seen leaked documents revealing that in 1996 Lord Carey agreed to remove the priest’s name from a centrally-held record of clergy who had been subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Lord Carey told the BBC he does not remember David Tudor’s name. The Church said the request was made by the Right Rev Roy Williamson, the then-Bishop of Southwark who died in 2019, and Lord Carey had agreed to it.

[<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2024/12/17/lord-carey-archbishop-surrender-license-to-minister-tudor/>]

BBC -

[<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cly2714wgdno>]

Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at houstonmckelvey@mac.com

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