

Church News Ireland



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December 19, 2024

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Image of the day

Blessing Cork's S.H.A.R.E. crib



The Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Reverend Paul Colton, the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr. Dan Boyle, and the Bishop of Cork and Ross, the Most Reverend Dr Fintan Gavin with students at the launch of Cork's Iconic S.H.A.R.E. Crib on St. Patrick Street. Photo: Gerard McCarthy

The S.H.A.R.E. Cork collection was inaugurated for the 55th year on Friday 13th December 2024 by the Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Dan Boyle, and the S.H.A.R.E. Crib on St Patrick's Street, Cork was blessed by the two bishops: Dr Paul Colton and Dr Fintan Gavin.



Almost 2,000 Students will take part at some stage in this year's S.H.A.R.E. collection in aid of older people. The collection continues throughout the streets of the city until Christmas Eve, with many of the 5th year students fasting during that time also.

S.H.A.R.E. stands for Students Harness Aid for the Relief of the Elderly, and it has 140 housing units for older people throughout Cork City and also a wide range of support services for older people

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The Chosen at City Church Bangor for Christian Aid

Thanks to everyone who came to City Church Bangor in County Down on Saturday 7 December to share a meal



together and watch an episode of The Chosen, a drama series about the life and ministry of Jesus.

Christian Aid Ireland partnered with the promoters of The Chosen to offer exclusive screenings of the Christmas episode, entitled The Shepherd, which follows the birth of Christ through the eyes of Simon, a disabled and outcast shepherd. Simon's experiences on the margins of society are similar to those of the people we work with, so we shared the story of our Christmas appeal with those who came along. You can find more info at caid.ie/Christmas

We want to thank the minister Rev Mairisine Stanfield, our representative at City Church Natalie Kelly and City Church's team of volunteers for putting together such a wonderful event. And thanks to everyone who donated and



joined our community of regular givers - we are hugely grateful for your support this Christmas.

Christmas Carols with Britannia Brass Band at All Saints in Londonderry

On Sunday evening it was All Saints Clooney in Londonderry welcomed The Britannia Brass Band, who it wouldn't be Christmas without, and also talented singer Amy Smith.

The church air was filled with Christmas Carols, instrumentals and beautiful singing. A wonderful music night and a very fitting tribute to the late Ken Goodman.

Thanks to all the musicians and everyone who attended this Christmas Extravaganza.



Students' video part of crowd funding plan to refurbish St Peter's in Beara

Southern Star - A Video created by Beara Community School students is the centrepiece of a new Go Fund Me campaign to refurbish St Peter's, the former Church of Ireland parish church in Castletownbere, as a community events centre.

St Peter's was acquired by Castletownbere Development Association (CDA) on behalf of the local community in 2017. The church was built in 1841 by the Church of Ireland. The group were able to acquire the building due to the then custodian, Reverend Paul Willoughby, who made the decision to sell the building to CDA for a smaller amount than had it been sold commercially on the proviso that it be used as a community space for the town. More at -

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[<https://www.southernstar.ie/news/students-video-part-of-crowd-funding-plan-to-refurbish-st-peters-in-beara-4315278>]



Pro Bono Choir raises charity cash with Christmas carols

Solicitors, barristers and judges in the Pro Bono Choir have raised cash for two vital Northern Ireland charities at a sold-out Christmas carol concert.

Over 400 people attended the concert in Fitzroy Presbyterian Church last week, which raised funds for Brain Injury Matters NI and The Boom Foundation.



The Lady Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, Dame Siobhan Keegan, was among distinguished guests and briefly addressed the audience.

The Pro Bono Choir is chaired by barrister Sarah Minford and solicitor Owen Williamson, assisted by a wider committee.



“Our choir is now 50 strong and we are so excited for what is in store over the next number of years,” Ms Minford wrote on LinkedIn..

Bishops from Ireland, Australia and New Zealand collaborate on Joint Lectionary Project

For more than fifty years, parishes and communities across the island of Ireland, Australia and New Zealand have listened to the scripture readings proclaimed in church from the same translations which are given in the Lectionary for Mass.

Many of these books are now in a poor state and in need of replacing. The bishops have recognised that this is an opportunity for a new edition of the Lectionary, taking advantage of a revised translation of the readings, which is both accessible and faithful to the evolving nuances of the English language and contemporary biblical scholarship.

After consultation with experts in both scripture and liturgy, and also amongst the faithful, the Revised New Jerusalem Bible was chosen as the text for the Lectionary. This translation recognises the need for the text to be proclaimed in the liturgy, to be faithful to the original biblical texts and it is sensitive to inclusivity. For the psalms in the Lectionary, the Abbey Psalms and Canticles will be used. This is a sympathetic revision of the familiar Grail Psalter and the revised text has already been adopted in several English-speaking countries.

The three Bishops' Conferences will pool their expertise and resources in this 'Joint Lectionary Project'. The editorial leadership for the project will be provided by Martin Foster,

an experienced editor who previously oversaw the preparation of the Lectionary for England and Wales. Mr Foster will work with experts from all three conferences to ensure the quality and liturgical appropriateness of the final text.

The first draft texts, the Sundays of Advent and Christmas, will be sent to bishops for review early in 2025, with the rest of the Lectionary following over the next couple of years. This 'Joint Lectionary Project' is a major collaboration and it is hoped that it will enrich the celebration of the Eucharist in parishes and communities into the future across Ireland, Australia and New Zealand.

Former MI5 chief appointed to lead search for new Archbishop of Canterbury

The Prime Minister has appointed Lord Evans of Weardale, former head of MI5, to chair the Crown Nominations Commission (CNC) responsible for selecting the next Archbishop of Canterbury.

Lord Evans spent 33 years in the Security Service and led as director general from 2007 to 2013. Since retiring, he has served as a crossbench member of the House of Lords and chaired the Committee on Standards in Public Life from 2018 to 2023.

Currently, he chairs the anti-landmine charity HALO Trust and the Public Interest Committee at KPMG UK, and is an active member of his local parish church.

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Archbishop Justin Welby announced his resignation in November 2024, following a review that criticised his failure to report abuse cases involving the late barrister John Smyth to the police in 2013.

The CNC's selection process does not accept direct applications; instead, the public is invited to submit nominations.

No shortlist will be published, and no hustings will occur before the announcement of the new Archbishop, expected in autumn 2025.

Archbishop Welby will conclude his duties on 6th January, 2025, the Feast of Epiphany.

Subsequently, the Archbishop of York will assume his official responsibilities until a successor is appointed.

Cathedral Calls

Gaudete vestments at Southwell Minster

Beautiful, bespoke rose vestments were worn for the first time at Sunday's Cathedral Eucharist.

Rose (pink) vestments are traditionally worn on the third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday) and the fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare or Mothering Sunday), symbolising hope and expectation.



The vestments were created by members of the Minster's Needlework Guild and designed by their Tutor, Emma Frith.

The designs bring together motifs associated with the Minster's history and with the Blessed Virgin Mary, its Patron.



'Times are tough, but the generosity always amazes me' - Black Santa

Belfast Telegraph - As Black Santa begins his annual Sit Out Dean Stephen Forde talks about his motivation behind the collection

On Monday morning, standing on the steps of St Anne's Cathedral with my black cloak wrapped tight against a light rain, I knew that the Belfast Black Santa Sit-out for 2024 had begun in earnest.

From now until Christmas Eve, my focus will be to reach that target of £180,000.

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On the first day of the sit-out I always feel both expectation and apprehension. I love the opportunity to meet so many people who come to make their annual gift to the Black Santa Appeal. But I also wonder: “Will we hit the target?”

Times are tough. People don't have a lot of money to spare. And yet the generosity of people always astounds me.

As this is my seventh year for the sit-out, I know that the first day follows a certain pattern. Early in the morning there is a press call, and I find myself photographed from every angle.

This year we have our brand new 'tap machine' which featured in many of the pictures. This allows people to donate to the Black Santa Appeal with a simple tap of their card.

Many people no longer carry cash, so this will be an essential way for people to make their donations. Some will tap with their phone and some will use their watch. Black Santa has definitely entered the digital age.

It is always a pleasure to welcome the Mayor of Belfast to the first day of the sit-out. This year Councillor Micky Murray made a donation and spent time with the Black Santa team.

And then there are the opportunities for television and newspaper interviews. It is no longer necessary for an interviewer to set up their camera. Everything can be done on a smart phone. And I am given time to explain the impact the Black Santa Awards can have for charities working in communities from Fermanagh and South Armagh, to Randalstown and the city of Belfast. Among these are

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charities working to prevent suicide, or working to support those who have been trafficked to Northern Ireland and who have escaped from modern slavery.

The need across the charitable sector is almost without limit. But I know that across the next nine days, through the generosity of the people of Belfast and beyond, much will be given in the spirit of Christmas, so that much more can be done across our communities in 2025.

RTÉ Christmas special from St Brigid's Cathedral Kildare



RTÉ will broadcast a major new television and radio programme called 'Christmas in Kildare', from St Brigid's Cathedral on Christmas Eve (Tuesday 24th

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December) on RTÉ One (9.25pm), RTÉ Lyric FM (7.00pm) and to a worldwide audience on RTÉ Player.

RTÉ's annual Christmas show is presented by Marty Whelan and Kildare native Celine Byrne. This year's broadcast also marks the 1,500th anniversary of the death of St Brigid, Ireland's female patron saint.

This special seasonal programme features the RTÉ Concert Orchestra conducted by Gavin Maloney, with musical guests including Bell X1's Paul Noonan, Lisa Hannigan, Rhiannon Giddens, Méav Ní Mhaolchatha with Colm Mac Con Iomaire, Kingfishr, Dulciana, and star soprano Celine Byrne.

Commenting on the programme, the Dean of Kildare, Very Rev Isobel Jackson said, "I am so delighted that RTÉ have chosen our wonderful Cathedral of St Brigid for their



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'Christmas in Kildare' broadcast. As we conclude our celebrations of Brigid 1500, we hold on to the immensely positive year with people engaging with the legacy of St Brigid and the significance of her pointing towards the light of the world, how perfectly seasonal."

Founded by St Brigid in 480 AD, her original hilltop Church of the Oak ('Cill Dara' in Irish), gave rise to the name of the town, county and diocese of Kildare. Today the 801 year old stone cathedral lies at the heart of Kildare Town. For further information on 'Christmas in Kildare' see www.rte.ie.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

'Follow the Star' Christmas trail at Dundonald

Join us on Tuesday 24th December for our Family 'Follow the Star' Christmas trail.

Download the map (or pick a copy up from the church), find the stars hidden around Moat Park and unscramble the letters to spell a Christmas phrase. Once you've worked out the answer come to the church building and tell us your answer to receive a prize and enjoy some free Christmassy treats and refreshments. The trail continues inside... meet the characters from the nativity and hear what they think of Jesus!

www.stelizabeths.church/thestar.<https://fb.me/e/2JbqVsy9t>

In the media

See separate post on this site today for -

**Mission Society and Church of Ireland Part Ways -
The Living Church**

**Irish Church Missions apology to Northern Ireland
Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry - Excerpts
from Wickipaedia**

**Newry Cathedral priest to address planning
committee over council's controversial
headquarters - Irish News**

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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