

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Happy 90th Birthday to Sister Michael**

## Image of the day

### Happy 90th Birthday to Sister Michael

St Eugene's in Derry made a special presentation last week to Sister Michael who was the Parish Sister for many years. St. Eugene's PS past pupils knew Sister Michael as both teacher and Principal.

Presenting flowers to Sister Michael on behalf of the parishioners of St. Eugene's Cathedral are Anne Marie Hickey, Sarena Hickey and Anna Mc Mahon.

This prayer was offered by the parish - Heavenly Father, we offer our gratitude for the gift of Sister Michael's life. May she be aware of the love and appreciation that surrounds her on this special day. Amen.

## People and places

### Moderator preaches at merging congregations

**Yesterday the Moderator preached in Great Victoria Street as the congregations of Great Victoria Street and Windsor are merged.**



Please give thanks for their past ministries and pray for God's blessing on this new beginning under the leadership of the Rev Ivan Steen in Belfast city centre.

## **City Centre Churches Walk on the Walls of Derry**

**The iconic City Walls is the backdrop for the city side churches Annual Christian Unity Week, as Christians of all denominations gather in a circlet of prayer on the evening of Monday, January 22nd 2024 at 7pm at First Derry Presbyterian.**

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The walk begins at First Derry on Magazine Street and will proceed in a loop taking an anticlockwise direction, that ends back where it began.

This year local religious leaders are walking the Walls together offering prayers in the direction of all our churches, schools, government offices and courts, retail, health and community services etc. Walkers will pause at stopping points on the way to pray followed by a short reflection on a passage of Scripture – taking no more than five minutes at each staging post. Each stop will focus on a different theme all of which influence the lives of people here and beyond our city and region.

The various Ministers will offer prayers for Education, Economy and environment etc. The walk will conclude in First Derry with Dean Stewart completing the celebration for Christian Unity. This will be followed by tea and biscuits.

## **Awaken series at Queen's University Catholic Chaplaincy**

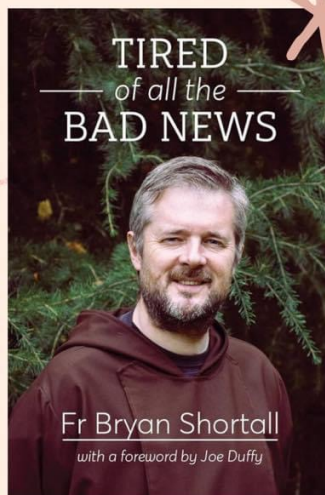
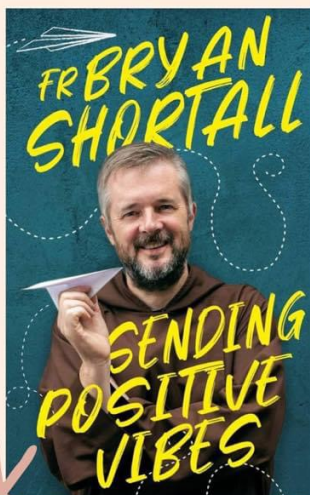
The weekly Catholic Chaplaincy night, 'Awaken,' kicked off last Wednesday. For those unfamiliar with it, 'Awaken' consists of a Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration with reflection and music at 6pm, followed by dinner and a talk, discussion or video series at 7pm.

This week, on Wednesday 17th January, Chaplaincy will be welcoming Fr Bryan Shortall OFM Cap as the guest at Awaken. Fr Bryan will speak on the theme of 'positivity' - a



**WEDNESDAY 17TH JANUARY**  
6PM: HOLY HOUR WITH REFLECTION  
7PM: DINNER AND DISCUSSION

AUTHOR OF 'SENDING  
POSITIVE VIBES' AND 'TIRED  
OF ALL THE BAD NEWS'



ALL STUDENTS  
WELCOME!

THE CATHOLIC  
CHAPLAINCY  
QUB

42 UNIVERSITY  
ROAD

fitting theme to help conquer those January blues! All students are most welcome to come along and bring friends.

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## Methodist Local Preacher in Training series

**In the second of the Local Preacher Series, meet Sharon Little a Local Preacher in Training and a member of Primacy, Bangor.**

Sharon tells us about her experience so far of training to be a Local Preacher, or as she describes, her “takeaways and wow moments of the course.”

“I came into this experience knowing I had much to learn, and I'm blown away by the hunger God has given me for study and for diving deep into His word.

A congregation member sent me a message, she said 'you look at home behind the pulpit', it was so encouraging, and it echoed how I felt...at home, following God's direction.

As a joint church moving towards a covenant church, I have been given plenty of opportunities to practice, with great support from Pastor Wilson, Rev Corrigan and Colin



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Burrows, a fellow Local Preacher in Training. That support has been so encouraging in these early days.”

For more information on the Local Preacher application process and training please visit the website <https://irishmethodist.org/ministries-local-preachers>

## In the media

### Where is fury over invisible sea border that is killing NI people? - Sunday Life

*WE'RE BOTTOM OF UK CANCER CARE LEAGUE, BUT HEALTH NOT SEEN AS SIGNIFICANT AS CONSTITUTIONAL OR CULTURAL ISSUES*

**People in Northern Ireland are second-class citizens, and it's not because of the Irish Sea border, Suzanne Greene writes, January 14, 2023.**

Shocking statistics just released by the Department of Health show that only 34% of patients here start cancer treatment within two months of an urgent GP referral. The target is 95%.

Tumours can grow rapidly in far less time. People are literally being condemned to death. When it comes to cancer care, we're bottom of the UK league.

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Perhaps a DUP which has spent years in negotiations on post-Brexit trading arrangements could put the same energy into lobbying for parity of healthcare for Northern Ireland?

Because the most important invisible border in the Irish Sea is the one which denies us access to the same life-saving treatment that people in Britain enjoy.

It's now 15 years since targets were met for cancer referrals here. The figures are released every quarter, and every quarter they're getting worse.

Kathy McAllister was diagnosed with bowel cancer in 2019. She has friends whose diagnoses were delayed for so long that their outlook changed from treatable to terminal.

“There are lots of people running out of time who can't wait,” she told the BBC. “It feels like the figures are wallpaper — on hearing them we just become numb, and we stop thinking that there are real people behind them.”

Health should be front and centre of our political agenda each and every day. It's far more urgent than green and red lanes, and all the other matters making the headlines.

The Less Survivable Cancers Taskforce also published data this week ranking Northern Ireland 30th for five-year survival for lung cancer and 29th for pancreatic cancer out of 33 countries of comparable wealth and income levels.

It's more than cancer treatment which is failing. Our emergency departments are like war zones with a sea of



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trolleys, no patient privacy, and exhausted doctors and nurses.

Getting a GP appointment feels like winning the lottery. It is increasingly challenging to find a dentist that welcomes NHS patients.

Our hospital waiting lists are twice as long as the Republic's, with the list of those waiting over a year more than four times as long.

If trends continue, Northern Ireland will soon have half a million people waiting for a hospital appointment.

Over the years loyalists have filled halls denouncing British prime ministers and making impassioned speeches that citizens won't stand idly by if their government continues to let them down.

Why aren't we doing the same over our crisis-hit NHS? We should be beating the Lambeg drum — and all others — over our rocketing waiting lists.

We put feet on the streets over issues not a fraction as important as our collapsing health service.

Thousands marched to Belfast City Hall to demand an Irish Language Act. There were all sorts of imaginative protests for an Acht na Gaelige. Why can't be put the same energy and creativity into a campaign to save lives?

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Why do we not view health as significant as constitutional and cultural issues? It affects every family in Northern Ireland.

It's our parents waiting horrendously long times for ambulances, our kids needing to go to emergency departments, ourselves terrified about what will happen if we're one of the 37 people a day diagnosed with cancer here.

I just can't understand why we are so docile. We've blocked roads and rioted over things which are trivial by comparison.

If the DUP doesn't return to Stormont imminently, then the British government must intervene. Repeating the mantra that health is a devolved issue and nothing can be done is holding the sick in Northern Ireland as political hostages.

People should not be used as pawns in a game of blackmail. A healthcare emergency should be declared with special measures initiated by London to address it.

We need money made available now to get people off waiting lists and to increase the number of acute hospital beds in particular. Funds also must be released to pay NHS workers what they deserve.

People — unionist, nationalist and other — are being forced to sit at the back of the bus on healthcare.

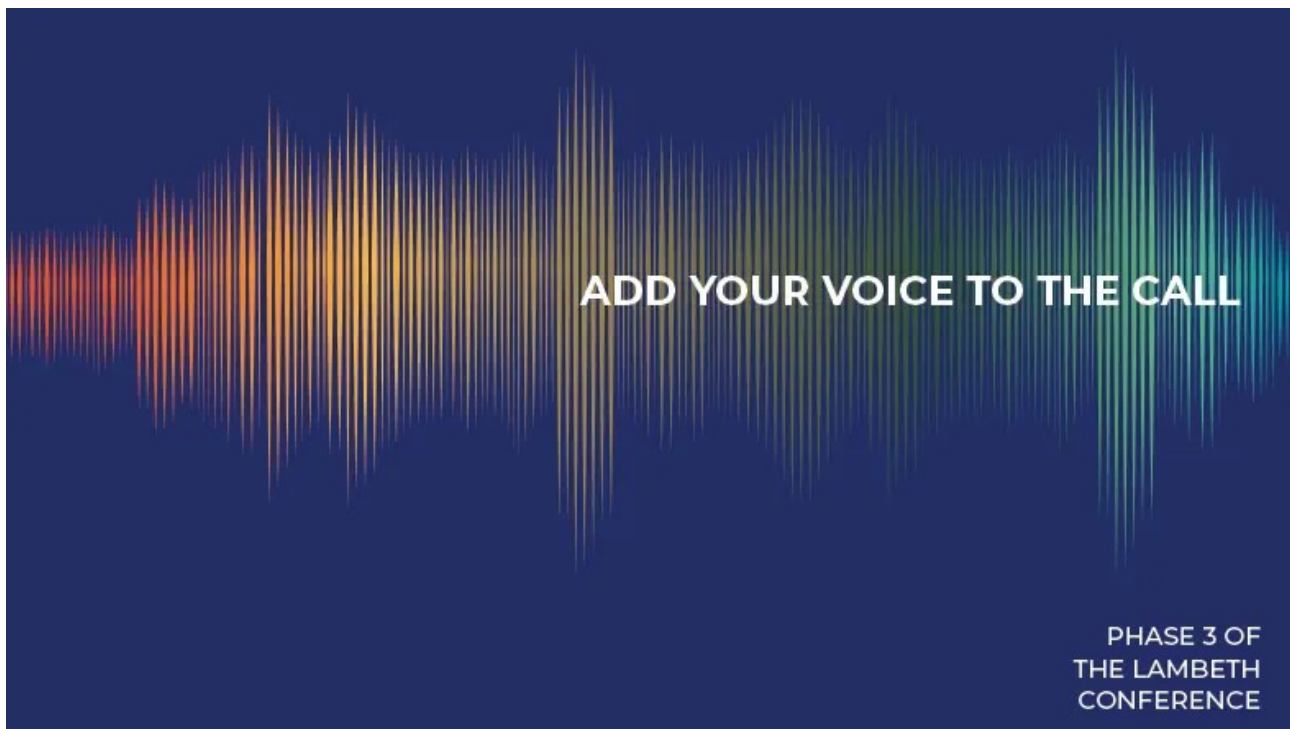
We need to get angry, and to get out there to demand the service we deserve. We must fight against our second-class citizenship, not normalise it.

# Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books



## Climate change and faith...

Members of the committee of the Inter-Faith Forum met with Dr Lorna Gold together with some Church representatives and Juanita Majury from Belfast Focalore in advance of her meetings in Belfast exploring faith responses to the climate crisis.



## Voices from across the Anglican Communion Webinar

**Voices from across the Anglican Communion were drawn together for a fascinating webinar which took place as part of Dublin and Glendalough's Lambeth4All initiative.**

The webinar gave an overview of The Lambeth Conference's Lambeth Calls as well as addressing a number of the themes of the calls.

Following an introduction by Archbishop Michael Jackson, speakers included Bishop Jo Bailey Wells, Bishop for Episcopal Ministry in the Anglican Communion; Archbishop Kay Goldsworth of the Diocese of Perth in Australia; Canon Andrew Orr from the Church of Ireland in Cork, Cloyne and Ross; Nicholas Pande, Global Coordinator of The

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Communion Forest project from Kenya; Dublin MEP Frances Fitzgerald; and Alan McAlwee of Christians Against Poverty Ireland. There were videos from the Diocese of Melbourne, which is seen as a world leader in working against violence against women, on their domestic violence programme and from the Bhambayi Project which works to build up marginalised people from Bhambayi, Inanda, one of the most disadvantaged and shunned communities in South Africa.

You can register for the next Lambeth Calls webinar, which takes place on the evening of February 7 or the morning of February 8 here

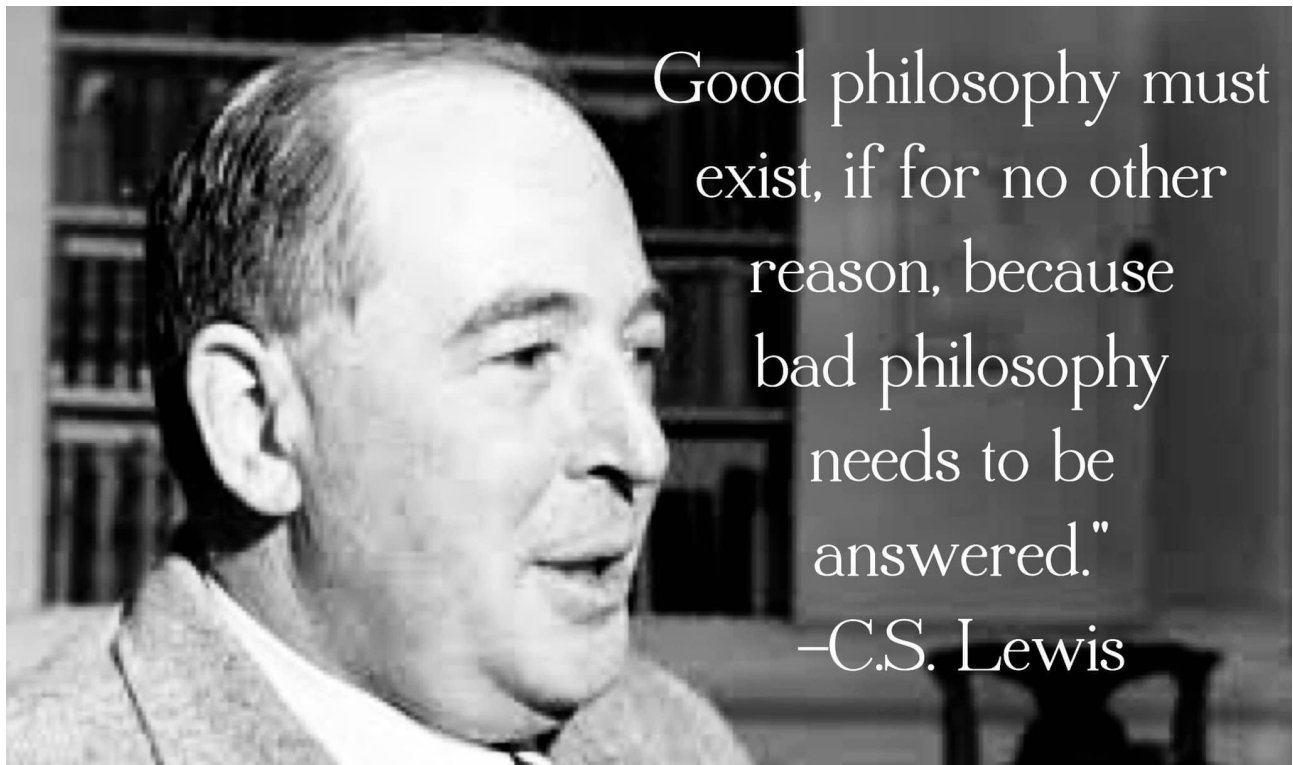
<https://www.lambethconference.org/phase-3/register-for-phase-3/>

## Perspective

### Good philosophy must exist - CS Lewis

“If all the world were Christian, it might not matter if all the world were uneducated. But, as it is, a cultural life will exist outside the church whether it exists inside or not.

To be ignorant and simple now—not to be able to meet the enemies on their own ground—would be to throw down our weapons, and to betray our uneducated brethren who have, under God, no defence but us against the intellectual attacks of the heathen. Good philosophy must exist, if for no other reason, because bad philosophy needs to be answered.



The cool intellect must work not only against the cool intellect on the other side, but against the muddy heathen mysticisms that deny intellect altogether. Most of all, perhaps, we need intimate knowledge of the past. Not that the past has any magic about it, but because we cannot study the future, and yet need something to set against the present, to remind us that the basic assumptions have been quite different in different periods and much that seems certain to the uneducated is merely temporary fashion.

A man who has lived in many places is not likely to be deceived by the local errors of his native village; the scholar has lived in many times and is therefore in some degree immune from the great cataract of nonsense that pours from the press and microphone of his own age."

- CS Lewis, "Learning In War Time".

## Poem for today

### **Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind** by William Shakespeare

Blow, blow, thou winter wind.  
Thou art not so unkind  
As man's ingratitude;  
Thy tooth is not so keen,  
Because thou art not seen,  
Although thy breath be rude.  
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:  
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:  
Then, heigh-ho, the holly!  
This life is most jolly.  
Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,  
That dost not bite so nigh  
As benefits forgot:  
Though thou the waters warp,  
Thy sting is not so sharp  
As friend remember'd not.  
Heigh-ho! Sing

As You Like It (Act II, Scene 7)

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

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