

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – St Mary's Cathedral, Tuam

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St Mary's Cathedral, Tuam

This is a very very impressive Hiberno-Romanesque arch in Tuam's Protestant Cathedral. This red sandstone chancel arch dates to the 12th century. The largest extant example from this era in Ireland.

It is the only remaining part of the original cathedral built at this site during the reign of Turlough O'Connor (1088 - 1156), High King of Ireland. It was destroyed by fire in 1184.

The next cathedral was begun in the 14th century, and this beautiful arch was incorporated into the new build, becoming the main entrance to the building and thus exposed to the elements on one side. It was not until the 19th century that it became part of the chancel once again.

Amazingly there is no keystone in this arch, the supporting columns are slightly inclined to take the enormous weight of the structure. This is an absolutely beautiful piece of architecture and is well worth a visit. PC

People and places

Save the Children NI concern about summer pressures

“We’ve been speaking to parents here about summer pressures:

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- ◆ 9 out of 10 low income families have cut back on essential spending for themselves to provide for their kids
- ◆ 41% are choosing between food & activities
- ◆ 54% worry kids will be lonely because they're missing out

“It’s why we’re so passionate about our Summer of Play programme - in NI we’ve given £20k to community organisations to create activities, so hundreds of children who might otherwise miss out get to be part of fun & connective summer experiences!”

Ordination congratulations



Patrick Comerford with Avril Bennett and Tim Close were made deacons on June 25, 2000;

Roy Byrne was ordained priest that afternoon; by Archbishop Walton Empey in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin



Russia pulling out of grain deal will put countless more innocent people at risk

Noreen Gumbo, Trocaire's Head of Humanitarian Programmes, says the potential impact of Russia's decision to exit the Ukraine grain deal. "Ukraine and Russia produce 30% of the worlds wheat.. we need to rethink how we feed the world "

Christian Aid - Russia pulling out of the grain deal is a body blow to Ukraine's grain exports. If a full-scale invasion of Ukraine wasn't enough, preventing ships reaching places like Africa and the Mediterranean will put countless more innocent people at risk.

While food prices have come down from their peak, more countries are still falling further into hunger due to insecurity, climate change and the rising cost of living.



Climate change is an issue of poverty, conflict and injustice. Anglicans around the world are responding as their faith calls them to care for creation and their neighbours.

The loss of millions of tonnes of these key staples from the Black Sea will further push countries closer to famine, especially countries such as South Sudan where almost two-thirds of the population are food insecure.

Antonio Gutierrez, Secretary General of the UN said - I deeply regret Russia's decision to terminate the implementation of the Black Sea Initiative, which has been a lifeline for global food security in a troubled world. Hundreds of millions facing hunger and consumers confronting a global cost-of-living crisis will pay the price.

"Now that the deal is off the table, it is even more urgent to rethink how to feed the world", said Oxfam
It's time to:

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Stop this unhealthy reliance on food imports - Diversify production - Invest in small-scale farmers in poorer countries.



Fight Climate Change petition

Christian Aid Scotland has written to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to ask the UK to maintain its commitment to help poorer countries fight climate change. The public can also make their voices heard by signing a petition at:
<https://ow.ly/1iin50Pe4xC>

Appointment to Tullylish

The Bishop of Down & Dromore has appointed Revd Robert Smyth as Minister-in-Charge of the Parish of Tullylish.



Robert was ordained in 2015 and following his deacon year in Kilkeel, was appointed Diocesan Curate with special responsibility for the parish of Annalong. Following this he served in a voluntary role at Lambeg parish with preaching and leading duties for its church plant at Hilden. Since January 2022 he has served in All Saints' Tullylish, providing Sunday cover during the Rector's illness and subsequent retirement.

Speaking of his appointment Robert said, "I am humbled and honoured to be appointed as minister in charge for Tullylish, a parish we have considered our spiritual home for 18 months. This new chapter provides continuity and in one sense nothing will change, we will continue to preach the word, sing the praises and pray the promises.

"As we look to our future in Tullylish, we are reminded of the final words of Christ, prior to His ascension. They contain the confirmation that He 'has been given all authority in heaven and on earth,' followed by the command for us 'to make disciples of all nations baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.' By His

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grace, we will continue to preach and teach faithfully all that He has commanded us, strive to make His name known to all by making disciples and lovingly pastor all of His people.”

Robert has been married to Pamela for 35 years, they have 2 married daughters, two grandchildren and a third arriving soon. In his spare time Robert enjoys playing in brass bands, following the fortunes of the Northern Ireland football team and endeavouring to keep a 1972 VW Camper roadworthy.

News reports

Dogs among the dog collars at Canterbury

All human visitors are already welcome through its doors – and now dogs too are being allowed inside Canterbury Cathedral.

The seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, has joined a growing number of cathedrals welcoming faithful four-legged companions.

Dogs are being allowed in as part of an effort to develop “community and connection” and to act as an “ice breaker” for churchgoers. It is one of three cathedrals holding trial schemes this summer in a move that may become permanent.

Cathedral deans say the initiatives at Canterbury, Worcester and Chichester cathedrals will help to make their buildings “more welcoming”.

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The relaxation of the rules comes amid ongoing decline in church congregation numbers, with total average attendance for Sunday services having fallen from 707,100 in 2019 to 509,200 in 2021 and as cathedrals find increasingly controversial ways to entice visitors through their doors.

In 2019, Norwich Cathedral installed a 55ft helter skelter to allow visitors a closer look at the ceiling. In the same year, Rochester Cathedral replaced its central aisle with a crazy golf pitch. John Paul Hoskins, canon and precentor at Worcester Cathedral, which began its trial on Monday said



The Illegal Migration Bill has passed into law after the Archbishop of Canterbury withdrew his amendment because of a lack of government support during the "ping pong" stage between the Houses of Lords and Commons

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the scheme will run until they have enough feedback to decide whether or not it should become permanent. Canon Hoskins, who is also the owner of border terriers Rosie and Wellington, said: “The idea to let dogs in emerged from lots of conversations we’ve been having, because we’re always thinking about how to make the cathedral more welcoming.

“We have a very well supported pet blessing service, and particularly over the summer lots and lots of visitors came and, because some were leaving their dogs at the door, we wanted to find ways of being more inclusive and welcoming.” Worcester is already known as a pet-friendly space, having held annual pet blessing ceremonies since 2013.

However, Canon Hoskins acknowledged the news was not popular with all members of the congregation. “I think the initial reaction has been positive and broadly welcomed. Understandably there are people who have expressed some anxiety who are nervous around dogs and we hear that.

“I used to be nervous around dogs, so I can understand that slight nervousness, but you would expect owners to keep your dog under control.”

The newly drafted Worcester dog policy states any chewing, scratching or damaging the buildings is prohibited, with owners asked to ensure their animals do not approach other visitors who may be uncomfortable or allergic. Barking that can be heard during services could result in disciplinary measures being taken to protect “others’ rights to quiet”, it adds.

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Fifteen of the 42 cathedrals in England and Wales already allow dogs inside their buildings during general visiting hours, with guide dogs permitted in all circumstances. Among those that already have dog-friendly policies are Lincoln, Bristol, Newcastle, Sheffield, Salisbury and Chester.

As autonomously run bodies, cathedrals are responsible for their own policies regarding animals. A Church of England spokesman said it does not have a central policy on dogs, adding that there is no theological objection or reason against allowing dogs in churches or cathedrals.



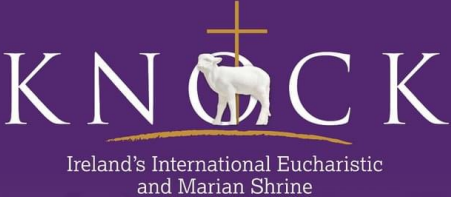
Pope's visit to Mongolia will thrill tiny Catholic community, cardinal says

The head of one of the world's smallest national Catholic communities - Mongolia with 1,450 members - said on Monday that Pope Francis' visit there will show how far it has come since locals watched "these funny foreigners praying".

Cardinal Giorgio Marengo, an Italian who administers the Church in the vast country that borders China and Russia, also said the pope's Aug. 31-Sept. 4 visit will be a balm to a people who suffered "70 years of harsh communist rule" until the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

"The reaction of both the Catholic community and the larger local community was of great wonder and joy and something thrilling. It's gradually becoming more evident how important and meaningful this visit will be," he said at a conference.

Francis, who enjoys visiting places where Catholics are a minority, will spend all of his time in Mongolia in Ulaanbaatar, capital of the vast country with fewer Catholics than most parish churches in many places. The smallest of Mongolia's nine parishes has only 30 members.



For further information see
www.knockshrine.ie
Tel: 094 9388100

Grandparents Pilgrimage to Knock Shrine

Sunday
July 23rd, 2023



Schedule of Ceremonies

- 2.00pm: **Rosary**
- 2.30pm: **Anointing of the Sick at Knock Basilica**
- 3.00pm: **Concelebrated Mass at Knock Basilica followed by Benediction & Rosary Procession**

Explore Knock Shrine:

- Exposition in Blessed Sacrament Chapel
- Self-Guided Audio Tours available
- Guided Prayer Sessions in the Prayer Centre
- 100 acres of landscaped gardens to explore
- Resources to enrich and inspire at Knock Bookshop

Highlights include:

- VISIT THE APPARITION CHAPEL
- SEE THE APPARITION MOSAIC
- VISIT KNOCK MUSEUM (Admission Free)

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Marengo has been a missionary in Mongolia for more than 20 years and recalled his first years.

"We put up two gers," he said, using the Mongolian word for a tent-like portable circular dwelling.

"One for prayer and one for activities with children ... the people of the neighbourhood started entering and watching these funny foreigners who were praying (in Mongolian)."

"They told us 'we felt there was something special in this ger,'" he said.

Marengo would not be drawn on the political significance of the trip, referring reporters to Vatican diplomats.

The country of about 3.3 million people is strategically significant for the Roman Catholic Church because of its proximity to China, where the Vatican is trying to improve the situation of Catholics.

Mongolia, which was part of China until 1921, has good relations with Beijing. Diplomats say it could be used as an intermediary with China.

About 60% of Mongolians identify as religious. Among those, 87.1% are Buddhist, 5.4% Muslim, 4.2% Shamanist, 2.2% Christian and 1.1% followers of other religions, according to the U.S. State Department.

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In the media

Demand for clarity over €3.5m funds as congregation fears for crumbling Dockers' Church in Dublin

Independent.ie - Church authorities are facing calls for greater transparency around the handling of funds earmarked for the redevelopment of a chapel in Dublin city centre.

City Quay Church, on the south side of the Liffey opposite the Custom House, has fallen into a state of disrepair despite receiving €3.5m in compensation from a developer four years ago due to loss of light from surrounding buildings.

Some of the funding was used for work outside the so-called Dockers' Church and on a nearby school.

Planning permission was granted in 2020 for work inside the church. A contractor was also appointed but works were halted at the eleventh hour and never started.

Parishioners are unhappy with its condition and have complained about plaster peeling from the walls. They fear for the church's future and want work to begin as soon as possible to preserve it.

The area has had significant development with new office blocks surrounding the chapel.

Independent councillor Mannix Flynn is bringing forward a motion to Dublin City Council.

He is calling for the church to be transparent about any financial contributions made in the last 15 years for upkeep and to address disadvantage in the area.

[<https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/demand-for-clarity-over-35m-funds-as-congregation-fears-for-crumbing-dockers-church-in-dublin/a1651026836.html>]

United Methodist Church loses more than 6,000 churches over sexual ethics

The Christian Institute - More than 6,000 churches in the US are expected to leave the United Methodist Church (UMC) over moves away from biblical sexual ethics.

In 2019, the UMC gave congregations a four-year window to depart as pressure grew to allow homosexual clergy and same-sex weddings.

Although church law still officially forbids the weddings or ordinations of “self-avowed, practicing homosexuals”, the denomination appointed its first bishop in a same-sex marriage in 2016 and recently appointed Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth, who is also in a same-sex marriage.

Thousands

Some remaining members of the denomination are expected to propose abandoning biblical sexual ethics at the next General Conference in 2024. According to United Methodist News, 4,172 congregations have already been granted permission to leave this year – over 170 per cent higher than 2022.



The majority are joining the Global Methodist Church, while others are remaining independent or becoming part of other denominations. More at -

<https://www.christian.org.uk/news/united-methodist-church-loses-more-than-6000-churches-over-sexual-ethics/>

New national children's hospital could "slip further"

Irish Times - The timeline for the completion of the new national children's hospital could "slip further" after another breakdown in communication between the board and builders, while a squad of external investigators were shut out of the site for six weeks, reports Jennifer Bray

A BAM company spokesman said the firm "has fully engaged with the board and its advisers throughout the new children's hospital project and will continue to do so in order to deliver a world-class facility for Ireland as quickly as possible".

A hospital development board spokeswoman said it has "nothing to add beyond what is stated in the minutes".

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Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books



Holy Imagination: poetry and authority in the Bible
Judy Fentress-Williams

St Paul's Cathedral Online event
Premieres online on Tuesday 12th September, 7-7.45pm

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What does it mean to bring our imaginations to reading the Bible?

Professor Judy Fentress-Williams says the Bible is there to guide us, challenge us, confuse us, inspire us, and that bringing our honest questions to the text can lead us into deeper truths and a deeper relationship with God.

Biblical scholars Judy Fentress-Williams and Paula Gooder talk about the beautiful, inspiring and difficult parts of the Bible, why we should read it like poetry, and what Biblical authority really means.

Dr Judy Fentress-Williams is Professor of Old Testament at Virginia Theological Seminary. Her latest book is *_Holy Imagination: A Literary and Theological Introduction to the Whole Bible_*.

Dr Paula Gooder is Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral, a distinguished New Testament scholar and the author of numerous popular and academic books.

The event is free, but if you are able to make a donation to the continuing learning programme at St Paul's Cathedral when you register for the event we would be very grateful.

We are very grateful to [Benefact Trust] for their generous support of this programme.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/holy-imagination-poetry-and-authority-in-the-bible-tickets-673050079907?aff=oddtcreator>

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Brides of Christ - Women and monasticism in medieval and early modern Ireland

Martin Browne
OSB, Tracy
Collins, Bronagh
McShane &
Colmán Ó
Clabaigh OSB,
editors

On sale soon but
available for pre-
order now!

Glenstal Abbey
Four Courts Press

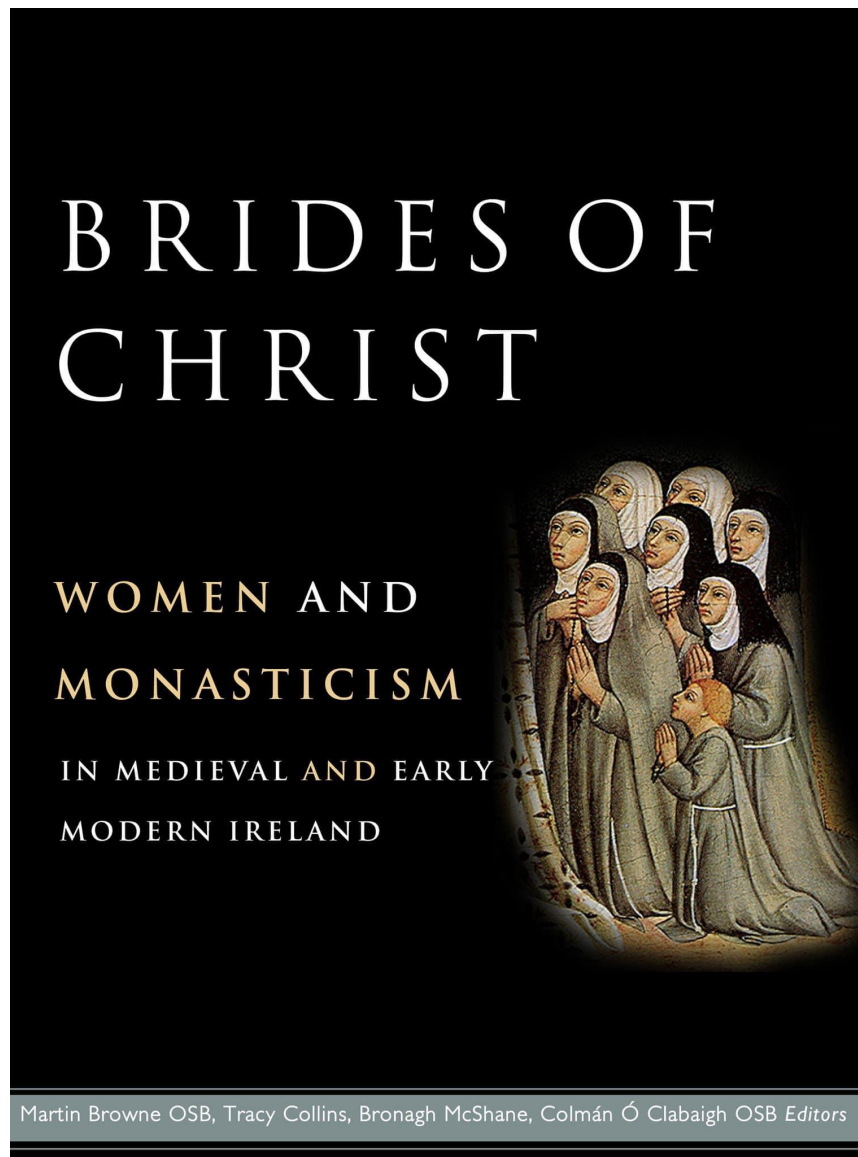
[https://www.fourcourtspress.ie/books/2022/brides-of-christ/
contents](https://www.fourcourtspress.ie/books/2022/brides-of-christ/contents)

Child poverty - Play it by Ear video and a powerful article

The Council on Social Responsibility of the Methodist Church asked Play it by Ear to write a monologue on the subject of child poverty. You can check out the video below and a powerful article on the topic by clicking the link

bit.ly/3Zy8mRz

[Church News Ireland](#)





BELFAST CATHEDRAL

THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. ANNE

BILLY ADAIR MEMORIAL ORGAN SCHOLARSHIP for 2023-2024

Here at Belfast Cathedral we have an exciting new opportunity for a young musician to join our ever-growing Music Department in a thriving Cathedral community, with applications now being sought for the position of Billy Adair Memorial Organ Scholar commencing in **September 2023**.

The post holder will:

- ◆ Receive tuition/training in all aspects of liturgical music, including organ accompaniment, solo performance and choral conducting.
- ◆ Be present at the organ console during rehearsals/services to assist and observe.
- ◆ Assist with the maintenance of the Cathedral Choir library.
- ◆ Receive free organ lessons throughout the academic year, and a small bursary of £1,800.

Ideally, the successful candidate will:

- ◆ Currently be studying, or intending to study, the organ.
- ◆ Have reached a level of keyboard proficiency equivalent to Grade 5.
- ◆ Have an understanding/interest in the music and liturgy of the Anglican Communion.

For further information, please contact the Master of Music, Mr Jack Wilson, at jackwilson@belfastcathedral.org Applications close **Friday 11th August 2023**.

It is with our sincerest thanks to the family of the late Billy Adair (1921-2023) for their kind generosity in endowing this Scholarship.

Choristers' Confession.

Almighty and most merciful Choirmaster,
We have erred and strayed from thy beat like lost sheep.
We have followed too much the intonation and tempi of our own hearts
We have offended against thy dynamic markings,
We have left unsung the notes we ought to have sung,
And have sung the notes we ought not to have sung,
And there is no breath in us.
But thou, O Choirmaster, have mercy on us, miserable singers,
Succour the chorally challenged,
Restore them that need extra note bashing,
Spare thou them without pencils.
Pardon our mistakes,
And have faith that we will follow thy directions,
And sing together in perfect harmony.

Amen

[from the choir vestry in Lichfield Cathedral

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
