

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Kyiv Symphony Orchestra at Kirchentag

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Kyiv Symphony Orchestra at Kirchentag

Kyiv Symphony Orchestra in the wonderful surroundings of the Meistersingerhalle in Nuremberg when over 100,000 people from Germany and beyond shared five days of exploring what it might mean when we read “Now is the time!” in the Gospel of Mark. Sarah Lane Cawte, a member of British Kirchentag Committee, reflects on the 38th gathering in June 2023. See News reports in today’s CNI

People and places



Backpacking in Holy Trinity, Woodburn

Young people took part in a holiday club - “We are backpacking in Northern Ireland with God. Having fun, enjoying stories, singing, making crafts and some food”.



Muckamore Mothers' Union member 101st birthday

Indoor member of St Jude's, Muckamore Mothers' Union, Mrs Jean Jackson last week celebrated her 101st birthday.

Jean was visited earlier in the week by Irene Paget, Branch Leader and conveyed greetings from all her friends in the Grouped Parish and the local Mothers' Union branches.

Hunger in Northern Ireland report

Trussell Trust Northern Ireland recently released its Hunger in

Northern Ireland report. It finds that one in six people face hunger across NI, with women, disabled people, carers, parents, among groups disproportionately at risk.

Read the report here [➔ bit.ly/3r6zag1](https://bit.ly/3r6zag1)

Kandle clergy golf

Golfing clergy of Kildare and Leighlin ("Kandle") recently had a great days sport at Athy Golf Club. A number of Kiltegan



Fathers and Irish Spartans joined the diocesan clergy. Bishop Denis Nulty was delighted to present the Trophy this year to Bishop Dempsey

Inspiring presentation from ‘Lighten Our Darkness’

Members of the General Synod were inspired by a multi-faceted dramatic and musical presentation on improving our care for Creation.

It was performed by the Lighten Our Darkness by Numbers youth group from Mullingar Union of Parishes.

‘Lighten Our Darkness by Numbers’ takes its name from the many references in Scripture to living in the light in following Jesus and the journey that people took in the Book of Numbers to the Promised Land – it seeks to build a

movement of Christians who are encouraged to make an environmental difference in the world around them.

Part of this vision is for all 900 churchyards in the Church of Ireland – God’s gardens of hope – to become oases for biodiversity and also to challenge inaction (and sometimes bewilderment) at the scale of the current challenges which face us due to climate change. As one of the young speakers from the front explained, this is a vision “to repair God’s world and to create awareness of what our human actions are doing which are destructive” and to be helpful in building momentum to change.

In keeping with this theme, the young people involved in the movement are seeking to become ‘sowers’ who protect the natural world, use God’s gift of energy wisely, and not to waste our daily bread: “It is to light the light that fans the flame that glows inside out hearts again.” It’s a matter of developing daily habits and personal priorities that are not damaging for our natural world.

In biblical terms, the Flood represented God’s response to a “me–focused and I–centred” view of the world and the Covenant with Noah shows the importance and significance of relationships, including with the natural world. Jacob’s wrestling with God showed that he didn’t understand the meaning of enough and using his gift of life in a way that was non–destructive – a parallel with consumerism today.

After outlining several examples of good responses to climate change – notably the Great Green Wall and the creativity of new urban– design in Singapore – the group presented three foundations for positive change: giving and

not taking; real liberty rather than a free-for-all culture; and Christian virtues built on strong character to enable us to do the right thing.

By closing with ‘This Little Light of Mine’, in which synod members joined in singing, the group finished on a positive note to inspire others to find new ways to change our ways of life for the benefit of the natural world and people most affected by global warming.

News reports

King will mark anniversary of his accession privately at Balmoral

King Charles will mark the first anniversary of his accession privately in Scotland, it is understood.

His Majesty, 74, is expected to spend September 8 in quiet reflection on the Balmoral estate, surrounded by the sweeping scenery of Elizabeth II’s beloved Highlands.

It is a place that will be forever associated with the late Queen. Balmoral was her “happy place” and where she spent the final weeks before her death aged 96. The anniversary will come midway through the King’s annual break in Scotland, when he will continue royal tradition by gathering the wider family for countryside walks, grouse shooting, fishing and picnics.

This summer will be particularly poignant as they reflect on the same period last year and the final weeks they spent with the late Queen, by then very frail but stoically ploughing on with her constitutional duties, saying goodbye to one prime minister, Boris Johnson, and ushering in his successor, Liz Truss.

The King is expected to head north at the beginning of August, staying first at the Castle of Mey, the home that once belonged to his late grandmother, Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

As is tradition, he is expected to attend the Mey Highland Games in Caithness on August 5 before travelling to Birkhall, his private home on the Balmoral estate.

Most members of the family will gather at Balmoral at some point after it closes to the public on August 16 and the King will host the Rishi Sunak, the Prime Minister, Humza Yousaf, the First Minister, and various private guests.

The King is expected to attend the Braemar Games on September 2 and will spend part of the holiday at Balmoral Castle.

He will remain in Scotland until the beginning of October, interspersing his break with occasional engagements locally and further afield.

By marking his accession day where his mother died, he will follow in her footsteps. The late Queen almost always spent her accession day, February 6, at Sandringham, where her

father, George VI, died peacefully in his sleep in 1952 after suffering from lung cancer.

Kirchentag - Jetzt ist die Zeit! (Now is the Time!)

Sarah Lane Cawte, a member of British Kirchentag Committee, reflects on the 38th gathering in June 2023.

Just over a month ago, I was setting off for Nürnberg (Nuremberg), in Bavaria to join over 100,000 other people from Germany and beyond in five days of exploring what it might mean when we read “Now is the time!” in the Gospel of Mark (or, in some translations “the time is fulfilled” – Mark 1.15).

I continue to reflect on the – at times, overwhelming – experiences of those days.

With over 2000 events and many more informal “happenings”, it was incredibly hard to decide where to be at any one time. The first evening presented the most straightforward set of choices, with two opening services – one in simple German – in large public squares in the city centre, and each of those was attended by thousands of people.

However, before the Kirchentag officially began there was, as every time, an opening act of remembrance, recognising the origins of the Kirchentag as a place of reconciliation for divided churches in a country that was only just beginning to come to terms with its past.

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Sarah Lane Cawte, a member of British Kirchentag Committee

The Abend der Begegnung (Evening of Encounters) was a chance for the churches in the region to welcome guests from near and far, with food, culinary delights and entertainment. The Bavarian bagpipe band, complete with kilts and sporrans, drew a lot of interest!

As I look through the programme again now, I'm conscious of how much I didn't see or experience, but I'll mention some of my highlights.

Firstly, the brilliant Bible study led by Rev Dr Susan Durber, a URC minister, and current European President of the World Council of Churches. Exploring Luke 17.20-25, Susan

helped a church full of people to think in new ways about the Kingdom of God.

By way of contrast, I joined a tour, with the theme of “Difficult Memorials”, visiting the former Nazi party rally grounds and congress hall. The Mayor of Nürnberg greeted us and talked about the problems of dealing with memorials that have such negative histories and the dilemmas about preserving them or demolishing them. Linking with the Kirchentag theme, the question remains about when is the right time to decide.

Finally, I’d like to mention the superb concert by the Kyiv Symphony Orchestra in the wonderful surroundings of the Meistersingerhalle (I do love long German words!). Musically it was wonderful, and the prolonged standing ovation was an expression of solidarity with this displaced orchestra, acting as ambassadors for a war-torn country.

In the media

Machete-armed youth robs Aled Jones of £17,000 Rolex

Aled Jones was said to have been specifically targeted by the robber

Daily Telegraph -Aled Jones was left “shaken” after being robbed of his £17,000 Rolex watch by a machete-wielding teenager who confronted him in front of his son.

The presenter of BBC's Songs of Praise was targeted in broad daylight while walking in Chiswick, west London, with 18-year-old Lucas, earlier this month.

Jones was unharmed after handing over his Rolex Daytona and called police who later charged a 16-year-old boy with the July 7 robbery.

The mugging bears the hallmark of a "Rolex Ripper" theft in which wealthy individuals are targeted for their expensive watches by robbers or gangs often armed with weapons.

"Aled was totally shocked as it came out of nowhere and all happened so fast," a source told The Sun, which first reported the incident.



Here's a strange fact about Croagh Patrick..

Irish Times - Fintan O'Toole writes - Neither pilgrims nor any other visitor has any right to walk that punishing path up to

the summit of Croagh Patrick. In principle, the climb could be stopped and the path blocked

Secretary of State refuses to retract inaccurate sea border claim after misleading the public

Belfast Telegraph - Chris Heaton-Harris refuses to apologise after saying movement of plants would be simple

Four months ago, Northern Ireland Secretary of State Chris Heaton-Harris told the Belfast Telegraph that the Windsor Framework would end the ban on certain plants being brought into Northern Ireland from Great Britain. That was wrong. This newspaper established that hundreds of British-grown plants remained banned from crossing the Irish Sea – even though plants from thousands of miles away in southern Europe can arrive freely. We asked the Northern Ireland Office if Mr Heaton-Harris would clarify what he said but it simply ignored the question. Today, the Belfast Telegraph asked the Secretary of State to address the issue personally. This is what he said.

https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/video-news/sam-mcbride-challenges-secretary-of-state-over-inaccurate-claim-about-irish-sea-border/a307883352.html?utm_source=taboolaExploreMore&utm_medium=Dark%20Social

SamMcBride - Secretary of State Chris Heaton-Harris misled Belfast Telegraph readers on the implications of the Windsor Framework for the Irish Sea border. I challenged him about that today but he responded dismissively, refusing to clarify or retract his untrue words.

Pay at -

https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/secretary-of-state-refuses-to-retract-inaccurate-sea-border-claim-after-misleading-the-public/a2104027830.html?_=123



Autistic doctors are a ‘hidden minority’, new study shows, with nearly a quarter attempting suicide and almost half self-harming

Autistic doctors are a “hidden minority” in hospitals and other health settings, according to an Irish hospital consultant whose new groundbreaking study has revealed their mental struggles.

Independent.ie - Dr Mary Doherty, an anaesthetist in Our Lady’s Hospital Navan, who herself was only diagnosed with autism 10 years ago, discovered on average the doctors surveyed only had their autism confirmed in their mid-30s but many are not disclosing their condition.

Dr Doherty, a founder of Autistic Doctors International, is a senior author of the first study of autistic doctors led by Brighton and Sussex Medical School and Thomas Jefferson University, USA.

It found a quarter of the autistic doctors in the survey across different countries had attempted suicide, and more than three-quarters considered it. Nearly half had also engaged in self-harm.

“Autistic doctors are a hidden minority in the medical workforce, and the range of specialties in Autistic Doctors International challenges autistic stereotypes. General practitioners are the largest subgroup, followed by psychiatrists,” said Dr Doherty.

<https://www.independent.ie/irish-news/autistic-doctors-are-a-hidden-minority-new-study-shows-with-nearly-a-quarter-attempting-suicide-and-almost-half-self-harming/a183746410.html>

Why a US-style megachurch is thriving in rural Northern Ireland

Financial Times - Róisín Lanigan visits Green Pastures, an evangelical church run by a scion of the Wrightbus family

Green Pastures is an evangelical megachurch situated on a sprawling 97-acre plot just off the motorway outside Ballymena. First opened on a smaller site in 2007, it now boasts more than 1,000 members. It was founded by Jeff Wright, scion of a bus manufacturing family (his father and grandfather founded Wrightbus in 1946). He told The Irish Times that he awoke one day to discover God had a

question for him: “Do you love me more than these buses?”
The answer was yes. Subscription -

[<https://www.ft.com/content/5df8e43f-846b-43de-80b3-d324639504fd>]

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Choral Evensong - Belfast via Texas

At 5.30pm on Wednesday 26th July, 2023, the Choir of Christ Church Cathedral, Houston, Texas will sing Choral Evensong at St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast.

The music for this Evensong will include the Preces and Responses by Bernard Rose, and with an emphasis on American composers, the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis will be “An Evening Service in A” by Stephen Caracciolo, and the Anthem, “Pilgrim’s Hymns” by Stephen Paulus.

Lunchtime Organ Recital Cork - Aleksandr Nisse

Friday, 18 August 2023, 1.10pm. St Fin Barre’s Cathedral, Cork

Aleksandr Nisse is an organist and composer of Russian (St. Petersburg) and French (Paris) descent. Aleksandr spent his childhood years growing up in Hamburg and in the family ancestral home in Normandy, France. As a child Aleksandr was influenced by the legendary blind organist

Helmut Walcha, who was his father's teacher, and by his aunt Danielle Salvignol-Nisse, a student of Jean Langlais and Gaston Litaize. Having studied piano with Valery Krol, Aleksandr went on to study organ with Susan Landale in Paris and continued his keyboard studies with Louis Robilliard at the Conservatoire National de Region de Lyon, where he was unanimously awarded "Premier Prix de Perfectionnement" with distinction. A scholarship for postgraduate studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London followed where he studied under Nicolas Kynaston and Lionel Rogg.

He regularly performs concerts in Ireland, Switzerland, France and Germany and succeeded in obtaining an award from TU Dublin for a PhD in composition under the supervision of Prof. Gráinne Mulvey. His research area lies in the application of the exact partial pitches of the harmonic series. He has held positions in Terenure College, St Andrew's Church Westland Row, Whitefriar Street Dublin and has recently been appointed as Titular Organist at St Mary's Pro-Cathedral Dublin. His recent recording, The Ascension, on the world-famous Selby Abbey organ, received 4 stars in the BBC Music Magazine and 5 stars in the Choir and Organ magazine.

As a composer he was commissioned in 2019 by the Hochschule der Künste Bern, Switzerland to write an Irish based piece for voice, strings and wind dynamical organ and dancers. Entitled Aiséirí this piece was performed as part of a dance production in Bern Minster in June 2019. His most recent piece NOTINTUNE was commissioned by the Crash Ensemble. A reflection on the impact of digital devices on society, the piece explores what happens when

humans, distracted and out of tune with their natural selves and surroundings, lose empathy, a quality without which it is suggested our human civilization might cease to exist.

Benefact Trust

If you're planning a church or charity project, why not see if you're eligible for one of their five open grants programmes?
<https://bit.ly/404UGxn>

Brothers in Arms – Ignatian Camino book

Five hundred years after Saint Ignatius Loyola walked from Loyola to Manresa in Spain, Jesuit priest Brendan McManus and his new-found friend, Dubliner James Fullam, set out to retrace Ignatius's steps on the newly established Ignatian Camino.

Brothers in Arms (Messenger Publications) » is the story of two pilgrims, one saint, totally unexpected adventures, and finding the freedom to follow the path God has revealed.

The book by best-selling author Brendan McManus SJ with James Fullam is part travelogue, part Camino-prep for seasoned and unseasoned pilgrims alike, and part hands-on guide to the basics of Ignatian spirituality.

Referring to the pilgrimage he undertook with James, Brendan writes in the introduction:

“Though we didn't explicitly plan it, we ended up doing a version of the Spiritual Exercises together along the way. This was very appropriate on the Ignatian Camino and especially during the Ignatian 500th anniversary year.

Two Men, A Camino And A Heatwave...

Brothers in Arms

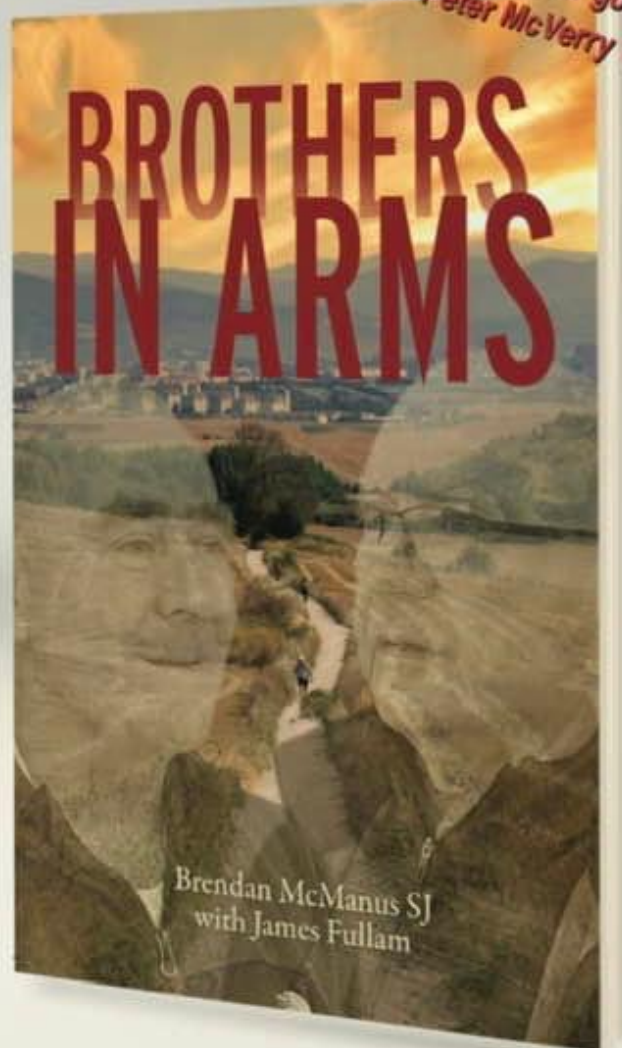
Brendan McManus SJ

€12.95/£11.95

Feel the heat and taste the dust in Brendan McManus SJ's evocative tale of two people struggling to complete the Ignatian Camino pilgrimage during an unprecedented heatwave. Despite exhaustion, dehydration and other unexpected hurdles, they shared a mutual spiritual quest and along the way forged a strong emotional relationship.

'I absolutely loved this book – the reflections, the songs, the stories of people met along the way. I've no doubt it will help many people make the right choices along their chosen path in life.'

Patricia McCann, Playwright and author of *Bring Me Back Alive*



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There is a long tradition of adapting the Exercises for times, places and persons, known as Annotation 19, and nowhere was this more apt than on this walking pilgrimage, which necessarily involved sharing life and faith.”

Brendan continues:

“What was providential was the way life threw up situations that the Exercises spoke to and about which they provided some wisdom. The result was an ongoing conversation about life and faith, shaped by the experience of Ignatius, which became this book.”

On their journey Brendan and James face exhaustion, dehydration, intense heat, capricious bus drivers and unexpected losses, as well as the challenge of getting to know and trust one another.

Using tools developed by Ignatius – discernment, consolation and desolation, the Examen, agere contra – Brendan and James overcome their challenges together. Guided by the Spirit, they follow in the steps of Ignatius, deepening their trust in one another and in God.

The book includes eleven chapters dealing with topics such as ‘the sound of silence’, ‘dealing with desolation’, ‘rescued by nuns’, and ‘a meeting of minds and hearts’.

Referring to their encounter with nuns in chapter nine, Brendan writes:

“After we had been there for a couple of long hours, James was growing disconsolate, although I was still hopeful and

praying hard for some assistance. Then I saw some nuns in full habits alighting from a minibus.

Inside, I approached them for a lift, explaining that I was a Jesuit and my friend, unable to walk, needed a lift. I was taken aback by the immediate positive response I got from the mother superior, whose name was Montserrat.

Not only did they offer us a lift to Igualada, where they had to pick up another sister, but they were actually going on to Montserrat, our next day's destination."

The book includes many more adventures and provides pilgrimage reflection questions and a music playlist after the epilogue.

Brendan McManus SJ works as a Spiritual Director and retreat giver in Belfast. He has published a number of books with Messenger Publications including Channelling the Inner Fire: Ignatian Spirituality in 15 Points; The Way to Manresa: Discoveries along the Ignatian Camino; and co-authored with Jim Deeds, the best-selling Finding God in the Mess; Deeper into the Mess and Discover God Daily.

Brothers in Arms by Brendan McManus SJ with James Fullam is published in Ireland and the UK by Messenger Publications. It is priced at €12.95/£11.95.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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
