

Church News Ireland

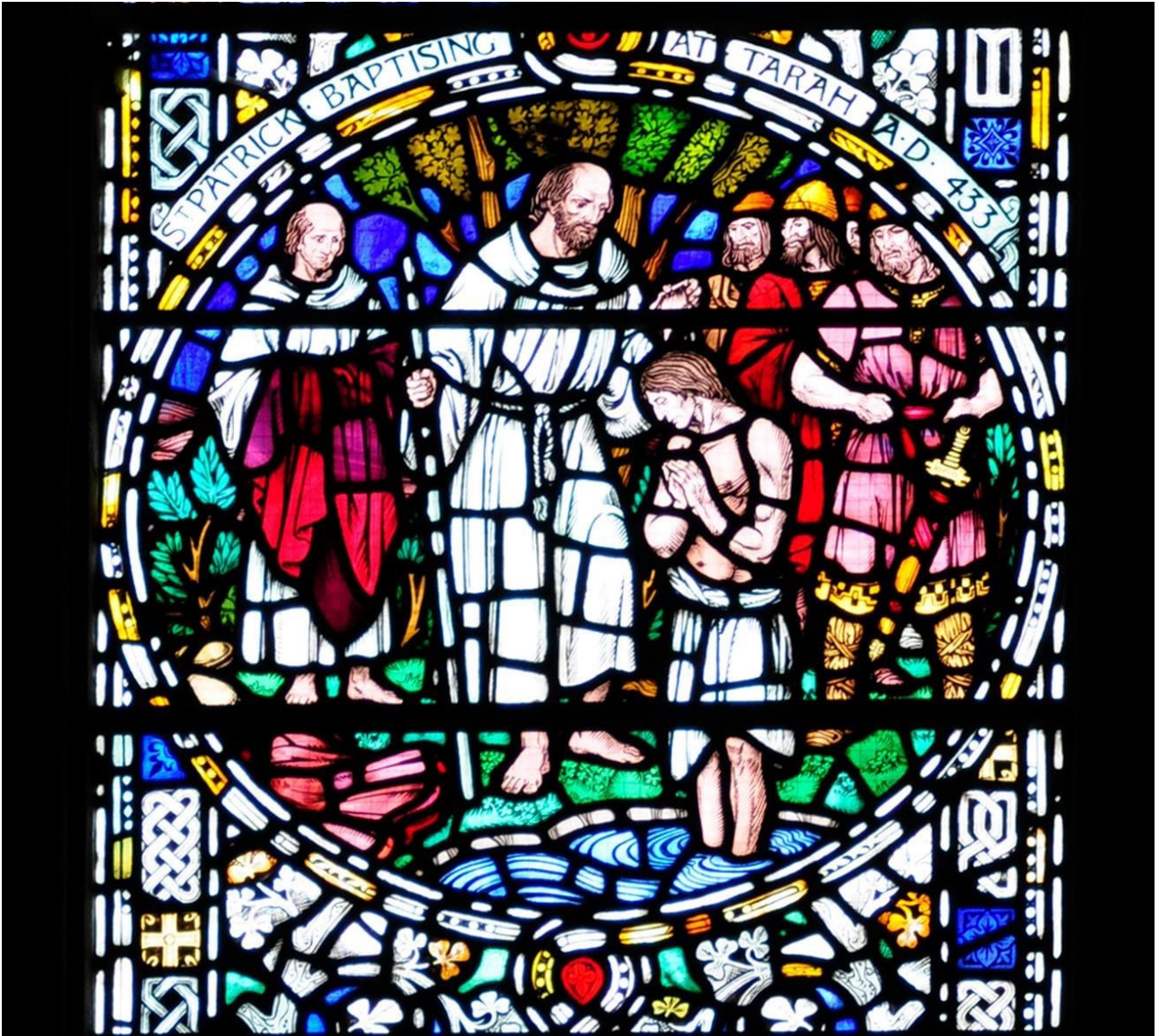


Image of the day – a Belfast baptism

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Image of the day

A Belfast baptism

A window portraying St Patrick baptising at Sarah in 433 features in the baptistery of Belfast Cathedral

People and places

Small rural parish raises £1,400 for Christian Aid



Christian Aid writes - Our wonderful supporters from St John's Church of Ireland parish in Stoneyford, near Lisburn, raised an amazing total of £1,400 for Christian Aid Week. All this from one small rural parish!

Some of the money was raised when they held a lunch after a Sunday service in June at which Ruth Cooke, our Head of Fundraising and Supporter Engagement, spoke about our work in Malawi.

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Many thanks to Norma Parker and Zelda Hearst (wearing the Christian Aid t-shirts) for their unfaltering support and to everyone who helped with the lunch and contributed so generously.

We're also grateful to the rector, Rev John Farr for his support for our work. Perhaps he's the reason the parishioners are so kind to people living in poverty 'farr' away?

(St John's parish is in the Church of Ireland Diocese of Connor.)

Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin focus of Nationwide on RTÉ 1

The National Cathedral of the Church of Ireland, Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, was the subject of Nationwide on RTÉ 1 on Wednesday 26 July 2023.

Filming for the production over about three days included conversations with the Dean, Dr William Morton, the Administrator, Mr Gavan Woods, the Master of the Music, Mr Stuart Nicholson, and some of the choristers, the Education Officer, Mr Clark Brydon, one of the members of the Cathedral Chapter, Canon Jennifer McWhirter, as well as with worshippers, visitors, and volunteers.

In the programme, Dean Morton describes the worship – the musical and choral tradition of Saint Patrick's – as the heartbeat of the Cathedral, and that the Choir School (the only one of its kind in Ireland) is the oldest school in Ireland,



600 years old in ten years' time! The Master of the Music reiterates this theme and describes the chorister recruitment drive currently.

Numbers flocking to the Cathedral are actually up on those of 2019 when an estimated 650,000 people came through the doors. There are about 70 staff, with, over the summer months, as many more volunteers.

The programme provides a wonderful insight into the many aspects of life in the Cathedral and can be played back until Friday, 25 August.

[\[https://www.rte.ie/player/series/nationwide/SI0000001172?epguid=IH10000974-23-0081\]](https://www.rte.ie/player/series/nationwide/SI0000001172?epguid=IH10000974-23-0081)



Baking Buddies Academy at Narnia themed Holiday Bible club

At St Andrew's Narnia themed holiday Bible club in Belfast children are having a fabulous time.

Singing, Bible stories,

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memory verses, craft, games and more - and lunch.... and Walking through the wardrobe (all fur coats are fake!)

Fabulous ladies were helping all week at St Andrew's HBC and have been testing new recipes for the Baking Buddies Academy. Fun farm animal buns, choc chip cookies, jammie biscuits and more Fun times ahead...



Archbishop Jackson receives Pioneer Ministry Candle

Archbishop Michael Jackson was presented with Dublin and Glendalough's Pioneer Ministry Candle last Friday.

The candle is one of 11 – one for each diocese of the Church of Ireland – which were lit in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, at the Pioneer Ministry launch service in February.

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The candle is a symbol of God on the move and exciting times ahead for the United Dioceses. It will find a home in the diocesan cathedra, Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, where it will be lit on a regular basis as a reminder of the light of pioneer ministry.

Receiving the candle from the Revd Rebecca Hamilton of the Church of Ireland's Pioneer Ministry Team, Archbishop Jackson said: "The Pioneer Ministry Candle will be a constant reminder of the flame of faith which lightens and inspires the Pioneer Journey which we undertake along with all the other dioceses of the Church of Ireland".

Volunteer with 'Time to Read'

A project which supports children in their reading is seeking volunteers to give an hour a week to offer a child one-to-one tuition.

Children who fail to read well before they leave their primary school have a reduced prospect of doing well both in their secondary school and later in finding work.

Time to Read provides volunteers who spend one hour each week helping two pupils in a primary school to read better. They give one-to-one tuition that the class teacher cannot provide. Schools also find that pupils who read with a volunteer gain added confidence and boosted self-esteem.

Time to Read is sponsored by Business In The Community. The project was established in 1999 to improve the reading of pupils in primary schools by linking them with adults who



would help them for half an hour each week – volunteers see two pupils each over the hour.

Many volunteers are released by their employer for an hour, while others give of their own time. Volunteers do a short training course. Their reward is to see children start to enjoy books. There are currently 98 schools involved in the programme across Northern Ireland and some 525 pupils receiving help.

Jeffrey Johnston, a parishioner of St Patrick's, Jordanstown, has been a volunteer with Time to Read for seven years, working in a team of six in Hollybank Primary School in Monkstown estate. Jeffrey said: "The commitment is small for the volunteer but the benefit to the pupils is substantial." Anyone who would like to help at a primary school near them or who would like to know more can contact Jeffrey on 028 9086 4993 or by email: jeffreyjohnston175@gmail.com.

News reports

Lord Sentamu barred from pulpit over his stand on abuse

A former Archbishop of York has been stripped of his preaching powers after refusing to apologise for excusing failures to report abuse.

In May, Lord Sentamu, who was the Archbishop of York from 2005 to 2020, was forced to step back from ministry after he failed to act on a disclosure of child sexual abuse and claimed that “safeguarding is very important, but it does not trump Church law”.

His comments prompted uproar from survivors of church-related abuse as well as members of the clergy.

The Bishop of Birkenhead, the Rt Rev Julie Conalty, who is the deputy lead bishop for safeguarding within the Church of England, responded by saying: “I am so ashamed and angered by this response.

“Church law and our complex structures are no excuse for failing to do the right thing.”

Now, the Bishop of Newcastle has banned Lord Sentamu from ministry following a meeting in which he refused to apologise for his comments.

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He has been stripped of his permission to officiate, meaning that he cannot preach, celebrate communion or confirm, and cannot exercise any ministry duties.

However, this only applies to the Diocese of Newcastle, where Lord Sentamu now lives after retiring to Berwick-upon-Tweed. As a result, he could be invited elsewhere as a guest speaker, but he would have to ask permission from the presiding bishop there as a result of his ban.

In a statement published on Thursday, the Rt Rev Dr Helen-Ann Hartley said that following a meeting with Lord Sentamu earlier this week “my concern is that his public statement ... is inconsistent with the tone and culture I expect around safeguarding in Newcastle Diocese, and has had a significant impact on survivors and undermined public confidence”.

She said that she asked him to reflect on his words, and the impact of them, and to offer an apology.

Scottish Episcopal Church appoints Net Zero Delivery Director

The Scottish Episcopal Church has taken a significant step forward in its commitment to addressing climate change by appointing Paul Williams as the Net Zero Delivery Director.

The announcement was made during the General Synod in June, and Paul has now started in his new position, leading the implementation of the Net Zero Action Plan for the years

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2023 to 2030.

Paul brings a wealth of experience and passion for environmental sustainability to his new role.

After graduating, he moved to Scotland to work for the Scottish Wildlife Trust where he travelled around Scotland managing wildlife reserves. During this time, he volunteered for Christian conservation charity A Rocha UK where he interned with a community church in Possil Park, Glasgow, to connect local people with their greenspace. He went on to lead A Rocha's projects and partnerships in Scotland before moving to support the Climate Change Project at the Church of Scotland.

Working ecumenically with Eco-Congregation Scotland, he developed new partnerships and projects for Scottish churches, including an international Church and Community Orchard Twinning Project.

His project Faith Action for Nature brought together church and conservation communities for the restoration of Scottish ecosystems and was recognised by the United Nations Environment Program for its pioneering demonstration of collaboration between faith groups and biodiversity conversation.

"When the Scottish Government declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and church communities around the UK began setting carbon reduction targets, I drew on my knowledge of biodiversity and climate change to mobilise the Church towards more ambitious climate action through its Net Zero commitments," said Paul.

“I am very excited to start my new role at the Scottish Episcopal Church and join my brothers and sisters in Christ in pursuing climate justice and seeing God's creation restored.”

Paul will be responsible for steering the implementation of the Net Zero Action Plan by providing guidance and resources to dioceses and charges,

In the media

Will a united Ireland celebrate a holiday that marks a Protestant victory over a Catholic king?

America Magazine - by Kevin Hargaden a theologian with the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice in Dublin, Ireland.

Excerpt - But less likely to generate headlines are the local community initiatives that perceive in July 12 festivities an opportunity to weave more inclusive narratives. In many places, the stark exclusionary culture is dissipating. Ms. Mitchell notes that it is easy to overlook “how de-escalated everything already is.” In many places, “boundaries already are very fuzzy.”

The increased seriousness with which reunification is being discussed is largely driven by the consequences of Brexit. The United Kingdom’s decision to leave the European Union in 2016 (Northern Ireland voted to remain, but that did not change the outcome) created a series of complications for the Northern Irish peace process around borders, access to

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the European Common Market and residency. Invariably, questions of national identity are affected by these practical policy implications.

Daniel Mulhall was the Irish ambassador to the United Kingdom during the Brexit decision. Retired from the Irish diplomatic corps, he is now serving as a Fellow of Magdalene College at Cambridge University. His position is that “Brexit was deeply unhelpful and those promoting it had a callous disregard for the consequences in Northern Ireland.”

He understands the strong negative reaction to the July 12th proposals because “there are lots of raw feelings, in part because there are many victims still around.” From his perspective, the July 12th festivities are an “annual provocation” that make peace-building more difficult.

A promotional poster for the Ballymoyer Sunflower Festival. The background is a vibrant field of sunflowers under a cloudy sky. A church building is visible in the distance. The text is overlaid on the image in white and yellow. At the bottom, there are logos for 'Friends of the cancer centre', 'Dementia NI', and 'AIR AMBULANCE NORTHERN IRELAND CHARITY'.

Ballymoyer
Sunflower Festival
Opening Saturday 5th August
Open Daily with Honesty Box @ Gate

All Donations in support of

Friends of the cancer centre **Dementia NI** **AIR AMBULANCE NORTHERN IRELAND CHARITY**

and Ballymoyer & Belleek Parish Funds

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But he also thinks that “in a divided society you have to reach out to find some common ground.”

@@@ Kevin Hargaden is a theologian with the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice in Dublin, Ireland. His is the author of Theological Ethics in a Neoliberal Age, published by Wipf and Stock.

[<https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2023/07/27/july-12-public-holiday-united-ireland-orangemen-ulster-republic-245750>]



Irish football authorities urged to meet the IRA victims being hurt by 'up the Ra' sentiments

News Letter - Football authorities in the Republic of Ireland have been accused of "burying their heads in the sand" as

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pro-IRA chants and banners continue to cause immense hurt to terror victims.

Victims' group SEFF said the Football Association of Ireland (FAI) has ignored repeated requests to meet with victims of [IRA](#) violence – to hear first-hand how such behaviour negatively impacts those worst affected.

The latest request for a meeting follows the display of a Irish tricolour, with added republican imagery, at a Women's World Cup game in Australia earlier this week.

<https://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/national/irish-football-authorities-urged-to-meet-the-ira-victims-being-hurt-by-up-the-ra-sentiments-4236493>



How PSNI pursued innocent officer for three years while not disciplining those it admits broke the law

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Belfast Telegraph - Treatment of cop cleared over Covid breach has added to unease in the ranks, further damaging morale and increasing distrust of the force's top brass.

Three years ago the PSNI accused one of its officers of breaking the law in a minor way, Sam McBride writes.

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/sam-mcbride/how-psni-pursued-innocent-officer-for-three-years-while-not-disciplining-those-it-admits-broke-the-law/a1144156575.html>

Campaigner dedicates freedom of Derry honour to victims of abuse

Irish News - Abuse victims' campaigner Jon McCourt says he feels a tremendous sense of pride and honour at his nomination for the freedom of his native Derry.

However, Mr McCourt (70) said he looked on the award as recognition of the campaign on behalf of victims of church and state institutions and of those who suffered.

Mr McCourt, who spent his childhood at the St Joseph's boys' home at Termonbacca in Derry, founded the Survivors North West group to campaign for victims of historical institutional abuse.

Mr McCourt spent more than 20 years campaigning for a full investigation into allegations of abuse at church and state institutions. The campaign culminated in the establishment of Hart Inquiry which found that there had been "shocking levels" of abuse in church and state institutions.

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A former teenage IRA member in the 1970s, Mr McCourt spent the greater part of his life working for peace and reconciliation. He worked as a volunteer with the Peace and Reconciliation Group before becoming chairman of the organisation.

He was proposed for the Freedom of the City and Borough by People Before Profit councillor, Shaun Harkin. The proposal, which was ratified by Derry and Strabane council on Wednesday, came shortly after Mr McCourt turned down an MBE in the King's birthday honours.

As the recipient of the Freedom of Derry award, Mr McCourt will join other famous people from the city, including Nobel laureate John Hume, Derry Girls' writer Lisa McGee, musician and composer Phil Coulter and former Derry City football manager Jim McLaughlin among others. More -

[<https://www.irishnews.com/paywall/tsb/irishnews/news/northernirelandnews/2023/07/28/news/campaigner\ dedicates\ freedom\ honour\ to\ abuse\ victims-3479184/content.html>]

[Rishi Sunak's Brexit deal means more red tape for business, peers warn](#)

The Independent - [Rishi Sunak's Brexit](#) deal will pile more red tape on businesses sending goods to [Northern Ireland](#), a group of peers has warned.

The prime minister's [Windsor](#) Framework, agreed with [Brussels](#) this year, will create "more burdensome" bureaucracy for many firms than the status quo, they said.



A report by the [House of Lords](#) committee on the [Northern Ireland Protocol](#) found the UK and EU's post-Brexit agreement will help large retailers, but leave many others facing more paperwork.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/northern-ireland-rishi-sunak-ursula-von-der-leyen-european-commission-house-of-lords-b2381168.html>

Enoch Burke case: the unanswered questions

Catholic Herald - Dubhaltach O Reachtnin. Excerpt - As it stands, no one knows whether the School acted within its rights in instructing Burke to speak in a particular way, or whether Burke was right in complaining that it was an illegitimate demand.

There are other complications in the case, such as whether the student's parents were informed of their request, or whether the instruction from the school was more of a request – but the primary issue remains unanswered.

As it stands, until the substantive issue is addressed, it may be a case that Burke has spent more than three months in prison and been driven to bankruptcy for not agreeing to submit to an illegitimate request that trampled on his religious beliefs.

For other teachers, the chilling effect is to warn them that they need to comply or submit to being placed on administrative leave, in the event of a similar request.

Schools and teachers, as well as parents and students, are forced to make decisions in the absence of guidance from the State.

The result is not just uncertainty for teachers as to what their rights are, but uncertainty for schools as to what is the best response for students who are identifying as gender non-conforming. Debbie Hayton, writing in the Spectator, comments on the delays in the Department of Education in issuing guidance on transgenderism in schools.

The result of the absence of any guidance is highlighted in the Policy Exchange report earlier this year: *Asleep at the Wheel, An examination of Gender and Safeguarding in Schools*. The report shows that while many schools were “asleep at the wheel”, failing to inform parents (as seems to be the case in Wilson's Hospital School), others were actively getting ahead of the law, taking advice from activist

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organisations such as Stonewall or Mermaids, and sometimes stepping outside the law, for example, by removing single sex toilets.

In Ireland, there is no such guidance being prepared, let alone any official discussion about such guidance. The dangers and risks of gender affirmation in teens, with or without parental consent, is a subject that officials in Ireland does not wish to discuss.

[\[https://catholicherald.co.uk/enoch-burke-case-the-unanswered-questions/\]](https://catholicherald.co.uk/enoch-burke-case-the-unanswered-questions/)

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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