

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Baking the Bishop



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Baking the Bishop

Bishop Paul Colton of Cork has had an amazing time visiting each of the church's schools in the diocese and sharing his 25th

anniversary. Planting a tree and sharing a cake seems to figure!

This week Bishop Colton reported, "I had an amazing day. The second school I visited was St Luke's, O'Mahoney's Avenue, on the north side of Cork overlooking the city below.

The singing here was just wonderful and I was hugely impressed by all the people everyone knew from the Bible.

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We all watched an hilarious cartoon in the 'Whirl Kids' series - 'Ada and Friends' - called 'The bishop is coming!'

There were lovely flowers and gifts - great artwork - and an amazing cake - someone I know was on top and a great football club as well. Outside I planted an oak sapling which had been grown in a home in the parish and after it was watered we put it beside the Olive tree for peace that I gave the school to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War. Thank you all so, so much".

News

Dean celebrates milestone anniversary



Dean Dermot Dunne celebrated the 40th anniversary of his ordination on Sunday morning last (June 9).

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He marked the occasion with his wife Celia and members of the cathedral community and visitors after the 11am Eucharist. He is pictured cutting the cake specially baked for the day.



Ahoghill and Portglenone prepare for Sudan

A wonderful service of commissioning was held in the parishes of Ahoghill and Portglenone for the team travelling to Ibba, South Sudan, at the end of July.

Pray for Rev Dennis, Niall and Stephen as they prepare to spend 10 days working alongside Bishop Wilson and the diocesan staff team



Down linked diocesan guests

Bishop Leo and his wife Sadaf have arrived safely in Down and Dromore from the link diocese of Multan.

They will spend almost two weeks in Down and Dromore and Bishop Leo will preach at the Synod service next week.

Five mummified remains destroyed in Dublin crypt fire

A man has been arrested after a fire was lit in the crypt at St Michan's Church of Ireland in Dublin, destroying five mummies including an 800-year-old mummy known as 'The Crusader', Fergal O'Brien in RTE News

The incident happened shortly after 4pm this afternoon.

The alarm was raised after a tour guide detected smoke in the vault of the building on Church Street.

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The blaze was extinguished by Dublin Fire Brigade before it took hold and the area was made safe.

Gardaí say no injuries have been reported.

However, five mummified remains, which were contained in the crypt, are believed to have been "destroyed" by the water that was required put the fire out.

They include an 800-year-old mummy known as 'The Crusader' and four others dating back 400 years.

It is estimated there is around one foot of water in the crypt.

The scene has been sealed off to facilitate a forensic examination by a team from the Garda Technical Bureau.

The man in custody was arrested in connection with the incident for an alleged offence under the Criminal Damage Act.

He is being questioned under Section 4 of the Criminal Justice Act at a garda station in the Dublin area.

Gardaí, who are appealing to any witnesses or to anyone with any information about the incident to contact them, say their investigations are ongoing.

The Archdeacon of Dublin and Vicar of St Michan's Church David Pierpoint described the incident as "disastrous for Dublin, for history and for the parish".

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"The parish depends on income from our tourists and if we've no crypts to show people, then we have very little money coming in," he said.

"We're not sure now what's going to happen."

In February 2019, the crypt was broken into and the 'The Crusader' was decapitated during the incident. A man was later jailed for the crimes of five counts of criminal damage, including two of damaging a dead body.

80 years after historic meeting with Pope, Irish Regiment returns to the Vatican



Eighty years ago the Bugles, Pipes, and Drums of 38th (Irish) Brigade played in St Peter's Square to mark the liberation of Rome. This week their successors in The Royal Irish Regiment returned. The Pope received a Papal pipe banner and a copy of the Regimental Collect. He sent for

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*the
Commander
of the Swiss
Guard
immediately
afterwards to
ensure that
his
appreciation
was
conveyed to
every single
soldier.*



Eighty years ago this week, the Irish Brigade became the first group of Allied soldiers to meet with Pope Pius XII following the liberation of Rome from the Nazis. Vatican News spoke to Major General Colin Weir.

80 years ago on the 12th June 1944, a group of soldiers from the British Army's 38th (Irish) Brigade met with Pope Pius XII, Joseph Tulloch and reports.



The soldiers were the first Allied troops the Pontiff had met with since the liberation of Rome from the Nazis eight days earlier.

Ireland was neutral during World War Two, and the 38th Brigade belonged to the British armed forces, but was composed of a mixture of Irish volunteers and Brits of Irish descent.

Today, eighty years to the hour after that historic encounter between Pope Pius XII and the 38th Brigade, a delegation from the unit (which is now known as the Irish Regiment) met with Pope Francis in St Peter's Square.

Vatican News spoke to Major General Colin Weir, the head of the Regiment - as well as UK Ambassador Chris Trott, who helped arrange his visit - about the Irish Regiment's encounters with the Popes.



1944: Meeting with Pope Pius XII

General Weir said that the meeting with Pope Pius XII was “one of the legends, really, of our Regimental history.”

The audience, he added, is “one of those unique stories that didn't involve great valour or heroism or lots of casualties or securing a difficult objective. It was just one of those unique experiences that comes together in times of turmoil.”

Rome had been liberated on the 4th June. By the 12th, the day of the meeting with the Pope - arranged by Irish priests in the Vatican - the unit was already at the new frontline to the north of the city.

Since the Brigade was in an active combat zone, only a small group was pulled back from the front lines to meet with the Pontiff.



Major General Weir said that the Brigade's commander at the time had initially decided that only Catholics would be present at the meeting with the Pontiff, but that after "outcry" from the Brigade's Protestant members, a mixed delegation was sent.

80 years since D-Day

General Weir noted that the group he was leading from the Irish Regiment had recently been in Normandy for the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings.



The visit to Rome, he said, was in recognition of the fact that, while some of the Irish Regiment's troops had been preparing for D-Day eighty years ago, others had been fighting their way through North Africa, Sicily, and southern Italy, aiming at the liberation of Rome and the entire Italian Peninsula.

He noted that “both of those endeavours – in southern Europe and in north-western Europe – were hugely important; they complemented each other, and our Regiment played a very significant part in both of them. We wanted to recognise that.”

General Weir described the encounter with Pope Francis as a “huge privilege”, noting that he is due to retire in less than a month, and saying that the meeting ranks “extremely highly” on his list of career experiences.



Pope 'moved' by encounter with soldiers

The Major General's visit to the Vatican was facilitated by the UK Ambassador to the Holy See, Chris Trott.

Ambassador Trott told Vatican News that the initial plan had been for the

delegation from the Irish Regiment to pose for a photo with the Pope.

When they arrived, however, he said, the Pope asked the Regiment's musicians to play for him.

"I was very moved", the Ambassador said, "because that was unexpected; it was the Pope's own initiative."

"I think it was in response to the fact that the General had given the Pope a banner with, on one side, the Regiment's badge, and on the other side the Pope's crest, and I think he appreciated that very much. So it's been a very good morning."

Clergy appointments

Made deacon in Baltinglass

On Tuesday 11th June, the Feast of Saint Barnabas, clergy, diocesan readers, parishioners and a number of others from across the Diocese gathered in St Mary's Church, Baltinglass for the ordination of Reverend Andrew Pender.

Andrew was presented to the Bishop by his sponsors, who included Archbishop Empey, family members and the Rector. The Archdeacon of Ossory and Leighlin, the Venerable Mark Hayden then formally acknowledged that



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Andrew had successfully completed his training. The Reverend Ken Rue, the national co-ordinator for those training for Ordained Local Ministry was in the congregation.

In his sermon, Andrew's rector Reverend Canon Mairt Hanley, drew of the theme of encouragement and spoke of the importance of listening and being alongside people as well as the significance of forging links in ministry. Reverend Pender works as a lecturer in physics at the Technological University Dublin and will serve in the Ordained Local Ministry in both Baltinglass Group and Kiltegan Group.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Journeying with Women in the Bible

Drumalis retreat. Date for your diary: September 27-29th: "Wise Women and Prophetesses: Journeying with Women in the Bible"

This weekend will offer a short course for women and men who wish to gain a deeper insight into the stories of female characters from both the Old and New testaments. You will gain fresh insights and perspectives that will provide a richer understanding on why the stories of women in the bible are important for both women and men today. The weekend will be prayerful, dialogical and reflective.



Facilitator: Sr Sheila Curran RSM

Sheila is a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy, Northern province, Ireland. She is Justice Coordinator for the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI) and the Irish Missionary union (IMU).

Sheila's ministry and research has been shaped by her experience of living and working in Peru, particularly her involvement with the Institute Bartolome de las Casa, a non-governmental social justice and human rights organisation founded by the liberation theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez.

More information to follow on Facebook and at www.drumalis.co.uk

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Thousands expected to attend annual Clonard Novena

The theme of this year's event is 'Creating a Culture of Care', Caoimhe Quinn McCullough writes in The Irish News.

Thousands of worshipper's are preparing to flock to west Belfast next week for the annual Clonard Novena.

The theme of this year's event, which runs from next Wednesday, June 19 to June 27, is 'Creating a Culture of Care'.

Speaking ahead of the opening service, Fr Brendan Kelly, the Rector at Clonard said: "We are living in an era where we face new and complex challenges on how we understand life and human nature.

"In the light of this, we must ask ourselves: 'What does our faith say to us in the face of so much change and upheaval?' We hope over the nine days; by focusing on some of the burning issues faced by our society today, we

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can find ways of discovering the presence and voice of God amid so much confusion and anxiety.”

Meanwhile Pope Francis has appealed to the international community and every individual to foster a culture of care by advancing on the ‘path of fraternity, justice and peace between individuals, communities, peoples and nations’ adding that there can be no peace without a culture of care.

The popular Inter Church Day will take place on Monday June 24 and there will be a special Blessing of the Families at the 11.30am and 1.30pm Sessions on Saturday June 22 and the celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick the following day at the 11.30am and 1.30pm sessions. Also on Sunday there will be session dedicated to Young People at 8.00pm.

Novena Times

Mon to Fri: 6.45am, 9.30am, 11.30am, 4.00pm, 6.00pm & 8.00pm
Sat & Sun: 6.45am, 9.30am, 11.30am, 1.30pm, 4.00pm, 6.00pm & 8.00pm

You can also watch live on webcam: www.clonard.com or on social media

Church News Ireland

In the media

“Events, Dear Boy” – How a UK General Election affects devolved government in Northern Ireland - Dr Andrew McCormick

Elections change things – obviously – or sometimes they confirm trends that have been known but maybe not fully acknowledged, Dr Andrew McCormick writes in Pivotal Platform

And, quite often, something unforeseen happens that shifts events out of all proportion. Most strikingly, the 2017 General Election, which seriously weakened the May administration, and the 2019 European Parliament Elections, when the Brexit Party’s success moved the Conservative Party in its direction, were both significant gamechangers in the Brexit process.

There have only been a few UK General Elections that happened with a functioning devolved power-sharing administration in place in Northern Ireland – 2001, 2010, 2015 and...1974. And events related to three of those four Elections set in train consequences that undermined devolution – they were followed, sooner or later by collapses – very quickly in 1974, but also in 2002 and 2017.

Hopefully, 2024 will not follow that pattern!

Both 1974 and 2001 were the first contests after new agreements on power sharing – one key difference was that in 1974, a majority of those voting supported parties that

opposed the Sunningdale Agreement, whereas in 2001 there was a clear majority of those voting in favour of candidates who supported the 1998 Agreement. But the results of the 2001 Election perhaps suggested that a UUP/SDLP led administration was not likely to prevail and stabilise. That was a factor which led in 2002, as in 1974, to power sharing collapsing.

Following the elections of 2001, 2010 and 2015, the UK governments did not see any great need to give immediate attention to issues affecting Northern Ireland. The change of government in 2010 happened just after the resolution of the devolution of policing and justice, so it was understandable – though, on a long term view, deeply unfortunate – that the new government did not need to focus on working with the Northern Ireland Executive and was pre-occupied with the novel consequences of the coalition's modus operandi. In 2015, the surprise of the Conservatives' overall majority was the unforeseen event that inexorably started the UK on the road to Brexit: however, as in 2010, there was no strong focus on the Northern Ireland issues, with consequences that are all too relevant in the 2024 campaign.

THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNING

How do UK General Election campaigns affect the business of government in Northern Ireland? On the whole, the work of government here continues, but with heightened sensitivities about actions that could have party political impacts.

The Cabinet Office pre-election guidance makes it clear that most of its provisions do not apply to civil servants in

the three devolved administrations. However, it says that they need to be “...aware of the need to avoid any action that is, or could be construed as being, party political or likely to have a direct bearing on the general election”. The restrictions on political activity by individual civil servants (Section E of the guidance) apply in full. Guidance to the Northern Ireland Civil Service emphasises that they should not undertake any activity which could call into question their political impartiality.

The main difference that affects day-to-day work in the civil service in Northern Ireland is that it is even more important to avoid, if at all possible, the use of Departmental resources (including buildings and official cars) for party political purposes.

In practice it is not possible to separate the politics of the devolved administrations and the General Election campaign. That is most clear in Scotland, where a large swing from the SNP to Labour could be a very important factor in the arithmetic on 5 July, and hence any major presentational successes by the Scottish Government during the campaign period could affect the result. The outcome in 2017, while not likely to be repeated, shows that Northern Irish seats can be of critical importance at UK level.

Meanwhile, all the business of the devolved administration has to go on, and it is inherently impossible to secure a complete separation of party and Ministerial statements and publicity. Ideally, any announcements by Departments should not compete with the campaign, and care is needed

in relation to the conduct of Ministerial visits so as not to be seen as promoting one particular party.

HEALTH AND BUDGET ISSUES MATTER IN THIS CAMPAIGN

But the present context is uniquely complicated, because the election has come so quickly after the restoration of the institutions, and hence some very central aspects of its work have barely begun. We already have the anomaly that the Budget has been passed, but the Programme for Government appears to be deferred, despite the fact that the founders in 1998 saw these as inextricably linked. At the same time, a debate on the draft legislative programme is due to go ahead on 11 June.

And the controversy over health funding creates a fault line between the UUP and the DUP (and indeed with Sinn Fein and Alliance). Health officials have in the past commented controversially on the impact of budgets on the health service (notably in 2011). But the current controversy is more acute, because the risk to services is much more severe, and the case for health is extremely strong. It is one thing for a Minister to vote against a Budget in the Executive and in an Assembly division on the relevant legislation. But overspending – by a Minister failing to authorise action necessary to contain expenditure within the limits on expenditure set in statute by the Assembly – would be an extraordinary development, and could have repercussions for political relationships both here and with the UK government.

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It is fortunate that the oral hearings of the Covid Public Inquiry here were completed before the Election was called, as the issues it was addressing could easily have been presented and interpreted by candidates as relevant to current political controversies, not least the resourcing and management of the health and social care service, or indeed the broader effectiveness of the Executive as a government here.

The unpredictability of election campaigns is part of their fascination. It will be very surprising if there is not some twist or turn in the next few weeks that affects either the outcome or the operation of the Northern Ireland Executive. After the dust settles, it will be vital that the new UK government takes seriously the issues affecting Northern Ireland, and acts to secure stability and a viable way forward.

Dr Andrew McCormick is a retired Northern Ireland Civil Service Permanent Secretary and a trustee of Pivotal.

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Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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