

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Derry's Festival of Cloaks

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Derry's Festival of Cloaks

In St Columb's Cathedral, Derry, a Festival of Cloaks is being presented each day until.... 78 cloaks are on display reflecting what The Bishop of Derry, Most Rev Dr Donal McKeown described as the "marvelous diversity".

The Festival of Cloaks opened with a service on Friday evening (June 14th 2024) attended by The Lord Lieutenant for the County Borough of Londonderry, Mr Ian Crowe MBE.

The Dean of Derry, Very Rev Raymond Stewart, told those present that he believed nothing like the festival had ever been held in Northern Ireland before. Speaking as a son of the Diocese of Kildare, he said he was delighted that the legacy of St Brigid in spreading the Gospel all across Ireland



was now being recognised.

Opening the festival the Bishop of Kildare, Most Rev Pat Storey said it was a delight to be back in Derry-Londonderry and in St Columb's Cathedral. The Bishop shared something of the history of St Brigid - the patroness saint of Ireland.

Be a Brigid - Bishop Storey

"What's a cloak for?", Bishop Storey asked. "A cloak is to protect, to keep warm and to cover. And the legend around Saint Brigid is that there's room for everyone under Brigid's cloak. No one is beyond the Good News of Jesus Christ.



"Like Brigid, we're alert to every opportunity for every single person on the planet. Brigid was known in particular for outreach in giving to the poor; for praying for healing and for caring for the planet. But most of all she made the most of her history and heritage of Christian faith. Brigid was centered on Christian faith. That is what she was for. That is what she felt her vocation was. So she acted and spoke only to share Good News.

"That legacy still exists in my cathedral – in St Brigid's Cathedral in Kildare – in this cathedral, and in the South we even get a bank holiday now in the name of St Brigid, which is almost the best thing of all. So, tonight, if you can be anything, be a Brigid. It is with great delight that I officially open the Festival of Cloaks."

Cloaks on display will enable us to cherish our diversity - Bishop McKeown



The Bishop of Derry, Most Rev Dr Donal McKeown, said the wonderful range of 78 cloaks on display reflected the "marvelous diversity" in our community and on this island. "I hope this will enable us to cherish our diversity, to see that as a richness and not as something that divides or threatens us. I hope it enables us to be proud of our past – recognising the rubble that's there and seeing it as an opportunity to build a foundation for our wonderful young people who deserve better than earlier generations ever obtained or received.

"This is a very imaginative approach," Bishop McKeown said, "to sharing a range of creativity but I hope it will enable all of us to look at the past and find a shared past – in its multiplicity of identities a shared past – because once we have a shared past, our spiritual intelligence through the

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grace of God will enable us to look forward to a shared future."

Frequent mentions of robes in the Bible - Bishop Forster

As Bishop Andrew Forster moved forward to address those present, he was surprised by an unexpected rendition of 'Happy birthday', followed by a round of applause. Visibly taken aback, the Bishop pointed out that he wasn't alone in having something to celebrate: Malcolm and Irene Hewitt, who were seated near the back of the church, were celebrating their 49th wedding anniversary – which prompted an other round of applause for the happy couple. Bishop Andrew praised the organisers of the festival which he said would enhance the experience of visitors to the city throughout the summer.

The Bishop said there were frequent mentions of robes in the Bible but he said Jesus talked about a cloak in chapter 5 of Matthew's Gospel, when he said if someone wants your tunic, give them your cloak. "One of the most important parts of the teaching of Jesus is to open our hearts to the generosity of God – the generosity of God in the giving of Himself and of ourselves to others, because those verses talk about that.

"There's a physical generosity – somebody wants your tunic, give them your tunic as well, they're going to need your cloak – but there's a generosity of spirit, isn't there? There's a generosity of spirit that looks on someone who is perhaps in need and wants to go the extra mile to help. There's a generosity of spirit that says to those who are

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struggling that we want to help. There's a generosity of spirit that sees the other as part of the family of God and part of our responsibility. So, the cloak that Jesus talks about sharing, speaks into our hearts about having a generosity of spirit and a generosity of heart.



"In this city that we all love, and across this city, let's work and pray for a generosity of spirit, that the cloak is freely given, that we have a generosity of heart to those who struggle, to those from whom we differ, that we have that generosity of spirit that says 'Yes' to the generosity of God in our lives and we share the cloak as Jesus tells us to do.

"I want to wish great success on this wonderful display right throughout the summer."

Music for the service was provided by Tracey McRory who performed on the harp and the violin; soprano, Susan

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Wilson, accompanied by Ben McGonigle; and the Cathedral Girls' Choir, directed by Nicky Morton,

The Festival of Cloaks will continue at St Columb's Cathedral until the 31st of August, and will be open from Monday to Saturday from 10am until 4pm.

News



Monkstown Scouts stride out

Vicky, Scouts NI Strategy & Engagement Manager, was delighted to be invited to 1st Monkstown Scout Group &



Explorer Unit annual Sponsored Walk, BBQ and Awards.

“Well done to all the Leaders for putting on an incredible day and a huge congratulations to all the young people who received awards and Chief Scout Awards”. Vicky commented.

Honours for church members

Tobermore parishioner Hilary Richardson has been awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in the King's Birthday Honours list for "services to girlguiding and to the community in Tobermore".

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Hilary is the treasurer of Kilcronaghan Parish Church and serves on our Diocesan Council. She is one of a number of Derry and Raphoe members to have been honoured by King Charles.



Antrim Presbyterian couple return to Japan

First Antrim Presbyterian Church on Sunday morning last anticipated saying farewell to the Orme family as John and Emily were recommissioned for service with OMF Japan.



L-R Rev Canon D Ferry, Lord Lieutenant Alison Millar, Chairman of the UDR Regimental Association for Northern Ireland Glyn Hanna, Lord Lieutenant Cadet Corporal Brandyn Cole and UDR Regimental Association County Londonderry Chairman Adrian Nicholl

Ulster Defence Regiment Remembrance Service at Ballykelly

On Sunday the 16th June the Regimental Association of the Ulster Defence Regiment CGC held a Thanksgiving and Remembrance Service at Tamlaghtfinlagan Church in Ballykelly.

The service was attended by the Lord Lieutenant for County Londonderry and members of the Regimental Association



om across the province. Wreaths were laid at the Memorial Garden and guests congregated in the Church Hall after for refreshments.

Christian Aids ‘souper’ supporters at Kilbride Presbyterian

Count the saucepans! CAI’s ‘souper’ supporters at Kilbride Presbyterian Church in Doagh, County Antrim may have broken a record by preparing TWELVE different varieties of soup for this year’s fundraising lunch to mark Christian Aid Week.

The lunch, which raised more than £750, was held recently following a service at which Rev Uel Marrs spoke about our work in Burundi - the focus of this year’s Christian Aid Week appeal.

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The congregation also held a church collection and 'delivery-only' house-to-house collection which together brought in over £500.

The church members gave generously to support the '70k in May' running challenge taken on by their minister Rev Gareth McFadden, raising almost £1,700 and bringing Kilbride's Christian Aid Week total close to £3,000.

CAI is grateful to Rev Gareth and to CAI representative, Freddie Stirling as well as to all our supporters at Kilbride for their amazing generosity.

Transition Year students graduate at Kildare Centre of Mission's pilot tour guide training

Ten Transition Year students from Kildare Town Community School recently graduated from the Kildare Centre of Mission's pilot tour guide training programme.

The graduation took place in the school with Avril Ryan, CEO of Gaisce (The President's Award) presenting participants with Gaisce bronze awards and completion certificates. Success of the pilot was described as transformational by students, parents, friends and teachers alike.

The programme which took place across the 2023/24 academic year, enabled young people from Kildare town and its surrounds, to interpret and share the story of their own town especially focussing on St Brigid's Cathedral. The

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programme was led by Kildare Centre of Mission's Pioneer Evangelist, Kelley Bermingham.



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Kelley began the programme by creating a group agreement and setting the tone for the weekly sessions. It is the first time a programme of its kind has been run where students had a chance to co-create the focus sessions and inform the process from the outset.

Dean Isobel Jackson and Rev Philip McKinley, Lead Evangelist also led sessions and focused on the person of St Brigid as well as their roles within the Cathedral.

Cathedral Calls



Saying Goodbye

In Belfast Cathedral Candles were lit at a Saying Goodbye service for those affected by the loss of a baby in pregnancy, at birth, or in infancy.

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The service was hosted in partnership with The Mariposa Trust. For more information see www.sayinggoodbye.org



Sanford Choral Union at St.Canice's

“Glorious to have Sanford Choral Union join St.Canice's Cathedral Choir to sing the Choral Eucharist and Evensong. Laus Deo”.

The United Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory Saint Canice's Cathedral and Round Tower

Clergy

Readers and Pastoral Visitors commissioned in Armagh

Congratulations and blessings to Readers and Pastoral Visitors who were commissioned by Archbishop John McDowell in St Patrick's Cathedral Armagh.

Best Wishes to Diocesan Reader: Danielle Turton; Parish Readers: Roberta Driver and John Hayes; Pastoral Visitors: Natasha Coombes-Liddle, William Liddle, Christine Neill, Rachel Neville, Kenneth Morton, Elizabeth Burrows, Maureen Watt, Linda McCord, June Garvin, Samuel Douglas, Harry Simpson, Russell Hopcraft, Iris McKeown

Cork Canons

Bishop Colton of Cork, Cloyne and Ross commented - "Recently I appointed three honorary canons to the chapter of St. Fin Barre's Cathedral. It was a joy to be present when the Dean, the Very Rev. Nigel Dunne installed them and assigned them their stalls in the Cathedral: Canon Robert Ferris (Canon Missioner), Canon Gillian Kingston (Ecumenical Canon) and Canon John Ardis (Canon with responsibility for Vocations)".

Bishop Colton also licensed Joanna Griffin as a Diocesan Lay Reader in the Church of Ireland in Cork, Cloyne and

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Ross at a Choral Evensong in St Fin Barre's Cathedral for the installation of honorary canons.

Lay Funeral Ministers for Down & Connor



On Sunday morning Bishop Alan commissioned 16 new Lay Funeral Ministers during the 11.30am Mass In Our Lady of The Assumption parish, Newcastle Co. Down. The new Lay Funeral Ministers represent 6 parishes in the Co. Down area.

This was Bishop Alan's first pastoral visit to Newcastle as the newly appointed Bishop of Down and Connor. All the visitors to the parish received a very warm joyful welcome from Fr Jim Crudden PP and Brenda Webb the Parish Manager. Special words of thanks were expressed to the entire parish team for all their hard work, sacristans, altar



servers, reader, choir master and choir. The music was wonderful. It was such a joyful celebration. The hospitality team excelled with beautiful refreshments and wonderful cake which was enjoyed by all.

“Final thanks go to the New Lay Funeral Ministers for courageously stepping forward and embracing this ministry with commitment and deep faith, our parishes will be all the richer for their presence. We keep you in our prayers.

“Thank you to the Lay Funeral Ministry trainers Mr Paddy Shannon, Fr Paul Byrne, Mr Patsy Curry and Mrs Anne McDermott for your guidance and wisdom”.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books



Strabane Chorale to sing at Christ Church Derry's Celebration concert

**Gerard Bradley will conduct the free admission concert
on June 23 at 1900.**

This Choir was launched in February 2015 as Strabane Chamber Choir, but due to a steady increase in membership

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it has been renamed Strabane Chorale. The membership has a catchment of Tyrone, Derry and Donegal.

Since its formation the Choir has competed annually in National Choral Festivals throughout Ireland and are past winners of the Mixed Voice Competitions in Derry and were last autumn's runners up in this competition.

They first won the Mixed Voice in Navan in May 2019 and after the resumption of the festival, were delighted to be winners again in May 2023 and most recently May 2024. The Choir has also had top three placings in the Sacred Music section at the national festivals.

In addition to competing, the Choir performs its own concerts in the Co Tyrone / Derry catchment. Most recently, they performed the highly acclaimed Rutter's Gloria in St Columb's Church Omagh and St Mary's Church Strabane, with full orchestral accompaniment.

Their repertoire includes classical, traditional, jazz, sacred and popular pieces. The Choir, under the direction of Gerard Bradley and accompaniment of Stephen Bradley, is delighted to be performing in Christ Church for the first time.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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