

Church News Ireland



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January 18, 2025

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Speaking to the soul -

Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

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Image of the day – Schools past and present Bishop Wilkinson on his school rounds

“I visited Maryborough National School in Portlaoise today. It was great to hear recorders and violins being played by the pupils and also to talk to some of the classes about prayer”.



Antrim Grammar School support for All Saints' Church

Antrim Grammar School held their 50th anniversary carol service in All Saints in December.

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Following the fire, the school decided to give the proceeds of the retiring collection to All Saints to help with the future repairs. The amount handed over was £424.82

Harding Memorial school history note



It all began.... due to a local need for a larger Church and school Canon Harding approached Lord Arthur Hill about a plot of ground on the Cregagh Road, Belfast

The Select Vestry of Willowfield Parish gave its support and the ground was secured. The first building open on the site was Dromore Street Hall on Saturday 25 February 1911 to be used for Divine Worship for Parishioners residing on the South side of the Parish.

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Willowfield National School No 2 was opened officially on 5 April 1913. The school building consisted of two storeys, with 4 classrooms on each storey. The first Principal was Mr D. Moore.

Canon Harding was rector of Willowfield Parish from 1900-1922, his interest in the welfare of children led to his last great work the building of Willowfield No2 after his death in 1922 the school was renamed- Harding Memorial Primary School in his Honour

News

East Belfast Mission's Community Homes project nearing completion

Exciting times ahead! The Hosford Community Homes project at 240 Newtownards Road, Belfast, is nearing completion.

It will provide much needed housing and a fresh start for many.

This project has been generously funded by Urban Villages, Ulster Garden Villages, Benefact Trust, Garfield Weston and local churches, businesses and individuals.

240 Newtownards project is a unique, community-led housing initiative aimed at transforming an empty building into six apartments and a community space dedicated to fostering good relations.

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The project provides a pathway for individuals transitioning from hostel accommodations to more permanent housing, which in turn frees up hostel spaces for others in need. It promotes increased independence for residents while



ensuring they still have access to essential support services.

Overall, this project takes a holistic, community-based approach to housing, creating a supportive environment where individuals can thrive.

Clients identified the

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following needs -

“A house that is for the long term, not for a short term and moving around a lot.”

“A private house. For me the most important thing is for a place to be safe and clean. It needs to have a good area, like a small flat. Safety is the most important thing for me.”

“Somewhere secure. A private apartment where my family could visit me.”

For more information please visit <https://ebm.org.uk/hosford-community-homes/240-newtownards-road/>

Middle East cease fire and hostage release welcomes

Christian Aid Ireland said - We welcome the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas but a ceasefire by itself does nothing to address the root causes of the conflict.

A sustainable peace is not possible until the illegal occupation of Gaza, the West Bank (including East Jerusalem) is ended and Palestinians and Israelis are treated as equals.

‘At long last it offers people in Gaza respite from the relentless bombardment, displacement and deprivation they have endured for the last 15 months. It also means the welcome release of hostages and respite for their families

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after long months of torment.’ - William Bell, Head of Middle East Policy & Advocacy at Christian Aid.

For our partners on the ground, this ceasefire is a crucial window to scale up the humanitarian response.

They’re gearing up to expand the distribution of vital supplies to communities who've endured months of devastation. Many Palestinians have been living in cold winter conditions, forced to move several times while facing near starvation and acute shortages.



Archbishop John McDowell and Archbishop Michael Jackson have welcomed the announcement of a proposed ceasefire and release of hostages in the current conflict in the Middle East. The full joint statement from the archbishops is as follows:

‘This represents a fragile moment of opportunity, with the prospect of an end to the war in Gaza and the release of all hostages. We pray for blessing on peace-makers in every

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community in the Middle East who build bridges and reconcile relationships between those divided by conflict.

‘Beyond every number mentioned in reports of casualties in the region is an individual human being made in the image of God with value and dignity, regardless of their nationality or background. The needs of people who mourn or who have been displaced and injured must be foremost in our thoughts and prayers at this time.

‘We hope that this development will lead to a just and lasting peace, the full supply of humanitarian aid to relieve extreme suffering now, and the healing of physical and mental wounds. This requires leadership which relentlessly pursues a desire for peace, over and above any lesser gain, for the well-being of the people who live in the lands in which Our Lord found his earthly home.’

Cathedral Calls

Choral Eucharist in Saint Canice’s Cathedral to mark Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Most Reverend Niall Coll, Catholic Bishop of Ossory, will be the preacher at the Choral Eucharist in Saint Canice’s Cathedral on Sunday morning at 11.30.



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The Service is part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and the Church of Ireland Bishop will be the Celebrant. All are welcome.

Written In The Soul: An Evening of Song in St. Brigid's Kildare

St. Brigid's Cathedral in Kildare will be a marvellous setting for this exceptional musical event.



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In keeping with the spirit of Brigid, and the dignified aura of the Cathedral, this specially curated event will draw from the well of spiritual music, choral music, soul, blues and the Irish tradition to deliver an event that stirs the soul and the spirit alike. Starring Cathy Jordan.

St. Brigid's Cathedral, Kildare. February 2 8:00pm (doors 7:15pm) Tickets on sale now at <https://spiritofbrigid.ie>
More information on this event at -
<https://spiritofbrigid.ie/events/list/page/2/>

After the resounding success of Brigid1500, which welcomed nearly 80,000 visitors to Kildare, the magic returns in 2025, bigger, bolder, and more vibrant than ever before with Brigid 2025 – Spirit of Kildare.

This exciting new chapter builds on the extraordinary momentum of the Brigid1500 programme, taking the celebration of St. Brigid's life and legacy to new heights. With a richer lineup of performances, cultural experiences, and a deeper connection to Brigid's timeless influence, Brigid, Spirit of Kildare promises to captivate audiences of all ages, backgrounds, and locations.

The festival is an inclusive celebration honouring the life and legacy of St. Brigid, designed to bring her story to life in new, inspiring ways for people of all ages.

Through a diverse range of events, including festivals, concerts, art commissions, and workshops, Brigid, Spirit of Kildare will bring St. Brigid's story to life in a fresh way while developing a deeper connection to the past.

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The festival continues to highlight the values St. Brigid championed, such as faith, spirituality, peace, sustainability, arts and culture, social justice, hospitality, and education, and their relevance in the world today.

Clergy and ministry

Pioneer Ministry and Celtic Christianity

St Brigid's Cathedral, Kildare welcomed Valerie Raitt (Pioneer Ministry - Church of Ireland for Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe).



Valerie's work centres on Celtic Christianity, pilgrimage and spiritual tourism along the western seaboard Dioceses.

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On Saturday 8th February, Valerie is organising a special event on St Brigid of Kildare in Connemara National Park in Galway.



Derry rector on 'Your Place and Mine'

Those who've followed the progress of Killeter Parish's campaign to improve St Bestius' Parish Church may be interested to learn that the Rector, Rev Peter Ferguson, is scheduled for an appearance on BBC Radio Ulster this weekend.

Rev Ferguson will be interviewed by Anne Marie McAleese on the popular 'Your Place and Mine' programme about St Bestius' 'Bright and Beautiful' project. The broadcast is today, Saturday at 8am.

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<https://www.facebook.com/528414856142420/posts/928080749509160>

Renaissance Chamber Choir seeks new Conductor and Musical Director

Renowned Belfast Chamber Choir, Renaissance, wishes to appoint a suitably qualified Conductor and Musical Director.

Renaissance is a vibrant chamber choir based in Belfast, with a rich tradition of choral excellence and dynamic performances. Since its founding in 1976, the choir has established a notable reputation in Northern Ireland's musical scene, blending timeless classics with contemporary repertoire.

The choir now wishes to appoint a candidate who will take the choir forward into its 50th season.

Anyone interested can download the Job Description from the link below. The closing date for applications is 31st January 2025 at 5pm.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1y5ub7D32DvDG6WQFTHFZSkiGZBxVnfh4SK9u55RqL-A/edit?tab=t.0>

Any queries should be directed to renaissancechoirbelfast@gmail.com

Vacancies

Diocese of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh

Dean of Elphin & Ardagh

Are you called to ministry in a diocese aiming to be Christ-centred, character building and community transforming?

The Sligo Cathedral Group of Parishes – St Mary & St John the Baptist, St Anne’s Knocknarea and Rosses Point – are looking for an incumbent who will be Dean.

To receive a copy of the parish profile and to submit an expression of interest please contact:

Ven Patrick Bamber. Tel: +353 71 91 46513. Email: rector@calry.ie

Closing date Friday 14th February 2025

Kinawley & Holy Trinity Parish

The churches of Kinawley and Holy Trinity Parish (Derrylin, Crom, Drumany Chapel of Ease) are seeking to appoint an Incumbent to this attractive parish in Co. Fermanagh.

If you would like to express interest or would like further details, then contact:

The Venerable Ian Horner
ianewhorner@gmail.com

The Rectory, Cavan Road, Bailieborough, Co Cavan.
042 9675822

Expressions of interest by Monday 27th January 2025

Armagh Diocese - Incumbent of Kildress & Altedesert parochial group

Applications are invited for the Incumbency of the above parish which is currently vacant.

Kildress Parish is situated a few miles from Cookstown; Altedesert is in the nearby village of Pomeroy. 2 churches with one Sunday service in each. Approximately 250 families. There are a number of parish organisations. Spacious rectory situated close to Cookstown. There are excellent schools in the area and easy access to the M1.

For further information, including a parish profile please contact the Diocesan Secretary, Mrs J Leighton at Church House, 46 Abbey Street, Armagh, BT61 7DZ, Tel: 028 3752 2858, Email: secretary@armagh.anglican.org.

Diocese of Down and Dromore Ministry post(s) with St Mary's Ballybeen

St Mary's Ballybeen (Down and Dromore) wishes to appoint either a full-time Families Outreach Pastor, or a part-time Families Pastor and a part-time Outreach Pastor.

The post-holder(s) will be an active presence in the parish, working to support and develop our outreach and mission to our community, and the discipleship of children, young people and their families, both within the church and in the parish of Ballybeen.

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For more information about these roles and to apply, please download the relevant Job Description and Application Form from the parish website at this link.

Closing date: Monday 3 February 2025, 12 noon.

Family Outreach Development Worker

St. Mary's Parish, Comber, is seeking a committed Family Outreach Development Worker to help establish a thriving Children's and Youth Ministry.

This part-time role, for an initial fixed term of three years, will focus on building a welcoming environment for children, youth, and families, both within and beyond our parish community. The ideal candidate will be passionate about faith formation and community outreach.

Job title: Family Development Worker

Location: The Parish Office, St. Mary's Parish Comber, Comber, BT23 5DU

Hours: 20 hours per week

Salary: NJC Scale Points 14-17, (pro-rata based on a 37.5 hour working week), commensurate with previous experience.

Closing date for applications: Wednesday 29 January at 4.00pm

Application packs are available by emailing: jobs@stmarysparishcomber.com

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Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

School for Synodality online interactive

After the Synod on Synodality in Rome, what next steps can we take to bring synodality into our parishes?

Join the School for Synodality on Saturday 25th January, for an online interactive event to discuss the routes and resources as well as the challenges and opportunities available.

Includes a conversation between Synod facilitator Avril Baigent and delegate Bishop Nick Hudson, small group discussions, Q&A session and more.

Tickets here  www.schoolforsynodality.org.uk

C of I Children and Family Ministry reschedules date of National Conference

The National Conference Neartù will now be held on Neartù: May 24th. Rachel Turner is the keynote speaker - she will be exploring ways that we can disciple children and parents together.

If you didn't get tickets last time you can buy them at a discounted price now until the end of January by using the code: Take2 at the checkout here: <https://bit.ly/neartu>



Nearthú (*Irish for Strengthen*)
A conference for anyone involved in Children and Families Ministry.

**Saturday
May 24th**
10.30 am - 4 pm
€25
(inc. lunch)



Rachel Turner
Keynote speaker.

Author of many books including: "It takes a church to raise a parent"
Founder of Parenting for Faith. International speaker.

As

If you bought tickets last year you can relax - your place is secure!

<https://www.facebook.com/239169528439033/videos/1149765109843293>

Poem for today

AI in the rear view mirror

Something to end a period in which AI has appeared approaching fast in the rear view mirror...

Seated one day at my iPad
I found chat gtp
As my fingers wandered idly
I thought that I would see
If artificial wisdom
Could match my human brain
And write a song of sixpence
Or Singing in the Rain.

It offered me a medley
Of melodies second hand,
Cobbled from its memory
Of songs from every land.
But music as it seemed to me,
It certainly was not,
And artful as it sounded
It pleased me not a lot.

So intelligence that's digital
we do not want to see
And beholden to computers
We do not want to be.
So I sing a song of AI blues
Of rhythms false and fake,
For silicon endeavour
Does not an artwork make.

@Gordon Giles 2024

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

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www.churchnewsireland.org

Link in Monday through Saturday from early morning

Please recommend to your friends