

Church News Ireland

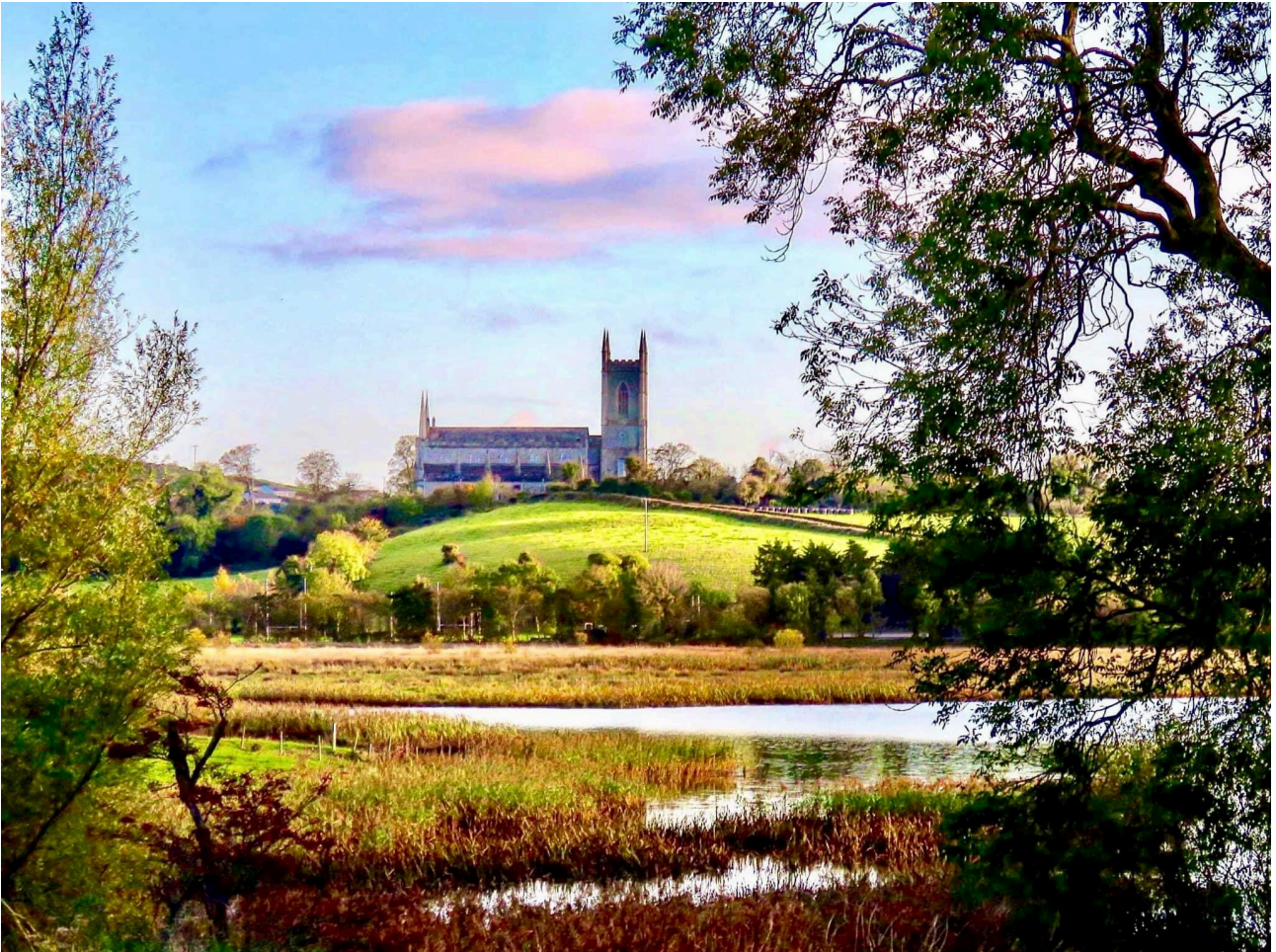


Image of the day – after the storm

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Image for today - after the storm

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Liam Neeson attends New York fundraiser for the Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust

Actor Liam Neeson made an appearance at a fundraising event in New York City for an NI charity which helps families whose relatives have died abroad return the bodies of loved ones back home.

The Emerald Guild of New York held a fundraiser for the The Kevin Bell Repatriation Trust, donating \$20,000 to aid the charity's work.

Donaghadee exhibitions and commemorations on MV Princess Victoria

A reader comments - Storm Eowyn and Radio Ulster set me thinking about the loss of the Larne-Stranraer ferry the MV Princess Victoria on 31 January 1953.

135 lives were lost. The greatest maritime loss of life in the UK since WW2.

The loading gates at the rear of the ferry were closed improperly and she was flooded quickly. A severe windstorm created waves so strong that they were over topping Donaghadee lighthouse.

Donaghadee lifeboat couldn't get out of the harbour and was forced to exit around the north pier. Forty four people survived, but my aunt (a child at the time) recalled seeing the recovered bodies of the deceased on Donaghadee pier.

Perhaps the most famous casualty was Sir Walter Smiles MP for County Down and Deputy Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. His family owned the east Belfast ropeworks. He was the great grandfather of Bear Grylls. He was succeeded in his parliamentary seat by his daughter Patricia Ford (Bear Grylls' grandmother).

Donaghadee Heritage Society and Donaghadee Community Centre will be hosting exhibitions and commemorations next week.

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MV Princess Victoria exhibition Larne

The MV Princess Victoria 72nd Anniversary Exhibition opened to the public yesterday, Monday 27th January 2025, at 10.00am.

The exhibition commemorates the 72nd anniversary of the MV Princess Victoria disaster in 1953.

Telling the story of the ship and the events of that day, the exhibition includes letters of sympathy sent to the family of James Arthur Morrow of Carnalbanagh, who was lost in the disaster, and a policeman's notebook which records details of bodies retrieved following the sinking of the MV Princess Victoria.

The exhibition will be on display until Saturday 1st February 2024. Opening times: 10.00am - 4.00pm.

For more information, please contact Larne Museum & Arts Centre on 028 28 262443 or e-mail marian.kelso@midandeantrim.gov.uk.

Archbishop John McDowell pays tribute to Michael Longley

Archbishop John McDowell, the Church of Ireland's Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, has issued the following tribute to the late Michael Longley:



“I would like to add these few words to the many which have been written in tribute, from many quarters, to the late poet, naturalist and seer Michael Longley.

Among Michael’s many official and unofficial duties, he kindly served as a Patron of the Robinson Library in Armagh. Indeed what seems like only a few months ago, not long after he was named as the winner of the Feltrinelli International Poetry Prize, he gave a reading in Library to help raise funds for that unique eighteenth-century institution. Michael did many such works of kindness and always carried them out cheerfully – in the words of Alexander Pope he ‘did good by stealth/and blushed to find it fame’.

In the 2024 BBC documentary about his life and work entitled *Where do the poems come from?* Michael spoke about a letter he had received from the late Rosetta Larmour, the mother of a man who ran an ice-cream shop on the Lisburn Road and who had been murdered by the Provisional IRA. Rosetta was writing to thank Michael for

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the poem he had written about her son in which he named twenty-one flavours of ice-cream for sale in the shop and also the names of twenty-one wild flowers he had been able to identify on a recent visit to the Burren in County Clare.

In the documentary, Michael said that the words in that letter ‘...excited feelings in me that are limitless and will go on reverberating in my soul ‘til the day I die’. These words reflect a prodigious and deep humanity and truthfulness. They also reflect what many of us feel about so many of the words which Michael himself wrote over his long vocation as a poet. He left the impression that he sincerely meant all the words which he wrote or spoke, in poetry or in prose, in public and in private, in life and in death; and that he believed them all.”

Ar dheis Dé go Raibh a Anam.

Moderator reflects on Auschwitz on Holocaust Memorial Day

Last month, on a visit to Poland, the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Right Reverend Dr Richard Murray, visited a place that has become synonymous with mans’ inhumanity to man – Auschwitz.

On Sunday, the 80th anniversary of its liberation, the day set aside as International Holocaust Memorial Day, he reflected on that visit, saying that ‘it's sobering to



remember that the evil which took place there actually happened within living memory.'

“Today, on Holocaust Memorial Day, people of faith and none, will remember an unequalled tragedy in history that saw six million Jewish men, women and children, and the millions of other victims of the Holocaust, who were murdered by the Nazi’s and their collaborators. Such evil can only forever be a stain on humanity and the world,” Dr Murray said.

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“In commemorating those who perished, the lives and the human potential that was lost with them, we also lament what happened, and try and ensure that it never happens again.”

Last month Dr Murray visited a fledgling Presbyterian denomination in Poland, preaching in a congregation in Kraków. During his time there he travelled to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest of the Nazi death camps.

“Even before I visited, it was sobering to remember that the evil which took place there actually happened within living memory. When we arrived, our guide told us, ‘You are not visiting a tourist attraction today, it is a mass grave you’ve come to’. Dr Murray said.

“As we were guided around Auschwitz, and the massive adjacent camp at Birkenau, the next four hours were harrowing and unforgettable. The gas chambers we stood in, the electric fences, rows of barracks, the crematoria, and the gallows that we saw, all instruments of systematic murder and unspeakable evil. You just came away stunned and numb.”

Returning home that evening, Dr Murray read a book in the airport that he had bought earlier that day. In ‘Night’, (which Dr Murray had read before) Ellie Wiesel wrote about having been deported from Hungary to Auschwitz in 1944 as a teenager.

“Reading it again, having stood in one of the barracks that morning, the words on the page were even starker. In a famous passage, he wrote, ‘Never shall I forget that night,

the first night in the camp, that turned my life into one long night seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the small faces of the children whose bodies I saw transformed into smoke under a silent sky... Never shall I forget those things, even were I condemned to live as long as God himself. Never.' Such powerful writing of an unimaginable horror."

Dr Murray continued, "When world leaders gather later on today in Auschwitz-Birkenau, to commemorate its liberation 80 years ago, they will not be able feel the sheer hopelessness of the place, experienced personally by the dwindling number of survivors who will join them, and were there eight decades ago. They are a living memorial to what took place, and testament to what could happen again."

On Thursday of last week, the Moderator attended the Northern Ireland ceremony to mark Holocaust Memorial Day, which took place in Belfast City Hall. The event not only marked the 80 years since the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, but the 30th anniversary of the genocide in Bosnia.

The Moderator concluded by saying, "So what might our response be, except to love our neighbour, as our Lord Jesus commands? We must continue to remember and commemorate, continue to tell of the Holocaust's horrors to each new generation.

"We also need to lament what happened and mourn that it has already happened again, admittedly on a smaller scale, in Bosnia, Rwanda, Cambodia, and Darfur, and in many other places since – and resolve to search our own hearts

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for anything ugly that treats people as less than a person made in the image of God.”

MAGA world breaks out the pitchforks for the Catholic Church

MAGA world breaks out the pitchforks for the Catholic Church after the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops releases a scathing statement tearing into Donald Trump's "deeply troubling" Executive Orders.

And that wasn't even the worst of it... "Many of the issues President Trump addresses in his recent Executive Orders, along with what may be issued in the coming days, are matters on which the Church has much to offer," the letter, signed by Archbishop Timothy P. Brogli, President of the USCCB reads.

"Some provisions contained in the Executive Orders, such as those focused on the treatment of immigrants and refugees, foreign aid, expansion of the death penalty, and the environment, are deeply troubling and will have negative consequences, many of which will harm the most vulnerable among us," it continues.

Given that the Church is a conservative religious institution, the letter also voiced support for Trump's Executive Order "recognizing the truth about each human person as male or female." But this faint praise was not enough to keep the MAGA cult at bay.



"I wish to reiterate that the Catholic Church is not aligned with any political party, and neither is the bishops' conference," the letter goes on.

"No matter who occupies the White House or holds the majority on Capitol Hill, the Church's teachings remain unchanged. It is our hope that the leadership of our Country will reconsider those actions which disregard not only the human dignity of a few, but of us all," it reads.

"Following the ancient tradition, Pope Francis has declared 2025 as a Jubilee Year of Hope. As Christians, our hope is always in Jesus Christ, who guides us through storm and calm weather. He is the source of all truth," it goes on.

"Our prayer is one of hope that, as a Nation blessed with many gifts, our actions demonstrate a genuine care for our most vulnerable sisters and brothers, including the unborn, the poor, the elderly and infirm, and migrants and refugees. The just Judge expects nothing less," it concludes.

Between this letter and the blunt sermon remarks delivered by Episcopalian Bishop Mariann Budde at the National Cathedral, this has been a historically bad week for relations between Trump and key religious leaders.

As it turns out, real Christians don't support hatred, bigotry, and fascist politics.

The famous Gandhi quote applies to Trump and his Evangelical supporters more than ever: "I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ."

Education

Belfast student selected for European Youth Orchestra Academy

Congratulation to talented musician and Lower Sixth pupil, Alex McQueen of Belfast Royal Academy who successfully auditioned for the European Youth Orchestra Academy.

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In April, Alex will be travelling to Mannheim in Germany for a fully-funded 10-day orchestra residential as one of 50 musicians from across Europe, which will culminate in two concerts. This is a remarkable achievement as she will be participating as one of only six cellists. The Academy is rightly incredibly proud of Alex.



Christian Aid Ireland marks International Day of Education

CAI shares the reflections of an Irish school teacher who travelled to visit our projects in Zimbabwe where she had a chance meeting with a school teacher in the country's Eastern Highlands.



In July, Gillian Porter from County Wexford met Kudzanai Mulambo, Deputy Head of Ndiyadzo Primary School in Chipinge region.

Gillian said, “I was delighted to meet another teacher and she showed me inside her school. Her commitment to the children’s education really shone through.

“But when I asked Kudzanai what she needed for the children, she said ‘food and clothes’. I was shocked to think that the children might not have enough food to eat and clothes to wear. Back

home in Ireland, our focus is on electronic whiteboards, digital devices and all-weather pitches.

“It made me even more determined to continue fundraising for the work of Christian Aid.”

Gillian, who teaches at St. Brigid’s National School in Annacurra, County Wicklow, supports the work of Christian Aid with her donations. She also organises an annual walk

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which sets off from her church, St Fiac's in Clonegal, with dozens of parishioners taking part in the fundraising effort.”

If you'd like Gillian to speak at your church or community group about her visit to Zimbabwe, please email dublin@christian-aid.org

Not your average day at the office for QUB academics

Recently a group of academics from the Queen's University, Belfast visited Stormont Parliament Buildings to showcase the impact their work is having across Northern Ireland and beyond to Executive Ministers, MLAs and policymakers.

“They had the chance to talk to our academics and staff who are making a real difference every day, whether that be through world-leading research and innovation, or life-changing work in the community.”

This was the first of a year-long programme of events to celebrate our 180th year, and highlighted the important role we play in supporting the government's objectives and creating real-world change.

“For nearly two centuries, our work has had a huge impact on real lives, and government priorities, every single day.

“We continue to nurture the minds of game-changers. There are researchers at Queen's considering how technological advancements can both assist in, and pose a risk to, the

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Executive's commitment to Ending Violence Against Women and Girls; researchers looking at transforming healthcare delivery through new techniques and precision medicine which can aid waiting list reduction, and countless other research teams and institutional initiatives linked to government priorities across economic growth, education, climate action, and global peace and security.” (Professor Sir Ian Greer, President and Vice-Chancellor)

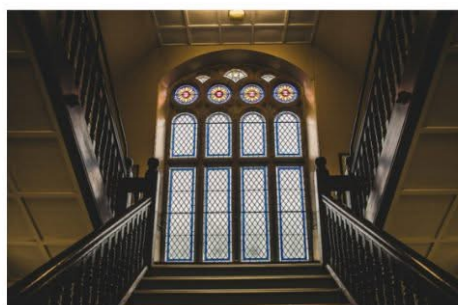
Another opportunity to explore BRA

Belfast Royal Academy

CLIFTONVILLE ROAD, BELFAST

22ND JANUARY 2025

MAKE YOUR OWN HEADLINES - BECOME PART OF OUR HISTORY



**This year, our school
will celebrate its
240th anniversary.
Be part of our
heritage as the oldest
school in Belfast.**

“In 2025, Belfast Royal Academy will celebrate its 240th anniversary and we are so proud of our heritage as the oldest school in Belfast”.

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Find out why generations of pupils have felt a sense of belonging in Belfast Royal Academy and why our alumni are so proud to say that they are former pupils.

If you missed our Open Nights, there will be a supplementary Open Afternoon for Primary 7 pupils and their parents/guardians on Wednesday 5th February at 2pm in the School Library. Please register your attendance by emailing Dr C O'Kane (cokane586@c2ken.net)

Cathedral Calls

Archbishop George Otto Simms last public engagement - RTE Archives

A clip shows Church of Ireland Primate Dr George Otto Simms blessing the foundation stone for a new building for the choir school at St Patrick's Cathedral. The recording continues -

The school which educates boy choristers was founded in 1432 by Archbishop Richard Talbot. Construction work has already begun on the new school and is due to be completed in September.

This is the last public engagement in the capital for Archbishop George Otto Simms who will retire next month. His successor will be elected by the House of Bishops on 25 February. From 1956 to 1969 he served as archbishop of Dublin.

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Also present are the Very Reverend Victor Griffin, Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, and Reverend Gordon Linney.

An RTÉ News report broadcast on 27 January 1980. The footage shown here has natural sound only.

[<https://www.rte.ie/archives/2025/0109/1489892-st-patricks-cathedral-choir-school/>]

St Brigid's Cathedral
Kildare

Patronal Festival 2025

Sunday 2nd February
3.00pm

Preacher:
Rev Robert Townley
Former Dean of St Brigid's Cathedral

 Sung Eucharist with
Cathedral Choir 



The image shows a tall, narrow stained glass window set in a stone archway. The window is divided into several panels. The top panel features a complex white Celtic knotwork design on a dark background. Below this is a panel with a landscape scene of green hills and a red sky. The central panel depicts St Brigid, a woman with a halo, wearing a green and white robe, holding a book and a crozier. The bottom panel contains the Latin inscription 'SCA BRIGID' and 'IN MEMORIAM OF'.

Clergy and ministry

Key ministry in inter-church relations

In the lead up to the recent Week of Prayer for Christian Unity the Anglican Communion Office spoke to The Revd Martin Browne OSB.



Martin is from the Dicastery for Promoting Christian Unity at the Vatican in Rome.

Martin is responsible for relations with the Anglican Communion and the World Methodist Council, and working with the World Council of Churches on the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Martin is also involved in two commissions focused on dialogue and cooperation between the Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions (ARCIC and IARCCUM).

Read the full article on the Lambeth Conference website:
<https://bit.ly/4gVxD1i>

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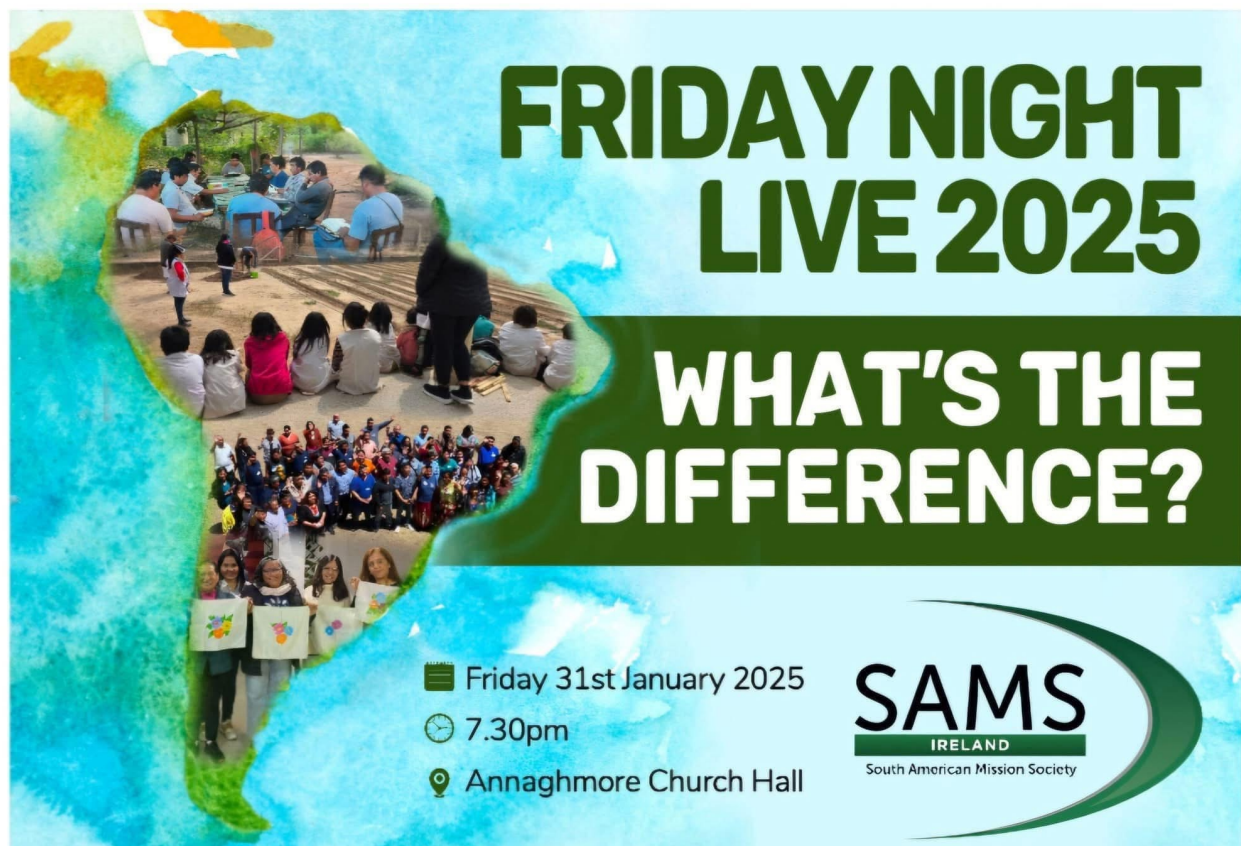
Ex-NI star Fr Mulryne at celebration for United's academy

Footballer-turned-priest Philip Mulryne was among the guests at an event celebrating Manchester United's famed academy.

The ex-Northern Ireland midfielder (47) started his career in the club's youth team, before later spells at Norwich City and Cardiff City.

In 2017, Mulryne was ordained as a Catholic priest in the Dominican Order.

Fr Mulryne, who is reported to have once earned £600,000 a year, also took a vow of poverty.



**FRIDAY NIGHT
LIVE 2025**

**WHAT'S THE
DIFFERENCE?**

Friday 31st January 2025
7.30pm
Annaghmore Church Hall

SAMS
IRELAND
South American Mission Society

He appeared at Saturday night's event at Old Trafford dressed in his religious attire.

There was a strong local connection, with ex-Northern Ireland player Craig Cathcart — another United youth academy product — also present.

The event at Old Trafford was hosted by Helen Evans, wife of defender Jonny Evans.

The annual celebration, which recognises the growth and achievements of players within the United Academy, featured Sir Alex Ferguson as a special guest.

The former manager, who led 38 trophies, including the Treble in 1999, shared advice for the next generation of talent.


"Sacrifice, work hard and practice. It's the defeats that make you," he said.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Powerful evening with George Jones and Heart and Soul


A powerful evening of music and words telling the journey of the life and faith of radio and tv presenter

An evening with
TV, RADIO PRESENTER &
BROADCASTER, AND ENTERTAINER



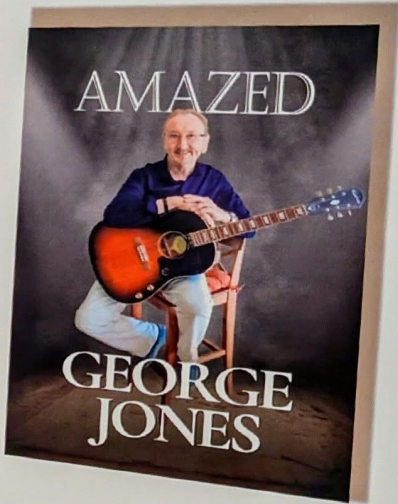
**George Jones &
Heart & Soul**

Christ Church Derriaghy
27th March 7.30

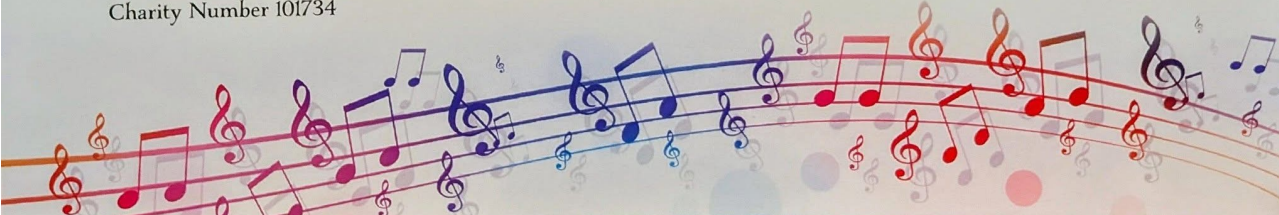


Marie Curie
Cancer Care
Devoted to Life

£15



AMAZED
GEORGE JONES



and broadcaster, George Jones with his band, Heart and Soul.

He will have his book 'Amazed' for sale on the night.
There will be refreshments available after the concert.
This should be a fabulous night to hear George's story.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/george-jones-with-his-band-heart-and-soul-tickets-1221151881149?aff=oddtcreator>

Irish Arts in Dungannon

As it happens, this event falls the day before Mothers Day, so tickets would make a wonderful gift.

Tickets are priced very reasonably at £20 and are available from St. Annes Parish office, church street, Dungannon



NEW IRISH ARTS

DRUMGLASS PARISH
Disciples who delight in letters,
who delight in letters,
and delight in letters

An evening with musicians from
the New Irish Choir & Orchestra

Saturday 29th March 2025 at 7:30PM
St. Anne's Church, Dungannon
Admission £20
Tickets available in person or online



(Open Tuesdays - Thursdays, 9am - 2:30pm), from vestry members, or online at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/new-irish-arts-tickets-1120689034069?aff=oddtcreator>

Hymns of Praise in Finaghy Methodist this Thursday

1st Boys Brigade Band's first event of 2025 is just around the corner. "Hymns of Praise" in Finaghy Methodist Church on Thursday 6th February at 7.30pm

Tickets can be ordered for free on the link, with donations made on the night in aid of Finaghy Cancer Group & 1OB's trip to compete in the 2026 European Brass Band Association Championships, hosted by the city of Linz

1ST OLD BOYS BRASS BAND INVITES YOU TO...



HYMNS OF PRAISE

A sacred concert of fellowship and worship,
with some of your favourite hymns!

THURSDAY	6TH FEBRUARY	7:30PM
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Admission free, donations welcome!
Scan the QR code or search 'Hymns of Praise
Finaghy Methodist' on Eventbrite for your tickets

**DONATIONS IN AID OF FINAGHY CANCER
GROUP AND 1ST OLD BOYS SILVER BAND**



(To request your favourite hymn, message our Facebook page or email secretary1OB@gmail.com)

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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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

Church News Ireland

www.churchnewsireland.org

**Link in Monday through Saturday from
early morning**

Please recommend to your friends