

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Patrick the patron migrant

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Patrick the patron migrant

Archbishop Eamon Martin in his Saint Patrick's message for 2024 says "Saint Patrick might well be considered a patron saint of migrants ...

As we think of Irish emigrants who sometimes struggled to gain acceptance in foreign lands, we also turn our hearts to the many newcomers who have arrived among us"

The Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland also stressed, "Ireland – north and south – needs an honest and open conversation about migration, both outward and inward"

The full text of the Archbishop's message begins on page 7 below.

News

Vote for Christ Church Derry

Christ Church Derry in running for prestigious heritage award

Christ Church, Derry~Londonderry has been shortlisted for a prestigious Heritage Angel Award. The Church's 'Open Door Ministry' has made the final three in the 'Best

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maintenance of a historic building or place' category, with the winners to be decided by public vote.

Voting is now open and will remain so up until 23.59pm on Monday 25th March.

The awards were founded by Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber and celebrate the achievements of individuals, groups and communities who have helped to rescue, regenerate, research and record built heritage in Northern Ireland.

To vote for your preferred projects (in any of the six categories), go to:

[https://heritageangelawards-ni.org.uk/heritage-angels-award-2024-public-vote/?](https://heritageangelawards-ni.org.uk/heritage-angels-award-2024-public-vote/?fbclid=IwAR2fbSOSpEDndTGtLqLeJ-u8vPT4BINlqCoZ7WRWul59ttjrr6ielZ14IOk)

[fbclid=IwAR2fbSOSpEDndTGtLqLeJ-u8vPT4BINlqCoZ7WRWul59ttjrr6ielZ14IOk](https://heritageangelawards-ni.org.uk/heritage-angels-award-2024-public-vote/?fbclid=IwAR2fbSOSpEDndTGtLqLeJ-u8vPT4BINlqCoZ7WRWul59ttjrr6ielZ14IOk)

Retired clergy hear work of Methodist/C of I Covenant Council

The first event of the Retired Clergy Association (NI)'s 2024 programme took the form of a joint meeting with Methodist retired clergy in the Church of the Good Shepherd, Monkstown, New townabbey – which is itself a joint Anglican/Methodist single congregation partnership – in February, Canon John Budd writes.

The meeting came about as a result of an initiative of the Rev Dr Harold Good, a past President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, who addressed the RCA (NI) in 2023.



Charity Evening **Tuesday 19th March**

with Claire Woods MBE
head gardener
at Hillsborough Castle Gardens



“A year at Hillsborough”
Maghera Presbyterian Church Hall
at 7.30 pm

Admission £10.

Light refreshments
Proceeds in aid of Horatio's Garden
at Musgrave Park Hospital,
Spinal Injuries Unit



Bring and Buy Plant Sale

Everyone welcome



Rev Dr Janet Unsworth, Director of the Ministries Team of the Methodist Church in Ireland

Following coffee in the Church Hall, members were welcomed by the Rev Nathan Ervine of the Church of Ireland who is at present responsible for the Church of the Good Shepherd, and the Rev Billy Davison and Canon Jim Campbell on behalf of the Methodist and Church of Ireland retired clergy respectively.

The guest speaker was the Rev Dr Janet Unsworth, Director of the Ministries Team of the Methodist Church in Ireland, based at Edgehill House in South Belfast, and currently Secretary of the Covenant Council which oversees relations between the Church of Ireland and the Methodist Church. She was recently appointed as the next Methodist

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Ecumenical Canon on the Chapter of St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast.

Taking as her subject the work of the Covenant Council, she traced the course of inter-Church relations from as far back as 1905, referencing the Tripartite Commission of the 1960s and the Joint Theological Working Party of the 1980s which drew up a draft Covenant to oversee Church of Ireland and Methodist relations and which was presented to the Methodist Conference and General Synod in 2000.

Dr Unsworth told members that following the draft publication questions about both Church unity and relations with other denominations, particularly the Presbyterian Church, were to the fore, although there were only 65 responses to the 2000 draft.

In 2001, a revised draft was sent to the Methodist Church and the Church of Ireland which was passed by both Churches in 2002, with a formal signing then taking place. The Joint Theological Working Party was dissolved and the Covenant Council set up in its place.

Dr Unsworth said that the Covenant was never meant to be seen as a line in the sand, but, rather, as part of a process. It included 10 steps, covering topics such as praying for each other, welcoming each other's members, sharing resources, helping to draw out common gifts, encouraging interchange of ministries, encouraging united congregations, and joint training and chaplaincy work.

Over the years, much work has been accomplished arising from the Covenant and progress is still ongoing. There have

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been some joint mission events and areas for possible joint future mission work have been identified.

The speaker believed that interchangeability was central to the implementation of the Covenant, both locally and on a wider front. Whilst recognising each other's offices and liturgical rites, there was still continued exploration of each other's understanding of ministry and of rites such as Ordination, Holy Communion, Confirmation and Marriage.

Whilst some areas remain more sensitive and some easier to progress than others, Dr Unsworth added, the picture may always be mixed, though she believed that there was still so much more we could do together than apart.

Members present agreed that the meeting had proved to be a very enlightening and fruitful occasion and similar joint meetings were referred to as a possibility in the future.

Saint Patrick's Day 2024 message of Archbishop Eamon Martin to the people of Ireland

“Saint Patrick might well be considered a patron saint of migrants ... As we think of Irish emigrants who sometimes struggled to gain acceptance in foreign lands, we also turn our hearts to the many newcomers who have arrived among us”

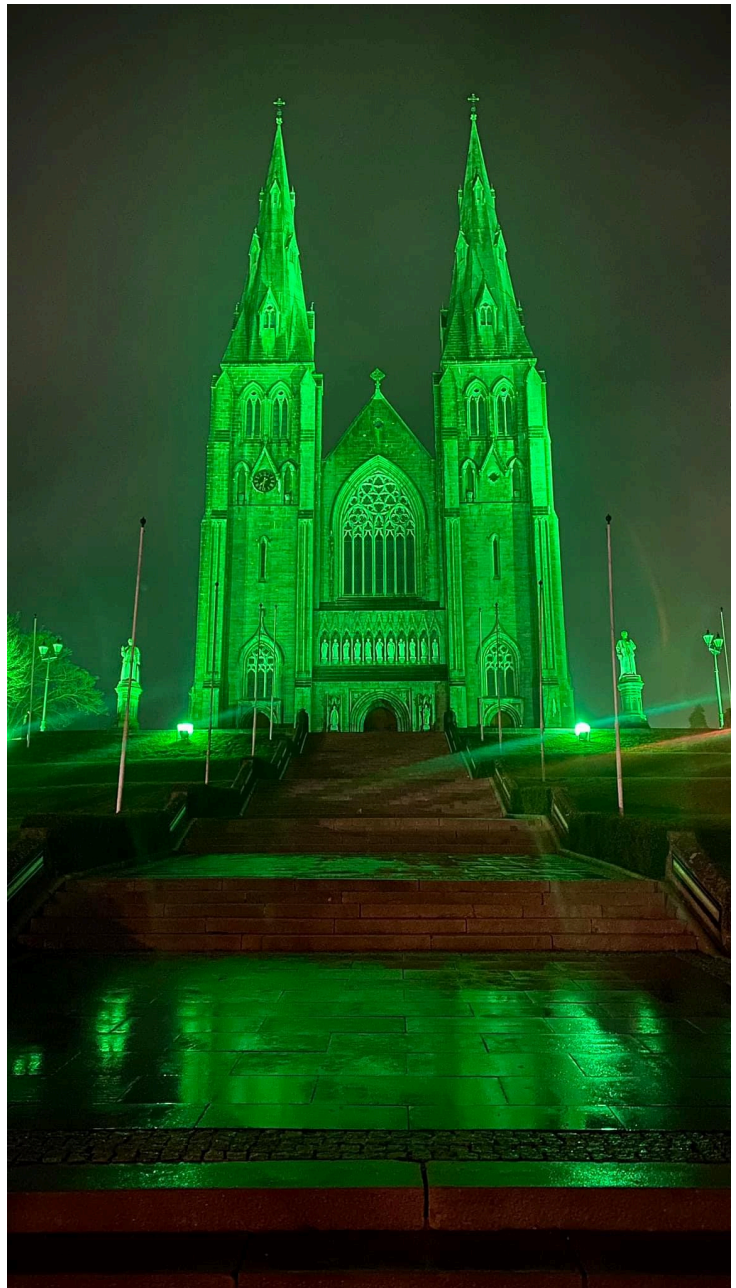
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“Ireland – north and south – needs an honest and open conversation about migration, both outward and inward”

Message

On Saint Patrick’s Day our thoughts and prayers naturally turn to our Irish emigrants abroad. Some left Ireland many years ago and have set down roots in other countries; others, including many thousands of our young people, have only recently gone in search of new places and opportunities. Wherever they are in the world – from Sydney to Toronto, from Manchester to Dubai – we wish them all a very happy Saint Patrick’s Day!

Nearly 64,000 people left Ireland in the year to April 2023 – around half of them were Irish citizens; but many Irish also returned home during that period bringing valuable new life skills.



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I spoke recently to one mother whose two eldest daughters – both of them recent graduates – have now followed many of their friends to Australia. She was clearly missing them a lot, but she tried to put a brave face on it, saying, “They’re having a great time and a better quality of life; hopefully they’ll be back, and anyway, what is there here to keep them?”

As a prayer for her daughters, I offered a line from Psalm 121: ‘The Lord will watch over your going and your coming, both now and forevermore’.

Going and coming is a major feature of the modern world. Millions of people are on the move. Some are voluntary migrants, seeking exciting new challenges and opportunities; others, sadly, are forced to leave their homes and families, displaced by war or economic hardship. Still others are cruelly deceived, captured and exploited by human traffickers.

Saint Patrick might well be considered a patron saint of migrants. He certainly understands the predicament of the trafficked unaccompanied minor; the exploited labourer; the escaping refugee; the immigrant, the emigrant; the expat; the student or missionary abroad! Saint Patrick wrote about enduring many hardships, hatred and insults in Ireland for being a foreigner (Confession, 37).

But having escaped his persecution, and finding himself back amongst family and friends, Patrick heard the voice of the Irish, calling him, “Come back gentle youth and walk once more among us”. Returning to our shores, Patrick made Ireland his home and liked to call himself ‘one of us’.

Today, as we think of Irish emigrants who sometimes struggled to gain acceptance in foreign lands, we also turn our hearts to the many newcomers who have arrived among us.

Pope Francis often speaks about migrants and refugees in terms of ‘welcoming’, ‘protecting’, ‘promoting’ and ‘integrating’ them:

- ‘welcoming’, in the sense of offering adequate and dignified initial accommodation;
- ‘protecting’ by defending their rights and dignity;
- ‘promoting’ opportunities for their employment, learning the language and becoming active citizens; and,
- ‘integrating’ them, by fostering a culture of encounter and mutual understanding, inclusion and diversity.

These are the very hallmarks of the kind of society that we would want for our own young people and families who travel to other countries – either willingly, or out of necessity.

It is worth asking ourselves this Saint Patrick’s Day, ‘how can Ireland live up to its reputation as a land of welcomes, renowned not only as a place of great natural beauty, but also as a country of warm hearted and charitable citizens who are prepared to offer sanctuary to those who arrive in need?’

Ireland – north and south – needs an honest and open conversation about migration, both outward and inward. How can we truly become an island of belonging and hope where our own young people, health workers and teachers

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want to stay, and where others want to come and live among us? This important discussion will only move away from the extremes when we recognise legitimate anxieties and resolve to tackle together, at national and community level, the immense challenges of providing affordable homes and services for all.p

When Saint Patrick walked among us, he brought the Good News of a merciful and compassionate God, who accompanies all of our comings and goings; God who wants us to welcome the stranger, to reach out to the margins and hear the cry of the poor.

An Ireland worthy of Saint Patrick is an Ireland of welcomes which does not tolerate hatred or racism, and which embraces both its returning citizens and its newcomers.

May we always, like Saint Patrick, see Christ behind and before us; on our right and on our left, in quiet and in danger; and in the mouth of friend and stranger.
Amen.

Beannachtaí na Féile Pádraig oraibh go leir.

+ Professor Sir Peter Gregson

The death has taken place of Professor Sir Peter Gregson - (Chair of Henry Royce Institute; previously CEO of Cranfield University, President of Queen's University Belfast and Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Southampton).

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Sir Peter died suddenly at home on 23rd February, aged 66.

“Beloved husband of Rachael, adored father of Ellie, Maria and Chrissie, wonderful Pa to Caleb (and now Jesse) and loving brother to Nicola and Philippa”.

Private family cremation. Thanksgiving Service at 2 p.m., Friday 3rd May in Romsey Abbey. If you would like to join the celebration of Peter’s life, please RSVP via <https://forms.office.com/e/jrEw7Euddy> Donations if desired for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance or Endometriosis UK may be given via <https://petergregson.muchloved.com>

Cathedral call

From a Slave to a Servant of God’

‘From a Slave to a Servant of God’ is the theme of Dublin Council of Churches’ 2024 St Patrick’s Day Service.

The ecumenical service takes place in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, on Sunday March 17 at 6pm and all are welcome to attend. The service celebrates the life and message of St Patrick in word, song and music and is organised by the many Christian churches in Dublin.

Christ Church Community Chorus Concert

On Saturday 23rd March at 8pm the Community Chorus of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, will perform Karl Jenkins's 'The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace' and Gabriel Fauré's much-loved Requiem, featuring soloists from the Cathedral Choir. The concert is free to attend and not to be missed!

Organ Music for Holy Week

On Monday 25th March at 6pm**, the Cathedral Organists at Christ Church, Dublin, will give a recital on the theme of Holy Week. Taking the listener from Jesus's entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday up to his Crucifixion, this recital will feature some of the most expressive and poignant music in the organ repertoire and is a chance to reflect and meditate as we approach Good Friday. Entry to the recital is free, a retiring collection will support the work of the Music Department.

Dog-friendly cathedrals

The Telegraph writes, "It's not quite all creatures great and small"... but half of England's cathedrals have opened their doors to dogs. The Association of English Cathedrals says that the pets are so important in people's lives, especially since the pandemic, that some buildings have now begun to open as dog-friendly spaces. See also -

[\[https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2024/1-march/features/features/cathedral-doors-open-to-kanine-visitors\]](https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2024/1-march/features/features/cathedral-doors-open-to-kanine-visitors)

In the media

Pope Francis reveals he has no plans to retire as he recovers from illness - Irish News

Pope Francis says he has no plans to retire and is not suffering from any health problems that would require doing so, saying in a new memoir he still has “many projects to bring to fruition” Nicole Winfield writes

Francis, (87), made the comments in an autobiography, *Life: My Story Through History*, which is being published on March 20, the 11th anniversary of his installation as pope.

Extensive excerpts were published yesterday in the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera*.

In the memoir, written with Italian journalist Fabio Marchese Ragona, Francis traces key moments of his life and their intersection with world events (the Second World War, Argentina's military dictatorship and Vatican intrigue) and how they together inform his priorities as Pope.

Significantly, he addresses recurring speculation about his health problems, criticism from conservatives and what both may mean for the future of his pontificate.

Such questions have always surrounded the papacy but the prospect of a papal resignation only became a reality with the late Pope Benedict XVI's historic 2013 retirement.

Francis has been battling bronchitis, flu and a cold on and off this winter and for the past two weeks has asked an aide to read most of his speeches.

He had a chunk of his large intestine removed in 2021 and was hospitalised three times last year, including once to remove intestinal scar tissue from previous surgeries to address diverticulosis, or bulges in his intestinal wall.

In his memoir, he stressed that the papacy is a job for life but that “if a serious physical impediment” occurs, he has already penned a letter of resignation that is being held in the Secretariat of State.

“But this is, I repeat, a distant possibility, because I truly do not have any cause serious enough to make me think of resigning,” he said.

“Some people may have hoped that sooner or later, perhaps after a stay in the hospital, I might make an announcement of that kind, but there is no risk of it: Thanks be to God, I enjoy good health, and as I have said, there are many projects to bring to fruition, God willing.”

Francis acknowledged that critics inside the Vatican and out have accused him of destroying the papacy and have tried to block the reforms that he was mandated by cardinals to enact as a result of his 2013 election.

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Francis doubled down on his decision to allow Catholic priests to bless same-sex couples and denied that the criticism could split the church.

He reaffirmed his support for civil unions while ruling out gay marriage, saying “it is right that these people who experience the gift of love should have the same legal protections as everyone else”.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

The view St Patrick saw from Slemish

As a slave, Patrick is believed to have tended flocks on the slopes of Slemish, in Co. Antrim. He describes finding faith in Jesus during this time: a faith which he then shared with the people of the island of Ireland when he came back in later life.

<https://vimeo.com/531311218> (1:00)

St Patrick's Day Pilgrimage

The Diocese of Down and Dromore's annual pilgrimage from historic Saul Church to Down Cathedral, Downpatrick. Pilgrims from all traditions join to walk and pray before arriving at the Festival Service at the Cathedral. Afterwards a wreath is laid at the Mourne granite stone believed to be the site of St Patrick's grave.

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<https://vimeo.com/260572642> (02:52)

The life and times of St Patrick

Former Archbishop of Armagh Alan Harper discusses the life and times of St Patrick, including what we know from research into early manuscripts referring to him, and his relevance in today's world.

<https://soundcloud.com/churchofireland/stpatrick> (14:39)

Tapes above courtesy The C of I Press Office

► **WORLDWIDE EVENING**
with
Rev. Johnny & Emily
Lowden

► Tuesday 19th March in
Glendermott Parish Hall,
at 8pm

► **EVERYONE WELCOME!**



Mothers' UNION
Christian care for families
Diocese of Derry & Raphoe

Church Times Festival of Faith and Music

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The Archbishop of York will give a keynote speech at the Church Times Festival of Faith and Music, a new venture created in partnership with the Royal School of Church Music, that will be staged for the first time at York Minster from Friday 26 until Sunday 28 April.

Find out more here

www.archbishopofyork.org/news/latest-news/new-festival-faith-and-music-launch-york-minster

The Organ Podcast

Organist Richard Gowers talks to The Organ Podcast about his experience as a King's College organ scholar, working with Sir Stephen Cleobury, and how he's diversified his keyboard skills to develop his career. Listen to episode 3 wherever you get your podcasts, or visit

<https://bit.ly/3T1qt0A> for more details.

Book spot - Heaven On Earth by Dr Emma J. Wells

This is a glorious illustrated history of sixteen of the world's greatest cathedrals, and the extraordinary stories of the people who built them.

More than architectural biographies, these are human stories of triumph and tragedy interwoven with the extraordinary stories of the people who built them. Together, they reveal how 1000 years of cathedral-building shaped



THURSDAY 21ST MARCH @ 7PM IN THE BELFAST JESUIT CENTRE
EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT
THE CAMINO

Join us for an enlightening Camino talk tailored for first-time walkers! If you have questions about embarking on this transformative journey, we've got you covered.



Our experienced guides, **Brendan McManus SJ** and **Susanne Bradley**, will share insights, tips, and practical advice to ensure your Camino experience is unforgettable.

From what to pack to navigating the trail, we'll address all your concerns and provide valuable guidance every step of the way.



Whether you're seeking spiritual renewal, adventure, or are simply curious about the Camino, this talk is perfect for you.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to prepare for your Camino pilgrimage and embark on the journey of a lifetime. Come along and start your Camino adventure on the right foot!

Belfast Jesuit Centre,
193 - 195 Donegall Street,
Belfast BT1 2FL
belfastjesuitcentre.co.uk
belfastjesuitcentre@gmail.com

To register, email belfastjesuitcentre@gmail.com

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modern Europe, and influenced art, culture and society around the world.

Heaven On Earth was Blackwell's Non-Fiction Book of the Month for February.

[https://blackwells.co.uk/bookshop/product/9781788541954?gC=5a105e8b&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw48-vBhBbEiwAzqrZVJggOtEGUeiDqaq2ND3LDoRrvKShQkmgW61xeh7OsVd4qElbxc0eKBoCmF8QAvD_BwE]

Invitation to sing The Crucifixion by Sir John Stainer

The Choir of Saint Bartholomew's Church and the Sandford & St Philip's Choral Union invite singers from the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough to participate in a rehearsal and performance of The Crucifixion by Sir John Stainer in Saint Bartholomew's Church, Clyde Road, Dublin 4 on Saturday 23rd March 2024

St. Bartholomew's Church is easily accessed by Public Transport
Nearest DART Station, Lansdowne Road.

Bus Services to Ballsbridge (4, 7, 7A, and S2)

Bus Services to Donnybrook (39A, 46A, 145, 155 and Bus Eireann 133 from Wicklow).

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Street parking is available Free on Saturdays.

Musical Director: Ben Barnes

Organ: David O'Shea

Tenor: Max O'Neill

Bass: Robin Heather

2.30pm Registration / Rehearsal

4.30pm Break with tea/coffee provided

5pm Performance

Please bring your own scores. (Some may be available on the day)

The performance at 5pm is open to all, and Hymn sheets will be provided.

This event is a fundraiser for the St Bartholomew's Organ Restoration Fund so please give generously.

About The Crucifixion

It is a very appropriate work to be sung on the day before Palm Sunday as we enter Holy Week. The Crucifixion: A Meditation on the Sacred Passion of the Holy Redeemer is an oratorio by John Stainer written in 1887 for SATB choir and organ with solos for bass and tenor. The format follows that of the Bach Passions and tells the story of the Passion and Crucifixion of Jesus. The text is taken from the King James Bible and other text is written by WJ Sparrow Simpson. The work is dedicated to "my pupil and friend W. Hodge and the choir of Marylebone Church". It was first performed on Ash Wednesday in 1887 and it has been sung in Marylebone Church every year since then. There are 5 hymns sung by the choir and audience throughout the work

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culminating in the final and most well known For the love of Jesus, also known as All for Jesus, All for Jesus.

Please come and join us for what promises to be a very enjoyable afternoon and help us to raise some much needed funds for the continuing restoration of the St Bartholomew's organ.

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
