

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – The gift of art**

## Image of the day

### **The gift of art - "The Aird Road" on the Isle of Skye**

**Derek Robinson had just finished in (very wet! He said) oil paint on linen - "The Aird Road" on the Isle of Skye.**

For show at Gallery An Talla Dearg in August. More underway over next few weeks.

Hotel Eilean Iarmain, Isle of Skye, Hebrides

### **Dunluce's annual exhibition is most successful yet**

**Dunluce Parish welcomed record numbers to its 15th annual Art and Photography Exhibition held over the early May Bank Holiday weekend.**

The Parish Centre in Bushmills was buzzing with locals and visitors alike admiring the 270 works by the 71 artists who took part.

Guest artist Ross Wilson opened the event on the Friday evening, complimenting the artists on their talent, and encouraging them to continue expressing their creativity through their art. Ross also congratulated the organisers on the quality and organisation of the exhibition.



The majority of exhibitors came from counties Antrim and Londonderry, but every county in Northern Ireland was represented.

The organisers were delighted with the attendance and the lovely warm atmosphere, both in the exhibition space and in the Drawing Room Café.

Old friends caught up with each other – and judging by the amount of chat and laughter, visitors of all ages seemed to enjoy themselves.

Commission from the sales of 68 artworks and proceeds from takings over the weekend will be donated to the Bishops' Appeal Fund, the Church's World Aid and Development Programme.



## From Romania to Enniskillen

**Steve and Rosie Kennedy of the Irish Presbyterian Church have been ministering as global mission workers in Romania.**

Church members have been asked to remember the Kennedy family as they make this transition back to life and service in Northern Ireland -

- for Steve as he prepares to be installed as minister of Enniskillen Presbyterian Church on 17 May,

- and for Rosie and the girls who will be completing the school year in Cluj.

## Chester Cathedral preference of Duke of Westminster

The Duke of Westminster has revealed he will move from London to Chester after marrying in the city.

Hugh Grosvenor, the seventh Duke of Westminster, will wed duchess-to-be Olivia Henson in what is expected to be a grand occasion for the Cheshire city with invitations sent out to members of the Royal family.

The scenes are expected to echo the marriage of Lady Tamara Grosvenor and Edward van Cutsem at Chester Cathedral in November 2004, where thousands of onlookers lined the streets as they saw royal guests including Elizabeth II and Prince Philip, Prince William and Prince Harry arrive.

Preparations for the wedding on June 7 are under way and the Duke, 33, acknowledged it was likely to be nerve-racking but added that he was “unbelievably excited”.

The Duke told local paper The Standard: “We’ve got a long association with the cathedral as a family so we were here for my father’s memorial, my sister’s wedding and every Remembrance Sunday that I can attend is here.”

Miss Henson, 31, said: “It’s obviously a place where we will live We’ll be building our lives together and we’re slowly transitioning to move up from London and be much more permanent here and really putting roots down.”

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The previous Duke of Westminster was the first in the line not to retain a residence in County Fermanagh. He was an officer in the army reserve and rose to become its most senior officer, a role which brought him to Northern Ireland often during his period in office.



## **Ennis Priest first Nuncio to South Sudan**

**On Tuesday (14th May 2024), Pope Francis announced the appointment of Ennis Priest, Monsignor Seamus Horgan as the first Nuncio to South Sudan, residing in Juba.**

Monsignor Seamus is son of the late Denis and Pauline Horgan, Tobertaoscain, Ennis, and was the last priest

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ordained by the late Bishop Michael Harty in the Cathedral of SS. Peter & Paul Ennis in June 1994. The newly ordained Fr Seamus served as a curate in the parishes of Bodyke and Roscrea. Following service in the Diocese of Killaloe, he entered into the Diplomatic service of the church with several postings around the world. Currently Msgr Seamus is attached to the Nunciature in Washington DC.

Msgr Seamus will be ordained Archbishop later in the summer before taking up his appointment in South Sudan.

Ennis parish commented - We congratulate Msgr Seamus on his new calling and assure him of the prayers and support of his parish community who fostered his vocation.

## **All Saints Church Belfast built in 1906 proposed for listed status**

**A 19th century church and an experimental physics research centre in Belfast have been proposed for listing.**

The construction of the current All Saints' Church building on Canterbury Street was completed in 1906, while the International Research Centre for Experimental Physics at Queen's University dates back to 1962.

Buildings of special architectural or historic interest are assessed by the Department for Communities Historic Environment Division and proposed to local councils for listing.

Statutory listing of buildings began in NI in 1974 and the first survey of buildings took more than two decades to complete.

Now there are almost 9,000 listed buildings here. When a building is listed it is given a level of protection to prevent any changes that would result in the loss of their significance.

The first interaction of All Saints' Church dates back to the late 1800s, when services were held at a temporary iron building at the Canterbury Street site. It sat 750 people and cost £700.

As the congregation grew, a permanent building was constructed, facing onto University Street. Seating 1,000 people, the new structure cost £8,000. It was designed in the early English gothic style and the nave — the central aisle of the church — was completed in 1898.

The section of the church near the altar that is reserved for the clergy and choir, the chancel, was completed in 1906. The contemporary architectural journal, the Irish Builder, wrote at the time that the church was “one of the largest and most beautiful in the city”.

According to a briefing document prepared for Belfast City Council's (BCC) planning committee: “The Lord Bishop of Down, Connor and Dromore, in his opening sermon, remarked that one of the greatest beauties of architecture, 'more than florid or enriched ornamentation', was 'the beauty



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of proportion' which had been achieved at All Saints by the construction of the chancel.”

The briefing document adds that All Saints' is of “local interest and social and cultural importance”.

It has been proposed that the church, boundary walls, piers and original gates be listed.

The International Research Centre for Experimental Physics at Queen's was designed in 1955 by John MacGeagh, who also designed part of St Anne's Cathedral. Construction was completed in 1962.

Courtesy - Report by Andrew Madden in Belfast Telegraph

## Cathedral Calls

### Belfast Cathedral's 120th anniversary services

#### **Anniversary services will be held on 2nd June, 2024**

11.00am A Civic Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving marking the 120th Anniversary of the consecration of the Nave in 1904.

A special service of Choral Matins sung by the cathedral choir, with the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Reverend John McDowell as our preacher.

3.30pm - A Choral Eucharist of Celebration. Join clergy and representatives from parishes across the Dioceses of Down, Dromore and Connor as we give thanks for a cathedral build to serve these three dioceses. And share in the inaugural



performance of the Missa Sancta Anna composed for this anniversary by Lucy Walker, Composer in Residence with the St Martins Singers, London, and sung by the choir of Belfast Cathedral.

For further details see: <https://www.belfastcathedral.org/news/preparing-to-celebrate-our-120th-anniversary-on-2nd-june-2024>

## **Bishop's sermon in Limerick Cathedral challenges view of General Synod vote about the baptism of children of unmarried parents**

**The service of Evensong Saint Mary's Cathedral, Limerick on Sunday 12th May 2024 was an opportunity**

**for members of the diocese of Limerick, Tuam and Kildare to come together and celebrate and give thanks for the rich variety of gifts shared in their diocese.**

The focus of the service was not only to celebrate lay and ordained ministry within the diocese, but it was also a way of giving thanks for all those who assist in the ministry of our diocese whether lay, ordained, diocesan or parochial, whether serving on committees, leading services, or making teas.

In his sermon, Bishop Michael Burrows, highlighted and gave thanks for the work of volunteers and also made extensive reference to the recent General Synod debate on baptism.

**Bishop Burrows then said - Now I want to come to my third point, which is entirely informed by recent events in Armagh, where the General Synod met yesterday and on Friday, and it will continue to do, in my view very foolishly, online on both Tuesday and Thursday evening, because I don't believe you can have a gathering of 600 odd people online in any effective way.**

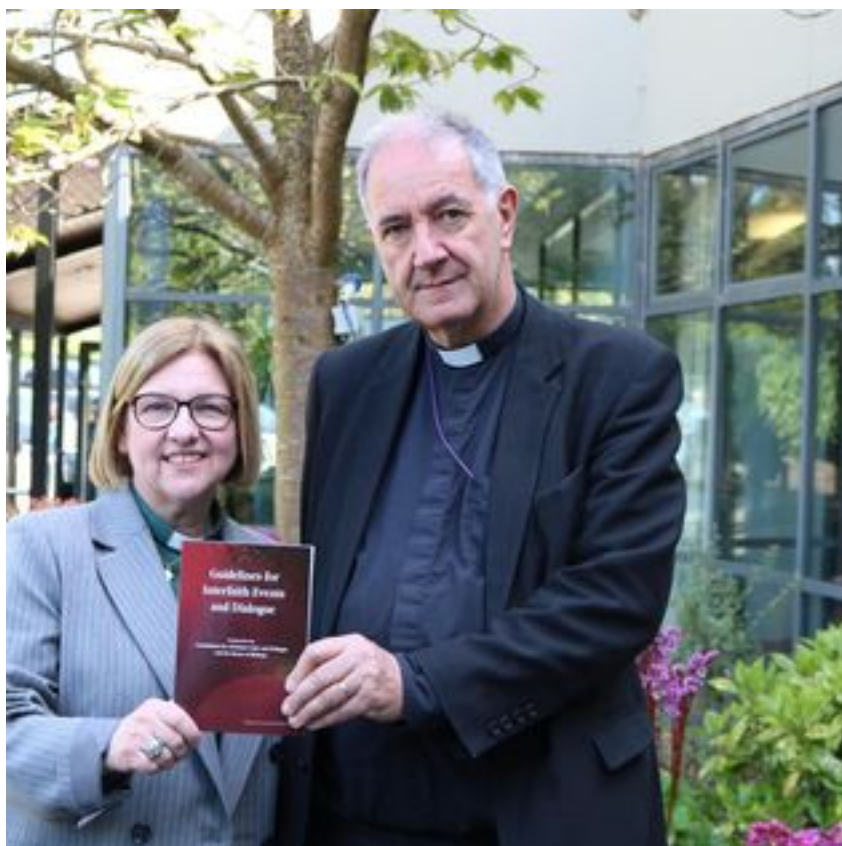
I don't know how the Spirit was given a chance to move in such a context, and in saying that I am not being a Luddite or anti technical, but you can't do it.

However, the General Synod is a place where we celebrate the ministry and the contribution particularly of the laity. There are twice as many of them there as there are clergy.

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From lay roles represented at the synod, from immersion in the life of the church, comes often the kind of courageous and prophetic voices that we often need to hear. Sometimes the General Synod votes, as we say, by Orders, so the clergy and the laity vote separately. This is because, on the particular question, a sufficient number of people can petition for the vote to be taken by orders.

And often, when they do frankly, they have an agenda. Because if you have to get both Orders, rather than a simple majority, to pass something, you have more of a chance of frustrating it in one of the cases. Anyway, and some would say this was a debate we didn't need to have, a motion had been put down affirming in effect that the grace of baptism should not be delayed or denied in the case of children



[Bishop Burrows at Synod launch of refreshed 'Guidelines for Interfaith Events and Dialogue'](#)

where the only issue at stake was the marital status of the mother or the parents.

This was not about proper theological preparation for baptism. an appropriate presenting to parents of the demands of baptism. It was simply a statement that the marital status of parents alone should be affirmed as not being an impediment to the grace of baptism. Now, I wouldn't have thought that was a discussion we needed to have.

I've been a bishop for nearly 18 years, and under the particular canon, I have never had an appeal to me about a delayed baptism either in this diocese or the last one I was in, and I have to say, if a priest delayed baptism on those grounds alone, I would tell them precisely what to do, which is to get on with it.

However, the General Synod apparently is not sure that it agrees with people like me. And after quite a long debate, which was full of very good speeches, particularly by lay women, and I want to mention one in particular from this diocese, which was made by somebody who is up to her neck in the sort of foot slogging task that I mentioned earlier in relation to assisting with the production of the diocesan magazine and with the chairing of a school board.

That particular lay member of the synod from this diocese revealed most courageously that when she had been born in that grim and gloomy Ireland of the 1950s, she had herself been born out of wedlock.



## **The Six Mile River enters Lough Neagh near Antrim town.**

But looking back on her life in an adopted family, she wanted to say, this was the message I picked up at any rate, that her lifetime of foot slogging discipleship in the Church of Ireland had begun when her unmarried mother was not denied baptism for her.

And there was a huge round of applause. And then we voted by orders, and the laity, by a vast majority, approved the motion affirming, as it were, non withholding of the grace of baptism in such situations, but by a majority, I have to say a very tiny one, the clergy took the other view. And so the motion fell, and although the law of the church has not been changed, the optics of such an event are appalling and shameful.

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And we have sent out a message to the world in an Ireland which should know, God knows, enough about the awful treatment of single mothers in the past. We have sent out a message in 2024 that we have scruples, apparently, about the baptism of the children of unmarried parents. And in saying that, I am all for the sanctity and the commitment of marriage.

And I have never experienced this issue under my Episcopal oversight but, apparently it arises, and the General Synod has acted as it did, and the damage will take a long time to be sorted out, and I am afraid that the wisdom and the experience of the which we're celebrating so much today did not defend us from the excesses of the clergy.

But I'm sure not clergy from this diocese. But nonetheless, there is a trajectory there, and it pains me very deeply. And I hate to sound judgmental, and I know I'm being streamed, and who will watch me, and who will be reacting I will be interested to see.

The older I get, and every year when I return from the General Synod, I sometimes wonder to myself more and more what planet I'm on.

And whether the Church of Ireland is still the place I thought I knew and loved. Sometimes I genuinely wonder that. And then I come back to this place, or in, for 16 years to my former diocese. And rapidly, and thankfully, I realized that when I did, I still found myself in a place of sanity. Anyway, our thanks today, and I hope I haven't appeared too judgmental, but I am cross.

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Our thanks today go to all who, in quiet, foot slogging, committed ways, Keep the wheels turning and are often, through that discipleship, inspired to say the courageous words. And we are deeply grateful for the sanity that ministry brings to the Church of God in these parts as it strives to serve, goodness knows, a complicated world which doesn't do black and white polarity easily. Enough. Amen.'

## In the media

### **Belfast Telegraph - Cancer survivor Suzanne (76) set to walk '70k in May' to fundraise for Christian Aid**

**A 76-year old cancer survivor from east Belfast is hoping to walk 70km in May to raise money for vulnerable communities around the world.**

Suzanne Shepherd from Belmont signed up to walk the distance - just over 43 miles - as part of a fundraiser for Christian Aid Ireland, writes Jessica Rice.

Suzanne received surgery in 2020 to treat malignant lesions that made sitting and walking unbearably painful.

She is now able to walk again pain-free and hopes to raise as much money through her walking challenge as possible.



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“I'm so thankful that I'm a survivor of cancer, and my enjoyment of walking can be put to such a good cause for Christian Aid,” she said.

Suzanne plans to achieve her 70km target with daily walks around her east Belfast home and her sister's Lisburn home.

The pensioner is an active member of St Dorothea's Church of Ireland in Gilnahirk and has always been an active fundraiser within the community.

She was awarded the BEM in 2013 in recognition of her many decades spent volunteering and fundraising for charities and good causes. This year she decided to take part in Christian Aid's '70k in May' — a new initiative for Christian Aid Week, which runs until Saturday. Christian Aid's '70k in May' is a sponsored challenge to cover 70 kilometres by walking, running, cycling or swimming, in order to raise money to help some of the poorest people across the world.

### **Christian Aid Ireland Chief Executive Rosamond Bennett thanked Suzanne for her fundraising efforts.**

“Every year during Christian Aid Week, people across the UK and Ireland raise funds, act and pray for their global neighbours in a celebration of hope for a fairer world. Christian Aid Week brings people together to put our faith into action. Every prayer, every gift, every action makes a difference,” she said.

The money Suzanne raises on her daily walks will go towards this year's Christian Aid Week appeal, which

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focuses on the charity's work in Burundi, one of the most densely populated and poorest countries in Africa.

Christian Aid has been working in Burundi since 1995 when it first offered humanitarian assistance to people surviving the civil conflict. Now, alongside local partners, the organisation helps establish Village Savings and Loans Associations.

These community-led groups mean people can save and borrow money, making small businesses possible, offering reliable incomes so families can eat regularly, get medicine when they need it, and build safer homes.

**One of the people Suzanne will be supporting with her donations is Aline Nibogora (35).**

Aline is a survivor of both domestic violence and homelessness, thanks to a small start-up loan from Christian Aid, she was able to begin trading avocados and peanuts locally. With her profits, Aline bought a bicycle to transport greater quantities of goods to markets further afield and now has the money she needs to support herself and her children.

In 2021, just four months after she spent 31 nights in hospital, Suzanne took part in a 75km walking challenge.

Speaking to Belfast Telegraph at the time, Suzanne said; “If I can inspire people that's the main thing. I also thought it would be good to do something that can bring in funds to the charity.”

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# Poem for today



## In May

By William Henry Davies

Yes, I will spend the livelong day  
With Nature in this month of May;  
And sit beneath the trees, and share  
My bread with birds whose homes are there;  
While cows lie down to eat, and sheep  
Stand to their necks in grass so deep;  
While birds do sing with all their might,  
As though they felt the earth in flight.  
This is the hour I dreamed of, when  
I sat surrounded by poor men;  
And thought of how the Arab sat  
Alone at evening, gazing at

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The stars that bubbled in clear skies;

And of young dreamers, when their eyes  
Enjoyed methought a precious boon  
In the adventures of the Moon  
Whose light, behind the Clouds' dark bars,  
Searched for her stolen flocks of stars.  
When I, hemmed in by wrecks of men,  
Thought of some lonely cottage then  
Full of sweet books; and miles of sea,  
With passing ships, in front of me;  
And having, on the other hand,  
A flowery, green, bird-singing land.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## Church News Ireland

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