

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Induction of Chief Rabbi of Ireland

Image of the day

Induction of Chief Rabbi of Ireland

Chief Rabbi Mirvis (right) visited Dublin this week, He said ,
“I was delighted to induct Rabbi Yoni Wieder into office as
Chief Rabbi of Ireland and to pay tribute to the outstanding
leadership Rabbi Yoni and Rebbetzen Olivia are giving to
the Irish Jewish community”.

News

St Ann of Lego Church

**St Ann’s
Dawson Street
was recently
visited by a
Lego model of
the church.
The model
was created
by David Fennell who spent six weeks building it.**



David’s work can be seen at the forthcoming Brick Féile
event on July 20 and 21 in the City North Hotel near Dublin
Airport.



The Vicar of St Ann's, Canon Paul Arbuthnot (right) said: "It was a pleasure to meet David – his model of St Ann's, the church in the heart of the city, is as delightful as it is detailed.

"It's an honour that somebody as talented as David should spend time making such a beautiful and interesting model of St Ann's. I particularly thank him for taking the time to come to St Ann's to set the model up in its home location".



If you would like to see more of David's work, tickets for Brick Féile can be purchased here:
<https://www.xn--brickfile-g4a.ie/>

Email change for Duke of Edinburgh School Leavers

If you are a school leaver and have used your school email address on eDofE (C2K email address), it is best to change this to your personal email address as soon as possible.

It is very important that your eDofE account reflects your current contact information as the DofE teams will use these to contact you regarding your Award and future events.

May 25, 2024

If you are a Leader, please ensure all school leaver in your group have updated their information. Notice courtesy of CL & CGB.

Joe Whitten remembered at Bray church fête

Christ Church, in Bray, hosted its annual garden fête last Saturday, May 18, in the church grounds, and despite some parking issues in the neighbourhood, the day was a huge success with those taking part blessed with glorious sunshine, Tom Galvin writes in Bray People/ Irish Independent.

There were plenty of stalls selling all manner of goods, but it was the wonderful scent of the BBQ and the homemade cakes that lured in the passers-by and, as always, the raffle offered some great prizes. Donors this year included EMC Property Maintenance, The Travel Boutique, Killruddery House and Gardens, Stackstown Golf Course, Tanseys of Bray, Fleuritique, Kaliedy, Kilcrone Furniture, Paul McGovern Car Sales and Mulveys Butcher's.

Sadly, the Christ Church community were mourning the passing of one of its own, Joe Whitten, who died on Tuesday, May 14, at the great age of 94. But in a touching tribute, Joe was remembered as someone who "loved his parish of Christ Church" and "was always thinking up ways to raise parish funds and is best known for 'Joe's Christmas trees'."

May 25, 2024

Over the years, Joe helped raised €1000s for local Bray charities and was “meticulous about making sure any monies raised were shared out equally”.

One of the first members of ‘Recycled Teenagers’, Joe was remembered as the one “who would often try to keep us all that bit longer as he related stories of times gone past”. He was known to have loved his once-a-month gathering and “always managed to sneak home some sausages and cakes”.

“For Joe to pass away the week of our Parish Fete is only another lovely reminder of Joe at the Book Stall,” the tribute said, “always there with his usual efficiency.”

Excellent photo gallery by Leigh Anderson at -
[<https://www.independent.ie/regionals/wicklow/bray-news/see-photos-as-joe-whitten-remembered-at-bray-church-fete/a220798638.html>]

Suspended Scottish Bishop, Anne Dyer, must face disciplinary tribunal

The suspended Bishop of Aberdeen & Orkney, the Rt Revd Anne Dyer, is to face a Clergy Discipline Tribunal this autumn over allegations of conduct unbecoming of a cleric, the [Scottish Episcopal Church](#) has confirmed.

A [statement](#) published on Friday reports that an investigation has been carried out by the Church’s Preliminary Proceedings Committee (PPC) of several complaints lodged against Bishop Dyer under Canon 54 (the



Suspended Scottish Bishop, Anne Dyer, must face disciplinary tribunal

Church's clergy-discipline canon). Last November, the PPC had referred these to the Procurator for further consideration, Hattie Williams reports in The Church Times.

“The Procurator, Paul Reid KC, has now decided to take three of those complaints to a hearing before the Clergy Discipline Tribunal, and Bishop Dyer has been formally notified of this decision,” the statement says. “The alleged canonical offences concern behaviour or conduct unbecoming of a member of the clergy, which brings or is

May 25, 2024

likely to bring the Church into disrepute. The other complaints will not be pursued further by the Procurator.”

Bishop Dyer was first suspended in August 2022 after two formal complaints of misconduct, understood to relate to accusations of bullying, but appealed against the decision and was almost immediately reinstated ([News, 10 August 2022](#)). Two months later, however, the Episcopal Synod rejected her appeal and the suspension was reinstated.

Allegations about Bishop Dyer’s conduct first came to light in October 2020, after the trustees of St Andrew’s Cathedral, Aberdeen, commissioned a review of a dispute with the director of music. A second review was commissioned the following year, this time by the Primus, after allegations of bullying were made by the Provost of the cathedral, the Very Revd Dr Isaac Poobalan ([News, 6 March 2021](#)).

Bishop Dyer’s lawyers have said on her behalf that “an entirely one-sided and self-serving picture has been presented by a handful of people who fundamentally object to same-sex marriage and to Bishop Dyer’s appointment as the Diocese’s first female bishop. . . She is clearly frustrated at being unable to respond publicly to the very personal and gruelling attacks on her” ([News, 14 October 2022](#)).

The tribunal hearing is to take place in Edinburgh on 10 September — “in public, unless determined otherwise by the Tribunal,” the statement concludes.

“Bishop Dyer now has one month to enter a plea in respect of the accusations. She remains suspended during the Canon 54 process.”

May 25, 2024

The Rt Revd Dorsey McConnell continues to serve as Acting Bishop of the diocese.



Columbans gather in Peru for General Assembly 2024

The leaders of the various Regions and Mission Units in the Missionary Society of St Columban, along with some elected delegates and designated others, have gathered in Lima, the capital of Peru for a General Assembly.

This is an event held every six years. Delegates are tasked with reviewing what has happened in the past six years and

May 25, 2024

with discerning the path forward for Columban Mission. A new leadership team will be elected to lead the Society into the future.

Fr Peter O'Neill has been elected President of the Assembly and President of the Steering committee. The members of the Steering Committee are: Fr Andrei Paz, Fr Carlo Jung, and Sherryl Lou Capili, Coordinator of Lay Missionaries.



New Primate for Episcopal Church in the Philippines

The Provincial Synod of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines have elected their new Primate.

May 25, 2024

The Right Revd Nestor Poltic, Diocese of North Central Philippines, has been elected as the next Prime Bishop (Primate) of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines. He will take over from The Most Revd Brent Alawas after his installation.

Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, Bishop Anthony Poggo has spent time with the bishops this week on a visit to the Philippines. Speaking about the election of the new Primate he said: "I have been delighted to spend time with my brothers and sisters of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines. I give thanks for the service of Bishop Brent and all he has done for his Province and the Anglican Communion. He has played an important role as chair of CCEA (Council of Churches of East Asia) and as a member of the Primates' Meeting, which recently met in Rome.

Featured in the photo (left to right): The Right Revd Nestor Poltic, the Right Revd Anthony Poggo and The Most Revd Brent Alawas.

Pope discusses ‘globalisation of indifference’ during famous US television news show

The renowned US television show 60 Minutes featured an interview with Pope Francis, The Catholic Herald reports

The prime-time programme showed segments from an interview that the Pope did with CBS News (the abbreviation of Columbia Broadcasting System), his first one-to-one

May 25, 2024

interview with a US TV network, in which Pope Francis spoke about immigration, surrogacy and clerical abuse.

Debuting in 1968, the 60 Minutes programme distinguished itself from other news programmes by using a unique style of reporter-centred investigation. It came to be regarded as “one of the most esteemed news magazines on American television”, according to the New York Times.

Giving his remarks in Spanish, which CBS translated into English, the Pope addressed the question of why there is such “indifference” to the plight of migrants.

Indifference to the plight of migrants

“Do you want me to state it plainly? People wash their hands!” Pope Francis said. “There are so many Pontius Pilates on the loose out there...who see what is happening, the wars, the injustice, the crimes \[but whom say] ‘That’s OK, that’s OK’ and wash their hands. It’s indifference. That is what happens when the heart hardens...and becomes indifferent.

“Please, we have to get our hearts to feel again. We cannot remain indifferent in the face of such human dramas. The globalisation of indifference is a very ugly disease. Very ugly.”\

Migration is something that makes a country grow

The Pope also said that migration is something that makes a country grow.

May 25, 2024

“They say that you Irish migrated and brought the whiskey, and that the Italians migrated and brought the mafia... (laugh) It’s a joke. Don’t take it badly. But, migrants sometimes suffer a lot. They suffer a lot,” Francis said.

The interviewer, news anchor Norah O’Donnell of CBS, told the Pope that she grew up in Texas, where a Catholic charity on the border with Mexico – the Annunciation House – offers undocumented migrants humanitarian assistance. Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton has recently tried to shut it down for helping undocumented immigrants. The pontiff described the attorney general’s actions as “sheer madness”.

“To close the border and leave them there, that is madness,” the Pope said. “The migrant has to be received. Thereafter you see how you are going to deal with him. Maybe you have to send him back, I don’t know, but each case ought to be considered humanely.”

O’Donnell also asked the Pope about the Catholic Church’s teaching on surrogacy.

“In regard to surrogate motherhood, in the strictest sense of the term, no, it is not authorised,” the Pope said.

“Sometimes surrogacy has become a business, and that is very bad. It is very bad.”

O’Donnell then noted that “sometimes for some women it is the only hope”.

The Pope said this “could be”, while adding: “the other hope is adoption. I would say that in each case the situation

May 25, 2024

should be carefully and clearly considered, consulting medically and then morally as well,” he continued.

“I think there is a general rule in these cases, but you have to go into each case in particular to assess the situation, as long as the moral principle is not skirted,” Francis said.

Clerical sexual abuse of children within the Church

Addressing the scourge of clerical sexual abuse of children within the Church, the Pope said that it “cannot be tolerated” and that “when there is a case of a religious man or woman who abuses, the full force of the law falls upon them”.

He added that “in this there has been a great deal of progress”, while also saying that the Church “must continue to do more”.

“Unfortunately, the tragedy of the abuses is enormous,” the Pope said, adding that set against this an “upright conscience” must not only “not permit it but put in place the conditions so that it does not happen”.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Launch of “From Every Nation?”

A new handbook to equip and support churches in understanding diversity and inclusion was launched at the

May 25, 2024

101st Annual Meeting of the Irish Council of Churches which took place in Gracehill Moravian Church, Co Antrim recently.

“From Every Nation? A Handbook for a congregation’s journey from welcome to belonging” aims to equip churches with an understanding of diversity and inclusion, and to support actions at the local church level to improve inclusion and work towards racial justice through faith.

Speaking after the launch of the handbook, **Bishop Andrew Forster**, Immediate Past President of the ICC, said: “We’re thrilled to be able to introduce this handbook as a comprehensive guide exploring the intersection of faith, diversity, and anti-racism. We hope those involved in church leadership will find it useful in fostering deeper belonging for all in their church”.

CTBI’s (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland’s) Director of Justice and Inclusion, **Richard Reddie**, gave the keynote address.

Reflecting on the resource, he said: “Racial justice ‘is everyone’s business’ and ‘is unfinished business’. Often many Christians don’t engage in these matters because they do not feel equipped to do so – they don’t want to say the ‘wrong thing’ and offend people. But if Christianity is for everyone, it behoves us all to engage and it’s great to see this handbook exploring these matters within an all-Ireland context.”

Bishop Brendan Leahy, Co-Chair of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting, added: “This handbook allows space to reaffirm our commitment to promoting justice and equality for all. We

May 25, 2024

hope church members will be equipped through using this resource to better understand diversity and work towards building a church where everyone belongs and is included”

The Annual Meeting of the **Irish Council of Churches** gathers senior church leaders and lay representatives from across its 15 member churches in Ireland, bringing together the broad spectrum of Irish Christianity. The Irish Council of Churches also maintains a structured dialogue with the Catholic Bishops’ Conference through the Irish Inter–Church Meeting, representatives of which were also in attendance.

In the media

Jerusalem Post - Irish government rewards Palestinian terrorism with a state – opinion

The Israel-Ireland Alliance, as well as the majority of the Jewish community in Ireland, opposes the unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state writes Jackie Goodall

Today is a sad day for Ireland-Israel relations and for the nation of Ireland, as almost eight months after the horrors of the October 7 massacre, our political leaders have rewarded Palestinian terrorism with the unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state.

Following the worst loss of Jewish life since the Holocaust, Ireland’s new Taoiseach (Prime Minister) Simon Harris, has started as he means to go on - rewarding Palestinian terrorism.

May 25, 2024

The Ireland Israel Alliance, which I founded six years ago, opposes the unilateral recognition of a Palestinian state, as do many others in Ireland, including the vast majority of Ireland's beleaguered Jewish community. We believe that such a move rewards terrorism and that rather than bringing a peaceful resolution to this tragic conflict, it will only further inflame tensions. Already, Israel's Ambassador to Ireland, Dana Erlich, has been recalled to Israel for consultations.

Only last month, the Irish government parties stated that the diplomatic representative of the Jewish State was not welcome at their party conferences, while Taoiseach Simon Harris and Foreign Affairs Minister Micheál Martin sought to lead the charge on Ireland's recognition, while lobbying other EU member states to follow suit.

The message from our political class is clear: the reward for Hamas terrorism and the punishment for Israel's self-defense is a Palestinian State. Indeed, the Taoiseach could not even afford a full sentence from his remarks at a recent Party conference to the innocents still being brutally held captive in Gaza. Not to mention the lame lip service the new Fine Gael leader offered to the families of the Israeli hostages still held in Gaza by Hamas.

Following a recent security incident targeting the embassy in Ireland, the Irish government decided to fan the flames and cross the picket line to join the voices of hate and violence in our society. This marks a persistent pattern in the Irish political response to October 7 - from UNWRA's links with Hamas, to saying Irish-Israeli citizen Emily Hand had been 'lost and found', to ongoing efforts by the IDF to rescue the hostages, to demonizing Israel and denying Palestinian

May 25, 2024

responsibility for their terrorism. This latest escalation is not the end. There will undoubtedly be further provocations to come – until sense returns, or until the cord linking Dublin and Jerusalem is finally severed.

Since the first news emerged of the massacre of Israeli civilians, security forces, and some 70 foreign nationals, in addition to the ongoing, horrific situation with the hostages still held in Gaza (babies and children included), their families and loved ones not knowing if they are dead or alive – Ireland's political leaders continue to tarnish our reputation on the international stage.

Synagogues implemented additional security measures in response to the outpouring of antisemitism, with many Jews and Israelis in Ireland fearful of publicly expressing their identity for fear of attack. Quite simply, where is the voice of reason? Where is the voice of moderation in Irish politics – who will raise the plight of the hostages, who will challenge the rise in antisemitism, who will refuse to support Palestinian terror? Taoiseach Simon Harris and Foreign Minister Micheal Martin now appear determined to even censor the voice of the Jewish State, lest the voice of the Jewish State be heard.

In response, we are organizing a March & Rally in Dublin this Sunday, May 26, at 3 pm. We will be joining several pro-Israel organizations including the Ireland branch of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, All Nations Church Dublin, Irish Christian Friends of Israel, and the Irish Jewish community. The rally will include key cross-community speakers including the newly inaugurated Chief Rabbi of Ireland, Yoni Wieder.

May 25, 2024

Rabbi Weider's speech will include personal testimonies from the Jewish community in Ireland who feel their viewpoint is being delegitimized by our political and media establishments, as well as their feelings of betrayal at being told that their feelings currently have no space in Irish society.

We can only hope for better days ahead. We will not give up on strengthening the alliance between Ireland and the Jewish state.

Jackie Goodall is the founder and executive director of the Ireland Israel Alliance, a Dublin-based NGO formed in 2018.

This op-ed is published in partnership with a coalition of organizations that fight antisemitism across the world.

Belfast Telegraph - Parents' group challenges power of churches over primary school pupils

The overwhelming majority of religious visits to schools were by those representing Christian faiths despite more children than ever being registered as no faith or other, according to a new report, Mark Bain reports in the Belfast Telegraph.

The report was compiled by a group of parents who form Parents for Inclusive Education NI (PfIE NI) and are challenging the power of churches over primary school pupils in Northern Ireland.

It reflects what they describe as a lack of inclusion and transparency over which religious organisations are given access to their children.

Only 13 of 11,500 visits to primary schools from outside organisations in dealing with religious matters were from outside the main Christian faiths — that's despite more children than ever registering as no faith or other.

The group also claim that significant numbers of schools don't proactively inform parents about the right to withdraw their children from religious practices and fail to inform parents of visits from religious organisations.

Set up in 2022, the grassroots campaign group of primary school parents raised further concerns that daily acts of collective worship are still legally required in all schools and the core RE syllabus at primary level focuses exclusively on Christianity and features no other religions or world views.

Further issues of Christian churches being represented on the Boards of Governors of all Controlled and Catholic Maintained schools and Controlled Integrated schools, schools being legally obliged to give ministers of religion and other suitable persons (who parents do not object to) access to pupils to deliver RE and inspection of RE conducted by churches, not the Department of Education, were also raised.

“Parental right to withdraw children is not widely communicated or exercised,” the report added.

May 25, 2024

“On April 30 2024 the NI Court of Appeal, in overturning a High Court ruling that a child's human rights had been breached, placed crucial emphasis on parents' rights to withdraw children from religious practices at school as a 'safeguard against indoctrination in the school setting', upholding a finding that the Religious Education (RE) curriculum is 'not conveyed in an objective, critical, and pluralistic manner'.

“Against this backdrop PflE found that, despite a legal requirement to do so, at least 290 schools (38%) are failing to publish details of the withdrawal procedure in their prospectus, and that parents' right to withdraw their children from religious practices is only being exercised for an estimated 1.2% of pupils across Northern Ireland.

Dr Eve Gilmore from PflR NI said she hopes the report will be a catalyst for a change in attitude.

“We are delighted to present our report into religious practices in primary schools,” she said.

“We hope that it will be embraced by the education community and important work can begin on developing an improved programme of learning which is inclusive of the wide range of world views held here, rather than the current syllabus which focuses exclusively on one.

Boyd Sleator, co-ordinator of Northern Ireland Humanists, added: “This has shone a light on just how little inclusion there is in our school practices when it comes to religion and belief.”

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
