

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Remembrance in Washington

March 15, 2025

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Image of the day



Remembrance in Washington

The deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland Emma Little-Pengelly MLA and the NI Communities Minister Gordon Lyons MLA visited Arlington National Cemetery in Washington DC this week to lay a wreath at the grave of Field Marshal Sir John Greer Dill.

Field Marshal Dill was a Lurgan born Ulster-Scot who forged the UK-US Special Relationship, working alongside US General George Marshall during the Second World War. When he died the US Administration agreed that his

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contribution to the USA and the Second World War warranted this unique recognition.

The Northern Ireland representatives were joined by James Applegate, the United States Consul General in Belfast, who laid a wreath on behalf of his country.

News



Creative variety in response to Day of Prayer

This year's service for the Women's World Day of Prayer was compiled by the women of Cook Islands in the Pacific.

At group meetings and services there was certainly creative variety.

St Polycarp's Mother's Union (Above) enjoying an Indian sari demonstration with Manju.

Mothers Union hear of daughter born with Apert Syndrome

Castlecaulfield and Donghmore Mothers' Unions held their Visitors' night with Mrs Julie Philpott who spoke about her daughter Jessica who was born with Apert Syndrome.

Julie also told members about how God has helped and guided her and her husband over the last 16 years and the many challenges they have faced.

“For I know the plans I have for you’, says the Lord. Plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:1

Parish response to Abaana mission team to Uganda

At St Nossonus’ Church and Tamlaght O’Crilly Church on a recent Sunday morning, Charlotte, Ellie and Natalie ‘took over’ from the Rector and shared their calling and plans to take part in an Abaana mission to Uganda.

All three girls were amazing sharing their calling and challenging the congregation to think about what they can do. The team are looking for shorts, T-shirts and books to take with them. All proceeds would be gratefully received. There will be a box in each church to put donations in.



Scrabo near Newtownards

As a result of the girls talks a number of adults expressed an interest in take part in a mission team. If anyone would be interested in finding out more contact Gary or Gillian and we can invite someone from one of the Missionary organisations to provide information.

Christ Church Strabane Healing Service

On Sunday 6 April the Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Ministry of Healing Team will visit Christ Church, Strabane to assist at a Healing Service at 6.30pm.

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The parish posted - What can you expect? A healing service is a time you can step away from a busy world and rest in the presence of God. You can come for prayer for yourself or a family member or friend.

There is absolutely no pressure to come forward, it's entirely up to you. No one can hear what your needs may be and everything is treated in a confidential and sensitive manner.

If you've never been to such a service before, please do consider coming along. The service is open to absolutely everyone and a warm welcome awaits all.

End of an era at Christ Church Leeson Park

Tuesday March 11 2025 marked the end of an era at Christ Church Leeson Park.

The imposing south Dublin church was deconsecrated following a final service of Evening Prayer during which the congregation was encouraged to cherish the memories of all that had happened there over 150 years and recognise that nothing God gives goes to waste.

The origins of the church lie in the Molyneux Asylum for the Female Blind which moved from Peter Street to Leeson Park in the 1860s. The Molyneux Chapel was rebuilt and renamed Christ Church Leeson Park in 1874. It became a parish in 1892 and was united with St Bartholomew's, Clyde Road in 1972.

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The church, which could accommodate hundreds of worshippers, was closed in 2007. It operated, with a modified right of use, with a Eucharist every Wednesday from 2008. A licence agreement for use by the Romanian Orthodox Church also functioned



well for many years. Unfortunately, the building was too large for the parish's purposes. The Select Vestry made the difficult decision to sell the property last year.

On Friday March 7 there was a final said Eucharist in Christ Church Leeson Park. Archbishop Michael Jackson undertook an Act of Deconsecration of the church on March 11.

In his sermon, Archbishop Jackson drew on the readings for the day [Genesis 4 starting at verse 6 and Galatians 4 starting at verse 8] as the context for the evening's service



Canon Andrew McCroskery reads the petition for deconsecration to the Archbishop.

noting that Scripture was written for our learning and could speak into any situation including the deconsecration of a He said that the reading from Genesis saw Joseph planning for the future in the time of plenty which meant there were stores of food when famine struck. “I encourage all who have memories of this gracious, extensive church in the past to bring those memories with them into the future. No gift from God is wasted so we are encouraged to take the spiritual harvest of this church into the seven years of famine,” he said.

The Epistle sees St Paul talk to the Galatians who have turned to other ways of understanding the world. He tells them that they are known by God. The Archbishop said that



we need to be given to God as circumstances change. “We cannot control how God knows us,” he said. “The way this church was used by worshipers and organisations in the past lives on in the spirit of those who were inspired here. That inspiration will continue to mark and celebrate Christ Church Leeson Park.”

Prayers were said for all who served God over generations in Christ Church Leeson Park. Members of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Dublin were also remembered in prayer.

Following the service, Canon Andrew McCroskery read the petition to the Archbishop requesting him to secularise the church and release it from consecration. Archbishop Michael Jackson read the Act of Deconsecration.

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Your church or faith community can host the ECI Climate Justice Candle

You can use the candle in worship to raise awareness of climate justice and caring for our common home.

Just drop a line to info@ecocongregationireland.com and they will arrange to get the candle to you. You can read lots of stories of how faith communities have used the candle in worship here <https://www.ecocongregationireland.com/shine-a-light-on-climate-justice>

Education

Ballyclare HS

ReadOn supports NI Cancer Fund for Children

A huge well done to the Year 8 pupils for their incredible fundraising efforts!



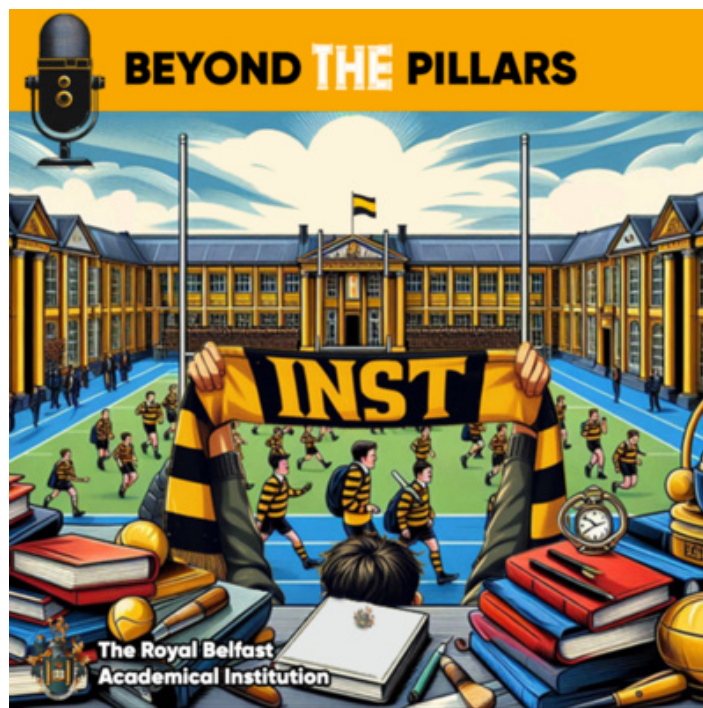
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Rebecca from NI Cancer Fund for Children visited the school recently, where she was presented with a cheque for an amazing £4,788.78 raised through the ReadOn initiative

ReadOn encourages pupils to read for fun while supporting children and young people affected by cancer. Thank you to all the pupils and their families for their generosity.

Episode 3 of RBAI's Beyond the Pillars is now available

In this episode, Vice Principal Mrs Muise gives her insight into the pastoral workings of the school.



Also featured is an interview with past pupil Andy Watt (1999-2006). Andy talks eloquently about his experience of bereavement as a pupil and how he dealt with the loss of his mum in the run up to captaining the 1st XV to victory in the 2005 Schools Cup Final.

The episode is available on Spotify and Apple podcasts:

<https://creators.spotify.com/pod/show/d-gray5/episodes/Friendship--Hope--Team-with-Andy-Watt-e302i39>

[https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/friendship-hope-team-with-andy-watt/id1798940685?i=1000699032021;](https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/friendship-hope-team-with-andy-watt/id1798940685?i=1000699032021)

Kids have a great morning with police Neighbourhood Team

On a recent morning officers from Castlereagh Neighbourhood Team attended Carr Primary School and Little Gems nursery in Dundonald.

Officers showed them around the Police vehicles and spoke to them about Road Safety and the importance of keeping safe at all times.



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Animate your imagination

Join Cinemagic on 23rd March at the Ulster Museum, Belfast for a hands-on Digital Animation workshop.

Using iPads and animation software WheelWorks artists will guide young people through the basics of creating animated images.



Reserve your spot now:

<https://wegottickets.com/event/649329>

Cathedral Calls

CHURCH OF IRELAND
The Cathedral Church of Saint Patrick, Armagh
Celebrating the life, faith and witness of
Saint Patrick
Sunday 16th March 2025
7.30pm Vigil Service and Procession of lights
After the short service, the route takes us from St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral to St Patrick's Roman Catholic Cathedral for closing prayers, followed by refreshments.
Monday 17th March 2025 – St Patrick's Day
10.00am Eucharist (Rite 2) in Irish
Celebrant: The Revd Canon David Hilliard
11.00am Choral Eucharist (Rite 2)
Choir: The Armagh Diocesan Singers
Celebrant: The Dean of Armagh
Preacher: The Very Revd Sarah Rowland Jones,
Dean of St Davids, Wales

Clergy, parishioners, and friends are invited to join us in Armagh for these services, held on the site of St Patrick's 'Great Stone Church' of 445AD. Clergy are invited to robe.



Clergy and ministry

Irish missionary nun celebrates 40 years service in Brazil

Irish missionary, Sr Margaret Hosty, is celebrating 40 years of missionary work in Brazil where she recently received an award in recognition of her devotion to the poor and marginalised in her adopted country, Matt Moran writes.

Sr Margaret grew up on a small farm at Cloonfad, Co Roscommon in the West of Ireland. One of a family of 12 - six boys and six girls - she says that she knew from an early age that she wanted to devote her life to missionary work in Latin America.

In those days, missionaries used to visit schools to talk about their work in far distant lands. That was a very effective way to create interest in the missions and to influence students to consider the missionary life.

In September 1967, she left home to enter the novitiate of the Sisters of Saint Louis in California along with two other Irish girls. After graduating from California State University at Fullerton, she began working as a teacher. Then in 1985 when the opportunity came to move to Brazil, she quickly accepted the opportunity.



St Patrick's C of I Cathedral, Armagh

"When I came to Brazil", she says, "I had to learn Portuguese, the language we speak here. I then taught English and also began working with a group of washer-women - women who wash other people's clothes by hand and iron them - accompanying them as they formed a syndicate to protect their rights as workers".

At the same time, she helped out in a parish on the outskirts of Goiânia where there wasn't a priest. It was through a colleague and friend in parish work that she first met someone with AIDS. "I knew almost nothing about AIDS at the time, she says, "but seeing the discrimination my new friend suffered, I realised that so many others were also ill-informed, leading to fear and stigma for those with HIV/ AIDS. After his death, I felt I needed to do something about this, and that was how I began working with and for people living with HIV and AIDS."

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In 1995, she co-founded an organisation called AAVE Group in the city of Goiânia. The AAVE Group (which in English stands for: AIDS, Assistance, Life, Hope) works with people with HIV/AIDS and their families. It provides psychological support and counselling, home and hospital visits, advice on their rights and legal entitlements, and training for income generating skills to help people who have lost their incomes due to HIV/AIDS become financially self-sufficient and provide for themselves and their families. Social support and a sense of community is central to the work of AAVE, creating a place for people to be welcome and escape the stigma and misunderstanding that still exists around HIV/AIDS. Advocacy and outreach in the poor and marginalised areas of Goiânia are also important.

Sr. Margaret points out how they "go out into the community, to schools, church groups, factories, and door-to-door in neighbourhoods to give correct information and to encourage early testing." The AAVE Group is funded entirely by donations and grant funding, including support from Misesan Cara through the Irish Aid programme. It is supported by the Archdiocese of Goiânia. Trocaire - the Irish Church's aid agency - has also supported it.

In 2023, Sr Margaret was honoured with a Human Rights Award from the Legislative Assembly of the State of Goiás in recognition of her four decades of service to people living with HIV/AIDS.

"It's hard to believe" she says "that I'm 40 years in Brazil already. I feel privileged and blessed to have worked here for so long. It's been a challenge but a challenge I've enjoyed. Living and working among the poor with HIV has

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contributed greatly to making me who I am today. I am grateful to God, to the Sisters of St Louis, to the AAVE Group and to all those whose lives have touched mine.

"One thing I've learned from these people is that they have hope, the need hope, and that they live in the present. As people with a serious illness, they don't have the certainty of tomorrow. I think my work with people living with HIV/AIDS has helped me to live more in the present," she says when reflecting on her four decades of missionary endeavour.

Readers wishing to know more about Sr Margaret's work in the AAVE Group, or to support it with a donation, can do so at <https://grupoaave.org/en/>

Matt Moran is an author and writer living in Co. Cork. He served as Chairman of the Board of Mísean Cara that supports the development work of Irish missionaries in the Global South and has written extensively on missionary development. He also served on the Board of Nano Nagle Birthplace.

Events

Registration is open for European Heritage Open Days 2025

Would you like to take part in European Heritage Open Days 2025 by organising an event or opening a historic property/building of interest to the public?

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The theme for this year is Architectural Heritage- Past Structures - Future Connections, and will engage both visitors and event organisers with the history, design, and cultural significance of Northern Ireland's architectural landmarks.

Register to take part by 11 May at -

<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/european-heritage-open-days#toc-1>

The open-door events will take place on Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 September.

The theme for this year is Architectural Heritage- Past Structures -Future Connections, and will engage both visitors and event organisers with the history, design, and cultural significance of Northern Ireland's architectural landmarks.

EHO will help you promote your offer to the public for **FREE** on our LoveHeritageNI social media channels, Department for Communities and Discover NI websites. There's help to manage bookings and find volunteers if needed and you'll be given promotional material, all **FREE**.

European Heritage Open Days (EHOD) is Northern Ireland's annual celebration of local architecture, history and culture. Individuals, companies/ organisations and community groups are all welcome to take part.

We're appealing to all races, ethnicities, genders, ages & abilities to participate by organising workshops, walks, talks, tours, exhibitions, traditional skills demonstrations. Or take

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part by telling your story to the public through art, literature, song, dance, drama, film, food, crafts.

For more ideas contact link

[<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/european-heritage-open-days#toc-1>]

‘Families in Church’ training day at Omagh

St Columba’s Omagh are thrilled to be hosting the Families in Church training day. They are inviting clergy and the children's and youth leaders of parishes to come together to consider how they are welcoming families into their churches.

Mrs Rachael Murphy, the National Children and Families Development Officer for the Church of Ireland, is the guest speaker at this interactive workshop.

After lunch participants will have the choice of seminars to best suit their needs. Youth leaders will be looking at keeping connections when moving into secondary school and throughout their school years along with how to plan and prepare for older Sunday School classes. Children’s leaders will be thinking about how we can help families develop faith at home and build relationships with parents and carers.

There will also be a time to look at resources available to borrow from the Diocesan Centre and to ask questions to Kirsty (Diocesan Children’s Ministry Officer), Claire

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(Diocesan
Youth Officer)
and Rebecca
(Clogher Rep)

Registration
with tea and
coffee is from
10am, with the
first workshop
beginning at
10.30am.
Everyone
should be
seated for
10.25am.



**Families
in
Church**

A training day for all clergy, children's and
youth leaders

Our main speaker will be Mrs Rachael Murphy, the National Children
and Families Development Officer for the Church of Ireland, who
will be helping us consider how we are welcoming families into our
churches through an interactive workshop.

You will have the choice of seminars to best suit your needs. Youth leaders will
be looking at keeping connections when moving into secondary school and
throughout their school years along with how to plan and prepare for older
Sunday School classes. Children's leaders will be thinking about how we can help
families develop faith at home and build relationships with parents and carers.

Saturday 5th April
St. Columba's Parish Hall, Omagh
10am - 3.30pm
£/€10 pp inc lunch and
take home resources



Scan to book

Booking link: <https://forms.gle/2DeDmVP3KJ2Ht4Un7>

Leading into Light - Leadership in Church Music - RSCM online conference 2025

**Booking is now open for this year's RSCM online
conference**



We are delighted to present Leading into Light, our 2025 online Church Music Leadership Conference on Saturday 17th May

Join us for an inspiring day of sessions led by a diverse range of contributors, exploring different aspects of leadership – from local and young leaders to clergy and even those who never saw themselves as leaders.

This day will provide practical advice and approaches rooted in a narrative that, whatever your personal experience and skill level, these things really matter and all play their part in enabling church music to flourish. In a challenging world, we are working to bring some hope and joy.

The conference will be hosted online live with interactive elements, but if you can't join on the day, your ticket allows you to catch up later at your convenience.

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Join us and buy your ticket for as little as £39.00 (RSCM Members) or £45.00 (Full Price). Members can use their discount code to claim the discount.

Find out more / book now at <https://ow.ly/Sfkb50Vfsge>

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

