

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Generosity

January 1, 2025

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Northern Ireland

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Generosity

Ballintoy & Dunseverick Parishes aid for Alzheimer's Society Northern Ireland

In December 2024 members of Ballintoy & Dunseverick Parishes came together to share the spirit of Christmas through carol singing in the local community.

Their incredible efforts on the North Antrim Coast raised an amazing £1,475 for Alzheimer's Society Northern Ireland

A huge thank you to everyone who took part and to those who donated so generously. Pictured: Hazel Kirkpatrick





St John's
Malone - two
photos above

Our Rory

Rory McIlroy has donated his entire prize money, including \$4.5 million, from The Players Championship 2025 to the Mencap charity





First Gold Awards for Seagoe Select Vestry

Seagoe Select Vestry members Matthew Smyton (above left) and Luke Nicholl were among the 39 from Seagoe Youth Group presented with their Duke of Edinburgh's Award certificates on 18 March.

Both achieved the Gold award which it is believed is a first for any Select Vestry in one year.

The ceremony took place in Seagoe Parish Centre, and the parish was delighted to welcome Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Kyle Savage, to present the certificates.

Nineteen participants were awarded Bronze, twelve Silver and eight Gold including the three boys of the McQuitty family who achieved a hat trick of Gold (John) Silver (James) and Bronze (Peter).

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Seagoe has been running the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme for many years and believes it has the largest number of participants of any youth group in Northern Ireland - all thanks to a group of very dedicated leaders.

At the ceremony, two of the founder leaders of the Award Scheme in Seagoe - George Kennedy and Paul Thompson - were remembered as unfortunately, they had passed away since our last presentation. Edwina and Keith Livingstone have led the scheme for many years and more recently Boyd McClurg has joined the team. Gratitude was expressed for their time and energies.

Those who attained Gold will be invited to attend a garden party in either Buckingham Palace or Hillsborough Castle later in the year at which the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Edward, will be present.

Young artist's exhibition takes sideways look at religion in Northern Ireland

An art exhibition with a difference, which takes a 'sideways look at religion in Northern Ireland', is running in east Belfast.

Shauna Fox, the artist behind Preachers, Priests and Nuns of Ulster, said she hopes it can express religion as a concept instead of the wedge that has divided society here for generations.

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The exhibition is based on paintings which mix religion with everyday life in various well-known parts of Northern Ireland.

One depicts a small crowd, with someone holding a flag saying 'Jesus Saves', in front of Cleaver House in Belfast.

Another shows a preacher as runners pass by Belfast City Hall, while a third depicts two nuns having a snowball fight at Clonard.

“This is really just my own thoughts on religion in Northern Ireland and how it is expressed by people here,” Shauna explained.

Her artwork was inspired by a variety of sources.

“Last year I was in central South America and the people there are really religious. It holds a lot of meaning for them and you can see religious imagery everywhere,” she said.

“Then I came back home and I started to notice how important religion is in everyday life here.”

But it was when she was working at the Belfast Christmas Market that her ideas began to really develop.

“I had a stall at the Christmas market and it's at City Hall and it got me thinking that a lot of things that happen in Belfast, protests and everything,” she added.

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“City Hall is the epicentre of all of that and it's got so much religious imagery everywhere, whether it's Catholic or Protestant, it's just so much religious imagery.

“It made me realise how religion is such an important aspect of life here. How much it drives people, in the way they decorate their homes and the things that they do.”

Shauna insists the show is not about critiquing religion, and instead it is about observing it.

“This isn't a diss to religion or religious people, it's just something I find interesting and wanted to share my thoughts on it,” she added.

“I find religion as a concept very intriguing. When I was younger I always assumed that all religious people must be good people, but now that I get older I'm realising that might not be true.” Many of the paintings in the exhibit are inspired by Shauna's family and friends.

“I have one painting, My Granny's Bed, and that is exactly how my granny's bed really looked,” she added.

However, Shauna hopes that those coming to see her paintings find their own interpretation of them.

“People are very intrigued by the paintings so far, I've had people asking me what some of them mean but I don't like giving away too much information because I think people can find their own meanings from them too,” she added.

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“I also have to praise the people at the ArtIsAnn Gallery because they've been able to let me do anything I wanted to do.”

Shauna's exhibition, Preachers, Priests and Nuns of Ulster, is in the ArtIsAnn Gallery until March 29. Courtesy Belfast Telegraph 24/04/2025



Pope Francis waves to crowd as he departs from hospital

Pope Francis waved from a hospital balcony in Rome on Sunday in his first public appearance for five weeks after suffering from severe pneumonia.

Before leaving Gemelli Hospital in the front passenger seat of a white Fiat 500 sedan, the 88-year-old pontiff appeared in a wheelchair shortly after midday to greet and bless around 3,000 pilgrims and well-wishers.

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As he lifted his hands to bless the crowd, some members of the public shouted “We love you!” and “We’re here for you!”.

Looking tired and frail, the Pope, who was hospitalised on Feb 14, offered his thanks to the crowd and singled out a woman holding a bouquet of yellow flowers, waving to her before giving everyone a thumbs-up sign and being wheeled back inside his suite.

“Today I feel a great joy,” said Dr Rossella Russomando, an Italian doctor who did not treat the Pope but joined the crowd at Gemelli yesterday. “It is the demonstration that all our prayers, all the rosary prayers from all over the world, brought this grace.”

Ending the longest hospitalisation of his 12-year papacy, Pope Francis thanked medical staff before he drove back towards the Vatican. He also decided to make a last-minute visit with his motorcade at the Basilica of Saint Mary Major in central Rome.

He did not leave his car but left a bouquet of flowers to be placed in front of the *Salus populi Romani* icon, a Byzantine-style painting on wood that is revered by Romans.

Pope Francis was last seen returning to Casa Santa Marta, his residence inside the Vatican, wearing nasal tubes for supplementary oxygen in the front seat of the Fiat.

He is expected to continue his medical treatment, rest and convalescence at the Vatican for at least two months.

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Ahead of his discharge, the Pope's medical team told the world's media that his body would need a long time to fully recover from the complex infection afflicting his lungs.

The Argentine Pope, who has chronic lung disease, had part of one lung removed as a young man.

Education



World Down Syndrome Day at Kells and Connor Primary School

A big thank you to everyone who supported our non uniform day on Friday. Money raised is going to support the work of the Causeway DS Group.

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We are delighted as a school to be proud members of Down Syndrome UK's Primary Education Programme.



Rainey Endowed School annual Spring Concert

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Join us for an enchanting evening of musical entertainment at our annual Spring Concert.

Featuring talented pupils from Years 8 to 14, the concert will showcase a variety of performances, including soloists, choirs, and ensembles. Come and experience the incredible talent of our students in the beautiful setting of our Johnston Hall.



Date: Thursday, 3rd April



Time: 7:00 PM



Venue: Johnston Hall, Rainey Endowed School

Tickets are available from <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/rainey-endowed/spring-concert/2025-04-03/19:00/t-ojdnoqe>

Refreshments will be served in the canteen afterwards. We look forward to seeing you there!

Join us for an enchanting evening of musical entertainment at our annual Spring Concert! Featuring talented pupils from Years 8 to 14, the concert will showcase a variety of performances, including soloists, choirs, and ensembles. Come and experience the incredible talent of our students in the beautiful setting of our Johnston Hall.

Insights on forces at Wallace High

The History and Politics Department was delighted to welcome Brigadier Murray to Wallace High in Lisburn.



He spoke to around 60 Year 12–14 students about his deployments in Afghanistan, his role as an adviser to Gordon Brown, and his visits to the Oval Office. His insights into Cold War history, global politics, and strategic decision-making were both fascinating and invaluable to our students' studies.

Cathedral Calls

Messy Church and more under the Moon

It was wonderful to see St Saint Canice's Cathedral and Round Tower full on Sunday with children and their parents at 'Messy Church under the Moon' in the afternoon and for 'Songs of Praise under the Moon' in the evening.

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Two well organised and successful outreach events. Congratulations to Dean Stephen Farrell, the volunteer helpers, the Cathedral Choir and all who were involved.

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Jubilee 2025 visitors at Armagh

A wonderful gathering this week in the Cathedral as part of our Jubilee2025 pilgrimage season as we welcomed members of the African community. May God bless all our visitors abundantly this Jubilee Year





St Columb's choral promotions

Congratulations to three of our Girl Choristers who were promoted this Sunday morning during a Service of Choral Matins.

Alanna and Alice were promoted to Corner Girls whilst Hollie picked up the Dean's medal for outstanding commitment to the Cathedral Girls' Choir. Well done, Girls!

Clergy and ministry

Rector of Mountmellick Group of parishes



Bishop Pat Storey has announced the appointment of Canon Lesley Robinson to be rector of Mountmellick Group of parishes.

Lesley was born in Birr, Co. Offaly but brought up on a small dairy farm in Castletown, Co. Laois and is delighted to be coming back to her home county.

She was ordained to the auxiliary ministry in 2002 and Priested in 2003. She served in the Clonfert Group of Parishes before being made Priest in Charge of the Roscrea Group of Parishes in 2004, both in the Dioceses of Killaloe.

Having transferred to the full time stipendiary ministry in 2011, she was appointed Rector of Clontarf parish in the United Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough in 2013. In 2018

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she was appointed as Rural Dean of Fingal and in 2021 she was made a canon of Christ Church Cathedral.

Lesley currently serves as Chairperson of the Church's Ministry of Healing: Ireland and is looking forward to developing the healing ministry in the Mountmellick Group. She is the proud mother of two adult daughters, Nicole (the Church of Ireland Synod Officer who is a parishioner of the neighbouring Portarlinton Union of Parishes along with her husband, Neil Gallagher and daughter, Grace) and Danielle, a mechanical engineer currently working in Pfizer, Newbridge, who will be moving to Mountmellick with her. She is also a very proud and doting grandmother of 17 month old Grace who will no doubt make her presence felt at many parish events in the future!

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**

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