

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Wallace High at Home Place**

March 8, 2025

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Short reading and a prayer daily on this site

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## Image of the day



### Wallace High at Home Place

**Year 13 English Literature students from Wallace High School, Lisburn, enjoyed a trip to the Heaney Homeplace at Bellaghy this week, exploring the biographical context of the Nobel prize winning writer.**

They also had the opportunity to hear from Professor Fran Brearton from QUB, enriching their understanding of their set poets, Frost and Heaney, in preparation for their AS examinations.

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The celebrated poet Seamus Heaney wrote affectionate works for the most important women in his life, from the warm dedications to his Irish mammy to dedicatory verses for his beloved wife Marie.

International Women's Day could prompt a visit today to the Seamus Heaney exhibition from the National Library of Ireland for an in-depth look at the poems honouring the formative female figures in Heaney's life.

When? 11:00 - 12:00 | 08.03.2025. Where? Bank of Ireland Cultural & Heritage Centre, Westmoreland Street, Dublin. See the National Library of Ireland website for bookings and details:

<https://www.nli.ie/exhibitions-events/i-was-all-hers-we-peeled-potatoes-women-heaneys-poetry>

# News



## A remarkable beginning to Lent at Queen's University Chaplaincy

**The Whitla Hall was filled with faith as upwards of 2,000 students, staff and friends came together to mark the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday.**

It was a powerful witness to the vibrant Catholic community at Queen's.

The Chaplaincy commented - We were blessed to have Fr John Harris OP as our guest preacher, who encouraged us: "Let your Lent be a springtime of growth when you

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experience anew God's love for you." May these forty days be a time of renewal and grace for us all.

"A special thank you to Bishop Alan McGuckian SJ, who joined us as principal celebrant for the final Mass.

"Let's walk this Lenten journey together, drawing closer to Christ and to one another."



## Bishop of Cork retraces memories of Ashton School, Blackrock

**Bishop Paul Colton commented - “This morning I spoke at assembly at Ashton School, Blackrock in Cork today.**

“Afterwards I spent time meeting and chatting with the senior students, the First Years

“And then it was back to my own first classroom in the school for refreshments and a good conversation with a group of students. Young people are inspiring and give me great hope for the future. I came away exhilarated by my time with them all.

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## **Sir Keir Starmer pays tribute to UK troops killed in Afghanistan and Iraq**

**Sir Keir Starmer has paid tribute to UK troops killed in Afghanistan and Iraq during Prime Minister's Questions in Parliament, - bfb's Forces News reports.**

The Prime Minister's comments came a day after US Vice President JD Vance was accused of disrespecting UK troops by referring to "a random country that hasn't fought a war in 30 or 40 years", during an interview on Fox News, angering many British MPs and veterans including Irishmen and women.

Sir Keir made no direct reference to the Mr Vance's controversial remarks as he remembered individual soldiers who gave their lives serving their country.



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The UK has played an active role in 10 conflicts in the last 43 years.

Sir Keir Starmer said, "Tomorrow marks 13 years since six young British soldiers were on patrol in Afghanistan when their vehicle was struck by an explosive, tragically killing them all," he said.

"These men fought and died for their country, our country and across the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, 642 individuals died fighting for Britain alongside our allies.

"Many more were wounded. We will never forget their bravery and their sacrifice."



**ROYAL IRISH  
REGIMENT BAND**

**VE DAY 80**

**ANNIVERSARY CONCERT**

**ALL SAINTS' CLOONEY CHURCH  
SATURDAY 5TH APRIL 7PM**

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Mr Vance's remarks come at a time when the US has suspended military aid to Ukraine and is calling on other Nato nations to step up their defence commitments.

In response to the backlash, he said he "didn't even mention the UK or France" in the Fox News clip, "both of whom have fought bravely alongside the US over the last 20 years and beyond".

**CNI** - Men and women from both Irish jurisdictions served each Irish fatality was acknowledged throughout the island.

## **Bear Grylls to speak at Flame youth congress**

Bear Grylls on visit to Coventry Scout group. Wiki Image by Jamie Gray

**This year's Flame, a gathering for young Catholics from across England and Wales, has sold out the OVO Wembley arena, with famous adventurer Bear Grylls one of the star speakers.**

On Saturday, 15 March, 10,000 young Catholics will travel to London to celebrate their faith, take in talks from outstanding Catholic and Christian speakers, listen to music and performances from headline acts, and place Christ at the heart of their worship with Adoration led by Cardinal Vincent Nichols.

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Speaking ahead of the event, Bear Grylls, echoed this year's theme of Flame which is 'Unstoppable: Fan the Flame of Hope' by saying:

"May God bless you and all who you share this with. Remember: with the Almighty within us we are unstoppable!"

Bear Grylls, OBE, is world-renowned for his survival skills, and a former member of the British Special Forces, and will also be releasing his new book, *The Greatest Story Ever Told*, a series of eye-witness accounts of Jesus' life.

Every attendee will receive a copy of his book, which aims to make the Gospel more accessible for young people. He said: "I'm so excited to share this book with you ... it's all of our stories really."

Alongside Bear Grylls will be Bryan Enriquez, a founding member of the Hallow app, which is now the number one Catholic prayer and meditation app.

Isaac Harvey, MBE, is also due to speak, a disability advocate and content creator, who has modelled for London Fashion Week to promote adaptive fashion and has featured in *Vogue*.

Isaac leads *Wheels and Wheelchairs*, where roller skaters push wheelchair users and champions inclusivity through various different charity roles.

Father Dominic Howarth, a priest of Brentwood Diocese, and co-chair of the Flame Core Group, said: "At a time when

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Pope Francis is so deeply in our thoughts and prayers, it is a particular blessing to be inspired by his Jubilee theme, Pilgrims of Hope.

"Flame 2025 is a testament to the hard work and dedication of many, many teachers, chaplains, priests and youth leaders from across the country - some of them will be leaving with groups of young people at 4am, and returning well after midnight!

"The programme is packed with speakers and musicians who will share life stories and images that offer a joyful vision of Christ-centred hope. We are looking forward to a wonderful day, to 'fan the flame of hope' for young people, parishes and schools across the country."

There will be music performed by Guvna B, Lily-Jo, World Youth Dance Crew, One Hope Project, and Adenike Adewale.

More information about Flame can be found here:  
<https://cymfed.org.uk/flame/>

## Education

### Campbell pathway players at India Cricket Academy

**Earlier this month, Seb (Year 13, Davis's) and Jacob (Year 13, Alden's), along with Old Campbellians Harry**



**Dyer (12730) and Adam Heasley (12953), embarked on an extraordinary journey.**

The Northern Cricket Union Pathway selected 18 pathway players and three coaches to travel to the Chennai Super Kings Cricket Academy in India for an intensive training period.

This initiative was designed to prepare future elite athletes for the rigours of international cricket. The players spent 10 days adapting to new environments while undergoing high-

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intensity training, facing the challenges of travel, jet lag, climate changes, new cuisines, and diverse cultures.

The trip to Chennai provided unique challenges and invaluable learning experiences, offering both rich cultural and cricketing exposure. A fantastic opportunity!

## **BBC Young Chorister of the Year deadline**

**Songs of Praise and BBC Radio 2 have announced that applications are now being accepted for this year's BBC Young Chorister of the Year.**

Could you be their Junior or Senior winner?

Don't delay – the closing date is Monday 7th April '25.

Apply here! [bbc.co.uk/songsofpraise](http://bbc.co.uk/songsofpraise).

## **Ballymoney shared education history project**

**Last week pupils from Dalriada, Ballymoney High, and Our Lady of Lourdes met for the first time as part of a Year 10 Shared Education History Project.**

Led by Gareth and Andy from Corrymeela, the pupils took part in games and discussions to build relationships with each other.

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“We had a great couple of hours and are looking forward to getting to know each other better as we explore Northern Ireland’s history and politics over the next few weeks”.

## **Support for St Saviours school, Rathdrum**

**St Saviour’s Church in Rathdrum was alive with the sound of music and community spirit when a group of performers came together for an evening of song that raised over €2,000 for St Saviour’s NS.**

People came from far and wide to support the event, with concertgoers immediately sensing a special night ahead as each of the stellar acts was introduced by MC for the night, Tina Koumarianos.

Audiences were treated to performances from Liam and James Kinsella, Leslie Dowdall, John Nolan, Three’s Harmony, the Arklow Gospel Revival Choir and Fran Harper.

Refreshments were served, with a huge raffle in the interval featuring prizes donated by local businesses that added to the fundraising total.

Thanking St Saviour’s Church for the use of the venue and all the wonderful performers, an organiser said: “We had a great turnout on the night and a lot of the credit has to go to Liam Kinsella, who travelled from his residence to be part of the concert and pulled all the performers and community together to host the night.

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“We made just over €2,000, between ticket sales and the raffle, which is a fantastic amount. A huge thanks to all the businesses that donated some brilliant raffle prizes.

“The funds will go to a great cause and help the school purchase science and sports equipment.” Courtesy Irish Independent

## Clergy and ministry

### Methodist Church 'Exploring Ordination' events

**Are you interested in finding out more about the candidating process?**

If so, you can register now for one of the 'Exploring Ordination' events

→ <https://forms.office.com/e/NYg5vu3RH5>

Saturday 29th March: Edgehill House, Belfast: 10:30am - 12:30pm

Saturday 5th April: Mountmellick Methodist Church: 10:30am - 12:30pm

Thursday 9th April: Online: 7:30pm

Saturday 12th April: Fivemiletown Methodist Church: 10:30am- 12:30pm



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## Armagh Pioneer Ministry

A Pioneer Ministry information morning was held in Armagh on 6th March. The Armagh Diocesan "Pioneer Hub Team" was introduced - Archbishop John McDowell, Archdeacon Elizabeth Cairns, Valerie Thom, Revd Carleton Baxter and Revd Peter Smith.

<https://www.facebook.com/266953909344778/posts/658680836838748>

## Chaplain to Connor Mothers' Union

**The Rev Louise Stewart (photo next page), rector of St. Polycarp's Parish Church, Finaghy and Upper Malone, is to take on the role of Chaplain to Connor Mothers' Union.**

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She succeeds the Ven Dr Stephen McBride, All Ireland MU Chaplain, who is stepping down after 12 years in the diocesan role. Read more at <https://bit.ly/3FfQtIA>

## **New Rector of Delgany**

**Parishioners of Christ Church Delgany turned out in great numbers on Tuesday March 4 to give a warm welcome to their new Rector.**

The Revd Natasha Quinn–Thomas was instituted by Archbishop Michael Jackson who thanked Natasha for her willingness to serve and thanked the people of Delgany for making the evening possible.

Also present were parishioners from Castleknock and Mulhuddart with Clonsilla, where she served her Curacy in the Church of Ireland following her arrival from the Diocese of St Asaph in North Wales. Also in attendance was the Rt



Revd Kenneth Kearon, former Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe who lives in the parish.

The sermon was delivered by the Rector of Castleknock, the Revd Colin McConaghie, who said that while he would miss Natasha as a colleague and friend, it was a wonderful appointment. “Her presence will have a significant and God inspired impact upon this place. She will sit with you in times of sadness, laugh with you in times of joy and inspire you to serve others emulating the love of God through her enthusiasm and innovation,” he stated.

He described the gifts Natasha would bring to Delgany – her profound pastoral care as could be attested to by parishioners of his parish; her wonderful innovation which would result in new ministries they had never even dreamed of; her passion for learning as she has just completed her Masters and was now undertaking her PhD; her nurturing

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and inspiring others to grow in faith and to serve God; and her gifted preaching. More at -  
[<https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2025/03/05/new-rector-of-delgany-will>]

## Louth sacristan retires after 63 years



*Canon Eugene Sweeney with Sean*

**It was the end of an era at Our Lady Lourdes Church in Drogheda after 10.30 mass last Sunday when Sean Walshe retired after an incredible 63 years as sacristan.**

The 82 year old grandfather said 'If I had my time all over again, I would do exactly the same job'. All his family were present along with hundreds of grateful parishioners. Courtesy John Kierans, Drogheda Independent.

# Events



## Echoes in the Landscape exhibition

**A photographic exhibition highlighting local sites of interest by Willie Drennan and David McClean.**

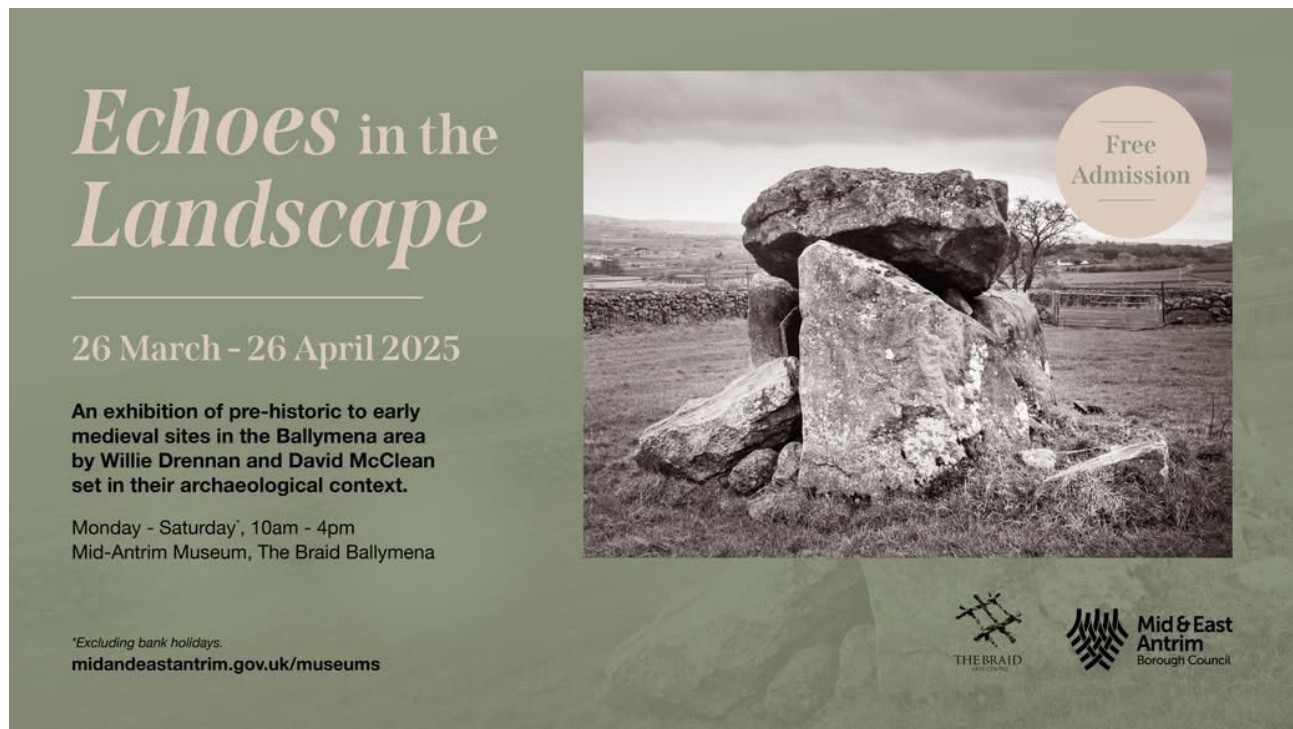
The display will explore our fascination with the folklore surrounding these sites and place them in an archaeological content.

An interactive map will allow visitors to find out more information on pre historic and medieval sites around Ballymena.



26 March - 26 April 2025

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*Echoes in the Landscape*

26 March - 26 April 2025

An exhibition of pre-historic to early medieval sites in the Ballymena area by Willie Drennan and David McClean set in their archaeological context.


Monday - Saturday, 10am - 4pm  
Mid-Antrim Museum, The Braid Ballymena


\*Excluding bank holidays.  
midandeastantrim.gov.uk/museums

Free Admission

THE BRAID  
MUSEUM

Mid & East Antrim Borough Council

 Mid-Antrim Museum, The Braid, Ballymena

 Monday - Saturday, 10am - 4pm (excluding bank holidays)

## In the media

### **New £13.6m museum to tell story of Irish in British Army - Belfast Telegraph**

**The history of Irish involvement in the British Army will be told in a new museum planned across two sites in Belfast and Enniskillen, Mark Bain reports.**

The £13.6million project will trace the 350-year story of Irish soldiers and their families who served.

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'Untold: The Museum' will be located at the restored linen warehouse at 28 Bedford Street in Belfast, with a second site at redeveloped galleries at Enniskillen Castle.

Phase one of the project, in Belfast, is expected to open in summer 2027.

Hugh Crossey, chair of the new museum, said: “Untold stories of the Irish in the British Army will hopefully inspire people to see things differently and make meaningful connections across generations.”

During the 19th century, around 40% of the British Army comprised soldiers from across the island of Ireland.

Nowhere was the Irish influence in the British military more evident than at the Battle of Waterloo, where Napoleon Bonaparte



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famously described the 27th (Inniskilling) Regiment of Foot as “the most obstinate mules I ever saw.”

The victorious Duke of Wellington likewise praised Corporal James Graham from Co Monaghan — one of the 7,000 Irish who fought in the battle - as “the bravest man at Waterloo.” Some 103 years later, on November 23, 1918, Irish soldiers once again took to the field at Waterloo. The 2nd Leinsters became the first British Army Regiment to march across the battlefield since Napoleon's defeat in 1815.

Funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund will support the planning phase, helping to recognise, explore and preserve the shared heritage of Irish men and women's contributions.

The Heritage Fund has awarded initial development funding of £249,239, with an application for a full National Lottery grant of £1,721,595 to be made later.

The project will bring together collections from The Inniskillings Museum, The Royal Ulster Rifles Museum, The Royal Irish Fusiliers Museum, The Royal Irish Regiment Museum, The Collections and Archives of The Royal Irish Regiment and The Collections and Archives of The North Irish Horse. Southern disbanded regiments will also be included.

Mr Crossey added: “Education will be at the heart of all the exhibitions, offering our visitors the chance to explore the lives of the Irish men and women who rose above divisions of class, politics and religion and overcame extremes of hardship to make an indelible mark on our history.



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“In sharing these stories, Untold seeks to contribute to ongoing peace and reconciliation across the island.

“We are already surprised at the number of people from a range of traditions who have discovered ancestral and family histories amongst Irish regiments in the British Army.

“When fully completed I would encourage everyone to visit this new immersive exhibition and learn more about our — and potentially their — shared heritage.”

Dr Paul Mullan, The National Lottery Heritage Fund's Northern Ireland director, said the new museum would bring “an exceptional heritage building in Belfast's Linen Quarter” back into use.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## 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](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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# Church News Ireland

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**Link in Monday through Saturday from  
early morning**

**Please recommend to your friends**