

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Cathedral Candles**

## Image of the day

### Cathedral Candles

Slemish College GCSE and A Level Music made the trip from Ballymena to a Candlelit concert in St. Anne's Cathedral, Belfast.



They noted on Facebook - "A new take on some Queen classics by Arco Strings! Everyone had a great evening".

## People and places

**Bishop McGuckian: please pray for our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, and in solidarity give to Trócaire**





**In a statement circulated to parishioners attending Mass across the Diocese of Raphoe in Co Donegal last weekend, Bishop Alan McGuckian (pictured) said:**

“I ask for your continued prayers for peace in the Holy Land as we continue to see the horrific impact of war, terror, death and destruction in Israel and Palestine.

“Let us pray particularly for those who have been taken hostage, those who have been killed, those who have been injured, and are being driven from their homes. We also pray that people in positions of power and authority receive the wisdom to guide them into ways of peace and justice.

“In solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land you might also consider giving to Trócaire. Two years ago I witnessed at first-hand the outstanding work of Trócaire and

November 15, 2023

their partners in providing aid and advocating for the human rights of the people in Gaza and the West Bank. On the Trócaire website [www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org) there are good guidelines for ways to help and advocate for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza.

“May our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land, through our prayers and solidarity, know our desire to remain close to them at this most difficult, terrifying, and testing of times.

“Our Lady, Queen of Peace, Pray for us.”



## **Carnmoney CGB win Archbishop's Award**

**Congratulations to Carnmoney Parish Church. CGB Company, which has won the coveted Archbishop's**



**Award, making it the champion company for the Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade in Northern Ireland.**

Prior to Covid-19, St Paul's, Lisburn won the inaugural Archbishop's Award, but it has not been awarded since due to the pandemic.

This year, Dobbin Company, Armagh Diocese, were pushed into second place by two clear points.

The Archbishop's Award, which is designed to be fair to groups large or small, encourages companies to support Church Lads' and Church Girls' Brigade (CLCGB) NI by having returns and accounts in on time, entering competitions, following a scripture course, supporting the



November 15, 2023

Leprosy Mission NI, and participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

The winning company receives a beautiful, etched, glass trophy adorned with the diocesan arms and £100 for their funds.

## **Welcoming the Brimage family to Down and Dromore**

**Trevor and Lorraine Brimage and family began work this week as Family and Community Evangelists for St Paul's Castlewellan and Kilcoo.**

Trevor and Lorraine will job share one post and are tasked with developing and supporting a family and community outreach strategy. They will be building relationships with the communities in Castlewellan and Bryansford who have no church connection or who have become disconnected from church, and helping them in their journey of exploring the Christian faith.

The couple are from Co Monaghan and have a heart for those who don't yet know Jesus. They have a background in youth work, worship and church planting and have found that Trevor's musical talents and Lorraine's gifts of hospitality have been put to strong use wherever God has led them. Trevor and Lorraine have been married for 20 years and have three children. They're looking forward to what's ahead in Castlewellan and Bryansford.



Revd Pat Kerr is Minister in Charge and is very excited at the prospect of working together with Trevor and Lorraine:

“Just as God called Jenni and me a year ago, we believe this is a timely appointment for the next phase of what God is doing and wanting us to do in this area. When I initially met up with Trevor to explore the role, I went away from our meeting praying that Lorraine and he were the ones God was sending to us, as it is very clear they have the right gift set between them to thrive in what will be a challenging yet very rewarding role. As churches we can’t wait to welcome them into the church family and help them settle and feel at home as quickly as possible.”

## **Open invite by QUB chaplaincy to a discussion on vocations to the priesthood**

**The Catholic Chaplaincy at Queen’s University, Belfast, invites all those with an interest in vocations to the Catholic Church to a ‘Take the risk for Christ – Holy hour and Panel discussion’, which will be held at**

The Catholic Chaplaincy at QUB presents

# TAKE THE RISK FOR CHRIST

*HOW CAN I SUPPORT VOCATIONS TO DIOCESAN PRIESTHOOD?*

## HOLY HOUR AND PANEL DISCUSSION



Led by Most Reverend  
Alphonsus Cullinan,  
Bishop of Waterford &  
Lismore

**6.00pm on 21 November at the Chaplaincy in 42  
University Road, Belfast.**

The Catholic Chaplaincy at Queen's is committed to supporting students to discern the definite plan God has for them in life. Within this culture of vocational discernment, students are encouraged to reflect on whether God might be calling them to serve Him and His people as priests, religious women or within family and marriage.

During this dedicated Year for Vocation to the Diocesan Priesthood – which concludes on Good Shepherd Sunday, 21 April 2024 – the Catholic Church across Ireland is making a special effort to promote and encourage discussions around vocations to the priestly life. In support



November 15, 2023

of this, the Chaplaincy, in partnership with the student Knights of Saint Columbanus, will host an evening of prayer, reflection and discussion.

The evening will be hosted by Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan, Bishop of Waterford & Lismore and chair of the Council for Vocations of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference.

Panellists on the night will include, Father Thomas McGlynn, Parish Priest of Saint Malachy's City Centre Parish, Belfast; Father Martin Mayerhoffer, European Chaplain for FOCUS and International Theological Institute, Vienna; Father John Joe Duffy, Curate in Creeslough, Donegal; Father Dominic McGrattan, Chaplain to Queen's University Belfast, former Chaplain to the Mater Hospital and Deacon Brett Lockhart KC, retired barrister, family man and permanent deacon.

If you are interested in attending, kindly RSVP by 17 November to [catholicchaplaincy@qub.ac.uk](mailto:catholicchaplaincy@qub.ac.uk)

## **Dare to leave the trenches to occupy space of reconciliation - Remembrance sermon in St Patrick's**

**God is calling us on a journey from the trenches to the open, fertile, generous space of reconciliation. So said Canon Paul Arbuthnot in his sermon on Remembrance Sunday (November 12) in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin.**

Speaking to a large congregation which included the President Michael D Higgins, Canon Arbuthnot explained that dwelling in the open ground of reconciliation required us to coexist in a manner that respects the other's right to exist.



In his sermon, Canon Arbutnot (Photo above) said that churches and cathedrals were committed to reconciliation. The summit of this is the Eucharist. With that in mind he asked what God was calling us to do on Remembrance Sunday.

The horror of the First World War was conducted in the trenches in France, he said. “Today serves as an urgent reminder for us to leave our trenches. The trenches in which we place ourselves so willingly within and find difficult to leave. [...]

These are the trenches of sectarianism in our land, of casual racism in our society, and of the terrible tragedy of violence in the Holy Land. They are but some of the trenches which we find ourselves withering within,” he stated.



November 15, 2023

He continued: “But, God calls us on a journey out of this. He calls us from the containment and narrowness of trench life into the broad vast, gracious landscape of reconciliation. Where our traditions, our hopes, and our people can co-exist side by side beyond old enmities and slogans.” He said it took bravery to leave the trenches and vision to imagine life in a wide open space but that it was a godly task that was so urgent in this world at the moment.

“It is time to leave the narrowness of the trenches and occupy that gracious space of reconciliation. Dare to go on that journey with God,” he concluded.

## News reports

### Israel-Palestine conflict ‘prising people apart’ in UK, says Justin Welby

**The conflict in the Middle East is “prising people apart” in the UK, the Archbishop of Canterbury said, as he insisted “hateful voices stoking prejudice” must be challenged and repeated his calls for a ceasefire in the region.**

Justin Welby said civilian deaths and the “humanitarian catastrophe” as a result of Israel’s bombardment and siege of the Gaza Strip cannot be morally justified.

Addressing the Church of England’s General Synod on Monday, he said the “bloodshed must cease”.

He said it is “essential” people can say both that there is no equivalence between the Hamas attacks against Israeli civilians, and the right and duty of Israel to defend itself, and that is also the case that there is no moral justification for the “devastating loss of civilian life” in Gaza.

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**I also want to make clear that I do not believe the devastating loss of civilian life and humanitarian catastrophe resulting from Israel’s bombardment and siege of Gaza can be morally justified**  
**Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby**

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He told the Synod, before a two-minute silent prayer was held for the Israelis and Palestinians: “I want to make clear that there is no equivalence between the atrocities of Hamas against Israeli civilians, and the right and duty of Israel to defend itself.

“I have emphasised that previously, and I do so again.

“But I also want to make clear that I do not believe the devastating loss of civilian life and humanitarian catastrophe resulting from Israel’s bombardment and siege of Gaza can be morally justified.

“I think we need to be able to say both these things – in fact, it is essential that we do.”



November 15, 2023

He said that, since a call for “an immediate humanitarian ceasefire” by himself and other Christian leaders during a visit to Jerusalem more than three weeks ago, “thousands more innocent men, women and children in Gaza have been killed”, while thousands of people in Israel “still mourn those killed on October 7, and hundreds of families still plead for the release of their loved ones”.

He added: “So I repeat that call again with renewed urgency and even more force. This bloodshed must cease, hostages must be released, and aid must reach those in Gaza in dire need.”

The situation there is having consequences at home too, he added.

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**While there are hateful voices stoking prejudice against anyone for any reason, we cannot stand by Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby**

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“Here in the UK, the conflict in Israel and Palestine is prising people apart,” he said.

“Jewish people are experiencing the trauma of the biggest single loss of life in one day since the Shoah (Holocaust).

“They are a small global community and everyone knows someone killed or taken hostage on 7th October.

November 15, 2023

He said that, for Muslims, “the sight of so many Palestinian civilians being killed, the majority of whom are Muslim, cuts deeply into the ties of the family of Islam”.

He added that “while there are hateful voices stoking prejudice against anyone for any reason, we cannot stand by”, and called on people to “rebuke those who are spreading vile antisemitic propaganda, and harassing and attacking our Jewish neighbours” and “those who engage in hateful Islamophobic attacks and abuse against our Muslim neighbours”.

He said people “have a responsibility to both speak out against all such evils and to play our part in building bridges across communities”.

## **Christian witness disappearing from parts of the Holy Land says Bible Society**

**As the Israeli military pushes deeper into Gaza City in its battle to obliterate Hamas, there are fears that the Christian presence there could disappear altogether.**

Increasing numbers of Gazans are fleeing the north of the territory, which has been continually bombarded by Israel for over a month, in an attempt to eradicate the radical militant group Hamas. The United States brokered a deal to allow four-hour pauses in the fighting, to allow innocent civilians to escape.



November 15, 2023

Nashat Filmon, Director of the Palestinian Bible Society, told Premier News most people in northern Gaza have been "displaced". He says there's been no safe haven or special treatment for Christians, even their own facilities were hit.

"We lost office space, we lost everything, but the staff are fine." Mr Filmon says two Bible Society staff are recovering after they were injured as a result of a different strike, on the Orthodox Church in Gaza.

In total 18 Christians are known to have been killed in Gaza in the recent fighting. The Christian community in Gaza numbers around 1,000 out of an estimated population of 2.3 million.

**We're there to help people, you know, find hope even in the midst of darkness.**

The Israeli action is in response to the brutal terror attacks by Hamas militants on 7th October, when 1,400 Israelis died in a co-ordinated series of attacks and more than 200 were taken captive. It was the Jewish people's deadliest day since the Holocaust. Most the hostages are still being held by Hamas.

Referring to what was unleashed, Filmon says the scale of the violence has taken everyone by surprise: "Nobody expected this size of [attack] as ugly as it was, with the death of kidnapping people, but the retaliation is even much worse.

November 15, 2023

"You correct an evil with another evil, and you try to justify this or that it's not right. It's not biblical. It's not Christian. We are all created in the image of God."

He's urging Christians throughout the world to pray fervently for the fighting to stop: "Call that God would have mercy over us and have this mercy quickly."

In an effort to bring a message of hope and encouragement, the Palestinian Bible Society has launched a series of social media posts, providing short online videos, of less than 90 seconds, based on the Bible.

Filmon is trusting that the ministry will reach those who need to hear it, despite Gaza being subjected to repeated communication blackouts, with no power or internet, sometimes for days at a time. "The whole aim of these messages is to inject peace, through the word of God. We say, 'Let's read the Word of God together, let's go to the cross together, let's suffer the pain, let's go through the Via de la Rosa', because at the end there is victory, there is a resurrection."

He asks people to pray for their work, in Gaza, which continues to provide humanitarian assistance with limited supplies. "Pray that God will provide his needs and give us the ability to help all those who are in pray for wisdom for the leaders so that they would go on the path of peace, rather than the path of war and pray for an end to this misery of Gaza.

"I do not want a temporary ceasefire. I wanted a radical solution for the Gaza Strip. It's time to change tactics and to

November 15, 2023

change plans. Let's not keep doing the same thing over and over and expect different results. Let's do it in a different way. And let's start as Christians with prayers - genuine prayers on our knees, for the Gazans, for the Palestinians, for the Israelis, and for the salvation of the nation's living in this amazing land.

He says the future of Christianity in the Holy Land is at stake. "I pray that this place would never turn into a museum where you come and say, Oh, Christ lived here. But he doesn't have any followers. What a shame! We need the living stones, to testify for our Lord from the Holy Land. Our calling here \[is] to be salt and light and to give a different taste, to give light to the darkness."

## Poem for today

### On Seeing Brendan Kennelly Looking in the Window of Hodges Figgis by Joseph O'Connor

I think of you, Brendan, in hushed Dublin streets,  
Walking at dawn past a shuttered store  
Or pausing a moment to look at the statues  
Of Goldsmith, Grattan, Connolly, Moore.  
Grey gulls over Christchurch, the city still sleeping;  
The burger bars closed and a rumour of snow.  
Little to hear but the dawn alleluia  
Of a Garda-car siren on Merrion Row.





Your mind rhyming melody, street-cry and humour,  
Passionate memory, heart-aching loss;  
Your heroes the ordinary; quiet Dublin widows  
Hurrying in for early Mass  
Past ghosts outside pubs in the hunger of morning,  
Five-o-clock shadowmen, shook by the fates;  
Cromwells and Judases, waiting for openings;  
The people unnoticed by cold-eyed Yeats.

I think of you, Brendan, walking The Liberties,  
Meath Street and Francis Street, down towards The  
Coombe,  
Watching the city in all of her vagaries  
Wandering back to her lonely room.  
Loving her streelings and early-hour homecomings,  
The whip of her wit, and her dirty-faced talk,  
You and the spirit of James Clarence Mangan  
Sharing a coffee on Bachelors Walk.

I think of you, Brendan, drifting through Trinity,  
Cobbles of history moistened by mist,

November 15, 2023

Head full of stanzas and jostling images,  
Lovers you kissed by the rivers of Kerry.  
The ferry from Tarbert traversing your memory;  
Carrigafoyle in the dawn of the day,  
The stream of your poetry flowing in eddies  
From Béal Átha Longfoirt to Baile Áth Cliath.

Your shy smile by Bewleys, your handshake on Duke Street  
One evening when August had glittered the town  
And the windows all shining in mischievous cadence  
With your stubble-cheeked grin, and your radiant frown  
As you looked at the flower-sellers, told me a story  
Told you in boyhood one Christmas night  
By an old seanchaí with a hatful of characters;  
Advent budded on Grafton Street.

Dawn-walker, teacher, lover of Dublin,  
Leopold Bloom with the glistening eyes  
Of a man who has seen all the ice-floes of folly  
Drift down the Liffey and out towards the bay.  
You pause on the bridges named for our poets.  
I see you there, Brendan. You always knew  
That words are a bridge on uncrossable rivers.  
Beir bua, my brother. This bridge is for you.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

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