

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – MU 16 Days of Activism

Image of the day



MU 16 Days of Activism

This year's 16 Days of Activism event in Down & Dromore MU took place on Saturday 25th November in Temple Golf Club.

The guest speaker was Detective Chief Inspector Heather Campbell (2nd from left above) of the Rape Crime Unit in the PSNI and also Head of the MARAC team, a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment organisation, relating to Domestic Abuse. It was an extremely informative morning.

Page below - Also in attendance were representatives from Women's Aid, Bishop David and Hilary McClay, Lady Eames



and Margaret Ritchie along with a great turnout of MU members from across our Diocese.

People and places

Book on Irish nurses in WW2 by Congregation's Secretary

Margaret Graham's new book, 'Nurses' Voices from the Second World War The Ireland Connection,' was launched last week at an event at Belfast City Hall.

Published by RCN Northern Ireland it tells the story of nurses from Ireland in the Second World War both on the



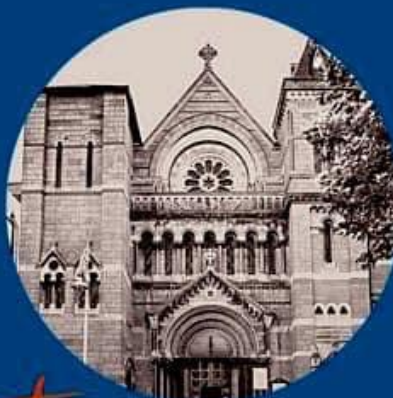
home front and all around the world. Well illustrated throughout, it is priced at £5 and all proceeds go to charity.

Margaret is the secretary of Dunmurry NS Presbyterian Church

ST ANN'S CHURCH
DAWSON STREET
DUBLIN

1723-2023

*Celebrating
300 years*



BREAK WITH HUNGRY MEN THY BREAD

Performers

Choir of St Ann's church
Director Thomas Charles Marshall
Con Tempo Quartet
Ruby Ashley
David Agnew
Adelah Davis
Cormac Hannon
Connor Wilcox

**Programme of music featuring Bach's
Cantata Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brot
BWV 39**

8PM FRIDAY
DECEMBER 8TH
2023

TICKETS €20



Singing for Westport church restoration

BellaCapella Choir Candlelit Concert with Westport Town Hall choir will present a concert on Saturday 9th December at 7.30 pm.

It is in aid of the restoration works at the church which was built in 1801.

The concert will be followed by a Mulled Wine and Mince Pie reception in Social Services building. Tickets €20.

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A Dean for Dromore





Archdeacon Mark Harvey in Dromore Cathedral. Bishop Harold Miller gave the address and Shankill Parish Lurgan choir and band led the worship. Thank you Dean Geoff for your hospitality”.

C of I Bishops’ Appeal announces Advent and Christmas Appeal 2023

Damage following an air raid in Gaza in early October.
Photo credit: Ibrahim Zaanoun/Tearfund.

The Church of Ireland Bishops’ Appeal has announced in the statement below that its Advent and Christmas Appeal for 2023 is focused on supporting those who are in great need in the Middle East.

The Holy Lands, the lands where Jesus himself lived and worked and worshipped. Where he demonstrated God's love, compassionate kindness, and saving grace through his sacrificial death on the Cross for all mankind.

Where today the 'little town of Bethlehem' that we will sing about in our Carol Services is only a short distance from the devastation being experienced in Gaza, and from the kibbutz area where Hamas carried out their massacre on October 7.

Where just as 2,000 years ago Joseph and Mary had to flee with the infant Jesus to another land to escape violence and threats upon their life, so today many are having to flee from their homes to become refugees in other places, leaving behind what is left of their homes and possessions.

There is no doubt of the level of suffering that this conflict has caused, with men, women and children killed, injured, made homeless, and lives utterly devastated by the violence.

The Advent and Christmas Appeal this year asks that if you can, you give something to help those most affected. Those fleeing Gaza as refugees, those needing emergency medical care, temporary accommodation, practical help, food, medicines, support, care.

Our focus on the desperate needs in the Middle East enables us to partner with the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough who are running the 'Shine A Light for the Diocese of Jerusalem' campaign, and also to help with the

overwhelming needs of displaced people who are now living in Lebanon as well.

Our intention is to channel the funds raised through our trusted partners on the ground – the Diocese of Jerusalem (with whom the Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough has been in relationship for a number of years) in their outreach to those impacted by war, and also to Tearfund partners working in Lebanon and in some of the areas and countries bordering Gaza and Israel where already things are precarious and extremely tense. Where there is the danger of further tension, violence and devastation erupting at any time.

We are so aware that many people have given so very generously to Bishops' Appeal during 2023 – to the victims of the earthquakes in Syria, Turkey and Morocco, the floods in Libya, and ongoing support for the victims of the war in Ukraine, and we are so grateful to all those who have given.

Yet as we move towards Advent and Christmas, it seems only right to maximise the focus on those in great need in the Holy Lands region and encourage those who are able to give -however small your gift may seem in the face of such unimaginable need, it will all add up, it will make a difference. £10 or £50, €5 or €50. It might cover an emergency food parcel, medicine, temporary shelter, or whatever the greatest need will be for that person.

Bishops' Appeal envelopes are available in each diocese, or donations can be made directly at this link for those who prefer to give online.

News reports

Pope Francis postpones commitments ahead of Dubai trip due to lung inflammation

As a result of what the Vatican described on Monday as an inflammation of his lungs, for which he's receiving antibiotic treatments, Pope Francis has postponed several commitments in coming days in order to preserve his strength for a planned Dec. 1-3 trip to Dubai for the COP-28 climate change summit.

Concern over the pontiff's health arose Saturday after the Vatican issued a statement saying Francis was suffering from a "mild flu" and that he had gone to Rome's Gemelli Hospital for a CT scan to rule out pneumonia.

The next day, the pope did not preside over this Sunday Angelus address from his window in the Apostolic Palace overlooking St. Peter's Square as usual, but he did so via livestream from the chapel of the Vatican's Saint Martha guesthouse where he lives, appearing with an IV in his hand and saying he was suffering from "pulmonary inflammation."

In a statement on Monday, Vatican spokesman Matteo Bruni confirmed that the pope's CT scan Saturday "ruled out pneumonia but showed pulmonary inflammation that caused some breathing difficulties".

"For a greater effectiveness of the therapy, a cannula needle was positioned for an infusion of intravenous antibiotic

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therapy,” he said, saying Francis’s conditions are currently “good and stable, he does not have a fever, and his respiratory situation is clearly improving”.

In order to help facilitate the pope’s recovery, Bruni said some “important commitments” in coming days have been postponed so that Francis “can dedicate the desired time and energy to them”.

Other commitments “of an institutional character or which are easier to support given his current health conditions,” are still on the schedule.

Pope Francis on Monday morning met with the President of Paraguay, Santiago Peña Palacios, and his entourage as his only engagement for the day.

The Vatican sent out an alert stating the pope is scheduled to hold his Wednesday general audience from 9a-10a local as usual. He is still expected to visit Dubai as planned. A press briefing on the trip is scheduled for Tuesday at 12:15p.m. local time.

In the media

Vatican’s transgender guidance “Very, very positive” step, say Irish priests - New Ways Ministry

An Irish organization of Catholic priests has responded positively to the Vatican’s recent guidance about transgender people and the sacraments, with the

priests group describing the guidance as a “very, very positive” step, Phoebe Carstens writes

Leaders of the Association of Catholic Priests (ACP), a church reform organization, heralded as an important step for inclusion the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith’s recent document saying transgender people could be baptized and serve as godparents.

Fr. Roy Donovan, an ACP member, called the Vatican statement “an extravagant welcome” for trans people, adding, per RTE:

“We hope that we all take \[Pope Francis’s] example and give people a full welcome and full inclusiveness in the sacramental, pastoral life of the church. . .here’s a lot more that can be done and I think the statement shows that the church can change its mind and change its practices and policies, and that’s good. It’s very, very positive.”

ACP members were critical of some of the guidance’s language, such as an over-emphasis on the avoidance scandal when set against pastorally-focused priorities, like fully integrating LGBTQ+ people in the church. However, the priests are mostly hopeful that this guidance is just the first of many steps taken to move the church away from LGBTQ-negative attitudes and towards a greater welcome of Catholics who have historically been excluded.

The Irish priests’ group has advocated inclusion for LGBTQ+ Catholics and their allies multiple times. ACP staunchly supported Fr. Tony Flannery, a Redemptorist priest and longtime supporter of New Ways Ministry, who

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was suspended from ministry by the Vatican in 2012, in part due to his pro-LGBTQ+ views.

Flannery nonetheless has continued to write and advocate for reform. He has remained firm in his support, refusing to sign a document which would grant him the ability to minister again, but would necessitate that he endorse anti-LGBTQ+ views. Fr. Flannery's steadfast support, even at such personal cost, is an example of what it means to truly be in solidarity with the marginalized.

Now, a documentary film about the Redemptorist priest, entitled *Misneach: Tony Flannery*, is being released. Described in the *Galway Daily* as a film which "gives a voice to a priest who has been side-lined by the church he has devoted his life to," the documentary details Flannery's life



THE SCOUTING GROUPS
AT KILDRESS
INVITE YOU TO THEIR

Christmas

CRAFT FAIR

Food & Craft Stalls | Refreshments | Entertainment | Free parking & admission
... not forgetting a very special visitor for the kids!

 **02** **SATURDAY**
DECEMBER **11AM - 2PM**

KILDRESS PARISH CHURCH

If you are interested in booking a table at a charge of £20,
please contact Emily on 07717006317

ALL DONATIONS RECEIVED GOING TO KILDRESS SCOUTS

Charity no: 104119

and ministry, highlighting the process through which he was censured and the ways that he continues to speak up.

Just as Fr. Flannery remains determined to speak in support of LGBTQ+ rights, ACP continues to support him and their common mission of LGBTQ+ inclusion. In a statement of support, ACP and the Lay Catholic Group (LCG), another Irish church reform organization, called for justice in the case of Flannery, who has never been granted a review of his case at the Vatican, despite his requests. The ACP and LCG remarked:

“In the wake of the Synodal Pathway how can the church accept the decision against Tony Flannery? The issues he wrote about which resulted in his removal from priestly ministry are now healthily being discussed in the public forums of the Catholic Church.”

Fr. Donovan made similar remarks:

“Pope Francis is stressing a pastoral approach at the moment and that’s very, very positive. Now, a lot of the teachings the church has at the moment, especially on gay people, on sexuality, they need to be updated. If they could change their minds on a lot of other areas I think there’s room for a lot more change, at the doctrinal level \[and the] teaching level.”

As Catholic LGBTQ+ advocates’ stories continue to be told and support for LGBTQ+ inclusion continues to be voiced, we hope that, as a church, we will continue to progress on the road of radical welcome, inclusion, and pastoral

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encounter—and see justice for LGBTQ+ Catholics and allies, especially Fr. Tony Flannery.

—Phoebe Carstens (they/them), New Ways Ministry,
November 27, 2023

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Irish Baroque Orchestra presents Handel's 'Messiah' with Chamber Choir Ireland

**St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin - Friday, 1 December
2023, 7.45pm**

Hailed as a master of sacred and secular music, Handel's talent of composing for voice and instrument shines through in Messiah, which Irish audiences first took to their hearts in 1742. This production is directed by Peter Whelan, Artistic Director of IBO, with step-out solos from the singers of Chamber Choir Ireland.

Through a dramatic series of arias, recitatives, and choruses, Messiah tells the universal story of triumph over trial, where life's sorrows and despairs are met with overriding hope and unbridled joy. It is Handel at his most brilliant, in a well-paced blend of aria and chorus to perfectly match the arc of the Christian story.

As one of the greatest oratorios ever written, Handel's Messiah has never waned in popular and critical appeal, and is as timeless today as it was when it premiered in

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Dublin in 1742. Join us for this special performance, and start the festive season in style!

'Messiah' is presented by the Irish Baroque Orchestra, in partnership with Chamber Choir Ireland.

A Christmas Celebration - Susie Gibbons (soprano) & Niall Kinsella (piano)

St Ann's Church, Dawson St., Dublin - Saturday, 2 December 2023, 1.30pm

Soprano, Susie Gibbons returns to Dublin for an afternoon singing everyone's favourite christmas carols, operatic arias and songs. Join us on the afternoon of 2nd December for an hour of entertainment to kick off the Christmas season in the heart of Dublin City Centre. Susie will be joined by Niall Kinsella on piano.

Doors will open at 1pm and the concert will begin at 1.30pm sharp and will last for approximately 60 minutes with a short interval.

Christmas Spirit - Annual Christmas Concert

St Columba's Church, Linden St., Ennis - Saturday, 2 December 2023, 8.00pm

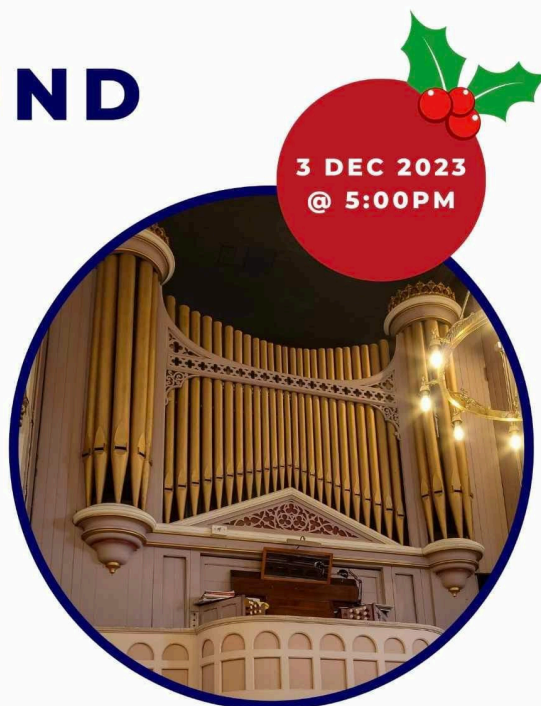
Regina returns for her annual Christmas Concert to St. Columba's Church of Ireland, Bindon Street, Ennis on Saturday 2nd December.



ST GEORGE'S PARISH
CHURCH BELFAST

ORGAN FUND LAUNCH

The **St George's Organ Fund** will be launched at this year's Advent Carol Service, remembering the contribution our dear friend - the late David McElderry - made to the parish over 40 years as a chorister, vestry member and organ builder.



SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER 2023
@ 5:00PM

**OPEN INVITATION -
ALL VISITORS
WELCOME**

105 High Street, Belfast, BT1 2AG

“It has become a lovely social occasion: this beautiful old church with its magical candlelit ambience and great acoustics. It is the perfect way for me to start my Christmas and to meet old (and new) friends.”

Regina will perform a delightful selection of popular songs from musical theatre, arias and Christmas favourites and will be joined by pianist Cathal Synnott.

NI Human Rights Commission Annual Human Rights Statement

Monday 11 December, from 12pm

November 28, 2023

You are invited to the launch of the 2023 Annual Human Rights Statement.

Mary Lawlor UN Special Rapporteur for human rights defenders will deliver the keynote address.

The launch is taking place on Monday 11 December, from 12pm – 2pm at the Long Gallery, Parliament Buildings, Stormont. There will also be an online live stream if you can't make it in person.

Sign up for either in-person or online attendance via Eventbrite here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/annual-human-rights-statement-2023-launch-tickets-757878413737?aff=oddtcreator>

Stream the latest single from Kings College, Cambridge - 'Silent Night'

Led by Director of Music Daniel Hyde, John Rutter's beautiful orchestral arrangement of the popular classic is not to be missed. Pre-order 'Rutter Orchestral Carols' and listen to the newest single while you await the full EP release.

Listen now on your streaming service:
<https://lnk.to/RutterOrchestralCarols>

Poem for today

November

by William Cullen Bryant, 1794 - 1878

November 28, 2023

Yet one smile more, departing, distant sun!
One mellow smile through the soft vapory air,
Ere, o'er the frozen earth, the loud winds run,
Or snows are sifted o'er the meadows bare.
One smile on the brown hills and naked trees,
And the dark rocks whose summer wreaths are cast,
And the blue gentian flower, that, in the breeze,
Nods lonely, of her beauteous race the last.
Yet a few sunny days, in which the bee
Shall murmur by the hedge that skirts the way,
The cricket chirp upon the russet lea,
And man delight to linger in thy ray.
Yet one rich smile, and we will try to bear
The piercing winter frost, and winds, and darkened air.

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

