

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Remembrance

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Remembrance

Commonwealth War Graves Commission - His Holiness Pope Francis has just arrived at our Rome War Cemetery to celebrate All Souls' Day. The Mass was streamed live on the CWGC website <http://cwgc.org>

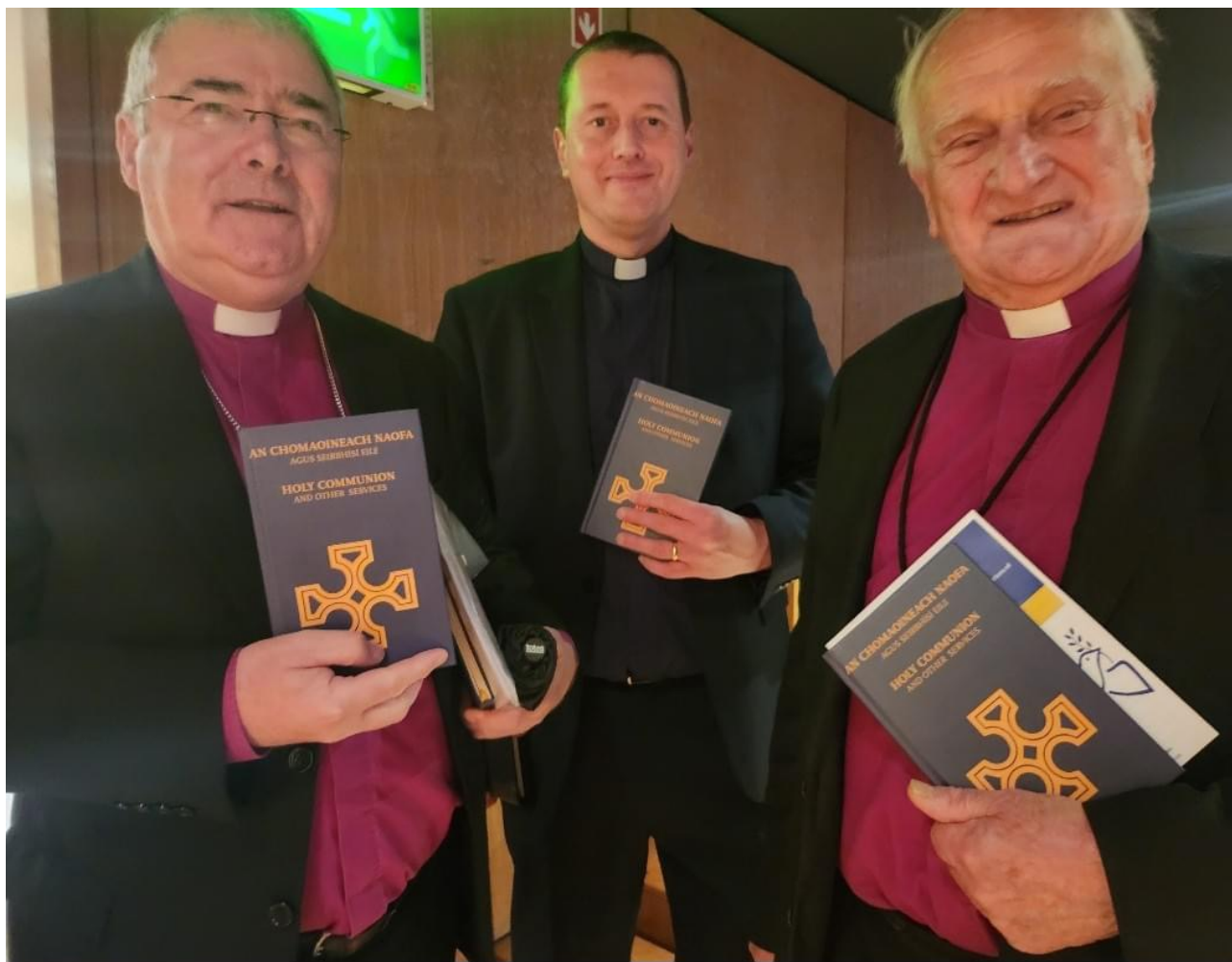
<https://www.cwgc.org/our-work/news/his-holiness-pope-francis-to-celebrate-all-souls-day-mass-at-rome-war-cemetery/>

People and places



St LEGO'S

This and much more at the Lego event in St Mark's Dundela Heyn Hall on Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 November.



C of I bilingual prayers and worship

Rt Revd John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh & Primate of All Ireland; Very Rev T.S. Forster, Dean St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh; Former Archbishop of Armagh, Lord Eames with copies of An Chomaoineach Naofa, the 2nd edition of the bilingual book recently published and presented by Dr Rita Kelly of Cumann Gaelach na hEaglaise.

An Fíor-Oirmhinneach John McDowell, Ardeaspag Ard Mhacha agus Príomháidh Éireann Uile; Déan Ard Mhacha, an Ró-Oirmhinneach T.S Forster; Iar-Ardeaspag Ard Mhacha, An Tiarna Robin Eames – iad go léir ríméadach lena gcuid gcóipeanna den 'Comaoineach Naofa', an t-

November 3, 2023

eagrán nua, díreach faighte acu ó RK in Ard Mhacha le déanaí.



The alpacas visit Morningside Church of Scotland - As one Morningside matron just said when the Alpacas arrived,



“I didn’t know whether to bring my knitting needles for the yarn or my shovel for the roses.”



Little Saints of Armagh Parish - Such a special gathering of 'little saints' to celebrate All Saints Day - please continue to pray for families and all those who hand on the faith to the young -Archbishop Eamon Martin

THE GATHERING

Friday, 17th November 2023





Trocaire colleagues in Gaza

“Our two colleagues, Hala and Reema, are currently in Gaza.

“Today, we received a message from Reema : 'Now the only matter we pray for is to keep alive.' 'Thank God me and my family are still alive but the situation is horrible. There is no water, no bread at all. While bread is provided in shelters (UNRWA schools), we, as IDPs outside camps, have no access to water or bread. My husband is walking long distances to fill water and I baked bread myself using fire since the cooking gas has also run out.'

Pic: Reema and Hala after meeting yesterday”



Changing Church profile means new era for priests and people of Kilmore

By 2030 there will be only 27 priests ministering in the Kilmore Diocese which comprises of 34 parishes.

Last weekend Bishop Martin Hayes (pictured), Bishop of Kilmore, published a pastoral letter Making Decisions and Preparing for the Future Together, to manage ministry into the future throughout the Diocese of Kilmore.

Highlights include:

Parishioners throughout the Diocese of Kilmore to be consulted

Era of teamwork involving priests and people embracing co-responsible leadership

New faith formation course for lay leaders based on everyday language

Rescheduling of Masses based on local feedback and partnering of parishes

In his pastoral letter, Bishop Hayes says, “It is the right and responsibility of lay people to be involved in our parishes. We can no longer rely on a model of parish which depends solely on the priest in view of the reduced number and ageing profile of priests.”

Following an extensive consultation process with the Diocesan Synodality team, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Priests of the Diocese and Diocesan staff along with the Director of Pastoral Planning and Faith Development, Martina Gilmartin, Bishop Hayes has developed a plan that will involve Parish Pastoral Councils and wider parish communities in discussions on enhancing the role of lay people in parishes as well as reviewing the number and frequency of Masses in our parishes.

Bishop Hayes continues, “while everyone is acutely aware of the decline in vocations to the priesthood, I see planning for the future of our diocese as an opportunity to bring lay people into their own as future faith leaders. I intend to support people in assuming leadership roles. As a diocese we must provide support and training to enable teamwork between priests and lay people.

“Due to the ageing profile of our priests, and changes in the behaviour of faith practice more generally, we in the Diocese of Kilmore find ourselves in uncharted waters. Only one thing is for sure: we must act now to sustain our Church for tomorrow.

“For example, we have currently 64 priests in the diocese, with 44 in active ministry resident in 34 parishes, two abroad and 18 retired. We have one seminarian at this time nearing ordination to the Diaconate, while more than half of our priests are over 70 years of age, and one third over 75. To put the situation more starkly, by 2030 there will be only 27 priests ministering in the diocese of Kilmore.

“This reality means that, sadly, we cannot continue with the existing number of weekend Masses in our parishes. Decisions have to be made which are fair to both priests and parishioners. With this in mind, I am leading a consultation with all parishes to address the celebration of Masses occurring at the same time in adjacent churches, and to enhance cooperation between priests and parishes in terms of sharing duties. Demographic changes mean that Mass won't be celebrated in each church on each weekend.”

Bishop Hayes stressed that, “central to our planning for the future is our lived experience that the Mass is best celebrated with maximum participation and a full congregation.”

In the Bishop's letter, people are invited to reflect on, and talk about, important issues of faith practice such as parishes having no resident priest, and how to sustain the

maintenance of churches. Bishop Hayes asks that the following questions are discussed:

In view of the fact that priests are fewer and getting older. What are your fears or concerns about our faith in the future?

How can lay pastoral leaders address key parish needs in our community?

What preparations do we need to put in place if there are fewer Masses in our parish?

Setting Easter 2024 as the goal for changes to take place, Bishop Hayes calls for flexibility and cooperation on the part of priests and parishioners as they address the common pastoral challenges now facing all of the faithful of Kilmore.

Copies of the letter were distributed at Masses, is available on kilmorediocese.ie and on the diocesan Facebook page. People can offer feedback by way of participation in their local Parish meeting which takes place in early November.

Full text of pastoral letter Together Making Decisions and Preparing for the Future <https://www.kilmorediocese.ie/bishop-martins-pastoral-letter-october-2023/>

Church hoping to find positive side of suffering two feet of dirty flood water

An elder at a Newry church which took in two feet of flood water said they are hoping to find a positive side to the challenge they are facing, Philip Bradfield reports in the News Letter

Noel McCune is an elder at Riverside Church on Basin Walk, a Reformed Presbyterian Church with 40 members.

“There was over two feet of water in the church building and church hall so there’s a lot of damage,” he told the News Letter.

“When we came into the church hall the chairs were floating in the water.”

The church congregation is made up of people from Spain, Argentina, Thailand and France as well as locals.

“Before this happened we were in fairly good heart. It is sad and there is a lot of upheaval obviously in trying to find somewhere to worship temporarily when repairs need to be done.

“Generally, people are sad about it but we are trying to see it in the light of our faith – sometimes good can come out of these things, so we try to see it positively.”

By yesterday the water had all left the main church building and there was about an inch left in their church hall.

Fortunately, unlike some businesses in Newry, their insurance is covering the damage.

A loss adjuster is coming to survey the scene today.

“The church is a nice building and we feel sad to see the damage that has been done,” Mr McCune added.

The carpets in the church and the wooden floor of the church hall will need to be replaced as it has been bowed by the water.

Water which seeped into the church and hall contained heating oil and diesel and has left behind dirty residue, he said.

Some Bibles have also been destroyed.

News reports

Pope Francis' prayer intention of the month of November is for himself – the pope

“Pray to the Lord that he will bless me,” Pope Francis said in a video released Oct. 31. “Your prayer gives me strength and helps me to discern and to accompany the Church, listening to the Holy Spirit.”

“The fact that someone is pope doesn’t mean they lose their humanity,” he added. “On the contrary, my humanity grows each day with God’s holy and faithful people.”

The Holy Father called his role as pope “a process.”

He explained that throughout the process, a pope “learns how to be more charitable, more merciful, and, above all, more patient, like God Our Father, who is so patient.”



“I can imagine that at the beginning of their pontificate, all the popes had this feeling of trepidation, apprehension, knowing that he will be judged harshly,” he said. “For the Lord will ask us bishops to give a serious account.”

Pope Francis asked the faithful to “judge benevolently” and to “pray that the pope, whoever he might be — today it is my turn — may receive the help of the Holy Spirit, that he may be docile to that help.” He concluded with a prayer: “Let us pray for the pope, so that in the exercise of his mission, he may continue to accompany in the faith the flock entrusted to him by Jesus, always with the help of the Holy Spirit. And pray for me! Favourably!”

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In the media



Don't delay guidance allowing priests to be in same-sex marriages, say 44 bishops

Church Times - A group of 44 bishops made a public statement on Wednesday afternoon expressing their hope that pastoral guidance allowing priests to be in same-sex marriages would be issued “without delay”

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2023/3-november/news/uk/don-t-delay-guidance-allowing-priests-to-be-in-same-sex-marriages-say-44-bishops.utm>

Bishop Guli, Bishop Lynne and Bishop Roger of Chelmsford Diocese have joined 41 other Church of England bishops in signing a statement about Living in Love and Faith. You can read it here:

<https://buff.ly/3tXN5Gv>



Life and Work - A church's 150th anniversary celebrations, long service, a 100th birthday and an ordination in the Channel Islands in this week's parish news.

The Rev Carolann Birnie was inducted to the charge of Jersey St Columba's on October 20. The induction was presided over by the Moderator of the Presbytery of England, Susan Pym, and was attended by members of presbytery and ecumenical partners in Jersey.

<https://www.lifeandwork.org/news/news/post/1892-parish-news>

“Paradigm shift” in Catholic theology

Catholic News Agency - Pope Francis in a new motu proprio issued on Thursday called for a “paradigm shift” in Catholic theology that takes widespread engagement with contemporary science, culture, and people’s lived experience as an essential starting point.

**Webinars,
music,
resources,
broadcasts,
and books**

**Presbyterian
Herald -
November
edition available**

**A light on a hill –
First Omagh
Presbyterian
Church**

Army life – Reflections from a PCI army chaplain

**Growing good leadership – Servant-hearted approach
needed**

Women in ministry – 50th anniversary

**[https://www.presbyterianireland.org/Resources/Categories/
Presbyterian-Herald.aspx](https://www.presbyterianireland.org/Resources/Categories/Presbyterian-Herald.aspx)**

Presbyterian
Herald

NOVEMBER 2023



Fifty Years of the Irish Inter–Church Meeting

Addresses from the Irish Inter-Church Meeting which took place last month are now available to read. The thirty–third meeting of the Irish Inter–Church Meeting took place on Thursday 19 October – Friday 20 October in Dromantine Conference Centre, Newry. The theme for the meeting was “Our Reconciling Vision of Hope: Fifty years since the Ballymascanlon Talks”.

[<https://www.irishchurches.org/news-blog/5514/fifty-years-of-the-irish>]

Poem for today

Hedauville, November 1915 **By Vera Brittain**

The sunshine on the long white road
That ribboned down the hill,
The velvet clematis that clung
Around your window-sill
Are waiting for you still.
Again the shadowed pool shall break
In dimples at your feet,
And when the thrush sings in your wood,
Unknowing you may meet
Another stranger, sweet.
And if he is not quite so old
As the boy you used to know,



And less proud, too, and worthier,
You may not let him go –
(And daisies are truer than passion-flowers)
It will be better so.

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