

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Coptic Orthodox Belfast

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Coptic Orthodox Belfast

Further photos of the opening of a Coptic (Egyptian) Orthodox Church in Belfast.


The opening service has taken place of the new St Stephen's Coptic (Egyptian) Orthodox Church in Berlin

Street. Guests invited by the Rev Angelos were present.

The majority of Egyptian Christians in Northern Ireland are adherents of this faith and this may be their only church in Northern Ireland. The new church wishes to be part of the local community.

People and places

ART FOR VOCATIONS



Calling All
Artists

Wednesday October 18th
from 3 – 6 pm
Feast Day of St. Luke
(Patron Saint of Artists)

Portlaoise Parish Centre

Art for vocations initiative

Are you a person of faith, with a creative gift in art, and would like to encourage vocations to the Roman Catholic church's diocesan priesthood?

Perhaps you have already created, or are willing to evoke, the beauty of a vocational calling through paint, sculpture, print, poetry and/or photography. If so, you are invited to apply with your name, an image of your artwork or exhibit, by email to info@vocations.ie. An exhibition called 'Art for Vocations' will be held at Portlaoise Parish Centre from 3.00pm to 6.00pm on 18 October, the Feast day of Saint Luke, Patron of Artists.



Day of great joy and happiness- ordination of Davis and Francesco this week as deacons in St Patrick's Cathedral. Armagh Priests outside cathedral

On the day, artist Eoin Madigan will give a talk on Finding God in Paint. Mr Madigan said, “visual art has the ability to communicate without words. It can inspire us, touch our emotions, reveal truths and challenge us in so many ways. What better medium than to explore our encounters with God? These are very special encounters that, without words, open our hearts and draw us into an awareness of God's presence”

This initiative has been undertaken by the National Vocations Office of the Bishops' Conference, as part of the 'Year for Vocation to the Diocesan Priesthood, 2023 – 2024'.



Mother's Union branch visits Knitted Knockers

Castlecaulfield Mother's Union and Friends Bus outing was to Knitted Knockers Brownlow House Lurgan.

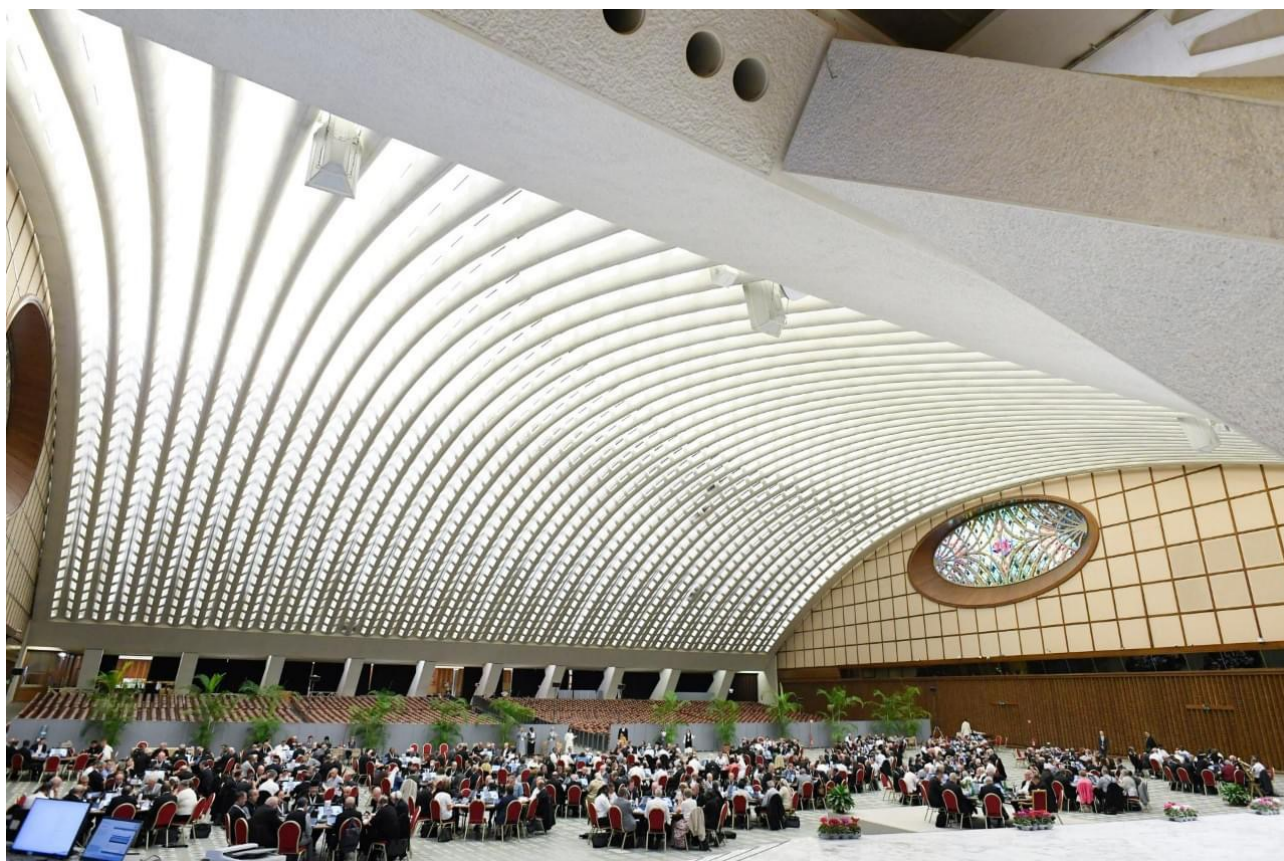
There they had morning coffee, listened to how Knitted Knockers began and watched a video on Breast Cancer and learned of how breast cancer is on the rise amongst men, who often think it is just a simple lump, when they too should be seeking medical attention

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They were shown how the prosthetic is knit on four needles, carefully labelled and signed by the knitter. The Charity Knitted Knockers depend on groups like the MU to help stuff and carefully package, add your name and message of love for the recipient.

The Castlecaulfield MU branch members were very pleased to learn that their donation will help to buy wool for the benefit of 112 mastectomy Patients.

Following an afternoon of shopping and a Tour of Brownlow House with a fantastic history from Tour Guide James they enjoyed a delicious evening meal from the Restaurant.



This week, Synod 2023 participants in Rome are reflecting on the theme "Communion that Radiates" which invites us all to reflect on: How can we be more fully a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of all humanity?



Women appointed to key posts by Pope Francis

Congratulation to Sr. Patricia Murray, IBVM, USIG Executive Secretary, appointed by Pope Francis as a member of the Commission for the Synthesis Report on the Synod Assembly in Rome



Pope Francis has appointed a religious sister to serve as the number two official at the Holy See office, which oversees religious orders.

Sister Simona Brambilla, 58, is from Monza in northern Italy and is a member of the female branch of the Consolata Missionaries. She led the order for twelve years until May 2023.

Sr Simona trained and worked as a nurse before entering the Consolata order in 1988 and later worked in youth ministry in Mozambique. She received a doctorate in psychology from the Institute of Psychology at the Pontifical Gregorian University and was a lecturer there.



Methodist President's call to prayer for Israel-Palestine

The President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Rev David Turtle calls on all of the Methodist people on our island to pray for the ongoing situation in Israel-Palestine.

The President's statement in full: "We have all been shocked and horrified to witness the loss of life, injury and terror in Israel-Palestine over recent days. We call on all of the Methodist people on our island to join with those around the world who are praying for families who have lost loved ones, or those who have been injured, on both sides of the conflict. We pray particularly for those who have been taken

hostage and their families in these days of distress and anxiety.

Only a few weeks ago the Church Leaders Group (Ireland) reflected on the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement and recalled again the core elements of partnership, equality and mutual respect which underpinned that milestone in our own continuing journey towards peace on this island. We seek and pray that, in the midst of the anger, pain and escalation of violence, people committed to these values on all sides of the conflict in Israel-Palestine would come to the fore. We would call on world leaders, the churches and all religious leaders in the region to redouble their efforts to help create a context for stability and peace.

We recognise the complications of a long history of conflict, and the fear and feelings of injustice that are felt on all sides, but pray and call for restraint from further violence alongside willingness to engage in dialogue to establish a just and peaceful outcome for all those who live in the Holy Land.”

A prayer

God of grace and compassion

Prince of peace and justice

Lord of hope and transformation

We bow before You, acknowledging the seeds of conflict and division which reside in each human heart, including our own.

In a world where we see violence and conflict all around, we pray especially at this time against any further escalation of violence and bloodshed in Israel-Palestine.

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Quiet the clamour of war and guide all those who have power and influence in this region towards peace.
Be with those who are suffering because of this conflict.
Draw near to them and make Your presence known.
Bring comfort to the mourning.
Healing to the injured.
Resilience for the fearful.
Bring Your hope and peace in place of hopelessness and violence. Amen

C of I Archbishops request for prayer

Archbishop John McDowell and Archbishop Michael Jackson have asked all members of the Church of Ireland to pray for peace in the Holy Land, following the outbreak of renewed conflict.

The Archbishops' statement – provided in full below – accompanies the release of emergency humanitarian funds to our sister church in the immediate region, the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem:

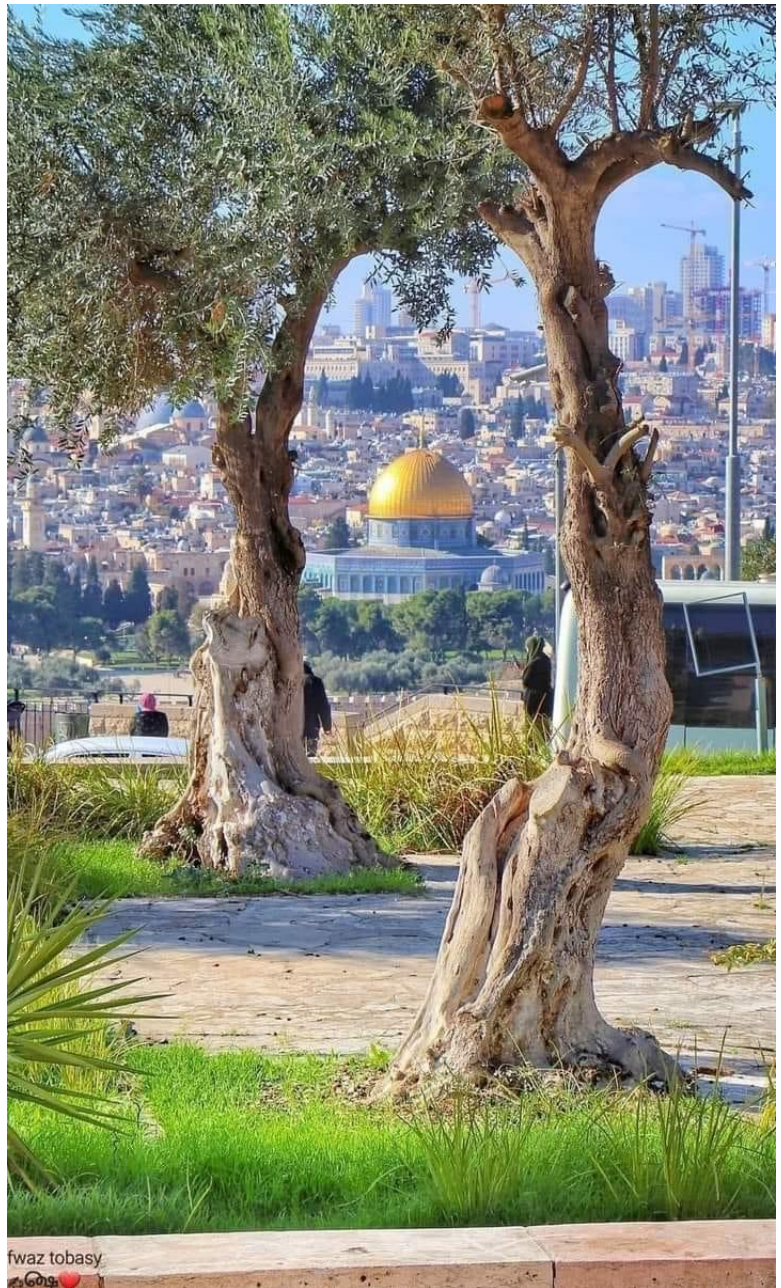
The rapidly escalating and degenerating situation in Israel and Palestine awakens within us our deep compassion for our brothers and sisters of all faiths in the Land of the Holy One. Where lives are lost through military attack and response, humanity in its entirety is diminished. We all grieve.

The Patriarchs and Heads of Churches in Jerusalem have called for peace and justice amidst unfolding violence. They have unequivocally condemned any acts that target

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civilians, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity or faith. They have called on the international community to redouble its efforts to mediate a just and lasting peace in the Holy Land.

The Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal for World Aid and Development is releasing €10,000 (equivalent to £8,650) in emergency funds to the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. The Diocese includes 7,000 Anglicans worshipping within 28 congregations in Israel, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. It is responsible for more than 30 institutions, including hospitals, schools, clinics, rehabilitation centres, guesthouses, and retirement homes. The Diocese runs Al Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza which provides medical care and support to all people, regardless of their faith or ethnicity.



We urge the people of the Church of Ireland to pray for peace in the Land of the Holy One and pray for wisdom for those in positions of authority to work towards an end to all

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violence. We uphold to God in prayer all who are affected by the current conflict. All human life is the gift of God. The Church of Ireland, in its daily prayers, prays for people suffering in conflict, those who seek to bring care and relief, and the peace of the world.

A Prayer for the Peace of the World – from the Book of Common Prayer

Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed; Kindle, we pray thee, in every heart the true love of peace; and guide with thy pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquillity thy kingdom may go forward, till the earth is filled with the knowledge of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

News reports

Church of Scotland calls on members to pray for peace in Israel and Palestine

Rev David Cameron, Convener of the Assembly Trustees of the Church of Scotland, has issued a statement in response to the outbreak of violence in the Holy Land.

Mr Cameron said: "We are horrified by the situation currently occurring in Israel and Gaza, and the wider areas. The sudden attack by Hamas on Israel, 50 years and a day

after the Yom Kippur War, came at a time when many Israelis were celebrating the end of the festival of Succot.

"At this time, our prayers are for all of those affected by these horrendous events. They are with the families of those killed, both in Israel and in Gaza. They are with those who have been taken hostage. They are with those dealing with the decisions to be made in the days ahead. With two Mission Partners and 160 locally employed staff, our prayers are also with them and their families, and they are with all whom we know in both Israel and Gaza.

"There can be no peace without justice, and we all must do what we can to bring justice to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including Gaza.

"The coming days are crucial as decisions are made which can either start the route to peace and justice, or lead to revenge and devastation, and much weeping and mourning. This war feels like a breaking point. There is a context to all the attacks which is important, but there is no justification for them.

"We urge all in our Church to unite in prayer for the people of Israel and Palestine. We condemn the attacks by Hamas, and the ongoing violence and killing. Our Church has long spoken out about the need for justice for all people in that land so that everyone can enjoy a future which is peaceable and just. No-one should live in fear of attack or kidnap; war and violence will only lead to more death and destruction.

"Alongside the voices of our partners in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and the

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Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem, and with the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, we agree that a just peace will bring, 'a secure future through which Israel and its people can live in security within its internationally recognised borders, and Palestinians have their own state and live in their lands in security, and with peace and justice.'

"Let us pray for that peace which will offer new opportunities for justice to prevail so that all the people in the region may live in peace."

Bible Societies in the Holy Land ask for prayer

Bible Societies in the Holy Land have asked for prayer in the wake of the terror attack on Israel and the ensuing attack on Hamas in Gaza.

The Bible Societies in the region serve their different communities but work closely together under the umbrella of the United Bible Societies.

Victor Kalisher, Executive Director of the Bible Society in Israel, said: 'Our staff is safe, but the situation is very tense. After yesterday when Hamas terrorists entered Jewish towns and kidnapped people, many are in a state of shock. One of our staff was called for army duty. Some rockets fell very close to us. However, all of us are safe and thank you for your prayers.'

Nashat Filmon, General Secretary of the Palestinian Bible Society, said: 'The situation is bad, and we are sadly and

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suddenly in wartime. It is heartbreaking to see and hear the number of casualties. Please pray for us all and for our team everywhere and for their families especially the ones in Gaza. Also, for a soon end for this war. May God have mercy.'

Dina Katanacho, Director of the Arab Israeli Bible Society, said: 'My staff have not come to work today. They are afraid. There are no cars in the streets, no schools, no universities. Everyone is at home. We are told to purchase food and water for a whole week. It might be even more. There are serious things happening. May God have mercy on all of us.'

You can write a prayer for Israel and Gaza here:
<https://cstu.io/d24388>

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Explore CTBI's work in its Autumn 2023 Magazine

Dr Nicola Brady, General Secretary, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, writes -

This edition of our CTBI Magazine (which you can read on the website, or download) is particularly rich in diversity in its themes, experiences and global reach. We have travelled to Sri Lanka and Estonia, welcomed church leaders from the

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Caribbean to Britain for the Windrush 75 anniversary and we prepare to join in prayer with the churches of Burkina Faso for next year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

As part of the symposium 'Being Churches Together in 21st Century Ireland', organised by the Irish Council of Churches and the Irish Inter-Church Meeting, I was invited to respond to the question: 'How can churches best bring their values to the public square when challenged with a lack of human and financial resources?'

Reflecting on this question, which is a particularly live and relevant one across the different national contexts brought together in Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), it occurred to me that there are some significant threads running through the different areas of work featured here, centred on listening and learning, and this of course goes to the heart of how the work of Christian unity is carried out. We come together to listen to the experiences of others, open to what we may have to learn from them, and willing to share any learning we may have to offer.

Our primary focus is on building relationships, and we can sometimes fail to notice how this sharing strengthens and enhances the work of mission, and not only that which is done ecumenically, but also the evangelising outreach of participating denominations and congregations.

In this edition of the magazine we listen to experiences of the United Reformed Church as it contemplates a significant crossroads in its future; of the Irish churches as they reflect on significant anniversaries; of the National Christian Council in Sri Lanka as they respond to the cries of a



peace and country in crisis; of the Windrush generation as they challenge barriers of belonging; to Christians in Burkina Faso as they share their vision for the work of preconciliation with the global Church, and the list goes on. In each case there is an opportunity to think about how we

might apply this knowledge and experience to our own contexts and the particular challenges that are foremost in our own minds.

As we prepare for the next Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we are reminded of the contribution we can make by supporting all of this work in prayer. Here too we can see significant common threads running through the different areas of work across the globe: the need for peace, reconciliation and the healing of relationships, and the hope that the Church might realise its full potential to be a force for good in this area. The churches of Burkina Faso remind us that Christ's commandment to 'love our neighbour' not only still applies in a context of security threat but takes on a particular relevance and significance.

This year, Christian churches from across Europe gathered in Tallinn for the General Assembly of the Conference of European Churches with the theme 'Under God's Blessing — Shaping the Future'. Incoming President H. E. Nikitas, Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain, challenged us to think about what it means for Christians to be bridge-builders in a world that all too often wants to put up walls. We can continue the work initiated in that coming together of Christians on a continental level by praying for renewed peace in Europe, with deeper attention to relationships and belonging. We pray especially for an end to the terrible suffering in Ukraine, and for all those in Ukraine and Russia who are being harmed by this invasion. We pray for greater global solidarity for the Armenian people losing their lives and their hopes for the future. We remember all those suffering, and working for peace, in the many forgotten conflicts around the world, especially those we seek to

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support through CTBI in Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka, working in contexts considered to be post-conflict but where the threat of violence remains and there is still a long road ahead to mend and build bridges and heal relationships. In the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity we join with our fellow Christians around the world in praying that the learning from our ecumenical journey will help us to bring a message of hope and healing wherever people are divided on issues of identity and belonging.

[\[https://ctbi.org.uk/explore-ctbis-work-in-our-autumn-2023-magazine/\]](https://ctbi.org.uk/explore-ctbis-work-in-our-autumn-2023-magazine/)

Poem for today

Harvest Poem by Henry Birtles

Let's gather as a band of one, in symphony across the land
To thank our Lord for Harvest reaped and gratefully as one
let's stand

To think of those, for all their toil who've readied plough,
who've nurtured soil

The farmers in the fields, the cold;
the hardened hands, the fens, the wold So many aspects of
a life, a challenge most will never know

For we in houses snugly sleep, whilst in the biting winds and
snow

The men and women of their earth prepare a ground for
springtime seeds That one day will produce our bread, our
milk, our food, our daily needs



Harvest at Dunmurry Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church

And through this nation memories walk, a depth of image
ever strong

Of distant days and innocence; of man and Shire Horse
ploughing on

Of wheatsheaves standing in the sun and laughing land girls
coming home The orchards, meadows, hedgerow birds; the
pitchfork and the haystack dome

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Though now they rest in picture form, the people, beasts
and tools long gone The land they worked is constant still;
the boundaries, fields, the far off hill

The skylark's song remains the same; a trout will rise below
the mill

For all the romance of these scenes, look not through glass
of tinted rose

Ask farming people what it's like and though the job is one
they chose It takes its toll; the troughs are long and cold and
deep

The flattened barley, missing sheep and so much more that
blights their show But on and on and on they go, until that
day of days has come

The tractor's parked, the combine's quiet; the crop is in, the
Harvest done.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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