

# Church News Ireland



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October 6 2024

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## Image of the day

### Moderator to visit Mothership

**This Sunday (6 October) the oldest of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's 500-plus congregations, Ballycarry in County Antrim, is set to welcome PCI's Moderator, Right Reverend Dr Richard Murray, as he begins his weeklong tour of the Church's Presbytery of Carrickfergus.**

The Moderator has many duties, and some of the most important they undertake during their year in office are the four tours of PCI's 19 regional presbyteries – and this will be Dr Murray's first. Established in 1642, the Presbytery of Carrickfergus is the oldest, and is made up of 19 congregations, one of which is Ballycarry, which dates back to 1613. Dr Murray will open his tour on Sunday, preaching at Ballycarry's morning service.

“Someone once described the Carrickfergus Presbytery to me as ‘the mothership’ of PCI given that it was the first presbytery,” Dr Murray said, “and I am very much looking forward to the week, not only because it will be my first tour, it will also be a great opportunity to see the work that congregations are doing on the ground in their local communities, and get a feel for this part of east Antrim.”

From the Belfast Loughshore through Islandmagee and on to the beginning of the striking Antrim coast road, the Presbytery moves inland and includes the three population centres of Ballyclare, Carrickfergus and Larne, with several

significant villages and townlands encompassed within that triangle. As one of PCI's regional bodies, the Presbytery consists of ministers and elders who are drawn from local congregations who have an oversight role for the local church.

When it comes to the tour, each is made up of a range of civic, community and church engagements, which will see Dr Murray preach in the mornings and evenings in different congregations on the two Sundays that bookend the tour: the churches in Ballycarry and Ballynure on the first Sunday, then Ballyclare on the second Sunday morning, with a 'united service' at Gardenmore Presbyterian in Larne that evening, for local churches in and around the town, which will close the week's engagements.

## **Ballyclare Comrades**

While tours start on a Sunday, the day before the Moderator will watch Ballyclare Comrades play Dundela FC at Dixon Park. "In the 30 or so events that have been planned, it will be a good opportunity to meet a lot of people in a relatively compressed period of time, seeing what is happening in local congregations and meeting ministers and their families," Dr Murray said.

## **Port of Larne and RNLI's lifeboat station**

"I am also looking forward to meeting people in the community who are working and serving in different ways, especially in local schools, foodbanks, businesses, policing and politics. With the North Channel running along the Presbytery's eastern edge, I am also looking forward to

visiting the Port of Larne and, in their 200th anniversary year, the RNLI's lifeboat station and meeting their crew."

Dr Murray continued, "While there are a number of civic elements to the tour, and I want to encourage all who serve in their various ways, the primary focus is pastoral; encouraging our congregations. Spending a time of fellowship and prayer in three separate meetings across the week with their ministers will also be a highlight for me. We have 15 active ministers and assistant ministers serving in the Presbytery and I very much look forward to spending time with them all."

## **Moderators theme**

Each year, Moderators have a theme which gives them a particular focus. Speaking at the various Sunday services Dr Murray will be able bring his theme, 'Mighty to Save', to each congregation. "I chose this for my theme because I believe there has been a loss of confidence in the power of the gospel. The Apostle Paul says in Colossians 1:18 "Him we proclaim" and I wanted to put the person and work of Jesus Christ front and centre throughout my year in office. If we are not about proclaiming Jesus Christ and Him crucified, then clearly, we have lost our way," he said.

The Presbytery Clerk and minister of First Larne Presbyterian Church, Rev Dr Colin McClure, helped to organise the tour. "It will be a packed schedule for the Moderator, which will see him meet many people who contribute to local community life and well-being. There are visits arranged to a foodbank, which does such valuable



supportive work in these challenging times, various statutory agencies, including the emergency services.

## **Schools important focus**

“Education is always an important focus on a Presbytery Tour, and Dr Murray will take assembly in Woodburn Primary School in Carrickfergus and in Larne High School he will take part in a Q&A session with some of the older students, while meeting the school’s senior team. He will also visit Roddensvale Special School, which is also in Larne.”

## **Mayor reception and MLA’s breakfast**

Dr McClure concluded by saying, “This has been an eagerly anticipated visit and I know that the Moderator is looking forward to being received by Alderman Beth Adger, Mayor of Mid and East Antrim, as well as meeting all the area's MLAs at a breakfast that we have arranged.

## **Uniformed organisations**

“What we call the ‘uniformed organisations’ play a large part in the life of our churches and our children and young people, and as a former member of the Boys’ Brigade, Dr Murray will attend the BB’s East Antrim Battalion’s annual service at my church, First Larne, and attend the Girls’ Brigade District Parade in Gardenmore. It will be a busy week, but I hope an informative and enjoyable one for the Moderator.”

# News



## Celebrating Scouting volunteers at Cultra Manor

**On Sunday last, Scouts NI hosted their final Thank You event at the beautiful Cultra Manor, bringing together just under 100 volunteers to celebrate their incredible dedication.**

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With inspiring speeches from Stephen Bell, the new NI Chief Volunteer, and Barbara Edgar, Chair of the People Sub-Group, along with a performance by the Claremont String Quartet featuring Adam McCambridge and special gifts for everyone, it was truly a memorable day!

Check out news article for more details and all the event photos

<https://shorturl.at/YuGby>

## Council reception for Carlow Union of Parishes

**“We were delighted to be invited to a reception in the Town Hall hosted by Carlow County Council on Tuesday night.”**



At the reception organisations that took part in the recent Entente Florale competition

were thanked and honoured with a small presentation.





Rev Paul and Carolyn were thrilled to accept the gift on behalf of all in Carlow Union and to be joined by some of the people who worked so hard to make the event so enjoyable. We hope to do something soon in church to recognise and thank our sub committee and all the volunteers and workers who made our experience so truly special.

## **Over 100 pilgrims from Würzburg accompany relics of Saints on journey to Cavan**

**It was a privilege for St Patrick's College, Maynooth to receive the relics of Saints Kilian, Colanat and Totnan on their journey to Co Cavan this week.**



Over 100 pilgrims from Würzburg in Germany accompanied by Bishop Franz Jung joined with the Maynooth community in a procession through St Joseph's Square to the College Chapel for vespers and veneration of the relics. This is the first time the relics have left Germany and is part of a larger St Kilian pilgrimage to the saints' birthplace in Mullagh, Co. Cavan. Bishop Martin Hayes of Kilmore welcomed the relics to Ireland.







There was a large attendance in the College Chapel for a solemn and respectful evening of song and prayer, presided over by Archbishop of Dublin, Dermot Farrell. The choirs included, Würzburg Cathedral Choir, Schola Gregoriana Maynooth, and the Choir of the National Seminary, under the direction of Dr John O’Keeffe.

Many thanks also to Aer Lingus who marked the occasion by ensuring the Würzburg travelling party were flown to Ireland on board St Kilian. For information on the full programme of events in Co Cavan, visit [kilmorediocese.ie](http://kilmorediocese.ie)







## Presiding bishop, in last diocesan visit, celebrates with Wyoming Episcopalians and his predecessor

**"Curry's two days in Casper last week, which included a Sept. 28 Holy Eucharist and sermon, marked the final diocesan visit of his nine-year term as presiding bishop. He will step down Oct. 31 after visiting more than 100 dioceses. Wyoming Episcopalians like to think he saved the best for last, and Corkery joked that Wyoming is used to this placement. "We're the bottom of the alphabet," she said.**

Wyoming Episcopalians felt special in another way: Their convention welcomed not one but two presiding bishops. Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, Curry's predecessor, is serving Wyoming as a part-time assisting bishop while the





diocese navigates a leadership transition. Jefferts Schori, in introducing Curry's keynote, described him as "a wonderful gift" to his fellow bishops, to The Episcopal Church and to the wider Anglican Communion.

"Bishop Curry has the tact and heart of a saint, and he has encouraged greater openness in the [Anglican](#) Communion," Jefferts Schori said. She highlighted his leadership in the areas of racial reconciliation, evangelism and creation care, and she emphasized the theme he has made central to his primacy.

"If you don't remember anything else," Jefferts Schori said, "it's all about love."

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As Curry got to the heart of his remarks, the speech hit many familiar notes. Above all, love one another, he said, invoking Jesus' command to his disciples at the last supper in the Gospel of John.

“What a different world we would have if we loved each other as God loved us,” Curry said. He issued his own command for the Episcopal Church in Wyoming: “Let the world know you are people of love.”

## Cathedral Calls

### St Fin Barre's Cathedral Dedication Festival on Sunday



**St Fin Barre's Cathedral will be celebrating its Dedication Festival on Sunday with Eucharist at 11:15am and Choral Evensong at 3:15pm.**

These special services will give thanks for the gift of our amazing Cathedral and how appropriate that we have had the West Front of this William Burges masterpiece cleaned for the occasion! Come and join us in celebration and prayer.

## **Dublin Festival of History event at Christ Church Cathedral**

**Dublin Festival of History and Christ Church Cathedral present Dr Greg Sullivan in ‘Contested Histories: the sculpture of Christ Church Cathedral re-examined’**

As part of the Dublin Festival of History, Dr Greg Sullivan will take a fresh look at the monuments of Christ Church Cathedral, informed by his work on the ‘Pantheons’ project in St Paul’s Cathedral, London and in the context of the current wider debate over public monuments. This is a free event. No booking required.

Wednesday 9th October 1-2pm. Henry Roe Room, Christ Church Cathedral

## **Clergy and ministry**

### **Archbishop Justin presents Bishop John Inge with Lanfranc Award for theological education**

**The Archbishop of Canterbury has presented the Bishop of Worcester, Dr John Inge, with the Lanfranc Award for Education and Scholarship.**

The Lanfranc Award, which was presented to Bishop John at Lambeth Palace on Friday 20th September, recognises outstanding work in field of theological education.





Bishop John received the award before a ceremony in Lambeth Palace Chapel conferring doctorates to graduands of the Lambeth Research Degrees in Theology(LRDT) programme, whose Council he has chaired since 2019. Bishop John is standing down as Chair of the LRDT as he retires as Bishop of Worcester this month.

The Archbishop first presented the Lanfranc Award in 2016. It is named after the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1070-1089, who was a scholar and a teacher.

Archbishop Justin said: "I'm deeply grateful for Bishop John's dedication to theological education in the Church of England. His extensive commitment and leadership in this area has made us richer as a church, and amplified voices previously overlooked. He has served humbly and faithfully and has left a lasting impact. Our understanding of God shapes who we are, we discover ourselves as we discover Him. Helping others learn about the nature of God is a crucial pursuit, and I know many will join me in thanking Bishop John for his work in this field."



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Bishop John said: “I was surprised and delighted to receive this award. The pursuit of theology is close to my heart and promoting it has been a reward in itself. To receive an award for doing so is totally unexpected and greatly appreciated.”

## Praying by Heart - Archbishop of York shares his new book

Join the Archbishop of York as he shares on YouTube the inspiration behind his upcoming book.

**Praying by Heart - The Lord’s Prayer for everyone**, speaks of the timeless relevance of this beautiful and challenging prayer in today's world.

Watch on YouTube <https://bit.ly/3TRxylK>

## Moderator of the NSPCI visit to First Belfast

**This Sunday’s Service will be conducted by the new Moderator of the General Synod of the NSPCI, the Right Rev Alister Bell.**



His vision is “to bring our congregations and churches closer together, fostering greater unity and collaboration within our

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community” - indeed his moderatorial motto is "Sharing God's Love Together". All welcome, this Sunday 6 October at 10.30am.

On Monday 7 October the church's Film Club will be showing the classic British chiller, 'Obsession' on Monday 7 October. Taking place in the Playfair Library at 7.30pm.

## Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

### Sharing hope with people without a home - C of I resource

#### **Parishes encouraged to take action against homelessness**

Each parish in the Church of Ireland is being encouraged to consider how it can help to overcome homelessness at a local level between Harvest and Christmas this year.

With both seasons being special times for thanksgiving and generosity, the Church and Society Commission's new two-page flyer – Sharing hope with people without a home – is a timely guide to actions that can be undertaken locally.

Above all else, the resource encourages each person experiencing homelessness to be valued as someone who is unique, facing unique challenges and deserving compassion and respect.

Welcoming people into warm spaces, sharing fruit and vegetables with families with nutritional needs, and small acts of neighbourly love to help people feel at ease at home are among the suggestions.

“Homeless is a rucksack that none of us wants to be carrying,” Archbishop Michael Jackson, as Chair of the Church and Society Commission, writes in his introduction. “Nonetheless more and more people in our societies are carrying this rucksack today. It runs counter to everything many of us have taken for granted around security, independence, belonging and care of ourselves and of others.

“Our appeal is first to you to consider what we have put together; to pray about it and to act upon it. It is a wonderful way to connect Harvest and Christmas and to share what matters with others in today’s society and to play your part in helping it to be a caring community.”

Copies can be downloaded, printed and shared from the Church of Ireland website [here](#) and will be shared with diocesan and cathedral offices over the coming weeks.

## **Hillsborough Castle and Gardens travel grant**

**Calling all teachers - Apply now for our Travel Bursary Scheme for school visits to Hillsborough Castle and Gardens for the 2024-25 academic year**

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This scheme enables more schools than ever to enjoy an interactive and immersive school trip, without worrying about the cost of a coach

Applications close Sunday 13 October 2024.

Find out more <https://brnw.ch/21wNrFQ>



## In the media

**MPs to get historic vote on England and Wales assisted dying bill - Guardian**

**Labour MP Kim Leadbeater says bill will give**



## **terminally ill adults choice and ensure stronger protections for loved ones**

The legalisation of assisted dying in England and Wales appeared to take a decisive step forward after it was announced MPs will vote on a bill to give people a choice about end of life care.

The Labour MP Kim Leadbeater said her private member's bill this month would give terminally ill, eligible adults a choice at the end of life to shorten dying and ensure stronger protection for them and their loved ones afterwards.

Keir Starmer has said he supports a change in the law, although MPs would get a free vote as it is a matter of conscience. Downing Street has said it would not obstruct the bill and the government would be expected to support the MP with drafting in the later stages.

Writing for the Guardian, Leadbeater said the law had not been updated for 60 years and it was now time to bring the UK into line with some other countries. "Somebody with a terminal condition and very little time left has only limited options," the Spen Valley MP said.

She added: "I believe we should have the right to see out our days surrounded by those we love and care for, knowing that when we are gone they can remember us as we would like to be remembered. I also believe that if we were able to spare them any unnecessary trauma and uncertainty, we would want to do that too."

The MP, who came first in the private members' ballot, said there would be safeguards and protections in place to ensure people could not come under pressure to agree to assisted dying against their will. She said her bill would not undermine calls for improvements to palliative care.

Leadbeater said: "Parliament should now be able to consider a change in the law that would offer reassurance and relief – and most importantly, dignity and choice – to people in the last months of their lives."

However, while polling shows a majority of the public back legalising support for terminally ill people who wish to end their lives, the issue could cause serious divisions across parties, with opinion split.

While the prime minister said last year, when he was in opposition, that there were "grounds for changing the law", the justice secretary, Shabana Mahmood, has said she could not back a policy she described as "a really dangerous position to be in".

Wes Streeting, the health secretary, suggested last month he that he worried the state of end-of-life care in the UK meant it was not ready for assisted dying. He has raised concerns over people being coerced into exercising their right to die because of a lack of end-of-life care.

Excerpt of a report by Pippa Crerar of 03/10/2024

# Poem for today

## October

By Patrick Kavanagh

O leafy yellowness you create for me  
A world that was and now is poised above time,  
I do not need to puzzle out Eternity  
As I walk this arboreal street on the edge of a town.  
The breeze, too, even the temperature  
And pattern of movement is precisely the same  
As broke my heart for youth passing. Now I am sure  
Of something. Something will be mine wherever I am.  
I want to throw myself on the public street without caring  
For anything but the praying that the earth offers.  
It is October over all my life and the light is staring  
As it caught me once in a plantation by the fox coverts.  
A man is ploughing the ground for winter wheat  
And my nineteen years weigh heavily on my feet.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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**Church News Ireland**



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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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