

Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – King's College, Cambridge's
wildflower harvest**

September 4, 2023

Image of the day



Two Shire horses, Cosmo and Bryn, help to cut the wildflower meadow before turning and carting the hay on a traditional wain. On this warm summer's day, they are both kept hydrated by drinking plenty of water.

Photography courtesy Lloyd Mann

King's College, Cambridge's wildflower harvest

We've just witnessed the harvest of King's College, Cambridge's wildflower meadow once again – with the help of these two glorious Shire horses!

Cosmo and Bryn helped to cut the meadow over three days, while supported by a team of gardeners from King's and other Cambridge Colleges.

Watching the two horses at work is not only a beautiful sight; there's also environmental reasons why they are used. The horses have a far lower impact on soil compaction and the flora of the meadow compared to the use of a tractor.

Once the hay bales are ready, they will be distributed across the city to create more wildflower meadows. Just like last year, the hay will be offered to local farmers as winter feed for livestock. Photography courtesy Lloyd Mann

People and places

Former Scots Moderator new Co-Chair of Boys Brigade Executive in UK and Ireland

Boys Brigade in UK and Ireland has announced that Very Rev Dr Martin Fair has been co-opted as Co-Chair of its Trustee Board, the Brigade Executive.

September 4, 2023

Martin served as Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland (2020-2021) and now works in a national Church role focusing on recruiting and training the leaders of tomorrow.

Martin commented: "I'm delighted and sensing the privilege that is

mine to be joining the Brigade Executive as Co-Chair and hope that I'll be able to contribute positively to the work of the Executive and, ultimately, to the life of the Brigade itself in the time ahead."

"But first and foremost I'm looking forward to getting to know people and to listening and learning and to joining what is already a great team. Here's to exciting days ahead!"

Read more about Martin's appointment at <https://boys-brigade.org.uk/appointment-of-new-co-chair-of-trustees/>



St. Columb's School of Music Bursaries

Applications for the St. Columb's School of Music Bursaries are now open!

Bursaries are designed to provide financial assistance to families to help the student learn a musical instrument and



attend St. Columb's School of Music. Bursaries are awarded at the start of the Academic year and run until the End of Year Concert (September - June), covering the cost of tuition, instrumental hire and exam entries.

Applications can be found online at <https://www.stcolumbsschoolofmusic.com/school-foundation>

Available Bursaries:

- The Mayor's Music Bursary
- Inner City Trust Music Bursary (2)
- The Honourable the Irish Society Music Bursary (3)
- Parents' Association Music Bursary

September 4, 2023

One application can be used for all available bursaries - please state your instrument of choice (Drums, violin, clarinet, flute, guitar, piano, voice)

Deadlines for all applications is 5pm on Friday 8th September.



Duke of Edinburgh Award Achievers

In August in Northern Ireland there were -

134 Bronze Award completions

61 Silver Award completions

18 Gold Award completions

and 132 Certificates of Achievement were issued.



Celebrating outgoing Archdeacons

The Bishop of Down & Dromore Rt Reverend David McClay hosted a reception on Friday 1 September in Willowfield Church Halls to mark the forthcoming retirements of both Archdeacon Roderic West (Dromore) and Archdeacon Ken Higgins (Down).

Roderic and Ken have ministered in the diocese for 37 years and 30 years respectively, Roderic having been Archdeacon since October 2011 and Ken since February 2020.

Bishop David said that Roderic and Ken had carried out the challenging role of an Archdeacon “with grace, with integrity and a depth of commitment to Jesus Christ who is the head of the church”.

He also thanked them for their parish ministries, noting that both had grown the churches where they had served and

September 4, 2023

were known for their deep commitment to the pastoral care of their parishioners.

He expressed his gratitude to both for their friendship and faithfulness.

“I have so valued your support, your prayers, your wisdom and all that you’ve given over the years. So, on behalf of all of us in this diocese, thank you so much for all that you’ve given as Archdeacons and all that you’ve given locally. May you, Roderic and Joan and you, Ken and Ann have a fruitful ministry in retirement and health and happiness in the years ahead.”

Hon Lay Secretary for Down, Dr Elizabeth Leonard presented each of the Archdeacons with a gift and Joan and Ann with flowers. More photos at -

[<https://www.downanddromore.org/news/gallery/734/reception-for-the-archdeacons-september>]

Ordinations yesterday

The ordination of (OLM) priests (presbyters) took place in St Saviour’s, Dollingstown, on Sunday 3 September at 6.30 pm.

The Bishop of Down & Dromore ordained the Revd Ross Munro for The Gathering (Parish of Titanic) and the Revd James Crockett for Braniel Church Plant

September 4, 2023

The preacher at the service was Revd Greg Downes, Director of Kingfisher Ministries and Theologian and Missioner of St Mary's Cogges near Oxford.

Yesterday morning Brian Shaw was made a deacon (OLM) by the Bishop of Connor in Agherton Parish, Portstewart. The preacher was Canon Kevin Graham, diocesan director of ordinands. The Rector, Canon Malcolm Ferry, Canon George Graham, Rev Patrick Barton and Rev Andrew Neill also took part. The liturgy was enhanced by the Parish choir under the direction of Mr Louis Fields the organist and choir master.



Quietly pleased with my look for the niece's wedding. Until the teenagers christened me Paddington

September 4, 2023

Three were made deacon by the Bishop of Connor at Belfast Cathedral yesterday afternoon.

Shona Bell will serve in the parish of Holy Trinity, Ballywillan, Portrush. Melanie Sloan will serve in St Patrick's Parish, Broughshane, and Cameron Mack will serve in the Cathedral Parish of St Anne, Belfast.

The Ordination will be led by the Bishop of Connor, Rt Rev George Davison assisted by the Archdeacons and the Director of Ordinands. The preacher was Rev Dr Andrew Campbell, Rector of Broughshane, with the Rector of Portrush, Canon Peter McDowell and the Dean of Belfast Very Rev Stephen Forde also assisting with the service.



Both Bishop Paul and Susan Colton had a great night entertaining the clergy, retired clergy and spouses of Cork C of I clergy in their home. Great night. Great team.

September 4, 2023

The Master of Music, Mr Jack Wilson and Assistant Organist, Mr Stephen Hamill led the cathedral choir. The communion setting was "Communion Service in C and F" by

Sir Charles Villiers Stanford, and the Motet "If you love me" by Philip Wilby.

Organ music included Choral Prelude on Nun ruhen alle walder Flor Peeters, and Carillon-Sortie by Henri Mulet.

In the media

Concern over ‘disturbing’ response to request for transparency on Church of Ireland bishops’ expenses

A retired canon and former Church of Ireland Gazette editor has raised concerns about the “disturbing” way the church has responded to his requests for transparency around bishops’ expenses, Mark Tighe writes in the Irish Independent.

Ian M Ellis, who was editor of the church’s newspaper for 16 years up to 2017, has been seeking answers from the Representative Church Body (RCB), the Rathmines-based charitable trust that runs the Church of Ireland’s finances across the island.

The charity has net assets of €638m and in 2021 reported income of almost €15m and expenditure of €17.8m.

September 4, 2023

Canon Ellis, who accused the RCB of “stonewalling” in 2016 when he asked about its finances while he was editor of the Col Gazette, told the Sunday Independent that for over a year he has been trying to get answers on why bishops’ expenses of hundreds of thousands of euro in 2021 were restated in the RCB’s accounts in 2022 by over €100,000.

The retired canon said that according to the RCB’s 2022 Book of Reports, its 2021 Office of the Sees expenses were reduced by €30,000 to €301,213 in its 2022 report.

The Office of the Sees expenses (in sterling) were reduced by £16,401 to £171,225. The Houses & Other Costs for 2021 increased by €58,574 to €367,000 and the sterling amounts under this category decreased by £9,107 to £230,948.

“The amending of the original 2021 figures led to three of the four restated figures being considerably reduced amounts, and one being a considerably increased amount,” said Canon Ellis.

“This raised questions for me concerning the process. I asked for an explanation of each of the four amended figures but did not receive this, only being told the changes overall were due to the inclusion of ‘administration recharges’.

The retired canon said an email he received from the RCB in June 2022 indicated that in previous years some costs



Canon Rev Dr Ian M. Ellis

were not included in the bishops' costs section of the annual report, but were included in an overall allocation to bishops. This raised further questions for him.

The retired canon was offered a meeting with the RCB to address his concerns in May, but this offer was withdrawn later this summer after he asked if he could record the meeting to have a formal record of the answers given.

“Precisely because I have always had all due regard for the RCB, its members and staff, I find the RCB’s approach to my enquiries on episcopal costs and expenses particularly disconcerting,” said Canon Ellis.

September 4, 2023

“I am disturbed that the RCB has indicated that I laid down required conditions for a meeting which the RCB had offered me last May in order to explain matters to me. I did not lay down required conditions.

"Rather, I made a four-point proposal, namely that I could be accompanied by a retired banker associate, that there would be no confidentiality restrictions placed on me, and regarding the recording of the meeting and possible follow-up provision.”

He said the RCB’s written responses to him were similar to what he experienced as editor of the Col Gazette in 2016/17 when it declined to answer specific questions.



Courtesy Peter Brookes - The Times

September 4, 2023

In 2016, the RCB insisted that expenses for bishops were “adequate, rather than generous.”

In response to queries from the Sunday Independent, the RCB said it is sometimes necessary to restate prior year comparisons.

“Any material reclassification of income or costs would be subject to internal approval and external audit, “ it said.

“The explanation for the reclassification referred to in your query relates to administration and related costs.”

It said the RCB’s trustees are responsible for its annual report and financial statements which are prepared by staff and audited by PwC.

“The financial statements are reviewed each year by the audit committee, to whom the auditors report, and presented to our governing body, the general synod,” it said. Courtesy the Irish Independent 03/09/2023

Pope reaches out to China

News Nightly by Colm Flynn - In the dead of night the Vatican and China took a diplomatic step forward as Pope Francis was permitted to fly through Chinese airspace on his way to Mongolia. Previous Pope's have been denied. As he did, he sent a telegram to president Xi Jinping saying he was praying for peace and unity. China then responded. Video tape report here -

September 4, 2023

<https://twitter.com/colmflynnire/status/1697745529281843371>

Orange Victims Day 2023

Loyal order chiefs gather in Co Tyrone to remember 342 members murdered during the Troubles

News Letter extract - Leaders of the loyal orders have attended a special church service in Co Tyrone today in memory of the 342 members of the Orange Order who were murdered during the Troubles.

The majority of the 342 victims were murdered whilst serving as members of the security forces.

Other events are being organised by the order locally around Northern Ireland to mark the occasion, which was also intended to highlight the ongoing plight of the injured and bereaved.

The date, 1 September, was chosen for the annual event as it is the anniversary of the largest loss of life inflicted on the Orange family from a single terrorist attack; The IRA murdered four Orangemen, with a fifth later dying from his injuries, in an attack on Tullyvallen Orange Hall in south Armagh on the same date in 1975.

So, what is driving more NI couples to call time on marriages?

Belfast Telegraph extract - Margaret Canning writes -Economic trends such as the post-pandemic rise in house prices in Northern Ireland may have been an influence in decisions to divorce, a matrimonial lawyer has said.

And another specialist has said that greater discussion in society of coercive control may also have been a factor in couples, most likely for women, calling time on failed relationships.

Solicitor Janice Spence, head of the family law department at Donaldson McConnell & Co Solicitors in Lisburn, said legislation making coercive control unlawful, which came into force in February last year, had changed discourse around relationships.

People were now regarding previously tolerated behaviours as unacceptable forms of conduct.

According to the latest statistics from the NI Courts and Tribunals (NICTS), 2,573 divorce petitions were received in Northern Ireland in 2022, up 2% on 2021.

Meanwhile, in the year prior, between 2020 and 2021, there was an increase of 11.2%; however, this was a period in which the legal system was catching up following lockdowns.

September 4, 2023

Proceedings can take place in the High Court — a case wherein a spouse wants to contest the divorce, say, and there are finances to sort out — or the County Court. The NICTS figures show a 13% rise in divorce decrees granted in the High Court between 2021 and 2022, to 808.

There was an increase of 14% in decrees granted in the County Court, where fees are lower and parties can represent themselves without needing a solicitor, from 1,425 to 1,628.

Ciara Brolly, director of the family law team at Wilson Nesbitt, said separate figures from the Annual Report of the Registrar General found that there were 2,041 divorces registered in 2021, an increase of 35.3% since 2020.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books



How could your church use TikTok to reach young people?

As of 2023, TikTok now has 1.1 billion users. How can your church use TikTok to reach young people?

Discover tips and examples in our latest [#DigitalLabs](#) blog, at <http://cofe.io/TikTok>.

Church Planting Taster Day

PCI - This event is open to individuals and congregations with a heart for church planting or mission pioneering; as well as anyone currently and actively involved in it.

When: Saturday, 21 October 2023 – 10.30am-1.30pm

Where: Central Church, Belfast (May Street)

Cost: £5

The half day will include a presentation on the vision and strategy for church planting in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, stories of recent practice and will offer support and guidance to help you or your congregation take the next steps in church planting.

Those who feel drawn to be involved in church planting are encouraged to attend, and congregations with a vision to plant elsewhere should come along with their minister and at least three elders or key leaders.

Tea and coffee will be available from 10am and the event will finish with lunch.

September 4, 2023

To book your place, visit:

www.presbyterianireland.org/ChurchPlantingTasterDay

ST JOHNS MALONE

CHORAL SCHOLARS (SATB)

We are currently recruiting singers to join our choir, and existing scholars, to sing at Sunday services.

- Accomplished choir.
- Low level commitment - 4 services per month during term time plus some additional at Christmas and Easter.
- Good music - we sing a wide range of music.
- Three payments per academic year totalling £600 PA.
- Friendly team.

For further details contact:
Richard Campbell
Director of Music
07920832333
richard.campbell@stjohnsmalone.com





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
