

# Church News Ireland

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## Image of the day – Air Ambulance Week

# Image of the day



## Air Ambulance Week

**This is Air Ambulance Week and also the 7th year of Air Ambulance Northern Ireland.**



If you are planning any fundraising, keep this very worthy charity in your mind as it is public donations that keep it running.

September 12, 2024

This service is in the air or on the road twice daily, assisting those in need and saving lives.

## News



### Portrush retreat hits the spot

**On the last weekend in August a group of 18-30 year-olds from throughout the diocese of Down and Dromore headed to the North Coast for their first ever Young Adults Retreat.**

They made the most of the excellent weather with sandcastle competitions, surf lessons and late-night campfires. It was a wonderful weekend for these 35 young adults to build new friendships and community together.

Janine Armstrong, FORGE Coordinator, said “Down and Dromore has well-established ministries with youth and children and for several years has been running

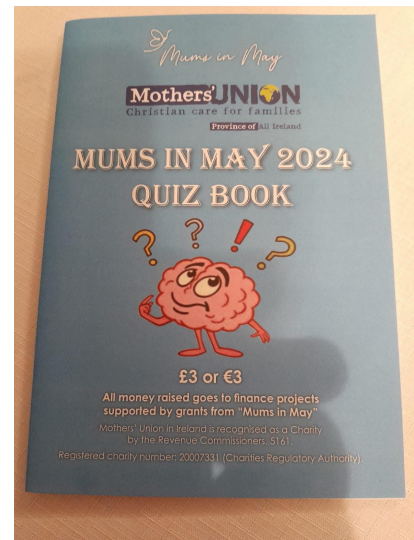
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Foundations for those aged 18-30. In 2022 we also launched the FORGE Ministry Apprenticeship Scheme for 18-25s.

“Our goal in serving young adults is to equip them to follow Jesus, serve His people and share His love through gap years, mentoring, leadership development and spiritual formation. Watch out for more news and events coming up!”

## Mums in May puzzle book on way to Australia

**Tullow Mothers' Union members and parishioners met in St. Columba's Church for the first event of our 120th season.**



The service was led by Richard Codd, Diocesan Reader, assisted by Eric Driver, parish reader. Readings and intercessions were led by members.

The light shining through the stained glass



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windows caught eye of a passing Australian visitor to the town, who joined us for the service. There is now a Mums in May puzzle book making its way through Europe!

## Archbishops join pilgrims on St. Columbanus Way walk from Carlow to Bangor

Archbishop Eamon, Archbishop John McDowell, local walkers and students and teachers from St. Patrick's, Armagh and St Catherine's joined pilgrims on the St. Columbanus Way walk from Carlow to Bangor.

Walking for Peace and healing the



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group walked from Navan Fort to the O’Fiaich Library, stopping at both Cathedrals. Many thanks to all who took part and we wish the St. Columbanus Pilgrims a safe journey as they continue their pilgrimage.



## Climbed Slieve Donard for South Sudan

On Saturday a wonderful team from St John's Moira climbed Slieve Donard, the highest mountain in NI, to

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**help raise funds for the the Mission team heading from St John's to South Sudan in January.**

If you would like to donate it would be so appreciated, there is now an online link <https://www.justgiving.com/page/stjohnsmoirasouthsudan>



## **Mothers' Union literacy circle a lifeline for Burundi woman**

**Yvette's life took a challenging turn when her husband went**

**missing, leaving her to navigate years of uncertainty and hardship.**

But in 2010, she found a lifeline in the Mothers' Union literacy circle in Burundi.

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Through the support of the program, Yvette learned to read, joined a savings group, and started her own small business.

She also received trauma healing support, which helped her find peace after years of sleepless nights.

Today, Yvette is not just surviving—she's thriving.

She's providing for her children, rebuilding her life, and living in the freedom she thought was lost forever.

Together, we're transforming lives around the corner and around the world.

## Large number of Christian Aid reps meet at Drumbeg

**Christian Aid reports - We were thrilled that so many of our church reps and organisers were able to join us on Sunday at Drumbeg Parish Church near Lisburn in County Down.**

Each September, we hold this event to thank our supporters for their hard work during Christian Aid Week and to reveal the total sum of money raised throughout the week.

At more than £361,000, this year's figure was well up on last year's total of approximately £329,000.

We'd arranged an icecream and coffee van to turn up and serve refreshments, creating a lovely late summer vibe and there was a real buzz in the hall.





We're grateful to St Patrick's Church, Drumbeg for the use of their beautiful venue.

We watched the Christian Aid Week thank you video which included a message from Aline Nibogora from Burundi whose story was the focus of this year's Christian Aid Week appeal.

Our Church and Community Officer Kaye Steele interviewed Maura Pringle, who's stepping down as our rep at Hillsborough Parish Church after more than 40 years of fundraising. Kaye presented Maura with some flowers to thank her for her incredible dedication.

Our Chief Executive Rosamond Bennett spoke about her recent visit to South Sudan where refugees fleeing civil war

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in neighbouring Sudan have poured into what was already the world's poorest country. Today, the refugee crisis in South Sudan is the world's biggest humanitarian emergency and this story forms the focus of our Christmas appeal.

Our Chair Liz Hughes spoke briefly about her recent trip to see our projects in Zimbabwe and closed in prayer.

Thanks so much to everyone who came along to join us for the afternoon.

## **Many people will be grateful for work behind Programme for Government - Archbishop John McDowell**

**Archbishop John McDowell, the Church of Ireland's Primate of All Ireland and Archbishop of Armagh, has issued the following statement on the publication of the Northern Ireland Executive's Programme for Government for consultation:**

The first Programme for Government in thirteen years is an opportunity to re-establish and to put on a firm footing the good governance of Northern Ireland for the benefit of all our people, and particularly for those who are finding it difficult to make ends meet and to live with proper human dignity.

The Church of Ireland will make a full response to the consultation, in the usual way, but in the meantime I thought it might be worthwhile to offer a few words of heartfelt encouragement.



It cannot have been easy to get agreement from all four Northern Ireland Executive parties on what must be regarded as a sincere attempt to end years of political uncertainty and instability. All things considered, the Programme for Government has been agreed remarkably speedily due to the preparatory work which has been carried out by officials and politicians alike when the Assembly and Executive were not functioning. Many people will be very grateful for that unseen and valuable work.

Perhaps an even greater challenge will involve the spirit in which the Programme for Government is implemented; where possible softening the sharp edges which are an inevitable, but perhaps not an irreducible feature, of a mandatory coalition.

Of course financial resources are finite, and deciding funding priorities for departmental programmes and

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Executive initiatives will require strong and compassionate leadership. However, I can't help thinking that the citizens of Northern Ireland will understand and put up with the financial realities if they feel that those making decisions will do so as people guiding us along a bumpy road together. Honesty and clarity in what has to be said and a strong sense of common purpose within the Executive will count for a lot.

The nine priorities which are outlined in the Programme for Government address many pressing needs. Ultimately, building hundreds of social housing units, addressing the pollution crisis literally at the heart of our Province in Lough Neagh, addressing poverty, childcare provision, violence against women and girls, and tackling the crisis within policing will all require significant financial resources. Perhaps understandably, there is a lack of detail under the nine priorities, reflecting the wider uncertainty around where the money will come from. No doubt greater clarity and depth will arise when the consultation is completed and the results analysed.

In the meantime all those involved in Government and indeed in Opposition can be assured of the prayers of many people as they carry out their vocation of public service.

## Cathedral Calls

### **Pets' Service returns at Belfast Cathedral**

**The Cathedral commented - We're delighted to announce that our Pets' Service is returning this year!**



**Pets' Service**  
including the blessing of the pets

Sunday  
September 22nd  
at 3.30pm

All well behaved  
pets welcome



**BELFAST CATHEDRAL**  
THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. ANNE

[www.belfastcathedral.org](http://www.belfastcathedral.org)

**God loves everything he has made, including the animals he has given us for companions.**

All are welcome to bring their pets to the cathedral at 3:30pm on Sunday 22nd September, when we will give thanks to God for them and bless them.

Come prepared for fun and happy chaos!

## **Shrewsbury are back**

**The Abbey choir came back from their summer break just in time for .....The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the succession of His Majesty King Charles III and Education Sunday. What a day!**

Holy Eucharist 11am

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Mass setting - Sumsion in F

Motet - Ave Maria - Parsons

Voluntary - Prelude and Fugue in C Major - Bach

Choral Evensong 3pm

Introit Oculi Omnium- Wood

Responses- Ayleward

Canticles - Dyson in F

Anthem - Ave Maria - Bonnet

Voluntary - Carillon - Murrill

The poster features a dark background with a photograph of a stone archway leading to a window with a grid pattern. Sunlight streams through the window, casting shadows on the wall. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout with some elements on torn paper strips.

 St Peter's  
Catholic Cathedral, Belfast

# FAURÉ'S

# REQUIEM

## OP. 48

SUNG BY THE CATHEDRAL CHOIRS  
AT SAINT PETER'S CATHEDRAL,  
BELFAST

# 22 NOV 2024

## 7PM

## Fauré's Requiem at St Peter's Cathedral

**“We are thrilled to announce our upcoming performance of Fauré's Requiem, featuring all 3 of our incredible choirs!**

“Join us for an evening of beautiful choral music in the stunning setting of St Peter's Cathedral”. Friday 22nd November. 7pm . St Peter's Cathedral



**Clergy  
and  
ministry**

**Prayer  
request  
for  
ministry  
South  
Sudan**

**Bishop  
Patrick P  
Augustine  
writes - I ask  
your  
prayers for**



**healing for Bishop Nathaniel Garang, the spiritual father of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan.**

He is longest serving Bishop and of the mother Diocese of Bor. He has served as diocesan Bishop, Dean of the Episcopal Church in Sudan and the Acting Archbishop of South Sudan. He has preached the Gospel and walked on foot hundreds of miles to preach and baptize thousands of animists.

Archbishop of Canterbury last year gave him the highest award of the Anglican Communion for evangelism.

Bishop Nathaniel and I have been brothers since February 1996 walked on foot inside war zone area of South Sudan



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where we preached the Gospel and prayed for people. He is close to 100 years now.

I was with him in Bor in his house last April 2024. He was fully alert. We spent time in fellowship and prayer. In this picture Archbishop Ruben Akurdid, Bishop Thomas and Bishop Patrick Augustine visiting Bishop Nathaniel at his home. We all were there to pay our respects to our senior brother in Christ.

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

### Singing on the Steps of Armagh church

First Armagh Presbyterian church seasonal series of Singing on the Steps continues on Sunday 29th



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**September at 3.30pm when Tassagh Silver Band will lead in praise.**

Refreshments will be served afterwards and the church would be delighted if you could join them.



**MAYNOOTH**  
COMMUNITY CHURCH  
Eaglais Phreispitéireach in Éirinn

**JOIN US FOR OUR**

**OPENING CELEBRATION**

**SATURDAY 14TH SEPT 2024 AT 4.00PM**



**REFRESHMENTS TO FOLLOW**

FREE PARKING ON SITE



**WATERFRONT HALL CONCERT**  
**FRIDAY 11 APRIL 2025**

## Save the RBAI Waterfront date

**The RBAI Choir & Orchestra will return to the Waterfront Hall for a special concert next April. Tickets will go on sale in the autumn.**

## In the media

### Former minister who defrauded his church and widow is jailed - Belfast Telegraph

**Six months behind bars for man who regarded parish as ‘personal fiefdom’, Ashleigh McDonald reports.**

A former minister who defrauded his church of £10,000 and a grieving parishioner of £1,000 has been jailed.

Judge Patrick Lynch KC told Adrian Robert McLaughlin that he abused the trust of his congregation and regarded the parish “as if it was a personal fiefdom”.

The 50-year-old father-of-two, from Church Avenue in Dunmurry, was convicted of defrauding £10,000 from St Colman's Parish Church in Dunmurry on a date between October 15 and November 30, 2016.

In June, a jury at Craigavon Crown Court also found him guilty of defrauding a parishioner, who had just lost her husband, of £1,000 between September 24 and October 31, 2016.

McLaughlin, who continues to maintain his innocence, was back in court yesterday where he was handed a 12-month sentence, which was divided equally between prison and licence.

Before imposing the term, Judge Lynch, who was sitting in Belfast Crown Court, outlined that McLaughlin had been the minister of St Colman's Church of Ireland since 2014.

In January 2016, a fire at the church caused extensive damage and a fund was set up to help with restoration costs.

Over the period from August to November 2016, the church didn't have a treasurer and cheques issued from its accounts required two signatures — one of which was McLaughlin's and the other from a nominated individual.

On October 16, 2016, McLaughlin approached the nominated individual and asked him to co-sign a cheque for £10,000, which he said was to purchase a replacement organ.

Then, in November 2016, a member of the congregation took up the position of treasurer.

When she examined the church's books, she observed that the cheque stub for the £10,000 transaction bore the name 'Northern Ireland Organs Limited'.

It later emerged that McLaughlin had made the cheque out to himself.

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Regarding the £1,000 fraud, Judge Lynch said this was handed to McLaughlin by a parishioner whose husband had just passed away.

She made the donation on the understanding that the money would be used to purchase memorial items in honour of her husband, which were to be positioned in the church.

On this occasion, McLaughlin requested that the payee line be left blank. Instead of purchasing the memorial item, McLaughlin filled in his own name and pocketed the £1,000.

Despite the offences being committed in 2016, they were not detected until 2018, with McLaughlin interviewed by the PSNI in 2020.

Following what Judge Lynch described as an “acrimonious split” from his wife, McLaughlin is now the sole carer of their two teenage children.

During his trial, McLaughlin claimed the allegations of fraud against him were false and were mounted by his ex-wife and a “cabal” of parishioners who had taken her side when the marriage broke down.

These claims were rejected by the jury, who found him guilty on two charges of fraud by abuse of position.

Judge Lynch also spoke of “the degree of trust” that was placed in McLaughlin in his position as a minister and the affect McLaughlin's offending had on the congregation — in particular the widow he defrauded and the nominated individual who co-signed the cheque for £10,000.

The judge said he had read victim impact statements made by both parishioners.

The widow opened up on her “upset” at being lied to by McLaughlin, who she said was “someone my late husband and I trusted”.

The judge commented: “The sense of hurt and disappointment oozed from every sentence of her statement.”

The parishioner who co-signed the £10,000 cheque said the allegations of fraud and McLaughlin's actions resulted in him and his family leaving St Colman's Church in November 2019.

He added: “After a lifetime of belonging to the community of St Colman's, this is a huge wrench for all of us, and it's still sometimes difficult for me to believe this has happened.”

Judge Lynch said he had taken into consideration defence submissions made by Richard McConkey KC.

These included the delay in bringing the case to court, the impact and hardship a prison sentence would have on McLaughlin's two children, and his previous good character.

Judge Lynch said it was “frequently and unfortunately the case” that relatives of criminals “suffer as much, or even more” as the offender, but that this “has to be balanced against the harm done”.

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Saying McLaughlin was “in a position where a high degree of trust was reposed in him”, the judge noted that he was “cavalier with that trust” and “almost regarded the parish as if it was a personal fiefdom”.

The 12-month sentence was then imposed and, as McLaughlin's two children sat in the public gallery, he was placed in handcuffs and led into custody by prison staff.

## Poem for today

### I Love Reading Books

by Kevin Seales

I read books, because they take me places  
Inside when I look, I see so many faces  
Detective stories, there are so many cases  
Oh how I love reading books

When I'm at home, I read two or three books  
My mom says, she thinks that I'm totally hooked  
You would be too, if you would only look  
Oh how I love reading books

My dad says, Kevin why don't you slow down  
There's plenty of books here, from the ceiling to the ground  
You read them like candy, you gobble them by the pound  
Oh how you love reading books

I find them fascinating, exciting, a tool  
I learn about a lot of things that I don't learn in school  
I'd rather read books than learn how to be cool

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Oh how I love reading books

In these books I learn so many things  
Look at the knowledge that these books can bring  
I even read one book, and it taught me how to sing  
Oh how I love reading books

So if someone says, that reading books is for girls  
They don't understand that reading rocks my world  
It lifts me, spends me, sends me in a twirl  
Oh how I love reading books

If they don't see now, they will in due time  
I'll let them read one of these great books of mine  
And after they finish, they won't be so blind  
Then they'll say, I love reading books

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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## 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](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

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# Church News Ireland

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