

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Guardian of the glass

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Guardian of the glass

Today we invite you to meet another member of the incredible team behind the scenes of St Patrick's Cathedral Dublin.

Today, we are pleased to introduce you to Kryzel.

Kryzel joined the cathedral family in June 2022, embarking on a journey as diverse as the cathedral's history itself. Her roles have spanned from events assistant to welcome assistant and tour guide, amassing a wealth of knowledge along the way. Today, she proudly serves as the cathedral's dedicated Schools Officer. ✨

But what ignites Kryzel's passion as she explores the historic cathedral?

Her heart belongs to the Saint Patrick's Window, the majestic focal point of the cathedral. This stained-glass masterpiece, crafted in the 1860s, narrates Saint Patrick's story through 39 exquisite images. It's not just a feature; it's the soul of the cathedral.

But it doesn't stop there; Kryzel's devotion to conservation and heritage is deeply ingrained in her essence. She even pursued a master's degree in World Heritage Management

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and Conservation at UCD. Her love for Irish heritage, culture, and its people led her to extend her stay in Ireland and explore the uniqueness of the Cathedral.

Stay tuned for more stories that illuminate Saint Patrick's Cathedral's rich heritage.

People and places



Priest and biker friends support for Lough Swilly lifeboat

Lough Swilly RNLI were delighted to welcome Father Gerry Sweeney and all their biker friends to the Lifeboat Station this week.

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Father Gerry held a special service for the bikers in St Aengus Church, Burt, followed by a ride out to Neds Point for some refreshments.

The bikers presented their very generous collection of €1600 for Lough Swilly Lifeboats. Many thanks to Father Gerry and all the bikers for their continued wonderful support.

Listen to Treasure Ireland's stained-glass event in Derry

BBC Radio Ulster featured Treasure Ireland's stained-glass event in the City of Derry as part of European Heritage Open Days 2023.

Listen back to Colum Arbuckle from BBC Radio

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Foyle interviewing stained glass expert Dr David Caron in the impressive surroundings of St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry Diocese -

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m001qlvm>

National Churches Trust would like to say a huge thank you to the eight stunning places of worship that warmly welcomed them and they look forward to returning soon. NCT expressed huge thanks also to Dr Caron for his insight, expertise and generosity and for shining a light on our



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NCT expressed huge thanks also to Dr Caron for his insight, expertise and generosity and for shining a light on our sacred stained glass heritage.

Keep an eye on the Treasure Ireland events page for future events: <https://www.nationalchurchestrust.org/explore/promote/treasure-ireland>

Next year Treasure Ireland is focussing on the connection between archaeology and churches with a tour of places of worship in County Down. Details coming soon!

Treasure Ireland events are FREE and made possible thanks to the support of their funders.

Major European ecumenical bodies meet in C of I Theological College

CITI (Church of Ireland Theological Institute) this week hosted a hybrid meeting of a working group from the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Roman Catholic Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE) who are revising the ecumenical document Charta Ecumenica.

The Charta Ecumenica is an ecumenical charter for Churches in Europe and was published in April 2001 in its final form by the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Roman Catholic Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE). It marked the beginning of the century by calling the churches in Europe to dialogue, unity and



The members of the working group are: Revd Dr Peter Pavlovic (Brussels / CEC), Ms Lea Schlenker (Evangelical Lutheran Church, Germany / CEC), Sr Estelle M. Sogbou (Chemin Neuf Community, France / CCEE), Cardinal Grzegorz Rys (Poland / CCEE), Fr Luis Okulik (Trieste / CCEE), Mr Nikos Kouremenos (Greek Orthodox Church / CEC) and Revd David White (Church of Ireland / CEC).

action, and particularly to their common responsibility in facing issues of peace and justice in Europe.

The aim of the working group is to revise the current Charta Ecumenica, and to update any areas that require modification given the current changing circumstances in European society as well as among Christians. The goal is to ensure that the document remains relevant in the current context.

The finalised revision is to be confirmed by 2025 and made ready and available for distribution by the time of the Charta's 25th Anniversary in 2026, in which there is also the

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proposed continental meeting of the European Ecumenical Assembly.

The working group remarked on the warm welcome they received in CITI and the excellent catering, accommodation and technological facilities.

News reports

Churches march in New York to declare no faith in fossil fuels

Representatives of the World Council of Churches (WCC) joined tens of thousands of demonstrators in New York City for the "March to End Fossil Fuels."

This powerful protest took place just before the United Nations General Assembly, where world leaders gathered for crucial climate discussions.

The march began with an interfaith invocation, bringing together people from various religious backgrounds. Frances Namoumou, from the Pacific Conference of Churches, delivered a Christian prayer focusing on water as a life-sustaining resource, emphasizing the need to safeguard it from exploitation and extraction.

Part of the WCC delegation in the march, Rev Henrik Grape, WCC senior advisor on Care for Creation, Sustainability, and Climate Justice, emphasized: "The fossil



New York City: March to End Fossil Fuels

fuel industry has shown an unwillingness to change, despite the evidence and scientific consensus. People of all faiths and Indigenous communities have marched together to demand the removal of fossil fuels from our society's systems. A swift and equitable phase-out is essential to protect our shared home."

Organizers estimated that between 50,000 and 75,000 individuals participated in the Manhattan march, marking it as the largest climate protest in the US since the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in 2020.

Athena Peralta, WCC programme executive for Economic and Ecological Justice, stressed the WCC's faith-based duty to support those most affected by climate change. She stated: "Our faith compels us to call upon our leaders to

transform our unsustainable and unjust economic practices. Today, we acted in accordance with our faith."

In June 2023, the WCC central committee endorsed the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, reaffirming its commitment to a fossil-free future. The 'March to End Fossil Fuels' sent a clear message: the time to shift away from fossil fuels is now, and the global church community is at the forefront of this call for a rapid and equitable transition to protect our shared home.

Anthony Reddie: first Professor of Black Theology in 900 years at Oxford

Professor Anthony Reddie, Director of the Oxford Centre for Religion and Culture at Regent's Park College, has been awarded the title 'Professor of Black Theology' in the University's latest Recognition of Distinction exercise.

This award marks the first time Oxford University has had a 'Professor of Black Theology' in its 900-year history. Professor Reddie, who has been teaching at Oxford since 2020, says he is honoured by the new title and conscious of the importance for Black Theology.

'I try not to think about it too much,' he laughs. 'But it is a great honour.'

'This is a moment,' adds Professor Reddie, talking of the burgeoning interest in Black Theology, which has followed the international reassessment of racial justice and equality, in the wake of the tragic death of George Floyd.

‘Tectonic plates have shifted in a lot of ways,’ he says. ‘Black Lives Matter put the issue of race on the agenda in the UK. There is great interest now in Black Theology in Britain. It’s made Black Theology more mainstream.’

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Anthony Reddie, Professor of Black Theology

[Professor William Wood, Theology and Religion Faculty](#) Board Chair, says, ‘I am absolutely delighted for Professor Reddie and for Oxford’s Theology Faculty. He has been a tremendously valuable colleague, as well as a popular and excellent teacher and mentor to our students. Thanks to his efforts, Oxford has become a centre for the study of Black Theology in the UK and in the wider world.’

As a relatively recent discipline, Black Theology was established in the 1960s by James Cone, the African American Theologian. In the US, segregation in churches inspired Dr Cone to voice outrage at the idea Christian churches saw nothing wrong in discrimination and injustice and practiced segregation as a matter of course.

This led to questions around civil rights and today has led to concerns about the role of churches in slavery and racism. In the UK, says Professor Reddie, there is also the question of colonisation, belonging and Britishness.

This, he says, is the experience of many in Black communities in the UK, who originally may have come from overseas and are still viewed as ‘other’, unlike African

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Americans who were in the US before most white settlers, as a result of the slave trade.

Thanks to Professor Reddie's efforts, Oxford has become a centre for the study of Black Theology in the UK and in the wider world

Professor William Wood, Theology and Religion Faculty Board Chair

The significance of Professor Reddie's new title has not been lost on social media, where he has received hundreds of delighted messages of support – for him and for the university. One points out that he is not just the first professor of Black Theology, he is the first Black professor in Oxford's Faculty of Theology and Religion. None, though, express surprise at his new title – only congratulations at a 'well-deserved' honour.

Professor Reddie has been teaching at Oxford since 2020. And last year, with the full support of the Faculty of Theology and Religion, he started a new course on James Cone's work – which runs alongside courses in Aquinas, Augustine and John Henry Newman. He had been worried about whether any students would be interested, he laughs, but it was a great success. He also teaches a popular course in Liberation Theologies, which includes Black Liberation Theology.

Civil rights leaders Malcolm X and Martin Luther King represented the two sides of the Black Theology debate in the 1960s, says Professor Reddie – separation and integration.

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‘Malcolm X saw the Christian faith as hypocrisy and his ethos was very much about separation,’ says Professor Reddie. ‘Although that changed over time. But Martin Luther King Jnr was a Christian and believed people can be changed. He believed in redemption.’

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Professor Reddie says, ‘In some ways, this is still being played out.’

He talks enthusiastically about the imminent arrival of a new post-grad student from the US, who has been studying at a historically Black men’s school, Morehouse College, in Atlanta, Georgia – the alma mater of Martin Luther King.

‘It’s the Black Oxbridge,’ says Professor Reddie. ‘He is the top student. It will be interesting to see how he gets on... Everyone is going to love him. He’s going to be invited to everything.’

The background of his new student, stands in stark contrast to that of Professor Reddie and many in the UK’s Black community, who are often made to feel as if they are outsiders, he says.

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2023-09-18-anthony-reddie-first-professor-black-theology-900-years>

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In the media



Commonwealth War Graves - We are delighted to announce that today, the [UNESCO World Heritage Council](#) in Riyadh has decided to inscribe 51 Commonwealth war cemeteries and memorials with World Heritage Status. Read our article below to learn more: <https://ow.ly/NKOE50PNSIe>

[UNESCO recognizes 27 Flemish WWI sites](#) in the Westhoek, including the Menin Gate, as world heritage sites. “Flanders has now gained another piece of world heritage. I would like to thank all the people who worked on this file for 13 years. This recognition is also for you”.
Matthias Diependaele, Vlaams Minister, Belgium

Common Travel Area: Calls for rule changes for non-EEA citizens

BBC News - A migrant charity has called on the Irish government to review rules around freedom of movement within the Common Travel Area (CTA) for migrants.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-66868408>

Queen's University buys two more city sites for student rooms

BBC News - Queen's University plans to build a further two student housing schemes in Belfast as part of a £100m investment.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-66871251>

Tributes after death of 'funny and kind' BBC NI journalist Dan Stanton

Belfast Telegraph - Tributes have been paid after the death of BBC NI journalist Dan Stanton. Mr Stanton, an experienced broadcaster and writer, passed away on Saturday last after an illness. A death notice said the father of one died "peacefully" at home. It said he "will be greatly missed by his many and treasured friends, and his dear colleagues at BBC NI".

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/tributes-after-death-of-funny-and-kind-bbc-ni-journalist-dan-stanton/a1436551813.html>

Law Society criticises Legacy Act as 'attack on rule of law' ahead of conference

Belfast Telegraph - The representative body for solicitors in Northern Ireland has voiced its opposition to new legislation aimed at addressing the legacy of the past as an "attack on the rule of law". Legal professionals and groups



A flypast fit for a King

The Red Arrows soared over Paris with their French partners this week to paint the skies red, white and blue when The King and Queen were in France to celebrate the close relationship between their nations. The defence partnership between the UK and France is vital to the security of Western Europe.

representing those bereaved and impacted by the Troubles will be brought together at the Law Society's annual conference in Belfast later this month to discuss the legacy act and legal challenges.

On Wednesday, the High Court in Belfast heard that 16 legal challenges have been lodged so far against the UK Government's controversial new laws.



<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/law-society-criticises-legacy-act-as-attack-on-rule-of-law-ahead-of-conference/a1327853574.html>

Derry-born actress Roma Downey pays tribute to 'beloved' late brother Fr John Downey

Belfast Telegraph - Rev Fr John Downey, brother of Derry-born actress Roma Downey, has passed away this week. Fr Downey died in Antrim Area Hospital on Monday, with his death being announced by the Parish of Ballinascreen, which he served. Hollywood star Roma Downey paid tribute to her brother, posting to social media: "Friends, My family has suffered a terrible loss. Our beloved brother Fr John has passed away in the night . We are grateful for all your prayers. His passing was peaceful and that's a blessing. May he rest in peace."

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<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/derry-born-actress-roma-downey-pays-tribute-to-beloved-late-brother-fr-john-downey/a1804928723.html>

Poem for today



September by Helen Hunt Jackson

The golden-rod is yellow;
The corn is turning brown;
The trees in apple orchards
With fruit are bending down.

The gentian's bluest fringes
Are curling in the sun;

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In dusty pods the milkweed
Its hidden silk has spun.

The sedges flaunt their harvest,
In every meadow nook;
And asters by the brook-side
Make asters in the brook.

From dewy lanes at morning
the grapes' sweet odors rise;
At noon the roads all flutter
With yellow butterflies.

By all these lovely tokens
September days are here,
With summer's best of weather,
And autumn's best of cheer.

But none of all this beauty
Which floods the earth and air
Is unto me the secret
Which makes September fair.

'T is a thing which I remember;
To name it thrills me yet:
One day of one September
I never can forget.

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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