

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – The crossing Peterborough**

## Image of the day

### The crossing Peterborough

**The crossing Peterborough cathedral- the most under appreciated cathedral in England. Romanesque with later windows and 15th century vaults.**

With its stunning architecture, glorious medieval art work and fascinating history there is so much to see and explore.

[<https://www.peterborough-cathedral.org.uk/>]

[[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peterborough\\_Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peterborough_Cathedral)]

## People and places

### The only female Dean in the Church of Ireland Province of Armagh

**The Very Rev Liz Fitzgerald has been installed as the first ever Lady Dean in the long and distinguished history of St Eunan's Cathedral. The historic Service of Installation took place on Saturday evening, 23rd September 2023 - the Feast Day of St Eunan, after whom the cathedral church is named.**

The Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Andrew Forster, told a gathering after the service that the new Rector had been appointed Dean not because she was a woman but because she was the best candidate for the position.



## The Rural Dean and Diocesan Registrar, Rev Canon David Crooks congratulates the new Dean

The incumbent-elect was presented for institution as Rector of Raphoe, Raymochy and Clonleigh by the Archdeacon of Raphoe, Ven David Huss, who also preached the sermon.

The Archdeacon began by commiserating with the new Rector because he said it was the third occasion on which she had had to listen to him (he had been the preacher when she was made deacon in St Columba's Church, Omagh in 2015 and again, six years ago, when she was introduced as Bishop's Curate in the parishes of Gweedore, Carrickfinn and Templecrone.

Rev Fitzgerald's husband, Sean, their son, John, and his partner, Eirinn Canning, were in the front pew listening to the sermon along with the new Rector.



Dean Fitzgerald's husband, Sean, their son, John, and his partner, Eirinn Canning

Saturday's Service of Installation was led by the Rural Dean and Diocesan Registrar, Rev Canon David Crooks. The Bishop's Curate for the occasion was Rev Johnny Lowden, Curate in Glendermott and Newbuildings.

During the service, gratitude was expressed to Rev Canon John Deane and Diocesan Reader Peter Clampett who had led services during the vacancy which followed the departure of the previous Rector, Rev Arthur Barrett, to Glendalough.

A choir comprising members of different local churches led the hymn-singing, accompanied by Cathedral organist Renee Goudie.

After the service, the congregation made their way the short distance to the Cathedral Hall for refreshments and speeches.

Canon Crooks was applauded for preparing the liturgy for Saturday's service (the new Dean thanked him for collecting her robes in England). Canon Crooks pointed out that the Bunbeg Group of Parishes - which Very Rev Fitzgerald had left after six years - had now produced its fourth Dean of Raphoe. Bishop Andrew told the gathering that the guest of honour was now the only female Dean in the Church of Ireland Province of Armagh.

## **‘May your hearts sing’ – Ordination to the Priesthood in Dublin and Glendalough**

**“Vocation is like any relationship. They need work, nurture, nourishment, care and time”. This was the message to the Revd Jane Burns and the Revd Scott Evans who were ordained to the Priesthood in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, on Sunday (September 24).**

Archbishop Michael Jackson presided at the service which was sung by the Cathedral Choir. Clergy from Dublin and Glendalough and beyond took part in the service and joined in the Laying on of Hands. Jane and Scott were also joined by many members of their families and friends as well as the Rectors and parishioners from Taney, where Jane will serve as Curate, and Rathmines with Harold's Cross where Scott will serve his Curacy. Parishioners and the Rector of Athy, Jane's home parish, were also there.



The Revd Jane Burns with her husband Dermot and their children Jamie, Ellen and Kate.

The preacher was the Revd David White, who co-lead the pre-ordination retreat. He asked Jane and Scott what made their hearts sing. He said that as they looked back on the whole story of their calling, they would notice that “the God of the frayed threads and scattered pieces” had been putting together the disparate parts of their experiences and making them whole and holy.

“The God of the long view knew from the moment of your conception, what God had in mind for you. Despite your own self-doubt and sense of unworthiness God worked through your humanity and will continue to do so in your priestly ministry. Since God wishes that your hearts sing,” he said.



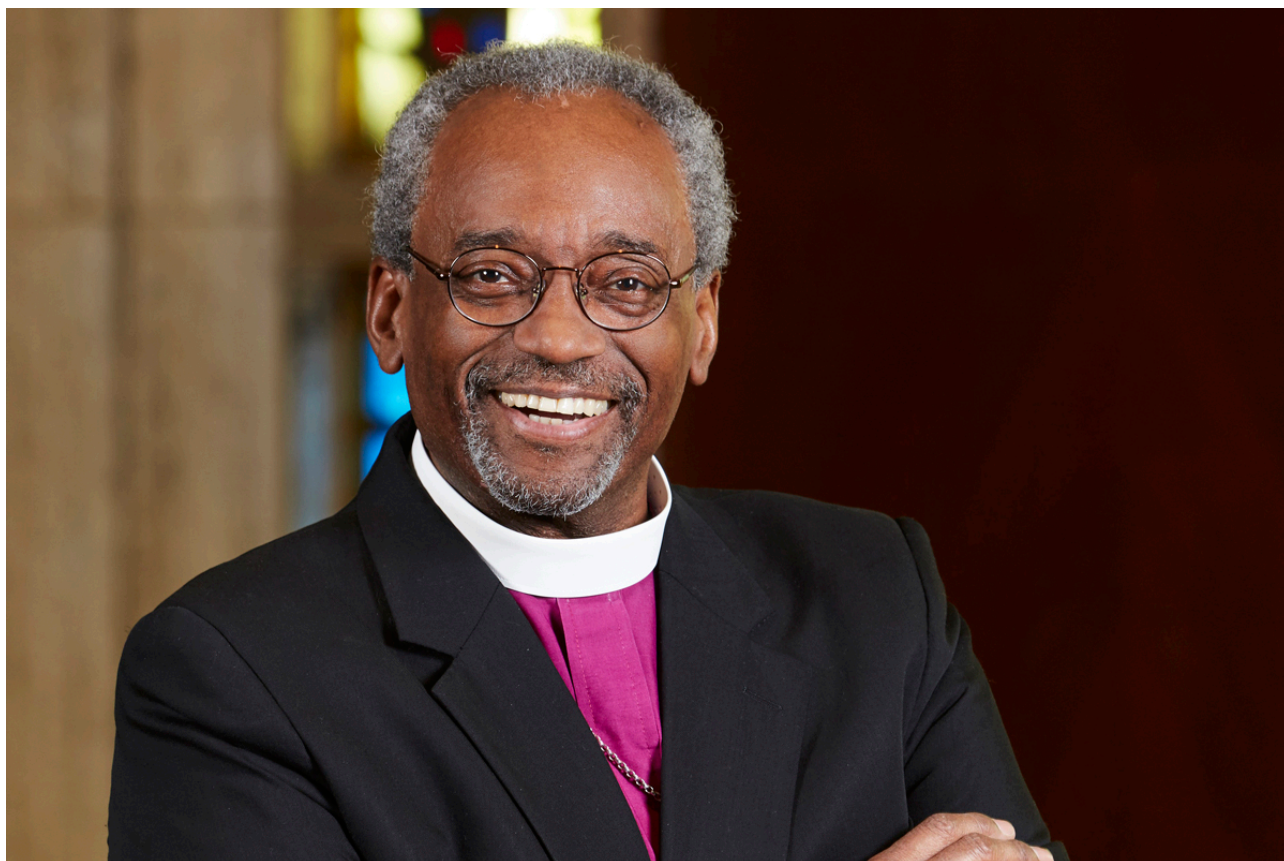
The Revd Scott Evans with his wife Christine and their daughter Hailey. Their son Daniel is also part of their adventure.

He added that some journeys end so that others may begin and said that Jane and Scott had left much behind but there was much before them. “But remember that the risen Christ gave the Holy Spirit to the disciples, and the Spirit stirred up in them bold, holy desires and animated them to continue the mission that Jesus entrusted to them throughout his earthly life. The Spirit of Jesus is with you now, summoning

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you for the adventures ahead, as you respond ever more to the call of Christ to build a more just and gentle world where God's love reaches every nook and cranny," Mr White said.

## News reports



### **Presiding Bishop Michael Curry awake and talking, remains in ICU**

**Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is awake and talking, according to a recent press release from The Episcopal Church's Office of Public Affairs.**

PB Curry continues to recover in an intensive care unit after having his right adrenal gland and an attached mass



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removed on Sept. 20. He was expected to remain in intensive care for about 24 hours.

The surgery had been planned. Last month, PB Curry was admitted to the hospital after a reoccurrence of the internal bleeding that required him to be hospitalised over Memorial Day weekend.

The day before his surgery, PB Curry briefly spoke with bishops over Zoom, thanking them for their prayers and helping to frame their discussions during the Sept. 19-22 online House of Bishops meeting.

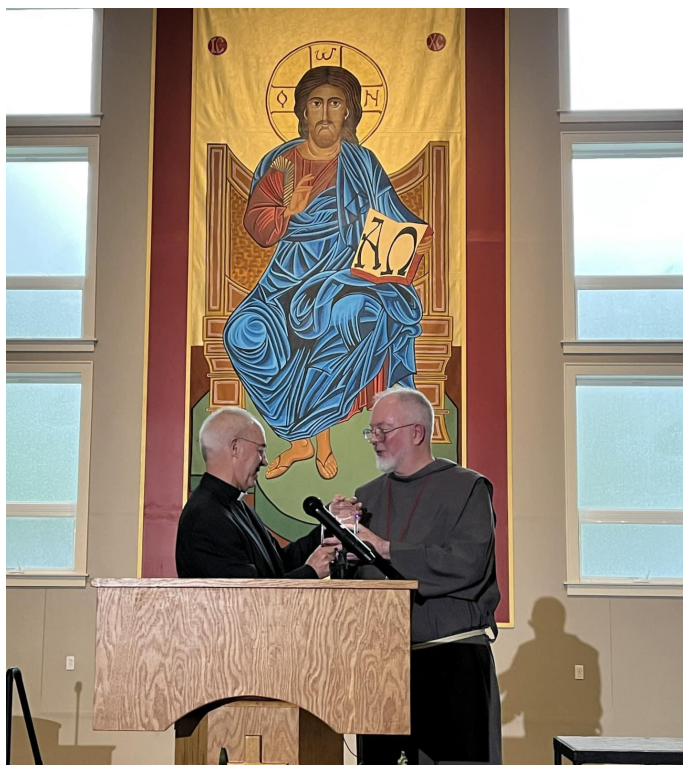
“I’m going to be fine. Come what may, I’m going to be fine, because we have a God and God is real,” Curry told the bishops.

The church is asked to continue to pray for PB Curry, his family and his medical team.

## **US Christian Unity Award for Archbishop Welby**

**The Archbishop of Canterbury said “Such an honour to receive the 14th Paul Wattson Christian Unity Award from the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement in New York State.**

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“Especially wonderful as one of my predecessors, Archbishop Michael Ramsey, was given the same prize in 1972”.

## In the media

### **New book by former Methodist President tells how IRA killed a pal he shared birthday with**

**A former president of the Methodist Church has told of his heartbreak over the IRA murder of a policeman friend who was born in the same maternity unit, at the same time as him, Ivan Little writes in the Belfast Telegraph.**

“Memorable Moments” is the third in a series of books from the Rev Jim Rea, who founded the East Belfast Mission and worked behind the scenes as a peacemaker during the Troubles.

He has donated £20,000 from the proceeds of earlier publications to three charities which help the homeless.

In his new book he recalls how he met key players involved in what was unfolding on the streets but who would later turn their backs on violence.

One of the chapters is devoted to his pain at the murder of Ian McClinton, a policeman shot dead on Upper Donegall Street in Belfast on March 2, 1974.

Mr Rea wrote: “In April 1945 our mothers gave birth to us in the same ward at the Royal Maternity Hospital, and as a result the two women became lifelong friends. Ian and I went to Everton Secondary School in North Belfast.”

The regular contributor to broadcasts on BBC Radio Ulster and Downtown Radio said he clearly remembered the day his friend told him he was joining the RUC, and how he went to see his pal's bereaved mother after he was murdered.

He added: “She was deeply distressed and recalled how Ian had called that day before going on duty.

“She told me she had brushed his uniform and could still feel the experience of touching the back of his jacket. It was heart-wrenching.”

Mr Rea, who described his books as “unapologetically Christian in ethos”, said he often wondered if the people who murdered his friend knew he had once been publicly acknowledged for trying to save the lives of two men who collapsed in the street. One man was from the nationalist New Lodge area of Belfast, and though he later died, Mr Rea said: “His family never forgot Ian.

“I guess for the gunmen such information would have meant nothing. The hatred was towards the uniform Ian wore that day.”

Mr Rea said he knew that a great many victims of the Troubles struggled to deal with the “big issue of forgiveness”.

He continued: “As I meet with victims, I realise that their ability to forgive is not easily achieved, and it has to be recognised that some, in their continuing trauma and grief, are not ready to forgive.

“However for those who can, it greatly helps through the anger, hurt and pain to find some release in the present.”

Mr Rea spoke of meeting Brendan Bradley, from Ardoyne, at a 2001 conference in California for victims of the Troubles.

Mr Bradley had lost a brother in a UVF bombing, a sister in an IRA sniper attack on the Army, a nephew in a UDA shooting and another nephew in a shooting by the INLA, which also subjected a third nephew to a punishment beating that was blamed for him taking his own life.

Mr Bradley set up the Survivors of Trauma group and was a key community worker in north Belfast.

Mr Rea said he could not imagine how the campaigner, who died in 2005, could deal with all that suffering. He added: “Despite all that happened to him, he was humorous, full of craic and great company.” He also spoke of his admiration for other people he met at the conference, including a sister of one of the 10 Protestant workmen murdered in the Kingsmill massacre and the late Margaret McKinney, the mother of one of the Disappeared.

### Memorable Moments

by Jim Rea is available in Faith Mission Bookshops or by contacting the author at [wjimrea@gmail.com](mailto:wjimrea@gmail.com)

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# Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books



## Highlights of Derry ChoirFest

### Wed 18 October | The Verdi Requiem

The Ulster Orchestra will be joined by the 100-Voice Festival Chorus, a whopping 100-strong ensemble to perform the The Verdi Requiem, and you won't want to miss it. We've even got Mexican tenor Benito Rodriguez and Derry's very own soprano sensation, Laura Sheerin, gracing the stage!

### Thu 19 October | Derry Girls Big Sing

We're going full Derry Girls mode in the Guildhall Square as local post-primary Derry girls and boys perform 'Dreams' by The Cranberries, plus a few more surprises from the smash hit TV series.

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## **Fri 20 October | Harry Christophers and The Sixteen**

The Sixteen, one of the world's finest choral ensembles, is finally back in town with the Guildhall as their stage, they'll dazzle us with choral wonders inspired by the legendary William Byrd, in honor of the 400th anniversary of his passing.

## **Sat 21 October | International Competition**

Join us for an international choral extravaganza as visiting choirs from Norway, Latvia, Poland, Switzerland, Czech Republic, UK, and Ireland compete and unleash their choral magic before a panel of superstar judges at Derry's iconic Guildhall! Who will win the Oak Tree of Derry Trophy!?

## **Sun 22 October | Closing Gala Concert**

The festivities are brought to a close with final performances from the visiting international choirs, an epic awards ceremony, and we're throwing in a world premiere performance of a brand new piece too!

And so much more...at,,  
[derrychoirfest.com](http://derrychoirfest.com) or snag your tickets at  
[millenniumforum.co.uk](http://millenniumforum.co.uk).

## **Foundations starts back on 30 September**

The Down & Dromore Foundations programme for 2023–24 will kick off with a gathering in Knocknagoney Church on Saturday evening 30 September at 7.30pm. This year's theme is Beautiful Resistance – The Joy of Conviction in a Culture of Compromise.

What is Foundations?

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[https://www.downanddromore.org/news/2023/09/foundations-is-back?utm\\_source=dlvr.it&utm\\_medium=facebook](https://www.downanddromore.org/news/2023/09/foundations-is-back?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook) Cavan

## **Cavan Christian Men's Conference – 11th Nov**

The Cavan Christian Men's Conference is happening again on the 11th November this year. It's an annual opportunity for Christian Men from across Cavan and Monaghan to get together to encourage one another. It is a morning of great Bible teaching, singing, food and a chance for men from across the region to spend time together. [...]

[https://www.dkea.ie/cavan-christian-mens-conference-11th-nov/?utm\\_source=dlvr.it&utm\\_medium=facebook](https://www.dkea.ie/cavan-christian-mens-conference-11th-nov/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook)

## **Knitted journey through the Bible**

This fun and creative event will be taking place in St Nicholas' Church, Carrickfergus from Thursday 9th November through to Sunday 12th November!

There will be 28 wonderfully knitted Bible stories displayed throughout the Church building and there will be tea, coffee and yummy traybakes available too!

On Friday 10th and Saturday 11th, afternoon tea will be available in the hall and can be booked through the Church office (£8 per person).

This is a FREE event, however donations are welcomed towards the parish Be In"spire"d fundraising campaign.

# Perspective

## Archbishop Martin on the Catholic Church and the Irish Civil War

**Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, gave a reflection as an epilogue to the Catholic Historical Society of Ireland Annual Conference held in the Seamus Heaney Lecture Theatre of Dublin City University.**

### Overview

I wish to acknowledge, today, that the pastoral letter of Irish Bishops' Conference of October 1922, and the way it was interpreted, clearly provoked much hurt and anguish among families which has permeated down the generations.

There is no doubt in my mind that the Bishops' letter was exploited and distorted to excuse and provide moral justification for un-Christian, sinful and criminal behaviour. And the bishops failed to publicly respond to that.

The bishops' failure to name and shame the atrocities being committed by the pro-Treaty side fed the narrative that they spoke with two voices: that the Free State government could act with impunity, whilst those continuing the armed struggle for an all-Ireland solution could do no good.

Experience tells us that those who understand the past more deeply and honestly will be more likely to be open to engage in the work of reconciliation.



## Remarks

Thank you for what has been a fascinating conference and for offering me this opportunity, in my role as President of the Bishops' Conference, to provide comment, as a kind of reflection or epilogue on what we have heard.

Recent controversy in the North surrounding the Legacy Bill remind us that the wounds of an unresolved past - particularly a past which involves trauma and loss - almost always fester; they hamper the achievement of common purpose and shared endeavour in the present and for the future. Addressing the legacy of the past is therefore critical to understanding the present and to building a reconciled future.

Today's conference has shone a light into Ireland's attic of memories. Our contributors have sensitively explored what John helpfully described as both the 'interior and exterior world'; they have lifted the 'code of silence' surrounding the issue of the Church and the Civil War, and exposed some of the Civil War's so-called 'unspeakable legacy'. Dr Aiken's reflection on spiritual wounds and trauma surrounding the civil war has shown us that memories have already found a way of coming to the surface. Various commemorations and graveside orations have also consolidated and sometimes revised different versions of our civil war story for successive generations.

However even the 'Decade of Centenaries' programme has shown us that it is difficult to bring events of a century ago to the surface and we have had to learn to tread softly on

Ireland's past. The shelving of the controversial event in 2020 to commemorate the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC) and Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP), and the controversy that erupted over the Church leaders' 'Service of Reflection and Hope' in Armagh, in October 2021, to mark the centenary of partition and the creation of Northern Ireland, confirmed that when it comes to opening up our shared history, we walk on eggshells. Perhaps that is why the National state commemoration of the Civil War, just a few months ago, happened somewhat 'off stage' - a simple ceremony - no speeches; just music, poetry, a short prayer and the laying of wreaths.

We are very grateful to the Catholic Historical Society of Ireland, and to today's speakers, for helping us to bring to the light the interaction between the Catholic Church and the civil war. The Church has not been immune from the tendency to try to 'move on' from our Civil War past. Like most others, we have often preferred to 'leave well enough alone'.

It is clear from today's papers and subsequent discussions that the pastoral letter of the Irish bishops in October 1922 represented the Church's most controversial intervention during the Civil War period.

Dr Daithí Ó Corráin's paper described the bishops' pastoral as 'an amalgam of earlier warnings' and situated it firmly within their dread and 'painful anxiety' that the country was rapidly descending into disunity, anarchy and ruin. Their pastoral letter, approved unanimously, and following what they saw as the overwhelming will of the people in favour of the Treaty, began with these words: "The present state of

Ireland, is a sorrow and humiliation to its friends all over the world." As we have heard, the bishops criticised those who were refusing to acknowledge the legitimate government as wrecking Ireland 'from end to end'. They had no doubt that the anti-Treaty struggle was leading to what Daithí called 'social disintegration', was morally unjust and, as the bishops said, was poisoning the minds of the young with 'false principles'. They unanimously pronounced that the 'guerilla war is without moral sanction'; 'it is murder before God'; 'it is un-Catholic and immoral'.

Horrified that the struggle had now evolved to violence of Irish against Irish, Catholics against Catholics, the bishops were also sending a message to priests who approved of what the bishops described as the 'Irregular insurrection'. They cautioned such priests that they were guilty of causing 'grievous scandal' and would be subject to suspension and denial of priestly faculties.

The bishops saw themselves as authentic teachers in faith and morals and rejected outright the charge that they were guilty of political partisanship.

Bishops called on opponents of the national government to advance their cause through elections and by constitutional means: 'Let it not be said that our teaching is due to political bias and a desire to help one political party. If it were true, we would be unworthy of our sacred office. We issue this pastoral letter under the gravest sense of our responsibility, our sense of duty.'

Most controversially, the bishops proposed the denial of absolution or admission to Holy Communion to those who

would persevere in violent resistance, urging them to repent of their 'grave sins' and to cease what the bishops called this 'lamentable upheaval'. The pastoral therefore included a call to prayer, to October devotions, and for a novena for peace to the Irish saints.

The papers at today's conference have helped to contextualise the bishops' pastoral letter, including Dr Brian Heffernan's interesting survey of the contemporary European media coverage, situating the bishops' position within the much wider development of Catholicism as a political force on the European stage. The contributions by Mr Michael Loughman and Dr Brian Kirby give us a very clear sense of how the bishops' position was disparately received at home, eg within pious families like the Ryan's of Tomcoole. Michael Loughman's highly interesting paper reminds us that, as in the Civil War more generally, people were split: neighbour against neighbour, brother against brother, in families, communities, farms and workplaces.

Like the majority of Irish citizens in 1922, the bishops of Ireland were weary of war, destruction and death. Dr O'Corrain mentioned some of their parallel peacemaking efforts. No doubt, the Northern bishops (like +McRory and +Mulhern) would also have been communicating graphically at bishops' meetings the impact that Partition was already having on their flock, with persecution, discrimination and displacement. Although not abandoning the republican ideal, and remaining vehemently against Partition, the bishops chose to support a stable Free State government as a bulwark against discrimination in the North. They were also optimistic at this point that a successful and peaceful Free

State would pave the way to unity on the island - if only the violence, spilt and divisions would end.

It must be acknowledged, however, that, in contrast to their explicit condemnation of crown forces and the British regime only a few years previously, the bishops' failure to name and shame the atrocities being committed by the pro-Treaty side fed the narrative that they spoke with two voices: that the Free State government could act with impunity, whilst those continuing the armed struggle for an all-Ireland solution could do no good.

Similarly, as we have heard, bishops' acceptance of the morality of previous republican struggle during the War of Independence, and even of previous hunger strikes, led to accusations against them of political expediency and manoeuvring for political power and influence. This was clearly behind what has been described today as the widespread 'dismay and disgust' of republicans at the bishops' position, seeing it as hypocritical.

The silence of the bishops in failing to publicly repudiate or condemn multiple executions of anti-Treaty republicans or the sometimes brutal actions of the National army, most definitely undermined the words of their own pastoral letter. There is no doubt, as Professor Rafferty's paper illustrates, that senior prelates like Archbishop Byrne of Dublin proclaimed the executions as 'morally unjustifiable' and prevailed upon the government to end the executions, to show clemency, to release prisoners and hunger strikers - but the fact that bishops preferred to do so behind the scenes rather than via public statements, has left a long

lasting bad taste that they were not impartial towards violence and destruction.

Not surprisingly, priests and religious, as Irish people themselves, with their own particular backgrounds, family traditions and political perspectives, had diverging reactions to the bishops' pastoral. Some pro-Treaty clerics took the bishops' sanctions to the extreme, choosing to exclude from the sacraments not just combatants, but also those sympathetic to the Republican cause. On the other hand, we have heard today that a sizeable minority of clerics - including, as Dr Kirby explained, many from the Capuchins and other religious orders - simply ignored the pastoral's threats of suspension, and continued to offer the solace of the sacraments to members of anti-Treaty forces.

Dr Kirby's paper, outlining the steadfast moral and pastoral courage of Fr Albert Bibby and Fr Dominic O'Connor, alongside their stalwart loyalty to the Republican cause, leading to their subsequent bitter banishment, raises troubling questions for Church leaders even today about the extent to which our pastoral and Gospel instincts for care and compassion can be compromised or even suspended during troubled times like the Civil War.

Clearly not all Catholic thinkers, theologians, canonists, or pastors were convinced that the bishops had got it right. We are told that the apostolic delegate sent from Rome, Monsignor Salvatore Luzio, concluded the bishops' actions were "less than prudent" (MMcC p104).

Michael Loughman and Dr Leeann Lane's reflections brought out for us, in a very moving way, the passion,

religious fervour, and deep spiritual conviction of many on the anti-Treaty side: for people like the Ryan family, whose sincere religious convictions were the source of much heartfelt inner trauma, family tension and struggle; or, for Mary MacSwiney, for whom to be denied the sacraments was as painful and unjust as being denied the goal of Irish unity and freedom. Dr Lane's very effective outlining of Mary McSwiney's correspondence with Archbishop Byrne shows her McSwiney's conviction that, in conscience, she was entitled to hold her republican opinions and to receive the sacraments.

Last Christmas, following correspondence to me from the National Graves Association, the current Irish Bishops' Conference suggested today's event as one way of exploring the heartfelt sense of grievance which still lingers in some Irish families, a century on.

Having listened to these informative papers and today's questions and discussion, I wish to acknowledge, today, that the Bishops' Letter of October 1922, and the way it was interpreted, clearly provoked much hurt and anguish among families which has permeated down the generations.

Similarly, the Bishops' failure to publicly speak out against extreme, and sometimes merciless behaviour by the National government and its forces, has left a residual hurt which remains deeply felt by some people who are now in the late 80s and 90s. It is a significant factor in their perception of the Civil War, and in the legacy of the conflict on their lives.

Although canonists will dispute that the penalties proposed by the bishops represented 'excommunication' in the technical sense, that's what it felt like. I understand that many men and women who fought in the conflict, and who remained practising Catholics, retained a lingering doubt as to whether they would die within, or without, the Church. Although we heard today of some episcopal statements expressing a desire for forgiveness and reconciliation, I believe the bishops might have taken more concrete pastoral steps towards that goal.

It is true that anniversary Masses and reburial ceremonies were held for republican combatants around the country, but it seems that the bishops, like many others connected with the Civil War, preferred in the main to let things evolve, rather than grasping the nettle of hurt, trauma and unresolved sense of grievance that were the legacy of that sorry conflict. In many ways it took decades for the healing process to properly begin.

It is difficult for anyone, at this remove, to adjudicate on these matters in an entirely objective manner. There is no doubt in my mind, however, that the Bishops' pastoral letter of 1922 was exploited and distorted to excuse and provide moral justification for un-Christian, sinful and criminal behaviour. And the bishops failed to publicly respond to that.

To conclude I return to my opening remarks about the legacy of the past. Earlier this year, in the context of the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, I said,

"It is obvious that we are simply not managing on our own to overcome the centuries of sectarian hatred and distrust



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which has sparked into violence on so many occasions ... Experience tells us that those who understand the past more deeply and honestly will be more likely to be open to engage in the work of reconciliation."

I therefore thank all of today's speakers and facilitators and the Catholic Historical Society, Brona and Alison, for its work in organising this day and to DCU for hosting us. I hope and trust that the conference has been both illuminating and challenging and has reminded us all of the importance of confronting the scars of the past in the interests of restoring wounded relationships and repairing divisions in the present.

## Poem for today

### September by Hilaire Belloc

I, from a window where the Meuse is wide,  
Looked eastward out to the September night;  
The men that in the hopeless battle died  
Rose, and deployed, and stationed for the fight;  
A brumal army, vague and ordered large  
For mile on mile by some pale general;  
I saw them lean by companies to the charge,  
But no man living heard the bugle-call.

And fading still, and pointing to their scars,  
They fled in lessening clouds, where gray and high  
Dawn lay along the heaven in misty bars;  
But watching from that eastern casement, I

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Saw the Republic splendid in the sky,  
And round her terrible head the morning stars.

The poem refers to the battle of Sedan, fought on 1 September 1870. It was a crushing defeat for France under Napoleon III, and decided the result of the Franco-Prussian war. Over 17,000 Frenchmen were killed or wounded, and 21,000 were captured. Napoleon III was deposed, in absentia, on 4 September.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

## Church News Ireland

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