

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Ballycopeland Windmill

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Ballycopeland Windmill

The photographer fesses up - Saw a few photos on Facebook which got my curiosity going so had to go see! To my surprise the rapeseed field wasn't the actual field the windmill stands in but quite a bit behind along a side road opposite. So down we went to see if it came into view and sure enough it did! Hopped out and found a bank to stand on for a hand held shot. Really needed a longer lens but the weather was turning quite wet so I decided to take what I could! — at Ballycopeland Windmill

People and places

Leading young organists to play at Belfast's St Peter's Cathedral

Two of Europe's leading young organists will be in Belfast on Sunday May 7th to give a stunning recital on Belfast's St Peter's Cathedral magnificent organ.

Much more detail of the program to follow.

Bogdan Reincke is from Budapest and Aaron Voderholzer from Bavaria. One is also an artist, and the other a medical student.



The Hub Choir sings for Uganda

The Hub Choir from the chaplaincy at Queen's University are ready for a big performance on Saturday night, alongside other incredible artists Daisy Johnston and Phil Acheson.

This is a fundraiser for the Hub's team of students heading to Uganda in June. All money raised is in aid of the team.

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Tickets are free to reserve but a donation of £10 is suggested. We'd love to see you there!!

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-hub-belfast-presents-sing-for-uganda-tickets-613294900557>

Join the Charles Wood Singers 20 - 27 August 2023

The Charles Wood Singers is a unique choral course which takes place during the Charles Wood Festival of Music and Summer School in Armagh.

Participants will have the opportunity to develop their vocal technique, musicianship and ensemble skills under the expert direction of our Artistic Director David Hill (Conductor, The Bach Choir), our Associate Conductor Philip Scriven (Organist-in-Residence, Cranleigh School) and our Specialist Vocal Coach Paul Farrington.

Applications are welcome from all those:

- aged 18 or above on 20th August 2023
- who are grade 8 standard or equivalent
- with previous experience of choral singing
- who can demonstrate sufficient levels of enthusiasm and skill, including sight-reading, to meet the challenge of an intensive week of musical study

New applicants are asked to send a video recording of themselves singing one art song and one aria from an oratorio. This can be recorded on a mobile phone or other device, and an accompaniment track can be used. Please

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Ballintoy Harbour - Game of Thrones and all that!

send your video recording to charleswoodfestival@gmail.com. Your application is only complete once you have submitted your video.

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for a remote audition which will include a short sight-singing excerpt. The excerpt will be emailed during the audition and will be unaccompanied.

In order to apply, please fill out the application form below. The deadline for applications is Monday 1st May. If you have any queries, please contact charleswoodfestival@gmail.com

News reports

Pope presents King with shards of Christ's cross

Vatican gives His Majesty King Charles two fragments from the wood said to have been used in the crucifixion

The Pope has given the King two fragments from the True Cross – said to have been used in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ – to mark his Coronation.

The relic, described as a “personal gift” from Pope Francis to His Majesty, was formally presented to the Royal Household by Vatican representatives at the Chapel Royal at St James’s Palace last week.

In what was hailed a “significant ecumenical gesture”, the King requested that the shards be incorporated into a new processional cross that he commissioned for the Church in Wales to celebrate its centenary before becoming monarch.

The fragments have been set into a larger cross, which will be used to lead the procession into Westminster Abbey

Both fragments are shaped as crosses, one measuring 1cm and the other 5mm. They have now been set into the larger silver cross behind a rose crystal gemstone. On the day of his Coronation, the cross will be used to lead the procession

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into Westminster Abbey, a decision said to reflect the King's "deep and long standing affection for Wales".

Upon its return, it will be shared between the Anglican and Catholic churches in Wales.

The cross was crafted from recycled silver bullion from the Royal Mint at Llantrisant, a shaft of Welsh windfall timber and a stand of Welsh slate.

Words from the last sermon of St David are chased onto the back in Welsh, translating as: "Be joyful. Keep the faith. Do the little things."

In November, the King became the first monarch to apply the "King's Mark" – a leopard's head – by hand onto the cross. It was blessed by the Archbishop of Wales, Andrew John, at Holy Trinity Church, Llandudno earlier this week.

The Archbishop said the cross was "both beautiful and symbolic", adding that he was "delighted" that its first use would be to guide Their Majesties into the Abbey on May 6.

'With a sense of deep joy we embrace this cross, containing a relic of the True Cross'

Mark O'Toole, the Archbishop of Cardiff and Bishop of Menevia, speaking on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church in Wales, said the cross was "a sign of the deep Christian roots of our nation". He added: "With a sense of deep joy we embrace this cross, kindly given by King Charles, and containing a relic of the True Cross, generously gifted by the Holy See."



North Coast bluebells

In November, the King became the first monarch to apply the “King’s Mark” – a leopard’s head – by hand onto the cross, which is almost 50cm tall and 25cm across.

Meanwhile, more than 30 faith leaders have come together in an “unprecedented coalition” to encourage participation in the Coronation’s Big Help Out on May 8. The group, including the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis and leading figures from the Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist communities, urged Britons to take part in a volunteer project on the Bank Holiday Monday of the Coronation weekend.

The initiative aims to inspire and recruit a new generation of volunteers by showing how easy it is to get involved.

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Thousands of organisations have signed up to take part, from Scouts, Royal Voluntary Service and Guide Dogs to the smallest local volunteering groups – all visible on a “one stop shop” app and searchable by postcode.

Faith organisations will play a leading role in the project because of the support the King has given to promoting inter-faith collaboration as well as their existing important role in volunteering projects across the UK.

Islamists kill 55,000 Nigerian Christians in 14 years

Islamic militants in Nigeria have killed almost 55,000 Christians in the last 14 years, a new report has said.

Since the Boko Haram insurgency began in 2009, a total of 52,250 Christians have been murdered in the West African country, according to a report called Martyred Christians in Nigeria.

More than 1,000 Christians have already been murdered in Nigeria this year alone.

A total of 30,000 killings have taken place under the rule of President Muhammadu Buhari, who has been often criticised for not doing enough to combat the growing insecurity in the country.

Islamists have also murdered 34,000 moderate Muslims and burned 18,000 churches and 2,200 Christian schools.

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The report was published by the International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law (Intersociety), a Nigerian-based research and investigative rights group, which has been monitoring and investigating domestic religious persecution since 2010.

Researchers also recorded the kidnappings of at least 707 Christians, with more than 200 carried out in the Northern Nigerian Niger State where last month more than 100 Christians were taken captive in Adunu.

More than 100 kidnappings of Christians took place in Kaduna state and others also in Katsina, Taraba, Edo, Ogun, Nassarawa, Kwara, Kogi, Borno, Yobe and Adawama Bauchi, Enugu, Imo, Kebbi, Gombe, Bayelsa and Cross River.

Christians in Nigeria face regular violence not only from Boko Haram and other Islamist groups, some of which are affiliated to the Islamic State or Al Qaeda, but also from Fulani Muslim herders.

The violence has forced the internal displacement of five million Christians, many of whom now live in refugee camps at regional and sub-regional borders, the Intersociety report says.

The Intersociety report confirms the claims of other human rights agencies and charities that Nigeria has become one of the most dangerous places to live for Christians in Africa.

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Nigeria is ranked the sixth most dangerous country in the world to be a Christian even though Christians account for 100 million of the nation's 217 million population.

Aid to the Church in Need, in its latest two-yearly report, revealed that more than 7,600 Nigerian Christians were murdered between January 2021 and June 2022.

One of the most horrific attacks this year involved a priest was burned to death and another was shot and wounded in an attack on a presbytery.

In the media

Irish nun receives O'Flaherty award for prison work

An Irish nun, Sr Agnes Hunt, who was the first woman to be appointed chaplain in a male prison in England 34 years ago, was presented with an international humanitarian award last Friday.

The event attended was by the Taoiseach along with the papal nuncio Archbishop Charles John Brown and British ambassador Dominick Chilcott.

The award is named after Msgr Hugh O'Flaherty from Co Kerry, who came to be known as the Scarlet Pimpernel of the Vatican. He is credited with saving more than 6,000 Jews and others by setting up an escape network during the German occupation of Rome in the 1940s, and was played

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by Gregory Peck in the 1983 film *The Scarlet and the Black*.

The fifth annual Hugh O’Flaherty weekend began in the monsignor’s native Killarney on Friday past with an exhibition of memorabilia at the town library.

On Friday night the participants heard personal reflections from the monsignor’s nephew, the former Supreme Court judge, Mr Justice Hugh O’Flaherty.



Sr Agnes, who spent 16 years at Wormwood Scrubs Prison, was nominated by the Irish Council for Prisoners Overseas and was chosen due to her commitment and empathy towards Irish prisoners overseas and their families.

Joanne Joyce, co-ordinator of the prisoners’ body, stated in her nomination submission: “Thirty-four years after her first day in Wormwood Scrubs, Sr Agnes remains committed to supporting prisoners. Every week she comes into our Maynooth office to write to prisoners serving life sentences

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in the UK, many of whom she has known since her time at Wormwood Scrubs.

“For many of them the letter they receive from Sr Agnes each week will be the only contact they have with the outside world.”

Report courtesy The Irish Times, by Anne Lucey

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

“Reflections on the Pilgrim's Journey” commemorates Cardinal Cahal B. Daly

Born in 1917, Cardinal Cahal B. Daly once remarked that he did not remember a time when he did not want to be a priest.

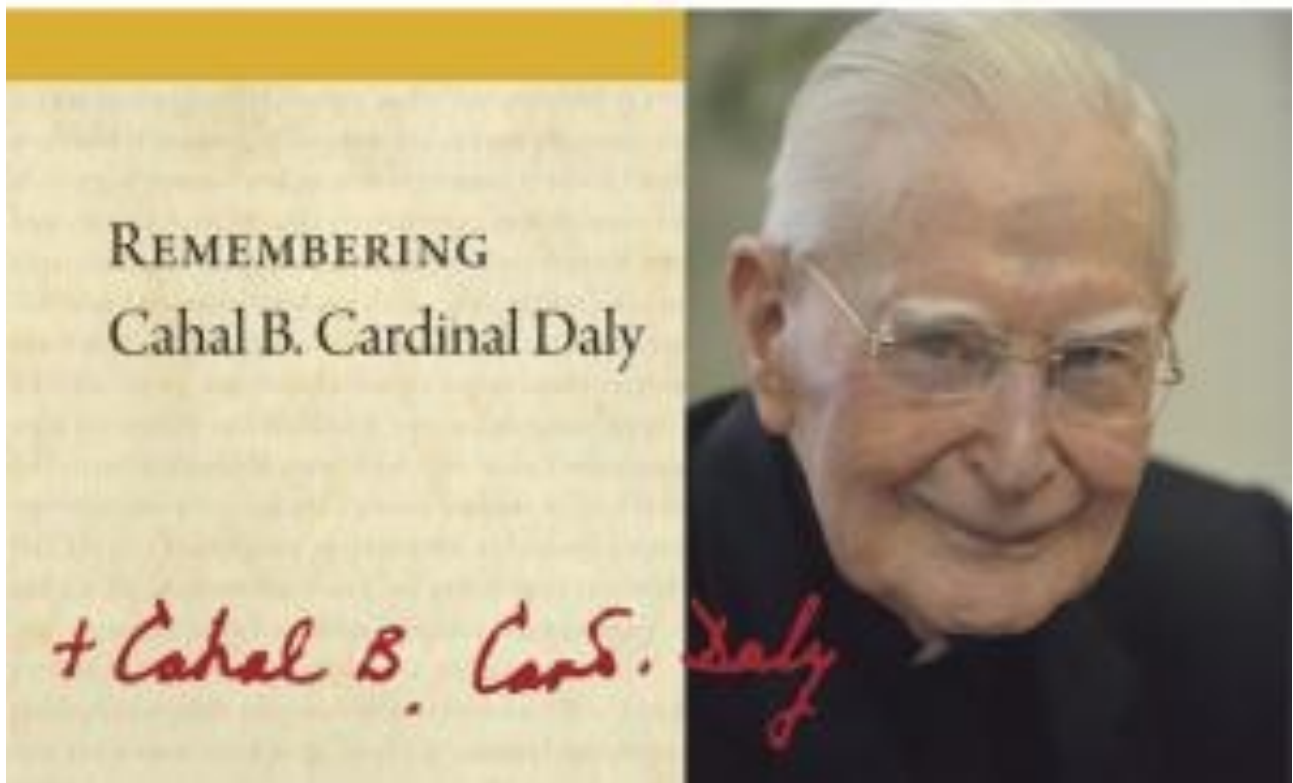
Ordained in June 1941 for the diocese of Down and Connor, Cahal B. Daly held the posts of Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise and Down and Connor, and in 1990 was appointed Archbishop of Armagh, just two years before the usual retiring age for bishops and archbishops.

Made a cardinal in June 1991, his reputation as one of the Irish Catholic Church's most outstanding spiritual and intellectual leaders was by this point well established.

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In this special commemorative book, those who met and worked with Cardinal Daly share their memories of the man who was, in the words of the former Archbishop of Tuam, Joseph Cassidy, a bit of an owl saint.

Reflections on the Pilgrim's Journey



Contributions came from Dame Nuala OLoan, Bishop Colm O'Reilly, Lady Sylvia Hermon MP, and many others.

Published by Veritas. 6.99 euro

[<https://www.veritasbooksonline.com/reflections-on-the-pilgrims-journey-9781847302250-17980/>]



Perspective

Queen's University's Agreement 25 Conference - a student's view

A highlight of the Inter-Chaplaincy Prayer Breakfast to commence the Queen's University's Agreement 25 Conference, was the contribution of current students.

Inez Murray, a 2nd Year Medical student, had this to say:

"My name is Inez. I was born four years after the Agreement was signed, and I grew up in a village not far from Belfast.

Growing up, I knew my neighbours based on who they were, not what box they ticked on the census. I knew the local farmer who sold us our potatoes, the neighbour who checked-in with my grandmother every day, the Reverend for whom I cat-sit.



The Chaplains

I didn't know them by their politics or their Christian denomination, but by the Christian values they lived by each day. I knew them for their kindness, their generosity of spirit, their waves across the street.

On paper, my village could be described as 'cross-community', and it was. But for me, a girl that grew up in the glow of the Good Friday Agreement, we were not just 'cross-community', we were one community.

I am grateful for the Good Friday Agreement, that I have had the opportunity to grow up in the peace that past generations dreamt of, a peace that their perseverance and compromise made possible for my generation.

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I know that there is work to do; our peace is fragile, and our promise is still to be fully fulfilled, but this work starts with our generation, and we are ready for the task.

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Our generation, equipped with the energy and enthusiasm of the peacemakers before us, are eager to realise the potential that our homeplace holds.

Young people in Northern Ireland do not want to return to the past; they want to shape their own shared future.

Since coming to Queen's, I have been able to engage with my peers over issues that our parents' generation would have been afraid to whisper. Young people here are open, curious, and eager to explore the Northern Ireland that exists outside their own bubble.

I have listened and learned from new friends from overseas who have seen Northern Ireland with fresh eyes and without the weight of the past.

Friends that call this place home share stories about languages and sports and cultural celebrations close to their heart. I have been free to share my cúpla focal and folklore as I discover new cultures and perspectives.

By listening and sharing, we have been able to enrich and expand our understanding of what it means to be Northern Irish.



That is what is different about my generation. The peace process has allowed us to be able to see difference not as a barrier to agreement but as a bridge towards mutual understanding.

Our faith, which so many of us here share, has been a powerful contributor to peacebuilding. Our faith encourages us to connect with the God's creation, to protect our environment and to love our neighbours – especially those experiencing hardship or injustice.

Our faith allows us to appreciate the power of reconciliation and love and provides us with a firm foundation upon which we can work together to bring enduring peace to our shared home.

I'll finish where I started, home.

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Every Christmas, for as long as I can remember, our village has hosted an inter-church community carol service. It rotates every year but, no matter where it is, it is always completely full.

Last year, it was my church's turn to host; a collection of carols followed by tea and buns in the local Orange Hall.

Watching everyone walk up the hill after the carol service towards the hospitality of our neighbours, there was no separation to be seen; there was nothing to distinguish what seemed to divide us over twenty-five years ago. We were, and we are, one community.

For me, that neighbourliness, that peace, is all I have ever known.

This is thanks, in no small part, to the peace secured by the Good Friday Agreement.

Words of immense value and meaning and promise printed on a page twenty-five years ago have come to life in my generation.

I acknowledge that it has been a painful journey to get here, and I know that this pain continues for some, especially those who have suffered.

Twenty-five years ago, my generation was given that gift of hope, but we must also give back. We owe it to those who dedicated their lives to peace to dedicate ourselves to making the place we all call home a place to be proud of, a

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place where peace prospers and where hope can become a reality.

It is my prayer that we make those who gave us the Agreement, and who gave us hope for a brighter future, proud."

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It is my prayer that we make those who gave us the Agreement, and who gave us hope for a brighter future, proud.”

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/agreement25/>

Poem for today

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here

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To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

Book: The Poetry of Robert Frost: The Collected Poems -

<https://amzn.to/3mEMkim>

Audiobook: <https://amzn.to/3oIBzSn>

Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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