

Irish Jewish museum to expand - locals object

Interview with Bishop Pat Storey

New form of Catholic mission in London

Former Archbishop of New Zealand knighted

Look out for the three kings on their journey in Kinsale



Following the Star: 'King Balthazar' at the Trident Hotel, Kinsale, on his journey to the nativity crib outside the Methodist Church. (Photo: John Allen)

The churches and community of Kinsale have united to host a unique 'Journey of the Three Kings' during Advent and Christmas culminating in their arrival at the town crib in front of the Methodist Church at Barry's Place on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6th.

Leo McMahon writes in The Southern Star - 'We are all familiar with the story of the three kings or wise men. They were called Melchior (a Persian scholar), Caspar (an Indian scholar) and Balthazar (an Arabian scholar); they

represent all the Gentile peoples (non-Jews) called to worship Jesus', said Irene Treacy, one of the organisers with Sally Simpson.

'We know they brought gifts. Gold, a precious metal often reserved for royalty, a symbol of Jesus as King. Frankincense, a costly perfumed substance burned in the temple representing prayer rising to God, a symbol of Jesus's deity. Myrrh, an expensive perfume used at burials, a symbol of the death Jesus would suffer.

'The three kings and their journey also represent that peoples from all parts of the world are called to believe and adore our Lord. All nations and peoples are called to the light of faith', said Irene.

'This year, to remind us of this, one of the kings started a journey in each of the churches of Kinsale on the first Sunday of Advent and have travelled to the national schools, the community hospital, Haven Bay Care Centre and the Mercy Convent and arrived into Kinsale town centre last weekend. They will travel via different locations, closer and closer to the town crib located in front of the Methodist Church and will finally be put in their crib on the Feast of the Epiphany.

'The wise men came from afar, to give their gifts and to proclaim their belief in Jesus the king of kings. This Christmas we can journey too, to give our gift of praise and worship at the crib', Irene added.

All, and especially the young, are encouraged to look for the kings; they can be spotted be in the windows of businesses in the town. For more information, contact Irene Treacy, Jane Connaughton or Sally Simpson.

As in the past few years, the baby Jesus will be placed in the crib on Christmas Eve at approximately 3pm. This is attended by representatives of the different churches in the area preceded by an ecumencial baby Jesus birthday ceremony in St John the Baptist Church.

New, larger Irish Jewish Museum granted planning permission despite local objections

A two-storey Irish Jewish Museum and reinstated synagogue has been granted planning permission in Portobello, Dublin.

The Journal.ie reports - An Bord Pleanála decided by a majority of five to three to grant permission generally, with a number of revised conditions.



The Irish Jewish Musuem requested permission to demolish five houses, including the old synagogue on Walworth Street, Dublin. (Photo: Facebook/Save The Streets of Portobello)

The Bord decided that the proposed development would not seriously injure the visual or residential amenities of the area of property in the vicinity, it would not be prejudicial to public health or pose a risk to flooding.

It also said it would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience.

The conditions include that a full architectural survey of the exteriors

and the interiors of the buildings proposed for demolition on the site be carried out; that the height of the plant zone not exceed a certain height; and that the noise level during development not exceed a certain level.

The Bord also asked that prior to the opening of the museum, the applicant give a mobility management plan to the Bord that will include measures to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport to the location.

There had been some opposition from locals to the demolition of numbers 3 – 7 on Walworth Road in Portobello and the construction of the museum.

Objections

The Irish Independent reports - Plans for an enlarged Jewish museum in Dublin's Portobello have been given the go-ahead by An Bord Pleanala, despite opposition by many local residents.

The Irish Jewish Musuem requested permission to demolish five houses, including the old synagogue on Walworth Road, Dublin.

The museum's plan, which had the personal backing of Taoiseach Enda Kenny, will use the space to accommodate exhibits and to qualify for proper accreditation.



Local residents had expressed concern about traffic congestion in the area as the museum's visitor numbers are projected to increase five-fold to 50,000 a year.

Residents of Walworth Road and the surrounding areas have also expressed fears of building work

destabilising their own homes.

The Facebook page 'Save the streets of Portobello' wrote this morning;

"This morning the residents of Portobello received the terrible news that An Bord Pleanála have consented to allow the Irish Jewish Museum to demolish our street.

"We are devastated.

"The inspectors report is due on Thursday, we will keep you updated."

Local resident Adrian Kenny said the community have always supported the museum.

"We have all supported the museum throughout the years," he told RTÉ this evening.

"We've given gifts and donated money, but this plan will knock down a whole terrace of houses, this will look like the entrance to a Tesco Express."

Residents also said they're baffled the plans got the go-ahead, saying many experts have called the scheme 'totally flawed'.

Labour TD Kevin Humphries described the plans as a "commercialisation of a terraced street."

An Bord Pleanála have ruled that the plan will not injure the residential amenities and one of the conditions includes the reinstatement of the original synagogue interior.

The Irish Jewish Museum have said in a statement that they are very pleased with the decision with board member Edwin Alkin stating that the plans are necessary for the museum to become an 'educational centre and beacon for tolerance.'

They also said they wish to maintain a good relationship with the local community.

Pat Storey on life as the first female bishop

"You shouldn't believe your own publicity," says the UK and Ireland's first female bishop

Christian Today reports - On Saturday 30 November, history was made as the first female bishop in the UK and Ireland was consecrated.

Bishop Pat Storey officially took up her role as new Bishop of Meath and Kildare at a ceremony that took place at Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin.

After studying French and English at Trinity College, Dublin, she trained at the Church of Ireland Theological College - now Institute - and was ordained deacon in 1997 and priest in 1998. Before consecration as bishop, she was rector of St Augustine's Parish Church, Londonderry; a position she has held since 2004.

Her appointment as bishop has been welcomed by many, including the Most Reverend Dr Michael Jackson, Archbishop of Dublin, who said her election would bring "delight" to many Anglicans.

"Pat herself brings to this work of God a warm personality and a breadth of spiritual gifts to share generously in the church and in the community," he said.

Bishop Pat spoke with Christian Today about her historic appointment, the future of women in the Anglican Church, and what part of her new role is most important to her.

CT: Your appointment has huge historic significance, but does it feel that way to you?

BP: In terms of position or post, it's a big thing for there to be a first female bishop. But my personal experience has actually not been bad at all, I've never felt discriminated against, so whilst I recognise that it is a glass ceiling



being broken, I haven't personally had much of an axe to grind because I think I've been very fortunate. If you asked a different woman, she might have a different experience, but I think I've been fortunate. So I do recognise that it is historic, but for me personally, really genuinely, the big thing was becoming a Bishop. I was worried enough about that without thinking about it being historic!

CT: You've been labelled as a 'trailblazer' - do or did you feel any pressure or do you prefer not to think about it?

BP: I don't go there in my head to be honest, or I think you're just setting yourself up for disappointment really. You shouldn't believe your own publicity. The first time it struck me really personally that it was historic was at the end of the consecration; there was such a crowd outside and a big round of applause and suddenly it hit me: 'Oh my goodness, this is historic!' It's not that I hadn't known that, but it didn't hit me until then.

CT: What are your hopes for the future of women bishops in the Church?

BP: Really honestly, I just hope that the right people are put in positions as Bishop. I was assured when I was phoned with news of my election, which was shocking news for me, that it wasn't tokenism and they felt that I was the right person; I wasn't elected because I was female. I suppose I would hope

for the future that that would continue; the right people would be elected to the post and I hope and pray and know, actually, that many of them will be women. Because of course they have great skills and abilities and they are the right people and perhaps they've been overlooked. I don't think that's going to be so much the case now, I think that it's easier once you've got the first one in!

CT: What would you say to those who are considering ordination, whether male or female?

BP: I think it's a fantastic vocation, but it has to be a vocation. If you're not sure you want to do it then don't do it, because it's your calling that sees you through the difficult times. When you're in God's will, no matter how hard it is, God will take you through it because you're in the right place. It's a very silly job to take if you don't feel called to it.

CT: And finally, what are you looking forward to in your new role?

BP: I'm looking forward to learning what it will entail! There aren't many training courses for how to be a bishop, you know. I know how to be a rector; I've been one for a long time. But I don't know all that a bishop does; it's been a big learning curve. I'm looking forward to working that through, talking to others and really prioritising for myself what a bishop should do. Personally, I hope that my first priority will be pastoring the clergy and looking after clergy families, because I think that's a real need. Bishops tend to get so caught up in other things that it's the one thing they neglect.

It's like prayer and Bible study; it's the most important thing to do and yet sometimes it gets squeezed into five minutes at the end of the day. I feel the same thing can happen to bishops; you neglect the very thing that you were consecrated for. I want to protect that.

GB NEWS

Nightfever - Catholic mission in the heart of Soho

Do not be afraid to go and to bring Christ into every area of life, to the fringes of society, even to those who seem farthest away, most indifferent. The Lord seeks all; he wants everyone to feel the warmth of his mercy and his love."

These are the words of Pope Francis, which so aptly set the context for a Nightfever mission.

Young, vibrant Catholics have started running Nightfever events in cities across the UK during which they invite people off the street to enjoy a time of quiet worship and reflection.

St Patrick's Catholic Church in Soho is the London location for the evening initiatives that go to the heart of the Christian mission – bringing people to Christ.

Candlelight and gentle worship music create a peaceful atmosphere, and anyone is welcome to come inside and enjoy the stillness and beauty in the presence of Jesus. Volunteers are sent out bearing lanterns to offer people the chance to experience it for themselves.

"Some stay for a few minutes, others the whole night," the team say.

"People of all ages and creeds come together in prayer, music and conversation."



The event was first pioneered in Cologne, Germany, after young people from all over the world came to the German city to celebrate their faith at the Catholic youth event, World Youth Day in 2005.

Andreas Suss, now a chaplain in Düsseldorf-Garath, was amazed by the number of young people who came to worship and organised a one-off youth event called 'Nightfever' following the gathering.

Spurred on by the popularity of the event with local Catholics and an enthusiastic team, Nightfever has become a popular regular event. The

initiative has since spread to cities all across Germany, Europe, and now even to North and South America, and Australia.

St Patrick's in Soho first held an event in February last year and aims to create a welcoming environment for people to feel at ease to think about their life and faith. Priests and volunteers are available throughout the evening for prayer, support and counsel.

The team behind Nightfever hope that passersby will be encouraged to discover God's love by providing a space for reflection, away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

"Nightfever is intended to be a door opener. For those who once had faith in God we hope they will be renewed through their experience at St Patrick's. For those who have never met Christ we hope this becomes a moment of fruitful encounter," says Zyg Rakowicz, of Nightfever UK.

The response to the event has been fantastic, he notes. "On a typical Nightfever evening in Soho we have over 300 visitors who accept the invitation to come inside and light a candle in the church.

"Each evening our volunteers are struck by the openness of those passing by and what has moved them to come into the church. Visitors comment on how they have been touched by the evening, the prayerful atmosphere, the beautiful music, the stillness and openness of the evening.

"Some visitors have never have been in a church, others have been long absent. Many ask questions about faith. A number return the following Nightfever, start coming to Mass or show up at parish events and courses where they can learn more.

"Many also express surprise to find that Christianity is alive – and especially in the heart of Soho!"

The hope is that non-believers will experience the peace and love that comes with knowing God. The Nightfever team also hope that the welcoming atmosphere might challenge those with negative perceptions of the Catholic Church. "At Nightfever our volunteers are reminded of the core Christian values and witness – to extend Christ's love and welcome to all. Accordingly we welcome everybody and we make no judgements," says Zyg.

"This can pleasantly surprise those whose understanding of Christianity in general and Catholicism in particular, is based on the, often distorted, message they hear in the mainstream media. The reality they find here is very different – they discover the peace the Lord offers."

The Nightfever team in Soho has expressed a commitment to help the start-up of new Nightfever missions and provide support to those they encounter in their faith journeys.

"The rest is in God's hands!" Zyg finishes.

WORLD NEWS



Archbishop David Moxon knighted

Archbishop David Moxon is now, formally,

Archbishop Sir David Moxon – an honour he calls "a complete bolt out of the blue."

Archbishop Sir David Moxon

In the New Year's Honours he's been appointed a Knight Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit "in recognition of his services to the Anglican Church."

"I was very, very surprised," he said today. "I genuinely don't think of myself in that league at all."

Archbishop Sir David Moxon – that will become his formal title – is presently in Raglan with his family, on holiday from his job in Rome as the Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative to the Holy See, and Director of the Anglican Centre in Rome.

Before taking up his Rome appointment Archbishop David, 62, had already had carved out a stellar record in the Anglican Church in these islands, said a spokesperson of the Anglican Church.

He'd served as Bishop of Waikato for almost 20 years, and in 2006 he was chosen as the Archbishop of the New Zealand Dioceses – and therefore as one of the three Archbishops heading the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.

Prayer for Today

God our redeemer, you have delivered us from the power of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of your Son: grant, that as by his death he has recalled us to life, so by his continual presence in us he may raise us to eternal joy; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Common Worship