

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Belfast City Mission’s Toy Appeal

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Belfast City Mission's Toy Appeal

For 23 years, the BCM's Toy Appeal has had the support of the Giving Tree & the DfC. The Dept's 'Mummy Elf', Stella, was given flowers yesterday morning by BCM's CEO, Nicky Conway, and Superintendent Rev David Campton, as a token of thanks for her hard work and the continued partnership with the Dept.

News reports

Church leaders condolences on death of Private Seán Rooney

Archbishops John McDowell and Michael Jackson and the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church have expressed condolences on the death of Private Seán Rooney

The Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, the Most Revd John McDowell, and the Archbishop of Dublin, Bishop of Glendalough and Primate of Ireland, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson said. -

'It was with the deepest sorrow and regret that we learned of the untimely death of Private Seán Rooney on active service in Lebanon. Our prayers and sympathies are foremost with all those who held him dear and whom he held dear, in both

family and community along with his fellow–soldiers who have been injured in this incident.

‘Ireland’s peacekeepers with the United Nations give quiet, honourable and courageous service in the cause of peace and reconciliation each and every day. We are also very mindful of how every family affected by last night’s events would have been looking forward with hope to Christmas. In this season as we await the coming of Our Lord as the Prince of Peace, we remember all who grieve and ask for prayer to uphold them in these days and those to come.

‘Jesus in The Sermon on The Mount said: “Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God ... (St Matthew 5.9).” We remember with gratitude those who make peace, who keep peace and who nurture peace.’

Archbishop Jackson added: ‘Having visited Beirut as part of Dublin and Glendalough’s link with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, I am well aware of the esteem in which the Irish people are held as a result of their long association with the UNIFIL mission in Lebanon. This contribution is treasured and cherished as are all those who put their lives at the service of peace.

‘At tragic times such as this we are reminded, that while the role of the soldiers on these missions is to act as peacekeepers, they operate in dangerous conditions.’

The Moderator said - ‘I have written to @defenceforces Chief of Staff to offer our deepest sympathy & condolences to Pte Rooney's family & colleagues who are in our prayers. His tragic death in Lebanon is a sorrowful reminder that the

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vital work of peace often comes with an incredibly high price.'



Appointment to Nenagh Union of Parishes

The Nenagh Union of Parishes said “We are delighted to share this announcement from Bishop Michael Burrows, and we very much look forward to welcoming Reverend Keith Barry and supporting him in his ministry with us...

“The Board of Nomination for Nenagh union has nominated The Revd Keith Barry to be the next rector of the parish in succession to The Very Revd Rod Smyth.

Mr Barry was largely brought up in Kinsale Co Cork, where his father still lives. I say largely because he also had a somewhat international upbringing — his father worked with Irish Aid and this meant that the family lived abroad for several years, including during a huge electrification project in Lesotho

After secondary education in Dublin, Keith was a student of theology in Trinity College in the early 1990s during the years when I was chaplain there. He was ordained for a curacy in Derry cathedral, and then his love for travel and his deep interest in military chaplaincy led him towards what has been a long ministry in the British Army Chaplain’s department. In that context he has served with distinction in many roles, including in places of considerable danger where his pastoral heart and adventurous spirit have been well displayed.

It is now the time for Keith to return to parochial ministry and to come home to Ireland. He greatly looks forward to parish life in Nenagh in all its rich variety. As it takes a little time for British Army chaplains to be discharged and freed from

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existing contractual obligations, it will probably be late spring/early summer when he arrives. He can be assured of our welcome and prayers.

I would like to thank the parochial nominators for their extremely diligent and careful work in recent months. I also would like to express continuing and deep gratitude to the Revd Paul Fitzpatrick who continues to sustain fruitful ministry in both Nenagh and indeed Killaloe during these times of transition in both places. We owe a very great deal to him.

Michael Tuam Limerick and Killaloe “

Archbishop of Canterbury says he won't share his views on same-sex marriage while in post

Most Rev Justin Welby has said he won't be disclosing his stance on same-sex marriage in church any time soon.

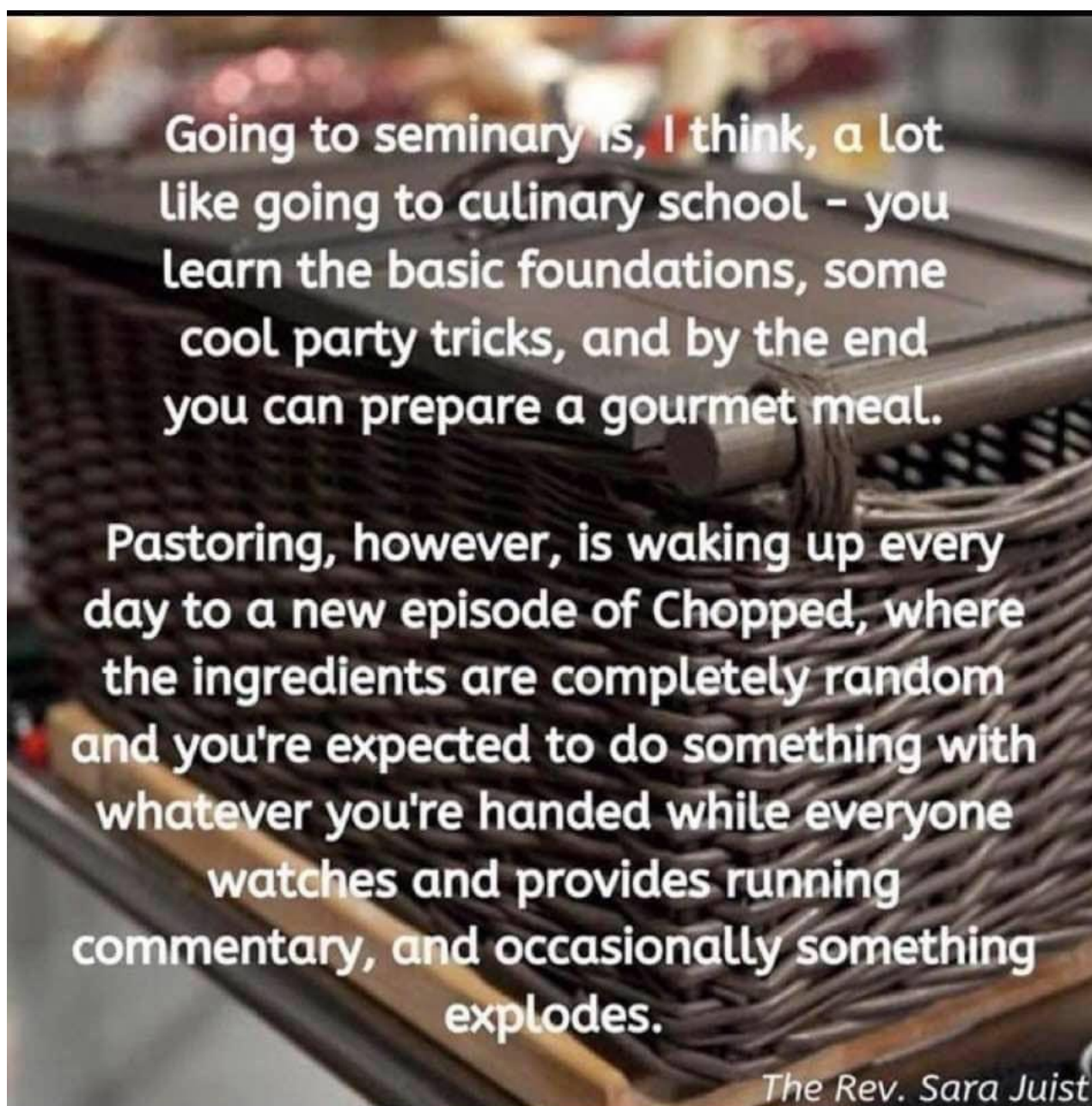
Speaking to The Times during his visit to Ukraine, Archbishop Justin said he will keep his views secret as long as he remains in post as he sees his role as a “focus of unity”.

He said: “I am not sure I will be able to say during my time in this job. I can express my own view as far as I know my own mind — and it doesn't change.

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“But the role of archbishop is to be a focus of unity. That isn’t just convenient or pragmatic. In Christian thinking, that is part of God’s call to church leaders. Therefore I have to be convinced before God that it’s the right moment to do it — and not just politically.”

Archbishop Justin’s comments come as the House of Bishops meets on Monday to discuss what it collectively plans to recommend on same-sex relationships to the next General Synod.



It is all part of the Living in Love and Faith (LLF) process, an initiative launched in 2017 to encourage churches to discern the Church of England's direction of travel over issues of gender and sexuality.

In September, the Church of England published its first report with feedback on the LLF process showing a clear consensus for bishops to give clear leadership on the issues discussed.

So far, several bishops have made public their positions, with the Bishop of Oxford becoming the first most senior bishop to advocate for same-sex marriage in the Church of England.

Some of the other bishops supporting gay marriage in the church are the bishops of Worcester, Reading and Dudley.

But the issue is very divisive. The evangelical wing of the Church of England has also made public its opposition to any changes in the church to accommodate the blessing and marriage of same-sex couples.

Buy fewer presents and send money to Ukraine, says Pope

Pope Francis has urged people to spend less on Christmas presents and send the money saved to Ukrainians to help them get through the winter.

The Pope made the plea at the end of his weekly general audience yesterday.

“Brothers and sisters, I tell you, there is so much suffering in Ukraine, so much, so much,” he said. “It is beautiful to celebrate Christmas, but let us lower the level of Christmas spending. Let’s have a more humble Christmas, with more humble gifts, and send what we save to the Ukrainian people, who need it,” he said, prompting several rounds of applause in the audience hall.

“They are suffering so much, they are going hungry, they feel the cold and many are dying because there are not enough doctors and nurses available,” he said.

He spoke as millions of civilians enduring Europe’s biggest conflict since the Second World War have had to contend with cuts to power, heat and water caused by Russian



People, look east. the time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Guest is on the way.
~ Eleanor Farjeon



attacks on infrastructure as sub-zero temperatures take hold.

“Let’s not forget. Christmas, yes. In peace with the Lord, yes. But with Ukrainians in our hearts. Let’s make this concrete gesture for them,” the Pope said.

The Ukrainian national church in Rome, Santa Sofia, yesterday also urged Italians to donate clothing and medicine that volunteers have been taking to Ukraine by the truck load since March.

In the media

Sadness and disbelief at passing of ‘wonderful’ Newry man and recently ordained deacon

Micheal McKenna writes in Armagh I -

A highly-respected and recently ordained Deacon to the Catholic Church in Newry has died suddenly.

The Very Reverend Brendan McAllister passed away on Tuesday at Daisy Hill Hospital following a short illness.

Brendan was the dearly beloved husband of Elizabeth, deeply devoted father to Anna, Joseph and Tom, loving Granda to Dara, Oisín and Shaan, dearest brother of Marie, Sheila, Kevin and Seamus and a caring father-in-law, brother in law and uncle.

On Sunday, January 30, Brendan was ordained in Armagh Cathedral as a deacon for the Diocese of Dromore.

From Greenwood Drive on the Warrenpoint Road, Brendan attended the Christian Brothers' schools in Newry before going to Queen's University to study History and Politics. He subsequently trained in social work and spent 12 years as a probation officer, including two years in Maghaberry Prison.

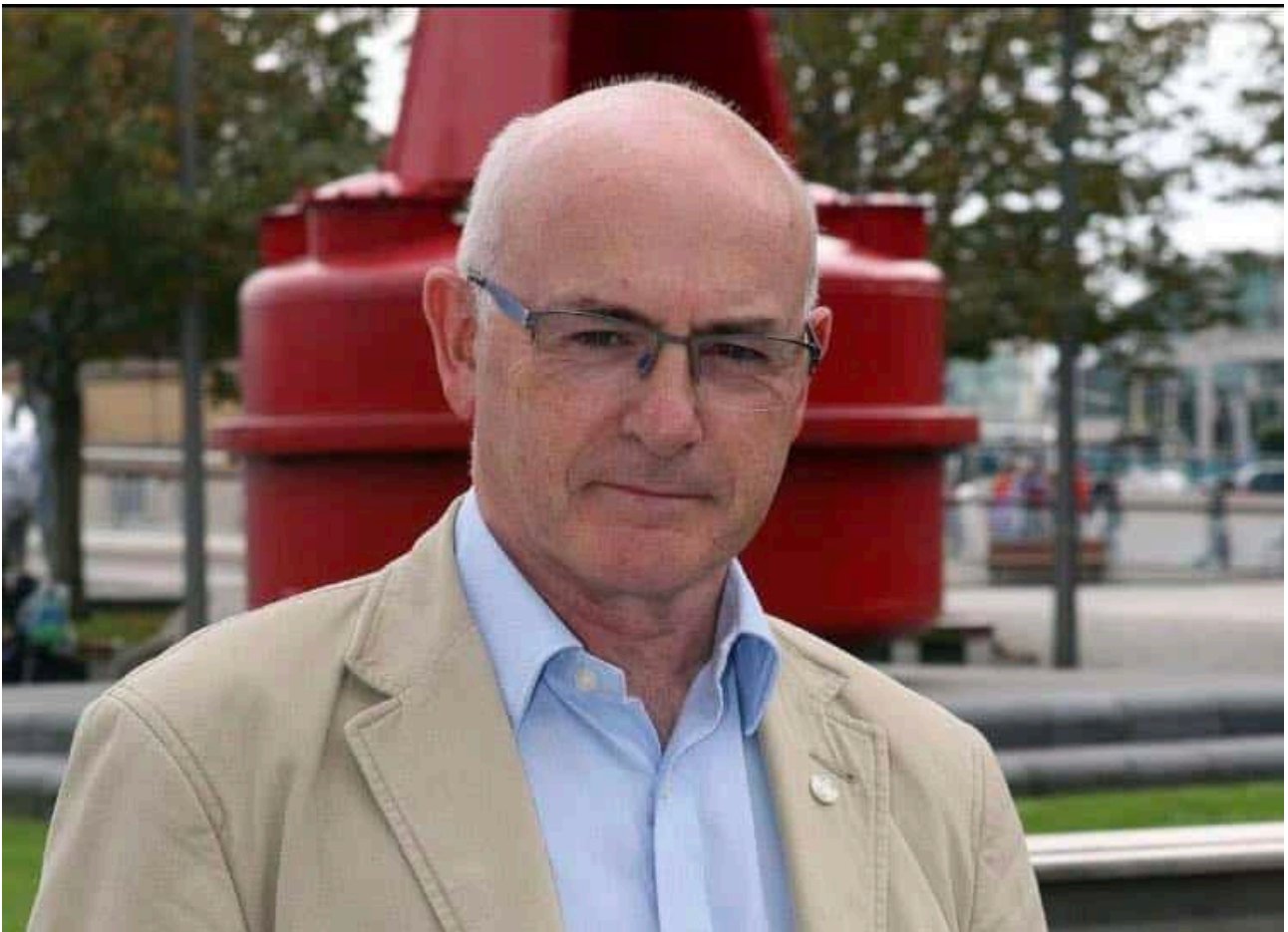
In 1992 Brendan became Director of Mediation Northern Ireland and over the next 16 years he was very involved in mediation of the Troubles.

He served for four years as a Commissioner for victims and survivors of the Northern Ireland conflict before moving into the international peace mediation field in 2012, working first in Brussels for the European Union before joining the United Nations in New York in 2015 as a Senior Mediation Advisor.

Brendan's final appointment was as the Interim Advocate for victims of historical institutional abuse until his retirement in December 2020.

Speaking following his ordination in January, Brendan said that he first felt a calling at the age of 16 and presumed that it was for priesthood. But then he met Elizabeth McGrath and followed his destiny to become a husband and father.

"But a sense of calling never left me. Everything I have done has involved some discernment with God and a desire to follow where he might lead me in life," he said.



A few years ago, Elizabeth’s cousin said that Brendan might make a good deacon.

Added Brendan: “At first I laughed at the idea. I was nearly 60; time had moved on and I was comfortable with my life.”

But the notion began to pull at him and would not leave him alone.

“It was not easy to take the first steps; I was embarrassed and awkward, but this latest calling was steady and strong and I had to respond if I was to stay true to myself.”

Tributes have poured in for a man so highly respected in the local community and beyond.

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Former Deputy Leader and Chairman of the Ulster Unionist Party, Danny Kennedy, said he was “deeply shocked” to hear of Brendan.

“I counted him as a friend and we had many discussions over the years, always on friendly terms despite our differences,” said Mr Kennedy.

“Brendan gave himself unstintingly to the cause of peace and reconciliation at home and abroad and I offer my sincere condolences and sympathy to his wife Elizabeth, his children, Joseph, Anna and Tom, his family circle and many friends at this very sad and difficult time. May they all know God’s comfort and blessing.”

Newry, Mourne and Down Councillor, Jarlath Tinnelly, commented: “So sorry to hear about Deacon Brendan’s sudden passing. Clearly a kind, caring and compassionate man who made a very positive impact during his short time in Kilbroney parish, he will be greatly missed. Ar dheis dé go raibh a anam.”

His niece Naomh simply wrote: “My lovely Uncle Brendan. We will miss your warm, funny and gentle soul so much.”

Sinead added: “What a wonderful man, in total disbelief. In our darkest hours Brendan was there for our family, supporting us, praying with us and helping us to come to terms with mum’s passing. My thoughts and prayers are with Elizabeth and the entire family circle.”

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Those sentiments were echoed by hundreds who passed on their sympathies and condolences to Brendan's friends and family.

Funeral arrangements have yet to be announced but any enquiries should be directed to Daniel Mallon Funeral Director, tel 02830277210.

Deeply loved and cherished by his wife, children, grandchildren, sisters, brothers, nieces, nephews and entire family circle.

Family flowers only please, donations in lieu to SVDP Newry or The Corrymeela Community c/o the family.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Broadcasts

Christmas Eve · 16.00 · RTÉ Radio 1

A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

Traditional and modern carols and hymns, sung by the magnificent choir of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, directed by Stuart Nicholson, and interspersed with readings to celebrate the birth of the Saviour. Led by the Dean of St Patrick's, The Very Revd William Morton.

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Christmas Eve on RTÉ 1

CAROLS FROM THE CASTLE

In one of the most loved RTÉ shows of the year, Mary Kennedy brings Christmas magic into every home with a special evening of festive music, old and new, from the magnificently decked halls & Chapel of Dublin Castle. This year's show features musicians and singers of every age and from every corner of Ireland, who will have you singing along, loud and proud, from the comfort of your sitting room. Mary Kennedy and the RTÉ Concert Orchestra are joined by a wide range of performers including the Choristers and Schola of Saint Patrick's Cathedral Choir.

The Heavens are telling the Glory of God: Faith, Science and Astronomy

Br Guy Consolmagno from St Paul's Cathedral, London

Premieres online on Thursday 5th January 2023,
7.00-7.45pm

Br Guy Consolmagno says that science is an important way to get to know God. In this conversation with Paula Gooder about Br Guy's role as director of the Vatican Observatory, they explore what meteorites tell us about God; why science and faith are more compatible than people imagine and the importance of story-telling to both science and religion. Thinking of the season of Epiphany, they also touch on the Magi and what star they might have seen at the time of Jesus' birth.

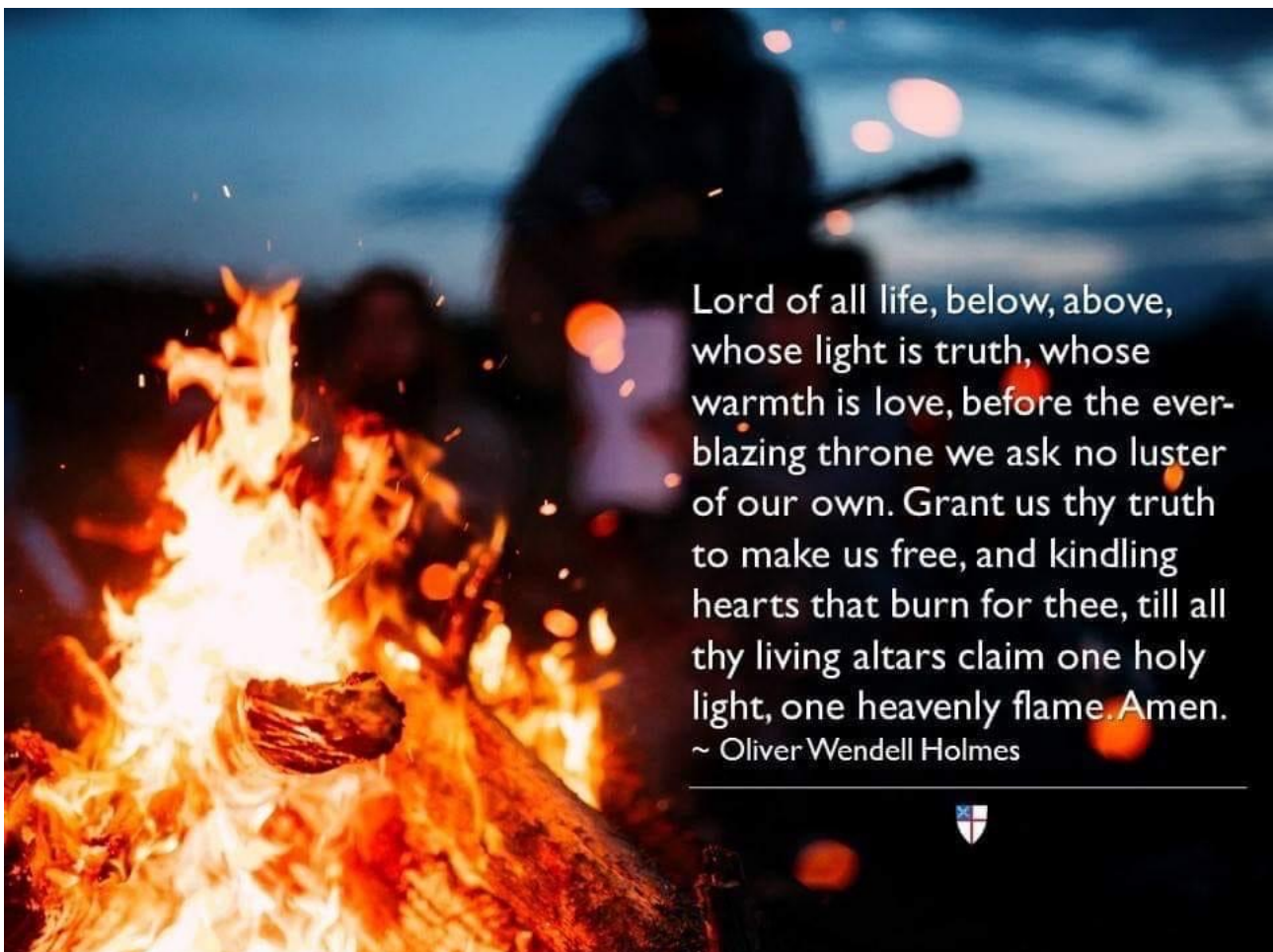
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Br Guy Consolmagno is the director of the Vatican Observatory and president of the Vatican Observatory Foundation. His latest book is *My Theology: Finding God in the Universe*.

Dr Paula Gooder is Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral, and a leading Biblical scholar and writer.

The event is free, but if you are able to make a donation to the continuing learning programme at St Paul's Cathedral when you register for the event we would be very grateful.

[\[https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-heavens-are-telling-the-glory-of-god-faith-science-and-astronomy-tickets-482980105497\]](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-heavens-are-telling-the-glory-of-god-faith-science-and-astronomy-tickets-482980105497)





Perspective

Love. Always. - Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry

From Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry's message at the Good News Festival in the The Episcopal Diocese of San Diego:

“Love. Always. Don’t be ashamed. Don’t be afraid. Live in the love that made us all. When the power of love overcomes the love of power, then this world will know peace.

Love. Always.

Love when you can feel it.

And love when you can’t.

Love when you can see it.

And love when you don’t.

Love when you believe it.

And love when you don’t.

Love when you’re on the mountaintop of exaltation.

And love in the valley of humiliation.

Love. Always.”

Poem for today

An Old Man's Winter Night by Robert Frost

All out of doors looked darkly in at him
Through the thin frost, almost in separate stars,
That gathers on the pane in empty rooms.
What kept his eyes from giving back the gaze
Was the lamp tilted near them in his hand.
What kept him from remembering what it was
That brought him to that creaking room was age.
He stood with barrels round him -- at a loss.
And having scared the cellar under him
In clomping there, he scared it once again

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In clomping off; -- and scared the outer night,
Which has its sounds, familiar, like the roar
Of trees and crack of branches, common things,
But nothing so like beating on a box.
A light he was to no one but himself
Where now he sat, concerned with he knew what,
A quiet light, and then not even that.
He consigned to the moon, such as she was,
So late-arising, to the broken moon
As better than the sun in any case
For such a charge, his snow upon the roof,
His icicles along the wall to keep;
And slept. The log that shifted with a jolt
Once in the stove, disturbed him and he shifted,
And eased his heavy breathing, but still slept.
One aged man -- one man -- can't keep a house,
A farm, a countryside, or if he can,
It's thus he does it of a winter night.

World Cup Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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