

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Dublin's Black Santa Sitout

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Dublin's Black Santa Sitout

New Vicar looks forward to his first Dublin Black Santa Sit Out

Dublin's Black Santa Appeal is preparing to take to the streets again this Christmas outside St Ann's Church, Dawson Street. There will be a new face this year with the arrival of the new Vicar, Canon Paul Arbuthnot. But he will be guided by the team, some of whom have been running the Dublin appeal for over 20 years.

Volunteers will start collecting outside St Ann's on December 15 and will continue until Christmas Eve. The official launch will be on Monday December 19 at 1pm and the Archbishop will join the Vicar and Fred Deane, known to many as the face of the appeal.

After a gap of two years, choirs will make a welcome return to the sit out. The choir of Kildare Place National School will be there on the launch day and many others will join the volunteers to sing carols at lunchtimes.

The charities being supported this year are the Salvation Army, the Simon Community, Alice Leahy Trust, Protestant Aid, St Vincent de Paul, the Samaritans and other local charities. You can donate via the parish website www.stann.dublin.anglican.org or in person at the church via cash or card.

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Canon

Arbuthnot was presented with a pair of socks from the Dean of Belfast, the Very Revd Stephen Forde, at his institution in September.

The Black Santa Sit Out tradition began at St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast where Canon Arbuthnot served as a Chorister and Lay Clerk in the choir.



“I am looking forward to donning my black cloak and becoming Black Santa for the week before Christmas,” Canon Arbuthnot commented. “I am especially looking forward to meeting many people as they pass by our church door on Dawson Street.

“As the new vicar of St Ann's, I am very aware that this wonderful week of fundraising doesn't happen of its own

accord – the amount of planning by our parishioners and Parish Administrator is immense. Our administrator, Kristin, has organised the rota of choirs at the sit-out, the publicity materials, and many other arrangements which are unseen, yet crucial to the smooth running of the sit-out. My heartfelt thanks and gratitude go to her and all in the parish who have done so much to help.

“Despite being new to St Ann’s, if you pass by you’ll recognise one familiar face at the sit-out – Fred Deane. His steady hand, good humour, and immense knowledge of the parish have been invaluable to me throughout my first few months here and my first sit-out at St Ann’s. If any members of clergy would like to come and keep me company during the sit-out, I’d be delighted to see them! But I look forward to seeing many of you from across the dioceses during the course of the sit-out.”

News reports

Christian Aid Ireland overwhelmed by churches generosity for Ukraine

In a statement Christian Aid Ireland says - We’ve been absolutely overwhelmed by the generosity of our sponsoring churches – the Presbyterian Church in Ireland’s Moderator’s Appeal, the Church of Ireland Bishops’ Appeal and the Black Santa sit-out completed by the Dean of Belfast, which have together yielded an astonishing £565,000/€645,000 towards our Ukraine appeal.



There are also hundreds of church communities across the island of Ireland to whom we owe our thanks but just one among them is the Benburb Group of Parishes in County Tyrone (Clonfeacle, Derrygortreavy, Eglis/Drumsallan) where two events were held in the spring to raise funds for our response in Ukraine – the proceeds reaching us via Bishops’ Appeal.

The parishioners held a daffodil tea at Benburb Old School in March which raised over £1,600 and in June they held a sunflower tea at Eglis (Drumsallan) Hall which raised almost £1,100.

We are incredibly thankful to Rev Suzanne Cousins and all the Benburb parishioners for their ‘generosi-tea’. 😊

Christian Aid has also received generous donations both directly and through the Disasters Emergency Committee

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and the Irish Emergency Alliance. Working with partners, Christian Aid has supported 600,000 people inside Ukraine as well as another 170,000 Ukrainian refugees in Hungary and Romania by providing cash, medical equipment and supporting shelters.

Photo @vicky_comerford_photography

Advent Candle Stand memorial



Advent is always a special time, as we prepare for the feast of Christmas. This year the Advent Candle Stand at St Canice's Cathedral, Kilkenny was generously

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donated in memory of Neville Matthews by his widow, Avril and the Matthews' family.

Made from Irish Oak, the stand was designed by Eric Phillips and Sinéad Lucey and made by Eric in his Bennetsbridge workshop. It is a companion-piece to the Paschal Candle Stand that Eric made for the Cathedral in April 2022.

Hanging the former Primate



It was a great pleasure to see the unveiling of the official portrait of the former Archbishop of Armagh - Right Revd Dr Richard Clarke in the Alexander Synod Hall in Armagh on the evening of Sunday 4th December 2022.

The portrait will enhance the legacy of portraits of former Archbishops and Primate. Archbishop John McDowell gave his predecessor a helping pair of hands.

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Clergy appointments



The Rev Danielle McCullagh to The Hub, the Methodist and Church of Ireland Chaplaincy at Queen's University and Stranmillis College

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The Rev Danielle McCullagh, Vicar of Lisburn Cathedral, has been appointed Chaplain and Dean of Residences at The Hub, the Methodist and Church of Ireland Chaplaincy at Queen's University and Stranmillis College and as minister of 'The Church of the Resurrection', a joint Methodist and Church of Ireland congregation.

She succeeds the Ven Barry Forde, Archdeacon of Belfast, who is now Priest-in-Charge of the Inner South Belfast Mission Area.

In her new role Danielle will serve alongside Gail Mercer, the Ulster University Chaplain.

Archdeacon Ruth Elmes has been appointed as the new Rector of St Patrick's Parish, Dalkey in the Diocese of Dublin.

Ruth is currently Rector of Tinahely and Carnew in the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory and Archdeacon of Ossory and Leighlin. The announcement was made in the parishes this morning.

A daughter of the rectory (Archdeacon Donald and Janet Keegan), Ruth says she railed against the idea of becoming ordained herself for many years. She was what she says is politely called a 'late vocation' and had another career in uniform before she donned her clerical garb. She trained as a nurse in the Adelaide Hospital like both her mother and her sister and then worked in Beaumont and Tallaght before entering the Theological College.



She served her curacy in Stillorgan and Blackrock in Dublin from 2009 to 2012 and pays tribute to the recently retired Rector, Canon Ian Gallagher, for his support. She has served in Tinahely and Carnew in County Wicklow for 10 years, since 2012. There are four churches, two national schools and two agricultural shows in the parish. 2013.

“Steeped in rural life I have learned a lot living there and it has increased my admiration for those who work the land.



Installation at St Patrick's Cathedral

On Sunday 4th December, 2022 at St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, Archdeacon John Godfrey was installed as Prebend of Kilmactalway (Diocesan Canon for the dioceses).

He is pictured here with the Dean of St Patrick's, Dr Morton; the Dean of Limerick (who is Chancellor of St Patrick's) and Canon Charles Mullen, the Chapter Clerk.

My first incumbency gave me opportunity for pastoral care, conducting services and being involved in parish life which is the foundation of clerical life for those who are blessed to be part of it especially in the key moments of other's lives through baptisms, weddings and sadly, funerals," Ruth explains.

She adds: “I look forward to starting ministry in Dalkey. I know the area a little as a past boarding pupil of the late Glengara Park School. I happily anticipate getting to know the people of the parish, school and local communities as well as walking opportunities”.

Ruth is widowed with two adult children, Jessica and Jonathan. Jonathan and his fiancé Sarah have recently moved to Vancouver but Jessica lives in Dublin and has been left the responsibility of assisting with the move from Tinahely. Ruth says this worries her as Jessica loves a good clearout. Ruth has a small dog, Timo, who has passed his obedience test at puppy training school.

Her interests include laughing at Timo, photography and Formula 1 motor racing.

Bishop Martin Drennan - tribute by Archbishop Eamon Martin

Together with my fellow bishops I am saddened to learn of the death of our Episcopal colleague Bishop Martin Drennan.

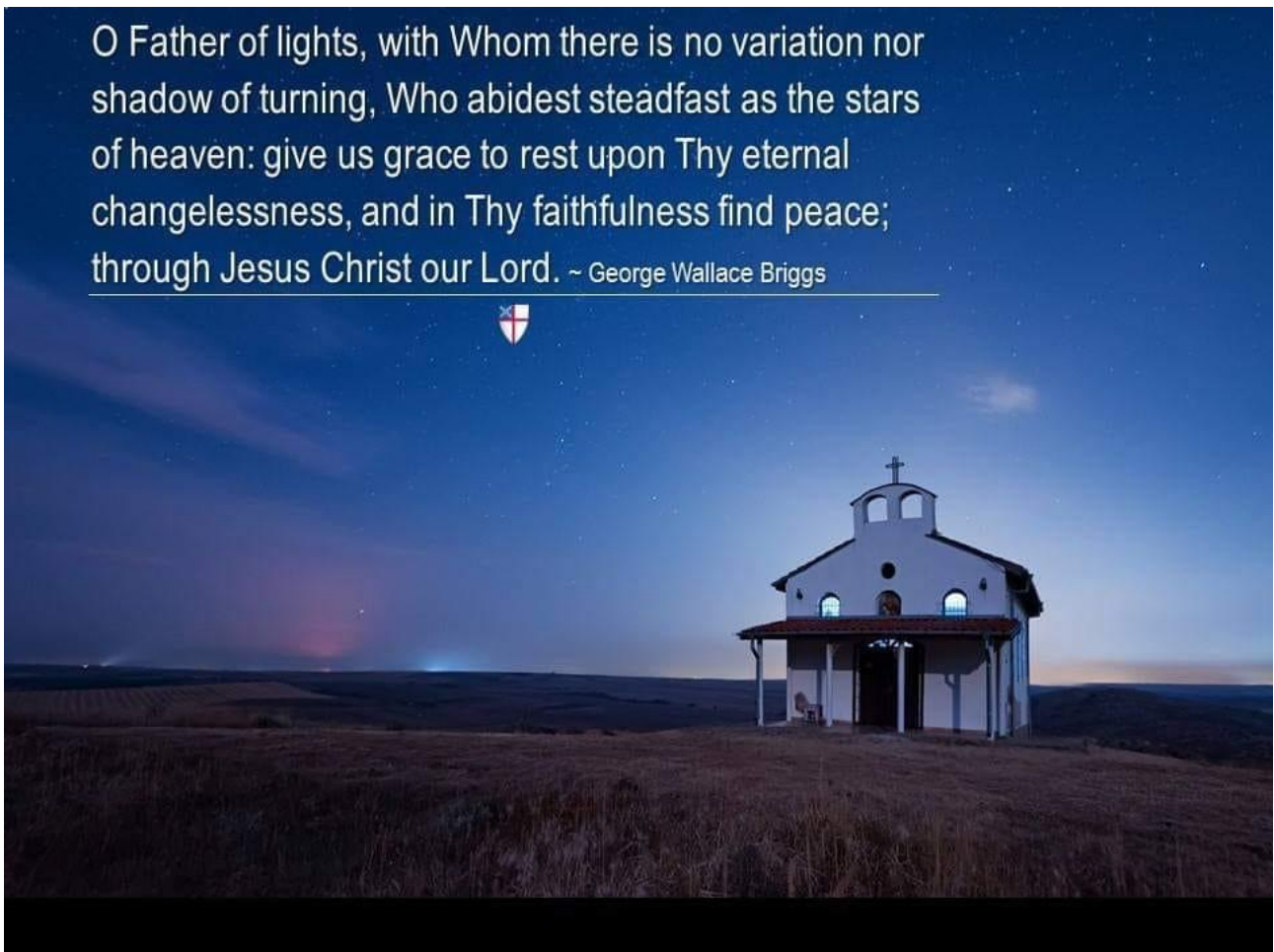
A quiet person by nature, Bishop Drennan was a deeply spiritual, devoted and generous priest and bishop, who was widely respected for his piety, humility, intelligence and strength of character. Throughout his ministry Bishop Drennan was held in affection by his students, parishioners, clergy and religious whom he sought to serve as priest, bishop and shepherd.

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Bishop Drennan served as a member of the Irish Bishops' Conference from 1997 until 2016, when he retired early due to ill health. During that time Bishop Drennan was a dedicated member of the Conference, committed and especially knowledgeable in the areas of liturgy, catechetics and doctrine. Drawing from his experience as a former professor of scripture, his grasp of the power of God's Word brought a depth and richness to his contributions to the work of the Bishops' Conference.

At this time of loss, I pray that Bishop Drennan's brother Father Michael Drennan SJ, his other family members and loved ones, will find comfort in knowing that he was a good and faithful servant of the Gospel. I extend sympathy also to the parishioners and clergy in Galway and in his former diocese of Dublin. May God have mercy on his soul and

O Father of lights, with Whom there is no variation nor shadow of turning, Who abidest steadfast as the stars of heaven: give us grace to rest upon Thy eternal changelessness, and in Thy faithfulness find peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ~ George Wallace Briggs



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may he rest in the peace of Christ whom he served with love and dedication. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

Archbishop Eamon Martin is Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of All Ireland and President of the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference.

Perspective

Why true unity is a distant dream while we are so divided

Since my book *Can Ireland be One?* was published I have been hearing responses from critics and in conference discussions, Malachi O'Doherty writes.

One idea that comes back at me is that no country can be one, or should even aspire to being one.

I agree with this. I don't think Ireland can ever have an homogenous culture or an agreed history. But neither does England have these. England has divisions over big ideas that some think should be bonding principles for the whole country, like monarchy, respect for the army and the imperial legacy.

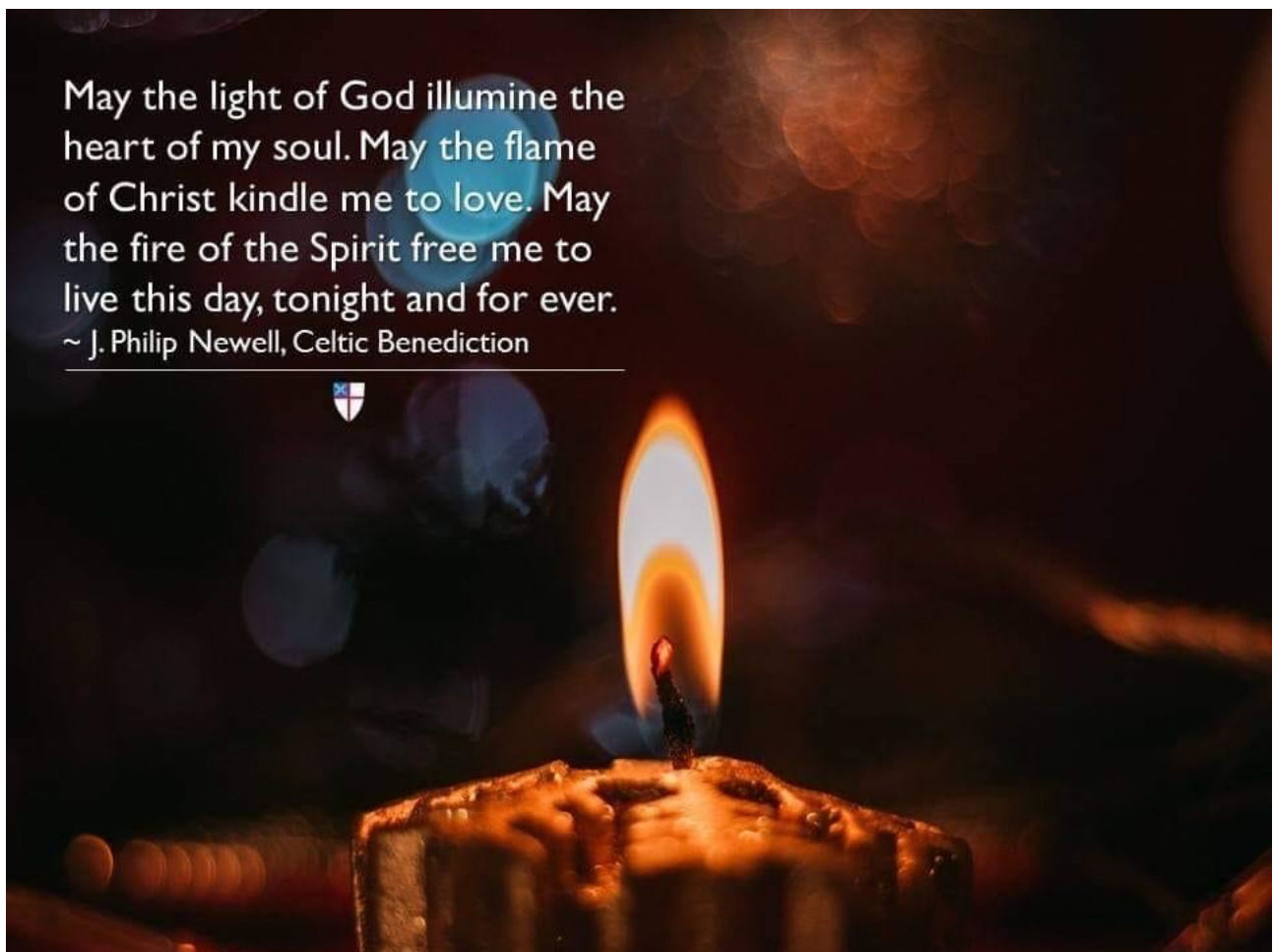
You don't have to seek out nationalists to find dissent from these. Indeed, in England it is more likely to be the nationalists who hold these ideas dear.

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What I mean by Ireland being one is the question of whether it can deal with a core division about what the nation actually is.

It will never again have a single language or a population of one colour or religion. That being the case, it should perhaps give up on asserting traditions which assume that there is something like a national story or a national character. It is loath to do that.

Not that it matters to everybody or even to a majority of the people, but it matters to the major Irish political parties which commemorate the national struggle in ways which those who do not ground a sense of identity on that story find uncomfortable.



May the light of God illumine the heart of my soul. May the flame of Christ kindle me to love. May the fire of the Spirit free me to live this day, tonight and for ever.
~ J. Philip Newell, Celtic Benediction

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When I ask if Ireland can be one I mean primarily, can it shed its fixations on identity and administer an all island jurisdiction through politics which don't refer to past wars, legacies or traditions.

I suppose I am trying to imagine an Ireland which is a meritocracy, governed by parties according to their talents and visions for the future without loyalty assumptions based on reference to the past.

We are already seeing in England that rivalry between the Labour Party and the Conservative Party is less about ideology and more about who would make a better job of running the country.

Some have objected to my idea that division in the North needs to be sorted out before ending partition of the island. They fear that this means giving more power to unionist votes than was ever accorded to nationalist votes. Why not live with the fact that a big chunk of Unionism is going to be deeply unhappy in a united Ireland and get on with uniting the country despite them.

Wasn't there an unhappy nationalist minority? Did unionists make sacrifices to accommodate it? Then just live with the division and sort it out after unification.

Yet one obstacle might be a southern unwillingness to take responsibility for managing that division. Instability in the North might make us an unattractive partner.

Would the Republic vote for a United Ireland?

A counter argument that I hear from some nationalists is that unionists will be better off in a united Ireland because they will be a proportionately greater part of the population than they are in the UK and will therefore hold the balance of power.

Two things surprise me about that argument.

One is that it assumes that unionist coherence will remain within a united Ireland and that is acceptable to the nationalists making that case.

Another is that such nationalists want a united Ireland in preference to any other arrangement, even a united Ireland in which unionists have greater, not lesser power.

This argument anticipates the continuation of sectarian division after partition ends and even offers it to unionists as an attractive feature in the new Ireland.

This ideological fixation on unity, even a badly framed unity, shows up the weakness in nationalism. Unity is a principle for them whether in practical terms it is a good idea or not.

It may indeed be a good idea. I am amenable to being persuaded of that. But I am more likely to be persuaded by another pragmatist than by a principled ideologue.

Currently we can make a simple statement about nearly everyone who wants a united Ireland, that they were raised in a Catholic family, baptised Catholic and given a Catholic education, probably laced with Gaelic culture.

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The fact that you can predict someone's stand on the Union by looking at their birth certificate says that these positions are identitarian, basically sectarian positions that do not extend beyond their community bases. The DUP isn't winning Catholic converts to the Union and Sinn Féin isn't winning Protestants to unity. Neither is even trying.

This doesn't mean that there are not many perfectly reasonable people in both camps who have arrived at logical convictions. But if neither of these positions has an appeal stronger than mere communal affiliation, and is capable of winning converts, then maybe neither idea is a very good one.

And if communal affiliation is so strong that it resists new ideas, then that is something we should try to constrain so that people can think more clearly about what's actually good for them.

All nationalists being Catholic and all unionists being Protestant points very clearly to the sovereignty question being advanced as a cultural prejudice rather than a practical debate on what's best.

I'd feel happier about this question being decided in a Northern Ireland in which the communal blocks had broken down and merged so that the debate could be a clash of ideas rather than a clash of cultures.

Of course, that isn't going to happen within a single generation, that is, within the time frame within which a border poll is likely."

Courtesy - Belfast Telegraph November 29 2022

Poem for today

In Memory Of My Mother by Patrick Kavanagh

I do not think of you lying in the wet clay
Of a Monaghan graveyard; I see
You walking down a lane among the poplars
On your way to the station, or happily

Going to second Mass on a summer Sunday -
You meet me and you say:
'Don't forget to see about the cattle - '
Among your earthiest words the angels stray.

And I think of you walking along a headland
Of green oats in June,
So full of repose, so rich with life -
And I see us meeting at the end of a town

On a fair day by accident, after
The bargains are all made and we can walk
Together through the shops and stalls and markets
Free in the oriental streets of thought.

O you are not lying in the wet clay,
For it is a harvest evening now and we
Are piling up the ricks against the moonlight
And you smile up at us - eternally.

World Cup Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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