



CNI



The Dean of Belfast, the Very Rev John Mann, begins his Black Santa Sit-out for charities today

Clergy sit-outs and charity raising

The Dean of Belfast, the Very Rev John Mann, will begin his Black Santa Sit-out for charities on the steps of St Anne's Cathedral at 9am on Wednesday December 16. This is the 39th sit-out, and maintains a tradition established by Dean Sammy Crooks in 1976.

Black Santa will be employing new technology to help raise funds this year – a credit/debit card facility will be sitting alongside his traditional barrel!

The Dean commented: “Some gifts we thank others for again and again. It’s the story of Black Santa really. Do we tire of it and suffer charity fatigue? I hope not. The gifts that are given are used for the benefit of many, and that need has not diminished.

“Already some cheques have arrived, and this year, by way of moving things on, I have been provided with a card reader terminal at the barrel. Can you believe it? Would Dean Crooks 39 years ago have imagined that a piece of plastic could be read to make a donation?

“But in the end it is down to generosity, goodwill and concern for others. Those things don’t change – ever!”

Dean Mann will stand on the steps of St Anne’s, come rain, hail or snow, every day until Christmas Eve and will be supported by members of the Cathedral Chapter.

The 2015 Black Santa Appeal at St Ann's Church, Dawson Street, will be launched on Thursday December 17 at 12.30 pm.

The annual sit out will continue right up until Christmas Eve. The Vicar of St Ann's, Canon David Gillespie, joined by clerical colleagues from around the United Dioceses of Dublin and Glendalough, will remain outside the city centre church from 10.00 am until 6.00 pm each day collecting money for a number of charities.

They will be joined by different choirs each lunchtime and this year there is a record number of choirs lending musical support to the sit out.

The Black Santa sit out is modelled on a similar appeal which has been run by successive Deans of St Anne's Cathedral in Belfast for many years. It became known as the Black Santa appeal because of the long heavy black cloaks worn by the clergy to keep out the cold. This is the 15th year that the appeal has been held in Dublin and in that time over €400,000 has been raised for good causes.

The Rector of Drumbeg, Revd Willie Nixon, completed a 24-hour charity sit-out in the

village. He exchanged the rectory for a horse trailer complete with a few home comforts.

The rector collected tinned and dried foods for the Storehouse in Dunmurry and all monetary donations are going to the work of the Salvation Army in Belfast.

Willie sitting out for the entire time he was joined by parishioners throughout the day. Well over 60 took part.

This is the 3rd sit-out. Last year's effort raised £1800 and 4000 tins of food and it's looking as though this year's total will be similar.

Lord Mayor of Dublin Hosts Interfaith Forum

The Lord Mayor of Dublin, *Críona Ní Dhálaigh*, met representatives of Dublin's diverse Faith communities in the Mansion House last Friday afternoon. Organised by the Dublin City Interfaith Forum, the meeting aimed to show how Dublin's different Faith communities worked together. Also attending the meeting were members of Dublin City Council's Social Inclusion Unit. The Church



of Ireland was represented by Archbishop Michael Jackson.

Welcoming the visitors, the Lord Mayor said it was an honour to host the forum in the Mansion House and commended the work DCIF is doing. “In all the strife and heartache that is going on in the world today, it is great to see that everyone here can sit down and talk together,” she commented.

Acting chairperson of DCIF, Dr Damian Jackson, told the Lord Mayor of DCIF’s background. He explained that the seeds for the forum were sown in 2010 out of a collaboration between the Irish Council of Churches and Dublin City Council and came out of a recognition that Dublin was an increasingly diverse city. Dublin City Interfaith Forum was launched in January 2012.

Dr Jackson highlighted the work of the forum which includes supporting faith communities in integration work, challenging injustice and discrimination and promoting respect and acceptance. Their activities include annual events such as Faith in the City which involves the congregations of different Faith communities meeting in each other's places of worship and the Interfaith Walk of Peace to mark UN World Peace Day as well as public seminars, facilitated workshops and panel discussions.

“We believe that diversity is an advantage in a city. It is an asset and can enrich the life of a city. It is important to have organisations that facilitate this rather than cause fragmentation. It is a diverse group, we are not uniform, but we want to celebrate this,” he concluded.

Colin Nativity a unique community theatre event

Colin Neighbourhood Partnership and Partisan Productions invite you to be part of The Colin Nativity.

This is a unique community theatre event involving local people working alongside

professional actors, singers and musicians. It offers the hope that, even when times are at their hardest, there is no need for despair.

Taking place from 7.30pm on Monday December 21, The Colin Nativity will be staged in and around the Dairy Farm Shopping Centre and the Colin Community Hub on the Stewartstown Road.

This is a free event. Part of the show will take place outside so wrap up warmly. Please note there is limited parking.

For further information contact Karen McFarlane and 0770 100852 email ksmcfarlane@hotmail.com or John Paul Russell at Colin Neighbourhood Partnership on 028 9062 3813 email Johnpaul@newcolin.com.

Colin Neighbourhood Partnership (CNP) is an award-winning community group based in the Colin area of West Belfast. The Partnership consists of local people & organisations, elected & community representatives, and government bodies. CNP was set up by local people living and working in the Colin area who wanted to see positive change in their community. Today, all these organisations work together in partnership

to address issues which affect people living in the Colin neighbourhood.

The Colin area is located on the outskirts of greater West Belfast and currently within the Lisburn City Council local government boundaries. It has a population of almost 30,000 people and is comprised of four distinct areas – Twinbrook, Poleglass, Lagmore and Kilwee. A large portion of Colin falls under the Department of Social Development's designated Neighbourhood Renewal Area.

CNP employs 18 members of staff managed by Annie Armstrong and operates six sub-groups which focus on Education; Health for All; Community Safety; Environment and Recreation; Youth; and Economic Regeneration.

Man asks Derry Bishop to pray for him to “get off the drink”

The Bishop of Derry, Dr. Donal McKeown has revealed how five local men he met on the streets of Derry asked him to pray for their mothers and help to get them to get off the drink.



Bishop of Derry Rev. Donal McKeown uses his crozier to open the door at the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy Mass at St Euges Cathedral on Sunday.

Derry Journal - Speaking at the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy Mass in St. Eugene's Cathedral on Sunday, Dr. McKeown revealed how last Tuesday he and another priest were walking in the city centre when they met five young men who each "gave every impression of having struggles in their lives."

He said: "What did they ask for? Money? No. Rather to 'pray for my mammy, she died a couple of weeks ago' and another one asked for prayer that he could get off the drink.

“And so in the middle of a city centre footpath, we formed a circle and prayed together. The world is full of people, crying out for healing in their lives.

“They want to meet mercy and hope, not condemnation and scorn. And many of them have not found mercy every time they turned to people who say they have faith.”

Bishop McKeown was speaking after he officially opened the door on the Catholic Church’s Jubilee Year of Mercy with a special service in the Cathedral on Sunday morning.

The day began with the bishop joining the congregation in the neighbouring Church of Ireland’s Christ Church for a Service before using his crozier to open the door at the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy Mass at St Eugene’s .

“The Year of Mercy gives us a great opportunity to remember death and battle with sadness, silence and forgiveness rather than with a vainglorious abuse of the past in the service of subliminal modern battles. The question is not ‘will He come?’ but rather ‘will we let Him in through the door of our hearts?’”

Four Centres of Mercy in Derry diocese

As part of the diocesan celebrations for the Holy Year of Mercy, Bishop McKeown has established four Centres of Mercy in the diocese. The four centres are:

St Eugene's Cathedral, Sacred Heart Church, Omagh, St Mary's, Maghera, The Oratory, Buncrana.

The first Day of Mercy in these centres will be held on Saturday 19 December 2015, when Confessions will be heard in these churches continuously from 10.30am – 6.00pm, with visiting priests. "You are welcome to come and experience the mercy of God as we begin our celebration of the Holy Year of Mercy."

'Prayers in the forest' concludes Christmas Tree Festival

A Christmas tree festival at Billy Parish Church, Bushmills, concluded with a packed carol service on Sunday evening, December 13.

The festival, which opened on Saturday, had the theme 'Conifer Calendar.' Visitors had the

opportunity to enjoy refreshments, gifts and homebaking after taking a walk around a wonderful array of creative Christmas trees.

‘Prayers in the Forest’ were said on Sunday at 10.30am and the concluding service had the theme ‘Carols in the Forest.’

The festival was in aid of Billy Parish Church Funds.

There's no 'vocation to laziness', Pope Francis tells young people

Pope Francis on Monday met with an Italian initiative aimed at offering support to unemployed and underemployed youth, saying their responsibility is to help young people rediscover the “vocation” of work in the context of their human dignity.

The task at hand is to help young people find, not just a job, but “a responsibility of evangelisation through the sanctifying value of work,” the Pope said during the Dec. 14 audience with members of the Policoro Project.

However, this does not apply to “any form of work: not work that exploits, crushes, humiliates



and abuses, but work that makes man truly free, in accordance with his noble dignity”.

“The vocation to work: that is one of the traits of human dignity,” the Roman Pontiff said. “There is no vocation to laziness, but to work.”

He added that this sense of commitment to work goes beyond monetary gains: it is for the “edification of the world, of society, and of life.”

Sponsored by the Bishops' Conference of Italy, the Policoro Project began twenty years ago; it aims to support young people in Italy experiencing unemployment and underemployment.

Pope Francis met with the Policoro Project at the Vatican's Paul VI Hall, lauding the work of the initiative, which has spread nationally.

“Its key ideas have guided its success: the formation of the young, the establishment of cooperatives, the creation of mediation figures such as 'community animators' and a long series of concrete gestures, a visible sign of commitment throughout these twenty years of active presence.”

The Pope said work which allows for freedom, creativity, participation and mutual support helps workers “express and enhance” their dignity.

“Let us not lose sight of the urgency of reaffirming this dignity! It belongs to each and every one of us. .. When there is no work, dignity is at risk, as unemployment not only prevents you from putting food on the table; it also makes you feel unworthy of earning a living.”

The Roman Pontiff observed how young people today have fallen victim to unemployment, not only affecting their ability to sustain themselves, but also promoting feelings of unworthiness.

“How many of them have given up looking for work, resigned to continual rejection or the indifference of a society that rewards only the usual privileged few – even if they are corrupt – and obstructs those who deserve affirmation.”

“The reward seems to go to those who are sure of themselves, even if this security is gained through corruption. Work is not a gift to be kindly granted to the select few: it is a right for all!”

Pope Francis lauded the Policoro Project for representing a “sign of real hope for many people who have not resigned themselves but have instead decided to commit themselves courageously to creating or improving their opportunities for work.”

“Continue to promote initiatives for participation for young people in a community and participatory form,” he encouraged them.

“To the question, 'what has the Church to do with my situation?', that you have said and heard many times, the answer is 'witness'. And here you are able to provide your witness, face to face with those who are in need of courage and support.”

Media digest

'John Wayne of religious world' James McConnell says he will keep on shooting from the lip

Belfast Telegraph

Indeed, I've heard it said that I'm the John Wayne of the **religious** world," ... pro-republican film set during the **Irish** war of independence and civil war.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/john-wayne-of-religious-world-james-mcconnell-says-he-will-keep-on-shooting-from-the-lip-34284259.html>

Nearly 1500 parents appeal decisions to refuse school entry

Irish Times

Figures supplied to The **Irish** Times show that in 2009 there were 279 ... so that one **religion** is not imposed on children who do not share the school ...

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/nearly-1-500-parents-appeal-decisions-to-refuse-school-entry-1.2465394>

'Cured by prayer' Joshua got out of wheelchair and danced after visit to healing ministry, say parents - Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/cured-by-prayer-joshua-got-out-of-wheelchair-and-danced-after-visit-to-healing-ministry-say-parents-34287311.html>

Ex-Rockwell priest jailed for four years for abusing schoolboy - Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/crime-and-law/courts/circuit-court/ex-rockwell-priest-jailed-for-four-years-for-abusing-schoolboy-1.2467265>

Judge rejects bid to halt trial of preacher in 'satanic Islam' case - Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/judge-rejects-bid-to-halt-trial-of-preacher-in-satanic-islam-case-34289009.html>

Mirror/Premier

Further coverage of the Archbishop of Canterbury's "Big Issue" article on refugees. In it Justin Welby calls on government to remember its "long and wonderful history" offering shelter to refugees.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/archbishop-canterbury-urges-government-generous-7008278>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Archbishop-of-Canterbury-Justin-Welby-Britain-should-welcome-more-refugees>

Times

Sir Hector Sants, the former chief executive of the Financial Services Authority, is criticised by an official investigator for failing to take action against Andy Hornby over the collapse of HBOS. Sir Hector is now a part-time adviser on credit

unions to the Archbishop of Canterbury. HBOS collapsed in 2008, leaving taxpayers to foot a £20.5 billion bill for its rescue.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/business/industries/banking/article4641134.ece>

Church Times

Comments by CofE leaders, including the Archbishop of Canterbury (see above) and Bishop of Salisbury on the Paris climate change deal

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2015/18-december/news/uk/paris-climate-deal-progress-but-only-a-start-church-leaders-warn>

Christianity Today

Rachel Treweek, the Bishop of Gloucester, describes the lack of religious TV on the BBC over Christmas as “offensive”. Referring to the six hours of new religious broadcasting she writes in her Christmas message: "If true I find that offensive. Presumably the decision was taken in order to reduce the possibility of offending people with too much God stuff over the holiday."

Exp

British scientists, leaders in the field of forensic anthropology used in crime fighting, have teamed

up with Israeli archaeologists to create a computer generated photo fit of Jesus, to show what he might have looked like.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/science/626779/JESUS-CHRIST-Is-that-what-he-really-looked-like>

Comment

Telegraph: Christina Rees writes, “When Canon Jeremy Davis married his long term partner... he must have known what he was doing.”

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/life/the-church-has-banned-a-gay-priest---heres-what-you-can-do-about/>

Guardian: British political parties are suffering slow decline in membership leaving “elites and rumps” behind. The decline in institutions like the church is referenced.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/dec/14/british-party-democracy-long-slow-death-elites-cults>

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