

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – St David's Cathedral**

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## Image of the day

### St David's Cathedral

Since the 6th century there has been a church on this site. For the past 1500 years prayer and worship has been offered to God on a daily basis which continues to this day.



In January members of the community visited Wexford to explore St Aidan's Way. In March St David's is holding a "Festival of Ideas" - a great weekend of events across St Davids. You are invited to join in 3 days of events 24/25/26 March 2023 - Inspire your mind, free your spirit and feed your soul, 3 days of talks and presentations on a variety of themes, in their picturesque City. Tickets at - [tinyurl.com/2459u23f](https://www.stdavidscathedral.org.uk/)

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## People and places

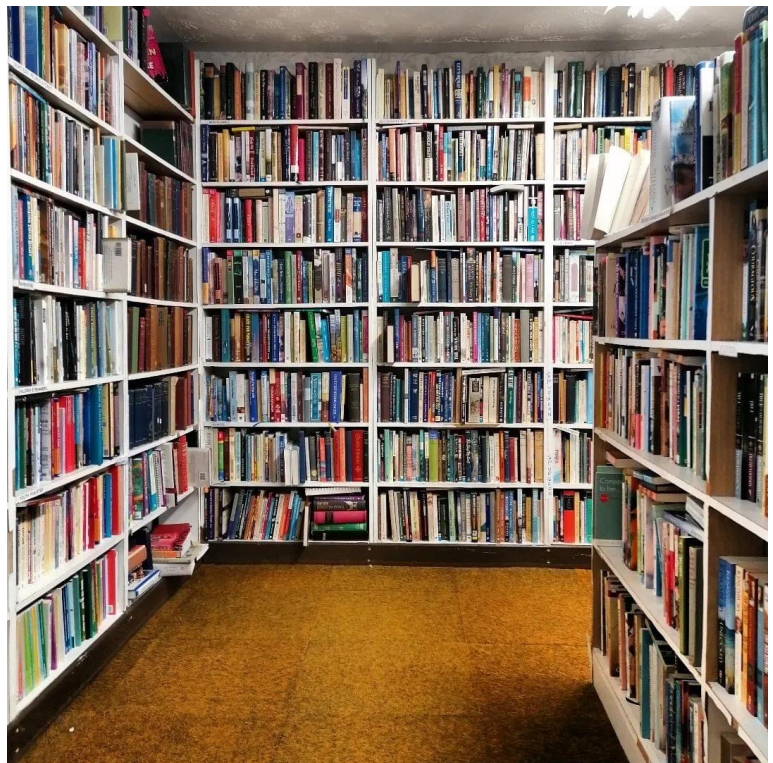
### Christ Church Cathedral Community Choir

Christ Church Cathedral Community Choir in Dublin continues to meet every fortnight and the next rehearsal will take place at 7.15pm on Wednesday 15 February. The Choir is currently working towards singing in the Cathedral on Sunday 19 February. The Community Choir is open to all regardless of experience or ability! Please contact [james.short@christchurch.ie](mailto:james.short@christchurch.ie) for more details.

### Commendation of Book Aid charity

Every year The Book Well in Belfast has a second-hand book sale in St Mark's Dundela made up of donated books that they have

accumulated over the previous 12 months, with all proceeds going to charity. [Photo - Book Aid premises at Templepatrick](#)





Richard, proprietor of the Book Well says, “What you may not know is that the books that are left over also go to charity, namely Book Aid. Recently I had the opportunity to meet Pamela and one of her volunteers David (Photo above), to see their shop and warehouse in Templepatrick and to hear about the incredible work they do.

“Their shop is a veritable treasure trove of Christian books, many no longer in print. It's well worth a visit. We're grateful to them that they have taken so many books in from us,

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especially after 5 years of our book sales! It's important to us also that nothing is wasted, so rest assured that any books you donate to us always get another use, and will be of benefit to someone, so please keep donating your books because you have no idea whose life you could be changing!"

## **Former rector's Preaching the Passion book launched at St Matthew's, Shankill**

The Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev George Davison, launched a new book on the death and resurrection of Jesus by Dean Gregory Dunstan on Thursday of this week



(February 2) – in the parish where Dean Gregory ministered for 18 years.

Invited guests who attended the launch of *Preaching the Passion: Interpreting the Evangelists* in St Matthew's, Shankill, heard Bishop George describe it as a book that was not simply 'written for its own sake, but was written out of a vocation and faithfulness of one who is called to serve Christ as a minister and teacher.'

Guests were welcomed by the rector of St Matthew's, the Rev Tracey McRoberts, who described the publication as 'a little gem.'

"We are delighted to be hosting the launch of Dean Gregory's book and honoured to have been the first audience for the series of sermons on which this thought-provoking and reflective book is based," Tracey said.

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“The people of this area, not just St Matthew’s, hold you in the highest esteem and it is a great privilege to see that this book is dedicated to this parish. It shows the love you have for the people in this part of the world.”

Dean Gregory, a former landscape architect who was ordained in 1990 for the curacy of Ballymena, was rector of St Matthew’s from 1993 until his appointment as Dean of Armagh in 2011, where he remained until his retirement in 2020.

Preaching the Passion: Interpreting the Evangelists consists of six series of Holy Week sermons on Jesus’ Passion, as told by each of the four evangelists. Dedicated to the people of St Matthew’s, the book is published by Sacristy Press.

Speaking at the launch, Bishop George said: “With characteristic thoughtfulness, Gregory Dunstan has shared with those who will read this book, many insights into the witness of scripture about the days leading up to Jesus’ death and resurrection.

“It will give food for thought and for the soul whenever you choose to read it, but I have no doubt that many will find it to be a helpful book to aid their Lent devotions.”

Dean Gregory described the book as an exploration of the events at the heart and foundation of Christian faith.

The accounts of Jesus’ death are the climax of the Gospels,” he said. “They are like portraits by four of the world’s greatest artists. Each works in his own way, in the



tradition that he inherited. The subject is the same, but each shows him from a different angle, in a different context, and in a different light.

“Each portrait is complete. Nothing is missing, but we need all four of them if we are to even to begin to explore the mystery of what God has done for us in Jesus Christ.”

Thanking Tracey and St Matthew’s Parish for hosting the event and Bishop George for launching his book, Dean



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Gregory drew attention to the front cover, the Crucifixion window in the south wing of St Matthew's, and read two extracts from Preaching the Passion.

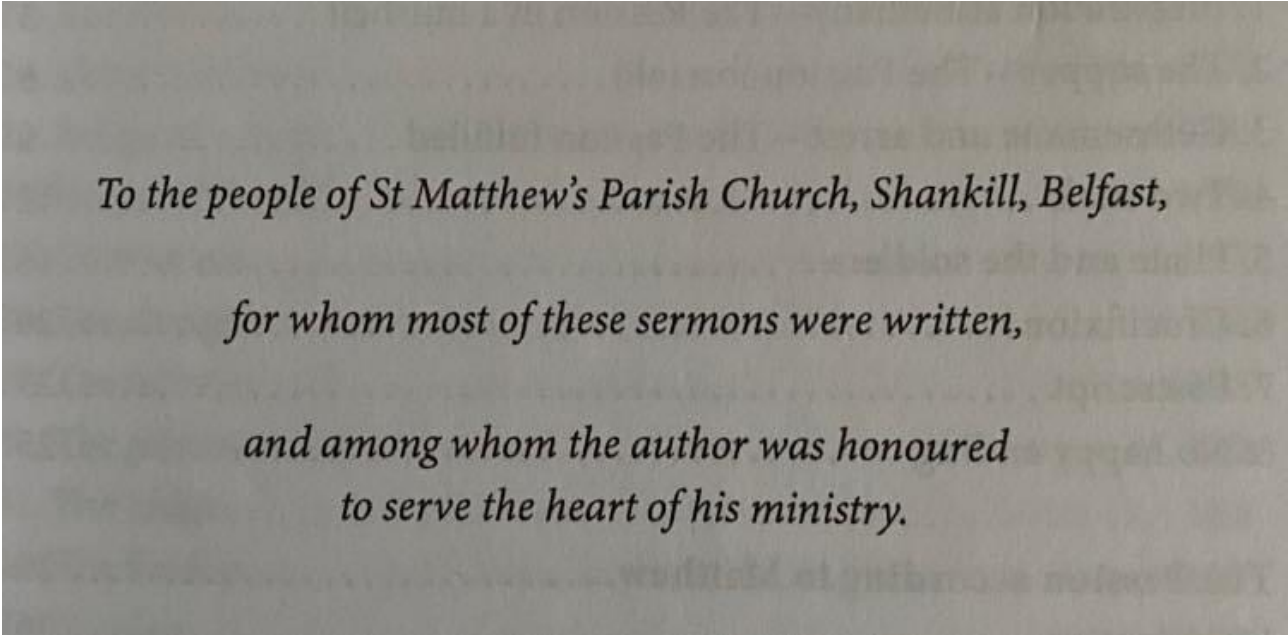
Amongst the guests at the launch was former MLA and Belfast City Councillor, William Humphrey, who later commented on social media saying -

Delighted this morning to attend a lovely event in St. Matthew's Church, a book signing by former Rector, Canon Gregory Dunstan.

Gregory was Rector of St. Matthew's for 18 years, before being appointed as Dean at Armagh Cathedral.

'Preaching the Passion' is based on sermons Gregory preached while Rector in St Matthew's in Holy Week, between the years 2000 and 2005.

Gregory Dunstan is a lovely, gentle man, who was very popular and extremely well liked and respected by those in



*To the people of St Matthew's Parish Church, Shankill, Belfast,*

*for whom most of these sermons were written,*

*and among whom the author was honoured  
to serve the heart of his ministry.*

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his own congregation and the wider community in Greater Shankill. Rev Dunstan was always very supportive during my time as an elected representative and took the time to write to me on a number of occasions - letters I still cherish.

Gregory was a regular visitor to our family home, indeed he officiated at the funerals of my late parents, both of whom were very fond of him.

We are hugely fortunate to have current Rector, Rev Tracey McRoberts, continuing that work and playing such a key and vital role in our community. My sincere thanks to them both. God Bless!

Preaching the Passion: Interpreting the Evangelists is available from Sacristy Press at £14.99.

## News reports

### **Missionary Aviation Fellowship ensures bishop gets to Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Peace in Juba**

MAF comments - A very warm welcome to The Right Reverend Anthony Poggo, who arrived on a MAF shuttle flight from Kajo Keji . The Bishop who is visiting Juba as part of the Ecumenical Pilgrimage of Peace this weekend, will join the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, Right Reverend Dr Iain Greenshields, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland and His holiness, Pope Francis, and as

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they pray for and amplify the call to peace and unity in the great nation of South Sudan.

Bishop Poggo is an old friend to MAF flying with us over 200 times since the 1990s during his tenures as Bishop of Kajo Keji and Executive Director of ACROSS and in his role with Scripture Union. Bishop Poggo may be a less frequent with MAF these days but his current role as Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, sees him jetting all over the world to lead and support the different functions of the Anglican church including the Primates' Meeting, the Anglican Consultative Council, and the Lambeth Conference and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Anglican Communion is the world's third largest Christian denomination. It comprises 42 independent-yet-interdependent provinces and is active in more than 165 countries including South Sudan.

The homecoming is bittersweet for Bishop Poggo who shared that many people in his home community of Kajo Keji are struggling, forced to choose between living in an area of insecurity or staying in the camps of northern Uganda where conditions are challenging. Insecurity continues to be the single biggest challenge and prerequisite for development in South Sudan.

South African Pilot Tobias Meyer said, 'It was a pleasure to fly Bishop Poggo today as part of the Southern Equatoria Shuttle. He is a warm and humble guy, called to a role on the international stage, who embodies the very best of South Sudan.'

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# THE SWINGLES

**THURSDAY 2ND MARCH**  
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**SATURDAY 4TH MARCH**  
**ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL**  
**DUBLIN**  
**8.00PM**

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**"superhero singing" - The Guardian**



## Outdoor Mass in Michigan

Every year during winter, students at Michigan Technological University build an ice chapel where they celebrate Mass outdoors.

## **Moderator to tour in Dublin and Munster**

**Tomorrow (Sunday, 5 February) the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI), Right Reverend Dr John Kirkpatrick, will begin a weeklong tour of PCI's largest regional presbytery, the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster.**

Preaching in local churches, pastoral visits and encouraging ministers, coupled with meetings in the Oireachtas, engagements involving the social care and education sectors, along with the turning of the first for a new church in County Kildare, are all on the agenda.

The Church's 500-plus congregations across the island are divided into 19 regional presbyteries that oversee a number of congregations in a particular area. While the Church has just under 100 congregations in the Republic of Ireland, 26 of them make up the Presbytery of Dublin and Munster. Covering all of Munster and Connacht, it also takes in the nation's capital and parts of north and south Leinster, constituting PCI's largest geographical presbytery.

It will be a busy week of engagements for the Moderator and his wife Joan that will see Dr Kirkpatrick preach in a number of churches, starting with tomorrow's morning service in Arklow Presbyterian and the evening service in Kilkenny Presbyterian. The Presbytery tour will conclude the following Sunday, 12 February, when he preaches in PCI's newest congregation in Donabate, County Dublin. During the week he will also visit Clontarf and Galway Presbyterian Churches.

Clerk of Dublin and Munster Presbytery, Stuart Ferguson who arranged the tour, is looking forward to welcoming Dr and Mrs Kirkpatrick, “Moderators undertake four presbytery tours a year on a rotational basis, so with nineteen in our denomination, it has been a while since we have been able to put out the red carpet for a Moderator. I think the last tour was in 2018 and the one before that was in 2011.

“While they are primarily pastoral visits to encourage ministers, their families and church members, it is also an opportunity to listen and see how congregations are working quietly in the name of Jesus in their local communities. The tours also have strong civic and community elements to them and we are very much looking forward to having the Moderator with us,” he said.

Dr Kirkpatrick, who is a third generation Presbyterian minister, his grandfather’s congregation was in Donegal Town, was last in the Presbytery in November, when accompanied by the leaders of the Roman Catholic and Methodist Churches, the Church of Ireland and Irish Council of Churches, he visited President Michael D. Higgins at Áras an Uachtaráin.

Next week he will visit the Oireachtas and have lunch with Dáil Éireann Ceann Comhairle, Seán Ó Fearghaíl TD and meet with Heather Humphreys TD, the Minister for Social Protection and Minister for Rural and Community Development, the state’s senior elected Presbyterian. When he visits Rev Helen Freeburn in Galway Presbyterian, the Moderator will also meet the city’s mayor, Councillor Clodagh Higgins.



In Dublin during the week, Dr Kirkpatrick will also pay a visit Howth Road National School, which is adjacent to Clontarf Presbyterian and is under the patronage of the church. Dr Kirkpatrick will also visit St Andrew's College in Blackrock, which also has a close association with the denomination. Founded in 1894 by members of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, he will meet the college acting principal, senior leadership team and Student Council.

Social care will also feature on his tour, as the Moderator will spend time with staff and residents of Tritonville, a complex of sheltered accommodation for older people in Sandymount, Dublin, run in partnership with PCI's Council for Social Witness. During the week Dr Kirkpatrick will travel to see the work of the Peacehaven Trust, a group of three homes for adults with intellectual disabilities nestled in the seaside town of Greystones in County Wicklow. For a



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number of years PCI has been deepening a relationship with the Trust.

Speaking about the forthcoming tour, Dr Kirkpatrick said, “While I am a northern minister, we are one all-Ireland church serving Christ together and I’m really looking forward to the visit. Spending time with my colleagues, listening to them, praying with them and discovering the work that is being undertaken so faithfully as they, and the members of their congregations, serve the Lord to help others is so important. Or, as a predecessor of mine once so succinctly put it, seeing for myself, ‘the quiet witness of God’s people’. At the same time, as I have done in my previous two presbytery tours, I want to encourage our leaders and reaffirm their calling to serve God and their community.”

“Last year I spent a short period of time in western Ukraine seeing first-hand how funds raised by our congregations across Ireland were supporting the relief effort there and in Hungary. As we approach the first anniversary start of the war this month, refugees are still finding a welcome and a home on our island and I am looking forward to seeing the practical, as well as spiritual support, which members of our churches have been able to give. I will be seeing one aspect of that compassionate work through the English classes that Arklow Presbyterian have been providing since March of last year,” he said.

During the week Dr Kirkpatrick will also travel to PCI’s two newest congregations - Maynooth, which opened its doors officially in 2007 and Donabate Presbyterian which followed three years later. On Sunday, at the conclusion of the tour, the Moderator will be in Donabate, County Dublin, where he

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will preach at the Sunday morning service. In the County Kildare town Dr Kirkpatrick will officially turn the first sod for its new church building, his very last engagement.

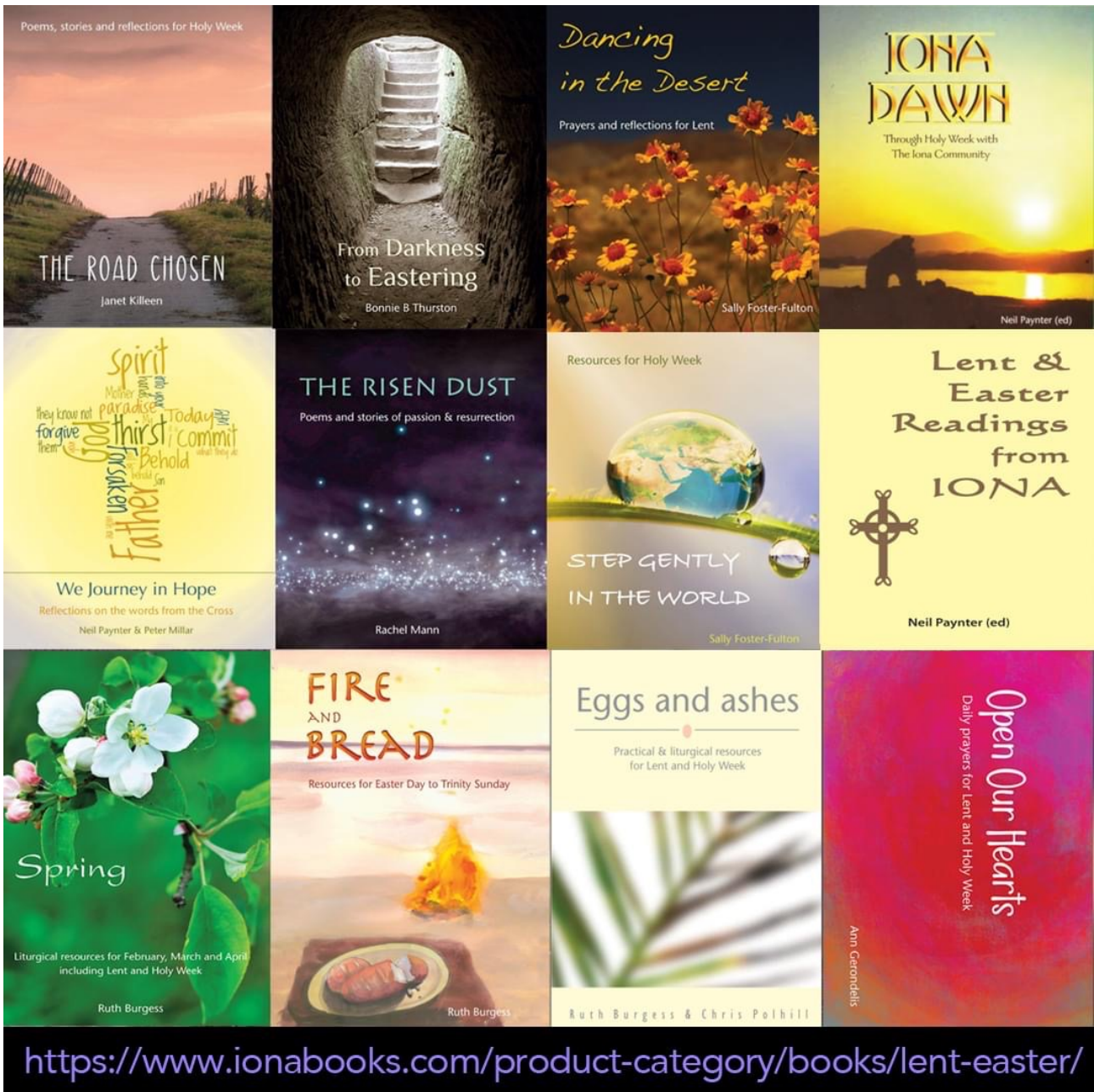
The visit also comes at the time of the annual election for PCI's Moderator, which by convention takes place on the first Tuesday in February. All 19 presbyteries will meet at different locations across Ireland to elect a successor to Dr Kirkpatrick, who will then take office in June at the Church's General Assembly. Dr Kirkpatrick will lead the opening prayers and devotions at the Dublin and Munster Presbytery meeting, which will take place at the Lucan Centre.

## **Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books**

### **Ending Homelessness and mental health**

Patricia and Sean are the voice of experience within the Simon Community's report on Mental Health and Homelessness in partnership with Depaul Ireland - Ending Homelessness. They share their stories about dealing with mental health and homelessness here in Northern Ireland. Former Simon Community client Sean states, "If you get the right help at the right time for your mental health, you mightn't become homeless and might be able to work on your problems and resolve your issues." Click the link below to download the full report:

<https://simoncommunity.org/homelessness/knowledge-hub/mental-health-homelessness>



## Iona resources for Lent

As we draw closer to Lent, Iona Books will be sharing readings, prayers, poems, blessings, and other resources, many taken from the books featured here, all available from their website.

<https://www.ionabooks.com/product-category/books/lent-easter/>

A promotional banner for the RSCM Church Music Conference 2023. The background is a blurred photograph of a man in a suit speaking at a podium. The text is overlaid on the left side. At the bottom right is the RSCM logo, which consists of the letters 'R', 'S', and 'M' in a serif font, with a sunburst symbol between 'S' and 'M'. Below the logo is the text 'THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC'.

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## **RSCM Church Music Conference**

Don't forget to book your place on this year's RSCM Church Music Conference, on the 18th March!

Book your place here:

<http://ow.ly/2jMJ50MFe9q>

## **Poem for today**

### **Leisure by William Henry Davies**

What is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.

No time to stand beneath the boughs  
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,  
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass.

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No time to see, in broad daylight,  
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,  
And watch her feet, how they can dance.

No time to wait till her mouth can  
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this is if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)

