

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day - bridge on Sixmile River**

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## People and places



### Christian Aid gratitude to Black Santa sit-out

**Christian Aid Ireland states, “We were delighted to receive £15,000 on Sunday - our allocation of the Dean of Belfast’s Black Santa sit-out which is held annually on the steps of the Belfast Cathedral of St Anne”.**

Half of the money will go to alleviating hunger in Afghanistan and half will be distributed to other people living in extreme poverty.

Our colleague Sarah Leeman attended the Good Samaritan service at which the monies raised by the appeal are dispersed to local charities.



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Each year, Christian Aid receives 10% of the total sum raised by the sit-out. We are hugely grateful to the Dean of Belfast, the Very Rev Stephen Forde and to all the clergy and staff of the cathedral, as well as to everyone who donated so generously.

Sarah, who is CA's Senior Fundraising Officer, is pictured receiving our cheque from Dean Forde. Looking on are special guests Northern Ireland Minister of State, the Rt Hon Conor Burns MP and comedian Tim McGarry.

## **Bishop Duignan to oversee two dioceses**

**His Holiness Pope Francis has accepted the request for retirement of Bishop Brendan Kelly, heretofore Bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Apostolic Administrator of Kilfenora.**

Pope Francis has appointed Bishop Michael Duignan, Bishop of Clonfert, to minister simultaneously as Bishop of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Apostolic Administrator of Kilfenora. The two Dioceses concerned (Galway and Clonfert), united in persona episcopi, pastorally administered by the one Bishop, will retain their respective rights, obligations and juridical autonomy. The news of these pastoral changes will be made public at a Mass at which His Excellency Archbishop Jude Thaddeus Okolo, Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland, was the chief-celebrant. This Mass was celebrated in the Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven & Saint Nicholas, Galway, and was concelebrated by Bishop Duignan and Bishop Kelly.

## **Schools' staff praised by C of I for 'dedication, endeavour and resilience'**



**The Church of Ireland Board of Education (Northern Ireland) has sent a message of encouragement to all principals of schools in the controlled sector.**

The message, addressed to school principals, reads as follows:

The Church of Ireland Board of Education (Northern Ireland) is writing to express its continued thanks to all involved in school life at this time and to outline its approach to the Integrated Education Bill.

## Covid-19

The Church of Ireland is conscious that schools are currently experiencing a high incidence of Covid-19, recently reported by the Public Health Agency, as being more than 5,000 cases among staff and pupils. Thankfully, it is also being reported that in most cases the virus is not leading to individuals experiencing serious symptoms that require hospitalisation. It is acknowledged that required periods of isolation for those testing positive for Covid-19 brings disruption for both staff and pupils and significant organisational pressure on school leaders.

It is clear from reports from school leaders that the absences of affected staff and pupils has had and continues to create challenging circumstances as schools work to ensure that children and young people continue to have access to education, with particular challenges for staff and pupils in those year groups working towards examinations.

The Church of Ireland Board of Education (NI) wishes to commend Principals, Teachers, Staff and Governors on their outstanding dedication and day to day endeavour and resilience in coping with these extraordinary times and to extend our heartfelt thanks to all for their professional work in schools.

The Board is encouraged to hear that many restrictions may soon be eased and is hopeful that this will be of benefit to reducing the pressures on the operation of schools. It is also pleasing to note that some direction is emerging in respect to 2022 examinations and that already some examinations have taken place in person.

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### **Integrated Education Bill**

Schools will also be aware that the Northern Ireland Assembly are currently considering a Private Member's Integrated Education Bill which contains elements that, if approved, will have far-reaching effects on the schooling system in Northern Ireland in the years ahead.

The Church of Ireland Board of Education believes that all pupils should learn together.

The Board recognises that the Controlled Schools Sector, which by in law and ethos is non-denominational, provides an environment for children and young people of all faiths and none, to learn together and would wish to express support for the opportunities provided in these schools.

The Board encourages churches to engage with their local schools and work with them in whatever way helps the pupils, the school and the local community.

Thank you for your time and, again, for all that you do on behalf of our young people.

The letter is signed by Board Chairperson, The Most Rev John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh; and Board Secretary, Dr Peter Hamill.



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## Change of Head Chaplain to the Óglaigh na hÉireann - Irish Defence Forces



**Fr Seamus Madigan recently concluded 13 years of Military Chaplaincy, the last 6 as Head Chaplain to the Óglaigh na hÉireann / Irish Defence Forces. His has been a notable tenure.**

A special event marked the occasion at IUNVA HQ following his last Mass in Arbour Hill Church. Mr Jim Kearns (Dublin

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Central Branch Royal British Legion) represented the organisation. In letter to Fr Seamus who has been a great partner in RBL events at Islandbridge, RBLROI District Chairman Brian Duffy wrote “Please know you are in our thoughts, hearts and gratitude for your great friendship and support to our events and causes throughout your outstanding tenure. We wish you a very enjoyable day, however poignant, and salute you Sir on behalf of all our members.”

Lt Gen Sean Clancy, DF Chief of Staff presented an emotional Fr Seamus with a service medal on the occasion and presentations were received from Post 1 IUNVA President Michael Colton and local parishioners.

Fr. Paschal Hanrahan, a native of Ennis Co Clare will succeed Fr Seamus as head chaplain of the Defence Forces in Ireland with effect from March 1st, 2022. He is currently serving as a chaplain in the British Army.

## News reports

### **Bishop of Down and Connor expresses deep concern on Macron call for abortion rights in EU Charter**

**Mgr Noel Treanor is a signatory to The Presidency of the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) which has expressed its deep concern on President Macron's proposal of including a supposed right to abortion in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.**



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In a statement released on Tuesday 8 February 2022 The Presidency said:

Aware of the tragedy and complexity of the situations in which mothers considering an abortion find themselves, the EU Bishops highlight the need to provide the necessary help and assistance to women in distress and to their unborn child.

"Caring for women who are in a difficult or a conflict situation because of their pregnancy is a central part of the diaconal ministry of the Church and must also be a duty exercised by our societies", reads the statement of the EU Bishops.

From a legal perspective, the members of the COMECE Presidency stress that "there is no recognized right to abortion in European or international law. Attempting to change this - they continue - not only goes against fundamental European beliefs and values, but would be an unjust law, devoid of an ethical foundation and destined to be a cause of perpetual conflict among the citizens of the EU".

"The proposal of President Macron of inserting this supposed right can in no way be seen as 'breathing new life into our basic rights'", continued the Bishops of the European Union.

Recalling the founding fathers of the European Union, the COMECE Presidency stresses that the European integration should always "foster and promote respect for different identities and avoid ideological impositions".

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The statement of the COMECE Presidency follows President Emmanuel Macron's speech addressed to the European Parliament on 19 January 2022 in the context of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Read the full statement of the Standing Committee of the Commission of the Bishops' here:

Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) on the proposal of President Macron to include a right to abortion in the Charter of Fundamental Rights

Following President Macron's speech to the European Parliament on 19 January 2022 with his proposal to update the European Charter of Fundamental Rights to include the recognition of a right to abortion, we would like to express our deep concern and opposition.

Since its beginning, the European integration process has always been supported and accompanied closely by the Church. We agree with President Macron on the importance of defending and promoting the values of the European Union. But we would like to point out that one of the main values is the respect for the dignity of every human person in every stage of his or her life, especially in situations of complete vulnerability, as is the case of an unborn child. The founding fathers of the European Union, based on the genuine humanistic tradition that makes Europe what it is, were very conscious of the fundamental importance of the inalienable dignity of the human person as well as of community as common ground for our Union.

We are aware of the tragedy and complexity of the situations in which mothers considering an abortion find themselves. Caring for women who are in a difficult or a conflict situation because of their pregnancy is a central part of the diaconal ministry of the Church and must also be a duty exercised by our societies. Women in distress should not be left alone, nor can the right to life of the unborn child be ignored. They both must receive all necessary help and assistance.

From a legal perspective there is no recognized right to abortion in European or international law. Attempting to change this by introducing a supposed right to abortion in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, not only goes against fundamental European beliefs and values, but would be an unjust law, devoid of an ethical foundation and destined to be a cause of perpetual conflict among the citizens of the EU. European integration should always foster and promote respect for different identities and avoid ideological impositions. In this sense, the proposal of President Macron of inserting this supposed right can in no way be seen as "breathing new life into our basic rights."

The Presidency of COMECE is composed of:

- HE Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich SJ (President)
- HE Mgr Mariano Crociata (First Vice-President)
- HE Mgr Noel Treanor (Vice-President)
- HE Mgr Jan Vokál (Vice-President)
- HE Mgr Franz-Josef Overbeck (Vice-President)



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## Anglican Primates' Meeting moved from Rome to London



**Next month's meeting of Anglican Primates – the senior archbishops, moderators and Presiding Bishops from the 42 Churches of the Anglican Communion – will take place in London, England.**

The meeting was due to take place in Rome, Italy. However, Covid-related travel restrictions in Italy meant that around half of the church leaders would not be eligible to fully participate.

The meeting, called by the Archbishop of Canterbury, will take the form of a spiritual retreat, with the church leaders praying and studying the Bible together. The Primates will also discuss the latest plans for the Lambeth Conference –

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the decennial meeting to which all Anglican bishops from around the world are invited. The next Lambeth Conference, which was postponed in 2020, will take place in Canterbury, England, in July and August this year.

The Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon, said: “it is not feasible to gather in Rome due to Italy’s Covid-related restrictions that would prevent a significant proportion of primates – including virtually all Primates from Africa – fully participating in the meeting in person.

“I would like to thank everybody who has worked hard to facilitate a meeting in Rome, especially the Director and staff of the Anglican Centre in Rome and our colleagues at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

“It will be possible for all Primates to gather in England and to participate in person and we now shift our focus to preparing for that.”

## **Welby meets with UK Jewish leaders in a bid to ease tensions over his anti-Israel comment**

**A meeting was held on 9 Feb 2022 at Lambeth Palace between the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, the Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem, Hosam Naoum (who joined via video from Jerusalem), and the President and Chief Executive of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.**

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They discussed issues affecting Christians in the Old City of Jerusalem, as well as issues of concern to the UK Jewish community.

The leaders talked about the importance of honest dialogue between their respective communities, even around difficult issues.

They agreed to explore the setting up of an informal working group to develop significant opportunities for deeper connection between the UK Jewish community and the Church of England, and with Christian communities in Israel. These will focus on dialogue, education and engagement.

## In the media

### Statement of Mission for the Dublin Archdiocese

#### **Dublin diocese**

A year after his installation, Archbishop Dermot Farrell, guided by the Building Hope Task Force Report, presents a Statement of Mission for the Dublin Archdiocese. This Statement highlights our core mission in a time of rapid change, setting out a vision for the diocese and providing values to inform our planning for the future.

This is the beginning of our more formal response to the Building Hope Task Force Report which is available [here](#). Having gathered 3,000 consultation responses from people, priests and parishes, the Task Force in its Report sets out a pastoral strategy for the Archdiocese. It is an essential



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starting point in the process of renewal we must undertake together.

[ <https://dublindiocese.ie/archdiocese-of-dublin-statement-of-mission/> ]

## The Church's war on the clergy

### Unheard

Giles Fraser writes - No one in their right mind should want to be a bishop. It's a terrible, terrible job. You spend half of your life in pointless meetings reading screeds of minutes covered in ghastly acronyms, and the other half going round the Diocese doing confirmations and ordinations, again and again on some kind of continual liturgical merry-go-round. While vicars have a base, and they can get to know their people over time, Bishops see new people every day, and their relationships can often be little more than meet and greet.

Spiritually it is extremely bad for you; people are either too nice or too horrible. Expectations are unrealistic: you are a fantasy of projection and a lightning-rod for disappointment. And every day having to put up with jokes about actresses and only being able to move diagonally... The golden rule is: if you really want to be a bishop, you almost certainly shouldn't be one.

Things are about to get a whole lot worse. Bishops are the latest part of the church now slated for reinvention — part of the twaddle-riven Welby-era revolution that is totally transforming church structures.

[[] <https://unherd.com/2022/02/justin-welbys-war-on-the-parish/> ]

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## **1972 Five Nations Championship was abandoned**

### **BBC News**

Fifty years ago the 1972 Five Nations Championship was abandoned, left unfinished for the first and so far only time in its history.

[ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/rugby-union/60236293> ]

## **Tribute to Tom Kiernan**

### **Daily Telegraph**

[ <http://digitaleditions.telegraph.co.uk/data/872/reader/reader.html?social#!preferred/0/package/872/pub/872/page/92/article/271643> ]

## **The Olympic curling stones crafted in Scotland**

### **BBC News**

[ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-60259628>

[

## **Games of Thrones studio attraction opens in Northern Ireland**

### **BBC News**

[ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-60243681>

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## **Las Vegas bishop asks pro-abortion Catholic politicians not to present themselves for Holy Communion**

### **Catholic News Agency**

The Bishop of Las Vegas, responding to a pro-abortion column written by a Catholic politician, has asked all Catholic politicians who do not agree with the Church's

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teaching on abortion not to present themselves for Holy Communion.

“It is my sincere hope that Catholic politicians and Catholics at large take this moment to look deeply into their own hearts, and re-examine the church’s moral conviction on the inviolability and dignity of human life,”

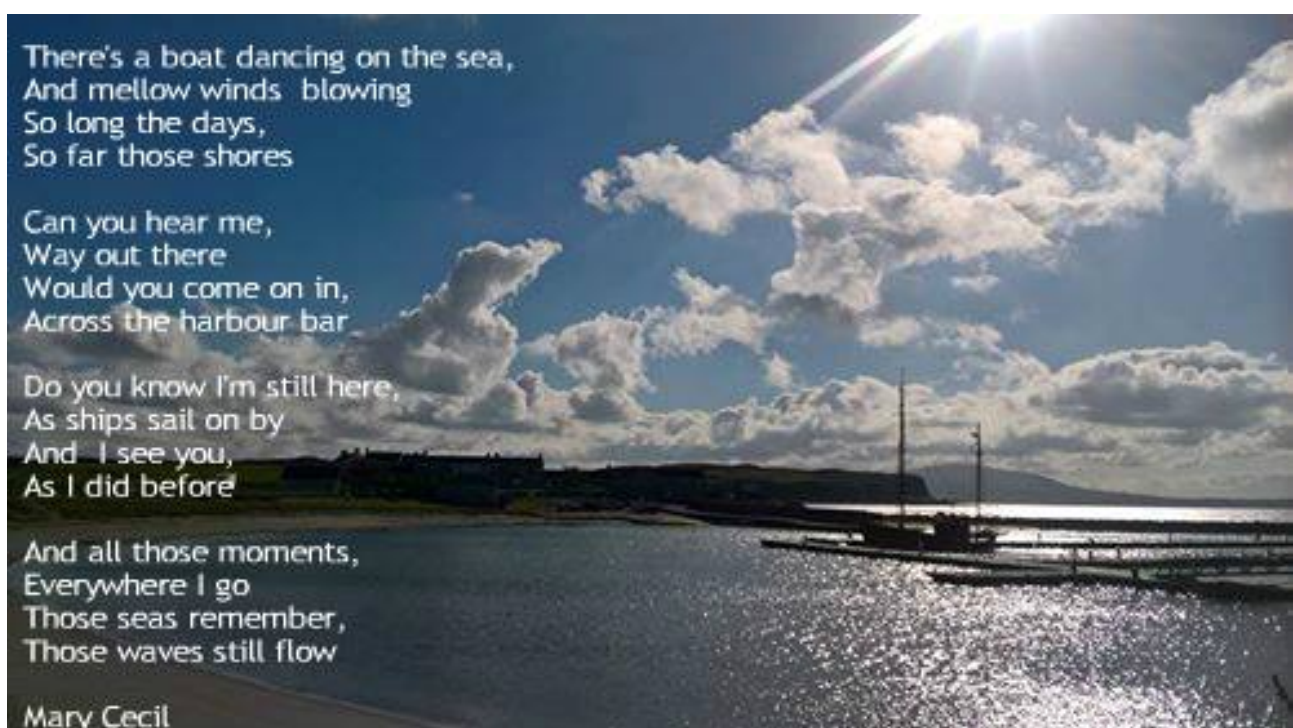
[[] <https://www.catholicworldreport.com/2022/02/01/las-vegas-bishop-asks-pro-abortion-catholic-politicians-not-to-present-themselves-for-holy-communion/> ]

## Double agony for Shine victims as deal delayed

### Irish Examiner

Victims, many of whom are elderly and in ill health, insist the Medical Missionaries of Mary religious order has walked back from an agreed settlement.

The victims of child abuser Michael Shine will have to wait until after he is out of prison before they receive any compensation because of a dispute over legal costs.





Due to legal wrangling, the proposed multi-million settlement to more than 100 victims fell at the last hurdle in recent weeks, and a resolution could now be months away.

[[] <https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/courtandcrime/arid-40804635.html> ]

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

### **Songs Of Praise**

Archbishop John Sentamu reflects on the life Archbishop Tutu and recalls how he dealt with police who were holding him under house arrest. Hear the whole story on Sunday 13th February @BBCOne 11.25am and afterwards at [bbc.in/34upeSI](http://bbc.in/34upeSI)

### **Women of Holy Week - An Easter journey in nine stories by Paul Gooder**

Due to incredibly high demand, this is now reprinting - with copies due back in stock on 17th Feb!

Order now for delivery as soon as copies arrive:

[ [ow.ly/MP3550HP7GM](http://ow.ly/MP3550HP7GM) ]

### **Including Autistic Children and Young People in Church**

You may join the online launch of the new Grove Youth Series booklet, 'How to Include Autistic Children and Young People in Church' by Mark Arnold

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It will be live on the Grove Youth Series Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/182964651793396>) at 6pm on Feb. 16th

Mark will be hosting, sharing his heart for the booklet, and answering questions, but will also be joined live by a whole panel of special guests.

There'll be chances to win a copy of the booklet, and get special one-off discounts too.

## **PCI Ministry Taster Day**

Saturday, 26 March 2022 , 10.30am–1pm, Union Theological College, Belfast

Ministry in PCI is open to men and women on an equal basis. Find out more about serving God and studying for the ministry of PCI.

- Explore God's leading in your life •
- Current and former students' experiences of study •
- Study courses and pathways •
- Ministry application process •

On Saturday, 26 March 2022 , 10.30am–1pm, at Union Theological College, Belfast

For further details, or to register, contact David Leach at E: [d.leach@union.ac.uk](mailto:d.leach@union.ac.uk); T: +44 (0)28 9020 5080

This event free, but please register by 21 March for catering purposes – coffee and lunch will be provided.

# Perspective

## Tim Stanley - The woke Pope epitomises liberal illiberalism

### **The 'merciful' leader of the Catholic Church is persecuting a harmless minority: traditionalists**

The Pope, you have probably read, is ever-smiling, merciful and tolerant. Towards some, that might be true; for others, it's a cruel joke. His treatment of traditional Catholics, to give just one example, is a case study in liberal hypocrisy.

Many trads are affiliated with an ancient liturgy we will call the Latin Mass, practised by most Catholics until the 1960s. Then the Church decided that things needed to be brought up to date. Out with Latin; in with the vernacular, new prayers, audience participation etc. The Latin Mass was driven underground.

But in 2007, recognising that the old rite posed no threat to the authority of Rome, was rather lovely and indisputably part of the Catholic tradition, Pope Benedict permitted it to be said again. My parish priest decided to give it a go and we learnt it together. I served at his altar, stuttering through schoolboy Latin, and afterwards a group of us would sit at his kitchen table, smoking cigarettes, discussing Benedict's latest book. These were the happiest days of my spiritual life. It was as exhilarating as being in love.

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The Latin Mass grew in popularity, particularly among students and young families, and for the 1960s liberals, this revival sparked an odd panic. The trads were “rigid”, said the Pope; he implied, psychologically ill. In July 2021, he issued *Traditiones Custodes*, which sought to cut the Latin Mass off at the root, permitting it to be practised where it already was, but to grow no further. One pro-Francis bishop took the opportunity to ban a certain kind of hat.

At a time when the Church was still reeling from Covid, still apologising for the child abuse scandal, this assault on liturgical choice seemed bizarrely unnecessary – and many bishops ignored the instructions. The Vatican doubled down. Last December, it tried to outlaw Latin Mass baptisms, marriages, funerals and blessings (outside of a few “personal parishes”), and even banned clerics from listing the times of Latin Masses in newsletters. The root was to be torn up, violently.

Why would the Pope who famously said “Who am I to judge?” of gay people and who had instituted a year of mercy – why would this liberal fellow persecute a harmless minority of his brothers and sisters?

One answer is that the mass media image of Francis is false, that a cleric who survived Argentina’s Dirty War cut his teeth in a culture in which one was either in power or in jail. In 2010, he was videoed answering questions on the war, and the novelist Colm Tóibín, in a must-read essay in the *London Review of Books*, described this Francis as “steely, distant and formidable, if somewhat impatient, even at moments arrogant”. Three years later, Tóibín noted: “Being elected Pope seemed to cheer [Francis] up immensely.”



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Paradoxically, or maybe not, this “dictator Pope”, as one critic called him, is a devout believer in the spirit of the Sixties. Contemporary reformers wanted to return to the basics of Christ’s mission and the purity of the early Church, or the Church of the poor and the colonised (and when re-evaluating the historical sources or travelling down the Amazon in a canoe, how excited they were to find that what Jesus and the tribesmen really wanted was what they wanted, namely tambourines and a chorus of Kumbaya). Here was a formula for setting mankind free. Anyone who questioned it must be wicked or sick.

At first, theological liberals might have had a case; the establishment was arcane and oppressive, though not that oppressive because the liberals won with barely a shot fired, captured the institutions and became the establishment.

Liberalism, in the Church and elsewhere, has now mutated from a process by which we might seek our own definition of freedom into a model for how a free life should be lived. It is prescriptive. Today, trads are the ones arguing for diversity and choice; liberals, still at war with fascist phantoms, have become as rigid as steel. Hence a Latin Mass congregation that expands from one old lady to two old ladies and a pigeon fancier is seen as a totemic threat to the great project – better dead than trad! – especially in the embarrassing context of overall decline. After decades of trying to make the Church look more like the society it serves, society is turning away. Attendance and ordinations are falling across the West; the tree has little fruit.

The recent escalation of papal tyranny is thus easily explained: the old man is in a hurry to discredit and destroy

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a tradition so completely that when he goes, there will be nothing left to revive. The trads can only sit back and pray that he's out of time, that his edicts will be reversed in a few years, and their spring will come.

“Thin pope, fat pope,” goes the saying: the Church has always yoyoed about, we have been through worse, and we always come out the other side, still recognisably ourselves. Some day, the Sixties will be acknowledged as a detour in Western history, not the direction, and we will view it the way we do a curious old house, behind red ropes with plaques acknowledging moral error, wondering at how people once lived and thought, and the funny notion they entertained that this was the way it would always be.

Man does not decide the future, the trads insist. The Holy Spirit does.

Courtesy the Daily Telegraph 07/02/2022

## Poem for today

### Pisces by Colette Bryce

When the tide withdraws  
like a jeweller's cloth  
to reveal a mile  
of glittering rocks,

what's not to love?  
What's to stop  
a human like you

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in coat and gumboot

clambering out  
to the furthest reach,  
as near as dammit  
to the sea floor?

What's to prevent  
a human like you  
from choosing a spot  
on the planetary rocks

to live,  
resolute as a limpet  
sits tight  
in its home scar?

The hermit crab  
in its hermit shell.  
You in your skull,  
your pulsing fontanelle,

the North Sea  
creeping up on you  
again, fingertip  
by fingertip, ready  
to pounce

## Speaking to the soul

A daily reading and prayer on this sit

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# Church News Ireland

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