

Church News Ireland



Image of the day - St Malachy's Church, Coleraine

People and places

C of I primate pays tribute to Queen

Church of Ireland primate Archbishop John McDowell has warmly praised the Queen, citing Her Majesty's "discipleship and desire for toleration and inclusiveness".



The archbishop, speaking at a civic service in Larne Presbyterian Church

to mark the celebration of the Queen's platinum jubilee, said the monarch's long life of duty and devotion to the British state and Commonwealth had been possible in large part to her personal discipleship of Jesus Christ.

"Because that discipleship was formed and has been lived in a very particular religious environment, it is characterised by a certain reserve and desire for toleration and inclusiveness. It is not a very showy expression of faith, but it obviously runs very deep.

“Her Majesty the Queen has understood what many people, including many religious people, have failed to grasp; that all life is God’s, and that it is the manner in which we do the ordinary things of life which is a true discipleship. It is not everything that has to be said about the Christian faith, and it presupposes a trust in Him, but it is a great deal.” Billy Kennedy in the Belfast News Letter

Text of sermon at -

[\[https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/11185/sermon-to-celebrate-the-70th\]](https://www.ireland.anglican.org/news/11185/sermon-to-celebrate-the-70th)

Radical Discipleship, Radical Mission focus of St Patrick’s Day Festival Service in Downpatrick

Down & Dromore diocese has announced that Simon Guillebaud will speak on the theme, Radical Discipleship, Radical Mission at its St Patrick’s Day Festival Service on Thursday 17 March.

Simon is the founder and International Director of the Great Lakes Outreach which is working to bring transformation to the people of Burundi in Central Africa. The author of several books, Simon has a large social media following and shares frequently on challenging and radical topics.

Programme

The St Patrick’s Day celebrations will follow a similar pattern to previous years but instead of lunch in the marquee, the Diocese will be providing a complimentary ‘Picnic in the



Simon Guillebaud

Pew' so please plan to stay around after the Festival Service!

9.15 am Holy Communion at Saul Church

10.15 am Prayer Pilgrimage to Down Cathedral

11.45 am Festival Service at Down Cathedral

The service will be followed by the wreath laying at St Patrick's grave and a complimentary 'Picnic in the Pew'. Tea and coffee will be provided.

Saint Columb's Cathedral Derry will be all lit up

Saint Columb's Cathedral will feature in the up coming Derry City and Strabane District Council Illumination Festival.

The historic Walled City of Derry - Londonderry will come to life through a magical mix of lights, colour and sound as 'Illuminate' Derry.

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'Illuminate' will run over two weekends, 17th - 20th and 24th – 27th February, from 6pm - 9pm, and will shine a light on the events that have shaped the unique story of Derry, a city that has been forged through a millennium of adventure, endurance, imagination and endeavour.

Take a journey through time and discover the secrets of the Walled City as you embark on a magical illuminated trail telling the story of a legendary place that will capture both your heart and your imagination.

The story of Amazing Grace will be depicted in video form on the East wall of the Cathedral and LegenDerry Food Popups will have several stalls in the car park.

The Cathedral car park will be out of use to all keyholders from Midnight on Wednesday until Midnight on Sunday for both extended weekends. Cathedral volunteers/workers will still have access to the Cathedral during these times and the Sunday services will be unaffected.

Please be aware that London Street will close from 4.00pm on the above dates.

<https://www.visitderry.com/illuminate>

Bunclody Organ-playing marathon to raise funds for Christian Aid

Bunclody rector, Rev Trevor Sargent is organising a 12-hour organ-playing marathon at St Mary's Church in Bunclody, County Wexford to raise funds for Christian Aid.

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The Bishop of the Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory, Right Rev Michael Burrows is one of those who will be taking part in the challenge which runs from 9am until 9pm on Saturday 12 March.

Bishop Michael has agreed to play for 45 minutes and the hunt is on for other organists to help keep the music going. Even beginners are welcome!

Money raised on the door will not only go to support Christian Aid's work overseas but will also help to start a music tuition fund for children in Bunclody interested in learning to play an instrument.

To get involved and for more information, contact Rev Trevor Sargent on 087 254 7836 or email bunclody@ferns.anglican.org

Invitation to cycle the Causeway Coast

Why do we want you to cycle the Causeway Coast? Gilbert's smile should tell you everything you need to know! Every £215 raised could train 10 self-help groups of 20 people like Gilbert in business & life skills. Sign-up to put your efforts behind the cause tearfund.org/cyclethecoast

New choral composition for Queen's Catholic Chaplaincy's Golden Jubilee.

The Catholic Chaplaincy states, "We are delighted to have received a copy of our commissioned choral work by Sir

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On St Bridgit's day - a workshop making crosses

James MacMillan.

The world-renowned composer has set to music for us Helen Waddell's English translation of the ancient Eucharistic hymn, *Adoro te devote*, excerpts of which feature in our Chapel's artwork.

“Waddell was a QUB alumna and celebrated medievalist.

‘With my heart I worship’ will be premiered by the Queen’s Chamber Choir in the University’s Great Hall later this Spring at a celebration to mark the Catholic Chaplaincy’s Golden Jubilee”.

Friends of Kinlough Church of Ireland thank supporters as they approach fundraising target

The Friends of Kinlough Church of Ireland group has extended a sincere thanks to everyone who has supported their recent fundraising drive to restore and preserve the beautiful church for the congregation and local community.

The campaign was officially launched last October, with €22,887 of their €25,000 target having been raised to date.

The monies, in conjunction with a grant of €20,000 from Leitrim County Council's Historical Structure Fund 2021, will contribute to the most significant renovations of the church in living memory including the restoration the clock tower and the waterproofing of the church's roof.

The church, also known by its titular title of Rossinver Parish Church, is in the heart of Kinlough Village and was built in 1820.

Joan Regan, treasurer of the Church's Vestry committee, noted how the congregation has been humbled by the response to the campaign.

“We have received donations from our congregation, from our local community, from all across Leitrim and the northwest, and from much further afield.

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“Many people from abroad were also in touch to record their family’s connections to the church, while many local people also spoke about the place it holds in Kinlough’s cultural, social, and built heritage.

“We are thrilled with the response and hope to hit our tally of €25,000 in time for the end of March.” - Leitrim Observer

All donations are still welcome at the GoFundMe page as the group hopes to hit their fundraising target of €25,000 by the end of March. Go to if you’d like to contribute: <https://gofund.me/ba0b8692>

You can keep abreast of all planned activities on the Church’s Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Church-of-Ireland-Kinlough-107754342889486/>

Carlow Union of Parishes presented with gold award by Eco Congregation

Carlow Union of Parishes was presented with a gold award by Eco Congregation Ireland (ECI) for environmental work around their three churches of St Mary’s, Carlow, Staplestown and Urglin.

Canon Andrew Orr is chairman of the ECI and he visited St Mary’s Church in Carlow town on Sunday 6 February to make the presentation.

The children of the parish started the campaign back in 2017, so it was fitting that they accepted the award on behalf of the parish.

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Cannon Orr, left, presented the award to some children in the Carlow Union of Parishes, with Rev David White and teacher Carolyn Good, right

“We had a lovely morning. Our next stage, because we have a gold award, is to mentor other parishes, so we’re going to work with the Enniscorthy union,” said Rev David White.

The environmental organisation encourages churches of all denominations to take an eco approach to worship, lifestyle, property and finance management, community outreach and contact with the developing world.

Its vision is to see churches of all denominations throughout Ireland celebrate the gift of God’s creation, recognise the inter-dependence of all creation and care for it in their life and mission and through members’ personal lifestyles.

Courtesy of Elizabeth Lee of The Nationalist newspaper

Rare 15th Century Bells Donated to the National Museum of Ireland

Three fifteenth century medieval bronze bells which once hung in the bellcote at St Mary's Abbey Church, Howth, Co. Dublin have been donated by the Gaisford St Lawrence family to the National Museum of Ireland.

Bearing gothic inscriptions, these three bells have been a part of Howth's history for centuries. They sounded the hours, called seafarers, and the people of the Howth peninsula to prayer for three hundred years before being taken to Howth Castle in the mid eighteenth century for their safety, where they have remained ever since.

The St Lawrence family were the Lords of Howth since the 12th century are likely to have commissioned the bells.

Very few late medieval bells in Ireland survived the Reformation when many were sold and melted down. It is even more unusual to have a set of such bells surviving from one church.

The castle, which was built by the St Lawrence family, has recently been sold and its contents auctioned. Key objects have been purchased by the National Museum of Ireland with funding from the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media. The medieval Great Sword of Howth has been acquired by the museum in this purchase.

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The Gaisford St Lawrence family recognized the importance of the bells to the Howth peninsula and to the wider history of medieval church in Ireland.

The bells will be conserved and displayed in the National Museum of Ireland, Kildare Street while appropriate signage will be placed in St Mary's Abbey church, Howth which is in the care of the Office of Public Works.

Lynn Scarff, Director of the National Museum of Ireland said,

“I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Gainsford St Lawrence family for their donation of these three medieval bells to the National Museum of Ireland so that they can be viewed and enjoyed by visitors to the museum into the future. It is our honour to take on the responsibility of caring for these precious artefacts and ensure their history as part of St Mary's Abbey and connection to the community of Howth is communicated to all who come into contact with them. The bells illustrate that wonderful connection between our material, built and natural heritage and it has been a pleasure to work with our colleagues in the National Monuments Service and Office of Public Works as well as the Gaisford St Lawrence family to reach this important day.”

Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Minister Darragh O'Brien TD said,

Christopher Gaisford St Lawrence said,

“The story of these bells is the story of Howth. They were such a part of peoples' daily lives and it only seems right

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that they will now be able to be enjoyed by everyone in the National Museum.”

News reports

Church of England demands end to ‘pills by post’ abortion scheme

The Church of England has claimed that the Government’s “pills by post” policy for abortion medication has had a “negative impact” on women amid calls for it to be scrapped.

Under current rules, women in the first nine weeks and six days of pregnancy, can have pills sent by post (following a telephone or e-consultation) without having to leave the house.

The new Bill was passed on Mar 30 2020, but with the caveat that it would only last until the pandemic ended, or for a maximum of two years.

However, in a written question to General Synod, the Church of England’s legislative body, church authorities revealed its position on the system for the first time, having written to the Government insisting that it remains a “temporary provision”.

Rebecca Hunt, a lay Synod member from the Portsmouth diocese, asked what steps had been taken “to end this policy”.

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Mrs Hunt also referenced Freedom of Information data, released in November, showing that one in 17 women using the pills at home had been admitted to hospital with complications.

Mark Sheard, chairman of the Mission and Public Affairs Council, said the “pills by post” system, “has had a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of women and girls”.

He said: “In our submission to the 2021 government consultation on the effects of the temporary measure to permit home use of both pills for early abortion, we submitted that the provision has had a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of women and girls. For that reason, we argued that the provisions should lapse at the latest when the temporary provisions of the Coronavirus Act 2020 expire (March 24).”

Calls to repeal the Government’s policy on so-called “DIY-abortions” was subject to a judicial review, following a campaign by a Christian group.

However, it was thrown out by the High Court, lost its Court of Appeal challenge, and now the case lies with the European Court of Human Rights.

Currently, women are able to take two pills at home instead of going to a clinic. The move was welcomed by women’s rights and pro-choice campaigners. However, it was criticised as “scandalous” by pro-life campaigners.

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They also claim it marks the most significant change to abortion policy since the 1967 Abortion Act, which offered legal abortions for the first time.

A Department of Health spokesman said: "The current temporary measures were brought in at the start of the pandemic to allow eligible women to take both pills for early medical abortion – which goes up to 10 weeks of gestation – at home. We will keep the future of these provisions under review."

Pope Francis to visit Malta in April

The Vatican has announced that Pope Francis will make a two day visit to Malta at the beginning of April 2022.

A Holy See Press Office statement said: "Accepting the invitation of the President of the Republic of Malta, the civil authorities and the Catholic Church of the country, His Holiness Pope Francis will make an Apostolic Journey to Malta from 2 to 3 April 2022, visiting the cities of Valletta, Rabat, Floriana and the island of Gozo."

The programme and further details of the journey will be announced in the near future.

The Pope was originally scheduled to visit Malta on 31 May 2020, but that journey was postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

The theme of the apostolic journey is: 'They showed us unusual kindness' - referencing the hospitality shown to St

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Paul by the Maltese when a ship carrying him to Rome was shipwrecked there in 60 AD. It is meant to highlight the plight of the refugees and migrants who cross the Mediterranean toward Europe, and be a source of encouragement for new evangelisation in the island nation.

Two previous Popes have made apostolic visits to Malta: Pope St John Paul II visited Malta in 1990 and 2001. Pope Benedict XVI visited in 2010. Pope St John Paul II beatified George Preca, who became Malta's first Saint in 2007.

Ban on conversion therapy will not criminalise Church

Christian teachings will not be affected by the ban on conversion therapy, the Government has promised church leaders.

Officials from the Government's Equality Office met religious leaders after more than 2,500 of them wrote to Liz Truss warning that they are willing to be "criminalised" should proposed legislation prevent them teaching their faith.

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'The Government has been played by campaigners who have orthodox Christianity in their sights'

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The Rev Dr Matthew Roberts, the minister of Trinity Church in York, said that during the meeting this week they were "very clear that there is no intention to criminalise Christian teaching".

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Proposals to ban gay and transgender conversion therapy were delayed in December amid growing disquiet that they would criminalise parents, teachers and therapists who were exploring issues around gender identity.

The proposed legislation was also criticised by MPs and peers, who said the changes were being rushed through. This month the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) wrote to the Government calling on it to delay the plans, as they could have a “chilling effect” on professionals.

Religious leaders have also added their voice to the concerns, warning that the changes to the law could prevent them teaching traditional Christians values, such as marriage being between a man and a woman.

Officials agreed to discuss those concerns after 2,500 Christian ministers and pastoral workers, whose combined congregations run into the hundreds of thousands of people, signed a letter written to the Equality Office.

The six signatories who attended the meeting on Thursday were “concerned” that the Government did not understand “the difference between a quack therapy and a call to live according to Christian teaching”.

Dr Roberts said that when they questioned “what, actually, they were trying to ban that wasn’t already illegal” during the meeting on Thursday, officials were unable to give a clear answer. He added that they also failed to give a straight answer when asked how religious teaching would be protected under the new laws.

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Sources close to the negotiations on the ban told The Sunday Telegraph that the strength of the reaction to the proposals had surprised ministers.

Dr Roberts said: “It seems that this was virtue signalling from the Government that they thought would be uncontroversial.

“But, unfortunately, it does seem that to some extent the Government has been played by campaigners who have orthodox Christianity in their sights.”

In the media

Northern Irish devolution collapses—again

Sam McBride writes in The Economist

The province’s politics are very far from the heady days of the Good Friday Agreement.

Northern Ireland’s most famous exports include Rory McIlroy, George Best, Van Morrison—and peace. Since the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, it has been marketed around the world as a template for ending seemingly intractable political violence. And if peace is defined as the absence of violence, it has been remarkably successful. An average of 124 deaths from political violence every year during the three decades of “the troubles” fell to just eight a year in the two decades since. But sectarian divisions remain bitter and the centre piece of the deal, a power-

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sharing government involving almost every shade of political opinion, has failed.

Since the devolved administration was set up in 1999, it has been absent for 37% of the time. Now it is absent again. On February 3rd Sir Jeffrey Donaldson pulled his party's first minister out of government, collapsing the administration.
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NI to adopt presumed consent for organ donation

Christian Institute

Stormont has voted in favour of an 'opt-out' organ donation system.

Currently, people in Northern Ireland who wish to donate their organs or tissue must sign the NHS Organ Donor Register.

But from next year, Northern Ireland will join the rest of the UK in automatically registering most residents as donors, unless they have confirmed otherwise.

[[] <https://www.christian.org.uk/news/ni-to-adopt-presumed-consent-for-organ-donation/>]

Boris Johnson should be ashamed of Savile slur, says bishop

The Guardian

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... that led to street violence, a senior Church of England bishop has said. ... Speaking on the eve of his retirement, Bayes also said church law ...

[[] <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/feb/12/boris-johnson-savile-slur-bishop-paul-bayes>]

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Launch of book on St Patrick's Pilgrimages

On Wednesday evening the two most recent additions to the Braemor Studies Series, which is published by Church of Ireland Publishing, will be launched at the Church of Ireland Theological Institute. The Rev Karen Salmon's book, St Patricks' Pilgrimages – Journey to Place, Journey to God, will be launched by the Very Rev Henry Hull, Dean of Down, and the Rev Christopher Woods' book, Eucharist and Embodiment, An Invitation to Constructive Theological Thinking, will be launched by the Very Rev Kenny Hall, Dean of Clogher. Both books have been prepared for publication by the Church's Publications Officer, Bryan Whelan, who is the Assistant Librarian in the RCB Library.

Speaking to the soul

A short reading and a prayer on site daily

Church News Ireland

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