



***The Revd Martin O'Kelly was ordained to the Priesthood last Sunday afternoon. The Archbishop of Dublin presided at the service in Christ Church Cathedral and Martin was joined by a great crowd of family, friends and well wishers along with many clerical colleagues - which include his wife the Revd Ruth O'Kelly. There were also parishioners from Christ Church Bray where Martin will serve as Curate.***

## **Presbyterian Church honours long serving care staff**

The Presbyterian Church has 17 homes and centres across 14 locations in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland serving people and the community through residential, respite and day care for the elderly and people with physical and learning disabilities, ex-offenders and those overcoming substance abuse.

Managed by the Council for Social Witness, the Church employs 444 staff across its sites and many were at Assembly Buildings in Belfast for the Long Service and Training Awards.

Congratulating those at the ceremony the Convenor of the Board for Social Witness, Rev. Dr. Trevor McCormick said, “It is essential that in our work we make sure that before God and in the community we get across the message that people matter to Him and people matter to us. This is why we are engaged in the work that we do in all its various guises.

“As a Council we seek to deliver an effective social witness service on behalf of the



Presbyterian Church in Ireland and to the wider community and that can't happen without the dedication of our staff and ongoing commitment to training, which is so vital. Today we recognise

and give thanks for that dedication and commitment,” he said.

“We continue to provide care of the highest possible standard in our facilities for older people, those with physical or learning needs, those with addictions, and those who are in our Approved Premises.

Presbyterian Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian McNie presented Bibles to seven members of staff who were recognised for 20 years service and number of staff who received awards for the completion of specific training, including Best Practice in Dementia.

“The work of the Church in this particular area often goes unseen, but that does not mean it is unappreciated. Loving and caring for others is at the heart of the Gospel and the work of His Church.

“On behalf of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, I want to express my thanks and appreciation to those of you who have served others faithfully and with dedication for 20 years. I also offer my congratulations to those of you who are as committed to excellence through ongoing training, as you are to serving others,” Dr. McNie said.

## Irish Methodist Youth and Children's leaders events

The Irish Methodist Youth and Children's Department (IMYC) is running a residential youth and children's leader retreat, called *Abide*, in the Killeshin Hotel, Portlaoise, Co Laois. The two-day event, aimed at anyone volunteering or employed as a youth leader with youth and children in any capacity, will begin on Tuesday, February 23rd, at 9.30am and end on Wednesday at 5pm.

The theme, *Choosing Faithfulness*, will focus on what it means to be "people of warm hearts, tough hands and wet feet as we walk with young people and children". It will be facilitated by IMYC and the Irish Methodist Church's Home Mission Department and will provide opportunities to worship, learn, pray, chat and share with others from across the island. For more details, see [irishmethodist.org/imycd](http://irishmethodist.org/imycd).

A further event, called *Youth & Children's Work: A Whole Church Perspective Seminar*, will be held in Edgehill College, Belfast, on Thursday, February 25th from 10am-4pm. This seminar, a collaboration between Edgehill College and IMYC, is open to ordained ministers,

probationers, and lay workers employed in any capacity in the life of the church.

There is a nominal charge of £5 (€6.40) to cover morning coffee and lunch.

## **Irish Christian magazine's seminar on suicide prevention**

VOX, the Irish Christian magazine, will hold the third of its one-day conferences around Ireland, aimed at informing and equipping churches and Christians (of all denominations and backgrounds) as they seek to respond to suicide and engage in suicide prevention.

The latest event is on Saturday February 20th in Calry Church of Ireland, Sligo. The keynote speakers are consultant psychiatrist Steve Critchlow and counsellor/ psychotherapist Joanie Reilly. Other speakers will include Stephen Bradley, lecturer in mental health nursing, and Christian counsellor Linda Rowett.

The programme will provide workshops and opportunities for discussion, questions and practical examples of how churches around Ireland are involved in suicide prevention. The

cost is €20, including lunch, with concessions available. Further details at [vox.ie](http://vox.ie).

## **Campbell College memorial service for Rev John Nelson**

A memorial service has been held at Campbell College, Belfast, for Rev John Nelson who was the first Methodist minister to teach RE and serve as chaplain at the school.

Ben Lowry, Deputy Editor of the News Letter and a former student, stated on Facebook, “He was liberal, humane, chatty, wise and loved by the boys.

“By one of those quite peculiar coincidences in life I was at a Methodist service on the Lisburn Road in August 2014 and then in Dundrum near Newcastle in May 2015, two churches I had never set foot in before, and who was taking them but Rev Nel.

“It was classic him: he had the congregations chortling at points in sermons that always made a serious point (in May he touched on the refugee crisis).

“He also played a central part in my lifelong love

of hymns - the former head Dr Pollock said today that John often chose the hymns in the morning assemblies and Sunday services and we got to know every one in the long list of classics. It is therefore ultimately thanks to John that when I walk into a church and see a drum kit, my heart sinks and I want to walk straight back out!”

John Nelson was educated at RBAI and QUB. He retired as Chaplain at Campbell in July 2001. Donations in lieu of flowers are establishing a new Educational Fund in his memory at the college. Mr Nelson is survived by his wife Margaret, sons Simon and Timothy and grandson Clement.

## **C of I Clerical appointments**

The Rev Canon Sam Wright, rector of Lisburn Cathedral, has been appointed Dean of Connor, by the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy.

He succeeds Dean John Bond, who retired in January. The new Dean is one of a number of appointments to the Chapters of the Cathedrals in the Diocese.



Other appointments to the Chapter of Saint Saviour, Connor, in the Cathedral of Christ Church, Lisburn, are:

- The Rev Canon George Irwin has been appointed Chancellor of Connor
- The Rev Canon George Graham has been appointed Precentor of Connor
- The Rev Canon John Budd has been appointed Treasurer of Connor
- The Rev Chris Easton has been appointed Prebendary of Rasharkin
- The Rev Peter Galbraith has been appointed Prebendary of Connor

The Rev Mark Taylor, Rector of Whitehead, has been appointed to the Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Saint Anne, Belfast, as Canon representing Connor Diocese.

The Bishop of Cork, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, has announced that, following meetings of the Board of Nomination, the Reverend Kingsley Sutton has been appointed as the new rector of Kilgariffe Union of Parishes (centred on the West Cork town of Clonakilty). The Service of Institution will take place on Tuesday, 19th April in Kilgariffe Parish Church.

Having recently resigned his incumbency in Newry, in the Diocese of Dromore, the Reverend Kingsley Sutton currently holds a General Licence in that Diocese, and he has been looking for a new opportunity for ministry. Kingsley is originally from County Wicklow where he grew up on a farm in Powerscourt Parish in the Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough, and his wife Daphne, a teacher, is from Cork. They have five children.

Having completed his education in Wesley College, Dublin, Kingsley spent some years full-time in farming before training for ordination at the Church of Ireland Theological College (at Trinity College, Dublin). He served curacies in St Matthew's Parish, Belfast (Diocese of Connor) and in Willowfield Parish, Belfast (Diocese of Down) before being appointed as Rector of the Parishes of St Patrick and St Mary, Newry, County Down (Diocese of Dromore) in 2002.

## **Lecture and Trust Fund in Memory of Connor rector**

The inaugural Clive West Memorial Lecture takes place in All Saints' Church, Belfast, on Monday February 22 at 7.45pm. The Speaker is the Rev

Dr Ashley Null whose topic is ‘The Faith at the heart of the Book of Common Prayer.’

The launch of this lecture series coincides with the launch of a Trust in Clive West’s memory. The Rev Trevor Johnston, rector of All Saints’, said: “He was a godly mentor to many of us, giving an example of faithful ministry, prioritising the proclamation and exposition of God’s word for the growth of God’s people and investing deeply in the lives of those serve God’s people in ministry.”

The lecture will be introduced by Bishop Harold Miller, and there will be an opportunity to donate to the Trust Fund on the evening.

Cano West was rector of All Saints’ from 1984 to 2000. He was a Canon of St Anne’s and a previous curate of both Lisburn Cathedral and All Saints.

The speaker, the Rev Dr Ashley Null, is an ordained minister of the Diocese of Western Kansas. He has a PhD from Cambridge and also studied at Yale Divinity School. His special area of interest is Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury and primary author of the Book of

Common Prayer. Currently based in Berlin, he is researching the correspondence of Archbishop Cranmer.

The Clive West Memorial Fund will aim to provide support for excellent Biblical and theological training (for eventual ministry in Ireland), where no other major resources are available.

A leaflet on the lecture and the work of the fund is available [here](#).

## **C of E Synod's sexuality conversations "going to be risky" warns Archbishop Welby's Irish adviser**

David Porter, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Director of Reconciliation, told the General Synod the discussions to be had at the next meeting in July may not go smoothly.

He said the meetings were "private", will not be open to the press or the public and social media use will be restricted.



***David Porter, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Director of Reconciliation***

The Church of England launched its shared conversations on sexuality in November 2013 in response to gay marriage and changing public attitudes to LGBTI people.

Conversations on how the Church treats gay people have been taking place across England in advance of July's Synod session in York.

During the session members will take part in a number of small groups.

There will also be panel discussions on scripture and what it says about LGBTI people.

David Porter, who was involved in the Northern Ireland peace process, told Synod that after the

meetings around the country it was clear “some people don’t want to talk”.

He said he had predicted “at least four would implode, so far by the grace of God none of them have”.

“What we’re offering is facilitated space, not mediated space.

“Safe space does not mean that you won’t hear things that you’ll find difficult or even at times offensive.

“It will be a guarded space.”

He added that “it has always got to be an honest conversation” and he urged members to find the “ability to move from campaigning discourse to a compassionate discourse.”

“We may still not agree but we are listening to each other,” he said.

After his presentation David Porter opened the floor to questions. LGBTI campaigner Jayne Ozanne asked Mr Porter: “What involvement at a

panel level will LGBTI have in these conversations?

“It is terribly important that we listen to all involved. We need to ensure that we’re hearing from real people and not just talking about them.”

Mr Porter replied: “We are committed to making sure the balance respects both the balance in Synod and in the wider Church.”

See also: [Gay rights and same-sex marriage will dominate C of E summer synod](#) by Harriet Sherwood, Guardian

[Equal marriage is the next stage in the church’s continual reformation](#) by Giles Fraser, Guardian

## **Pope Francis warns against diminishing importance of family**

Pope Francis warned against moves to diminish the importance of the family, during a speech at a packed football stadium in Mexico.

Speaking under a scorching-hot sun as dozens were treated for heat stroke, the Pope said family life was not always easy and often was a

struggle, but he pleaded for perseverance, saying family life was one of the solutions to increasing isolation and uncertainty and its unintended consequences.

“I prefer a wounded family that makes daily efforts to put love into play to a society that is sick from isolationism and is habitually afraid of love,” [Pope Francis said on Monday](#) in front of a boisterous audience of families, who came from across southern Mexican and nearby Guatemala for a celebration in the city of Tuxtla Gutierrez.

“I prefer a family that makes repeated efforts to begin again to a society that is narcissistic and obsessed with luxury and comfort. I prefer a family with tired faces from generous giving to faces with makeup that know nothing of tenderness and compassion.”

The Pope’s attention on families turned the focus of his six-day visit toward the pastoral issues after hitting hard on matters such as corruption, crime and the country’s often impoverished and exploited indigenous populations.

During the event, a couple from the city of Monterrey — one of whom was divorced —



spoke of the stigma and sense of not belonging by not being able to receive Communion, but finding a home in the Catholic Church by serving others and organizing pastoral projects. “As we came close to our church, we received love and compassion,” said Humberto and Claudia Gomez, who are married civilly, but not in the Church. “It’s marvelous to have a marriage and family in which God is at the center.”

Another speaker, single mother Beatriz Munoz Hernandez, 52, spoke of a childhood marked by “poverty, violence and abandonment” by her father, then of becoming pregnant as a teenager.

## **News links to reports on faith, politics and education**

### **High stillbirth rates in Northern Ireland have been linked to strict abortion laws**

Irish News

Strict abortion laws are the reason why Northern Ireland's biggest health trust has the highest stillbirth rate in the NHS, according to a midwifery chief.

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/healthcarenews/2016/02/16/news/abortion-laws-skewing-high-stillbirth-rate-in-north-418776/?>

[mc\\_cid=92acb20b46&mc\\_eid=23f2f80c40](http://www.irishnews.com/news/healthcarenews/2016/02/16/news/abortion-laws-skewing-high-stillbirth-rate-in-north-418776/?mc_cid=92acb20b46&mc_eid=23f2f80c40)

## **Do not allow abortion for fatal foetal abnormalities, Catholic Church**

News Letter

The Roman Catholic Church has urged Irish legislators not to allow abortion in cases of “fatal foetal abnormalities”.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/irish-bishop-urges-no-abortion-for-fatal-foetal-abnormality-1-7214567>

## **Key Farming issues identified for NI elections**

News Letter

Key issues affecting Northern Ireland’s farming community have been revealed ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/farmers-set-out-list-of-concerns-before-assembly-election-1-7215897>

## **C of E urges help for hard hit farmers**

FarmersWeekly

... help UK farmers when the market isn't working, such as the current situation in the dairy industry, according to a leading Church of England bishop.

<https://www.fwi.co.uk/news/church-urges-help-for-crisis-hit-farmers.htm>

## **Adams driver replaces His former bodyguard as northern Sinn Fein chair**

News Letter

The senior republican who addressed a Falls Road rally saying “we ain’t gone away you know” has stepped down from his position as northern chairman of Sinn Fein.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/former-adams-bodyguard-replaces-bobby-storey-in-top-sf-post-1-7214700>

## **Clergy fuming over 1916 ceremony Easter church lockout**

Irish Independent

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/1916/clergy-fuming-over-1916-ceremony-easter-church-lockout-34456473.html>

## **The rescue of Cashel's magical but mouldering Bolton Library**

Irish Times

In 1835 they were moved from the archbishop's palace to a purpose-built chapter house on the grounds of the **Church of Ireland** Cathedral in Cashel.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/heritage/the-rescue-of-cashel-s-magical-but-mouldering-library-1.2532666>

## **St Peter's Church to be hub of Cork's 1916 celebrations**

Irish Examiner

St Peter's **Church** to be hub of Cork's 1916 celebrations ... The historic St Peter's **Church** has been returned to public use as Cork City's hub for its 1916 ... <http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/st-peters-church-to-be-hub-of-corks-1916-celebrations-382129.html>

## **[Christian Today](#)/[Premier/Times](#)**

Coverage of the Archbishop of Canterbury's presidential address to General Synod (see above) where he reflected on last month's Primate's meeting in Canterbury.

[churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com)

The *Times* has a short diary item regarding smartphones saying the Primates waved them at him to show the inaccuracy of press reports that he had banned them.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Primates-meeting-spun-more-than-Donald-Trump>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/article4691302.ece>

### **BBC/Herald Scotland/Scotsman**

Reports that for the first time, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland will address General Synod today. Dr Angus Morrison is expected to address the proposed Columba Declaration, a plan for closer cooperation between the two churches.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-35581273>

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/kirk-moderator-to-make-history-in-england-1-4030944>

### **Guard/Premier**

Reports that the summer session of General Synod will hold discussions on homosexuality and same-sex marriage in efforts to move towards a settled policy. Synod will spend two days in July in small groups and plenary sessions in a process of "shared conversations".

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/15/gay-rights-and-same-sex-marriage-will-dominate-c-of-e-summer-synod>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Synod-s-sexuality-conversations-going-to-be-risky>

### **Times/Guard**

Reports that the General Synod is to consider a proposal that would define organ and blood donations as central to Christian giving. The motion, citing Bishop of Carlisle

James Newcome, is quoted. The Leeds diocesan motion will only be debated if there is time at the end of Synod.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4691033.ece>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/15/donating-blood-organs-christian-duty-synod-church-of-england>

### **Mail/Tel/Guard/BBC**

Further coverage of the private letters of Pope John Paul II to Polish philosopher Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. The letters and photographs, held by the National Library of Poland, detail their 32-year friendship. The archive formed the material for BBC1s *Panorama* programme.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3448767/The-Pope-married-woman-secret-love-life-Treasure-trove-letters-photographs-shed-light-John-Paul-II-s-extraordinarily-close-relationship-philosopher.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/bbc/12157733/What-really-happened-between-Pope-John-Paul-II-and-his-close-friend-Anna-Teresa-Tymieniecka.html>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/feb/15/pope-john-paul-ii-letters-reveal-32-year-relationship-with-woman>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-35577944>

### **Commercial Risk Europe**

An article reviewing the impact of the agreement to fight climate change at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change, known as COP21, which will increase pressure on companies to adopt clean technologies and environment-friendly business practices. It notes that in mid-January, a group of investors led by the pension fund of the Church of England and the New York State Common Retirement Fund urged oil giant Exxon Mobil to

clarify the extent to which it is prepared to meet the requirements of COP21.

<http://www.commercialriskeurope.com/cre/4939/134/COP21-agreement-delivers-upside-and-downside-risks-for-business/>

### [Christian Today](#)

Reviews Christians relationship with alcohol asking the question can giving up booze make our relationship with God healthier?

### [Christian Today](#)

An article on the use of Social Media. While reminding Christians to go where the people are - online today - the article details good practice of Christians using social media. Tips include don't "bash", "respond to bashing" "judge", "compromise" or "stay silent".

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