



## Irish Bulletin 31st January

### Church centre attacked in East Belfast as loyalists protest against Brighton bomber

**There was trouble in east Belfast as Brighton bomber Patrick Magee appeared at an inter-church event alongside the daughter of a man killed in the blast.**

Four police officers suffered minor injuries as protesters threw fireworks and stones at a community centre in east Belfast where a former IRA bomber was a guest speaker.

About 50 people gathered at the Skainos centre on the Newtownards Road shortly before the man responsible for the Brighton bomb, Patrick Magee, arrived.

They threw stones and four police officers suffered minor injuries.

The windows of two police vehicles were also smashed.

Patrick Magee and Jo Berry, who lost her father in the bomb, went in together through a back door at the building.

Both were taking part in a festival called: Listening to Your Enemies.

East Belfast MP Naomi Long, Alliance Party, said: "There can be no justification for the violence that has occurred. I would appeal for calm in the area.

"The event at the Skainos centre is part of a dialogue that should be allowed to take place. It is important that everybody respects the rights of those who wish to take part in reconciliation events, and that they are allowed to do so without such negative scenes as we have seen tonight.

"It is deeply disappointing that this trouble has occurred at an event which is aimed at breaking down the barriers in our society."

East Belfast community worker Jim Wilson said he had been verbally abused as he came out of the talk.

Earlier on Thursday, anti-republican graffiti was discovered on the Skainos building which belongs to the east Belfast Methodist mission.

Mr Wilson had said people were entitled to their views, but they should be expressed peacefully.

Patrick Magee was behind the bombing of Brighton's Grand Hotel during the Tory Party Conference in 1984.

It killed five people and injured 34, including Lord Tebbit and his wife. The prime minister at the time, Margaret Thatcher, had a narrow escape.

Jo Berry lost her father, Sir Anthony Berry, in the atrocity. She has since forgiven Magee for the attack.

In recent years, Magee has been associated with projects that work with groups specialising in conflict resolution, reconciliation and victim support.

Police are treating the Skainos graffiti incident as a hate crime. See also -

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-25957468>

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/missiles-thrown-as-loyalists-protest-against-brighton-bomber-in-east-belfast-1-5846741>

## **New Sunday morning gathering in Lurgan**

**Shankill Parish Lurgan has started a new Sunday morning gathering at the Jethro centre Lurgan. Aptly named 'Eleven30', the vision of the leadership team is to reach those in the community the church has not previously been engaging with the good news of Jesus.**

The new service was launched on Sunday 19 January and the special speaker was Bishop Harold.



“Over 280 people gathered for worship and teaching and it was amazing to see such a variety of ages worshipping God together,” said rector, Revd Geoff Wilson. “There was a palpable sense of the Holy Spirit and great excitement for this new thing that God is doing in the area. To God be the glory!”

## Former Derry church to become trad music academy

**A former Presbyterian church in Derry is to become a traditional music academy.**

The listed building and its manse are to be developed as part of a campaign to create an 'urban Gaeltacht' in the city centre.

Built in 1837, Great James Street Presbyterian Church - known as the 'Scots Church' - remained as a place of worship until the early 1980s when the Protestant drift to the Waterside resulted in its eventual closure.

The building has since been used as a library, a glass works and a market. More recently it was the venue for the other Voices concerts during Derry's year as City of Culture.

It has been bought by the Culturlann Ui Chanain Irish language and culture hub. Culturlann chief Gearoid o heara said the church - adjacent to Culturlann Ui Chanain - was needed to cope with a huge demand for Irish language and cultural activities in Derry.

## How Donaldson placed his destiny in God's hands

**“Being a Christian and a politician can be very difficult,” admits DUP MP Jeffrey Donaldson.**

News Letter - The softly spoken Lagan Valley representative - who has been involved in Northern Ireland politics since he was 22 - does not often open up about his deep faith in God; indeed, as one of the unionist party's most hardworking and busy members, both at Westminster





*With the Mayor of Lisburn Margaret Tolerton and Clergy at the 50th Anniversary Service in St Paul's Parish Church, Lisburn.*

and local level, one wonders how he even finds the time to go to church.

“When I first became a Christian I really questioned whether politics was the right place for a Christian to be,” he continues.

“But God showed me

very clearly through his Word, that He was able to use people in political positions to advance His plan. You have stories like Joseph and Daniel, and people who were placed in positions of political responsibility, not so that they themselves could be great men in their own right, but because God had a plan and a purpose and He was able to use them for that plan.

“So I believe what we see in the Bible can also apply in the 21st century.”  
More at -

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/features/how-donaldson-placed-his-destiny-in-god-s-hands-1-5844065>

## **Rugby stars support Africa Mission**

**Ulster Rugby Stars Ruan Pienaar and Johann Muller are backing a cross-community project which is seeing young people cross the peace lines to carry out charitable work in South Africa.**

UTV - Young people from Ardoyne and the Shankill area of north Belfast will travel to the South African township of Blanco next Friday for two weeks. They will get the opportunity to help rebuild the local township, help the sick, feed the poor, engage with young prisoners about their life stories and gain valuable experience in various cultural backgrounds.



For the past six months the young people have been planning and fundraising for their journey to Africa - and in turn developing and maintaining relationships through event planning, sports events and engaging in programmes such as leadership skills.

Fintan Marley and Darryl McLaughlin met through at Hammer Youth Club and Fintan they have grown a "strong friendship".

"As a boy growing up in a sort of rough background, not really at once stage in my life did I think I was going to be this close with a boy from Ardoyne," Darryl added.

Pienaar and Muller are supporting the youngsters in the project and wished them well on their travels.

"They are going to George, my hometown where I was born and raised, I've still got a family farm down there. It's just great to see kids from over here going to South Africa to support a great cause," Ulster skipper Muller said.

Alan Waite, Belfast2Blanco leader added: "It's the relationships that it's built, not only between the group of young people in Shankill and Ardoyne but the relationships they build within the townships.

"The most important thing about it all is actually what our young people do with the experience when they come back."

<http://www.u.tv/news/Rugby-stars-support-Africa-Mission/eac44f83-1811-4a6c-a012-b8acef0fd6ca>

## Concentrate on similarities

**Concentrate on similarities while recognising differences' was the message from Archbishop [Michael Jackson](#) during last week's Christian Unity Service in Arklow.**

The service, which was held in St. Joseph's Church, Templarainey saw a number of clergy from across a number a religions taking part in the joint service for Christian Unity.

Dr. Jackson, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin and Bishop of Glendalough, preached during the service which was organised as part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

In his sermon he focused on wisdom and the Wisdom Literature in the Bible. The Archbishop said that wisdom was to be found among people. In this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, he suggested that God was asking people to talk about God and with God.

'The fact that we already have unity in Christ means that we ought to be out and about conversing with God with confidence and compassion for all we're doing and for all that others are doing. Rather than our tearing our hair out about why we don't have even more visible unity, I want to make a simple suggestion and it is so simple that you may think it is not worth making.'

He said that during this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Wisdom was asking people to have the confidence to take the gift of God and do three things: to do Mission, to do Witness and to do Sacrament.

But he said that people could not continue to do these three things within their own familiar settings.

'We concentrate on the things which are similar, while recognising that we are also different. At the same time we all keep our eyes open for all the opportunities which are given us for Godly conversation, with God and with our neighbours. We begin to live at the crossroads and outside the churches,' he said.

## Down volunteers needed

**Home Start Down District are looking for Volunteers who can give 2-3 Hours per week to Support families in their Own Homes.**

Could you support a family with a new born? or may someone who has had a premature baby and has other children at home, and maybe no family living in the area? A New Volunteer Prep Course is starting on Friday 21st February at 10am in the Kairos Centre, Newcastle, Co. Down. Interested? Why not contact Dorothy @ 44615727 or text 07590849280 for information.

## The Larder expands

**The Larder (see yesterday's CNI Bulletin) is expanding.**

Rev Adrian McCartney says - We have been invited to join a pilot scheme connecting ten local food businesses to ten food charities. This is an East belfast pilot so businesses are between North Road and Knock Road (Ballyhackamore). An app will connect us all and every day the businesses will update what food they have available for collection rather than recycling as waste. This works out cheaper for them and provides food for us. A wee system will be needed to collect stuff that we think we could use before "sell by" dates. End of Feb is the launch.

## C of I college archive marks 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary

**February 2014 marks auspicious month in the calendar of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute (CITI) – formerly the Theological College (until 2008) and before that the Church of Ireland Divinity Hostel, founded in 1913, which prepares future clergy for ordination.**

On 17 February 2014 it will be exactly fifty years to the day since the official opening and dedication of the premises at Braemor Park, Churchtown (formerly Rathgar) in Dublin.

To mark the occasion, this month's Archive of the Month at the Representative Church Body Library (which is part of the CITI campus) features of the resources available in the Library to document with accuracy the evolutionary story of this central Church institution, and thus contribute positively to its anniversary.

In addition to keeping safe two concurrent minute books of the Divinity Hostel (evolving into the Theological College), for the period 1913 to 2000, the Library also holds an array of supplementary printed materials that help to flesh out the story. These latter include the *Reports of the General Synod* published annually, which document the administration and funding of the institution; the news pages of the *Church of Ireland Gazette* which in February 1964 include pictures and reports covering the re-opening in Braemor Park some fifty years ago; and even the order of service used in the chapel of the “new hostel” on the very day when the Most Revd James McCann, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland opened the new premises, and when the chapel was dedicated by the Most Revd George Otto Simms, Archbishop of Dublin.

The minute books, as original manuscripts, are subject to normal 40-year closure rules, so they are available for public consultation up to and including the year 1974. The printed materials are open to all. A colourful selection of archival and printed items is included on the online display.

Re-location of the Divinity Hostel in 1964 had repercussions for the RCB Library, which was founded in 1932, and originally occupied the top floor of the Church’s central administration at 52 St Stephen’s Green. When Church of Ireland House re-located, the decision was made to move the theological and reference library of the Church of Ireland, as well as the principal repository for its written heritage, in close proximity to the Divinity Hostel, to facilitate ordinands in training. This occurred in 1970, and today the Library’s printed collections of books and periodicals are used on a daily basis by the current generation of ordinands, as well as a wide range of public researchers.

To view the online presentation, see: [www.ireland.anglican.org/library/archive](http://www.ireland.anglican.org/library/archive)

For information about the Church of Ireland Theological Institute see <http://www.theologicalinstitute.ie/>

## Christians feeling marginalised: cleric

**Those who hold traditional Christian moral views feel marginalised in today’s largely secular society, a former Presbyterian Moderator has said.**

News Letter - The Rev Dr Stafford Carson, now principal of Union Theological College, was speaking ahead of a Presbyterian conference to be held today in Belfast which will examine the role of Christian churches in public life.

Among the speakers will be Attorney General John Larkin.



The Rev Carson said:  
“Those who have lived through the second half of the 20th century will be aware of the seismic shift that has taken place in terms of morality and ethical standards...

“The changing scene has meant that those who hold to a traditional Christian position feel decidedly uncomfortable and marginalised as our society, and increasingly its major institutions, reflect a secular point of view which conflicts with their Christian principles.”



## Memorial service

The Reverend [Mervyn Kingston](#)'s memorial service will take place on **Saturday 8 February**, at 11.30 am in [The Parish Church of St. George, Belfast](#), followed by tea in the Parish Hall.

## Bishop McKeown - Catholic schools are places of faith and learning

If Catholic Church leaders and members have had to learn anything over the last twenty years, it is a heavy dose of humility. But Pope Francis has succeeded in blending humility with enthusiasm for ‘the joy of the Gospel’. And those two poles provide the context within which we celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2014 across the island this week - Bishop Donal McKeown writes in the Irish News.

Each year a theme invites schools and communities to celebrate their work in the context of one specific idea. If Catholic schools are motivated by an explicit belief in God, they need to reflect on their mission, not just focus on their marketing. This year’s focal point is ‘Catholic Schools – Places of Faith and Learning’. So what might that ask us to look at?

For a while, there was the shallow ideology that faith and science were incompatible. You couldn’t possibly be an empirical scientist and a religious

believer! The more people became rational and scientific, the more they would leave behind religious fables.

But people from Copernicus, Descartes, to Newton and Fr. Georg Mendel (the founder of modern genetics) found no problem in balancing faith with a fascination for the world of science. The one thing that science can't prove is that science has all the answers to life. It takes a real leap of faith to believe in scientism!

Recent Popes have been very clear that faith and reason are not enemies but that they need each other. Pope Benedict noted that both reason and religion could develop 'pathologies'. In Ireland we all know too well what religion can look like when sickly! Indeed, the Pope Emeritus said that 'I would speak of a necessary relatedness between reason and faith..., which are called to purify and help one another'. In an age where there is widespread scepticism about both religion and the secular state, this dialogue is vitally necessary.

And it has become increasingly clear that human beings seek to know, not just facts about volcanoes, tornados and the duck-billed platypus, but whether their life has any meaning. Most people don't lose sleep over how old the earth is – but hearts are broken by illness, death, broken relationships and shattered dreams. Those are the real questions to which people seek answers.

So it is not surprising that Catholic schools around the world show that, the more explicitly they are proud of their faith identity, the better seats of secular learning they become! A learning community, imbued with meaning and hope, tends to deliver above-average exams result in everything from arithmetic to zoology, not despite the fact that it is openly faith-based but precisely because of its faith convictions. Being places of faith helps Catholic schools and colleges to be top class places of human growth and learning.

The openness to the transcendent seems to be accompanied by the belief that teachers and young people can do fabulous things together. What Harvard researchers in 1992 called the 'inspirational ideology' pushes staff and students that little bit further in all fields of learning. Catholic schools are not a burden on the Exchequer. In the age of 'value for money', civil society is getting a great bargain from explicitly faith schools!

And what else links faith and learning? In our increasingly individualised and fragmented society, a faith perspective on life offers – and does not impose – a worldview, a framework within which young people can anchor their

learning and their living across all subjects. Indeed, when a curriculum reduces itself to subject content and fails to help young people discuss the major topics of life, it is deficient. An education that is limited to fragmented packages of information and analysis is humanly impoverished. Young people, threatened by drugs, family break-up and suicide need more than better maths results!

Indeed all the great works of literature, art and music deal with the big questions of love, loss, forgiveness, betrayal and hope. And much modern culture – including music, films and books – often deal with the challenges, joys and crises of life in our high-speed world. Catholic education explicitly engages with these questions about the meaning of living rather than just the means for living.

Professor James Conroy recently led a team of experts to study the value of religious education. And their conclusions? “What they reveal is that good RE is about something absolutely fundamental: a space for serious, critical exploration of the meanings and values by which we live. To live good lives, individually and together, we need to be able to make sense of our world and ourselves – and RE offers the only place in the curriculum where that can still be done systematically”.

That is not indoctrination. But it is training young inquisitive minds to not be afraid of tackling important issues. A good education involves asking awkward questions, not just regurgitating pre-packaged answers.

This Catholic Schools Week, Pope Francis would invite us to reflect, with humility, on our strengths and weaknesses – and to acknowledge the joy of the Gospel that we seek to offer to our contemporaries. That contribution to the Common Good is worth celebrating! This article was published in Faith Matters in the Irish News on Thursday 30 January 2014.

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