

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Dalriada School at the Somme

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Dalriada School at the Somme

Year 10 History students from Dalriada School, Ballymoney, visited the area around the Somme Battlefield last week.

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They started off in a very moving and poignant way by visiting the grave of a former school pupil, Lt. James Hart, who was killed in action in Valenciennes on the 1st November 1918. They laid a wreath in his memory.



Vimy Ridge with the notable national Canadian memorial and some reconstructed trenches nearby were next on their itinerary.

The next day started off with a visit to the Hill 62 museum and original trenches, which the pupils enjoyed walking

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through. Then on to Houthoult Belgian Cemetery and Langemark German Cemetery, which was part of the original German front line in 1914. This was also the scene of the very first chemical gas attack of the First World War.

The pupils then enjoyed some free time in the beautiful town of Ypres before dinner. The day finished with Mrs. Irwin and two pupils laying a wreath on behalf of the school at the Menin Gate.

Their final day in the Flanders area started with a visit to Lijssenthoek cemetery, containing almost 11,000 British, American, and French graves. One of the largest cemeteries in the region, it is located on the site of a former field hospital and air strip. They then visited Essex Farm Cemetery, where John McCrea wrote his famous poem In Flanders Fields, when he was stationed there as a doctor during the war.

People and places

Service marks improvements in Clare Parish Church and hall

On Sunday 25th June, Archdeacon and Rural Dean Elizabeth Cairns preached at a service of thanksgiving at Clare Parish Church, as the packed renovated hall was dedicated, together with a painting of the church buildings.



Earlier, during the service in the very full church, the congregation were treated to musical contributions from musicians and singers with both ministry and personal contact with the parish.

New pew bibles were also dedicated. The normally small Clare congregation were keen to thank the tradesmen who generously helped with the renovation and

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all who led services before the arrival of current Ballymore and Clare Rector, Rev Colin Darling



Tiles for Habitat for Humanity

The girls of St Michael's church, Belfast, loved painting tiles for their friend Pete from Habitat for Humanity - they look forward to seeing what happens to the masses of tiles next! Habitat Restore opened recently on the Crumlin Road and is well worth a visit as is checking out this wonderful organisation <https://www.habitatireland.org/>

Moderator in Newcastle

The Moderator conducted the morning service in Newcastle Presbyterian on Sunday and then visited Lawnfield House.

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Pray for safe travels for the Moderator and Mrs Mawhinney and that the service and the visit will be a blessing and encouragement to all those involved.

Belfast Bible College open day

BBC is holding a College Open Day on Thursday 24th August at 10.00 am so if you're an RS or Careers Teacher, "please pop this date into your diary and, if you're a student getting A level results on 17th, this might be useful to you.

"You'll be able to have a look around the campus, meet some of our staff team, have a coffee and ask any questions you want. We'd love to see you."

Email for more information - info@belfastbiblecollege.ac.uk

Select Vestry service over 40 years recognised

It was a great pleasure for his fellow parishioners to present a gift to Sam McKeever yesterday to mark his retirement from Castleknock and Mulhuddart Select Vestry.

Sam served on the Select Vestry for over 40 years and was church warden for a good part of that. Sam also looked after the graveyard for many years and was always the go to for information regarding graves. Sam helped out in many other ways in the parish including ringing the church bell.

The McKeever household was also a sanctuary for many in the church over the years with Sam and his late wife Mary



often having a house full of children from the school or parish as well as being a place of hospitality for many adults.

Unfortunately due to limited mobility Sam is unable to get out to church and so he decided to step down from Select Vestry at this year's Easter General Vestry.

To mark his many years of service the Vestry presented him with a beautiful painting of St Brigid's church and graveyard along with a special gold medal marking 300 years of Castleknock National School.

Rev Colin was joined in making the presentation by two of our longest serving Vestry members Gladys Hutchinson and

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James Anderson along with Sam's daughter Orla who carries on the mantle of her father in serving on the Vestry.



Rings of bells for new rector

There was a great evening of celebration in St Mary's Church, Dunmanway in Fanlobbus Union of Parishes to welcome their new rector, the Reverend Adam Pullen. Dunmanway is one of 7 churches in the Church of Ireland in Cork, Cloyne and Ross with a full ring of bells. Here are Bishop Colton and the new rector with the team of bellringers who rang before and after the Service.

Derry ordination

Yesterday afternoon Shaun Doherty was ordained priest in St Eugene's Cathedral, Derry, by Bishop Donal McKeown.

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His friends in the diocese have wished him “Ad multos annos!”... many happy and fulfilled years of priestly service.

First female dean in Derry and Raphoe

The Diocese of Derry and Raphoe is to get its first female dean following the appointment of Rev Liz Fitzgerald as Rector of the Grouped Parishes of Raphoe, Raymochy and Clonleigh and Dean of St Eunan’s Cathedral.

Rev Fitzgerald’s current parishes are Gweedore, Carrickfinn and Templecrone.

The Omagh-native said she may have “squealed” when the proposition was initially put to her by the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Andrew Forster to succeed Rev Arthur Barrett as Dean. “I think I squealed, ‘Who me?’”

Mrs Fitzgerald says she is looking forward to the challenge immensely. “Being invited to be Rector of the Raphoe Group and Dean of St Eunan’s Cathedral is very exciting and I’m really looking forward to it. When I was ordained curate, I never thought that I would see a time when I would be in full-time ministry in a parish, so that is very exciting for me. My grandmother lived next door to St Patrick’s Cathedral in Armagh. As a child I’d be in and out of the Cathedral and I just loved the feeling and the atmosphere and I would have worshipped there, so to be invited to be Rector of St Eunan’s Cathedral is wonderful. The ‘Dean bit’ I think is exciting, it’s a privilege. I’ve a lot of learning to do.”



St Eunan's has a long and distinguished history. The church itself is 800 years old and people have prayed on the site for 1,400 years. While acknowledging the historic nature of her appointment, Rev Fitzgerald says she is undaunted by it, putting her trust in God.

“I was brought up in a family where we considered professions as genderless. If it was the right person in the right place to do the right job that was good. The fact that I've been appointed [St Eunan's Cathedral's] first lady Dean, I don't feel weighed down by it at all. I think it's very exciting. It's certainly an historic event, but I feel the weight of the calling more than the weight of history. Am I daunted? I just feel spiritually guided. I feel spiritually very content in what I've been asked to do, and I feel God will be my guide and will see me through it – but I still have to do the graft.”

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Rev Fitzgerald will miss her parishioners in west Donegal. “My part of Donegal – Bunbeg, Carrickfinn, Dungloe – is beautiful, and what makes it beautiful is the good, kind people, my parishioners and the people in the community. But about a year ago I had a restlessness deep inside me which I tried to ignore and tried to leave to one side. That restlessness continued all of last year. \[Rev Fitzgerald’s husband] Sean had a huge role in Rotary Ireland, my son was on placement in Belfast, our life was upside down and then, all of a sudden, our life is now calm. Sean’s retired. Rotary has stopped. This offer has been presented to me and I’ve said ‘Yes’ because the time is right, I’m ready for another challenge – I’ve time for another challenge – and I thank the Lord that this is my challenge.”

“I’ve always loved the sense of peace in Raphoe Cathedral. It never, ever dawned on me that I would actually end up being Rector of a cathedral and whenever it was proposed to me, I just heard God say, ‘This is yours’. It was the strangest feeling. I didn’t stop and think about it. I just put it totally in God’s hands, and that’s why I’m so calm and excited all at once.”

Rev Fitzgerald says she is not totally sure what being Dean of St Eunan’s entails in its entirety but says she is up for the challenge. “I feel energised, I feel awakened. Sean even said this morning that I look 10 years younger. This has reawakened my call, my duty. I’m ready to roll up my sleeves and learn about the administrative roles and responsibilities of being Dean and Rector, as well as the pastoral needs and the worship needs involved. I’m ready to roll up my sleeves and go.”

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A date has yet to be finalised for Rev Fitzgerald's institution as Rector and installation as Dean. "The only thing that I have in my head," Rev Fitzgerald says, "is that St Eunan's Day is the 23rd of September and it would be lovely if something could happen around St Eunan's Day.

"It's all a bit of a fantasy to me. George Otto Simms was the Archbishop in Armagh when I was a child. He inspired in me how central to the Church and yet how important to our faith a cathedral and cathedral worship can be. I just feel privileged. Thank you, God. Thank you for letting me serve this way."

Bishop Forster has congratulated Rev Fitzgerald on her appointment and thanked her for her ministry in the Gweedore Group. "On behalf of the Diocese, I wish to express my gratitude to Liz for her generous and faith-filled witness in Gweedore, Carrickfinn and Templecrone. She is a gifted priest and pastor, and will share those gifts with her new parishioners in Raphoe, Raymochy and Clonleigh. I trust that parishioners in Raphoe, Manorcunningham and Lifford will welcome Liz warmly and offer her their prayers and support."

New rector for Killala group

Bishop Michael Burrows has appointed the Rev Alex Morahan as Incumbent of the Killala Group (Killala Union & Kilmoremoy Union).

The Bishop says "I'm delighted that the Revd Alex Morahan has accepted my invitation to be Rector and will arrive in



early November. He is currently full-time chaplain to Kilkenny College but is by birth a Mayo man. His ministry began in the RC context, in which he had rich international experience, but then he moved away from that context and embraced Anglicanism as a parishioner in Bunclody, Co Wexford where he currently resides. He served as a fulltime lay healthcare chaplain for some years in Dublin as part of an ecumenical team before taking up his present role in Kilkenny college.”

Some words from Rev Morahan - “I am genuinely excited to be appointed to the Killala Group and am looking forward to meeting all those working in and connected to all 7 churches. I am also truly sad to leave the people of Kilkenny college, staff, students and their families behind me. I have great love for and belief in the young people I've known through these 4 years, I have also enjoyed the support and friendship of Bishop Adrian Wilkinson and many clergy friends and congregations throughout Cashel, Ferns

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and Ossory. They will always be a special part of this journey of mine. I'm married to Maggie Power and we have a daughter, Megan, who has just completed her Leaving cert in Kilkenny college. We are nervous and excited about this new step in our journey.”

<https://tlk.ie/parish/killala-group-of-parishes/>

News reports

King and Queen to be presented with Honours of Scotland

Their Majesties King Charles III and Queen Camilla will be presented with the Honours of Scotland during a National Service of Thanksgiving at St Giles' Cathedral on Wednesday 5 July.

The event follows the King's coronation which was held on 6 May in Westminster Abbey in London and will feature centuries-old aspects of Scottish royal tradition.

Before the service, the Honours of Scotland will be escorted from Edinburgh Castle to the cathedral by a People's Procession from participants from across the country representing different aspects of Scottish life.

The Royal Procession will leave from the Palace of Holyroodhouse and finish at St Giles', with the public able to watch both processions from the Royal Mile.

There will be contributions at St Giles' from the Most Rev Mark Strange, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church and from the Rt Rev Sally Foster-Fulton, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and the ceremony will also include representatives from other faiths and different Christian denominations.

Record number of Catholics turn their back on the church in Germany

More than half a million baptised Catholics left the Catholic church in Germany last year, according to new figures from the German Bishops' Conference.

It's the highest number ever recorded, with 522,821 leaving in 2022 – but if deaths are included, that figure rises to more than 708,000.

Just over 155,000 baptisms were recorded, with 1,447 people joining the church in the same period.

The number of people leaving the church last year was 44 per cent higher than the 360,000 recorded in 2021. In 2020, just over 270,000 people left the church.

Nearly 21 million people in Germany are officially listed as Catholic – almost a quarter of the country's population of 84 million.

Despite these departures, Church statistics for 2022 show that nearly 21 million people in Germany remained officially

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Catholic by the end of the year, representing 24.8 per cent of the country's resident population of 84.4 million.

The figures also show a slight increase in Mass attendance in 2021 – up from 4.3 per cent to 5.7 per cent. The number of church weddings also increased by around 15,000 to 35,467 in 2022.

The Catholic Church in Germany is currently undergoing a period of reform known as the Synodal Way. It has been criticised by some traditional Catholics who oppose any attempt at making the church more liberal.

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Service from St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Glasgow.

The Very Rev Kelvin Holdsworth led worship on BBC Radio 4. The Provost was assisted by the Vice-Provost, The Rev Canon Oliver Brewer-Lennon, and Associate Priest The Rev Dr Maggie McTernan.

The 40-minute broadcast is available to listen again until 10 July here on the BBC website. At the service, which celebrated music and singing, the Cathedral Choir was directed by Frikki Walker, and the organist was John Gormley.

Music: When in our music God is Glorified (Tune: Engelberg)

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Jubilate (Philip Stopford)

Could It Be that God is Singing (Lewis Folk Melody)

Over my head I hear music in the air

Angel Voices Ever Singing (Tune: Angel Voices)

The 40-minute broadcast is available to listen again until 10 July here on the BBC website. The text of the service is also presented -

[<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001msy2>]

3 Lessons of Healing by Br David



Recording of Br David Jardine speaking on 3 Lessons of Healing

Methodist Pioneer Mission Leaders insight

Two Pioneer Mission Leaders in the Methodist Church in Ireland, Neil Curran and Steven Foster were commissioned

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at Conference on Saturday 10th June 2023. Neil was commissioned as a Pioneer Mission Leader in the Braniel estate in Belfast. Steven was commissioned as a Pioneer Mission leader in Country Galway. Learn more from Neil and Steven here: <http://bit.ly/46e3yov>

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Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

Church News Ireland

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