

# Church News Ireland



**Image of the day – Shared art transforms church wall**



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# Image of the day



## Shared art transforms church wall

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**Year 11 Art students from Loreto College and Coleraine Grammar School took part in a street art walking tour in Portstewart and Coleraine, before transforming the wall alongside St. Patrick's Church in Coleraine.**

The students worked together to prepare and base coat the wall, before painting a shoal of wild Atlantic salmon. A massive well done to all involved, so much great talent.

Mrs McGill, Head of Art at Loreto, thanked Mr G. Hutchinson, Head of Art at CGS, for bringing his students along and taking part in the event. Further thanks to Mrs Gormley, Shared Education Co-ordinator at Loreto, for all her hard work behind the scenes, which enabled the 2-day event to run so smoothly.

## People and places

### Celebrating Gurteen College's past and future

**This Sunday the Friends of Gurteen College are hosting a Christian celebration, with a focus on the ethos of Gurteen, with a nod to the past and an eye to the future.**

Friends of Gurteen College from across Ireland, would be delighted to welcome you to a special afternoon as they give thanks for the vision, life and progress of the College since its founding in 1947. The service is also very much a celebration of the progress of Gurteen in regard to its



trajectory of further expansion and commitment to rural life, community and the environment into the future.

There will be many who have had associations with the College in the past or who are simply interested - do come along - you are very welcome.

### Programme

3.30pm Refreshments/ 4.00pm Campus and Farm tours – self guided/ 5.00pm Celebration Service/ 6.00pm Tree Planting Ceremony/ Sandwich tea/ 7.00pm approx. Close



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## Claire ordained priest after serious illness with two spells in intensive care



**There was a great mood of celebration and thankfulness in Derg Parish Church on Thursday evening as Rev Claire Henderson was ordained priest by the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Andrew Forster.**

The new curate has battled against serious illness in the three years since she was ordained deacon, including two spells in intensive care.

Bishop Andrew said to Rev Henderson, "After what you've been through these last number of years, Claire, this was

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just the work of God's spirit that you were brought to these parishes [of Derg and Termonamongan]. I really think God's hand was in that."

The new priest served most of her diaconate under the guidance of the Rector of the Derg Group of Parishes, Rev Peter Ferguson, who preached the sermon at the Service of Ordination. The new curate's parents, George and Jean, sat beside her in the front pew, along with her brother, David, who delivered the first reading.

In his sermon, the Rector recounted his great admiration for the famous polar explorer, Sir Ernest Shackleton, whose 1914 expedition on the ship Endurance was - he said - regarded as the greatest example of survival in history. "If the words 'endurance' and 'survival' could be applied to anyone I have the privilege to know," Rev Ferguson said, "it would be to Claire."

**Thursday evening's service was more than an ordination, the Preacher said. "It's a celebration of life and grateful thanks to God for His grace. It is remarkable that we stand with Claire here today. Praise be to the Lord."**

"In 2020, in 'lock-down', Claire was ordained deacon and after a short spell in Raphoe joined us in Derg and Killeter, at a time when we were recording services online. Claire you don't like taking the easy approach, do you, at all?" That was borne out by Rev Henderson's bouts of serious illness (which put her in ICU on two occasions). "I remember Claire sending me messages from ICU about parish ministry



and ideas that she had. I said, ‘Claire, you’re in ICU; would you rest for goodness sake?’” ...

...Rev Ferguson said he was excited about the next step in his curate’s “adventure with God” and what it would mean for the clergy team, the parish group, the rural deanery and the diocese as she entered into part-time stipendiary curacy.

The Rector and the Bishop were joined by two Archdeacons for Thursday’s service, Venerable Robert Miller (Archdeacon of Derry) and Venerable David Huss (Archdeacon of Raphoe). Clergy from both dioceses attended and took part in the ‘laying on of hands’.

Music for the service was provided by the Derg Parish Group organist Gordon Speer.





Afterwards, the congregation moved to the nearby parish youth hall for refreshments and speeches. The new priest said: “Most of you’ll know this has been quite the journey for me. I was ordained at the height of Covid in 2020 and I was meant to be in Raphoe but Dean Arthur [Barrett] moved on and I was reassigned to Peter.”

Rev Henderson thanked her rector for his leadership and support. During her three years as Deacon, she said, she had spent a long time in hospital but knew the whole time that the parishes were praying for her. “That kept me strong, and they’re still praying for me and that’s what keeps me going”. She was excited now to see what the future held for her as curate in Derg and Termonamongan.

Bishop Andrew also thanked the Rector for the training he had been providing for Rev Henderson, and expressed



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gratitude, too, to the parishioners of St John's and St Bestius' Churches.

“What you've found in Derg and Termonamongan,” he told Rev Henderson, “are warm-hearted, big-hearted, loving-hearted people who have taken you to their hearts, and cared for you and have been blessed by you as you seek to be a blessing to them.”

The Bishop recalled how inspirational Claire had been during her spells in hospital. “When Claire was in hospital – it was Covid times, and we couldn't [visit] – and I used to phone her up, knowing she was really ill, and yet she was cheerful, she was positive, she was prayerful, she was faith-filled. It was really humbling for me.

“So, Claire, we just delight, tonight. At times we wondered was this going to happen, were you going to be able to take the next step in ministry? And the Lord has provided the way and we bless His holy name for that and give Him the glory in what He's been doing in your life and what He continues to do in the life of these great parishes.”

## **Institution in Nenagh today**

**Today Saturday, June 24th at 3.30pm the Rev Keith Barry will be instituted St Mary's Church, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary – Midsummer's Day and the Feast of the Birth of John the Baptist.**

Bishop Michael Burrows writes...Rev Barry comes to the shores of Lough Derg after a long effective ministry particularly in military chaplaincy in the context of the British

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armed forces. However, his home place is Kinsale in Co Cork and he is delighted to be returning to parochial ministry in his native land.



Rev Barry says “In the Bible, the end of successful journeys is often marked by rest and refreshment and that is my vision for the Nenagh Union of Parishes: that we will be in the community, for the community a place of rest and refreshment, a place where through word, sacrament, music, silence and service we fold space and time into what a church is meant to be – an Embassy of the Kingdom of Heaven where the Divine may be glimpsed, felt and fed upon to give us the strength to carry on in our Pilgrimage of the Christian Life”.

The diocese asks for your prayers for Rev Barry as he embarks on new ministry in Nenagh & the United Dioceses of Tuam, Limerick & Killaloe and for the parishioners of Nenagh Union as they prepare to welcome their new Rector.

His Institution as Incumbent will take place at St Mary’s Church, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary at 3.30pm on Saturday, 24th



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June, 2023 – Midsummer's Day and the Feast of the Birth of John the Baptist.

## Welcome for new Dean of Kildare



**The parishioners of Newbridge Union and Kildare Parish group have welcomed their new rector. Rev Isobel Jackson.**

She was instituted by Bishop Pat Storey on the evening of 22 June, in St Brigid's Cathedral, Kildare. During the Service she was also installed as Dean of Kildare, by Dean Paul Bogle..

The preacher at the service was Very Rev Cliff Jeffers. He is the Dean of the Cathedral Church of Saint Fachtna, Rosscarbery.

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Dean Jackson was joined by her husband Norman, along with family and friends. Clergy from across the diocese, former colleagues, local political representatives, senior Garda and army officers from The Curragh joined the parishioners of the parish group. At the close of the Service speeches were made to welcome Sobel and Norman, as they begin their new life in the Group of parishes and the dioceses.

After the Service a reception was held in the Keadeen Hotel, Newbridge.

## News reports

### **Alabama Episcopal church observed first anniversary of shooting with worship, unveiled labyrinth memorial garden**

**June 16 marked one year since three Episcopalians were killed in a shooting at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Vestavia Hills, Alabama, a suburb of Birmingham, writes Shireen Korkzan of ENS.**

The three victims — Jane Pounds, 84, Bart Rainey, 84, and Sharon Yeager, 75, longtime parishioners of St. Stephen's — were participating in a potluck inside the church's parish hall when an occasional churchgoer opened fire. Two died at the scene and one died later in the hospital. In May, the shooter pleaded guilty to capital murder and was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.





*A special altar hanging made from ribbon with prayers and reflections written by people in the weeks after a shooting killed three parishioners on June 16, 2022, at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Vestavia Hills, Alabama, was used during an evening worship service on the first anniversary of the tragedy to commemorate a year of healing and honouring the victims. Photo: Shireen Korkzan/Episcopal News Service*

“By now, most of the story has been told and forgotten by others in the world who have moved on with their lives, and that is okay with me,” Jim Musgrove, a parishioner of St. Stephens, wrote in an essay. “For those of us at Saint Stephens, however, our memories and pain will never end.”

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Musgrove was awarded the Carnegie Medal by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, North America's highest honor for civilian heroism, for subduing the shooter until police arrived. His essay was published in "The Light Shines in the Darkness: Choosing Hope after a Mass Shooting," a compilation of essays written by 42 parishioners of St. Stephen's reflecting on the tragedy and the lifelong healing process.

The essay collection was edited by parishioner Melinda Rainey Thompson, a local author and Bart Rainey's daughter. She's also an English professor at Birmingham-Southern College.

To honour Pounds, Rainey and Yeager, St. Stephen's observed the one-year anniversary of the shooting with a special evening worship service attended by hundreds of people, followed by a reception. Earlier in the day, a labyrinth memorial garden, which includes a plaque and three sheet-water fountains symbolizing Pounds, Rainey and Yeager, was unveiled to the public. The current plaque is temporary and will be replaced by a permanent one later.

Shooting survivors and the victims' families arrived at St. Stephen's earlier in the day for private reflection and prayer.

"How can we not give thanks to three of the most faithful people that this community has ever met? They lived in a life of the ultimate witness to God's love, and there's a sense of incredible gratitude," the Rev. John Burruss, rector of St. Stephen's, told Episcopal News Service.



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Counselors were available on site for anyone in need throughout the course of the day.

In the weeks after the shooting, people wrote prayers and reflections on brightly colored ribbons and tied them on wire in front of the altar. Liz Edge, a St. Stephen's parishioner and a local artist, used the ribbons to create a special altar frontal and stoles for clergy that were used during the evening service.



*The labyrinth is available for public use as a form of prayer and meditation.*

“I think grace that comes with brokenness being made a connection with the community, that’s what the labyrinth will be,” Alabama Bishop Glenda Curry said in a news

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conference. “It will be a place where everybody can come to collect.”

Curry served as officiant while Burruss preached the evening worship service. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry was originally scheduled to preach the service and bless the labyrinth memorial garden, but he’s currently not clear for travel due to recent health issues. However, he told Bishop Glenda Curry that he plans to visit St. Stephen’s sometime before his tenure concludes in 2024.

Burruss said the tragedy and subsequent year of healing among the St. Stephen’s community has, in a way, been clarifying for his faith.

“As Christians, we are not promised safety; we’re not promised anything other than eternal life,” Burruss said. “What we have found here is a commitment not only to care for each other, but to continue to be a place of inclusivity and to welcome the stranger. It’s challenging and this has been really hard ... but St. Stephen’s is testament that God’s love is breaking through all things. And we don’t have control over what happens, but we have control on how we respond. So is our baptismal covenant.”

-Shireen Korkzan is a reporter and assistant editor for Episcopal News Service.

# Church News Ireland

## In the media

### Dublin to finally get a Catholic Cathedral - but on the southside

**St Andrew's Church on Westland Row identified as best site while Pro-Cathedral to become basilica, Olivia Kelly and Patsy McGarry write in the Irish Times.**

Dublin's Pro-Cathedral, which has served Catholics in the capital for nearly 200 years, may be about to lose its current status and become a basilica under a diocesan plan, while St Andrew's Church on Westland Row, south of the Liffey, would become the city's cathedral.

The "Pro" always indicated the temporary nature of the cathedral at St Mary's Church on Marlborough Street, pending the building of a new one.

Various sites were put forward over the years, including Merrion Square, the GPO and a site around the north end of Capel Street, but none of these schemes were progressed and the "Pro" remained the city's principal Catholic church.

In a statement on Thursday, the Catholic Archdiocese said: "Dublin does not have a cathedral."

St Mary's had, for nearly 200 years, provided a focal point for the Archdiocese "but it was always envisaged that, at some point, a cathedral building would be required that had both the space and the facilities to accommodate the full range of diocesan liturgical and pastoral ministry. For a



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variety of reasons, that never happened but the limitations of the St Mary's building and complex remain.”

St Mary's was in an area “undergoing renewal” it said, while St Andrew's Church “is well placed to engage with the vibrant residential, commercial and cultural heart of the city”.

Having consulted with the Council of Priests, an advisory body to Archbishop Dermot Farrell, the Archbishop decided Dublin should have a “properly designated cathedral and that it should be complemented by a church on the other side of the Liffey whose status and dignity are formally recognised and supported,” the statement said.

“For logistical reasons, there are strong grounds for considering that St Andrew's might better serve the cathedral function, with St Mary's raised to the dignity of a basilica.”

[ Targeting of refugees and asylum seekers ‘unacceptable’ and risks ‘damaging social fabric’ - Churches ]

The proposal will require approval by the authorities in Rome and, in advance of seeking sanction, the Archbishop is establishing a project group which will include representatives of both St Mary's and St Andrew's parishes to develop proposals, supported by expert and technical advice, the diocese said. It is envisaged proposals will be presented by the project group for decision before the end of the year.

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Should the Pro-Cathedral ultimately be designated a basilica, it will become just the third in Ireland, joining that at Knock in Co Mayo and at Lough Derg in Co Donegal.

## **Presbyterian General Assembly 2023: Leaders narrowly reject proposal to clamp down on excessive public dissent by ministers - after repeated rows on LGBT issues**

**The collective leadership of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has narrowly rejected a high profile attempt to stop ministers from dissenting excessively in the media, Philip Bradfield writes in The Newsletter**

Elders and ministers from across the island are meeting this week in Belfast in the church's Annual General Assembly – the main collective decision making forum of the church. Ahead of the gathering, Clerk of the General Assembly **Rev Trevor Gribben** told journalists that they would be considering a code to reign in ministers from excessive dissent in the media.

The moves come after repeated clerics and elders have gone to the media in recent years to express personal anger about the denomination's conservative views on LGBT relationships.

The proposed code, from the Decision and Dissent Task Group, said it would “not be appropriate for an ordained

minister or elder to fail to implement a decision taken by the courts of the church, or publicly to promote a view which undermines a stated position of the church, whether doctrinal, moral, or administrative.”

However **Rev Mark Neilly** from First Ahoghill Presbyterian Church proposed that the clause be sent back to the church’s General Council to be revised and re-presented next year.

He was uncomfortable with the apparent ambiguity.

“For example would I or another minister be permitted to present a position from the pulpit that is at variance with what is in our code or a decision taken by the general assembly?” he asked.

He said this is not contrary to the supreme standards of the church but would be contrary to the proposed code under debate.

“Since there is no mention of exceptions in this report for churches or the preaching of the word, it feels as though we are left in no-man’s land.”

His fear was that the proposal could be “used as a blunt instrument to bash certain sections of the church”.

Seconding the proposal, **Rev Richie Cronin** from Trinity Presbyterian Church in Cork, said the code was not clear to him – and others.

“It is not clear and because it isn’t I am worried that this line would be weaponised against members of the assembly in the future,” he said.



He added: “People come and go in our church, and who is to say that some future Presbyterians won’t look at these words and tell us that this ban is much stronger than we are being told today?”

He suggested that landmark decisions that were taken by the church in the past – and might come again in the future – might not have been possible without public dissent; such as the decision to sever ties with the World Council of Churches in the 1970s.

**Prof Michael McClenaghan**, the incoming principal of the church’s Union Theological College who helped draft the code, politely disagreed – and urged the house to reject their amendment.

In consulting widely about the proposed code, he said one point that came back “frequently and emphatically... was that ordination vows need to mean something”.

An audible vote on the amendment was too close, so elders and ministers had to stand to indicate their wish to reject the code.

It will now go back to the church’s General Council to be reviewed and re-presented to the assembly next year.

When you lie on your resume  
but still get the job



## Church News Ireland

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