



A conferring ceremony at St Patrick's College

Maynooth to bolster links with top-level colleges

St Patrick's College, Maynooth is set to strengthen its links with a number of top-level European colleges this year.

The Kildare-based Pontifical University has been in discussions since 2013 with Heythrop

College, London (Britain), Tilburg School of Catholic Theology, Utrecht (Holland) and the Newman Institute, Uppsala (Sweden) with a view to forming a strategic partnership.

Despite the announcement of the closure of Heythrop College, the Ecclesiastical Faculties of Theology and Philosophy (The Bellermino Institute – Heythrop) is still a partner in the proposed Utrecht Consortium.

Maynooth's Vice-President Prof. Michael Mullaney told *The Irish Catholic* that the grouping "will not diminish the autonomy of each participating academic institution, but will empower participating institutions to greater flexibility in academic co-operation".

Noting that the proposal would be an "innovation" in the world of ecclesiastical academic institutions, Prof. Mullaney said it would "require the approval" of the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education, which is "aware of the discussions and has received regular updates on the consortium's progress".

The canon lawyer said he hoped the colleges would be in a position to submit their proposal for the proposed consortium to Rome later this year and expects the Holy See to approve it *ad experimentum* for five years.

“The Holy See are up to speed on the discussions to date so far and I think are very interested in the proposal. If it works, as they have said themselves, it could be a model for other areas of the world where there are similar sized Catholic institutions that could benefit from working closer together or indeed our own consortium might expand to include other ones in Western Europe,” he said. Among the primary objectives of the proposed consortium Prof. Mullaney listed were “promoting Catholic higher education”, “facilitating the award of ecclesiastical decrees” and “finding other ways of educating the next generation of theologians and philosophers in the ways enabling them to cultivate and communicate Catholic tradition”.

The consortium, which will mainly benefit post-graduate students and lecturers, will involve joint degrees; collaborating in ecclesiastical formation for ministry; promoting joint research projects; and encouraging exchange students and teachers.

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Remembering 1916: Ordinary People in Extraordinary Circumstances

On Wednesday 17 February, the Church of Ireland Historical Centenaries Working Group will host an evening entitled 'A State of Chassis – Ordinary People in Extraordinary Circumstances in Dublin in 1916' which will be held in the Music Room of Christ Church cathedral, Dublin. Chaired by historian and broadcaster Dr John Bowman, the speakers will be Professor Keith Jeffery and Dr Fearghal McGarry from Queen's University, Belfast, and Dr Jason McElligott, Keeper of Marsh's Library.

New Armagh canons

Today On Sunday March 13 two canons will be installed in St Patricks Cathedral, Armagh. They are Revd Joyce Moore from the Drogheda, Ardee & Kilsaran Union of parishes and Revd David Hilliard, Rector of Tartaraghan & Diamond parishes

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Cork and Clogher Mothers Union events

Today the Mothers' Union in Cork, Cloyne & Ross will have a Quiet Day in St Matthew's church hall, Aughadown, which will be led by Bishop Richard Henderson, while on Friday evening in Colebrooke parish church Mrs Irene Boyd will be commissioned as MU President for the Diocese of Clogher.

What we can all learn from outcome of McConnell case

Alf McCreary, Religious Correspondent of the Belfast Telegraph commented on aspects of this recent case. He noted that neither the Methodist Church nor the C of I commented upon the issues involved.

He writes, "This case centred on some of Pastor McConnell's outspoken remarks about Islam, but the issue transcended individual personalities and became an important test-case for the freedom of speech and of conscience.

Much credit is due to the wisdom of District Judge Liam McNally who heard the case. He deftly steered through the options facing him,

and produced a just verdict that comforted the pastor and his supporters.

In doing so he also cut off the road to martyrdom. He found the pastor not guilty, judging that his remarks did not meet "the high threshold of being grossly offensive".

However, he also noted, significantly, that the pastor's remarks had been offensive, though not grossly so. This in turn raises the question as to what is "offensive" or "grossly offensive", and this is surely a matter of subjective judgment.

The judge's ruling showed uncommon common sense, and that should be the end of the matter. Whether or not you think that the PPS was most unwise to proceed with the prosecution - and many people think it was - the case raised many important points.

Surprisingly, there was no public reaction from the Methodists or Anglicans on such an important matter, but the Presbyterians issued a deeply thoughtful statement through the convenor of its Council for Church in Society...

...In diplomatic language, Dr Hamilton also warned of the need for "self-imposed parameters that support important freedoms such as the rights of free speech and free

assembly". The important words here are "self-imposed". None of us can say in public just whatever comes into our heads, though our politicians seem to do this far too often.

Meanwhile, Peter Lynas, the national director of the Evangelical Alliance Northern Ireland, and himself a former barrister, rightly underlined that "it is vital that the State does not stray into the censorship of Church sermons or unwittingly create a right not to be offended".

However, he made it clear that "the Church must steward its freedom of speech responsibly so as to present Jesus in a gracious and appealing way to everyone".

More at -

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/opinion/columnists/alf-mccreary/what-we-can-all-learn-from-outcome-of-mcconnell-case-34347456.html>

Amnesty International last night moved to clarify its position in relation to the trial of Pastor James McConnell.

News Letter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/amnesty-clarifies-its-position-on-trial-of-pastor-for-muslim-remarks-1-7148219>

Albert Gubay, founder of Kwik Save, gave half of his money to Church causes dies aged 87

A billionaire papal knight who founded the supermarket chain Kwik Save has died aged 87.

Albert Gubay, who once made a “pact with God” to leave half his wealth to the Church, died at his home in Cheshire.

His firm the Derwent Group announced: “It is with the greatest sadness that we have to announce the death of our founder.

“Our thoughts are with his wife Carmel, his children and grandchildren,” added a spokesman.

In 2011 Gubay told the BBC that he made a pact with God as a young businessman. He said: “One Saturday, I didn’t know where the next penny was coming from and I lay on my bed and I had this conversation with God,” he said.

“I said: ‘God, help me and whatever I make over the years of my life, when I die, half will go to the Church.’



Albert Gubay with his wife Carmel and the then Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster in 2011

Since then half of his money has gone to causes identified by the Catholic Church, with the other half going to other good causes.

In 2011 then Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster conferred a papal knighthood on Gubay, in recognition of his charitable acts.

Mr Gubay was born in 1928 in Rhyl, Wales, to an Iraqi Jewish father and an Irish mother. He began his business career in North Wales selling sweets during the ration period following World War Two.

He went on to launch successful businesses such as the Total Fitness empire and acquired property developments in Liverpool and Manchester.

Mr Gubay made a fortune in excess of £1bn, a number he argued was “so great it does not mean anything”.

Mediator reports on options to rebuild or replace Christchurch NZ Cathedral

A decision as to whether the earthquake damaged Christchurch Cathedral should be reinstated or replaced could be a step closer

Christchurch Cathedral in New Zealand could be reinstated after a mediator reported that restoration work could leave the re-built cathedral “indistinguishable” from the one that was all-but destroyed by the 2011 earthquake. But the report says that the “costly and risky project” would be significantly more expensive and take much longer to build than a contemporary replacement.

There has been something of an impasse about which of the two options should be followed and



A decision as to whether the earthquake damaged Christchurch Cathedral should be reinstated or replaced could be a step closer

the New Zealand government appointed lawyer Miriam Dean QC to mediate. Following the publication of her report, the Diocese of Christchurch said it would look again at the cost and feasibility of reinstating the cathedral. Further announcements are expected in April.

The report by Miriam Dean stops short of endorsing either option but, *Anglican Taonga* reports, “crucially brings to the negotiating table parties that have been at loggerheads over the cathedral’s fate for more than three years.”

“Miriam Dean QC and her team did an excellent job of assessing the positions of the parties involved and finding points of agreement. We are grateful for her hard work,” the Bishop of Christchurch, the Rt Revd Victoria Matthews, said, adding that the engineers and quantity surveyors involved were able to reach a large measure of high-level agreement on the engineering options and indicative costs of reinstating Christchurch Cathedral.

The cost of reinstatement has been estimated at \$105 million New Zealand Dollars (approximately £47.6 million GBP) and the work could be completed by 2022. In contrast, the cost of building a completely new cathedral has been estimated at costing up to \$66 million New Zealand Dollars (approximately £30 million GBP).

“The Anglican Diocese of Christchurch and the Church Property Trustees wish to move past the current deadlock to find a way forward to re-establish a cathedral in Cathedral Square,” Bishop Matthews said. “We want to support the city to move forward and we recognise the central importance of this building to many people in Christchurch.

“It is the calling of the church to minister to people; to serve the lost, the last and the least.

As the body of Christ we use buildings, but we don't exist for the sake of bricks and mortar.

“Therefore, comprehensive measures to ensure safety during deconstruction and reinstatement, and measures to achieve future safety including 100 per cent of the New Building Standard, as well as sufficient financial resources are essential.”

Further confidential discussions will take place between the government and diocesan officials on the question of safety and cost before further announcements which are expected in April.

In August 2013 a transitional “cardboard cathedral” was opened to serve the community of Christchurch.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Speculation mounts over Gerry Adams's future as SF leader

Irish Independent

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/politics/speculation-mounts-over-gerry-adamss-future-as-sf-leader-34349710.html>

Teachers set up protest group to fight new Stormont policy on jobs

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/teachers-set-up-protest-group-to-fight-new-stormont-policy-on-jobs-34348054.html>

Car park for Drumcree church

News Letter

Drumcree Church is set to build a much-needed car park after a “very generous” anonymous donation of around £200,000 from a parishioner.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/drumcree-parishioner-donates-200-000-to-build-car-park-1-7150217>

Armagh priest, his buggy and the battle of Gettysburg

News Letter

A horse-drawn buggy used by a Co Armagh priest during the American Civil War is being unveiled by the Ulster American Folk Park in Omagh.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/armagh-priest-his-buggy-and-the-battle-of-gettysburg-1-7150299>

S Times/Mail

Over 100 members of the CofE including retired Bishops, Deans and members of General Synod have signed a letter (see below) asking the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to take a message to the Primates meeting that the Church has failed in its duty of care to the LGBTI community. The Bishop of Buckingham, the only serving bishop to sign the letter, is quoted.

http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/National/article1654679.ece

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3392096/Senior-Church-liberals-pile-pressure-Archbishop-stop-vilification-gay-Christians.html>

Christianity Today

The Dean of St Pauls Cathedral, the Very Revd David Ison writes a first person article under the headline, "Anglicans need each other despite deep split over homosexuality".

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/dean.of.st.pauls.anglicans.need.each.other.despite.deep.split.over.homosexuality/76082.htm>

S Tel

Preview of the Primates Meeting. Archbishop Mouneer Anis of Egypt, convenor of Anglican primates in the "global south" is quoted.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/12091403/Dire-split-looms-as-Anglican-rivals-use-separate-rooms-at-summit.html>

Sun Times

Reports the details of a police file written by two detectives who investigated Peter Ball, the Bishop of Gloucester, in 1992-3 over allegations of sex abuse. Ball received a police caution at the time.

http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/Crime/article1654612.ece

BBC

The Diocese of Manchester has offered to underwrite £3,000 of unsecured loans to people affected by floods

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in Salford. The Boxing Day flooding caused "great difficulties for people" in the area, not least because about 90% were uninsured. The Very Revd Lisa Battye, Dean of Salford is quoted.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-35264143>

S Tel/Metro/Guard/Mail

Reviews of the opening of the fifth series of BBCs The Voice. One of last night's contestants was the Revd John Barron from Gateshead singing This Is The Moment from the musical Jekyll & Hyde. Sad to report, none of the four judges 'turned' for John.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/the-voice/12090839/The-Voice-BBC-One-Boy-George-steals-the-show.html>

<http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2016/jan/09/the-voice-boy-george-will-i-am-singing-vicar>

<http://metro.co.uk/2016/01/09/the-voice-2016-heres-everything-that-happened-in-the-first-show-5605690/>

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3391973/Can-new-judges-Boy-George-Paloma-Faith-save-BBC-s-flagship-singing-contest-Not-Voice-UK-sticks-losing-formula-Jim-Shelley.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3391973/Can-new-judges-Boy-George-Paloma-Faith-save-BBC-s-flagship-singing-contest-Not-Voice-UK-sticks-losing-formula-Jim-Shelley.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-3391973/Can-new-judges-Boy-George-Paloma-Faith-save-BBC-s-flagship-singing-contest-Not-Voice-UK-sticks-losing-formula-Jim-Shelley.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

Letters

SunTimes: Letter from supporters of LGBTI asking the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to take a message to the Primates meeting that the Church has failed in its duty of care to the LGBTI community. The letter has over 100 signatories.

<http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/comment/regulars/lettersandemails/article1654333.ece>

Times/Tel/Guard

Articles highlighting differences in views within the Anglican Communion over issues such as same sex marriage, ahead of the start of next week's Primates' meeting. The Guardian reports that the Church of England is braced for a 'de facto' split in the worldwide Anglican Communion over the issues of gay rights and same sex marriage. In the *Times*, the Archbishop of Canterbury is quoted saying that a 21st-century Anglican family must have "space for deep disagreement".

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/article4660459.ece>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/12090622/Justin-Welby-summit-to-tackle-Anglican-break-up.html>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/08/church-of-england-fears-talks-on-gay-rights-could-end-global-anglican-communion>

Economist

News feature examining the forthcoming meeting of the Anglican Primates.

<http://www.economist.com/news/britain/21685472-archbishop-canterbury-tries-save-anglican-communion-rowing-not-rowing>

Guard

Analysis of the issues of homosexuality and same sex marriage facing the Anglican Communion. It uses extensive historic quotes from Anglican Primates representing the wide range of views on the subject.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jan/08/how-issue-of-gay-rights-has-racked-anglican-churches-for-decades>

Big Issue

Canon Andrew White, “The vicar of Baghdad”, writes a first person article about his fears for the survival of the Christian community in Iraq. Since Isis swept through northern Iraq in 2014, the Christian church has been providing vital relief – food, medicine and shelter – to thousands of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced people who have been forced from their homes. He says that the Christians are now one of the most threatened religious minorities in the country.

<http://www.bigissue.com/features/6114/vicar-of-baghdad-praying-for-survival>

Mail

Report which says increasing numbers of parents have been caught telling lies to get their children into the best state schools and that these include professing a religious faith. The number of places withdrawn due to ‘fraud’ rose by more than 50 per cent in a single year, says the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. 284 offers were withdrawn in 2014-2015 compared with 186 a year earlier (up 53 per cent). Most were at primary schools, and of these more than a third were in London or the South East, where pressure for places is highest.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3391304/Rise-school-place-cheats-Soaring-numbers-parents-caught-lying-children-best-state-education.html>

BBC

Bibles, parish registers and the legal deeds of a Greater Manchester church are being professionally restored after they were severely damaged in last month's floods. Water in

St Mary's church, Radcliffe, threatened to ruin marriage and baptism records. A company specialising in the restoration of damaged paperwork and works of art, has promised to restore them. The vicar the Revd Carol Hayden is quoted. (See also Church of England podcast above)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-35263171>

Times

The Rt Rev Stephen Platten, Rector of St Michael's Cornhill and chairman of the governors of the Anglican Centre in Rome highlights this year's winners in the Royal Institute of British Architects and Art and Christian Enquiry's prize for the best piece of religious architecture in Britain. The recently awarded joint winners were - the Kingston Quaker Centre in southwest London, and the new chapel at Shepherd's Law hermitage in north Northumberland.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4660480.ece>

Exp

Report that police are hunting vandals who targeted two churches.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/632986/Churches-vandalised-statue-beheaded-extremist-attack-anti-christian>

Comment

Times: Michael Binyon writes that the meeting of all 38 Anglican Primates could be "make or break" for the Communion.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/faith/article4660489.ece>

January 11

Guardian: Andrew Brown writes about his fears for the survival of the Anglican Communion following the Primates Meeting.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jan/08/anglican-schism-sexuality-end-global-church-conservative-african-leaders-canterbury>