



## **Ellie Goulding is patron of Church Army project**

Singer Ellie Goulding is pictured above with Mark Russell, as she was appointed the first-ever Patron of Church Army's project for women experiencing homelessness in London, one of the largest of its kind in the United Kingdom.

The announcement follows Ellie's recent visit to the Marylebone Project, where she chatted to the women and staff about their experiences.

Ellie said: "I am so pleased to be the first-ever Patron of the Marylebone Project. This amazing place serves hundreds of homeless women every week and helps them make a fresh start. I love how the project empowers women to make the changes to transform their own lives.

"I saw this for myself when I visited a few weeks ago and was inspired by the stories of the women I met."

Church Army Chief Executive, Mark Russell, said: I am so excited that Ellie has accepted my invitation to become the Patron of the Marylebone Project. She is such an amazing advocate for homeless people and she is passionate about helping those in need. All our clients are so excited that Ellie wants to be part of our project. We are so grateful for her fantastic support."

Ellie even volunteered at Marylebone over the Christmas period to get to know the women, staff and objectives of the project better.

Ellie and homeless charity, Streets of London, recently donated £15,000 to the Marylebone Project, which will be used for its Women into Work, a programme designed to train, support and guide women on their journey towards employment. Around 110 women a year benefit from the Women into Work programme.

The Marylebone Project was able to offer 40,515 bed nights to vulnerable women during the past financial year.

## **Santa thanks East Belfast Mission's Cookery Programme volunteers**

On December 24 Santa visited the kitchens of Hosford in East Belfast to thank volunteers from the Hosfords Cookery Programme who were busy preparing Christmas dinner for homeless people the next day.

On the menu was turkey, roasties, mash, and lots of healthy vegetables. The day was spent washing and chopping vegetables, making stuffing, and preparing the turkeys for cooking the next day.



The Cookery Programme provides the residents with the skills they will need when they move into more permanent homes.

Hosford is the homeless project of East Belfast Mission based in the Skainos Centre on the Lower Newtownards Road in East Belfast and for over 20 years Hosford has provided services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It provides 26 rooms/apartments for people who have lost their home. Hosford supports individuals to make positive changes in their lives, overcome the traumas they have experienced and help them to build a better future.

## **Be agents of hope, Archbishop Martin of Armagh in New Year's message**

The followers of Christ are the agents of Christian hope, says Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland in his New Year's Day message released yesterday.

“Our challenge is to get out there, witnessing to hope, accompanying those who suffer, willing to make a difference,” he writes.

One of the difficulties we shall meet is indifference to God, he says, referring to Pope Francis message for the World Day of Peace today.

“Many people – even in our own families, communities, and country – are so swept away by the pace and concerns of everyday life that they have little time or space left for God and for reflection on their eternal destiny.”

“One of our tasks – and privileges,” he continues, “is to gently introduce others to the joy and hope of an encounter with our friend, Jesus. Such an



***Archbishop Eamon Martin, Primate of All Ireland***

encounter changes us, so much so that it is impossible to remain indifferent to the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth, our common home.”

2016, has added significance in that it marks the centenaries of the Easter Rising and the Battle of the Somme – “events which had a profound impact on the history and culture of this island,” he writes.

The commemorations will provide opportunities for us to deepen our understanding of who we are as a people and to affirm our hope for lasting peace and justice, he writes.

“We will be able to reflect on where we are as a society and on what we want to achieve for the future.”

But sadly there are still many families shouldering grief and nursing wounds that are “raw and hurting from the legacy of violence and years of unrest”.

“We have not yet found a way of acknowledging our troubled past without being tempted to control the narrative, resorting to blame and creating hierarchies of victims,” he writes.

“During 2016 we must resist being so indifferent to the other’s suffering that we engage in revisionism or false glorification of the past with its tragic loss of human life on all sides. Instead we should redouble our efforts to find safe spaces where we can genuinely hear one another’s stories and pain, and bolster friendship, mutual understanding, justice and peace.”

Archbishop Martin said that with his fellow Church leaders he was praying today that “our memories and commemorations of the past, alongside our hopes and longings for the future, strengthen our resolve to live together in harmony, trusting in the Lord, Jesus Christ in whom we find our hope, for he is ‘the same yesterday, today and forever’”.

## **World must overcome 'torrent of misery' to live in peace, Pope Francis**

Pope Francis, in his first message of the new year, on Friday urged people to combat the "torrent" of misery, injustice and violence in the world by overcoming all indifference to the many who are suffering.

Security was tight. Police checked the bags of people blocks away from St Peter's Square and about 10,000 people went through additional, airport-style screening to get into St Peter's Basilica and hear Francis celebrate Mass.

"We ask how long human evil will continue to sow violence and hatred in our world, reaping





***Pope Francis censes a statue of the infant Jesus as he leads a mass on New Year's Day at Saint Peter's Basilica.***

innocent victims ... we are witnessing hordes of men, women and children fleeing war, hunger and persecution, ready to risk their lives simply to encounter respect for their fundamental rights," the pope said.

In his homily he urged people to overcome what he called "a torrent of misery" by "building an ever more just and fraternal world, a world in which every person and every creature can dwell in peace, in the harmony of God's original creation".

The 79-year-old looked and sounded well despite having made many public appearances over the Christmas and New Year season.

He called on everyone, on the day the 1.2 billion-member Roman Catholic Church marks its annual World Day of Peace, to "let ourselves be reborn, to overcome the indifference which blocks solidarity, and to leave behind the false neutrality which prevents sharing".

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

### **Ian Paisley felt betrayed by DUP and Free Presbyterian Church, says wife**

BBC News

In an interview for BBC Talkback to be broadcast on Thursday, Baroness Paisley spoke in-depth about his departure from the **church** and party.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-35161398>

### **Newton Emerson: Fresh Start for North in 2016 looks predictable**

Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/newton-emerson-fresh-start-for-north-in-2016-looks-predictable-1.2481299>

## **Fine Gael duo vow to address abortion in 2016**

Irish Examiner

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/fine-gael-duo-vow-to-address-abortion-in-2016-373962.html>

## **Moral ambiguity over 1916 and northern Troubles - Denis Bradley**

Irish News

<http://www.irishnews.com/opinion/columnists/2016/01/01/news/moral-ambiguity-over-1916-and-northern-troubles-367189/>

## **Letters of support for sex offender ex-bishop Peter Ball released**

BBC News

A former Archbishop of Canterbury wrote to police with letters of support for the then Bishop of Gloucester - Peter Ball - who was being investigated for sex offences, it is revealed.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-35205948>

<http://home.bt.com/news/uk-news/church-apologises-to-sex-abuse-victims-of-shamed-bishop-11364031379947>

## **Pope accepts resignation of Australian bishop accused of cover-up over child sex abuse**

Christian Today

[http://www.christiantoday.com/article/pope\\_accepts\\_resignation\\_of\\_australian\\_bishop\\_accused\\_of\\_cover\\_up\\_over\\_child\\_sex\\_abuse/75221.htm](http://www.christiantoday.com/article/pope_accepts_resignation_of_australian_bishop_accused_of_cover_up_over_child_sex_abuse/75221.htm)

## **Alienated Catholics should return to fold – George Hook**

Irish Catholic

<http://irishcatholic.ie/article/alienated-catholics-should-return-fold---george-hook>

## **Christmas youth retreat attracts largest numbers yet**

Irish Catholic

<http://irishcatholic.ie/article/christmas-youth-retreat-attracts-largest-numbers-yet>

## **Archbishop of Canterbury's new year message focuses on refugees**

BBC News

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-35205943>

## **Pope designates Walsingham shrine as a minor basilica**

Catholic Herald

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2015/12/31/pope-designates-walsingham-shrine-as-a-minor-basilica/>