



Methodist Church applauds Martin McGuinness' 'unstinting work for peace'

The President of the Methodist Church, the Rev. Bill Mullally and the Church's Council on Social Responsibility, have issued the following statement, marking the retirement of Martin McGuinness:

“With the retirement of Martin McGuinness, Northern Ireland politics will be the poorer. There

was an honesty about him in that he never tried to avoid his past as a leading commander of the IRA in Derry. Dealing with political leaders in Britain and Ireland was nothing new to him as he was a negotiator for the IRA with the British and Irish Governments from the 1970's onwards.

“While acknowledging his past and the actions of others which led him into the IRA and the great loss of life his organisation caused very often to innocent civilians, it would be churlish not to commend and acknowledge his influence in the pursuit of peace. On a personal level, he was acutely aware of the pain and grief of the victims caused by the conflict. Encouraged by others, he put away the armalite and replaced it with the ballot box and we could say the rest is history.

“As a Church, we with others, applaud his unstinting work for peace sometimes perhaps at great personal cost. His was the hand that was held out in friendship even to those who continued to see him as "the enemy". His courage and bridge-building was seen in his visits to the Somme and Flanders fields; in his historic handshakes with Queen Elizabeth II and this was matched by Her Majesty's historic visit to the Irish Republic whereby her words and actions she held out a hand of friendship to a

people who had for centuries seen Britain as the enemy.

“Friendship does not mean the betrayal of aspirations. It does mean a willingness to work together for the good of all the people and leave behind the battles of the past as there are enough battles to be fought in the present.”

Warring Anglican Primates summoned to new meeting In October

The Archbishop of Canterbury has called the heads of warring Anglican factions together for a second meeting in two years, according to a report in Christian today.

Justin Welby wrote to the Anglican primates in November, the website **Anglican Ink** revealed, confirming details of an upcoming gathering in October.

Rather than being an official "Primates meeting" the leaders of the different Anglican provinces will meet "only as Primates of the Communion in 2017", Welby said.



The meeting will be hosted at Canterbury Cathedral.

The meeting will take place in Canterbury from 2-6 October and will be the first time all the leaders of the different Anglican provinces have met since January 2016.

That gathering resulted in The Episcopal Church (TEC) in the USA facing "consequences" for changing its teaching to welcome gay marriage.

The Primates' decided TEC should be removed from any decision making on "issues pertaining to doctrine or polity" for three years.

It is not clear whether TEC bishops have been invited to the October 2017 conference.

Christian Today has contacted Lambeth Palace for a response.

In his letter Welby also attached a response to "the unfortunate and continued inaccurate comments on the situation over same sex relations in the Church of England".

In November, shortly before Welby sent his letter, the C of E's senior civil servant, William Nye, rebuked the conservative body GAFCON UK after it published a list of gay clergy in relationships.

The document painted a "significantly misleading picture both of the teaching and practice of the Church of England", Nye wrote.

GAFCON represents a number of primates from the more socially conservative provinces in Africa and the global south.

All-Ireland Hurling champions to pay special tribute to Fr Alec Reid

Current All-Ireland Senior hurling champions Tipperary will play a special tribute match to one of their former hurlers and one of the architects

of the Peace Process in Northern Ireland, the late Fr Alec Reid CSSR later this month.

On Sunday 29 January, Antrim will host Tipperary for a challenge match which features in a weekend of festivities dedicated to the memory of the late Fr Reid, the Redemptorist priest originally from Nenagh who played a crucial role in the Peace Process.

Fr Reid was a member of the Tipperary Minor hurling panel which won the All-Ireland in 1949 and he was a joint-recipient of the 1995 Tipperary International Peace Award. Fr Reid was also named the Tipperary Person of the Year by the Tipperary Association, Dublin in April 2006.

Speaking about the festivities, the PRO of the Tipperary County Board Joe Bracken said "On January 29th next at 9.30 am Mass in Clonard Monastery in Belfast, three commemorative plaques will be presented in memory of Fr Alec Reid. One plaque will be presented to Clonard Monastery, one will be held in reserve and will be placed in the redeveloped Casement Park and one will be brought back to Tipperary.

Meanwhile at 12.30 pm on the same day Tipperary will take on the Antrim Senior hurling



team in Corrigan Park, Belfast in a challenge game.”

Reid was professed as a Redemptorist in 1950, and ordained a priest seven years later. For the next four years, he gave Parish Missions in Limerick, Dundalk and Galway (Esker), before moving to Clonard monastery in Belfast, where he spent almost forty years. The Redemptorist Monastery at Clonard stands on the interface between the Catholic Nationalist Falls Road and the Protestant Loyalist Shankill Road areas of West Belfast.

In 1988 Reid delivered the Last Rites to two British Army Royal Signals corporals killed by the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA) – an event known as the ‘corporals killings’ – after

they drove into a Republican funeral cortège in Belfast. A photograph of his involvement in that incident became one of the starkest and most enduring images of the Troubles. It was not known until years later that Reid was carrying a letter from Gerry Adams to John Hume outlining Adams' suggestions for a political solution to the Troubles.

In the late 1980s Reid facilitated a series of meetings between Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams and SDLP leader John Hume in an effort to establish a 'Pan-Nationalist front' to enable a move toward renouncing violence in favour of negotiation. Fr Reid then acted as their contact person with the Irish Government in Dublin from a 1987 meeting with Charles Haughey up to the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.

In this role, which was not public knowledge at the time, he held meetings with various Taoisigh, and with Martin Mansergh, advisor to various Fianna Fáil leaders.

After he moved to Dublin, Reid was involved in peace efforts in the Basque Country. In January 2003 he was awarded the Sabino Arana 2002 World Mirror Prize by the Sabino Arana Foundation in Bilbao in recognition of his efforts at promoting peace and reconciliation.

Reid and a Methodist minister, the Reverend Harold Good, announced at a news conference in September 2005 that the IRA had decommissioned their arms. He received the 2008 Gandhi Foundation International Peace Award together with the Reverend Harold Good. He died in a Dublin Hospital in November 2013 aged 82 years.

Clogher archdeacon and canon installed

Canon Brian Harper, rector of Magheracross has been installed as the new Archdeacon of Clogher following the move by the Revd Helene Steed to take up an incumbency in the Diocese of Down. The Service of Installation took place on Sunday 22nd January in St Macartan's Cathedral, Clogher.

Archdeacon Harper was ordained in 1986 and has served in rural parishes in Armagh and Clogher throughout his ministry. He brings a wealth of experience to his new post, and has enjoyed the confidence of his colleagues as Clerical Honorary Secretary of the Diocesan Council and Synod.

Canon Geoffrey Bridle, rector of Cleenish and Mullaghdun was installed as prebend of



Canon Kyle Hanlon; The Very Rev Kenneth Hall, Dean of Clogher; The Rt Revd John McDowell, Bishop of Clogher; The Venerable Terry Scott, Archdeacon of Armagh; The Venerable Brian Harper, Archdeacon of Clogher; Canon Geoffrey Bridle.

Tyholland in the Cathedral Chapter, and Canon Bridle's canonry without prebend was filled by the appointment of the Revd Kyle Hanlon, rector of Fivemiletown.

The Dean of Clogher, the Very Revd Kenny Hall conducted the Service of Installation and Admission and was also the celebrant. The preacher was the Archdeacon of Armagh, the Venerable Terry Scott.

Dean Hall has welcomed the appointments. He said “I have known both Canon Bridle and Canon Hanlon for the last six years since my appointment as Dean and I recognise that they have served in the Diocese for many years prior to that. Canon Hanlon having initially served in the parish of Dromore for 6 years, and latterly as rector of Fivemiletown since 2006. During his time in the diocese he has contributed to the work of both the diocesan youth council and the diocesan board of religious education, a board for which he worked significantly on the compilation of the Kid's Guide to the Book of Common Prayer. He served as rural dean of Kilskeery rural deanery for a time, and currently serves as a clerical member of both Diocesan Council and General Synod.

“Canon Bridle has also served as a clerical member of Diocesan Council during his time in Clogher Diocese, and he is a clerical member of General Synod. Since moving to Clogher Diocese in 1999 he has served as rector of the grouped parishes of Cleenish and Mullaghduin. Archdeacon Harper and I have known each other for over thirty years and we have ministered together in both the dioceses of Armagh and Clogher as well as travelling together to visit the Church of Sudan and the Church of Uganda - both his faith and

experience will enrich the life of our Diocese as he serves in this senior post. Since his appointment as rector of Magheracross in 2012 he has been involved with many aspects of diocesan life, he currently serves as a Honorary Secretary of both Diocesan Council and Diocesan Synod, he is the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, is a member of General Synod and it's Standing Committee, and has served as Prebend of Tyholland on the Cathedral Chapter since 2014. He is also a Diocesan Nominator and a member of the Representative Church Body.”

New Secretary and Finance officer for Down and Dromore diocese

The Diocese of Down & Dromore is delighted to announce the appointment has appointed a new Diocesan Secretary and a new Finance Officer. Since the diocese of Connor was split from Down in 1947 there has been a joint administration. These appointments are the result of a major re-organisation of staff at Church House, Belfast.

Roy Lawther has been appointed to the role of Diocesan Secretary, commencing his post on Monday past. Having worked in the local



Brian Lavery (left) and Roy Lawther (right)

government for the last ten years, including managing the merger between two local councils, Roy will bring his wealth of knowledge and experience to this management role within the Diocese. Roy also serves as Honorary Treasurer at St Columbanus' Parish, Ballyholme.

Speaking of his appointment Roy said, "I am delighted to start this new challenge and am looking forward to meeting new people within the Diocese."

Brian Lavery will take up the post of Finance Officer for Down and Dromore. Brian is a

member of St Finnian's Parish, Cregagh and comes to the Diocese from the Church Mission Society Ireland, where he was been the Finance Manager for the last nine years. Brian would like to pay tribute to all his former colleagues and wishes CMS Ireland well as it helps parishes in Ireland engage in mission with the global church.

Brian is very much looking forward to his new role, which he hopes will help facilitate mission in the local context within the Diocese. He will take up his post on Monday 6th February.

Bishop Harold has welcomed these two new appointments saying, "We are very pleased to welcome Roy and Brian to the team in Church House and wish them God's blessing in their new and important ministry in the diocese."

Come&C Songs of Praise Service in Greystones

The next Come&C Songs of Praise Service in Dublin & Glendalough takes place in Temple Carrig School in Greystones on Sunday February 5 at 5.00 pm. The focus of this service will be a reflection on Come&C and the Five Marks of Mission. Everyone is welcome to come and join



COME&C

this informal, interactive service which is one of a series of Songs of Praise type events to have taken place around Dublin and Glendalough during the past year of Come&C.

Services have taken place in a number of different locations and each one has highlighted one of the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion while also bearing the hallmark of the host location. The first service took place in Castleknock Community College. Then in St Maelruain's Church in Tallaght in February, the

theme of the service was 'To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom' based on the first Mark of Mission of the Anglican Communion. In March a Come&C service took place in the Church of St John the Baptist in Clontarf where the theme was 'To teach, baptise and nurture new believers'. In April the Inter Faith Centre at Dublin City University hosted the service where third level chaplains examined the theme 'To respond to human need by loving service'. In May the service moved to Christ Church, Dun Laoghaire, where the theme was 'To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation' based on the fourth Mark of Mission.

During Come&C Greystones, Curate at St Patrick's Church and Chaplain of Temple Carrig, the Revd Alan Breen and others will lead a time of reflection from the previous Come&C services and events and look to the hopes and dreams for the future through the lens of what has been learnt.

Opus Dei elects new leader

Mgr Fernando Ocáriz Braña has been elected the new prelate of Opus Dei, with Pope Francis approving the election on Monday.



Mgr Fernando Ocáriz Braña meeting Pope Francis

Mgr Ocáriz takes on the leadership of Opus Dei, a personal prelature that aims to help ordinary people seek holiness in everyday life, following the death of the previous prelate, Mgr Javier Echevarría on December 12.

Since 1994 he has been the Vicar General of Opus Dei and in 2014 he was named Auxiliary Vicar of the Prelature. Over the past 22 years he accompanied Mgr Echevarría in his pastoral trips to more than 70 countries. In the 1960s, as a theology student, he lived in Rome alongside St Josemaría, the founder of Opus Dei.

Mgr Ocáriz was born in Paris on October 27, 1944, to a Spanish family exiled to France during the Civil War (1936-1939).

He graduated from the University of Barcelona with a degree in physical sciences in 1966. He received a licentiate in theology from the Pontifical Lateran University in 1969 and a doctorate in theology from the University of Navarre in 1971, the year he was ordained a priest.

He has been a consultor for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith since 1986 and has been a member of the Pontifical Theological Academy since 1989. In the 1980s, he was among the professors who began the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Rome).

In the upcoming days, the new prelate will propose the names of the vicars and other new members of Opus Dei councils who will assist him for the next eight years

News briefs

+++ Palace outing for Armagh youth - Church Lads' & Church Girls' Brigade members from Grange and the Dobbin in Armagh diocese will be presented with their Youth United 'Social Action Award' in the presence of (and hopefully

by) HRH The Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace.

+++Cleric's engagement - Rev. David Gillespie of St Ann's, Dublin, son of Mr & Mrs Ivan Gillespie, Drumahoe, Londonderry and Tanya, only daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Richard Sewell, Outreach, Kilkenny.

+++ Dublin & Glendalough Youth ministry training - Everyone involved in youth ministry in Dublin & Glendalough, whether paid, voluntary or clergy, are invited to attend a youth facilitation workshop run by Tearfund. This is a two day programme and the first day will take place in St Mary's Parish, Howth, on Saturday February 25 from 10am to 3pm. The training focuses on skills, knowledge and resources to help mobilise youth groups to act for a more just and sustainable world and has been widely praised. As part of the training, the group will be joined by Ephraim Kahsay, the Country Representative for Tearfund in Ethiopia, based in Addis Ababa. His passion is to see people lifted out of poverty.

Ephraim has worked with Tearfund for the last nine years in the development, implementation and management of several ongoing programmes including self-help group work, church and community mobilisation, HIV/Health

and livelihoods. The self-help group programme has been particularly successful and has seen over a million people lifted out of poverty in Ethiopia since 2002. Ephraim's background is in psychology and he has extensive experience in group facilitation.

The training is being paid for by Irish Aid so there is no charge to participants but they are asked to bring a packed lunch. Places on the course are strictly limited so book yours as soon as possible by calling the chairperson of Dublin & Glendalough Youth Council, the Revd Ruth Noble on (087) 0523450. The date of the second training day will be in March and will be finalised on February 25.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

NI Youth service jobs could be at risk if funding withdrawn

BBC News

Hundreds of jobs are at risk if £3.5m of annual youth service funding is withdrawn, youth leaders warn.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-38724148>

Martin McGuinness has a duty to tell, says biographer

News Letter

The only author to have written a biography of Martin McGuinness says that “history demands” that he now gives a full account of his life.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/martin-mcguinness-has-tremendous-duty-to-tell-whole-story-biographer-1-7785467>

Times

Report that Tesco has mounted a ‘robust’ 42-page defence in the High Court against more than 100 shareholders, which claim that they have suffered losses after the grocer’s accounting scandal in 2014. The investors bringing the claim are reported to include the Kaiser Foundation, an American non-profit organisation, the Church Commissioners and the American Red Cross.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/tesco-attacks-vague-legal-challenge-hqfqfnffj>

HuffPo

Report that Wycliffe Hall theological college has denied an article in a weekend paper which claimed it recommended that staff and students no longer refer to God as “He” but as “the one who”. In a statement Wycliffe Hall Principal Rev

Dr Michael Lloyd said there had been “no suggestion” that traditional gender pronouns concerning God should be altered in any way. http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/oxford-theological-college-wycliffe-hall-gender-neutral-god_uk_5885db0ee4b020854098bf8f

Christian Today

Reports on an appeal for churches across Britain to take part in the Government’s community sponsorship scheme which allows community groups to directly sponsor a refugee family. The appeal follows a report last week that only two Syrian refugee families have been resettled so far under the scheme, six months after it was unveiled by the Home Secretary and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Christian Today

Further coverage following a *Guardian* newspaper report that the Archbishop of Canterbury has intervened in an attempt to prevent an Iraqi Christian who fled Islamic State from being returned to his home country. The *Guardian* said that Archbishop Justin wrote a letter in support of the man, a Syriac Orthodox Christian, ahead of an appeal against his rejected asylum claim, saying he supported his application to remain in the UK.

Comment

Tel

A look at sex and relationship education (SRE) noting that Parliament has just voted against legislation that would make(SRE) compulsory in all schools in the UK. Article includes comment on how faith or 'religious' schools approach SRE.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/01/23/sex-relationships-education-needs-become-compulsory-schools/>