



***At the premises of Warren Allen Collections in Bandon flooded for the second time in a month were (l-r the Reverend Denis MacCarthy, Susan Colton, Jacinta Warren, Dr Paul Colton, and Maria McLoughlin.***

## **Diocese of Cork responds to recent flood victims**

For the second time in one month, the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, set off on New Year's Eve, to visit communities in the Diocese and County of Cork uprooted by the floods of recent times. Such is the scale of disruption that in the one day it was only possible to make visits and to listen to people's stories, as well as to try to be of some help, in just two of the places, among many, affected by the recent floods in the midst of continuing bad weather.

Accompanied by Mrs Susan Colton, and the rector of Bandon, the Reverend Denis MacCarthy, the Bishop visited Bandon, County Cork first and met business people whose premises had been affected already on 7th December last as well as in the flooding of previous years such as 2009. He spoke with local councillors, volunteers including scouts helping out in the centre of the town, and, most important, with local business people, their families, friends and volunteers. Afterwards he visited some whose homes had been flooded yet again. 'Some people are finding it difficult to be as resolute this time round,' said the Bishop, 'I find many are more fragile, exhausted and exasperated to say the least. I met one man who



***With the scouts of Bandon who had set up a food station – soup, tea, coffee, bread, sandwiches in bandon town, as well as helping with sand bags.***

had spent the previous 36 hours on his premises trying to save his livelihood. I met another who has lost everything now, twice. At the same time there is enormous community spirit, solidarity and mutual help and volunteering.'

The Bishop and Mrs Colton also travelled to the east of the Diocese to the town of Middleton where there had also been terrible flooding and, on this occasion to meet the Fire Service and Civil Defence at Lauriston where the housing

estate had been flooded. Speaking with one family whose entire home and garden was full of water he was shocked to hear that they had nowhere to go for the night. Other residents were being transported to and from their houses in inflatable boats. It became apparent that local hotels which had already been generous and hospitable were already full. Bishop Colton said: 'There and then I telephoned Dr Edward Gash, the Principal of Midleton College which is nearby and where I chair the Board, and without hesitation we agreed that we should fire up the heating system and open the dorms to accommodate people who might need overnight accommodation. With the support of the Dean of Cloyne, the Very Reverend Alan Marley, and Mr Kevin Stanley, the Deputy Principal, arrangements were put in place at the College.

## **Call For a Renewed Coordinated National Effort to Prioritise Flood Defence Works**

Bishop Colton said:

I am no expert in the scientific field associated with flooding, but I am well-placed, as a pastor, to see the effects of the human cost and fallout.

People have been telling me their heart-breaking stories. Situations such as these in this county as well as elsewhere in the country really do require a renewed, determined and coordinated national effort to put in place as an immediate priority some of the long-awaited and long-promised solutions. As we approach a General Election in due course this cannot be the stuff of party political point scoring or election promises; something needs to be done as soon as possible and by everyone working together for the common good.

## **Local Appeal**

Bishop Colton said that he had identified some immediately grave situations that require urgent emergency funding. 'I don't mean in weeks to come,' he said 'but even yesterday, it was necessary to make sure that people had money for food yesterday and today, as well as shelter and accommodation last night and tonight. I have been working on this, with support, throughout today.'

He said 'In consultation with the clergy and lay leadership in this Diocese, I have made direct appeal to well-disposed individuals for financial support, and I have asked that special collections

take place at all church services in these coming days, particularly on Sunday, 3rd January and Sunday, 10th January, throughout the Diocese.'

See also -

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/video-new-year-same-old-flooding-nightmare-374099.html>

## **Catholic bishop commends DUP leader Arlene Foster as exemplary in dealing with the past**

The Bishop of Limerick has urged the Irish public to make the centenary year of the 1916 Rising one that is dedicated to “re-reading our history and healing our memories”.

In his homily at a Mass to celebrate World Day of Peace, Bishop Brendan Leahy said, “What best motivates our remembering, memory and commemoration must be the hope that we can take some step forward that will mark the history lessons of the future.”

He warned that Irish society needs to find a way to be inclusive in our remembering “After 35 years of ‘the Troubles’ as well as recent years of painful revelations of corruption, abuse and lack



of integrity, we search for how to reconcile and help heal our memories.”

Bishop Leahy said that deep down we want to be able to draw close to one another in acknowledging the trauma that either we or others have lived through.

He said the context of the 1916 centenaries is “one of learning to walk through our political, social and ecclesial history together”.

“Having come through this terribly turbulent period, when great sins have been inflicted, it would be great if this year might be a year to explore how best to face that past in a way that heals, how to move from being indifferent to one

another's pain to being able to journey together positively," he suggested.

"It will always be necessary to name the pain of the past but it is not always easy to hear or recognise sufficiently that pain in one another."

Dr Leahy warned that while we can always draw lessons from our past, we have to be careful not to let ourselves be trapped in it or in our interpretation of it.

The Bishop of Limerick also paid tribute to the newly appointed DUP leader Arlene Foster as an example of how we can deal with the past and her desire to create a 'more harmonious' society in the North.

"She was almost killed at the age of 16 when the IRA tried to bomb her school bus to murder its driver, a part-time member of the security forces. There was also an attempt by the IRA to kill her police officer father. Yet, on her appointment as DUP leader she said that while the 'Troubles have scarred Northern Ireland's history we must not let them shape our future'."

"We, too, as a nation have many scars but we too must not let them shape our future. It is time,



in this Year of Mercy, for us to bring mercy to bear on our judgements and evaluations of situations both past and present to build a better future.”

He also paid tribute to Gordon Wilson’s ability to forgive and show mercy.

Recalling the tradition of making covenants, such as the 1912 ‘Ulster Covenant’ and the Fenian ‘oath’, the Bishop asked if this 2016 might not be a year in which Irish people make “a new covenant together – a pact of mercy, promising to enter a daily contract, as it were, in our re-reading of history together and painful situations that have scarred our lives.”

He concluded, “To motivate our commemorations this year by stipulating a communal pact of mercy would be a valuable history lesson for the future.”

## **Peter Robinson nominated for Tipperary International Peace Award**

Northern Ireland’s outgoing First Minister has been shortlisted for an international peace prize, it has been announced.

News Letter - Peter Robinson, who is due to retire this month, has been recognised for his political contribution over four decades.

The citation for the prestigious Tipperary International Peace Award hails his role in the formation of the coalition government at Stormont, most notably overseeing the devolution of policing and justice powers from Westminster to Stormont in 2010.

It reads: “Mr Robinson has been involved in Northern Irish politics for over 40 years, being a founding member of the DUP, and was the leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) from 2008 to 2015.

“On 5 June 2008 he was ratified by the Northern Ireland Assembly as First Minister with Sinn Fein’s Martin McGuinness as Deputy First Minister. In February 2010 Robinson and McGuinness oversaw the devolution of policing and justice powers from the British Parliament to the Northern Ireland Assembly, negotiating a power-sharing deal with Sinn Fein. This process ensured that devolution in Northern Ireland was able to be fully completed.”



Other nominees for the prize include former Irish president Mary Robinson, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, US Secretary of State John Kerry and former president of Israel Shimon Peres.

The Tipperary Peace Convention said the winner would be announced in the coming days and the award would be presented during a special ceremony later in the year.

Humanitarian, entrepreneur and adventurer Chris Catrambone and his wife Regina, who founded the Migrant Offshore Aid Station (Moas), have also been shortlisted.

Read more: <http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/northern-ireland-news/peter-robinson-nominated-for-tipperary-international-peace-award-1-7140994#ixzz3w7LT3HWF>

## **Derry nun's Mercy Global Concern booklet is in worldwide demand**

A Derry born nun who is director of Mercy Global Concern and represents the Sisters of Mercy at the United Nations in New York has just produced a new booklet 'Mercy GPS: Our Global Positioning system'.

Sr Deirdre Mullan RSM initially had 5,000 copies of her Mercy GPS booklet printed, however demand for the book has been so great she has had to print 40,000 more.

It has now gone out to Samoa, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland, the USA, the UK, and Australia.

Explaining the background to her book to the Derry Journal newspaper on a visit home to the city this week, Sr Deirdre said, "I did a talk in the Mercy University in New Jersey. I called it the Mercy GPS, our global positioning system for



***"It's about the importance of being a merciful person. I always say - it's not enough to be compassionate - you must act."***

2016. The talk was a guide to keep each of us on the path of mercy."

"Afterwards some of the young people stayed behind and asked me if they could have a copy of the talk. And I thought to myself that talk has really resonated with them." Instead of handing out copies, Sr Deirdre sent her speaking notes to the graphic designer in UNICEF and produced the booklet.

“We started with 5,000, then it went to 40,000,” she said. “The Mercy Hospital has ordered copies which have been given to every employee. It’s gone all over the world.”

Speaking about the content of the book she explained, “It is about paying attention to people, it is about being grateful, it is about recognising that while we are local citizens we are also global citizens. It’s about the importance of being a merciful person. I always say – it’s not enough to be compassionate – you must act.”

According to Sr Deirdre, who was herself taught by the Mercy nuns, firstly the book encourages readers to “Pay Attention – connect by talking to each other instead of emailing, tweeting or Facebooking.”

Secondly, she said it asks people to “Move Your Gears Forward – be grateful for the sacrifice and support that has been given to you and take time to pray.”

“Thirdly, move in a direction that will nurture the global citizen within you. Fourthly, take delight in the good fortune of others. Fifthly, move with courage and integrity, and lastly, Watch out, emulate the life of Jesus.”

Deirdre Mullan RSM has served as the executive director of Mercy Global Concern at the United Nations for more than 10 years.

In 2011, she became the Director of the Partnership for Global Justice, a network of over 125 small congregations at the UN.

Her present ministry is working with UNICEF to look at ways in which they can partner with religious communities.

During the height of unrest in Northern Ireland, Sr Mullan spent 25 years as a teacher and administrator in schools, where she saw first-hand what hate and misinformed ideologies can do to young minds.

She has a doctorate degree in the Feminisation of Poverty and has long been active in promoting the education of girls.

## **Honours list**

This time last year, Ian Beggs, a life-long supporter of Ulster Rugby and a stalwart member of Belvoir Methodist, received a plaque honouring him for his voluntary service to the

sport . Now, Ian has again been honoured, this time with an MBE .

*News Letter* columnist and *Methodist Newsletter* interviewer, Anne Hailes, has been awarded an MBE in the New Year's Honours List for services to journalism.

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

### **Easter Rising centenary first event**

News Letter

The first major event to mark the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising in Dublin took place on Friday with a roll call of the 78 volunteers who died.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/dublin-hosts-first-event-in-year-of-1916-easter-rising-commemorations-1-7141161>

### **Uprising if Islamic sermon leads to jail term**

News Letter

The Belfast preacher due back in court next week over a controversial sermon on Islam, has said a guilty verdict would spark an “uprising”.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/mcconnell-warns-of-uprising-if-islam-sermon-leads-to-jail-term-1-7141169>

### **Charities reveal how every €1 donated is spent**

Irish Times



<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/charities-reveal-how-every-1-donated-is-spent-1.2482613>

## **Frances Fitzgerald: miscarriage one of Ireland's main taboos**

Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/frances-fitzgerald-miscarriage-one-of-ireland-s-main-taboos-1.2483269>

## **Enrolments on rise as country's fee-paying schools begin to enjoy the fruits of recovery**

Irish Independent

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/education/enrolments-on-rise-as-countrys-fee-paying-schools-begin-to-enjoy-the-fruits-of-recovery-34329942.html>

## **Lurgan-born nun had 'gift of making everyone feel special'**

Irish News

<http://www.irishnews.com/lifestyle/faithmatters/2016/01/03/news/lurgan-born-nun-had-gift-of-making-everyone-feel-special--370224/>

## **Kingsmill massacre: 'They didn't die in the first round of fire. I still hear them screaming in fear and agony'**

Belast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/kingsmill-massacre-they-didnt-die-in-the-first-round-of-fire-i-still-hear-them-screaming-in-fear-and-agony-34329284.html>

**Whitecross: 'My brother found the lads dead. He didn't speak for a year afterwards'**

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/whitecross-my-brother-found-the-lads-dead-he-didnt-speak-for-a-year-afterwards-34329274.html>

**Sinn Fein challenged to come clean and admit IRA was responsible for Kingsmill massacre**

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/sinn-fein-challenged-to-come-clean-and-admit-ira-was-responsible-for-kingsmill-massacre-34329649.html>

**Justin Welby's message on refugees is a clarion call for a better, bigger Britain**

Guardian - Andrew Brown writes

[http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jan/01/justin-welby-archbishop-asylum-seekers-patriotism?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw](http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jan/01/justin-welby-archbishop-asylum-seekers-patriotism?CMP=share_btn_tw)

**The Church, the police and the unholy destruction of Bishop Bell**

Daily Telegraph - Charles Moore writes

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/12077435/The-Church-the-police-and-the-unholy-destruction-of-Bishop-Bell.html>

**Most of my friends don't like politicians. Except me**

Guardian - Kate Hoey MP writes

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January 4

[http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jan/02/kate-hoey-interview-labour-europe-ukip-feminism?CMP=share\\_btn\\_link](http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jan/02/kate-hoey-interview-labour-europe-ukip-feminism?CMP=share_btn_link)

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