

Church News Ireland



Image of the day – Mothers' Union prepares for Easter

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Mullavilly Mothers Union is preparing for Easter

The Mothers Union branch (and friends) at Mullavilly Parish Church, Armagh diocese, are making Easter Cards to post to some of their 'Indoor Parishioners' Mullavilly Parish Church

People and places



Sharing the stew in Portstewart



The Four Churches in Portstewart had an evening of welcome to some families who had to flee Syria.

“A fabulous meal was cooked by the ladies and traditional music performed by Portstewart Primary School - a great evening of fellowship”. Posted on Facebook by a member of the churches.

Ukraine - very well done in Bray

A shout out to Bray Methodist Church who raised over €700 at a bake sale for the Methodist Church’s Ukraine Appeal.

Small and mighty, commented one Methodis

‘Pride of Cork Award’ presented to Bishop Paul Colton

At a ceremony on Friday 11th March in the Clayton Silver Springs Hotel in Cork, organised by Cork Civic Life and attended by more than 700 people, the Bishop of



Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, was one of those to whom a Pride of Cork Award was presented.

Bishop Colton said that he was very surprised to have been nominated by members of the public for the award:

So many of the other award winners are people who have done wonderful and inspiring things, They are people, many

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of whom I know and work with in Cork, and admire greatly. I never imagined I'd be nominated by members of the public. I was especially delighted that many said they were helped by my night time prayers and short reflections on Twitter throughout the lockdowns of the pandemic. All I thought I was doing was tweeting at about 9.30 p.m. or 10 p.m. each night to give people a prayerful or reflective focus at the end of another tough day.

Canon of Christ Church Cathedral appointed

The Revd Arthur Barrett has been appointed to the chapter of Christ Church Cathedral Dublin. He has been appointed 12th Canon by the Archbishop of Dublin in succession to Canon Olive Donohoe who retired recently.

Canon Barrett has been Rector of Arklow, Inch and Kilbride since January 2021. Prior to this he has served in parishes in Dublin, Sligo and Enniskillen and was Dean of Raphoe before moving to the Diocese of Glendalough.

He grew up in Glenageary, Co Dublin and spent a number years in business before entering the Church of Ireland Theological College in 1994. Arthur is married to Brigid and they have three grown up children,

Charlie, Nathan and Lucy. Arthur enjoys spending time with his family, walking their two dogs, cooking and playing croquet.

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Making the announcement Archbishop Michael Jackson said: “Arthur is well known and already has endeared himself to many since his return to Dublin and Glendalough. His positivity and hard work are infectious and I am delighted he will have the opportunity to bring this energy into the life of the diocesan cathedral”.



Dean Dermot Dunne welcomed the announcement. “It is with great personal delight that I greet the appointment of Arthur Barrett to the 12th canonry on the chapter of the cathedral. Arthur has served the diocese in so many ways and comes with immense experience gained over a very fruitful ministry and especially in his capacity as Dean of Raphoe. I look forward to sharing the ministry of the cathedral with Arthur and I wish him every blessing and the best of health as he continues to minister among us,” he commented.

Canon Arthur says: “I am humbled and honoured to be invited by the Archbishop to be the 12th Canon of Christ

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Church Cathedral. I look forward to getting to know the cathedral 'family', and to serving the cathedral and dioceses in this role."

The 12th Canon will be installed at Choral Evensong in the cathedral on Sunday May 15.

Saint Patrick a model for reconciliation and peace

Joint Message by the Archbishops of Armagh for St Patrick's Day 2022:

+++“What is happening today in Europe should help us learn lessons for our own peace process, about the importance of never taking our progress in peace for granted, never giving up on dialogue and the building of bridges and mutual understanding across historical divides”

+++“May all Christians of Europe, including Patriarch Kirill and the Russian Orthodox Church, unite in daily spiritual and practical efforts in support of a ceasefire, humanitarian outreach and the immediate laying down of weapons”

Archbishop John McDowell and Archbishop Eamon Martin on the Eve of the Feast day of Saint Patrick led the annual Saint Patrick's lecture and discussion organised by Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council in the Market Place Theatre & Arts Centre, Armagh.

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The annual lecture and discussion reflects on how the witness of Saint Patrick speaks into our contemporary world. This year's theme was: Saint Patrick as a model for reconciliation and peace. Following this event, the archbishops delivered their Saint Patrick's Day message and expressed concern about the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

The full message is as follows:

Like millions of others in Europe and around the world we are deeply disturbed and saddened by the terror of war which has been devastating life and property in Ukraine for the past three weeks. We call for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the relentless bombardment which has trapped countless civilians in a nightmare of destruction and displaced millions of others from their homes and families. We fear that the humanitarian crisis which this madness has caused may yet accelerate before it dissipates.

It would be unconscionable for us to celebrate the feast of Saint Patrick this year without offering the solidarity of our prayers, charity and welcome for the people of Ukraine. We pray for the Ukrainian people who already share this island with us, and for their families and friends who are trapped in the horror of destruction and bloodshed at home. We join our small Lenten sacrifices with their immense suffering. We also acknowledge the many Russian people, here and in their homeland, who bear no responsibility for this heart-breaking situation and who share our desire for peace and an end to this terrible violence.



Tradition tells us that Saint Patrick himself, in the face of great danger and peril to his own life, prayed his Breastplate Prayer, taking comfort in his faith that God does not forsake us, and that Christ is present with all who suffer: Christ is always with us, behind us and before us. We appeal through our prayers this Saint Patrick's Day for an end to this pointless massacre and pulverising of the property, bodies and spirit of the Ukrainian people. May all Christians of Europe, including Patriarch Kirill and the Russian Orthodox Church, unite in daily spiritual and practical efforts in support of a ceasefire, humanitarian outreach and the immediate laying down of weapons.

Christ's cause can only be advanced by Christ's means.

Although we are many miles away from the horrific bombardment and loss of life, the sacrifice of the Ukrainian

people shockingly comes home to us this Saint Patrick's Day. It is encouraging that Christians, people of other faiths and all those of goodwill here in Ireland are instinctively reaching out in a massive humanitarian effort of support and solidarity, especially towards the millions of refugees who have fled their homeland. At a young age Saint Patrick was captured and trafficked to these shores – no doubt frightened, disoriented, distressed and fearful for his life. In the opening words of his Confession, he describes how he and others “were scattered among many nations”.

So too the thousands of refugees arriving in Ireland must feel scattered amongst the nations. We pray that our land of welcomes will continue to offer compassionate respite to our sisters and brothers in their time of need. This is the light of the Gospel shining through the darkness: the outpouring of prayer, charity and solidarity across Ireland towards the people of Ukraine has been heartening. Many individuals and parish communities have already been extremely generous in establishing active links with charitable projects in Ukraine and along its borders to support refugees and those remaining in their homeland. We wholeheartedly support and encourage these efforts.

We also encourage Christians in Ireland, and our diaspora, to be inspired by the life and witness of Saint Patrick to be reconcilers and peacemakers. It is poignant to think that as the world comes out of a global pandemic which reminded us so strongly of our connectedness and interdependence, that our continent has so easily lapsed into the pointless divisions and devastation of warfare. War is a defeat for humanity. It represents the failure of politics, diplomacy and dialogue.

Our community reflection here in Ireland on what is happening today in Europe should help us learn lessons for our own peace process, about the importance of never taking our progress in peace for granted, never giving up on dialogue and the building of bridges and mutual understanding across historical divides. The tragedy of what we are witnessing in Ukraine during these days impels us again here in Ireland to work for a genuine human fraternity as the only way to resolve differences and conflicts.

For all the people of Ukraine we pray Saint Patrick's Breastplate Prayer...

Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ within me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ at my right, Christ at my left,
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks to me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me. Christ with me, Christ
before me,
Christ behind me, Christ within me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ at my right, Christ at my left,
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks to me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

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News special – Homes for Ukraine





Sharing and providing homes in Northern Ireland

Claire Sugden MLA writes - Many of you have been asking me how to provide accommodation for Ukrainian refugees coming to Northern Ireland.




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 The UK Government has created a bespoke scheme offering a route to those who want to come to the UK. It will enable individuals, charities, community groups and businesses to volunteer accommodation and provide a route to safety for Ukrainians, and their immediate family members.

 Sponsors should provide accommodation for as long as they are able, but there is a minimum expectation of 6 months.

 Someone is eligible for the scheme if they are a Ukrainian national or the immediate family member of a Ukrainian national, and were resident in Ukraine prior to 1 January 2022.

People arriving under this scheme will be able to:

-  Live and work in the UK for up to three years;
-  Access healthcare, benefits and employment support;
-  Education, and English language tuition

You can register your interest as an individual or organisation at the link below.

If you have a named person who you wish to sponsor you should get in contact with them directly and prepare to fill in a visa application with all their details and yours.

The visa application will go live on Friday 18 March.

 <https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk/>

Welcoming the Stranger: A church and civic response in Northern Ireland Homes for Ukraine

**Online on Thursday 24th March from 10.00 -11.00am.
Here's the information from Evangelical Alliance**

Many of us have been heartbroken and angry at what is happening to the Ukrainian people. We want to help, but we don't know how. On our watch, in our time, we witness "the fastest growing refugee crisis in Europe since WW2".

An entire nation of displaced people require safe places and communities with whom they can belong and among whom they can be restored.

To do something about this historic, humanitarian crisis is to respond to a call from God, who has repeatedly revealed that the Divine Heart is with and for the vulnerable displaced people of this world.

How can we 'Welcome the Stranger' and become safe havens for the refugees from Ukraine?

What does it look like for us, the church, in our local congregations to respond, to come around Ukrainian people as the hands and feet of Jesus in response to this crisis?

How might you as a church leader lead, teach and empower your people to respond – individually and corporately?



**Welcoming the Stranger among us:
Homes for Ukraine: Church and Civic
response in Northern Ireland**

Join Malcolm Duncan, Nathaniel & Donna Jennings and others

Thursday 24, from 10 -11 am

Together we will discuss and develop a strategic and united response
to the Ukrainian crisis within Northern Ireland

Sign up via the eventbrite link below



And, how might we rediscover the kingdom truth that in giving of ourselves we become those who receive; that in blessing others, we become those who are blessed?

What can you do now? 2 things:

1. Register your interest to respond to the need at Homes for Ukraine – Homes for Ukraine – Local Sponsorship Scheme for Ukraine (campaign.gov.uk)

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2. Plan to join Malcolm Duncan, Welcome Churches Nathaniel Jennings Donna Jennings and other agencies working on the ground in NI.

We are ready to help you to respond.

Contact here for the online event:

[<https://www.facebook.com/evangelicalallianceni/>]

Together, we want to discuss and develop a strategic united Christian response to the crisis within Northern Ireland.

Together, we can imagine and embody the Good News of belonging and hope to Ukrainian people who come to live among us

Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books

Towards Net Zero 2030: Toolkit, Checklist and Energy Footprint Analyser published

Following the affirmation by the General Synod in 2020 that the Scottish Episcopal Church should commit to working towards Net Zero carbon emissions by 2030, the Provincial Environment Group (PEG) is pleased to announce the publication of a suite of tools to help congregations work towards this goal.

Taking the 10 points of guidance produced by the Church in Society Technical Committee as it's starting point Towards Net Zero 2030 comprises a Toolkit and Checklist working

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document and an Energy Footprint Analyser. These tools are designed to guide churches through the process of identifying their current energy footprint, identifying opportunities to make meaningful changes, and prioritising those within the local context.

The toolkit and the energy footprint analyser are available at our website [here](#).

Welcoming the publication of the Toolkit, the Rt Rev Ian Paton, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane – PEG Convener – said: “I am extremely pleased that this resource is available for use by churches across the SEC.

“The twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss can seem overwhelming in their scale, so I want to thank the members of the Provincial Environment Group, the Church in Society Committee Technical Group who first drafted elements of the Toolkit, and the independent testing organisations, for their hard work in creating an accessible and comprehensive set of tools to help churches address these issues.

“I encourage all members of the Scottish Episcopal Church to engage with the Toolkit and to continue playing their part in meeting the challenges that we all face.”

In a foreword to the toolkit, the Primus, the Most Rev Mark Strange said: “Congregations and individual members of the church are often anxious about what it is we need to do and how we get started on this vital journey. This material begins to give us a roadmap of the journey ahead and I ask you all

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to engage with the Toolkit without delay and begin to make real change now.”

The Provincial Environment Group has indicated that the toolkit is intended to evolve and develop as new resources are added and collective action takes place, with further consultation on policies and processes in future. The Group has requested that if users have any ideas or suggestions to contribute they should get in touch with PEG via the dedicated email address:
environment@scotland.anglican.org

Perspective

Sinn Féin can't hide from its sorry history of Putin apologism by Ruth Dudley Edwards

Last week, caught on the hop by the behaviour of Vladimir Putin, for whom it has a soft spot, Sinn Féin – historically the political wing of the IRA – deleted 20 years of potentially embarrassing material from its official website: 2,729 pages of statements by its party representatives were reduced to 373.

So presumably out went the justification for Sinn Féin MEPs abstaining in 2015 on a European Parliament resolution condemning Russia's "direct and indirect involvement in the armed conflict in Ukraine and its illegal annexation of Crimea"; any record of party leader Mary Lou McDonald

attacking the then taoiseach Leo Varadkar for his “flagrant disregard for Irish neutrality” when the Irish government expelled a Russian diplomat after the Salisbury poisonings; Sinn Féin MEP Lynn Boylan in 2019 voting in the European Parliament against plans to block a Russian gas line; and MEP Chris McManus being one of 69 politicians out of 548 to vote against the resolution in the European Parliament supporting Ukraine’s independence last December.

Sinn Féin is a cult whose members obediently parrot whatever party line they are given. But their politicians are world-class examples of the brass neck school of politics. They have been Putin apologists for years, and are now perhaps the closest to power of all the populist movements in Europe that have displayed unhealthy sympathies for Russia. But the party’s reaction to the West uniting against Putin’s brutal invasion of a sovereign state and the emergence of President Zelensky as a heroic and eloquent warrior for liberty was to change sides immediately.

Without a blush, McDonald called for increased measures against Russia from the EU and “sanctions of such scale where there can be no doubt that Putin and his oligarch supporters will pay a huge price for choosing the course of military conflict over dialogue and diplomacy.”

McDonald is a practised hand. In 2003, having become Gerry Adams’s protégé, she was tested for stardom by participating unapologetically in the annual ceremony at the statue of the IRA’s chief of staff, Sean Russell, who in 1940 died in a U-boat on his way back home after explosives training in Berlin.

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Her nickname for a time was “I believe Gerry”, the phrase she would trot out brazenly whenever anyone questioned his veracity. Her reward was to be appointed party president in 2018. And she is now hotly tipped to become taoiseach, Ireland’s prime minister.

She has led Sinn Féin in its recent volte-faces on the EU (which it opposed bitterly until about a decade ago) abortion, same sex marriage and a plethora of progressive causes, and mostly has managed to keep closed the cupboard with all the skeletons.

Since she is in the US on a very public St Patrick’s Day charm offensive this week, it was a good day for bad news. Challenged in New York on the website deletions, she explained that this was just a routine overhaul – a housekeeping matter.

She told a crowd at Fordham University that the “outbreak of conflict in Europe reminds us that peace, self-determination and sovereignty are precious and can never be taken for granted. Ireland understands the damaging and divisive legacy wrought by colonisation, occupation and the denial of self-determination.” Putin would be proud of her.

Poem for today

I Dreamed That in a City Dark as Paris by Louis Simpson

I dreamed that in a city dark as Paris
I stood alone in a deserted square.
The night was trembling with a violet

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Expectancy. At the far edge it moved
And rumbled; on that flickering horizon
The guns were pumping colour in the sky.

There was the Front. But I was lonely here,
Left behind, abandoned by the army.
The empty city and the empty square
Was my inhabitation, my unrest.
The helmet with its vestige of a crest,
The rifle in my hands, long out of date,
The belt I wore, the trailing overcoat
And hobnail boots, were those of a poilu.
I was the man, as awkward as a bear.

Over the rooftops where cathedrals loomed
In speaking majesty, two aeroplanes
Forlorn as birds, appeared. Then growing large,
The German Taube and the Nieuport Scout,
They chased each other tumbling through the sky,
Till one streamed down on fire to the earth.

These wars have been so great, they are forgotten
Like the Egyptian dynasts. My confrere
In whose thick boots I stood, were you amazed
To wander through my brain four decades later
As I have wandered in a dream through yours?

The violence of waking life disrupts
The order of our death. Strange dreams occur,
For dreams are licensed as they never were.

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Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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