

# Church News Ireland

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**Image of the day – Washington National Cathedral**

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## Image of the day

Washington National Cathedral remembering Ukraine

## People and places



## Ukraine crisis: Moderator launches appeal

**In response to the devastating Russian invasion of Ukraine and exodus of people from the country, Dr David Bruce, launched a Moderator's Appeal yesterday towards the emergency relief effort.**

Continuing to encourage the Church to pray for the people of Ukraine, Dr Bruce also asked PCI members across Ireland to give generously to the Church's partners involved

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in providing humanitarian aid to those fleeing the conflict and those trying to get aid into Ukraine.

Calling on PCI members to consider their response to this humanitarian emergency, the Moderator said, “I have launched a Moderator’s Appeal towards the emergency relief effort to help people in Ukraine and those fleeing the conflict. I am confident our members will respond as generously, and sacrificially, as they have done on so many previous occasions,” Dr Bruce said.

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) is immediately releasing £60,000 (€72,350) to be distributed equally between its relief and development partners Christian Aid (Ireland) and Tearfund, and also to one of its partner churches, the Reformed Church in Hungary and its relief and development wing, Hungarian Reformed Church Aid.

Read more info and donate here: [ [bit.ly/pciUkraine](https://bit.ly/pciUkraine) ]  
Refugees fleeing Ukraine - Photo Courtesy of Tearfund -  
Credit JanaCavojsk

## **Belfast Cathedral Lent Sit-out for Ukrainian refugee crisis**

**Dean of Belfast (Black Santa) to hold Lent Sit-out on cathedral steps, each Wednesday until Easter, raising funds for the Ukrainian refugee crisis.**

The Dean will be standing on the cathedral steps from 12 noon to 3pm to receive all donations, from Wednesday 9th March to Wednesday 13th April. All funds will be channeled





through Habitat for Humanity and Christian Aid who are working directly in both Ukraine, and across the neighbouring countries.

The Cathedral's Chapel of the Holy Spirit, next to the Welcome Desk, is available for prayer for the ongoing situation in Ukraine and surrounding countries.

Donations can also be made on-line at [www.belfastbacksanta.org](http://www.belfastbacksanta.org)

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In partnership with:  
Christian Aid Ireland Habitat for Humanity

For full details see: <https://www.belfastcathedral.org/news/deans-black-santa-lent-sit-out-to-raise-funds-for-ukrainian-refugee-crisis>

## **Fantastic response to Armagh parish's Ukraine effort**

**Archdeacon Cairns of Mullavailly Parish in Armagh diocese has posted -**

“What a fantastic response from our local (and wider) community on the first two days of our collection for Ukraine . We are simply overwhelmed at the response from old and young alike. Everyone doing what they can to help.

“It has provided an outlet for many to do something tangible to support those who are fleeing their homes and their country.

“It has been a very emotional experience for many who came, many leaving in tears. Thank you to all those who have donated so far, came and helped with the packing, sorting and supplying boxes, and to those who have filled van loads to bring to Kinallen - (Shortts of Ballylisk and Neil Wright). Ballylisk Car Sales”

The first 40ft lorry has left and our first van load went with it. Another van load went this evening and two more are lined up for tomorrow. The hall will be open from 10-12 and

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7-8.30 tomorrow. The donations are being channelled through 'Hope for Youth Ministries' Colin Tinsley and Henryk Podsiadly working on the ground in Poland (Warsaw) and Ukraine.

Remember if you are bringing donations , keep clothes, bedding and toiletries separate if possible, and ensure they are new or nearly new - these people deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.



## ReLENTless Prayer for north and west Belfast

**ReLENTless Prayer for north and west Belfast will look a little different this year as instead of having numerous prayer spaces, prayer will be based in five venues.**



# RELENTLESS

## *Prayer for North & West Belfast Lent 2022*

### SCHEDULE 2022 - Dates & Venues

**Monday 7th, 14th & 21st** - Lamb of God Community,  
Shalom House, 12 Cliftonville Rd, Belfast, BT14 6JX (just off Antrim Road)

**Tuesday 8th, 15th & 22nd** - St Columba's, Church of Ireland,  
247 Ballygomartin Rd, Belfast, BT13 3NH (facing Springhill PS)

**Wednesday 9th, 16th & 23rd** - Joanmount Methodist Church,  
1 Wallasey Park, Belfast, BT14 6PN (Oldpark Rd)

**Thursday 10th, 17th & 24th** - St Stephen's, Church of Ireland,  
Millfield, Belfast, BT13 2GN

**Friday 11th, 18th & 25th** - Shankill Methodist Church,  
267 Shankill Rd, Belfast, BT13 1FT

These are the Lamb of God Community, Shalom House, 12 Cliftonville Rd; St Columba's Parish Church, 247 Ballygomartin Rd; Joanmount Methodist Church, 1 Wallasey Park; St Stephen's Parish Church, Millfield; and Shankill Methodist Church, 267 Shankill Rd.

On rota, these venues will offer space for prayer from 11am-3pm – see image below for dates and details.

Heather Carson, parish development officer for the Church of Ireland in Lower Shankill, said: "We are mindful of caring for each other in these challenging times, and so are having a three-week cycle of prayer beginning Monday March 7.

Heather said there will be an hour of led-prayer each day at 12noon, led by people who have partnered with ReLENTless Prayer in past years.

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“We welcome everyone to join us,” she added.

## Dublin Mothers Union members reconnect in hope and confidence



All Ireland Mothers' Union President June Butler with Daphne Danga (centre) wearing a specially made Mothers' Union dress and Dublin & Glendalough President Ada Lawson at the Mothers' Union breakfast in Leixlip.

**More than 70 members of Mothers' Union in Dublin & Glendalough cast off the shackles of the last two years and gathered for a joyful reunion at the Mothers' Union Breakfast 2022.**

Members were greeted in Leixlip on last Saturday morning (February 26) by their new Diocesan President, Ada





Lawson, who said her aim was to encourage members across Dublin & Glendalough to take small steps to reconnect in hope and confidence.

After a time of chat and catching up, members were addressed by All Ireland MU President, June Butler who spoke on the theme for 2022, 'Transformation Now!'

She said transformation of Mothers' Union did not have to be big and bold but the process could begin now. She added that transformation must be thoughtful, gentle and calm.

Looking at what was ahead for Mothers' Union, June acknowledged that most people do not like change. She suggested that transformation must happen in a way that did not annoy stalwart members but MU could not simply revert to the way things were pre-Covid. "We have the same values, the same aims and objectives but we have (no matter how much we may deny it) been transformed by the Covid experience and we need to think about the road

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before us and how to walk it – no running allowed!” she said.

Resources are available on the MU website <http://www.mothersunion.ie/>

which offer a framework for discussions in branches. They help members to look at what they used to do; what they have done in the face of Covid; and what they will do in the future.

“So as we move into 2022, we must not seem to be looking to the past – we must accept where we are now and look to the future. Christ must be seen in us as we transform – ourselves and Mothers’ Union, with God’s help,” June commented. “We have to transform ourselves before we can transform others... and also before we can transform Mothers’ Union – let us take those first baby steps soon, having confidence that our God – the Lord and Father of Mankind – is with us every step of the way.”

Ada Lawson will be commissioned as Diocesan President by the Archbishop in St Brigid’s Church, Castleknock, on March 25. The preacher will be Canon Aisling Shine.

## News reports

### **Russian Orthodox Church ‘encouraged’ Putin to invade Ukraine, says Bishop of Leeds**

**The Bishop of Leeds, Nick Baines, says nobody should be shocked that Russia has invaded Ukraine. In fact, he**

## **said, the Russian Orthodox Church had encouraged President Vladimir Putin's actions.**

It was quite clear, he said, that Putin was “going all out” for the whole of Ukraine and that he did not listen to words, but strong action.

In an interview for the 2nd episode of the Religion Media Centre podcast, the bishop said: “War is appalling, violence is terrible. It should be avoided at all costs. But for example, the Baltic states need to know if we mean what we say.

“Part of the reason Putin has been able to push the envelope so far over the last couple of decades, is because and this may be contentious, but I’m going to say it: Russians would still shed their blood for the Motherland. What would we shed our blood for? In the liberal West? You know, his line is you don’t believe in anything.”

Dr Baines, a Russian-speaker who has worked for the intelligence services, said Putin had been encouraged to keep pushing “because he knows that we ‘re not going to respond”.

In the past 20 years, Putin had not had to invade anywhere, but according to the bishop, his biggest weapon has been to destabilise the West, which he has done with disinformation and cyber-activity.

He went on: “I think Brexit is part of that. If you want to create chaos, which is what he wants to do, all you have to do is get your opponents to form a circular firing squad. With people like Trump, Brexit, the destabilisation of the EU, he’s



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been very successful. And he's also seen with Salisbury and the poisonings, with [Alexei] Navalny [the jailed opposition leader], and with other people, that we have big words, but we don't do much."

The current sanctions announced by the British government were "feeble", he said. And he challenged the church to put more pressure on the government to clean up "the corruption that swells through the sewers of 'Londongrad', the Russian cash ... the Russian disinformation and Boris Johnson's suppression of the Russia report".

There were different views about whether to threaten a military response or use other routes. "Having worked for the intelligence services, I take a particular view on this that some things are necessary, if not desirable," he said.

He was asked by interviewer Roger Bolton, whether the church could mediate, but he believed back channels were closed. The Russian Orthodox Church, he said, had bought into the mythology, which Putin is defending and encouraging, that Russia and Ukraine belong together. Putin has described Ukraine as a fake country.

"The roots of that judgment are religious." In fact, he said, it was unequivocally true that the Russian Orthodox Church had encouraged Putin in his campaign. There was, he believed, collusion and corruption between the Russian government and the Russian Orthodox Church.

He said Britain had a moral responsibility to go out if its way to give shelter to the large number of refugees displaced by the war. "We have been party to the development of what

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has happened in Russia in allowing Putin to get as far as he has, with his threats and now his actions.”

## **WCC urges Patriarch of Moscow to raise his voice against war**

**In a letter to Patriarch Kirill of Moscow this week, World Council of Churches acting general secretary Rev Prof Dr Ioan Sauca asked the patriarch to mediate so that the war between Russian and Ukraine can be stopped.**

De Sauca wrote:

Your Holiness, It is with great pain and with a breaking heart that I am writing to Your Holiness. The tragic situation of the war in Ukraine has brought tremendous suffering and loss of lives. Many of our brothers and sisters had to leave their homes-including the elderly, women, and children-to save their lives.

The whole world is looking with concern and expects to see a sign of hope for a peaceful solution. I receive letters every day from different parts of the world, from church leaders and the faithful of our WCC constituency asking to approach Your Holiness to mediate so that the war can be stopped and the great suffering ended. In these times of hopelessness, many look at you as the one who could bring a sign of hope for a peaceful solution.

I write to Your Holiness as acting general secretary of the WCC but also as an Orthodox priest. Please, raise up your voice and speak on behalf of the suffering brothers and

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sisters, most of whom are also faithful members of our Orthodox Church.

Western Christians celebrate today Ash Wednesday, the day of repentance as the beginning of Lent; likewise, we, as Orthodox, will celebrate this coming Sunday the "Sunday of Forgiveness" to mark our beginning of Lent next Monday. These powerful moments in our liturgical calendars call us to repentance, peace and reconciliation. While celebrating these spiritual moments, with filial respect and consideration, I write to Your Holiness to intervene and mediate with the authorities to stop this war, the bloodshed and the suffering, and to make efforts to bring peace through dialogue and negotiations.

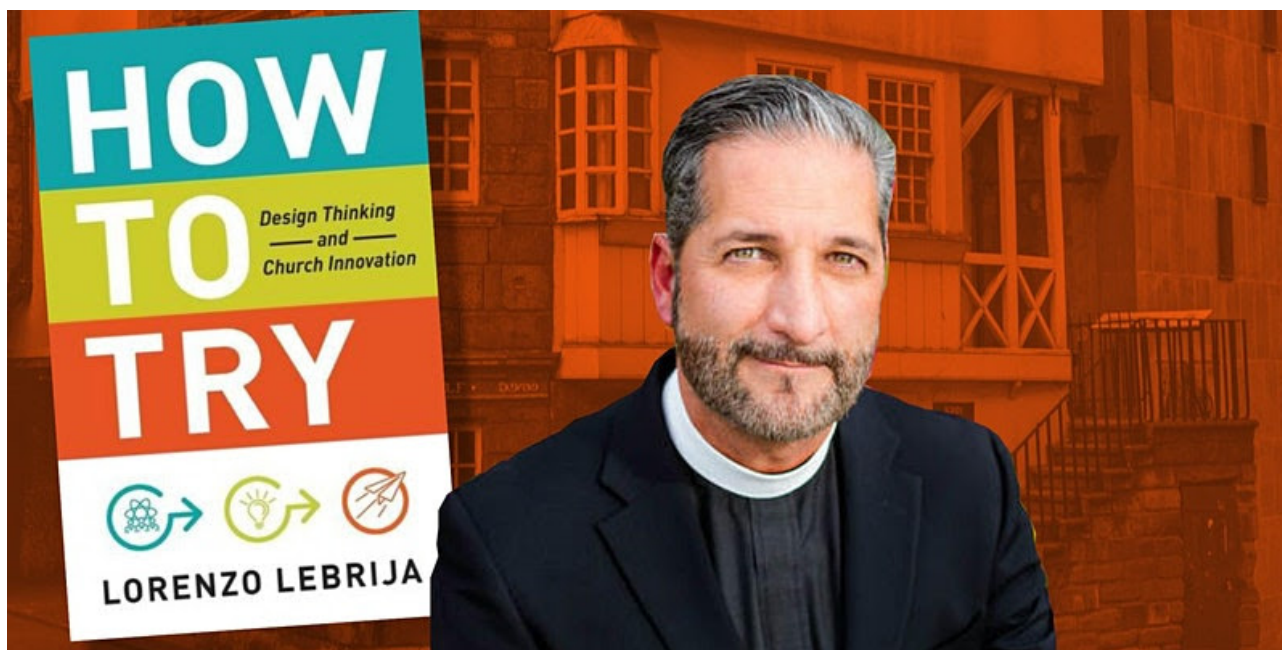
Respectfully Yours in our Lord Jesus Christ,  
Rev Prof Dr Ioan Sauca, Acting General Secretary World Council of Churches

## **TryTank learning day for Scots churches**

**The Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of Scotland have invited the Rev Lorenzo Lebrija (Founding Director of TryTank, The Episcopal Church, USA) to share with us in person the journey of TryTank: the Experimental Lab for Church Growth and Innovation.**

Rev Lebrija will attend two ecumenical workshop at The Scottish Story Telling Centre, 43–45 High St, Edinburgh on Saturday 19 March, one in the morning from 9.30am to 1pm and another in the afternoon from 2pm to 5.30pm.





Rev Lebrija will:

- share learning from the TryTank initiative that we might contextualise to Scotland
- help us build a 'risk, fail, learn' culture
- familiarise us with Design Thinking
- inspire us to bold experimentation

The event is open for all to attend – see further details below - with booking via Eventbrite

Building on the commitment of the St Andrew Declaration, this will be the start of a process of discussion within and between both denominations where we seek to learn from what TryTank is doing within The Episcopal Church and ask ourselves what a similar process might look like for us in Scotland.

Please note that the Saturday afternoon workshop is designed for those under 40 or those who are involved in

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facilitating the development of leadership and ministry by those under 40.

As the workshops will be interactive, it will not be suitable for livestreaming. It will only be possible to attend in-person in Edinburgh. It is possible that a recording of Rev Lebrija's input will be made available after the event.

## WCC renews call for release of Syrian archbishops



**World Council of Churches acting general secretary Rev Prof Dr Ioan Sauca reiterated calls for the release of two Syrian archbishops, Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim and Greek Orthodox Archbishop Paul Yazigi, who were kidnapped near Aleppo, Syria in April 2013.**

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Today, we mark 3,224 days since archbishops were abducted on their way back from the Turkish border to their city of Aleppo," said Sauca on 28 February.

"Day after day, we have prayed and we will continue to pray for safe return of the archbishops to their churches, their communities and their families," said Sauca. "We stand in solidarity with all the Christians of Syria and the region."

The calls for the release of the archbishops come amid grave concern regarding the alarming and rapidly deteriorating situation of Christians in the Middle East.

## In the media

### **Ireland's neutrality dubbed 'morally disgusting' as Ukraine wracked by war**

#### **Irish Catholic Newspaper**

Fr Séamus Murphy, an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Loyola University Chicago, has said Ireland's policy of neutrality is "morally disgusting" and Ireland should be doing more to support Ukraine as the Faithful are called to "defend the weak and the helpless". - Irish Catholic Newspaper

### **Minister says Ireland needs to be open to change on defence**

#### **RTE News**

The war in Ukraine will "undoubtedly" change the way many Irish people view Ireland's role in the world and "how we



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protect ourselves", according to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Simon Coveney said Ireland has to be "open to change" but added that this has to be "teased out" in a lot of detail.

[ <https://www.rte.ie/news/politics/2022/0304/1284388-ukraine-ireland/> ]

## **Ireland at forefront of ‘anti-Russian events’ in EU, Russian ambassador claims**

### **Irish Times**

Dublin embassy protests ‘really aggressive’, Yury Filatov says in Russian TV interview

[ <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/ireland-at-forefront-of-anti-russian-events-in-eu-russian-ambassador-claims-1.4818514?mode=sample&auth-failed=1&pw-origin=https> ]

## **How to help Ukraine: Financial donations are best, charities say**

### **Irish Times**

Irishman Joe Lowry from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on the Ukraine-Moldova border has asked those wishing to help Ukrainians to prioritise financial donations. Mr Lowry said convoys of lorries with supplies, while welcome, faced difficulties including having diesel “sucked out” while queuing at borders and elsewhere. He said donations to recognised agencies were among the fastest, most effective, form of help.

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[ <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/how-to-help-ukraine-financial-donations-are-best-charities-say-1.4818569> ]

## **Ukraine conflict: People in Northern Ireland rally to help refugees**

### **BBC News NI**

People across Northern Ireland are rallying together to collect supplies for refugees fleeing the conflict in Ukraine. Kinga Orkisz is part of a group of Polish people organising a collection point in a Belfast warehouse. The UN says more than half a million people have fled their homes as heavy fighting continues across the country.

[ [ ] <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-60552803>? ]

## **Webinars, music, resources, broadcasts, and books**

### **CPAS gives away 3,000 copies of major new evangelism resource**

**CPAS is offering 3,000 church leaders a free copy of its major new resource, How to Nurture a Faith-Sharing Culture.**

Thanks to funding from an anonymous donor, the Anglican mission agency is able to give the resource free to the first 3,000 leaders of Anglican churches, Fresh Expressions and church plants who request a copy via the CPAS website.

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How to Nurture a Faith-Sharing Culture offers 77 creative ideas to shape church communities around faith sharing, so that evangelism is increasingly about ordinary people in their everyday lives, sharing their faith in simple ways.

Acting General Director Graham Archer said: 'We want to get this into the hands of as many church leaders as we possibly can. If every leader was inspired by just one of the ideas, and implemented it in their church, we could see many, many more people coming to faith in Christ.'

The book, and related resources, webinars and videos, are drawn from the experiences of local church leaders across the country whom the mission agency works with. CPAS supports thousands of church leaders across the British Isles through its leadership training and patronage work.

Graham said, 'So many local churches have forged new links with their communities during the pandemic, and are now asking: "How can we share our faith in an appropriate way through these networks?". We feel God has called us to offer this important resource to the Church at this time, so that every child, adult and young person has the chance to hear the wonderful good news of Jesus.'

Leaders of Anglican churches, Fresh Expressions and church plants in the UK and Ireland can order a free copy of How to Nurture a Faith-Sharing Culture by James Lawrence from [www.cpas.org.uk/faith-sharing](http://www.cpas.org.uk/faith-sharing). It can also be purchased for £8.99.

CPAS ([www.cpas.org.uk](http://www.cpas.org.uk)) is an Anglican evangelical mission agency working with churches in the UK and the Republic of

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Ireland. It enables churches to help every person hear and discover the good news of Jesus Christ.

## Speaking to the soul

Short reading and a prayer - daily on this site

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# Church News Ireland

The publication of Church News Ireland is overseen by Very Rev Dr Houston McKelvey OBE, QVRM, TD. He may be contacted at [houstonmckelvey@mac.com](mailto:houstonmckelvey@mac.com)