



Unveiling of new Apparition Mosaic at Knock Shrine

A spectacular mosaic depicting the Apparition at Knock in 1879, was unveiled at Our Lady's Basilica at Knock Shrine on Sunday 28 February. The mosaic, illustrated by well-known Irish artist PJ Lynch, depicts in incredible detail the Apparition scene, as described by the 15 official witnesses.

It has been crafted by a team of some of the best mosaic artisans in the world – Trvisanutto Mosaics. The artisans, from Spilimbergo, near Venice, Italy, worked on the mosaic for eight months in their workshop before transporting it to Knock in sections during January. A team of artisans came to Knock to install the huge artwork, which measures 14 metres x 14 metres.

The mosaic is understood to be one of Europe's biggest pieces of mosaic on a flat surface. It was crafted from some 1.5 million individual pieces of mosaic. It has been inlaid on the wall behind the sanctuary in the newly refurbished Basilica at Knock.

Trvisanutto Mosaics have already worked on some of the best known religious sites around



the world, such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and the Basilica at the National Shrine of Immaculate Conception in

Washington DC, the largest Catholic church in the US.

The mosaic is the final stage of a major refurbishment at Knock Basilica over the past two years months. It is part of a renewal project at Knock, called 'Witness to Hope', which was launched by Fr Richard Gibbons, PP, rector of Knock Shrine.

Former Archbishop of Canterbury in Cork to mark 70th anniversary of Christian Aid in Ireland

The former Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams visited Cork this weekend where he marked the 70th anniversary of the founding of Christian Aid in Ireland with a ceremony at St Fin Barre's Cathedral.

Dr Williams, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 2002 until 2012 and is the current Chairperson of the Board of Christian Aid, spoke at a special Service of Thanksgiving on Sunday to mark the founding of the charity in Ireland in 1946.

The Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, Dr [Paul Colton](#), said Archbishop Williams' attendance was a wonderful recognition of the work of Christian Aid.

“Loving our neighbour, not only the person we know and like, but also the stranger in our midst and far away out of our sight, is a fundamental tenet of Christianity, given to us by Jesus Christ himself,” said Bishop Colton.

“Christian Aid, and indeed our own [Church of Ireland](#) Bishops' Appeal with which it works in partnership, helps us all to do this ecumenically, regardless of race and religion. Seventy years of this work through Christian Aid is indeed something to celebrate and be thankful for.

“It is a truly historic and significant occasion for the Church of Ireland in Cork, and by extension for the city and region, that a former Archbishop of Canterbury is honouring this occasion with his presence in this way.”

Bishop Colton said that as well as marking 70 years of Christian Aid, the service was an opportunity for Christian Aid to give thanks for the generosity of the Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross for their prayerful support of the charity's rebuilding work in Haiti over the past three years.

[Andrew Coleman](#) of Christian Aid (Cork) said that with support from Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal, the Cork diocese has raised more than €44,000 for its "Houses for Haiti" project to build new homes for families that lost everything when a major earthquake hit the island in January 2010.

"We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to the churches, schools and communities in Cork for their ongoing support for the work of Christian Aid over the years," said Mr Coleman.

"We have had overwhelming support for Christian Aid fundraising events including Christian Aid Week, the annual Sheep's Head Hike and other local community fundraising efforts. This has made a huge difference in changing the lives of people living in extreme poverty around the world."

Dublin priest ordained bishop in St Peter's Basilica

The Archbishop of Dublin, Diarmuid Martin, has congratulated Bishop Paul Tighe on his episcopal ordination in the Vatican.

Bishop Tighe was ordained in St Peter's Basilica in Rome by Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Vatican's secretary of state. He was appointed Bishop of Drivastrum and adjunct secretary of the Pontifical Council for Culture by Pope Francis last December.

Archbishop Martin and several priests from the Archdiocese of Dublin concelebrated and many friends and family travelled to Rome for the occasion.

Paying tribute to the newly ordained Bishop Tighe, Archbishop Martin said he was a person of kindness and integrity, whose contribution to life of the Church was widely respected.

Archbishop Martin added that, together with the priests of the Archdiocese of Dublin, he wished Bishop Tighe every blessing in his ministry.

C of I archive of month highlights 19th century Dublin Convert Rolls

An unusual source was recently brought to the attention of the C of I's RCB Library staff by professional genealogist Máire Mac Conghail who is a regular user of the Library's family

history resources. Having consulted the combined register for St Audoen's parish Dublin comprising baptisms 1837-1917, marriages 1837-1860 and burials 1837-1885 (RCB Library P116/1/4), she discovered an extensive list of names appended at the end of the run of marriages in the volume, appearing under this running title: 'A list of Persons who renounced the errors of Romanism in St Audoen's Church and who afterwards subscribed the roll of converts', covering the period from 6 May 1827 to 31 July 1847.

She asked for further information, which initially library staff was not able to provide, because they had never seen such a list before. However, having researched the background, the true origins of this list have been uncovered and are presented as the March 2016 Archive of the Month via the Church of Ireland website.

Whilst civic convert lists were compiled by the state, under the requirements of the 'Act to prevent the further growth of popery', and for which Church of Ireland bishops and clergy were, from time to time, called upon to provide evidence in the form of a certificate testifying that a person had become Protestant (evidence kept by the Court of Chancery in the form of Convert Rolls) there was no requirement on the



part of the Church of Ireland to keep such information. Indeed, by the time of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, there was no obligatory requirement for a person to account for their religious denomination – attendance at church and belonging was enough.

So in this context the St Audoen's list is a rare item deserving further attention. The background appears to be personal, as the list was initially compiled by the Revd Mortimer O'Sullivan (1793-1859) who served as Prebendary of St Audoen's from 1824-30. Born in Clonmel in 1793, he was the younger son of John O'Sullivan, the Roman Catholic schoolmaster at Clonmel, County Tipperary, where he and his

older brother Samuel were educated by Dr Richard Carey, a member of the Church of Ireland who had an influential role in the brothers' conversion. Both attended Trinity College, Dublin, and won scholarships: Mortimer in 1813 and Samuel the following year. Mortimer received his BA in 1816, an MA in 1826. Ordained in 1823, he served initially in a teaching capacity as Second Master in Tipperary Grammar School, then at the Royal School Dungannon where he was First Master, before his first clerical appointment as curate of the fashionable St Stephen's church in Dublin where he served from 1824 to 1827.

In December 1827 he was appointed to St Audoen's, Cornmarket, and it was from here that his active involvement in religious controversies began in earnest. Having been a Catholic, and whilst maintaining good relationships with the rest of his family who remained so, O'Sullivan became overtly anti-Catholic in his outlook. He belonged to the Protestant Association, a movement that proactively encouraged an 'Irish Reformation' especially among Catholic priests.

The list that Mortimer began in 1827 accounts for no less than 165 individuals, six of whom were former priests, and two student priests, whilst the remainder are lay people.

This rare source underpins the complexity and fluidity of religious expression in mid-nineteenth century Ireland, and records personal faith journeys. It is hoped that the online presentation which includes a digitized copy of the four-page list as it appears in the St Audoen's register of baptisms, marriages and burials as well as a surname index to all those people featured will bring their stories to light.

See -

www.ireland.anglican.org/library/archive

Lisburn Sunday School says farewell prayers for organiser

The children of the Sunday School at St Paul's Parish Church, Lisburn, made a presentation to Mrs Heather Carson on Sunday February 21.

Mrs Carson, wife of the rector of Rev Canon James Carson, has been Sunday School organiser for some years, but will be moving to the parishes of St Michael's and St Stephen & St Luke as Parish Development Officer when Canon Carson takes up a new post as Minister-in-Charge of the Parishes.

He will be introduced at a service in St Stephen's at 3pm on Sunday March 13.

After making the presentation, the St Paul's Sunday School children also laid hands and prayed for Canon and Mrs Carson.

Mystery resignation of leader of New Wine, the C of E's evangelical wing

Mystery surrounds why one of Britain's most prominent church leaders has resigned from leading a national evangelical organisation and 'stepped back' from his duties running a large church in Gloucestershire, The Western Daily Press reports.

The future of Rev Mark Bailey is now 'being considered under the Clergy Discipline Measure' by the new Bishop of Gloucester, Rachel Treweek.

Mr Bailey is the lead pastor at Trinity Church in Cheltenham, one of the leading churches in Gloucestershire, and for the past 14 years has been the leader of the New Wine movement, an evangelical-style organisation within the Church of England.

New Wine, which is an offshoot of the huge American Vineyard church, runs large-scale

Christian festivals in a number of locations around Britain, with the biggest taking place over several weeks at the Bath & West Showground, near Shepton Mallet every summer.

Mr Bailey was the national chairman of New Wine in Britain as well as its south and south west leader, and was a regular 'star-turn' preacher at churches throughout the West.

A statement from the Bishop of Gloucester said Mr Bailey resigned from his position with New Wine and stepped aside from his duties at Trinity in Cheltenham following a complaint.

He had a meeting with Bishop Rachel Treweek at the end of January and stepped down with immediate effect after that meeting.

While Bishop Rachel said she would not go into detail about the nature of the complaint against Mr Bailey, who is a Reverend Canon within the Church of England, she did confirm it was an issue that does not involve 'the police or other statutory agencies'.

""While I can't go into any detail, I can tell you that this relates to a matter now being considered under the Clergy Discipline Measure.

"This is not a matter involving the police or other statutory agencies. Further information will be made available at the appropriate time."

More at - <http://www.westerndailynews.co.uk/Mystery-resignation-Cheltenham-s-Mark-Bailey/story-28824034-detail/story.html#ixzz41ZgTwffs>

GB Methodists to commemorate 100 years of legal Conscientious Objections

Methodists from across the country will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of the right to refuse to fight in war at a special free event held at Englesea Brook Chapel, Crewe, on Sunday 20 March.

Led by the Revd Dr Inderjit Bhogal, former President of the Methodist Conference, this unique service will include prayers and reflections around the commemoration and will be broadcast [live online](#) for others to watch around the world.

Dr Jill Barber, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference, historian and Director of Englesea Brook Museum explains the relationship between conscientious objection and the

Methodist Church: "At the start of the First World War, many Primitive and Wesleyan Methodists were challenged to reconsider their attitude to war and peace. Methodists such as Bert Brocklesby and Jack Foister faced prison, rebuke from their families or church community, and even death, for their principled refusal to take up arms.

"As a result of their courageous stance alongside others, Britain became the first nation to enshrine in law the right to Conscientious Objection."

Presbyterian Church in which Donald Trump was baptized defies him on immigration policy

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has turned on Donald Trump who is still feeling the impact of his row with Pope Francis over his suggestion he was "not a Christian" for proposing a border wall with Mexico.

But the conservative credentials of the Republican front runner are not convincing to one foreign commentator who has labeled him a "complete fake."

The leadership of Presbyterian church he was born into says his extreme views on how to deal with immigration are out of line with its teachings.

Rev. Gradye Parsons, the most senior elected official of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to which Trump was baptized as a child, said that the Bible is clear:, stating followers of the faith have to care for the needy.

"Donald Trump's views are not in keeping with the policies adopted by our church by deliberative process," he said.

In an interview with the [UK's Guardian newspaper](#), Parsons said that the Presbyterian church had voted several times since the 1990s in its national general assemblies in favor of comprehensive immigration.

These allowed for granting a route to legal status for the 11 million undocumented people currently living in the United States.

"Our official policy is to encourage immigration reform," noted Parsons.

He explained that the founding narrative of Christianity contains a commitment to those

most in need - widows, orphans, the oppressed and the alien.

"It is clear that God wants us to act on behalf of the stranger. Jesus himself and his parents had to flee the country for their lives when he was born – there are lots of parallels."

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Mirror/Exp/Times/Mail/Premier

Reports of the letter written by Christian leaders to the *Sunday Telegraph* opposing the extension of Sunday Trading. Signed by the Bishop of St Albans Dr Alan Smith and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Southwark the Revd Peter Smith and others, the letter says, "We are concerned that the further deregulation of Sunday trading laws is likely to disrupt the rhythms of community life that are so integral to common good." But the *Times* and *Mirror* report that reform is expected to clear the Commons after the Scottish National party dropped its opposition to the hours extension.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/conservatives-plans-extend-sunday-trading-7461456#ICID=nsm>

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/648304/Church-leaders-hit-Sunday-trading-plan>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/politics/article4701694.ece>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3467978/Extending-Sunday-opening-hours-disrupt-community-life-English-churches-warn-unite-time-condemn-George-Osborne-s-plans.html>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Christian-leaders-say-Sunday-trading-will-ruin-communities>

Times

Further coverage of a Christian postgraduate student studying social work at Sheffield University who has been expelled from his course, for voicing opposition to gay marriage in a Facebook discussion. Felix Ngole expressed support for Kim Davis, the county clerk from Kentucky in the US who was jailed for refusing to issue marriage licences after the introduction of same-sex unions in September last year. Article notes that the university disciplinary panel concluded that his comment on the Facebook thread would affect his ability to operate in the profession, it was not about his personal views. The Christian Legal Centre is quoted.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/article4701815.ece>

BBC

Report that prayers have been said for three missing workers and another who died in the Didcot power station collapse last Tuesday. The Revd Hannah Reynolds of St Peter's church, Didcot, said, "It's weighing very heavily on the community. It's a feeling of agony of not knowing."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-35681614>

East Anglian Daily Times

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

Report and photographs of the installation of the new Bishop of Dunwich, Mike Harrison in St Edmundsbury Cathedral on Saturday.

BBC/Tel

Reports that *Spotlight*, a film about the Boston Globe's investigation into child abuse in the Roman Catholic Church has won the Best Picture award at the Oscars.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-35670715>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/oscars/12175827/Oscars-2016-winners.html>

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