



1916: Sentimental hagiography should not dictate the future, Archbishop Jackson

There is no room for “historical retrospect or for sentimental hagiography” in the centenary year of the 1916 Rising “if it is conceived of as a sort of political selfie”, the Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin said on Easter Sunday.

In his homily at Sandford Parish Church in Ranelagh, Archbishop Michael Jackson said there was no good reason to let historical

retrospect or sentimental hagiography dictate the future to and for us – uncritically.

“We recognise what has been; we seek to comprehend it; we need to keep interpreting it and not spend our time reminiscing about it,” he said.

In an Ireland which is increasingly diverse, there was room for the old and new, the Archbishop suggested.

He warned that the rest of this world was watching – “on its TV, its iPad, its iPhone or on any other device available to it – the way in which we are or are not dealing with a past that in many ways still dictates the present”.

The Church of Ireland Primate said the same world was watching out for the hopes for the future to which our leaders in public life on Sunday and for the rest of this year give voice.

“Following wave after wave of Troubles in some shape or form almost every decade since 1916, each iteration of Troubles-life in Ireland has given us a legacy soured by a disrespect for the Other and a predilection for turning the neighbour into the enemy,” the Archbishop criticised.

“We need to move beyond this now. We need to be careful, if we seek to re-focus ourselves at all, to re-focus ourselves along the lines of Isaiah, namely that revolution brings the responsibility and the requirement of security.”

He said both security and revolution were good to think about on a day when people throughout the Republic of Ireland were commemorating The Rising. So were words like memory and commitment.

“Ireland in 2016 and beyond would have ‘more religion’ by accommodating the cultural and religious ways of others,” the Archbishop suggested.

On the ethic of altruism, Dr Jackson said, “This can be a new type of revolution in 2016. It requires all of us to pull together and to draw together and to hold together revolution and stability.”

However, he noted that revolution always created displacement and regularly required violence as witnessed in Brussels this week, while security regularly breeds generalised indifference, he said. “But, if we work at it as a civic duty, it also engenders carefulness of others and ecology of the things of God.”

The senior churchman said people in 1916 were “battling exploitation, social exclusion, poverty, squalor, indignity and colonialism; they too in their day were offered the Revolution with all of its ambiguities and selectivities, its idealisms and its integrities, its hopes of freedom and its power-grabs”.

“Most especially they were offered the hope of something new, something independent, something of the future.”

“We in Ireland know that there remains to this day the unfinished business of revolution: and that is the work of connecting romantic idealism, interdependence on our nearest geographical neighbour and radical social inclusion with a newly envisioned future – if the Revolution of 1916 is to be more than a tableau of self-applause, a ghostly echo of our own sense of political bravado.”

“As members of our society, we as Christian people and as members of the Church of Ireland are called to seek and to serve God, to nail our colours to the common good and to play our part in ushering in the Kingdom of God through service and through leadership at every point in the compass.”

“In this sense, the Revolution is still to start,”
Archbishop Jackson commented.

Full text of sermon at -

<http://dublin.anglican.org/news/2016/03/The-Ethic-of-Altruism-A-New-Type-of-Revolution-for-2016-Archbishops-Easter-Day-Sermon>

1916: Easter Rising a warning about partition, Primus Chillingworth

The Most Reverend David Chillingworth, Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church, writing in his weblog comments -

“Alison has been doing some sorting out of the family archives – and came across a contemporary postcard of the 1916 Easter Rising, (*see below next page*)

“It happened a mere 35 years before we were born – both of us remember the 50th Anniversary. My grandfather, Ernest Batemen records his memories of it in one of his sermons.

“The commemorations seem to have taken a more rounded view of the significance of the Rising – national pride of course. But the other



stories have had an airing as well. Those include the fate of the WW1 veterans who came home – as veterans often do – to a world utterly changed. And the Civil War – and Partition. I’ve been reading about the hopes of some – particularly James Connolly – who hoped for a new state built on values of equality between men and women. What they got was a Catholic confessional state which was mirrored in Northern Ireland by a ‘Protestant state for a Protestant people’. And they also got generations of conflict.

“Those who contemplate partition – India/
Pakistan or Sudan – should learn the lessons of

Ireland. It's about what happens to the people who are on the 'wrong' side of the line. The Northern Catholics struggled against discrimination in housing and jobs – but increased in number. The Southern Protestants – the root community for Alison and me – were in many cases prosperous and influential in business. But they were drastically reduced in numbers.”



Portadown Methodist Circuit farewell

The Portadown Circuit said farewell to two circuit staff members at a service in Edenderry

Memorial church on Sunday 20 March. Youth Pastor for the past four years, Mark Hand (second left) is moving to a new position on the Lurgan Circuit, while Ambre Sloan (third right) is stepping down after eight years as Lay Pastoral Assistant. Also pictured are: (L-R) the Rev Kenneth Robinson (Portadown District Superintendent), Myrtle Wright (Portadown Circuit Steward), the Rev Mark Durrell and the Rev Aian Ferguson (Portadown Circuit Superintendent).

Professor Andrew Mayes to Deliver BACI Spring Lecture

It used to be said not so long ago in Trinity College Dublin that one could fly through Old Testament exams after attending Professor Andrew Mayes' lectures, without ever picking up a textbook. That's how clear and comprehensive they were. Now attending TCD is no longer necessary. At the BACI Spring Lecture on April 9th, every one can discover new treasures in the depths of the scriptural record, simply by accompanying Prof Mayes in his exploration of OT texts and the people who produced them.

Andrew Mayes has been internationally recognised as a prominent Old Testament scholar since 1974, when after only six years as a lecturer in Trinity he was elected to a fellowship. He was a key member of Prof Sean Freyne's team of Hebrew, biblical and theological specialists in TCD in the '80s, '90s and beyond. In a lecturing and research career spanning over 40 years, his major publications have included *The Story of Israel between Settlement and Exile*, *Judges*, and *The Old Testament in Sociological Perspective*.

His most recent area of interest has been Egypt as seen in the Hebrew Bible, and the historical relationship between Israel and Egypt. Some of this can be expected to feature in his lecture, titled "Identities in a World of Historical Change – an Old Testament Quest". All are welcome to the lecture at St Matthias, Ballybrack, at 10.30am on Saturday April 9th. A €10 charge (concessions €5) will apply to cover expenses – and coffee.

C of I Historical Society's spring conference

The Church of Ireland Historical Society's spring conference will be on Saturday, 23 April 2015 in Armagh Public Library. The library is located at the northwest entrance gate to the

Church of Ireland Cathedral. Tea and coffee will be served from 10.30am and the first paper will start at 11am.

Confirmed speakers are Ms Valerie Adams (Archivist of the Presbyterian Historical Society), Dr Jane McKee (University of Ulster) and Mr Colin Armstrong (independent researcher). The research paper will be delivered by Mr Ruairí Cullen who is pursuing his PhD at Queen's University, Belfast.

The full programme will be made available shortly.

The conference is open to all members of the public. There is a daily fee of €10 for non-members to assist with conference expenses, payable at the registration desk in the Music Room, but anyone can become a member for €40. For further details of membership package please see [membership](http://churchofirelandhist.org/membership/) page - <http://churchofirelandhist.org/membership/>

Urgent call for blood donations

The Irish Blood Transfusion Service (IBTS) is concerned that it may not be able to maintain supplies to hospitals over the coming few weeks.

While hospital requirements have been down in recent months (by 4%), donations levels have dropped significantly (by 10-12%). “Donors have been attending in their usual numbers over the last 6 weeks.

However, blood donations have remained low due to the fallout from the haemoglobin measurement technology issue identified at the beginning of November,” said Operations Director Paddy Bowler. “Up to October 2015, one in seven donors attending clinics were unable to donate for various reasons. Since November 2015 this has worsened to one in four attending donors being unable to donate. The increase is caused entirely by donors presenting with haemoglobin levels below permitted EU donation limits.

Donors are advised to check www.giveblood.ie for details of these and all other IBTS donation clinics.

“Enough is enough”, Pakistan Moderator laments bombing

Pakistan is at breaking point, the Moderator of the Church of Pakistan, President Bishop



#PrayForLahore

The Minar-e-Pakistan (Tower of Pakistan) has been adopted as a backdrop of a meme by social media users expressing solidarity with the people of Lahore after the Easter Day massacre.

Samuel Azariah, has said in response to the Easter Day massacre at the Gulshan-e Iqbal Park in Lahore.

At least 72 people were killed and more than 300 injured after a bomb exploded in the park. Many of the victims were women and children. A Taleban off-shoot, Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, has claimed responsibility for the suicide bombing, saying that the target of the attack was Christians celebrating Easter.

While Christians were the stated target of the attack, the bomb was indiscriminate and it is understood that many more Muslims were killed and injured than Christians. Officials say that they expect the death toll to rise in the coming days. Gulshan-e-Iqbal Park is one of the largest parks of Lahore. It is usually packed with visitors on weekends; but the crowds were busier on Sunday, with what the Church of Pakistan described as “an extraordinary rush” on Sunday evening “as a large number of Christians had turned up to celebrate Easter.”

Bishop Azariah, visited hospitals in the aftermath of the attack to console and pray for the injured and to analyse the situation. In a video message recorded late on Easter Day, he said that “some of the injured are very critically,” adding: “I have personally met and seen small children, women, old people. Some of them unconscious. Some of them from our church and from our diocese. It is a very, very, tragic and sad event.”

In the video, recorded before Jamaat-ul-Ahrar had claimed responsibility, Bishop Azariah said: “We cannot say that this was targeted at any one particular group or any one particular community. But it was definitely targeted to create chaos, confusion, fear and anxiety amongst the people.”

He continued: “Please keep us in your prayers and may this time of Easter – a celebration of Christ’s victory over death and the grave – be a meaningful and a consoling experience for many of our people who are in the hospital at the moment. . . God bless us and may the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ prevail amongst us.”

The Church of Pakistan is a United Church which brings together Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Lutherans. In addition to being a member of the Anglican Communion, the Church is also a member of the World Council of Reformed Churches and the World Methodist Council.

Responding to the attack, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said: “We pray for the victims of Lahore to the crucified God who brings hope in despair, whose love is with the victims, who promises justice.”

In a later statement, posted on his [Facebook page](#), Bishop Azariah, said that such terror attacks “weaken and damage the struggle and effort toward bringing a relation of peace and harmony between Christians and Muslims.”

He said: “It is unfortunate that these inhuman terrorists identify themselves as Muslims and by performing such barbaric acts damage the

image of their faith community. In a context of this nature, it is the primary responsibility of our majority brothers and sisters from the Muslim community to identify, silence and eliminate this minority.

“This minority claims to be the real Muslims, and primarily acts against the teaching of Islam and this should be resolved.

“Mere statements of condemnation and quotes from The Holy Scriptures are not enough. We as a nation have reached a breaking point that ‘enough is enough.’ How many more soft targets have to be sacrificed?”

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Catholic and Protestant workforce 50:50 in N Ireland for first time

Irish Times

<http://www.irishtimes.com/business/economy/catholic-and-protestant-workforce-in-north-at-50-50-for-first-time-1.2589891>

Oxfam urges rich nations to take in more Syria refugees

BBC News

The UK and other wealthy nations should sharply increase the number of Syrian refugees they take in, Oxfam has said.

www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-35913972

Guard/Mail Online

Reports on the funerals of some of the 70 mostly women and children killed in the bomb attack in Lahore, Pakistan. Many were Christians, who the articles note are among the country's most economically disadvantaged communities and had been attracted to the cheap and affordable public attraction as an Easter treat for their children. A Taliban splinter group has claimed responsibility.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/28/lahore-bombing-victims-buried-grief-anger-security>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-3512957/AP-Explains-Violence-against-Christians-Pakistan.html>

Christian Today

Reports the Maundy Thursday sermon by the Bishop of Salisbury Nicholas Holtam. In it Bishop Nicholas noted the link between Easter and the Jewish Passover festival. Fixing date date for Easter would separate Christians from their Jewish roots, he warned. His comments come after conversations between the leaders of Christian faiths about trying to fix the date of Easter.

Mail Online

Reports that a chocolate firm has been accused of 'hiding' the word 'Easter' from the front of their chocolate egg packaging. Cadbury was inundated with comments from customers on social media, questioning why the Easter treats simply said 'milk chocolate egg' with no

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mention of the Christian festival. Both Cadbury and Nestle denied that they were getting rid of the word 'Easter' from their products. The Bishop of Salisbury, Nicholas Holtam is quoted.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3512381/Cadbury-underfire-hiding-reference-Easter-chocolate-egg-packaging.html>

BBC

Reports that Oxfam has said that the UK and other wealthy nations should sharply increase the number of Syrian refugees they take in. The charity wants 10% of the 4.8 million Syrians displaced by civil war to be resettled by the end of the year. Ahead of UN talks in Geneva on the crisis, it highlighted figures showing only 1.4% had been helped so far. Oxfam said UK plans to resettle 20,000 Syrians by 2020 were "not good enough", but the British government says it is focused on providing aid to people in the region.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-35913972>

Comment

Telegraph: Tom Harris reflects the uncomfortable relationship between UK politicians and religion. The article notes that Christianity was never intended (originally, anyway) to be a comforting faith; it was, and remains, "a challenging and deeply uncomfortable philosophy".

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/12205727/David-Cameras-shallow-cliched-Easter-message-shows-why-politicians-really-shouldnt-do-God.html>

Independent: Following the bombing which killed 70 in Lahore, comment piece on the persecution of Christians in Pakistan

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/lahore-we-shouldnt-shy-away-from-talking-about-the-persecution-of-christians-in-pakistan-a6956876.html>

FT: Further comment on above, including quotes from the Bishop of Karachi.

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/5aeebe9e-f4eb-11e5-96db-fc683b5e52db.html?FTCamp=engage/CAP/webapp/Channel_Moreover//B2B#axzz44GVGuCvG

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