



Health Minister Simon Hamilton and president of the Presbyterian Childrens Society the Rev Purvis Campbell at the exhibition

Belfast exhibition marks 150 years of Presbyterian help to children

A Presbyterian society which assists hundreds of vulnerable children each year has opened an

exhibition in Belfast's Linen Hall Library to mark 150 years of its work.

News Letter - Entitled 'Generations of Generosity', the exhibition traces the story of the Presbyterian Children's Society and how it has been able to give 43,000 children from 17,500 families the opportunity to reach their full potential when circumstances appeared to have made that impossible.

Using stories from the society's archives - with identities protected - the exhibition tells how generations of generous Presbyterians have demonstrated compassion at the most calamitous times.

The exhibition was officially launched in the library on Friday by Health Minister Simon Hamilton, QUB Professor Emeritus of history Ken Brown and local author Tony Macaulay.

Typical scenarios that have prompted the society's intervention have been where a breadwinner dies unexpectedly; food isn't available or can't be afforded; disability forces a single parent to stop work; everything is lost through bankruptcy; or a family splits apart through domestic violence.

The exhibition also tells how recipients became a First World War VC and another a Presbyterian Moderator.

Known as the Presbyterian Orphan Society until recently, it granted almost £600,000 to support 720 vulnerable children last year.

Secretary Nathan Todd said cases are referred by local ministers with the consent of families.

“All of our grants are made with the family’s consent,” he said.

The organisation is funded by regular collections in congregations and from investments made with capital sums left in wills.

“Going through the exhibition is really taking a step through history,” he added.

“Some parents had fought or died in the First World War, then we helped people through the Great Depression, and next came the hardship of the Second World War. We also see that with the start of the welfare state in 1947, demands began to change.

“The general concept is not making any judgment, but simply stepping in to help children financially, until they finish in full-time education.

“In one case we dealt with one parent who died and another was diagnosed with a life-threatening condition soon after.

“We have also seen a rise in rural suicides in recent times, after which we often step in to help.”

The exhibition runs in the Linen Hall Library until March 25; in Coleraine on April 6; and Cookstown on April 28; with a service on May 10 in Assembly Buildings, Belfast. For further information, call 90 32 37 37.

New joint magazine to serve Catholic and C of I parishes

A new monthly newsletter, entitled *The Clarion*, produced by the Church of Ireland parish of Powerscourt with Kilbride (Bray) where the rector is the Ven. Ricky Rountree, and the Roman Catholic parish of St Mary, Enniskerry .

This has been made possible by the involvement of the recently established Liturgical Publications of Ireland Ltd., a company with vast experience of liturgical publications in the USA. This will be a full colour sixteen page magazine incorporating news from both parishes and from the wider community. It will include a combined

diary of community events and forthcoming events with the liturgical diary of each parish as the main centrefold. There will be ten issues each year.

The 'joint parishes' is a long standing concept in Enniskerry where there has been an established commitment to do everything possible together and never to do separately what is possible to do collaborately. This has involved joint study, combined fundraising and joint projects of many kinds as well as celebrating elements of the main Christian festivals together. The front page of the first issue of *The Clarion* depicts the Good Friday 'Way of the Cross', a highlight of the annual joint liturgical calendar.

1916: Maynooth Presbyterian focus on St Patrick's Day

A Presbyterian minister in Maynooth is using the legacy of St Patrick and the celebrations around March 17th to encourage greater community development.

Rev Dr Keith McCrory is the chairman of the St Patrick Foundation, a reconciliation charity founded upon the life and legacy of Ireland's patron saint. The aim of the St Patrick

Foundation is to bring people together and inspire them to excellence in reconciliation, and this year various community events, including Saint Patrick breakfasts, are planned towards achieving that goal. The foundation also promotes a Spirit of St Patrick Award Scheme, a Leadership Training programme and a Conciliation Service, all centred upon Patrick's message of faith in Christ.

This year's events include a St Patrick's breakfasts on March 17th (with an evening concert) in Maynooth, and for the first time, a St Patrick's breakfast in the City Hotel, Queen's Quay, Derry.

For more information on the St Patrick's Foundation, including Dr McCrory's *Leading through Conflict* seminar, and to order tickets for St Patrick's day events, visit saintpatrickfoundation.org.

Unique heritage tour on Armagh Hill on St Patrick's Day

A three-fold visit at 3.00pm on Armagh's ancient hill is on offer this St Patrick's Day. St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, the former Registry at No 5 Vicars' Hill and Armagh Public Library



will be open jointly to visitors on St Patrick's Day from 2.00pm–4.00pm.

A guided tour will be offered of all three places, starting at 3.00pm at the Cathedral and leading on to No 5 and finally to the Library. While the tour will be free, donations will be most welcome for the Cathedral, No 5 and Library.

Armagh owes its inheritance to St Patrick's choice of its Hill for his church, the principal church in Ireland. From the time that monks and scholars were first drawn to the site, Patrick's decision has shaped the development of Armagh down to the present day.

The Book of Armagh, written here in 807, records events in Patrick's life. The wealth of the Church in Armagh led to many Viking raids and much destruction from the year 832 onwards. In 1014, Brian Boru, High King of Ireland, was buried on the Hill of Armagh after his death at the Battle of Clontarf, in accordance with his wishes.

The eighteenth century renaissance of the City was the product of Archbishop Richard Robinson's vision. It is still the only city in the world with two cathedrals dedicated to St Patrick.

In 1765 Richard Robinson became Archbishop of Armagh. In 1771 he founded Armagh Public Library on the Hill, adjacent to the Church of Ireland Cathedral. The nucleus of its collection is Archbishop Robinson's personal gift of seventeenth and eighteenth century texts on subjects such as theology, philosophy and history.

The Library's collection has since expanded to include 46,000 titles. Copies of the 1913 reproduction of the 'Book of Armagh' are on display. Also to be seen are reproductions of costume designs by the artist, William Conor, for a pageant held in 1932 to celebrate the fifteen hundredth anniversary of St Patrick's coming ashore at Saul, County Down.

Number 5 Vicars' Hill, owned by Armagh Public Library, was built by Archbishop Robinson to hold civic and church records. Examples of these records are on display, as well as some of the Library's collections of coins, gems, prints, early Christian artefacts and other curiosities.

There is a small collection of four-sided iron bells, which are characteristic of the early Irish Church. They were used in worship and would have been familiar to St Patrick.

For further information, please telephone Armagh Public Library on 028 3752 3142 or e-mail admin@armaghpubliclibrary.co.uk

Passion Walk planned through the streets of central Belfast

Contemporary Christianity has announced that the Passion Walk will be taking place again this year.

The Passion Walk is an individual reflective journey through the streets of central Belfast, where the city itself becomes the backdrop for the story of Christ's Passion.

Walking with an audio guide and pausing at certain key locations, you will be invited to enter into the events of Jesus' final hours.

The first Easter took place in a busy, complex city where most people were preoccupied with their own concerns. The Passion Walk is an

invitation to experience the story in a new way, and perhaps to see the city in a new light.

You are invited to begin your journey at Grosvenor House, 5 Glengall Street (behind the Opera House) any time between 10am and 1pm on Friday 25th or Saturday 26th of March.

Make your urban pilgrimage at your own pace, alone or with friends, and complete the journey with refreshments and a space for further reflection at The Dock Café in Titanic Quarter.

All walkers are asked to book in advance on the website www.passionwalk.org. There is a charge of £5 (£3 unwaged) to help cover costs.

Samuel Beckett plaque unveiled at baptismal parish

Last Saturday evening the Archbishop of Dublin, Most Rev Dr Michael Jackson, unveiled a plaque in memory of the Nobel Laureate, Samuel Beckett, in Tullow parish church, as part of 'Beckett in Foxrock', an evening of drama, poetry and prose. The Beckett family lived in Foxrock, in the heart of Tullow parish, alongside other prominent Church of Ireland families such as the Elverys, Orpens and Darleys. The parish

register, now in the Representative Church Body Library, records that Samuel Barclay Beckett was baptised in Tullow church on 10 June 1906 by the Revd George Clark who had also baptised Beckett's elder brother, Frank, in 1902. Beckett and the Archbishops are both past pupils of Portora Royal School, Enniskillen.

Christian Aid opens first charity shop

The Changing Room, Christian Aid's first charity shop, has been established to raise money and awareness for the work of Christian Aid globally.





The Mayor and volunteer staff open the Christian Aid charity shop in Garvagh

The concept of this new venture was proposed by local woman Rachel McCormick who has worked with Christian Aid to realise her dream of opening a charity shop in [Garvagh](#) town.

The Changing Room will be staffed by Rachel and a number of volunteers within the local community.

The special guest at the opening was Councillor Michelle Knight-McQuillan, Mayor of Causeway Coast & Glens Borough, cutting the ribbon and officially opening The Changing Room to the public. Shoppers from Garvagh and the greater community came out for the occasion.

Rosamond Bennett, CEO of Christian Aid Ireland, spoke of her delight at the opening of the shop:

'Christian Aid is delighted to be able to open its first ever charity shop in the town of Garvagh. The fact that this shop was inspired by a local woman adds a great deal of poignancy to the occasion.

'Working in partnership is vital to the nature and purpose of Christian Aid and we are delighted that Rachel McCormick came to us with her dream of opening a charity shop in her town of Garvagh.'

Christian Aid is hoping that the shop will benefit both the work of Christian Aid globally and also the local community as it brings people together.

For more information on The Changing Room and how you can get involved, please contact Sarah Leeman: sleeman@christian-aid.org.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

Good Shepherd order focus of abuse inquiry - News Letter

A long-running child abuse public inquiry will focus on alleged wrongdoing at institutions run by the Good Shepherd Sisters when it reconvenes next week.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/inquiry-on-child-abuse-turns-to-catholic-run-group-of-homes-1-7254211>

Pope says nuns murdered in Yemen 'gave blood for the church' - Irish Independent

<http://www.independent.ie/world-news/pope-says-nuns-murdered-in-yemen-gave-blood-for-the-church-34515638.html>

Mail

Report that former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Carey has written to the niece of Bishop George Bell criticising the CofE for destroying his reputation over child abuse claims. Last October the Bishop of Chichester issued a formal apology following the settlement of a legal civil claim regarding sexual abuse against George Bell.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3478678/Carey-s-fury-Church-abuse-case-bishop-Ex-Archbishop-accuses-officials-destroying-dead-priest-s-reputation-unproven-claims.html>

York Press

Report that delegates from across the Church of England attended an evangelism consultation day at Bishopthorpe Palace focusing on urban estate mission. Revd Dr Malcolm Brown, Director of Mission and Public Affairs (Archbishops' Council) is quoted along with Bishop of Burnley, Philip North.

[http://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/14323767.Palace date for church leaders/?ref=rss](http://www.yorkpress.co.uk/news/14323767.Palace+date+for+church+leaders/?ref=rss)

Ind

Report on the Enterprise Bill to be debated in the Commons this week, which would allow councils to extend Sunday trading hours. Article notes opposition from around 50 Tory MPs along with backbenchers, Labour and the Scottish National Party, unions and church leaders.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sunday-trading-laws-government-moves-to-stave-off-50-strong-tory-rebellion-against-planned-changes-a6914581.html>

Ind

Report that Mothers will be £13bn worse off under the current Government as a result of policies announced over the past year, according to a new analysis released for Mothering Sunday by the House of Commons Library. The research looked at the effects on women with dependent children of a number of changes announced by Chancellor George Osborne, since last year's general election and quotes previous research from the Children's Society.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/benefit-cuts-will-leave-mothers-13bn-worse-off-over-course-of-current-parliament-a6914571.html>

Exp

Article on report published yesterday by House of Commons' Home Affairs Committee which states that as many as 50,000 asylum seekers may need to be housed in Britain by next year amid "unprecedented demand". Report notes that wealthier areas of the country should take on a greater responsibility with some local councils currently offering refuge to very few or even no asylum seekers. Article notes offer by Archbishop of Canterbury to house Syrian refugees.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/649913/Senior-Tories-councils-asylum-seekers-unfair-allocation>

Mail/Times/Guard/Star/Sun

Reports on the London wedding yesterday of Rupert Murdoch and Jerry Hall who married in a civil ceremony at Spencer House. Articles all note today there will be a service at Bride's Fleet Street in London for friends and family. A spokesman for the church is quoted saying: "Mr Murdoch has always had a lot of time and love for this place so we are delighted he is having a service of celebration here". *Guardian* notes Canon Alison Joyce, Rector of St Bride's, will officiate at the church event, assisted by Fr Jonathan Morris from New York, who has done some work for Murdoch's Fox News while the *Telegraph* speculates on who will be attending the church service.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3476642/Jerry-Hall-marries-Rupert-Murdoch-18th-century-palace-London-wearing-knee-length-skirt-flat-shoes-whirlwind-five-month-romance.html>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/medianews/article4706282.ece>

<http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/499043/Rupert-Murdoch-Jerry-Hall-wedding-married-Spencer-House-Fleet-Street>

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/6978643/Sun-boss-Rupert-Murdoch-marries-Jerry-Hall.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/celebritynews/12183058/All-six-of-Rupert-Murdoch-and-Jerry-Halls-daughters-to-be-bridesmaids-at-their-wedding.html>

BBC

Report that Cheltenham vicar, Richard Reakes, has praised a fire crew who lifted an 89-year-old wheelchair user into church for a friend's funeral calling it a "fantastic act of kindness". An appeal was issued by the carers of Muriel, who is partially-sighted, to enable her to pay her respects at the service in The Church of the Ascension in Southam. Three firefighters answered the plea and offered their time to carry her into the church.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-35726060>

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