



Mother Teresa's canonization date expected on 15 March

Pope Francis will hold an ordinary public consistory of cardinals in the Vatican on 15 March, during which he will sign the decree for the canonization of Blessed Mother Teresa of Kolkata and four others. The dates and venue of their sainthood ceremony are expected to be declared at the consistory.

Pope Francis had officially cleared Blessed Mother Teresa for sainthood on 17 December 2015, recognising the miraculous healing through her intercession of a Brazilian man with multiple brain abscesses. Mother Teresa was conferred the title Blessed in Rome, Italy, on 19 October 2003, after Pope Saint John Paul II recognized the miraculous healing of an Indian woman with a tumour in her abdomen.

Born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu of Albanian parents on 26 August 26 1910, in Skopje, in what is Macedonia today, Mother Teresa died in Kolkata, formerly Calcutta, on 5 September 1997. Affectionately known as the “saint of the gutter” for her unconditional love for the poor, abandoned and the marginalized, she earned several international honours, including the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979.

1,000 to attend Derry and Raphoe event in Letterkenny

On March 11 A Diocese-wide Commissioning Event is being held in Letterkenny Institute (LYIT) to celebrate the Year of Opportunity 2016. Every parish in the diocese will be represented at the celebration.

New MU members at Mothering Sunday Service in Macosquin

Four women were enrolled as new members of the Mothers' Union's Macosquin Branch during a special service in St Mary's Church on Mothering Sunday. During the service, Bertha Madden was commissioned by the Rector, Canon Mike Roemmele, as Branch Leader of the Macosquin Mother's Union. And Collette Cuckoo, Mary Campbell, Margaret Millar and Jane Parker were welcomed into the fellowship of the Macosquin Branch.

The ceremony took place during a Family Service which was led by members of the Confirmation Group. The young people performed dramatised readings of the story of Moses in the Bulrushes and the Parable of the Prodigal Son. In these Biblical stories, the mothers were physically absent at critical times in their children's lives. The love of the mother of Moses played an important part in the first story, and the congregation was challenged to consider how motherly love might have played a part in the return of the prodigal to his home.

The Mothers' Union was founded 140 years ago in England by Mary Sumner and is now a world-



wide charitable fellowship with four million members. Since its foundation it has been committed to the principles of Christian marriage and family life.

The Mothers' Union, the Men's Society, the Parish Development and Pastoral Care teams, the Confirmation Group and the Church Choir will lead Mission Services in Macosquin from Palm Sunday until Good Friday this year. These will reflect on the events from Palm Sunday to Good Friday, which came to a climax with the crucifixion of Jesus. The services will challenge the congregation to see themselves among the different men, women and children who were involved in Christ's Passion (suffering). The Mission will begin at the Sunday Club at 6.30 pm on Palm Sunday, 20th March, and continue for churchnewsireland@gmail.com

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the rest of Holy Week – up until Good Friday – at 7.30 pm each evening.

St Patrick's Day at Downpatrick Methodist



Downpatrick Methodist Congregation warmly invites you to call into their church in Scotch Street on St Patrick's Day for a cup of tea and to view an exhibition of photographs.

The photographs will illuminate the Christian heritage and test your local knowledge.

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You are welcome to come and share fellowship and encourage ongoing witness in this historic and beautiful area which has many Christian associations from St Patrick to John Wesley.

There will be quizzes and prizes. Thursday, 17 March, 2016 - 10:30 to 17:00 Downpatrick Methodist Church, Scotch Street, Downpatrick.
Email: louise.monroe@irishmethodist.org
Website with Further Details: <http://downmethodist.info/>

Training in the Healing Ministry offered in Belfast



Divine Healing Ministries will be offering training for those who would like to be involved in the Healing Ministry or who would just like to build up their knowledge of the Ministry.

This will take place in St. Anne's Cathedral Hall on 5 Thursday evenings at 8.00pm. The

dates will be 21st and 28th of April, then missing out 5th May, recommencing on 12th, 19th and 26th May.

If you are interested in this training please let the DHM Office know (028 9031 1532). There will be no charge for this course but on the final evening people will have the opportunity to make a voluntary free will offering.

Archbishop of Canterbury gives backing to Ministry of Sport strategy

The leader of the Church of England, Archbishop Justin Welby, has declared his excitement at the work being done to proclaim Jesus to sportspeople in the United Kingdom, particularly through a developing initiative within the Anglican church, the Ministry of Sport.

Opening a consultation day for all diocese within the Southern Province, he said, 'reaching into an area of life where huge numbers of people across the country are involved, particularly on Sundays, is something that is critical to expressing what it is to be a Christian.'



[...] Christians in Sport and all those involved at the Ministry of Sport are passionate about doing these two things within the world of sport and our prayer is that the meeting at Lambeth Palace is a catalyst, so that many of the 10 million people playing sport each week, can have the opportunity to hear the good news of Jesus.
Read here -

<http://www.christiansinsport.org.uk/news.asp?itemid=6469&itemTitle=Archbishop+of+Canterbury+gives+backing+to+Ministry+of+Sport+strategy§ion=22§ionTitle=Stories>

Draft programme for Anglican Consultative Council meeting published

Anglican Bishops, priests and laity from across the world will gather in Lusaka next month for the 16th meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC-16). Members will discuss a range of issues around the theme “Intentional discipleship in a world of difference” – how Christians can be faithful to the Gospel in all aspects of their lives in the different cultures and situations that Anglicans find themselves in.

The ACC facilitates the co-operative work of the 38 autonomous but interdependent national and regional Churches and the six extra-provincial churches and dioceses that are in Communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury. Through the ACC, churches of the Anglican Communion exchange information and co-ordinate common action. The ACC also advises on the organisation and structures of the Anglican Communion, and seeks to develop common policies on world mission and ecumenical matters.



Prayer, worship and Bible-study underpin the work of the ACC, and this year's meeting, which begins on Friday 8 April and continues until Tuesday 19 April, will begin with Morning Prayer in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Lusaka before the first in a series of Bible studies on the book of Ruth.

[The draft programme for ACC-16 has now been published.](#) This will be finalised by the ACC's Standing Committee immediately before the ACC meeting gets underway. Many of the issues to be discussed by the ACC will develop from discussions around emerging themes and priorities emanating from the provinces.

There will be extended discussions on environmental issues – a major concern for many Anglicans, especially those in parts of their world

where their very survival is threatened by the effects of climate change.

Significant recent developments in ecumenical relationships will also be discussed, including the final report of the Anglican-Methodist dialogue, “[*Into All the World: Being and Becoming Apostolic Churches*](#)”, the report of the Anglican-Orthodox dialogue, “[*In the Image and Likeness of God: A Hope-Filled Anthropology*](#)”, and the report of the Anglican-Oriental Orthodox dialogue, with its [agreed statement on Christology](#).

And as the 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017 approaches, the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order, will propose that the ACC welcomes and affirms the substance of the [*Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*](#) of the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church.

There will also be a report on the Primates’ Gathering and Meeting that took place in Canterbury Cathedral in January.

The host province for ACC-16 is the Anglican Church of Central Africa, which includes Botswana, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

ACC-16 will be the first time that such a significant international Anglican gathering has taken place in the Province.

During the meeting, the diocese of Lusaka and its bishop, the Rt Revd Rt Revd David Njovu, and its Dean, the Very Revd Charley Thomas; and the Province of Central Africa and its Archbishop, the Most Revd Albert Chama, will have the opportunity to welcome the delegates to Zambia and to showcase the mission and ministry of local Anglicans in the region.

One day of the meeting will be given over to a day conference when members of the ACC will be joined by members of congregations from parishes in greater Lusaka to discuss “Following and Proclaiming Jesus in a World of Differences.”

Before the conference, an international gathering of young people from across the Anglican churches of Central Africa and Southern Africa will gather for a conference on leadership for discipleship. During the five-day advocacy training for environmental ministry and intentional discipleship, based on the Micah Challenge “Change Makers” program, participants will have a chance to hear from and

speak with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby.

Their deliberations, sponsored by Tearfund, will feed into the regional day conference at the ACC.

As is usual, the members of ACC-16 are expected to draw up and agree a number of resolutions on various issues following their discussions. They will also elect the new chair and vice-chair of the ACC. The current chair is Bishop James Tengatenga from Malawi and the vice-chair is Canon Elizabeth Paver from England.

Elections will also take place for seven members of the ACC Standing Committee. The five primatial members of the Standing Committee were elected at the Primates' Gathering and Meeting in January. They are: Archbishops Dr John Holder of the West Indies; Dr Richard Clarke from Ireland; Philip Freier of Australia; Dr Mouneer Hanna Anis from Jerusalem and the Middle East; and Dr Thabo Makgoba of Southern Africa.

The membership of the Anglican Consultative Council is appointed by the Provinces.

The larger provinces send one bishop, one priest and one lay person. Smaller provinces send one ordained person and one lay person; while the smallest provinces send just one person and are encouraged to select a member of the laity.

The Archbishop of Uganda, the Most Revd Stanley Ntagali, has indicated that his Province will not be appointing anybody to its three places. This follows a decision of the Anglican Church of Uganda's Provincial Assembly that it would not to take part in the formal structures of the Anglican Communion until what it considered to be "godly order" was restored following decisions by the (American) Episcopal Church on issues of sexuality.

Vatican statistics report increase in baptised Catholics worldwide

The number of baptised Catholics worldwide has grown at a faster rate than that of the world's population, according to Vatican statistics.

Although the number of priests has increased globally, the number has decreased slightly in Europe and Oceania, according to the Vatican's Central Office for Church Statistics.

The figures are presented in the *Annuario Pontificio 2016*, the Vatican yearbook, and will appear in the *Statistical Yearbook of the Church*, which gives detailed figures on the Church's workforce, sacramental life, dioceses and parishes as of December 31, 2014.

The number of baptized Catholics reached 1.27 billion or 17.8 per cent of the global population, the statistics office reported on March 5.

Despite the increase of Catholics worldwide, the yearbook noted a "less dynamic" growth of only two per cent in Europe.

While the continent is home to almost 40 per cent of the Catholic global population, the per cent of the world's Catholics living in Europe has slowly decreased over the past nine years, it said.

However, with the exception of Oceania, the number of baptised Catholics has grown faster than the general population growth on every continent.

"The African continent remains without a doubt the one with the highest growth," the report said; the number of Catholics in Africa increased by 41

per cent, while the number of Catholics in Asia grew by 20 per cent.

The percentage of baptised Catholics as part of the general population remains highest in North and South America where they “make up almost half” of the world’s Catholics, it said.

The number of bishops of the world continued to increase, reaching 5,237 worldwide compared to 4,841 a year earlier.

The total number of priests — diocesan and religious order — around the world was 415,792, which the report said was statistically “stable”. There was a steady increase of diocesan priests in Africa, Asia and Central and South America, while numbers in North America, Europe and Oceania continued to decrease.

The number of permanent deacons reported — 44,566 — was an increase of more than 1,000 over the previous year.

The number of religious brothers was down slightly, going from a total of 55,253 at the end of 2013 to a total of 54,559 at the end of 2014.

The number of women in religious orders continued to decrease, dropping by 10,846 in 2014. The biggest decreases were seen in North and South America, Europe and Oceania while numbers in Africa and Asia continue to rise.

The number of candidates for the priesthood — both diocesan seminarians and members of religious orders — who had reached the level of philosophy and theology studies showed a slight downturn. The number of candidates fell to 116,939 men at the end of 2014 compared to 118,251 men at the end of 2013.

The variation in the number of men training to become priests varies by continent, the report said. There is an “evident decline” in the numbers from Europe and North America, while “Africa and Asia show great vitality,” it said.

News links to reports on faith, politics and education

BBC/Ind/Mail/Gloucester Citizen/Premier

Reports the maiden speech by the Bishop of Gloucester, Rachel Treweek, in the House of Lords in a debate about women's representation. For *BBC* scroll down to 18.16. The *Independent* and *Mail* contrast the two maiden

speeches in the debate, the other given by businesswomen, Michelle Mone. Others reports preview the speech.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/uk-politics-parliaments-35746506>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/tom-pecks-sketch-lingerie-tycoon-michelle-mone-provides-the-ultimo-in-delayed-gratification-a6918026.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3480754/Millionaire-Baroness-Bra-Michelle-Mone-uses-maiden-speech-House-Lords-tell-ministers-rid-Britain-doom-gloom-barrier-women-wanting-start-business.html>

<http://www.gloucestercitizen.co.uk/Bishop-Gloucester-Rachel-Treweek-make-maiden/story-28875404-detail/story.html>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/First-female-bishop-in-Lords-to-give-maiden-speech>

Int Business Times

Reports reaction to the Archbishop of Canterbury's three-day visit to Burundi. The article notes that while Burundi's Minister of External Relations and International Cooperation, said the visit had given the government "faith to overcome challenges", a number of Burundians took to social media to express concerns over the visit.

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/burundi-archbishop-canterbury-visit-criticised-amid-calls-forgive-1547952>

BBC

Reports the reaction of the woman who says she was abused by Bishop George Bell, to a letter written by the former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey to the bishop's niece saying he was "appalled" by the way authorities had treated his memory. The Church

announced in October it had settled a civil claim with the woman who said yesterday she was angry at Lord Carey's intervention as she had originally made the allegations when he was in office, and they were ignored.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-sussex-35749742>

Ind/Premier

Further coverage that Her Majesty The Queen did not approve of the legalisation of same-sex marriage.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/the-queen-did-not-approve-of-gay-marriage-report-claims-a6916796.html>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Queen-opposed-gay-marriage-but-could-do-nothing-says-friend>

Pathfinderinternational website

Reports that the Archbishop of York has visited the military and families based at Europe's largest driving school in Leconfield as part of his pilgrimage of prayer and blessing. The Defence School of Transport is the centre of excellence for driver and transport management training for the Royal Marines, Army and the Royal Air Force and has over 1,000 students.

http://www.pathfinderinternational.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3069&Itemid=2

Christian Today

Reports the most senior Scottish Christian and Muslim leaders are urging Scottish MPs to block the liberalisation of Sunday trading laws, which will be debated in the Commons on Wednesday. In a joint letter the Archbishop of Glasgow Most Revd Philip Tartaglia, joined the head of the Muslim Council of Scotland and

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the Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland and others to seek to persuade MPs to vote against the changes. A coalition of organisations including the CofE are opposed to the extension of trading hours for large shops.

Guard

Reports that the BBC outperforms most of the UK's top public organisations when it comes to employing an equal number of women as men. Just under half the corporation's staff are female (48%). The report goes on to compare that with other institutions including the CofE.

<http://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/mar/08/bbc-uk-public-bodies-gender-balance>

Mail

Reports the YouTube video shot in Lincoln Cathedral, which appears to show an apparition moving across the organ. Speaking to a local paper Paul Jackson, who shot the footage admits the best explanation is that it is a high powered torch from the tour group below the organ.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3480694/Does-ghost-video-Lincoln-Cathedral-really-unholy-spirit-running-organ.html>

Comment

Spectator: Melanie McDonagh writes, "Is anyone surprised that the Queen didn't approve of gay marriage?"

<http://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2016/03/of-course-the-queen-is-opposed-to-gay-marriage/>

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