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## **‘Thy Kingdom Come’ Prayer, 10–20 May in Armagh Diocese**



The ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ initiative was begun a couple of years ago by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Justin Welby. Through it, Christians are called to give special time and attention to prayer during the ten days between Ascension Day and Pentecost, praying that God’s Kingdom might become ever more apparent and that His loving will might be done on Earth.

What began as a Church of England proposal rapidly spread to other Christian traditions in the UK and then to other countries.

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This year, the Archbishop of Armagh, Archbishop Richard Clarke, has asked that churches in Armagh Diocese might take on the initiative, and indeed he has the encouragement of the other bishops in the Church of Ireland to encourage it to become a feature of Christian activity across the Church of Ireland.

Archbishop Clarke has requested that clergy would consider opening their parish church (or one of them if part of a group of parishes) for a period each weekday for prayer, perhaps for 20 minutes or half an hour. It might be liturgical prayer, non-liturgical prayer or silence. It could be at any time of the day or evening. If the time is announced, parishioners who cannot be there might well be joining clergy in prayer for the world and the extension of God's Kingdom. Archbishop Clarke says, 'Christians throughout the world will be giving special attention to prayer during these days. And never doubt the power of prayer.'

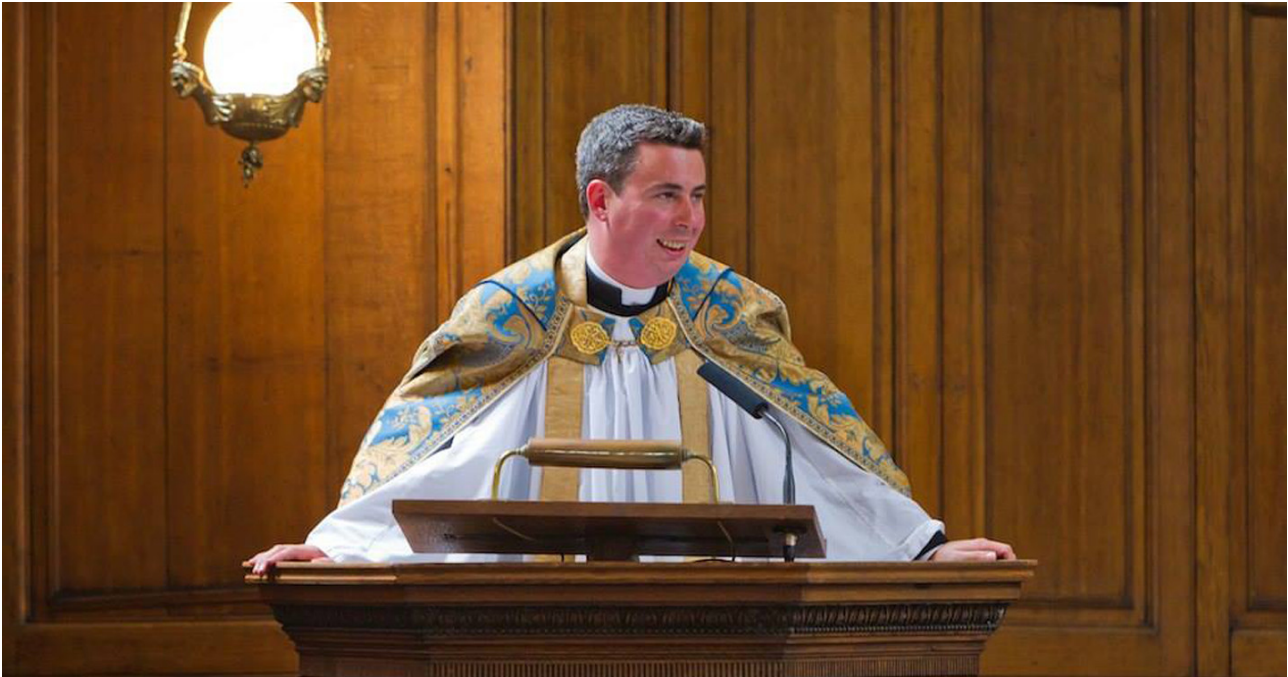
Ascension Day this year is on Thursday, 10 May, which coincides with the opening of the General Synod meeting in Armagh at which the Archbishop of Armagh will also draw attention to the 'Thy Kingdom Come' initiative. For further information and resources on planning and communicating the initiative, see:  
[www.thykingdomcome.global](http://www.thykingdomcome.global)  
#ThyKingdomCome

## **Dean of Ossory appointed**

The Reverend David McDonnell, currently Rector of Dunfanaghy Group of Parishes, County Donegal, has been appointed Dean of Ossory and Rector of Kilkenny Union of Parishes in the Church of Ireland Diocese of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory.

The announcement was made by Bishop Michael Burrows and the installation is expected to take place in late August 2018.

The Bishop remarked: "We keep David McDonnell in our prayers as he prepares for this demanding ministry to which he brings a rich range of gifts."



The Dean–elect is 37 years old and originally from Carrickmacross, County Monaghan, and trained initially as a primary school teacher. He taught for five years in Gaelscoil Cnoc Liamhna in Dublin before going on to be ordained in 2009. He was Curate of the Christ Church Cathedral Group of Parishes, Dublin, from 2009 to 2014, Treasurer’s Vicar of St Patrick’s Cathedral from 2011 to 2014 and also Assistant Chaplain to St James’ Hospital. He has a keen interest in the music and liturgy of the Church and enjoys the arts, history and the great outdoors.

“I greatly look forward to moving to Kilkenny,” he says. “It will be a privilege to help build on the life and prayer of the magnificent medieval cathedral, to serve three very different and interesting parish churches, to foster our links with Kilkenny College and other schools, to get to know parishioners, fellow Christians and other local people, and to help deepen community links.” The Bishop acknowledges the work of the Reverend David Compton, along with the rest of the cathedral community, in managing affairs in the parish so well in the interim.

## **Service of institution at Holywood Parish**

Revd Ken McGrath will be instituted as Associate Vicar of Holywood Parish a 8.00 pm on Tuesday 1 May (St Philip and St James). The preacher at the service will be Bishop Ken Clarke.

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## **Chalice and Ciborium consecrated in Bandon Church**

During his visit to Saint Peter's Church, Bandon on Sunday, 29th April, the Bishop of Cork, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton consecrated a new ciborium and a new chalice in memory of the late Noel Burns of Lissaphooka, Bandon, County Cork. The chalice and ciborium were the gift of members of his family. Also taking part in the service were the Reverend Denis MacCarthy (Rector) and the Reverend Anne Skuse (Chaplain to Bandon Grammar School).

## **Teachers heading south for work because they are being 'denied the chance of a genuine career' in NI**

Union says less than 400 out of the 18,000 teachers under 25 have contracts

Northern Ireland teachers are heading south for work because they are being "denied the chance of a genuine career" at home, a union is claiming.

The chairperson of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation told delegates at their Northern Conference an increasing amount of qualified teachers are seeking work in the Republic as "opportunities in the North are too restricted".

Dorothy McGinley, a teacher at Sion Mills Primary School, told hundreds of delegates that the INTO is receiving "more and more requests for information about teaching positions in the South".

Ms McGinley said budgetary constraints on principals are forcing them to "employ in accordance to budget and not merit".

Speaking at the Lough Erne Resort on Monday, Ms McGinley said that data issued on teacher employment shows that less than 400

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out of the 18,000 teachers under the age of 25 in Northern Ireland are in full time employment.

She added: “Data taken from the October 2017 school census indicates there was rise of more than 2,000 pupils on last year and pupil numbers in primary schools have hit an 18 year high.

“Yet the sad reality is that, data issued on teacher employment indicates that we have less than 400 out of the 18,000 teachers under the age of 25 in full time employment. So what does that look like for the nomadic young teacher?

“The absence of the coveted contract means they are denied sick pay, holiday pay and maternity leave and denied the chance of a genuine career. On the other end we have older teachers who having given all they can are not able to leave the profession without sacrificing large amounts of earned pensions.

“The little glimmer of hope in Investing in Teachers was in real terms considered a whitewash last year. Another wasted opportunity on DENI’s part we have higher hopes for this year but time will tell.

“In stark contrast across the border, schools are experiencing teacher shortages. INTO continues to receive more and more enquires from teachers wishing to explore more realistic career opportunities in the South.

“In response to this, INTO officials are providing guidance on the process involved so that these real possibilities become realities.”

## **Quakers face once in a generation decision to change guidance on sexuality**

Quakers are deciding whether to rewrite their 'faith and practice' guide to include more progressive approaches to sexuality.

More than a thousand Quakers are expected to gather in London this weekend for a yearly meeting to discuss whether to commission a new Quaker faith and practice which acts as a guide for life.

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**Friends House is the home of the Quakers in Britain and will host the annual meeting from May 4-7 to discuss re-writing the faith and practice guide.**

The last revision was published in 1995 and a new edition would reflect changes in attitudes towards marriage, sexuality and climate change.

'The book is hugely significant,' said Helen Drewery, head of witness and worship for Quakers in Britain. 'It inspires us in our lives and sets out our structures and procedures for how we work. It is what has kept us thriving as a church and it is the foundation that enables us to run great campaigns, like changing the law around slavery, conscientious objection and marriage.'

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Britain was one of the first Christian groups in the UK to campaign for same-sex marriage in 2009. It backed the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act in 2013 and has altered the guide since then to reflect those changes.

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'The discernment of Yearly Meeting in 2009 was that love and truth compel Friends to solemnise the marriage of same-sex couples equally with opposite-sex couples,' the current guide says.

'Open sharing of personal experience has moved us and added to our clear sense that, 22 years after the prospect was first raised at Meeting for Sufferings, we are being led to treat same-sex committed relationships in the same way as opposite-sex marriages, reaffirming our central insight that marriage is the Lord's work and we are but witnesses.

'We have heard dissenting voices during the threshing process which has led us to this decision, and we have been reminded of the need for tenderness to those who are not with us who will find this change difficult.'

However a new edition would be designed to appeal to young people's views, particularly on sexuality and climate change.

With only around 22,700 attenders across 474 meetings in Britain, the Society of Friends is one of the smallest Christian denominations. Its approach differs significantly from most other churches. Quakers do not have a concept of ordination but are led by 'overseers'; there is no formal liturgy or preaching, but a meeting sits in silence and waits for 'discernment' from God; and they do not hold solely to Christian theology but accept insights from other religions as well.

The Quakers were founded in the 17th century by George Fox, a dissenting preacher who advocated pacifism and attracted a following that eventually became the Society of Friends.

## **Salisbury Cathedral to host royal wedding party**

Salisbury Cathedral has announced it will host a live screening of the royal wedding between Prince Harry and Meghan Markle on 19th May.

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The wedding will be broadcast live on a 50 ft screen on the cathedral's grounds in partnership with BBC Wiltshire.

The screening will be part of a free royal wedding party on the cathedral's grounds which will include live music performances, arts and crafts for children and a chance to write good luck messages to the royal couple.

Canon Robert Titley from Salisbury Cathedral told Premier News Hour he hopes it will be a meaningful time for attendees.

"It will be a really enjoyable and potentially profound day for people all across the country. Church of England weddings are public events and we thought what better thing to do than to make this a very, very public event so people can watch it together," he said.

"We hope very much the service itself will be a moment when people can reaffirm the points of love and friendship in their lives. After the service is over there will be an opportunity for people to come into the cathedral to say a prayer and light a candle."

He said it's also one way to show locals are moving on from the ex-spy poisoning attack.

"People are getting on with lives very well here. But the wider perception is that Salisbury's reeling from this attack. I think we've



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bounced back very well and this is a way in which we can show that."

Those who want to attend are required to apply for a free ticket in advance.

## German Catholic bishops head to Vatican to discuss Protestant spouses taking communion

German Catholic bishops will discuss controversial plans to allow Protestants married to Catholics to take communion with senior Vatican officials this week.

It comes after Germany's bishops voted overwhelmingly in favour of producing a guide, or pastoral handout, to allow a Protestant partner of a Catholic to receive the eucharist in some cases and under certain conditions.

But the Vatican rejected the plan, [it emerged earlier this month](#), and now six German bishops will travel to Rome to discuss the issue.

They will meet with officials from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity



and the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts at the Vatican on Thursday.

'A group of German cardinals and bishops will meet some dicastery

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heads and officials of the Roman Curia at the Vatican to deal with the theme of the eventual access to the Eucharist for non-Catholic spouses in mixed marriages,' a statement said announcing the meeting.

Three-quarters of the German bishops' conference in February approved developing a pastoral guide specifying that permission could be granted if, having made a 'serious examination' of conscience with a priest or another person with pastoral responsibilities, the spouse 'affirms the faith of the Catholic Church', wishes to end 'serious spiritual distress' and has a 'longing to satisfy a hunger for the eucharist'.

However seven German bishops led by Cardinal Rainer Woelki of Cologne, wrote to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith last month to say they believed the proposal to allow some Protestant spouses to receive communion contradicted Catholic doctrine, undermined Church unity and exceeded the competence of the bishops' conference.

