



Ten days to go, ten things to know! Vital info on 'Thy Kingdom Comes'



Superb resources are available for prayer and worship during the 'Thy Kingdom Come' prayer initiative which runs between Ascension Day and Pentecost. Archbishop Richard Clarke has encouraged all parishes in Armagh Diocese to take part. (See yesterday's Morning Report on this site).
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1: All over the world from Norway to Japan, Australia to Mozambique people are preparing to pray Thy Kingdom Come! Last year more than 85 countries joined the great wave of prayer.

2: From school services to Pentecost party picnics, across the traditions and across the church people will gather and pray – together, individually, and as families. They'll be prayer stations, prayer walks and candlelit services, 40 hours of devotion before the Blessed Sacrament and 24/7 prayer. Communities of all shapes and sizes will take part.

3: Churches of all backgrounds and denominations have been working together to plan ecumenical events in towns and cities – from Methodists to Pentecostals and from Catholics to Baptists.

4: In the UK people will gather for special beacon services in Cathedrals and thousands are preparing to pray in churches.

5: This year the event has a song – have you heard it? It was written exclusively for “Thy Kingdom Come”. Watch the video, share with your friends and sing it in church.

Find it on the 'Thy Kingdom Comes' website where you can also download musical scores. Different versions are available depending on your genre - Piano, Gospel, or Rock.

6: There is everything you need to plan your Thy Kingdom Come church services – download liturgies and service plans here. https://www.thykingdomcome.global/search/resources?tags=1&theme_id=1

7: There's still time to order your resources. The cut-off point for large items (like roll-up banners or complex bulk orders) is today May 3rd but many items such as prayer journals or service outlines can be ordered up to May 8th. <https://www.cpo.org.uk/thykingdomcome>

8: The inspiring videos have been viewed millions of times. Check them out here <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/videos>

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9: Pledge to Pray here <https://www.thykingdomcome.global/#Pledge2PrayCounter> and we'll send you specially crafted daily devotions direct to your inbox each day during Thy Kingdom Come.

10: Know that the Lord is with all those taking as they prepare to pray. Just as the disciples prayed continuously from Ascension to Pentecost so those taking part will be joining with their brothers and sisters around the world.

BGT singing priest takes the Christian album chart by storm

A Britain's Got Talent contestant has entered the UK's Official Christian and Gospel album chart at no.3 and no.29.

Father Ray Kelly is currently on Britain's Got Talent but music he recorded in 2015 has now entered the chart as new entries.

The 'singing priest' was popular before with over 61 million hits on a YouTube video of him singing Hallelujah at a wedding and two albums to his name.

His highest entry at no.3 is 'Where I Belong' just behind Hillsong Worship and Stryper.

He spoke to Premier about his chart entry and his beginnings as a vocalist: "Well I've always loved to sing, I did a bit of voice training years ago when I worked in Dublin...my family are very musical anyway - it was always something I loved to do."

Father Ray Kelly regularly sings at church and for weddings and funerals but said: "it always took second step to being a priest; that was number one in my life."

"I wouldn't be a priest only for my parents and their faith and my grandparents' faith."

He added that although he is used to speaking in front of people, he was still nervous about singing in front of Simon Cowell and the other Britain's Got Talent judges: "I thought about it for a long time before deciding to enter and I kind of thought in the end I'm not



going to beat myself up if they criticise me and I don't get any yes's...but I said I'd give it a go"

Speaking of the moment he got a standing ovation, he said: "I was gobsmacked by their reaction really. you know, even the four second delay after I finished my last note and there was kind of silence in the auditorium in the palladium...those four seconds seemed like hours".

"Then Simon stood up and it all changed after that."

Two of his albums are in the Christian and Gospel album chart this week and he said as well as people enjoying it his music he would like his appearance on the ITV show to make people think about their opinions of priests: "I would like to think that it would sort of bring the priesthood closer to the people, bearing in mind that priesthood comes from the people anyway"

"The days are gone when priests are on a pedestal and untouchable and unseeable - they're just ordinary guys trying to get on and do their jobs the best they can."



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Young Voices Speaking Old Words: A Lectionary Revolution – BACI's spring lecture

There is a story being told on the internet which is not being informed by the church while there is a narrative happening in the church which is often not informed by the wider world. So says Scott Evans, founder of RevoLectionary, the weekly online blog on the lectionary which is written by young adults.

Scott was speaking at the Biblical Association of the Church of Ireland's Spring Lecture which took place in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, yesterday (Sunday April 29). He was joined by one of RevoLectionary's writers, Emma Rothwell, who is the Diocesan Youth Officer for Meath & Kildare and chaplain at Wilson's Hospital School.

RevoLectionary is a 600 to 1,000 word blog released every Tuesday on the readings for the following Sunday to help people who are going to be preaching to engage with the text and hear young adults' perspectives on it. It is also for people who are interested in following the lectionary and hearing the voices of young adults.

The blog grew in response to three challenges and three opportunities. Scot identified the challenges as being Biblical illiteracy and the difficulty young adults have in engaging with the Bible; the need to engage in the online world; and the need to bring the perspective of the wider world in which we live to the church.

“There is a story being told on the internet that is often not being informed by the church so we wanted to introduce ourselves into that space and be part of the online conversation. But there is also a narrative that is happening in the church world that is not being informed by the wider world in which we live. We wanted to be able to participate in that so that we could feed into the conversations that are happening in churches,” he explained.

He also identified three key opportunities which he said included a local and global network of clergy and lay readers who have to

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RevoLectionary writer Emma Rothwell and founder Scott Evans (Centre) with BACI committee members, the Revd Dr William Olhausen, Barbara Bergin, Canon Dr Ginnie Kennerley and the Revd Jack Kinkead at the BACI spring lecture.

preach on a particular passage every Sunday. “We have a captive audience and there is not a lot of people creating stuff for them,” he pointed out. He added that creating websites has never been cheaper or easier. Most importantly he highlighted the “unique relationships with passionate and articulate young adults who truly care about what’s happening in the world, what’s happening in church and what’s happening in Scripture”.

Emma Rothwell spoke about why she enjoys writing for RevoLectionary. She wanted to get involved because she loves to study the Bible and share it with others and was delighted to get the opportunity to go deeper into the Bible. She spoke about her background in the Church of Ireland and as a student of the Bible and highlighted the foundational value of children’s ministry.

But she said that when young people enter secondary school the Church of Ireland failed them. “We confirm you and then give you no idea what to do or how to be a Christian after that point. That’s difficult because young people won’t come, they won’t come to church or to anything that you’re doing so the blame can’t really be

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put on clergy. But you don't get a step up as to how to read the Bible as an adult," she commented.

The lectionary is a discipline and being involved in Revolectionary is a discipline for her, Emma explained. As someone who prepares a weekly sermon for her school, she said she realised it was easy to fall into a rut and ask what will they get out of this piece of Scripture. In RevoLectionary she is not feeding a congregation but starting a conversation.

She stressed the importance of stories and the narratives of the Bible and the lectionary is based on the idea of story and continuing the story. "The spirit of the age is yearning for the narrative approach... people want a truth that feels real," she said.

Concluding, Scott said that the strength of the project was the diversity of the team of writers and their different backgrounds from which they approach the text. He said all the contributors, except Emma, were raised outside the Church of Ireland which raised the question of how the Church of Ireland could create models for increasing Biblical knowledge without bringing in people from the outside.

He said the success of the project would be measured by its capacity to create ways to increase Biblical knowledge and understanding of the text and to raise up students with knowledge and wisdom. He said it also gave young people the opportunity to create an ethical framework which is dynamic and nuanced because it is them we need in our pews and pulpits in the future.

RevoLectionary is funded by the Priorities Fund of the Church of Ireland. It can be found at www.revolectionary.com/. BACI exists to enrich and deepen the use of the Bible in the Church of Ireland. See www.bibliahibernica.wordpress.com

BACI's spring lecture was livestreamed on [Dublin & Glendalough's Facebook page](#). You can watch it back here:

<https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2018/04/30/young-voices-speaking-old-words>

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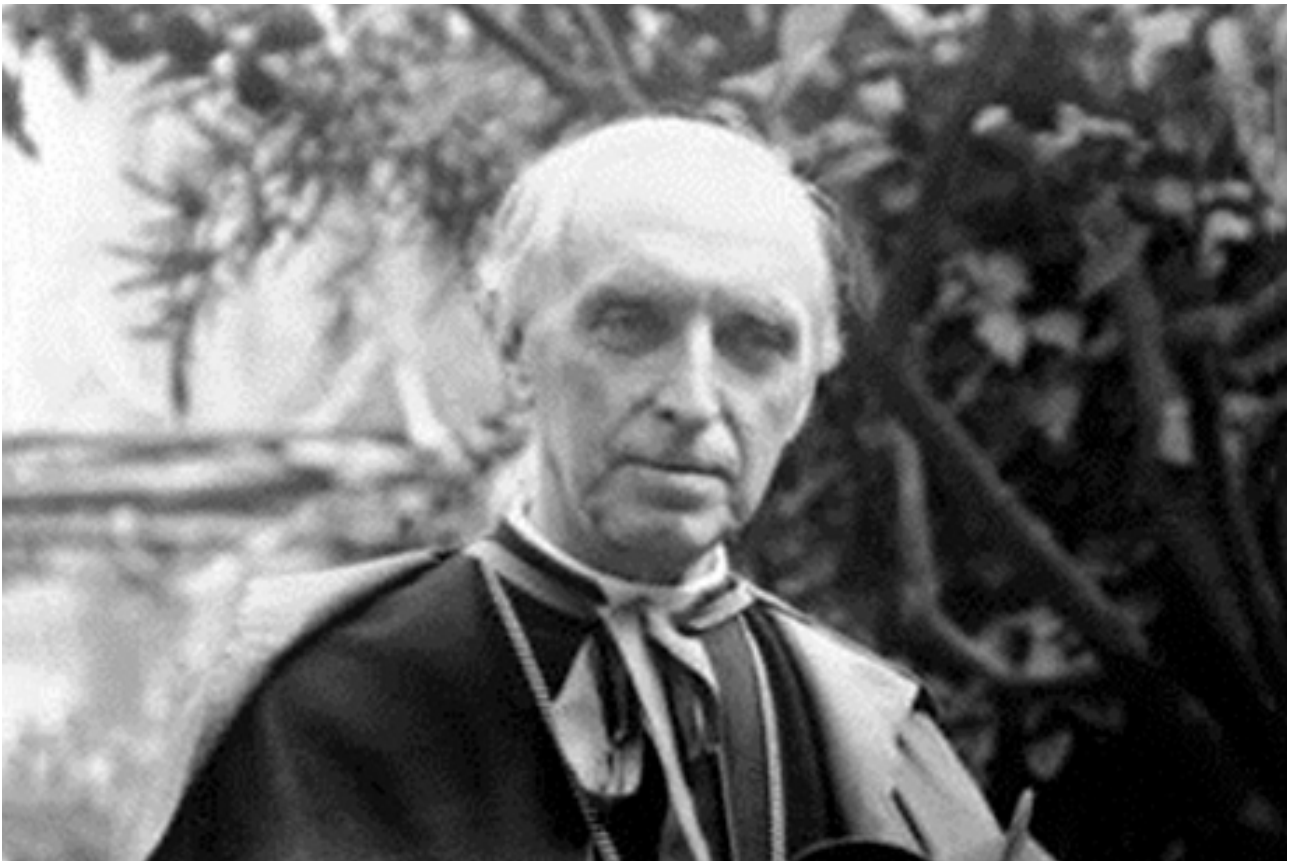
Informal group of Anglican – Roman Catholic theologians discusses “new layers of unity”

An informal but officially-sanctioned ecumenical dialogue between Anglican and Roman Catholic theologians has met to consider “the difficult question of Anglican Orders.” The Malines Conversation Group was originally established in the early 1920s by Cardinal Désiré-Joseph Mercier, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Malines-Brussels; some 24 years after Pope Leo XIII declared that Anglican Orders were “absolutely null and utterly void”. The 1920s Malines Conversations Group envisioned the restoration of communion between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in the phrase *l’Église Anglicane unie non absorbée* – united, but not absorbed.

Since then, a number of formal dialogues and relational groups between the two churches have been established, including the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC), which undertakes theological dialogue; and the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM), an episcopal commission which seeks ways to put joint agreements into practice.

But in 2013, with the blessing of both Lambeth Palace and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, a group of Anglican and Roman Catholic theologians began to meet once again to, “explore matters which the official theological dialogue is not mandated to do, including the difficult question of Anglican Orders,” the Suffragan Bishop in Europe, David Hamid, said.

The group met last month at the San Alfonso Retreat House in Long Branch New Jersey. “The intense theological discussions are driven by our common commitment as Anglicans and Roman Catholics, in obedience to Our Lord's command, to walk together as the one Body of Christ in our divided world,” Bishop David said.”



Cardinal Désiré Joseph Mercier presided over the original Malines Conversation Group in the early 1920s.

In [the group's communiqué](#), they say that “like its predecessor, it is an informal group while at the same time it keeps in close contact with the official mandated ecumenical bodies in both communions; it includes members of ARCIC and IARCCUM.

“Last year’s meeting at Clare College, Cambridge, UK, continued work of previous meetings on questions of sacramentality and ordination, with particular focus on liturgical theology, canon law, and the relation between theological anthropology and ordination in both communions.

“This sixth meeting developed each of these areas in greater depth as resources for ecumenical theology, continuing to sharpen the focus on the question of ‘order’”.

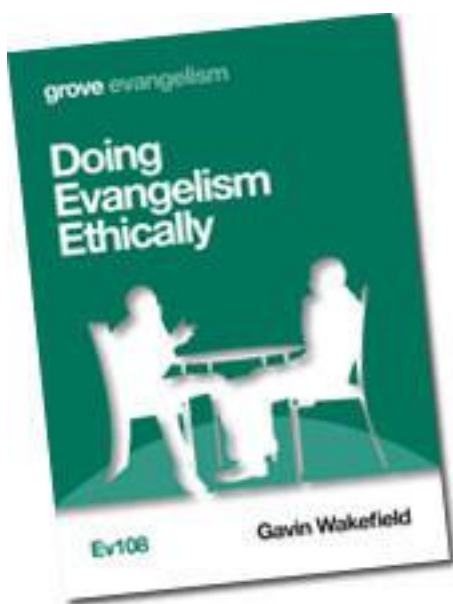
The group discussed a number of papers, including on the “ecclesial grammar of scripture”, the “reality of life at the root of the reality of holy order”, “perspectives on gender and the human person”, ’

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The Revd Prof Paul McPartlan from the Catholic University of America presented “a close reading of ecclesial texts, asking the question: ‘can it be said that the church of Christ subsistit in the Anglican Communion?’”

“A number of themes recurred throughout the sessions, most notably the recognition that liturgical language, rich in symbol, sign, word and gesture, offers rich possibilities for expressing the reality of unity and communion we share already,” [the group said in their communiqué](#). “And it gives rise to possible methodologies for developing new layers of unity as we continue to explore the reception of orders and fuller communion together.”

The Group will continue their work when they meet in the UK city of York next Spring.



Bookspot - Doing Evangelism Ethically

Evangelism is central to the great commission that Jesus gave to his followers, to make disciples of all nations. Yet in some circles it has become a dirty word, with objections of arrogance, coercion and manipulation levelled against some of its forms.

In such a context, formulating an ethical approach to evangelism has never been more vital. This timely study examines some of the concerns raised by critics, then sets out key principles for ethical

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evangelism. It argues that ultimately, evangelism will respect the person when Christians are themselves grounded in the love of God and seeking to become ever more Christlike disciples.



The author, the Revd Dr Gavin Wakefield, is the Director of Training for Missional Ministry for the Diocese of York, with oversight for clergy and lay development. He worked as a parish priest in Sheffield and Chelmsford, and was Deputy Warden of Cranmer Hall, Durham. He lives in Stamford Bridge, where he is also honorary curate, and enjoys hill walking, uncovering local history and travel.

Grovemention and evangelism £3.95

