



***A new suite of music commemorating the centenary of the 1916 Rising by one of the country's most distinguished traditional musicians, Dr Charlie Lennon, will premiere this evening in Dublin's Pro Cathedral - report this issue***

## **C of I General Synod begins today**

The General Synod of the Church of Ireland begins today in Dún Laoghaire commencing with

The Synod Eucharist will take place in St Paul's Church, Glenageary, at 10.00am.

By tradition the preacher is a bishop and determined by the date of his episcopal ordination. This year it is the turn of The Rt Revd Patrick Rooke, Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry.

With his involvement in the work of the Bishops' Appeal for World Development and the Tuam diocesan interest in projects in Africa, these concerns with the refugee crisis may be highlighted in the address - the full text of which will be available after its delivery at 11.00 am. The withdrawal of proposals to change diocesan boundaries and their consequences for Tuam will perhaps be a relief to the preacher.

Shortly after Synod is formally opened at noon by a short Bible study and prayer by a bishop, the Archbishop of Armagh, Most Rev Dr Richard Clarke will give his presidential address. This address tends to deal with the church's engagement with major contemporary events such as the Commemoration of events in 1916 and the UK's relationship with the European community.

The Archbishop will undoubtedly pay tribute to the Chief Officer of the Representative Church Body and Secretary General of the Church of Ireland, Mr Adrian Clements, who is shortly to retire, and welcome his successor, Mr David Ritchie. He will also recognise those members of Synod who have died during the past year and their individual contributions to the committees and boards of the church.

Having attended a service last week in London marking the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ministry of Lay Readers, recognition of this essential witness within the church can be expected.

## **Dublin Cathedral premiere of unique 1916 commemoration**

One of the country's most distinguished traditional musicians, Dr Charlie Lennon, has composed a new suite to commemorate the 1916 centenary. The composition *Áille na hÁille – a Terrible Beauty* will have its first Dublin performance tonight Thursday 12th May in the city's Pro-Cathedral on Marlborough Street.

The evening's unique commemoration will also involve the reading of first-hand accounts from

the Dublin priests who ministered in hospitals, on the streets and in jail to the injured, dying and bereaved – often at enormous personal risk – during Easter Week 1916.

May 12<sup>th</sup> is the date of the last executions of the rebel leaders – James Connolly and Séan Mac Diarmada – in Kilmainham Jail. Hubert O Keefe, sacristan at St. James' Church accompanied the prison chaplain, Fr. Mc Carthy, to the jail. In his memoir he recalled *“In giving a description of James Connolly’s execution Fr. Mc Carthy told me that the prisoner, who was in a bad condition, elected to stand like the rest but failed. He was then tied to a chair but slumped so much that he overbalanced. Finally, he was strapped to a stretcher and placed in a reclining position against the wall. The sight left an indelible impression on Fr. Mc Carthy.”*

Charlie Lennon will take part in this historic performance of his suite on May 12<sup>th</sup> next, playing fiddle and piano. He will be accompanied by a wealth of renowned traditional musicians, including Éilís Lennon on fiddle, Michael O’Brien – uilleann pipes, Jim Higgins – percussion, Ruth Mc Ginley – piano, Elizabeth Cooney – violin and singers Patricia Bourke D’Souza & Albert Llussa Torra.

Recalling the accounts of those priests who ministered on the streets of the burning city will be Dublin Diocesan Archivist Noelle Dowling and Darren Maher.

20 priests, including a curate who would go on to become Archbishop of Dublin, were involved in ministering to those caught up in the events on both sides of the divide one hundred years ago. Among the historic 1916 documents in the Diocesan Archives is an account of how over 40 people sought refuge in the Pro-Cathedral when fighting broke out in the city centre. All around the Cathedral buildings were ablaze – the group were forced to stay inside the “Pro” for three days. Meanwhile, the priests of the Cathedral continued to come and go from the building to be with the wounded and dying. One Cathedral curate ran from the Pro to Wynne’s Hotel through streets raked with gunfire from all sides to attend to a wounded man who was badly injured.

Jervis Street Hospital quickly filled with the wounded and it was the busiest hospital in the city centre during the week of the Rising. A priest was in attendance at all times to cater for the many religious needs of the wounded and dying. The Very Rev. Fr. Richard Bowden, Administrator of the Pro Cathedral, ensured that

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clergy were always available. He stayed there constantly through Monday, Tuesday and left on Wednesday morning when curates, Fr. Edward Byrne (who would later become Archbishop of Dublin) and Fr. Joseph Mc Ardle took over.

*Áille na hÁille* begins at 7.30pm in St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral tonight May 12<sup>th</sup>. No tickets are required for this event. Voluntary donations towards the cost of the performance will be taken up on the evening.

## **Presbyterian Children's Society celebrates 150 years**

Formerly known as the Presbyterian Orphan and Children's Society, since 1866, the Society has been supporting the Church's pastoral care for families with financial grants, provided through the generosity of individual Presbyterians and congregations.

The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, Koulla Yiasouma, joined Presbyterian Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian McNie for the service, and many supporters from across Ireland who had come together to give thanks for the work and witness of the Society over the past century and a half. During this



***Presbyterian Moderator, Rt. Rev. Dr. Ian McNie, The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, Koulla Yiasouma and the Society's President, Rev. Purvis Campbell.***

time, 43,000 children from 17,500 families have been given the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Taking part in the service, Dr. McNie reflected on the special place that Jesus had in His heart for children, the way in which the early church supported orphans and widows and how we continue to follow in their footsteps.

“The theme entrusted to me as Moderator this year has been a ‘Caring Fellowship’. It is a

theme that has its roots both in the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and the practice of the early church. For the past 150 years the Presbyterian Children's Society, through the generosity of individuals and congregations across Ireland has been doing just that, caring, by supporting families up and down the land."

The service took place almost 150 years to the day when a group of Presbyterian ministers and elders formed the Society with broadly the same aim as it has today – to 'strengthen and support the family by enhancing financial independence and providing, where possible, resources to enable children to fulfil their full potential'. Providing regular financial payments to support Presbyterian children up to the age of 23 – who with their families are living in hardship – last year the Society directly helped 740 children in 400 families. During this time it paid out almost £550,000 in annual and occasional exceptional payments.

Since 1866, the Society has been funded through the generosity of individuals, donations from congregations and investment income, which the Society's President Rev. Purvis Campbell was keen to acknowledge.



“During 150 years circumstances have changed and demands are different but at least two things have remained the same; there are still many families facing poverty and hardship and the generosity and support of Presbyterians is amazing,” he said.

“Our sincere thanks must go to those who financially and prayerfully support the Society, those who organise congregational collections – a number who have served in this role for over 50 years – and without whom the Society could not fulfil its calling to express practically God’s love to children.”

[The Presbyterian Children’s Society](#) can be contacted on +44 (0)28 9032 3737 or by [email](#).

## **Chinese bishop who resisted government pressure dies aged 90**

Bishop Thomas Zhang Huaixin of Anyang, who only accepted government recognition on the basis that he did not have to join a state-approved organisation, has died at the age of 90.

Before his ordination as bishop in 2004, Bishop Zhang Huaixin ensured that he would not have to join the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, which was set up by the

Communist government to supervise Chinese Catholics. It has been repeatedly condemned by the Vatican.

[Ucanews.com](http://ucanews.com) reported that Coadjutor Bishop Joseph Zhang Yinlin, 45, automatically succeeds him, according to canon law. The young prelate was the first Chinese bishop with dual approval from China and the Vatican since 2012.

Due to the elderly Bishop Zhang Huaixin's stance, when Bishop Zhang Yinlin was ordained in 2015, all bishops involved in the ceremony were Vatican-approved; there was no pressure to allow an illicitly ordained bishop to take part, as has happened at some other episcopal ordinations in China.

The late bishop was lauded as a teacher and role model for Chinese Catholics.

"I was most impressed by his teaching on money and women," Father Li Jisheng of Anyang told [ucanews.com](http://ucanews.com).

"He used to remind us clergy that there will be no problem with our clerical life as long as the ledger is clear, having little desire on wealth, and keeping a distance from women."

The funeral Mass for Bishop Zhang Huaixin will be celebrated in the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Anyang May 14.

## News briefs

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, through its Dromore Presbytery, is involved in **Balmoral Show** once again this year. Congregations within the Presbytery have put their hand to the plough as they take their place in the Eikon Exhibition Centre at Northern Ireland's premier agri-food event. The church is drawing on a very happy experience from last year, when they took a stand at the show for the very first time. The organisers recall: "We were thrilled by the very warm response we received last year as we welcomed folk from all arts and parts and backgrounds. The stand was often thronged with people of all ages, from push-chairs to pensioners, and all ages in between.

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**Problems converting Methodist Church to a pub** - JD Wetherspoon chairman Tim Martin has sounded a warning about the "deteriorating condition" of the former south Belfast church



which is to become his latest bar, the Belfast Telegraph has reported. Wetherspoon's has been planning to create around 100 jobs with two new pubs for Belfast, including one at the former Methodist church on University Road and another in Royal Avenue. But Mr Martin, who was raised in Northern Ireland, said there are concerns over the condition of the church, which Wetherspoon's is understood to have paid £1.2m for in 2014. He said the "condition of the building is deteriorating" and the company is keen to get planning permission and listed

building consent in order to begin work. The red sandstone premises has interconnecting church halls and a distinctive tower.

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**Clontarf Parish is holding a flower festival** as part of the 150th anniversary celebrations of the Church of St John the Baptist. The Flower Festival theme is 'Celebrating the Past, Enjoying the Present, Embracing the Future'. If you can't make the launch tomorrow (Friday) night, be sure to drop in over the weekend. There's even a coffee shop on site throughout the weekend selling delectable home baked goodies...

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The **Movilla Abbey Methodist Flower Festival** 2016 takes place from 10am Friday, May 20th to Sunday, May 22nd at 5pm. The theme of this year's flower festival is '*Lost in Wonder, Love and Praise!*' All are welcome and there is ample parking at the church, located on Movilla Road in [Newtownards](#).

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There will be an **exhibition of paintings** for sale by amateur artist Victor McMullen held in the Wesley Trust building, High Street, [Lurgan](#). The

exhibition will be open on Saturday May 21st from 10am- 6pm, and on Monday May 23rd through to Wednesday May 25th from 10am-8pm.

The artist took up painting while at the house during a long course of chemotherapy. He was treated at the Craigavon Area Hospital–Mandeville unit and all proceeds of the sale will be split between the Mandeville unit and the [Methodist Missionary Society](#) (Ireland) Container Ministry. The Container Ministry was founded in 1990 and has shipped containers from the warehouse in Lurgan to areas of need all over the world, with requested items including medical supplies, educational material, clothing, computers, tools and even toys.

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The May lecture of the **Christians in Science** series takes place on Tuesday, May 24th from 7.30-9.30pm in the Hub, 22 Elmwood Avenue Belfast. The lecture is titled *Why Jonah Can't Swallow a Whale: A Look at What Science Can and Can't Explain*, and the speaker is [Graham Veale](#) (City of Armagh High School, and author of *New Atheism: A Survival Guide*). All are welcome.

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Engage **Connor Youth Council** held its first **Sports Tournament** in Ballymoney on Saturday May 7, with young people from across the diocese competing for a variety of sporting accolades! The event was organised to raise money towards funds for Streetreach 2016, and some superb trophies were up for grabs. The young people played dodgeball and volleyball as well as completing a treasure hunt around Ballymoney Parish to compete for first prize. Everyone gathered at the end for a barbecue, co-ordinated by Girvin Woods from Muckamore Parish, and enjoyed by all despite the rain.

Christina Baillie, Diocesan Youth Officer said: “It was great to see the young people of various ages compete against one another with plenty of close matches and super sporting skill. “Thanks to the Connor Youth Council for another fantastic event, bringing young people together and building community as a diocese.” The Youth Council is looking forward to Streetreach and the sports tournament has helped raise resources to provide an excellent programme as the young people serve in north Belfast this summer.

## **News links to reports on faith, politics and education**

### **Ashers gay cake case: Bakers were not being forced to do anything against their beliefs, court told**

Belfast Telegraph

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/bakers-were-not-being-forced-to-do-anything-against-their-beliefs-court-told-34702619.html>

### **Asher's - Evangelical Alliance viewpoint**

News Letter

Ashers Baking Company appeared before the Court of Appeal seeking to overturn a decision by the County Court which found against them.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/it-is-important-that-ashers-win-this-crucial-legal-case-1-7374559>

### **New Ulster University building completion date delayed by a year**

BBC News

Part of the new Ulster University Belfast campus will open to students a year later than planned

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-36261241>

### **UK 'losing share of international student market'**

BBC News



The UK is losing its share of the international student market because of its immigration strategy, says a new parliamentary group.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-36252302>

## **Muslim leader calls for introduction of hate crime laws**

Irish Times

After attacks on Muslims in Dublin, Dr Ali Selim says State 'almost unique' in not having legislation

[http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/muslim-leader-calls-for-introduction-of-hate-crime-laws-1.2642644#.VzJ6\\_ikN8II.twitter](http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/muslim-leader-calls-for-introduction-of-hate-crime-laws-1.2642644#.VzJ6_ikN8II.twitter)

## **Premier**

Reports that the Archbishop of Canterbury has said that any church that leaves evangelism to the 'professionals' is committing missionary suicide. Archbishop Justin was speaking ahead of the culmination of the "Thy Kingdom Come" prayer and evangelism campaign. In the week running up to Pentecost, churches have committed to praying for every Christian to receive new confidence and joy in sharing their faith. The campaign will culminate with six 'beacon events' taking place in Cathedrals and large churches across the country.

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/Justin-Welby-Leaving-evangelism-to-professionals-is-missionary-suicide>

**BBC/Mail/Times/Ind/Guard/Metro/Even Stand/Tel/  
Sky News/Premier/FT/ITV/Spectator**

Extensive coverage of the private remarks made by Prime Minister David Cameron to Her Majesty the Queen regarding international corruption in which he names Nigeria and Afghanistan. The Archbishop of Canterbury offers an alternative view on the leadership in Nigeria.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-36260193>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-3584113/Queen-British-PM-double-diplomatic-gaffe.html>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/fantastically-corrupt-the-pms-view-of-bribery-summit-guests-knf2q9bmh>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/david-cameron-corruption-remarks-if-you-can-t-say-something-nice-prime-minister-a7023311.html>

<http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/may/10/cameron-incorruptible-unguarded-remarks-queen>

<http://metro.co.uk/2016/05/10/these-are-possibly-the-two-most-corrupt-countries-in-the-world-according-david-cameron-5872890/>

<http://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron-gaffe-prime-minister-caught-telling-queen-that-nigeria-and-afghanistan-are-a3244811.html>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/10/david-cameron-caught-on-camera-boasting-to-queen-about-fantastic/>

<http://news.sky.com/story/1693734/was-camerons-corruption-gaffe-deliberate>

<http://www.premier.org.uk/News/UK/PM-caught-in-gaffe-with-Archbishop-Justin-Welby>

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/>

[0/69e196e2-16c9-11e6-9d98-00386a18e39d.html?](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/69e196e2-16c9-11e6-9d98-00386a18e39d.html?FTCamp=engage/CAP/webapp/Channel_Moreover//B2B#axzz48Jz80wWp)

[FTCamp=engage/CAP/webapp/Channel\\_Moreover//B2B#axzz48Jz80wWp](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/69e196e2-16c9-11e6-9d98-00386a18e39d.html?FTCamp=engage/CAP/webapp/Channel_Moreover//B2B#axzz48Jz80wWp)

<http://www.itv.com/news/2016-05-10/cameron-nigeria-and-afghanistan-possibly-two-of-the-most-corrupt-countries-in-the-world/>

<http://blogs.spectator.co.uk/2016/05/david-cameron-tells-the-queen-the-leaders-of-some-fantastically-corrupt-will-attend-his-anti-corruption-summit/>

## **Mail**

Further coverage of the letter printed in the Times signed by 27 faith leaders including the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Williams which applauds the UK government for allowing unaccompanied child refugees from Syria into the country.

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3583973/Former-Archbishop-Canterbury-30-figures-warning-youngsters-left-limbo.html?ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3583973/Former-Archbishop-Canterbury-30-figures-warning-youngsters-left-limbo.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

## **Christian Today**

Reports that a Catholic Archbishop from the Syrian city of Aleppo is appealing to Western countries to stop taking in any more refugees and instead exert more effort into finding a resolution to the conflict. Jean-Clement Jeanbart, said efforts to resettle the refugees in Western countries are hurting people in Syria who are already suffering. The Archbishop said it would be better for the Syrians, especially the Christians, to remain in their own country. The World Watch Monitor report notes that since 2011 when Syria's civil war began, the Christian population in Syria has been reduced by two-thirds-from 1.5 million to only 500,000 today.

## **BBC/Mail**

Reports that Northern Ireland's Attorney General, John Larkin, has told the Court of Appeal that the judgement in the case against a Christian-run bakery that refused to make a cake bearing a slogan supporting gay marriage was wrong. Last year, Ashers Baking Company was found to have discriminated against a customer who placed an order in 2014. It is trying to overturn the ruling. The hearing continues.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-36261498>

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3583294/Bakers-not-forced-against-beliefs-court-told.html?ITO=1490&ns\\_mchannel=rss&ns\\_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-3583294/Bakers-not-forced-against-beliefs-court-told.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

### **Comment**

Guardian: Giles Fraser - Let us pray that vicars stop telling jokes in sermons.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/shortcuts/2016/may/10/pray-vicars-jokes-sermons-clergy-humour-church>

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