



New Sligo Learning Centre opened for autistic students

The College of the Immaculate Conception, Summerhill, Sligo, has opened a new state of the art extension for students with autism which will be known as the *Bishop Christopher Jones Learning Centre*. The new centre includes two specially designated classrooms, a practical

living demonstration room, a multi-sensory room, specialised outside gardening facilities, staff offices and resource rooms along with a large central activities space that can accommodate over 150 students. This space links the new building with the main school.

Bishop Jones, Bishop Emeritus of Elphin, attended yesterday's ceremony along with many family, friends and invited guests. The Centre was blessed by the Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland, His Excellency, Archbishop Charles J Brown, and opened by Councillor Rosaleen O'Grady, Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council.

Bishop Kevin Doran, Bishop of Elphin, said, "I am particularly happy to be associated with the name of this new centre in appreciation of Bishop Christopher Jones who, as a past pupil, long serving staff member and patron of the College, represents that stability and continuity of service and faith which is so much a part of the tradition of the College".

Speaking at the event, Bishop Jones thanked the Board of Management "for bestowing this honour on me at this time." Bishop Jones added that he was "delighted to be associated so publicly with such a progressive development

in the life of the College” and he expressed the hope that “education at Summerhill College will be forever inspired by the Catholic ethos and the two great commandments: ‘Love of God, and Love of Neighbour’.”

The ceremony was led by students of the college and accompanied by the College Choir.

Bishop Christopher Jones, a native of Tulsk, Co Roscommon, was Bishop of Elphin from 1994 – 2014. Funding for the new centre came from the Department of Education and Skills.

Youth Night at the Assembly

This year the theme is ‘Idol Factory’ through which participants will consider what things grab their attention and consume their thoughts and how they can go about shifting our focus to worshipping God by living life to the full with Him. It is on Saturday, 11th June at 7.30pm, doors open at 7pm.

The speaker is Marty Gray who is Student Assistant in Hamilton Road Presbyterian Church. He grew up in Bangor and after school, moved to England for five years, where he studied Marketing at Northumbria University and also

The poster features the title 'IDOL FACTORY' in large, bold, yellow letters with a metallic, gear-like texture. Above it, 'YouthNight 2016' is written in a smaller, black font. The Presbyterian logo is in the top right. The central graphic is a large, glowing orange and red heart, partially broken, surrounded by various mechanical gears and tools. A small assembly line with gears is at the bottom. A brown box on the left contains speaker and cost information.

Presbyterian

YouthNight 2016

IDOL FACTORY

**Saturday
11 June
@ 7.30pm**

Doors open @ 7pm
Assembly Buildings, Belfast

Speaker:
Marty Gray,
Hamilton Road, Bangor

Worship led by the
Worship Academy Band

Cost: £4 (Euro equivalent)
Tickets available online

www.presbyterianireland.org clw@presbyterianireland.org +44 (0) 28 9032 2284

worked for IBM. Before beginning his ministerial training at Union Theological College, Marty was employed as a Youth and Children’s Worker by Howth and Malahide Presbyterian Church in County Dublin. Marty is married to Emma and in his free time he enjoys taking his dog “Sheepie”

out for walks, watching football, going to the theatre and playing golf (although he's not very good).

Also taking part is Worship Academy Band. The PCI Worship Academy Band will be leading us for the first time! This is a group of young musicians and worship leaders drawn from a number of churches with PCI who have been part of Worship Academy for a couple of summers. They are eager to use their gifts and talents to glorify God and help us all to focus our worship on Him. **Cost:** £4 (or Euro equivalent). For more information contact the Congregational Life and Witness Office

Email: clw@presbyterianireland.org Tel: +44 (0)28 9032 2284

Clontarf Parish Celebrates 150th Anniversary

Parishioners past and present, friends and members of the wider community gathered in the Church of St John the Baptist in Clontarf on Pentecost (Sunday May 15) to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the current church building. While Christian worship and witness has taken place in the area for centuries, the current church opened its doors 1866.



Clergy and church wardens following the 150th anniversary service of the Church of St John the Baptist in Clontarf.

The special anniversary service took place in the presence of the Archbishop of Armagh, the Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke (who preached) and the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Dr Michael Jackson. The church was beautifully decorated for a flower festival which was taking place throughout the weekend as part of the anniversary celebrations. The service began in the old church and the congregation then processed to the current church led by members of the local Scouts.

The service also included a tribute to organist John Rowden who has played the organ in the Church of St John the Baptist for 50 years. The

Rector, the Revd Lesley Robinson read greetings to Mr Rowden from Liverpool Cathedral and made a presentation to him on behalf of the parish. She said the parish was blessed to have had the virtuoso organist playing for them for a third of the life of the church building.

Reflecting on 150 years of the Church of St John the Baptist, Archbishop Clarke said that the parish had never stood still and rested on its laurels: they had moved to the new church 150 years ago, later added a chancel, extended Green Lanes School and built the parish centre.

“There has always been change and there has always been movement,” he stated. “As we celebrate what our forbearers have done, we must look at what we want to be today and into the future.”

Preaching for the Frontline

‘Preaching for the Frontline’ is a conference organised by the Presbyterian Church for all ministers and those who speak or teach in any setting within our congregations.

“This day conference is designed to be as relevant to those who have been preaching for 30 years as those who began last year.”

It will be practical, thought-provoking and stimulating, enabling you to go back to your churches confident that your preaching can be a key part of equipping the whole people of God for the whole of their lives.

The speakers are Rev. Dr. Neil Hudson and Antony Billington. Dr. Hudson is the Director of the Imagine project at the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity. Since 2006, Neil has worked at LICC enabling local churches to develop a front-line focused ministry. He is also a part-time paid leader in a church in Salford.

Antony Billington is Head of Theology at LICC, prior to that he taught Hermeneutics and Biblical Theology at the London School of Theology. He has served in church leadership as a lay person, and preaches regularly in his home church and elsewhere.

Assembly Buildings, Belfast, Tuesday, 24th May 2016. 9.45am – 1pm. Cost: £5. To book your place email purchase a ticket online below. Note: The closing date for purchase of tickets will be 4.00pm on Friday, 20th May 2016.

Church of Scotland 'to introduce online baptism' in bid to boost membership



For centuries the [key Christian sacraments](#) of baptism and communion have symbolised people coming together in one place.

John Bingham writes in The Daily Telegraph - But under potentially radical plans being considered by the Church of Scotland, the rites could be administered online for the first time in a [move to redefine the idea of a congregation](#) in the internet age.

The suggestion, to be debated by members of the Kirk's decision-making General Assembly which meets in Edinburgh next week, stems from initiatives such as streaming services to enable housebound parishioners to join in despite being unable to be physically present.

A paper presented to members of the General Assembly drafted by the Church's Legal Questions Committee suggests re-examining issues such as voting rights at congregational meetings to people joining remotely.

But it goes on to argue that it is also time to go further and create what could effectively amount to virtual congregations, by allowing "access to the sacraments" for people are not "physically present in the congregation". More at - <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/17/church-of-scotland-to-introduce-online-baptism-in-bid-to-boost-m/?cid=sf26457058+sf26457058>

News briefs

Bishop Paul Colton presided and preached at a Eucharist to mark the 150th anniversary of the consecration, by Bishop John Gregg, of the Church of Saint Lappan, Little Island, County Cork on 17th May, 1866. Afterwards, at a

reception in Cork Golf Club (across the road) which was founded in 1888, the parish presented him with a print to mark his visit. Walter Stansfeld, the artist, made the presentation. The print is number 1 of 150. They are being marketed now by Little Island Business Association to support the church.

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This year's General Assembly will run from Monday, 6th June to Friday, 10th June. For the first time in many years, the General Assembly will continue its meeting through to the Friday afternoon, providing additional time for debate and discussion across the week. Rev. Frank Sellar will be installed as Moderator, succeeding Rev Dr. Ian McNie. The timetable for the week is available at -

<https://presbyterianireland.org/Training-Events/Events/General-Assembly-2016?eventType=2>

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The Anglican Church in Japan is drawing on its experience of the 2011 tsunami to respond to the powerful earthquakes that struck the island nation last month. Twin earthquakes of 6.5- and 7.3-magnitude on April 14 and 16 caused extensive damage in Kumamoto prefecture on

Kyushu, the southern island of Japan, killing more than 65 people and injuring nearly 1,600.

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The Church of England's investment arm, the Church Commissioners, has almost trebled the value of its investment fund over a 20-year period, it announced this week. The value of the Commissioners' investment fund has grown from £2.4 billion at the start of 1995, to £7 billion at the end of 2015; producing a return of 8.2 percent last year.

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A United Nations plan to eradicate Aids as a public health threat by 2030 has been welcomed by the Anglican mission agency United Society (formerly USPG); but U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon warns that instead of eradication, the Aids epidemic could be prolonged indefinitely if urgent action is not implemented within the next five years. The plan will be discussed during a high level meeting at the U.N. headquarters in New York next month.

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The primate of Brazil has criticized the suspension of President Dilma Rousseff and the imposition of Vice President Michel Temer pending Rousseff's impeachment trial; and

warned of a growing social movement to “reclaim” the country’s democracy. The Most Rev. Francisco De Assis Da Silva had previously criticized the impeachment process. Today he described the process as “a show of sad cynicism.”

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The primate of Australia, Archbishop Philip Freier, has increased the pressure on Pakistan over their continued detention of Asia Bibi under the country’s much criticized blasphemy laws, by writing to Pakistan’s High Commissioner to Australia, Naela Chohan, and Australia’s Foreign Minister, Julie Bishop, about the case.

Cathedral, choral and musical

St Patrick’s Parish, Coleraine, has announced details of its annual Summer Music Programme which takes place during July and August. The programme features a series of recitals designed to both entertain and relax over lunchtime. Each recital starts at 12.30pm and will last for approximately 40 minutes. Recitals will be followed by refreshments.

The full programme is as follows:

•July 7 Joanna Higgins / Derek Collins –
Soprano / Piano

- July 14 Simon Mawhinney- Piano
- July 21 Ross and Jake Houston-Flute and Gail Evans – Piano
- July 28 Michael Brown – Bass
- August 4 Ben McGonigle – organ
- August 11 Gillian McCutcheon-Clarinet, Nicky Johnstone-Viola, Michael Harrison-Piano
- August 18 Peter Wilson and Pupils
- August 25 Conor and Cahal Masterson – Violin and Piano

All are welcome. Admission is free.

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Handel's "Israel in Egypt" sung by Westminster Abbey Choir forms part of a wonderful concert with amazing solo performances. Catch it on Friday 20th May on Radio 3!

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Festival Brass Concert at St Bernadette's, Rosetta, Belfast. Festival Brass will perform at a concert at 8pm on Friday 20th May. They will be joined by the parish choir and folk choir, and by St. Bernard's Primary School choir. Tickets cost

£10 and further details are at <http://www.stbernadettesparish.org/>



John Rowden has played the organ in Clontarf for 50 years. He received a presentation in honour of his long service to the parish from the Rector, the Revd Lesley Robinson, at the service to mark the 150th anniversary of the Church of St John the Baptist.

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The Dublin County Choir will celebrate its 40th anniversary with a special concert at the National Concert Hall (NCH) next weekend. The

120-strong choir will present the Magnificent Magnificats through the works of JS Bach and John Rutter on Saturday at 8pm. There will also be Irish language interpretations on the theme by Dublin composer Brian Ingoldsby, who is also a choir member. Sylvia O'Brien and Donna Gallagher (sopranos), Cliona McDonough (contralto), Eoin Hynes (tenor) and Jeffrey Ledwidge (bass) will be accompanied by John Dexter on organ, with the Dublin Sinfonietta lead by Elaine Clark, and Colin Block conducting. Tickets, from €20, are available from nch.ie, or tel: (01) 417-0000

News links to reports on faith, politics and education.

Abortion figures for NI women 'don't tell true story'

Newsletter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/northern-ireland-news/abortion-figures-for-ni-women-don-t-tell-true-story-1-7387830>

There has been around 16 same-sex marriages a week since it was legalised

The Journal

397 couples have registered their marriage in Ireland since last November.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/number-of-same-sex-marriages-ireland-2774139-May2016/>

Dublin accused of hypocrisy over call to open UK files on 1974 bombings

Newsletter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/northern-ireland-news/dublin-accused-of-hypocrisy-over-call-to-open-uk-files-on-1974-bombings-1-7387768>

Author welcomes Church of Ireland report into Royal Black

Newsletter

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/northern-ireland-news/author-welcomes-church-of-ireland-report-into-royal-black-1-7387376>

Heaney's attic study to be recreated in former RUC station in Derry

The Journal

It's for a new arts centre which will open in his name in Bellaghy.

<http://www.thejournal.ie/seamus-heaney-homeplace-2774183-May2016/>

Salisbury Journal

Reports that the Bishop of Salisbury has called for environmental issues to take a more prominent role in the debate over Britain's future in the EU. Article says that Britain has taken a stand on the environment in recent years, which the Bishop said has made other countries "clean their acts up". He also called for the

voices of younger voters to be heard ahead of the June 23 referendum.

http://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/14497794.Bishop_calls_for_environmental_issues_to_be_debated_ahead_of_EU_referendum/?ref=rss

Times (Tues)/[Christian Today](#)/Efinancialnews/ Investment and Pensions Europe

Continuing coverage of the annual report of the Church Commissioners, published on Monday, which shows a return on investments of 8.2 per cent in 2015. Reports continue to focus and comment on the Commissioners investment in Alphabet Inc, Google's parent company, <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/comment/church-of-england-has-failed-to-meet-its-promises-on-tax-0t56dbrc0>

<http://www.efinancialnews.com/story/2016-05-17/church-commissioners-more-to-avoid-than-google>

<http://www.ipe.com/countries/uk/real-estate-standout-performer-as-church-of-england-returns-82/10013330.article>

Champion

Reports that the Church Commissioners have moved to reassure residents of Halsall, Lancashire that they are co-operating with gas and oil company, Aurora, as their hand has been forced by licensing laws which require landowners to grant access to carry out a geophysical survey. Edward Mason, Head of Ethical Investment for the Commissioners is quoted: 'As responsible landowners, we entered into negotiations with Aurora, now at an advanced stage, to reach an agreement that

provides full protections and indemnities for our tenants and us, while allowing that access.'

http://www.champnews.com/NewsDetail.aspx?ID=GN4_ART_152302

Guard

Further coverage of York Minster's decision to allow Zen Buddhism meditation sessions in the precinct. The Dean Vivienne Faulk is quoted.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/may/17/york-minster-criticised-zen-buddhist-meditation-grounds>

Mirror/Tel

Reports that the Advertising Standards Authority has upheld complaints that a betting firm's advert showing a partial crucifixion, features elements likely to cause offence to those of Christian faith at Easter. The ad email for Boylesports Enterprise shows a hand nailed to a length of wood alongside the caption "Boylesports Gaming - nailed on bonus."

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/betting-firm-advert-featuring-crucifixion-7991038#ICID=nsm>
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/17/betting-firms-nailed-on-easter-crucifixion-ad-banned-for-being-o/>

Times/Tel

Reports that before this year's General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, a committee has recommended a series of proposals to broaden the congregation by suggesting the possibility of baptism and communion online. The Church of Scotland has said it does not know how online baptisms would work at the moment.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/jesus-saves-to-hard-drive-kirk-considers-online-baptisms-and-communion-to-broaden-appeal-zts2g0jn9>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/05/17/church-of-scotland-to-introduce-online-baptism-in-bid-to-boost-m/>

Comment

Times (Tuesday): Church of England has failed to meet its promises on tax

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/comment/church-of-england-has-failed-to-meet-its-promises-on-tax-0t56dbrc0>

Letters

Times: Church Investment - Edward Mason (Scroll down)

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/comment/the-role-of-european-unity-in-securing-peace-bljmcg2sn>

FT: Pope risks controversy over female deacons

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/0e748058-1c23-11e6-a7bc-ee846770ec15.html?FTCamp=engage/CAP/webapp/Channel_Moreover//B2B#axzz48ygkZfaA

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