

**The essential daily
brief on the Irish
churches**

**Brian O’Driscoll &
Fr Peter McVerry
receive the
‘Freedom of
Dublin’**

**NELSON MANDELA,
AUNG San Suu Kyi...
Adam Clayton. There
are some huge names
on the roll of ‘Freedom
of the City’ recipients in
Dublin.**



The Journal.ie - Two more were added on Saturday evening — the award was bestowed on rugby legend Brian O’Driscoll and charity campaigner Fr Peter McVerry.

And in advance of the big night, the two men were intent on paying a few tributes to each other — before receiving the honour of the city.

“What Peter does is life or death, he changes peoples’ lives,” O’Driscoll said of the veteran campaigner — who has worked with and championed the rights of Dublin’s young homeless for more than 30 years.

Of O’Driscoll, Fr McVerry had this to say:

Brian is an icon, he has achieved everything that you can achieve in his particular world of rugby.

He’s a role model for young people and has brought a huge amount of joy and pride to many people because of his achievements.

The Lord Mayor said the two men, though from different generations “share much in common and are both inspirational leaders”.

They are people who lead by the example they set and in their own way and in their own fields they are individuals who walk the walk.

Ahead of becoming the 77th and 78th recipients of the ‘Freedom’ honour, O’Driscoll and McVerry were each presented with a granite and glass sculpture specially commissioned for the occasion.

Video at -

m.youtube.com/watch?v=H0a49hnNKHc&list=UUB-6HyOKDSRFQtYepN4ULpQ

C of I Committee on sexuality responds to criticism

There has been a significant development since the criticism last Tuesday of the C of I Select Committee on Sexuality without a gay member.

It was discussed on Sunday Sequence, yesterday morning. This included an interview with Pam Tilson which be listened to the BBC website at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007cphf> (interview starts at 8.40am).

The most relevant part of the interview is when the BBC presenter read out a statement from the Church of Ireland Select Committee on Sexuality which stated that now the Committee has:

"decided to establish an advisory panel which can draw more widely from the Church and will include self-identifying LGBT people as well as academics who will be able to present their expertise".

On Thursday 20th Pam Tilson was contacted by the Chair of the Select Committee, the Dean of Belfast Very Rev John Mann and asked to join the advisory panel, which she agreed to do.

New leader for Belfast Jewish community

The Belfast Jewish Community’s new spiritual leader brings a para medical background to the congregation and has also pledged to attract

more of the Northern Ireland community who identified as being Jewish in the last census.

Jewish Chronicle - Birmingham-born Rabbi David Singer said from the last census taken in Northern Ireland, “over 300 people have declared themselves to be Jewish, but there are only 90



Rabbi David Singer and his wife Judith

members of the shul, so if we can make it known that we’re here and people were open to being approached maybe we can enhance their identity. That does not necessarily mean, expecting them to come to shul, but at least, to be involved in Jewish things.”

At a special kiddush, attended by more than 50 members of the congregation, Dr Dennis Coppel, joint president of the Belfast Jewish Community, welcomed Rabbi Singer and his Finchley-born wife Judith who have lived in Israel, apart from a three-year term of office at Birmingham Hebrew Congregation in the early 1990s, for 40 years.

During his time in Israel, he served in the IDF and trained as a medic and ambulance driver for Magen David Adom; he is also a founder member of Hatzolah. In 1999 he enhanced his medical skills, gaining an Advanced Cardiac Life Support course at Jerusalem’s Hadassah Hospital. He gained semichah at Yeshivat Hanegev in Israel in 1981.

“The community have warmly taken to Rabbi Singer and his wife,” said Dr Coppel. “Rabbi Singer brings a wide breadth of experience and knowledge to Belfast and it is our hope that with his para medical background he will breathe new life into our tiny community!”

The Singers have 10 children and 20 grandchildren.

Rabbi Singer replaces Rabbi Menachem Brackman who served the Belfast community for five years. He left in January and now lives in Edgware, north London.

Rabbi David Singer and his wife Judit

Dublin City
Interfaith
Forum



Inter faith in Dublin south side

Dublin City Interfaith Forum is organising an exciting programme to introduce people to some of the diverse faith communities located on Dublin's Southside. *Faith in the City* gets underway today Monday, March 24, and will focus on the thriving Baha'i, Jewish and Christian communities within a small area of Dublin's suburbs.

The introductory talks, aimed at providing an understanding of the different faiths, will be hosted in the centres or places of worship of the different communities and will run from 6.00 pm to 7.30 pm on four evenings.

The first talk, on Monday evening March 24, will focus on the Presbyterian community, taking place in Adelaide Road Presbyterian Church, 18a Adelaide Road, Dublin 2.

People will have the opportunity to learn about the Baha'i community on Monday March 31 in the National Baha'i Centre, 24 Burlington Road, Dublin 4.

On Tuesday April 8 it will be the turn of the Church of Ireland, hosted by St Bartholomew's Church, Clyde Road, Dublin 4.

The final talk will be on the Jewish community on Monday April 28 in the Irish Jewish Museum, 3 Walworth Road, Dublin 8.

Everyone is welcome to attend all or some of the talks.

DCIF works with interested members of faith communities to deliver interfaith gatherings and activities in Dublin City.

Recognising the diverse nature of the backgrounds of the residents of Dublin, DCIF seeks to provide the space and opportunity for Faith Communities to build relationships with and between Dublin City communities, statutory and voluntary organisations and the residents of Dublin City.

Pope appoints Marie Collins to church group on sex abuse



Pope Francis on Saturday appointed Irish abuse survivor Marie Collins to the Vatican commission on protecting children from clerical abuse.

Irish Times - The group has been formed to help the [Catholic Church](#) tackle the problem of clerical paedophilia that has dogged it for two decades.

The formation of a group of experts was first announced in December, and today the pope named the first eight members - four female and four male - from eight different countries.

These initial members will be responsible for rounding out the “commission for safeguarding minors” with other experts from around the world and defining the scope of the group’s action.

“Pope Francis has made clear that the Church must hold the protection of minors amongst Her highest priorities,” Vatican spokesman Rev [Federico Lombardi](#) said in a statement.

“Looking to the future without forgetting the past, the Commission will take a multi-pronged approach to promoting youth protection,” he said.

These will include taking criminal action against offenders, educating people about the exploitation of children, developing best practices to better screen priests, and defining the civil and clerical duties within the Church, Lombardi said.

Among those named to the group was Ms Collins, who was a victim of sexual abuse in [Ireland](#) in the 1960s and who has campaigned actively for the protection of children and for justice for victims of clerical paedophilia.

Another member of the commission is the archbishop of [Boston](#), Cardinal Sean Patrick O’Malley, known as a pioneer for a more open approach to tackling scandal since he published a database of Boston clergy accused of sexual abuse of minors online in 2011.

Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin congratulated Ms Collins on her appointment.

He said the “commission will benefit greatly from her commitment to ensuring that the highest standards of child protection will exist in the Catholic Church around the world”.

Archbishop Martin described her as a “ person of great integrity and determination. I am grateful to her for accepting the appointment, knowing that over the years she had many reasons to have felt frustrated and disappointment by the failings and the slowness of the Catholic Church in Ireland in addressing child safeguarding concerns.”

Baptismal pool in rededicated C of I Bangor Church

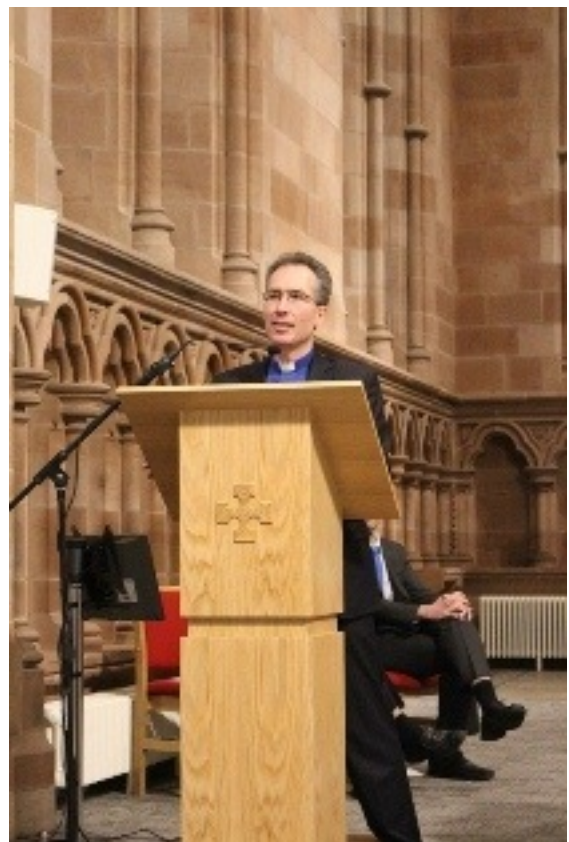
After an electrical fire in the early hours of 7 June 2012 destroyed a large section of roof and the pews and floor below, St Comgall’s, Bangor has risen from the ashes as an inspiring worship and community space.

On Saturday 22 March the rector, Revd Nigel Parker, welcomed Bishop Harold and Mrs Liz Miller, invited guests, parishioners and well-wishers, as they celebrated the official re-opening of the building .

The vision of the Select Vestry was to ‘enhance the historic beauty of St Comgall’s by providing a warm, bright, flexible seven-day-a-week centre of Christian excellence at the heart of Bangor – a hub for worship, prayer, teaching, hospitality, fellowship and mission.’

They have succeeded, as delight in the beautiful building was palpable amongst the several hundred people who came along to see the results of 21 months of work:

“It’s really amazing,” said parishioner Heather McQueen. “They’ve been so sympathetic to the original architecture but they’ve just brightened it all up.”



Revd Nigel Parker

Amy, 15, said, “I think it’s amazing. It’s beautiful, I love it so much.”

The church now has 2 levels – the top one has sound-proofed rooms for Children’s Ministry and Youth Ministry.

Downstairs there is a very large welcome area complete with a modern Coffee Bar. Coffee, tea and cakes were in steady supply in the welcome

area and break-out rooms thanks to the ladies from the church’s ‘Refresh’ hospitality team (right).



Bishop of Down with members of the Fire and Rescue Service

In the sanctuary, the pews have been replaced by chairs to give a completely flexible space which has already been used to maximum effect with the staging of the Saint Patrick’s Experience event last week.

The church has a new audio/visual system and the pipe organ was removed for cleaning and restoration before being fully reinstated.

The cost of renovation was £2 million, some of which was covered by insurance but £350,000 of which was raised by parish members.

Thankfully, the police and fire service intervened quickly the night of the fire, saving St Comgall’s from complete destruction. The firefighting team were back for the opening and stood beneath the spot where Firefighter, Mark Vance, (below left) had to quickly remove a section of the roof to stop the flames spreading.

Bishop Harold praised the Select Vestry for their positive response to the crisis, seeing it as a very real opportunity for God to do something new. He said that it was, “a wonderful attitude and out of that attitude has been born this beautiful, new renovated building today.”

The Bishop dedicated the new lectern, holy table, font and baptismal pool (hidden out of sight under the floor) which will be used for a baptism next Sunday. As he did so, he emphasised the centrality of the Word of God, the importance of baptism and holy communion as demonstrated by the early

church in Acts 2. His overarching theme was, he said, 'Let the church be the church in this generation'.

Armagh organ series continues

The programme of organ recitals will continue on Sunday 6 April 2014 at 4.15pm in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral, Armagh when the organist will be Dr Stephen Timpany.

Stephen has been Organist in Holy Trinity Parish Church, Banbridge for over 25 years and Head of Music at Glasry College on the Ards Peninsula. He is an Associate of the Royal College of Organists and is President of the Ulster Society of Organists and Choirmasters. Stephen's musical interests include Baroque and Romantic organ music, improvisation, Anglican cathedral music and the training of young voices.

CHRIST CHURCH
CATHEDRAL
DUBLIN

INTRODUCING CHRIST CHURCH

A series of free lunch time lectures

Tuesday 4 March 2014
What are cathedrals for?
Canon Kenneth Kearon,
Secretary-General of the Anglican Communion

Tuesday 11 March 2014
Music at Christ Church
Mr Ian Keatley, Director of Music

Tuesday 18 March 2014
Christ Church and its history
Professor Raymond Gillespie,
National University of Ireland, Maynooth

Tuesday 25 March 2014
The cathedral silver
Canon Roy Byrne

Lectures begin at 1.05 pm and end at 1.35pm
followed with tea, coffee and discussion, concluding at 2pm
Admission is free and all are welcome

Supported by the Friends of Christ Church

The Dean of Armagh, the Very Revd Gregory Dunstan, said, "Stephen Timpany is one of those accomplished organists who studied with Martin White, a former organist of the Cathedral and now one of its Lay Canons. Stephen's gifts both as a musician and a teacher have been evident in his work with the boys' choir as Acting Master of the Choristers. We are immensely grateful for his help at this time."

The choice of music for this next organ recital will include works by J S Bach, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, Franck, Whitlock and Alain. As with all the recitals in

this memorial series, admission is free, with a retiring collection towards the maintenance of the Cathedral's fabric. To date, donations have amounted to over £1,200.

From Patronage to Changing Populations – School Management Conference

Members of boards of management of Church of Ireland primary schools from all over Ireland gathered in the King's Hospital School, Palmerstown, for the fourth annual CIPSMA Conference, yesterday, Saturday March 22.



The Church of Ireland Primary School Management Association had lined up a wide variety of speakers whose subjects ranged from the work of the Inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills to supporting small rural schools in England. Legal matters affecting schools and boards of management and the recently published anti-bullying procedures were also covered and those in attendance also received an insight into being a school patron.

Proceedings got underway with an address by Gary Ó Donnchadha, deputy chief inspector with the Department of Education and Skills who spoke about synergies for better learning, linking the work of boards of management and the Inspectorate. He said that a huge piece of work carried out by the OECD on quality in schools concluded that good practice is needed in all areas such external inspections and teacher appraisals. But the study also found that synergies, such as links between the Inspectorate and school boards, were very important in ensuring quality.

Mr Ó Donnchadha explained how the Inspectorate works and acknowledged with work of all involved in boards of management. He said all involved in school management should have ideas about high quality schools. He added

that it was important that boards acquaint themselves with the codes of professional conduct as articulated by teachers through the teaching council. He advised those present that, following an external evaluation of their school, board members



should find out what themes arose from the inspection and follow up on what the school is doing regarding recommendations made.

Director of Education with the Dioceses of Lincoln, Jacqueline Waters–Dewhurst, gave an interesting talk on small schools and changing populations. She said that immigration presented opportunities to serve the immigrant communities and indigenous communities. Lincoln has a lot of small rural schools with lot of Eastern European immigrant children whose parents come to work in farming. She said that small rural schools often struggled to be sustainable. Increasing immigration solved the numbers issue but did present challenges.

However, Ms Waters–Dewhurst said that schools must embrace the challenge of integrating children of immigrant communities on a number of grounds. Pragmatically, more children result in bigger schools and more staff meaning a better offer for all the school’s children. She said Church schools also have a duty in this regard. “In Church of England schools we do it for the local community, whatever that community looks like,” she commented. Education will benefit as local children will extend their knowledge and experience of the mixed world in which they live. She said that, contrary to what is often perceived, involving children with English as an additional language had a positive effect on school pupil performance.

“Welcoming pupils with different cultures and languages into your schools has positive effects on the indigenous pupils as well as the immigrant pupils.

What's important in church schools is to remember what's at your core – what are your values – what do your schools believe. Your values will be what you call upon when you decide how welcoming your school is to the stranger in your midst," she stated.

More at -

<http://dublin.anglican.org/news/2014/03/-From-Patronage-to-Changing-Populations-School-Management-Conference-Hears-Wide-Ranging-Contributions.php>