

CNI
CHURCH
NEWS
IRELAND

**SPECIAL YEAR FOR
CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR**

**YOUTH CHALLENGE PARISH
FOR LENT**



Donations from Tyrone have funded a vital new community centre in Lusaka, Zambia, which opened on Saturday.

ZAMBIAN COMMUNITY CENTRE FUNDED BY TYRONE DONATIONS

A Zambian community centre paid for and built by the people of Tyrone will enhance lives for many generations to come, a Catholic women's group who use it has said.

Conor Sharkey of the Ulster Herald, in Lusaka - On Saturday, hundreds of people gathered in the country's capital city, Lusaka, to see St Theresa's Community Centre officially blessed and opened. Among those speaking at the event was the Arch Bishop of Lusaka, Telesphore George Mpundu, and Fr James O'Kane, the Omagh priest who worked as project director on the new parish centre.

Euphemia Chambolo is part of the Catholic Women's League that regularly uses the centre for meetings and to pray. She said they owed a great debt of

gratitude to the people of Ireland and said they would always be in their prayers.

Ms Chambolo told the TyroneHerald, “It is a centre, yes, but it is also the centre of what we do. It gives us somewhere to congregate, to pray and to share ideas. It has improved the standards of this environment and it has added so much value to all our lives. Many people who come to this area have been admiring it so it also gives us a sense of pride. It brings us together so while it is a community centre, it is also the centre of this area now.”

Work on St Theresa’s began seven years through the Omagh-based Paul McGirr Foundation. The late Paul’s brother Michael was in Lusaka on Saturday to see the ribbon cut on St Theresa’s. The Foundation has already begun work to extend the St Theresa’s by building a training centre. It will teach young people in Lusaka skills that will help them to become mechanics, joiners and other trades.

Ms Chambolo continued, “Skills development is very important and adds value to human life for everyone. The young people are going to be able to learn these skills and they will help them become economically empowered. They are the future of our church and it is important they have life skills when they are growing up.”

The Paul McGirr Foundation has been the lightening rod for amazing changes in one of Lusaka’s poorest regions. And those who use St Theresa’s say they will be forever grateful. “Without the people of Ireland we would not have reached this level and we thank them and put them in our prayers. They have done a tremendous job in identifying this area and giving us this wonderful community centre. All those have had a hand in building it and those back in Ireland who we have never met, we continue to bless them. We also offer a special prayer to the SMA and thank you all so much for having the heart to come and help us and hopefully this relationship can continue years after today,” Ms Chambolo added.



SPECIAL YEAR FOR CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR

It is a very significant year for those connected to Christian Endeavour anywhere in Ireland for not only will the movement be celebrating 125 years of its existence here but also this year’s annual Irish Union national

CE convention will be the 100th.

Consequently, in keeping with this remarkable occasion, this convention will be an extra special one.

Founded in 1881, in Portland, Maine, USA by Rev Francis E Clark, Christian Endeavour quickly began to spread.

It became established in Ireland in 1889 when Miss Margaret Magill formed the first society in Ireland in Agnes Street Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

The movement is now a worldwide interdenominational organisation.

This year's convention will be held on September 19 and 20 and it is appropriate that it will be in Agnes Street, in Immanuel Presbyterian Church which incorporates the old Agnes Street Church and congregation.

The main speaker will be Craig Dyer, the director of Christianity Explored, an informal course for those who would like to investigate Christianity or to learn more about their faith.

As always there will be various events and speakers to suit the different age groups including juniors, young people and seniors.

Anyone who has ever had any connection with CE should find a visit to even a part of this special celebratory convention memorable and worthwhile.

Further details on the special anniversary convention can be obtained from: conventioninformation@gmail.com

LIVELY & FRUITFUL MEETING OF CATHOLIC PRIESTS

According to a report on the meeting published on the the association's website, one major topic discussed was the declining number of priests.

Irish Times - "Many angles of this problem were raised, ranging from the pressure being put on priests in their old age to the further decline of local communities when they are deprived of a resident priest.

"It was stressed that we should not look on this issue in a clericalist way since it is a matter that concerns the whole church."



Fr Brendan Hoban: a purpose of the Association of Catholic Priests meeting was to attempt to improve communications with the dioceses.

Also discussed was the new missal “and the question of whether there was anything that could be done about it at this stage”.

Feedback to the association’s leadership “was generally very positive”.

“It was mentioned that some priests do not approve of us, but the feeling was that, while a great many priests do not want to be bothered by going to meetings or even joining, that generally the work of the association is appreciated and valued.”

Founder member Fr [Brendan Hoban](#) said that a purpose of the meeting was to attempt to improve communications with the dioceses.

He acknowledged that the association, which operates without office or secretarial facilities, had not always been able to keep lines of communication as open as the leadership would wish. This week’s meeting was mainly for the diocesan representatives to talk to the leadership.

In general the meeting was “lively and fruitful” with “a great sense of freedom and openness in the contributions that were made”, and “as has become the norm at ACP meetings”.

At its conclusion the association’s leadership felt it was “much clearer on the message we would like to bring to the bishops if and when they agree to our request for a meeting”.



10K WILL AID DONEGAL PARISH

The 18th North West 10k was launched in the Mount Errigal Hotel on Monday night where the two main benefiting charities from this year's event were officially announced by new Chairperson James Boyle.

Donegal Democrat - The charity race and walk has raised in excess of 650,000 euro for a number of very worthy causes and that mission will continue on Sunday, May 4th in Letterkenny when the organizers are hoping that around 3,000 people will gather at the Community Centre for the hugely successful charity event.

The 10k committee is delighted to again have the same sponsors on board Brian McCormick Sports and Leisure and DonegalDaily.Com who were represented at the launch by Evelyn Cullen and Stephen Maguire.

The benefiting charities this year are the Letterkenny Branch of the Dyslexia Association of Ireland and the Conwal Parish Church Restoration Committee.

Chairperson James Boyle paid tribute to the various organizations including the Gardai, Red Cross and ambulance service who provide invaluable support on the day of the event.

The charity race and walk takes place on Sunday, May 4th in Letterkenny starting at 2.00pm.

For further details visit the website at www.northwest10k.com.

C of I MISSION CONFERENCE

The Church of Ireland Council for Mission held a conference at Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre, Co. Down on 28 Feb– 1 March



2014 with guest speakers the Revd Dr Heather Morris, President of the

Methodist Church in Ireland, and the Rt Revd Richard Chartres, Bishop of London.

The conference addressed the key questions: how to articulate the mission of the Church of Ireland in the range of contexts that exist across Ireland in such a way that all church traditions can embrace, support and enact it, and how can it be brought to life?; and how can more traditional and newer forms of church together enhance and strengthen the mission of the church?

Delegates from across all twelve Church of Ireland Dioceses, the guest speakers and special contributors from a range of parishes engaging creatively in mission were welcomed by the Bishop of Down and Dromore, the Rt Revd Harold Millar, and the conference discussions were facilitated by Dean Katharine Poulton and Mr Andrew McNeile.



YOUTH CHALLENGE PARISH FOR LENT

When St Finnian's Youth Worker Peter Hilton asked his Youth Fellowship for some Lent challenges, they came up with 40 – one for each day.

The challenges of the Castlereagh, Belfast, group are broken down into suggested weeks – however you can do them in whatever order you wish over the season.

The suggestions are very do-able but if they were too easy they wouldn't be challenges! How about going screen-free

for a day, blessing your house by praying in each room, fasting a meal, reading passages of scripture, surprising someone with a small and even smiling? At their youth service last Sunday the young people of St Finnian's challenged the congregation to join them and you can too.

[Download the PDF here.](#)

PRIEST ACCUSED OF USING PARISH MONEY TO FUND HIGH LIFE

A flamboyant priest accused of stealing €500,000 from the Franciscan order in Dublin to fund a lavish lifestyle faces expulsion from the clergy if found guilty.

Irish Independent - Father Anthony Egan was arrested last Wednesday and questioned by detectives after it emerged that a significant sum of money from parish donations was missing. A file is being prepared for the DPP.



A Franciscan order spokesperson last night told the Sunday Independent that they are co-operating fully with gardai in the investigation.

[Gardai](#) arrested Fr Egan following a tip-off from a senior member of the clergy.

The priest faces accusations of using €500,000 stolen from the church diocese to fund a lavish lifestyle for more than a decade.

According to reports, the priest enjoyed multiple trips to [Paris](#) and [Monaco](#) each year. The 59-year-old is believed to have a fascination with Monaco's royal family.

He is also believed to have spent the money on expensive shoes and clothes and to have spread his finances over multiple bank accounts.

Under canon law, a priest is entitled to receive one stipend from financial donations made during Mass collections. Additional stipends cannot be claimed if the priest celebrates more than one Mass a day.

If Fr Egan is found guilty of misappropriating funds within his diocese, he faces being defrocked from the clergy and will have to relinquish all responsibilities within the Church.

Fr Egan was previously cleared of criminal charges in February 2012 after he was alleged to have falsely advertised his services as a psychiatrist in a national newspaper.

At the time of the investigation, it was believed Fr Egan referred to himself publicly as a psychiatrist, and members of his old church, St Audeons, said they received post addressed to 'Dr Egan' as recently as six months ago.

The court heard Fr Egan placed the ad in the Irish Times because he wanted to build up his client base and earn some money.

The court heard that during Garda questioning the priest claimed he had studied at Harvard University. However, there is no record of him having studied there. The court also heard that the priest had been duped into paying €1,000 to complete an online course in psychiatry, at the end of which he was presented with a fake degree.

An investigation into the newspaper advertisement began after it was seen by the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr [Diarmuid Martin](#), who contacted the gardai.



MODERATOR - SOCIETY MUST GIVE ACTIVE SUPPORT FOR POLICE

Presbyterian Moderator Dr. Rob Craig has said that society must give active support and encouragement to the PSNI.

He has stated that it can do this with confidence given the robust accountability mechanisms that are in place.

CORK HON SECRETARY ELECTION

At the meeting of the Diocesan Council of Cork, Cloyne and Ross on Tuesday, 4th March, 2014, the clergy elected the Very Reverend Nigel Dunne, Dean of Cork, as one of the two clerical honorary secretaries of the Diocesan Council and Diocesan Synod.

There are four honorary secretaries, two lay and two clerical. The other clerical honorary secretary is the Archdeacon of Cork, Cloyne and Ross (*ex officio*). The two lay honorary secretaries are Mrs Linda Deane and Mrs Ann Buttimer.

A MUSICAL RECORD?

It may be a musical record, with a 90-year-old in the ranks of Portadown Male Voice Choir – none other than Harrison Morrow, baritone.

Portadown Times - Harrison reached the milestone this week, and to mark the occasion, the ensemble had him a special cake baked. It was handed over by chairman Dr Alan Turtle and by conductor Gordon Speers.



Harrison Morrow receives his 90th birthday cake from male choir chairman Dr Alan Turtle (left) and conductor Gordon Speers.

The artistic icing included a fancy musical note and cricket stumps, as

Harrison also played leather-upon-willow for Armagh and Portadown.

Originally from the primatial city, he started singing as a cherubic boy soprano in St Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral at the tender age of eight and remained until his voice broke.

Memories include the fact that Church of Ireland chants were the thing in those days and that the outbreak of World War Two was announced from the pulpit one Sunday morning.

On the cricket field, he starred for Armagh and then Portadown, his fondest memory being circa 1950 when Portadown beat Laurelvale in the Junior Cup Final on the hallowed turf of The Lawn in Waringstown. Billy Martin was captain and he hit the winning boundary.

Harrison has served the male choir for 53 years. His gold medal was presented in 2011 when the choir performed at Áras an Uachtaráin, the official residence of the Irish President when Mary McAleese was the incumbent and enjoyed the PMVC dulcet tones.

"I've enjoyed every minute of the choir," said Harrison as he received the cake. "I have no plans to retire as long as the voice holds up. Our greatest triumphs have been at Cork International Festival where we have a terrific rapport with the knowledgeable audiences."

And to prove the point of non-retirement, he's off to Dungannon tonight (Friday) where the choir is performing a St Anne's Church of Ireland.



CHURCH BRIGADE'S YOUTH PARADE

**The Church Lads' & Church Girls' Brigade
Brigade's Annual Parade and Service will be held
at St John's, Fivemiletown, Clogher Diocese, on
Sunday 6th April.**

Companies will assemble at 2.45pm for a Parade round the town prior to the Service at 3.30pm. Family and friends of the Brigade will be most welcome.