



Princess Eugenie joined The Queen for the annual Royal Maundy Service, which took place at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. At the Service, Her Majesty

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distributed Maundy money to 93 men and 93 women – one for each of The Queen's 93 years.

Belfast parishioners receive the Royal Maundy at Windsor Castle

This year's Royal Maundy Service took place yesterday in St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle, the spectacular setting for Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding last year.

The Queen handed out Maundy money in small leather purses to 93 men and 93 women who had been selected for their service to the community.

The number of men and women invited reflects the years of the Sovereign's life, a tradition dating back to the 15th century. The Queen turns 93 on April 21, although she will not mark her official birthday until June 8.

Each person received two small leather string purses, a red one containing ordinary coins and a second white one containing silver Maundy coins specially minted by the Royal Mint for the occasion.

The Maundy coins amount to the same number of pence as the years of the monarch's age and bear the portrait of the Queen that was created by Mary Gillick for the first coins of her reign in 1953.

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Mr Jim Patterson and his wife Rosemary

Amongst those receiving the Royal Maundy was Mr Jim Patterson who is a lifelong member of the parish of St Mark, Ballysillan. He was nominated for by the Bishop of Connor, the Rt Rev Alan Abernethy.

Jim was accompanied to Windsor by this wife Rosemary, who retired as Personal Assistant to the Bishop of Connor in March last year.

Another recipient from Belfast is Mrs Mary McGrath. She was also nominated by Bishop Alan, with the help of Roman Catholic Bishop Noel Treanor, as Bishop Alan wanted to reflect the excellent relationship that exists between the Diocese of Connor and the Diocese of Down and Connor.

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Evangelism 'must not be forced on others', says Archbishop of Canterbury

Christian witness "must be both confident and humble", the Archbishop of Canterbury has said in an Easter letter to churches around the world.

Archbishop Justin Welby said that although it was a Christian duty to share the faith, it was important that Christians season their message with "gentleness and respect" and not force their beliefs onto others.

"Our proclamation of the hope which is ours in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ must be both confident and humble," he wrote.

"In our complex and plural world our evangelism must not be forced on others, but as followers of Christ we have a duty to bear witness to our faith: to speak of hope for the world in the Resurrection of Christ, a message seasoned with gentleness and respect.

"Our actions of love, compassion, respect and gentleness confirm that the message we share is indeed good news."

He reflected on the need for Christians to bring a message of hope to communities as people around the world continue to suffer as a result of environmental damage, war, terrorism, and political and economic instability.

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In addition, he warned of the "twin threats of extremism and apathy".

"Our world is in desperate need of hope. As Christians we have a message of sure and certain hope to proclaim," he wrote.

The call for humility echoes a [recent appeal](#) made by the Archbishop specifically to British Christians to be sensitive to their country's colonial past and how it might affect their witness in communities that were part of the Empire.

Delivering the Deo Gloria Trust lecture, Archbishop Welby said it was important that Christians engage in dialogue rather than monologue, and recognise the positive contributions of people who belong to different faiths.

"How are British Christians heard when we talk of the claims of Christ by diaspora communities who have experienced abuse and exploitation by an empire that has seemed to hold the Christian story at the heart of its project?" he said.

He added: "Let us never be guilty of demeaning the light that others have, just show them something of the light you know.

"Let's tell people about Jesus and witness to what he has done for us, without feeling the need to presume to tell others what is wrong with their faith."

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President Trump calls Pope Francis after Notre-Dame fire



President Trump promises to help rebuild Notre Dame in phone call to Pope Francis

President Donald Trump and Pope Francis spoke on the phone Wednesday afternoon, with the president pledging to assist with the rebuilding of Notre-Dame de Paris.

“Today, President Donald J. Trump spoke with His Holiness Pope Francis. The President offered his condolences for the destruction of Notre Dame Cathedral, one of Europe’s most important religious structures,” said a readout of the call from Press Secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

Trump also commented on the Cathedral’s “amazing beauty and great symbolism.”

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The two leaders also spoke on matters related to the current crisis in Venezuela, and how to best assist the people of that country during the current political crisis.

Venezuela has suffered through political and social unrest for years, but the situation worsened in January with the disputed reelection of President Nicholas Maduro. A large and growing number of nations have refused to recognize the legitimacy of the result, and the Vatican has rebuffed invitation by the dictator to mediate in the dispute with his opponents.

Trump characterized the call with the pope as a “wonderful conversation” on Twitter, adding that he wished the pontiff a happy Easter.

Alessandro Gisotti, interim director of the Holy See Press Office, confirmed the call on Twitter. He said that Trump “expressed to the pope his closeness, in the name of the American people.”

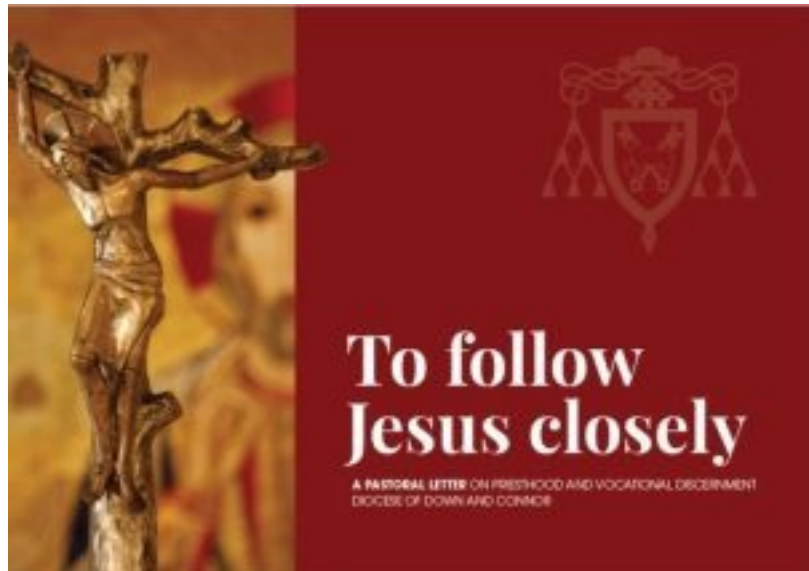
Trump previously spoke to his French counterpart, Emmanuel Macron, on Tuesday, expressing condolences over the tragedy of the fire and offering American help.

Bishop Noel Treanor issues pastoral letter on Priesthood and Vocational Discernment

Bishop Noel Treanor, Bishop of Down and Connor, has published a pastoral letter on Priesthood and Vocational

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Discernment entitled *To Follow Jesus Closely*. The letter was published on Holy Thursday morning in Saint Peter's Cathedral, Belfast, where priests and people from across the diocese gathered for the annual Chrism Mass celebrated by Bishop Treanor.



The pastoral letter is one of a number of initiatives within the Diocese of Down and Connor to support vocational accompaniment for young people. It is hoped it will help promote an increase in vocations to priesthood and religious life.

In this letter, Bishop Treanor reflects on the role of the priest in contemporary society. He encourages committed Catholics to build a culture of 'vocational discernment' which enables young people to respond to their calling 'with open minds and big hearts.'

The bishop acknowledges that there are fewer priests and religious and a decline in the numbers presenting to study for ministry. He remains confident however that Jesus continues to call men and women to follow him closely.

Echoing Pope Francis, Bishop Treanor reflects that 'to be a priest is always something beautiful, capable of fulfilling life

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with new splendour and profound joy, even in the midst of difficulties.’

Bishop Treanor’s pastoral letter is the first in a series of events to be held in Down and Connor diocese to promote vocations to priesthood and religious life.

Prayer vigils will take place in parishes and pastoral communities throughout the diocese on Thursday 2 May. A special nine-day novena will be launched at these vigils, inviting individuals and families to pray for an increase in vocations.

This will lead into Good Shepherd Sunday (Vocations Sunday) which is to be a joyful celebration of thanksgiving for the gift of priesthood and religious life.

Bishop Treanor’s pastoral letter will be distributed throughout the Diocese of Down and Connor at all Easter Masses and can also be downloaded from the Diocese of Down and Connor website: www.downandconnor.org.

Omagh teenager’s Holy Week art

A teenage Drumragh parishioner has two 100x70cm canvases on display in St Columba’s Church, in the centre of Omagh, which she painted specially for Holy Week.

Emma, the teenager, had already completed artistic reflections on the eight beatitudes – paintings accompanied by verse – which can also be viewed in church and were shared online as a Lenten outreach initiative by St

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Christ's passion reflected in Holy Week paintings by teenage Omagh parishioner

Columba's for those in the parish who were unable to come to church.

“For these two big paintings - 'Nails from the Cross' and 'Crown of Thorns' - I wanted to reflect Christ's suffering on the cross for all of us. It took me about a week and a half to complete them,” she says.

“For these two big paintings I wanted to reflect Christ’s suffering on the cross for all of us. It took me about a week and a half to complete them,” Emma says.

“I was working on them basically every day. For ‘the Beatitudes’, I tried to do one a week, maybe two.

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Emma, a student at Omagh Academy, says her unusual Easter project has won the backing of friends and classmates. "A lot were surprised I decided to do something so big at this age, but they've been really supportive and they really like it."

The curate in Drumragh with Mountfield, Rev Sean Hanily, says the church was keen to focus on Christ's suffering during Holy Week.

"Although we look forward to the message of hope of Easter Day, we must also be mindful of the suffering that led to that," he says. "These paintings help us to do that in a very meaningful way."

Mr Hanily says Emma's paintings will be displayed at the sides of the large eight-foot cross near the front of St Columba's Church throughout the Easter period.

Parishioners will be invited to leave a small stone at the foot of the cross, during a special service on Good Friday evening, to symbolise leaving their own burdens and suffering at the cross.

Stations of the Cross for Sex Trafficking Survivors takes the burden from victims

On the morning of April 6, the Port Authority Bus Terminal in New York City became more than a transit hub – it became a site of prayer and activism that connected the Stations of the Cross to the plight of sex trafficking victims.

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“The cross is a metaphor for sex trafficking,” said the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser, associate rector at Manhattan’s Church of the Incarnation and chair of the Episcopal Diocese of New York Task Force Against Human Trafficking. Sex trafficking victims often face continued violence, social stigma and a loss of agency in an unsupportive system.

Dannhauser and a group of some 30 faith-based activists – many of whom wore various hues of purple in support of sex trafficking victims and in recognition of Lent – gathered for a traveling model of the Lenten tradition, which connected the Stations of the Cross to elements of sex trafficking throughout New York City.

Praying the [Stations of the Cross](#) during Lent is a centuries-old tradition that focuses Christians on the path of suffering that Jesus followed to his ultimate sacrifice on the cross, and for many Christians, that story is retold in solemn tones inside the walls of a church or chapel.

Organized by the Episcopal Diocese of New York Task Force Against Human Trafficking, [Stations of the Cross for Sex Trafficking Survivors](#) followed seven stations, abbreviated from the usual 14, across three of the city’s boroughs.

Each stop reflected Jesus’ journey on Good Friday and the burden of commercial sexual exploitation, featuring opening devotion and liturgy from faith leaders, as well as speeches from trafficking survivors. Attendees visited a shelter and service provider for homeless youth, a strip club, an area of the Bronx known for street prostitution, a human trafficking

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intervention court in Queens, John F. Kennedy International Airport and a [hotel in Brooklyn](#) known for commercial sex.

Fittingly, the Port Authority Bus Terminal served as the first station. Located just blocks from Times Square, the Port Authority is the nation's largest and busiest bus terminal. It's open 24 hours a day and, because of its location in a tourist district and its nearly [200,000 daily visitors](#), the terminal has [long been](#) a hot spot for traffickers, pimps and others who scout for vulnerable women to coerce into prostitution.

Methodist President's Easter Message

The Rev Billy Davison, MCI President writes -

As the dark, frosty days of winter begin to fade, we look forward to Easter holidays with family and friends. Easter is a time for all kinds of celebrations and cultural events across the country. Many take off to their caravans or holiday homes for a change of scenery seeking a place to switch off from the same old routine and the sad news stories we live with constantly.

Easter is a Good News story! This is a completely true story that can transform the whole direction of your life. It's all about Jesus Christ, God's only Son, who on Good Friday was crucified, and on Easter Sunday triumphed over death and the grave; Jesus calls us to come and trust in his death for our sins and find new power for living through His resurrection. The heart of the message is that Christ triumphed over all the attacks of evil that were levelled against him in His crucifixion.

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Many today still think these events never happened, but scripture assures us they were witnessed by not just a few but by hundreds of people. As the apostle Paul says, "After that He appeared to more than 500 of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep." (1 Cor 15: 6)

Sadly, the world we live in continues to manifest evil events perpetrated by those intent on violent crime. The horrendous knife crime in London is one example of the disregard some have for human life. Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, spoke about his own anxiety when his children are on a night out in London, and how he can't go to bed until he knows they are home safely. Similar shocking evil events happen across the world. The message of Easter is that Jesus died in our place on the Cross to show us how much

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God loves us and how precious we all are to him, and he rose from the dead to assure us of ultimate victory over death.

Recently, a large banner in one of the Churches I was preaching in summed up the message of Easter so well. It read, "If you think you are not up to much, Jesus thinks you are to die for." As John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Easter Message from the Archbishop of Dublin

An Easter message from the Archbishop of Dublin, the Most Revd Michael Jackson:

Easter Day brings to a climax a long period of anticipation and searching. This period in the Christian Church is called Lent. It is a time of penitence and of preparation. As Jesus Christ has spent time in the wilderness and time in the city of Jerusalem, so we have had the opportunity to reflect on our relationship with ourselves, with others and with the world around us. Ecology, society and politics come together in the time we have been given under God in the Season of Lent for reflection and for dedication. Easter calls us to joy and to action. We rejoice with the church worldwide in the Hallelujah of the resurrection and in the assurance of God's presence with us in Christ Risen. We in Dublin and Glendalough remember with thanksgiving the faithful witness of the Christians in Jerusalem and in the land of The Holy One.

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‘The risen Christ came and stood among his disciples and said, Peace be with you. Then were they glad when they saw the Lord.’ St John 20.19,20. This is the Easter Message of Holy Scripture.

I wish you all Happy Easter
+Michael

Belfast Marathon’s move to Sunday shows ‘disregard for Christians’

An evangelical Protestant lobby group has described the decision to move the Belfast City Marathon to a Sunday as an example of the “dismissal of Christian values”.

The Caleb Foundation said the move is the latest example of the “growing trend” towards the “secularisation” of society in Northern Ireland.

Wallace Thompson, a founding member of the DUP and the chairman of the Caleb Foundation, said many Christians who “hold a higher view of the Lord’s Day” are now unable to take part.

A spokesperson for Belfast City Marathon said the decision to hold the event on a Sunday for the first time this year has come about following feedback from “all stakeholders, including athletes, city centre traders and the PSNI”.

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But Mr Thompson, whose organisation represents members from denominations such as the Free Presbyterian, Independent Methodist, Elim, and Reformed Presbyterian churches, as well as some Baptist churches, said there are both practical and religious difficulties with the move to a Sunday.

“This will mean practical difficulties for churches,” he said. “From experience it will be difficult moving around the city and it remains to be seen how those will be managed.”

But the “bigger concern”, Mr Thompson argued, is that the event is “no longer all-inclusive”.

He explained: “There are quite a lot of Christians who run to raise money for charitable work or for missionary work. I know several who are now no longer able to do that. Why not leave it so everyone can participate? We have raised this point with the organisers.”

Today in Christian history

April 19, 526: Justinian I is crowned Roman Emperor in Constantinople's magnificent cathedral, the Santa Sophia. Attempting to restore political and religious unity in the eastern and western empires, he ruthlessly attacked pagans and heretics and created the Code of Justinian, a massive restructuring of law (including much regarding the relationship of church and state) that would be the basis of legislation for nearly a millennium.

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April 19, 1054: Pope Leo IX dies. Because Leo refused the title of Ecumenical Patriarch to Michael Cerularius (Patriarch of Constantinople) and demanded recognition of the filioque clause (the western addition to the Nicene creed that asserts "the Holy Ghost . . . proceeds from the Father *and the Son*"), he is usually assigned responsibility for the final break between Eastern and Western Christianity, though the conventional date for the schism is July 16 .

April 19, 1529: At the Diet of Speyer (Germany), princes and 14 cities draft a formal protest of Charles V's attempt to crush Lutheranism, defending religious freedom for religious minorities, e.g. those involved in the Reformation movement. From then on, the Reformers were known as "Protestants."

April 19, 1560: German reformer Philip Melanchthon dies. The leader of the German reformation after the death of his friend, Martin Luther, Melanchthon composed the Augsburg Confession of 1530. Much more a peacemaker than Luther, he called for Lutherans and Zwinglians to put aside their differences for the sake of the reformation of the church. In addition, he led extensive efforts to develop the German educational system, for which he has been called "the teacher of Germany".

News briefs

+++ Limavady school's African endeavour - Brian Purcell (Head of Physics at Limavady Grammar School) visited CMSI on Wednesday with amazing news about the team of 24 students and 7 adults who are preparing to visit our partners in the Diocese of Kajiado, Kenya in June/July. After

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their fundraising walk last month and a raft of other events organised by each of the students, in turn, the Team so far has raised £35,000! This will support the construction of new kitchen facilities + other projects at the Oloosuyian Girls Secondary School near Kajiado. Massive congratulations and thanks to all who have worked so hard! Limavady Grammar School Naftaly Lemooke David-Gillian Maganda Roger Thompson

+++ Mothers' Union annual general meeting in Portsmouth - This year's General Meeting will be taking place in Portsmouth on 18th September. The full programme for the event will be released by the end of June. There will be a keynote address from the Worldwide President, Sheran Harper. Tickets go on sale on 30th April 2019 at 9am. Find out more: <https://www.mothersunion.org/get-involved/whats-on/general-meeting-2019>

+++ Knitted Last Supper - Julianstown Union of Parishes has completed a set. Approximately 10 people met weekly to produce a fantastic display. One of the members commented that although they were all knitting from the same pattern, all the end results are different, just like them. Then the Church Warden made the table. A wonderful example of a church community coming together to produce something to be enjoyed by everyone.

+++Food for thought - "Two friends delight to be joined by a third, and three by a fourth, if only the newcomer is qualified to become a real friend. They can then say, as the blessed souls say in Dante, "Here comes one who will augment our loves." For in this love to divide is not to take away." - CS Lewis

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Heritage - Thomas Barnard

Thomas Barnard (c. 1726/28–1806) was an Anglican clergyman who served in the Church of Ireland as Bishop of Killaloe and Kilfenora (1780–1794) and Bishop of Limerick, Ardfert and Aghadoe (1794–1806).

Born in 1726 or 1728, he was the eldest son of Dr. William Barnard, Bishop of Raphoe (later of Derry). He was educated at Westminster School, where he was admitted a King's Scholar in 1741, but he almost certainly spent some time at Leeds Grammar School. Later he went up to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and was awarded with a Bachelor of Arts in 1756, Master of Arts in 1760 and Bachelor of Divinity in 1769.

He was successively Vicar of Maghera (1751–1760), Archdeacon of Derry (1760–1769),^[4] and Dean of Derry (1769–1780). He was nominated Bishop of Killaloe and Kilfenora by King George III on 29 January 1780 and consecrated bishop at the Chapel Royal in Dublin Castle on 20 February 1780. The principal consecrator was Charles Agar, Archbishop of Cashel, and the principal co-consecrators were William Newcome, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore and Isaac Mann, Bishop of Cork and Ross. Fourteen years later, he was translated to the bishopric of Limerick, Ardfert and Aghadoe; having been nominated to the see on 14 August 1794 and by letters patent on 12 September 1794.

He was a member of the Literary Club, and well known as the friend of Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, Sir Joshua

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Reynolds, Edmund Burke, Bishop Thomas Percy, and other literary characters of his day.

He died in his 80th year, at Wimbledon in Surrey, on 7 June 1806.

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