



## **Prince Charles gives Pope Francis gift of tea and chocolate during Vatican visit**

Prince Charles and his wife Camilla, the Duchess of Cornwall, met on April 4 with Pope Francis at the Vatican.

The Pope and the British royals spoke privately for 27 minutes. The Vatican did not issue a

statement about the topics covered in the private conversation.

Following their private meeting, Prince Charles introduced the 15 members of a delegation accompanying him. Among them was Arthur Edwards, a Catholic who has served as the official photographer of the royal household.

“He is an important man. He has followed us for 40 years,” the Prince told Pope Francis.

After the presentation, Prince Charles confessed to the Pope that it was “difficult to know what to give your Holiness.”

He presented the Pope with a gift basket full of produce, including tea and chocolate, from the Royal Gardens at Highgrove, their private residence.

## **New Rathfarnham Baptism Tree to be a reminder of spiritual journeys**

Rathfarnham Parish Baptism Oak Tree was planted and dedicated by Archbishop Michael Jackson in the grounds of Rathfarnham Castle on Saturday morning last (April 1). The Baptism



Tree will act as a reminder to generations of children but also as a spiritual prompt to parishioners of all ages.

A large crowd of parishioners, including members of their Toddler Zone, Sunday Club and Youth Club gathered for the dedication on Saturday morning. The Rector, Canon Adrienne Galligan explained the background to the tree planting. Rathfarnham Castle Park is an amenity used by many parishioners. It's excellent play area and interesting trails and walks are visited regularly.

“While the parishioners are walking around the park or going to the play area with their children or grandchildren, we thought it would be appropriate if they had a visual reminder of their faith journey too. The Baptism Tree gives that opportunity to reflect on their spiritual growth and we hope the parishioners will adopt it and visit it often and take time to have ‘God thought’s at it. Also as the children see it grow it gives them time to talk to their parents and

grandparents about why we call it our ‘Baptism Tree and what baptism means,” she said.

Canon Galligan added that the planting of the tree linked into Dublin & Glendalough’s Come & C initiative in at least two areas: treasuring creation and thanking God for the oxygenating benefits of trees, their beauty and how we use tree products to express creativity and the way trees provide homes to wildlife. It also generates faith conversations as parents and grandparents pass on their understanding of their faith to the next generation.

Dedicating the tree, the Archbishop led a special prayer about trees featuring actions from the children of the parish. He said that the oak tree was a symbol of a strong and enduring God. The Archbishop added that the Baptism Tree was very much a community event and baptism was about becoming part of the community.

## **Connor Youth Forum delegation to Diocesan Council**

In the space of three days, members of Connor Youth Forum shared their vision with Connor Diocesan Council and then ran an event for a large number of young people.



***Connor Youth Forum members Catherine and Ciaran who attended Diocesan Council with Connor Youth Officer Christina Baillie.***

On Thursday March 23, Youth Forum members Catherine and Ciaran shared eloquently with the Diocesan Council. They spoke about the importance of Youth Forum, inviting new members from parishes across the diocese and demonstrating that there are young people in the diocese willing to serve.

They highlighted opportunities which Youth Council events have given them as individuals leading to development in their faith as well as

helping them make connections with other young people.

Christina Baillie, Diocesan Youth Officer, attended and said: “We really appreciate Catherine and Ciaran coming along to share with the Diocesan Council how the youth activities within the diocese have impacted them as young people.

“We also want to thank the young people from Lisburn Cathedral and the Parishes of the Lower Shankill for contributing to a video which was played, outlining their engagement with events the Youth Council has organised. I sincerely appreciate the Diocesan Council engaging with what is on offer for young people and its continuing support.”

## **Research: Senior C of I primary schools pupils have positive attitude to Christianity**

Research conducted recently among senior primary schools pupils in the Church of Ireland Diocese of Cork, Cloyne and Ross demonstrates that the children have an overall very positive attitude towards Christianity, higher than in many

other contexts where the same research survey has been used.

The research was conducted by Jacqui Wilkinson who has recently completed a three-year MA in Religions and Education at Warwick University. She presented some of the findings from her research dissertation, entitled Pupil Attitudes toward Christianity, to a meeting of the Diocesan Education Committee recently.

Using a well-established international research tool, she studied the attitudes toward Christianity of primary school children in senior classes in 18 of the Church of Ireland schools in the diocese of Cork. Analysis of the results demonstrated that the children surveyed have an overall very positive attitude toward Christianity, higher than in many other contexts where this survey has been used.

It was found that girls showed higher positive attitudes than boys, and children were found to become less positive in higher classes, findings which mirror UK studies. One interesting finding was that children who pray (on their own) tend to have a much more positive attitude toward Christianity. The children's church attendance was also recognised as a significant influence on their attitudes toward Christianity as was their

perception of their parents' church attendance. In presenting these correlating factors, Jacqui's research indicates practical implications, challenges and opportunities for church schools; specifically, in the areas of encouraging prayer, parish school links and the methods used in RE to engage children in senior classes.

So often discussion in this area targets stakeholders such as teachers, parents and clergy. This research, for the first time in Church of Ireland primary schools in Ireland, provides a unique insight into the attitudes of these children and their encouraging positivity toward Christianity. It promotes reflection on the value of Church of Ireland primary schools in the Ireland of today.

## **Team from The Hub at QUB prepares to visit charities in Uganda**

A group of students from The Hub, the Church of Ireland and Methodist Chaplaincy at Queen's University, is going to Uganda in June to work with Abaana and Waakisa, two of their established mission partners. The Hub has





***Flashback to 2015 – members of The Hub team at the Waakisa Centre for young Ugandan girls who are pregnant.***

partnered with these two projects because they reflect many of the aims of The Hub’s work with its own students: providing homes, community, education and support.

Abaana is a charity based in Bangor, Co Down, which since 1998 has raised more than £1.5m to build schools, to provide clean water, medical care and education. It also runs homes for boys at risk, and has established a school.



***Church of Ireland Chaplain, the Rev Barry Forde, was part of a Hub team which went to Uganda in 2015.***

The Abaana New Life Choir is currently touring Ireland and Britain, and the children from the choir had the [opportunity to meet with students](#) at The Hub on February 28.

Waakisa Ministries is another charity founded locally. The Waakisa Centre in Uganda provides care and support to young vulnerable girls who are pregnant and alone, and to deliver health education programmes to local schools and

churches. By providing medical care, pastoral support and community to those in need, the charity aims to support vulnerable young women at a pivotal moment in their lives.

The team from Queen's will be supporting both projects through a variety of practical and manual tasks; by running children's clubs; by assisting in education work; through schools' work; and by providing relief work with street kids.

Church of Ireland Chaplain, the Rev Barry Forde, was part of a Hub team which went to Uganda in 2015.

“As a chaplaincy, we want to invest in the lives of those who go on the team, helping to cultivate their awareness of issues such as poverty, education, healthcare, housing – and how they might respond to such needs,” he said.

“We want this to be the start of an ongoing relationship, supporting these projects alongside growing the potential for future teams. We also want to inspire each member of the team to engage further with these issues, and work with them beyond university.”

The team will leave for Uganda on June 5, returning on June 18.

## **Pope Francis appoints Irish priest to key child protection role at Vatican**

An Irish priest, who was ordained for the archdiocese of Dublin, has been chosen by Pope Francis to oversee the disciplinary section of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in the Vatican.

The Holy See announced on Tuesday that Mgr John Kennedy from Clontarf in Dublin, who was ordained in 1993, will head up the CDF section that processes clerical sex abuse cases.

Mgr Kennedy was an assistant to the previous head of the section, Fr Miguel Funes Diaz, who is one of three CDF officials who recently departed the congregation.

The announcement follows the resignation of clerical abuse survivor, Marie Collins, from the Vatican's Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors on 1 March over her frustration with resistance to reform from the Curia.

In the middle of March, Mrs Collins wrote an open letter to the Prefect of the Congregation for



the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), Cardinal Gerhard Müller, warning him that dysfunction can no longer be kept hidden behind institutional closed doors.

Forty-nine-year-old Mgr Kennedy trained for the priesthood at Clonliffe College. He was ordained in 1993 and is a graduate of University College Dublin.

He served in parishes in Crumlin and Francis Street in Dublin before undertaking postgraduate studies in canon law in Rome in 1998, where he lived at the Teutonic College in the Vatican, located between the audience hall and St Peter's Basilica.

He began his service with the Holy See in September 2002 under the then Prefect of the

CDF, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI.

The CDF took over responsibility for dealing with clerical child abuse cases in 2001 at the instigation of Cardinal Ratzinger, who felt that dioceses weren't disciplining clerical abusers as church law required.

From then on, bishops and religious superiors were required to submit all credible accusations against priests and religious to the CDF, which then determined how to proceed.

Following the resignation of Marie Collins, Cardinal Sean O'Malley, who heads up the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, said in an interview that the CDF needed more resources to deal with the abuse caseload.

In an interview with the Zenit news agency following the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI in 2013, Mgr Kennedy recalled his former boss as a "shy, but extremely intelligent man, a person who was very sincere, very gentle".

"I remember when my mother turned 60, I asked if it would be possible for her to meet him, and he said, "Oh yes, bring her in at a quarter to one." I brought her in and they sat like two friends on the sofa in his private office, and had

a good old chat for about fifteen or twenty minutes. He was very kind. He was very gracious. He'd remember details about you, and years later he'd be able to say: How is that situation, or how is that person that I met years ago?"

## **Organ recital of Dupre's Le Chemin de la Croix in St Patrick's**

Marcel Dupré's Le Chemin de la Croix (Stations of the Cross) will be presented in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin on Maundy Thursday, April 14 at 7.00 pm. The work began life as a series of fourteen improvisations inspired by the poems of Paul Claudel and played by Dupré. He later felt inspired to write down and expand what he had improvised, resulting in a demanding and complex work in 14 movements.

Performed by David Leigh on the cathedral organ, and accompanied by images of each station on a large screen, this powerful and meditative work offers a unique insight into the way of the cross on Maundy Thursday. Tickets are free, but advance registration is recommended via the link below - <https://stpatrickscathedral.digitickets.co.uk/event/2174922?>

[catID=6441&mc\\_cid=7b66526251&mc\\_eid=2bb9d00158](#)



## **Pope meets with UK imams to encourage relations**

Four British imams met Pope Francis at the Vatican yesterday in efforts to build relations.

The Imams visited with Cardinal Vincent Nichols, who has been coordinating interreligious discussions with the leaders for the past few years.

According to the Catholic Church in England and Wales, Christians and Muslims are increasingly cooperating on social action initiatives like the reception of Syrian refugees, food banks and care for the homeless.



The visit also included a meeting with the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious dialogue and a reception at the British Embassy to the Holy See.

Pope Francis plans to continue these efforts when he visits Egypt at the end of the month, which includes a trip to Al-Azhar University.

## **Tim Farron says Theresa May has 'egg on face' over Easter controversy**

The leader of the Liberal Democrats has suggested the Prime Minister Theresa May and Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn have got "egg on their faces" following controversy over a Cadbury Easter campaign.

Tim Farron has been speaking after the two politicians criticised Cadbury and the National Trust for removing the word Easter from their egg hunt events.

In a statement, Mr Farron said: "Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn have got egg on their faces today. They both scrambled out eggs-traordinary statements criticising Cadbury's and the



National Trust for something they haven't actually done.

"This is a eggs-tremely big distraction. I think we all feel poached by this whole sorry saga, but none of us more so than Cadbury's and the National Trust, who have done nothing wrong and are right to feel egg-rieved by the criticism they have received."

Meanwhile, the National Trust is facing a boycott among its members after the controversy.

A number of people have contacted the conversation charity about cancelling their membership, according to the Daily Telegraph.

The event, which is sponsored by Cadbury, was called the 'Easter Egg Trail' in recent years, however, its name this year is the 'Cadbury Egg Hunt'.

Bishop of Durham Rt Revd Paul Butler told Premier: "I think it's a real sadness that Cadbury's managed to drop Easter out of the title of their big egg hunt because it is Easter; and the eggs are intimately tied to Easter.

"They've always been a symbol of the resurrection."

Cadbury said it is "clear to see" the word Easter is visible in its promotional material and on the chocolate maker's website.

The National Trust denied downplaying the importance of Easter, with a spokesperson adding: "A casual glance at our website will see dozens of references to Easter throughout."

Spokesman from the Church of England accused the National Trust of "updating" the page overnight and "seemingly adding" a number of references to Easter.

Bishop Paul added: "It's a shame that, perhaps, that the National Trust didn't pick [Cadbury] up on that and didn't ask themselves the question, 'Why have you dropped Easter'.

"Because, it is Easter weekend; that's the title of it, that's what it's about."

## Today in Church History

**April 6, 1249:** Muslims take King Louis IX of France prisoner during the seventh crusade, which was supposed to overcome the Muslim political center in Egypt. After showing bravery in the face of torture, he was allowed to buy his freedom for a huge sum in gold—and the city of Damietta.

**April 6, 1528:** Albrecht Durer, German painter, engraver, and designer of woodcuts, dies. Famous for his religious scenes, he may have been so influenced by Luther (whom he called "the great Christian man who has helped me out of great anxieties") that he converted to Protestantism. His most popular work is "Praying Hands."

**April 6, 1801:** The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church recognizes the new African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME). Blacks who were denied membership and/or recognition within white Methodist churches, particularly in Philadelphia and New York, formed the original AME

**April 6, 1932:** Eric Liddell, the Olympic athlete featured in the film *Chariots of Fire*, makes his evangelistic debut by sharing his testimony to a

group of men in Armadale, Scotland. Liddell later returned to the mission field in China, where he was born, and ministered in an internment camp following the Japanese invasion. He died in 1945 from a massive brain tumour.

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