



Popstar turned priest to appear on Strictly Come Dancing

A priest is the latest contestant announced for this year's Strictly Come Dancing.

C of E rector, Rev Richard Coles, who is the only cleric in Britain to have had a number one hit single with pop band The Communards in the 1980s, is the fifth celebrity contestant announced to be competing this autumn on the BBC show. Speaking on Chris Evans's Radio 2 breakfast show, Rev Coles joked: "There's more bling in my vestry than in their dressing room."

"I've been waiting by the phone for 11 years. We had this top secret meeting... I cunningly disguised myself as a cardinal... They said 'do you fancy it?' I said 'not half'."

Rev Coles is vicar of St Mary's Church, Finedon, Northamptonshire and is a regular on radio and TV, as co-host of BBC Radio 4's Saturday Live and can often be seen on celebrity panel shows such as Have I Got News For You.

He said: "Cometh the hour, cometh the overweight vicar with arthritis in his knees."

His success with The Communards included 'Don't Leave Me This Way', the biggest-selling single of 1986.

He is also Chancellor of the University of Northampton.

Northern Ireland first minister vows to resist attempts to change abortion law

Northern Ireland's first minister Arlene Foster has said her administration will do "everything in its power" to resist calls from the UK government to change the province's tight abortion laws.

In a meeting with pro-life campaign group Precious Life, Mrs Foster pledged to protect Northern Ireland's laws while focusing on improving perinatal hospice care.

Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) has come under increasing scrutiny in the British mainland after agreeing to prop up Theresa May's weakened Conservative government following June's election.

Left wing commentators and politicians have strongly criticised the DUP's opposition to abortion and same-sex civil marriage, but the party remains defiant and has refused to introduced either to Northern Ireland.

The 1967 Abortion Act, which legalised the practice in Britain, never applied to Northern Ireland, which only permits terminations when a woman's life is at risk, or there is a permanent or serious risk to her mental or physical health.

Recently, the British government's equalities minister Justine Greening announced that Northern Irish women who travel to England for abortions will be able to have them for free on the NHS. Hard-line abortion supporters also want the government to fund their flights.

Precious Life said in a statement that Mrs Foster acknowledged Northern Ireland is “definitely under pressure to change its pro-life laws”, however she “firmly assured us that the DUP will do ‘everything in our power’ to safeguard our current laws and protect the most vulnerable in our society.”

Mrs Foster met with Youth for Life NI, Precious Life’s youth movement, as part of their ‘lobby for life’ campaign.

“It is so incredibly important to lobby for life at this present point in time because of the stark threat to unborn children here as Northern Ireland faces a great deal of political instability,” Precious Life said. The DUP is traditionally been strongly Protestant and anti-Catholic. However, some Catholics are now turning to the party as the only option to defend traditional social teaching.

Limerick priest challenges authorities over role of women in church

A parish priest in Co [Limerick](#) has called for the ordination of women to the priesthood in the,



Pope Francis set up a commission to look at the introduction of women deacons last year which will report “in a year or two”

Catholic Church, Patsy McGarry reports in the Irish Times.

Fr [Roy Donovan](#), parish priest of Caheronlish in Co Limerick, also objects to the introduction of a male-only permanent diaconate in his [Cashel](#) Archdiocese before completion of a report by the papal commission on women deacons.

On women priests, Fr Donovan said he believed “a woman could celebrate the Eucharist even better than a man being more familiar with the shedding of blood. A woman saying ‘this is my body, this is my blood’ can give more meaning to the Eucharist than any male celibate.”

He also knew women “who feel it in their bones and souls that they have a call to the priesthood”.

Fr Donovan was responding to the setting up of a working group by Archbishop of Cashel Kieran O’Reilly to look at introducing the male-only permanent diaconate in the diocese.

Fr Donovan was “upset” and “taken aback” by this decision of the Archbishop’s as [Pope Francis](#) had set up a commission to look at the introduction of women deacons last year which would report “in a year or two.” He was, therefore, “uncomfortable” about Archbishop O’Reilly’s decision.

Ultimately, he felt such matters were for the local church community to decide. His fear was that parishes were “going the way of the gardaí and post offices.” Local communities “should have the last say and permanent deacons were not the answer,” he said. Nor was parish clustering, he said.

What was happening now where bishops were concerned was “a kicking of the can down the road. They are not facing reality”.

Fr Donovan was particularly surprised at Archbishop O’Reilly’s decision concerning the

permanent diaconate in Cashel following his experiences of attempting to introduce it in his previous diocese, [Killaloe](#).

In September 2014, two months before it was announced he had been appointed Archbishop of Cashel, then Bishop O'Reilly announced he was delaying introduction of the permanent diaconate there following strong protests by women mainly.

Just a month beforehand, in a pastoral letter circulated throughout parishes in Killaloe, he had invited men to apply for posts as permanent deacons there.

Man released after arrest over nun killed by IRA

A man arrested in connection with an IRA bomb attack in Northern Ireland which killed four people including a nun has been released.

The 55 year old, who was held in Armagh on Thursday morning over the blast in 1990, was freed pending a report to the Public Prosecution Service in Northern Ireland.

He was detained by detectives from the Police Service of Northern Ireland's (PSNI) Legacy

Investigation Branch over the explosion which occurred on 24th July 1990.

A landmine detonated on Killylea Road, Armagh, killing Sister Catherine Dunne, Constable William Hanson, Reserve Constable Joshua Willis and Reserve Constable David Sterritt. A second woman was seriously hurt.

According to PSNI Detective Inspector Deborah Eakin, the man was held on suspicious of various offences including the four murders. He was questioned at the Serious Crime Suite at Musgrave Police Station in Belfast.

Marks of Mission focus of C of I Biblical Association's annual lecture

The subject of the Biblical Association for the Church of Ireland's AGM Lecture, on Wednesday, 13th September, will be *The Church in Today's World: Engaging with the Five Marks of Mission*.

The Lecture will take place at Castleknock Parish Centre at 7.30pm. The Five Marks of Mission, as identified in the Anglican



Biblical Association for the Church of Ireland

Communion, will be explored biblically in brief presentations by the following speakers:

1. Tell – Rev Jack Kinkead: To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.
2. Teach – Rev Lesley Robinson: To teach, baptise and nurture new believers.
3. Tend – Mr Philip McKinley: To respond to human need by loving service.
4. Transform – Canon Paul Houston: To transform unjust structures of society, and pursue peace and reconciliation.
5. Treasure – Mr David Ritchie: To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the Earth.

Attendance at the *Five Marks of Mission* presentation is free to paid-up members of BACI. Admission charge for non-members: €5.

The AGM will follow at approximately 8.45pm.

BACI's Lent Course 2018, available in January, will be prepared by these presenters on the same theme, enabling parishes around the country to reflect biblically and contextually on the mission of the Church at local level today.

For further information, please contact Mrs. Barbara Bergin, BACI Treasurer, at berginba@gmail.com or by telephone: 01-288-8877.

Further contacts:

BACI Chair: Rev Dr William Olhausen,
wolhausen@gmail.com

Vice-Chair: Canon Ginnie Kennerley,
vkennerley@gmail.com

Webmaster: Rev David Compton,
revdavidcompton@gmail.com

Website: www.bibliahibernica.wordpress.com

Death of Mrs Ellie Leckey

Mrs Ellie Leckey, wife of the late Dean of Down, the Very Revd Hamilton Leckey, has died, the Diocese of Down and Dromore stated yesterday.

Bishop Harold Miller said, "Ellie was the archetypal rector's wife, serving alongside Dean Hammie Leckey. She was a very warm and

outgoing person, who continued to serve the Lord in so many ways even after Hammie's death.

"I will remember her leading singalongs for the Mothers' Union indoor members, and she was well known for using her gift of music to play the organ wherever the need was, well into her eighties! The one sure thing was that no one was allowed to lag behind in the singing!

"I had the privilege of seeing her on her recent birthday and just a few days before she passed away. We hold the family in our prayers."

'Testing but wonderful' - Archbishop Justin reflects on Sudan and Uganda trip

Archbishop Justin Welby writes -

We are home and I am looking back on a testing but wonderful few days in Sudan and Uganda.

The final day was spent at two refugee camps in Northern Uganda - Belameling and Mirieyi - which host more than 200,000 refugees, almost



entirely South Sudanese. The number of South Sudanese refugees in Uganda has now reached the million mark. We met people who had literally run for their lives, fleeing across the border with just the clothes they stood up in.

Bishop Anthony Poggo, who accompanied us on the visit, is South Sudanese and was a bishop in Kajo Keji for ten years. His diocese is now almost completely deserted. As we left he recognised several of the clergy and diocesan staff who now live in the camps. This included a man he'd known from back home. He used to produce a programme on the diocesan radio station taking prayer requests when people phoned in, and now lives in Moyo.



We were accompanied by Archbishop Stanley Ntagali, the Primate of Uganda. We spent a lot of time reflecting on the plight of these refugees and the generosity with which Uganda has embraced them at tremendous cost to themselves. They receive help from UNHCR, World Food Programme, DiFD and many others, but even with help, their open-heartedness is extraordinary, and challenging to the whole world.

I am left wondering whether the cause of this crisis can be resolved. Is it possible for peace to be achieved in South Sudan? This question formed the basis of my meetings with President Museveni and with Mrs Rebecca Garang, wife

of the late Dr John Garang. Truthfully I don't know the answer but we are disciples of Jesus Christ, the resurrected one, the Lord of hope and reconciliation. I have committed to do two things:

First, pray and advocate.

Second, do all I can to strengthen the church as a force for reconciliation in South Sudan.

Women have a central role in bringing about reconciliation in communities, and my wife Caroline and my Advisor for Reconciliation Sarah Snyder are hoping to visit South Sudan in the autumn to explore what can be done to support them. So please join me in praying for an end to suffering. Pray that the efforts of the international community, the leaders of neighbouring African countries and the African Union find a way to bring about peace. And pray for the Spirit of God to be healing those who suffer the most.

Australia's former Catholic PM may lead case against gay marriage

Australia's former Catholic Prime Minister has indicated that he may lead the case against same-sex marriage when Australians are asked



next month what their opinion on gay marriage is.

Tony Abbott, has led opposition from within government ranks to same-sex marriage and the faction he heads has repeatedly threatened to stabilise Australia's gay-marriage supporting Prime Minister.

Malcolm Turnbull has promised that a national vote on same-sex marriage will be held before the end of the year.

Mr Abbott told Parliament: "If you're worried about religious freedom, and freedom of speech, vote 'no' because voting 'no' will help to stop political correctness in its tracks."



A postal ballot - which is not binding - will begin in September but the government will not legislate on the issue without it.

If most Australians vote no, the government will not allow Parliament to consider lifting the nation's ban on same-sex marriage.

Mr Abbott's sister, Christine Forster, a Sydney city councillor who is engaged to her same-sex partner has publically opposed her sibling's views on the issue.

On Wednesday she tweeted: "If you want the person you love to be in every sense a part of your family, vote yes."

Upcoming radio services

A Service on RTÉ Radio 1 Extra will be broadcast on Sunday, 10th September, at 11.45am, from the Church of St John the Baptist, in Clontarf, Dublin.

BBC Radio Ulster's Morning Service on Sunday, 17th September, will be broadcast from St Augustine's Parish Church, Londonderry, at 10.15am. St Augustine's is known locally as 'The Wee Church on the Walls'. The preacher will be the Rector, Canon Malcolm Ferry.

CNI

Help CNI grow

**Please commend
CNI daily news to your
friends**

www.churchnewsireland.org

CNI