

## The essential brief on the Irish churches

### Dromore Cathedral Has A New Rector And Dean

The Revd Bryan Kerr has become both Rector and Dean of Dromore Cathedral. He was instituted as Rector by Bishop Harold Miller and installed as Dean



*Bishop Ferran Glenfield, Dean Bryan Kerr and Bishop Harold Miller*

by the Chancellor, Revd Canon Robert Howard at a service on Wednesday 6 August

The address was given by the Rt Revd Ferran Glenfield, Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh with whom Bryan was a student reader in Kill O' The Grange.

Dean Kerr has been rector of Lisbellaw for eight and half years and has served a total of eighteen years in the Diocese of Clogher.

He was ordained in 1996 to serve as curate assistant in St Macartin's Cathedral, Enniskillen and then took up position as Rector of the Garrison Group of Parishes until 2005. Since 2012 he has been a Canon of Clogher Cathedral.

He is married to Shirley, a primary school teacher and they have two daughters, Hannah (7) and Rachel (5). A former pupil of Omagh Academy, he studied Theology at Queen's University, Belfast and Trinity College, Dublin before ordination.

In addition to his parochial duties, Bryan has been Rural Dean of Kilskeery and an Honorary Secretary of Clogher Diocesan Synod. He is a member of the RCB and of General Synod, serving also on the Standing Committee.

He enjoys reading, football and travel in his spare time. He has taken a keen interest in Christian mission in Serbia, travelling there a number of times with Crosslinks.

Speaking of his forthcoming ministry in Dromore Cathedral Bryan said, 'We've enjoyed a really warm welcome in Dromore and we're very much looking forward to getting to know the people here and ministering among them.'

## **New adult choir at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast**

**St Anne's Cathedral,  
Belfast, is to launch a  
new volunteer adult  
choir.**

The Cathedral Singers will support the existing choirs and will perform at services and concerts both in St Anne's and in other venues.



*Thérèse Woodfield, Deputy Master of the Choristers*

At present the cathedral has a girls' choir, a junior girls' training choir, a soprano choir and an adult choir of lay clerks.

The choirs rehearse weekly and sing every Sunday at Sung Eucharist and at daily Evensong services. The lay clerks form the bottom three lines of the choir, and the top part is currently filled by members of the girls' choir alternating every other week with the sopranos.

St Anne's is now training a new boys' choir and it is intended that in time the boys will sing alternate weeks with the girls' choir.

One thing all these choirs have in common is that the choristers, whatever their age, receive a salary as an incentive to ensure they attend all rehearsals and services. 'It is like a job and it is a big commitment,' Thérèse Woodfield, Deputy Master of the Choristers at St Anne's, said. 'If you are paid you cannot miss rehearsals or services.'

Thérèse will be training the new volunteer choir, members of which will not be paid.

'I would plan to have a larger pool of singers so not everyone has to commit to attending every time,' said Thérèse. 'I need enough members to ensure that I can draw on 12–16 on any occasion.'

Rehearsals will be held every Wednesday night from 10 September. 'I want to build a community so people really want to come and sing. Membership will be open to all. St Anne's is the city cathedral and this city choir will be open to everyone, not just singers from a Church of Ireland background. It is for people who love choral music,' said Therese.

## **Tribute - Armagh Diocesan Lay Reader Richard Ruddell**

**Drumcree Parish Church was filled to capacity on Saturday (July 26) for the Service of Thanksgiving for the life of prominent local accountant and Diocesan Lay Reader Mr Richard Ruddell.**



Portadown Times - Richard (72) was well-known and respected within the business community, as the founder of Ruddell and Company, Chartered Accountants. Established in his home town of Portadown (Portmore Street), he took a great personal pride in growing the business over the past 30 years, expanding to the firm's Dungannon Office (Church Street).

He was delighted that both his sons followed him into the profession, with Brian now running the Portadown office and Jonathan the Dungannon operation.

As a diocesan lay reader attached to the Parish of Drumcree, Richard was heavily involved in the life of the Church of Ireland in general. He faithfully preached the Gospel throughout the length and breadth of the Armagh diocese, which runs from Magherafelt to Drogheda. His passion, to tell others about the Word of God, often lead to him preaching at three different services on a Sunday.

It was in Drumcree, however, where Richard's heart lay and he had been a member of the Select Vestry and church warden on several occasions during his life and in recent years enjoyed preaching there on a regular basis.

During his early life Richard, had a passion for Christian youth work and he had been a Sunday School teacher at Drumcree and a teacher-superintendent at the parish's Derrycorey Sunday School. He had also been involved in missionary work through the Irish Evangelistic Band as their missionary box secretary of Ireland.

He was a lifelong member of both the Orange Order and the Royal Black Institution - in Erin's Royal Standard LOL 20 and Red Star of Drumcree RBP 30.

Prior to his death, he was the chaplain of both LOL 20 and RBP 30 and had been the Worshipful Master of both LOL 20 and RBP 30 during his life. He was also the Deputy District chaplain of Portadown Black District. Richard was a devoted family man and in recent years he enjoyed nothing more than gardening at his Derryanville Road home with his grandson Nathan and going on family holidays. He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Helen, sons Brian and Jonathan, daughter-in-laws Ruth and Alison and grandsons Nathan and Andrew, as well as his brother Freddie and sisters Rachel and Margaret.

The service was conducted by Drumcree Rector Rev Gary Galway, and the Archbishop of Armagh, The Most Rev Richard Clarke took part, with the Benediction and a tribute to Mr Ruddell. Burial was in the adjoining churchyard.

## **Pittsburgh Episcopal Diocese approves same-sex marriages**

**The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh says its clergy may sign marriage certificates between same-sex couples.**

The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* [reports](#) Monday that the rule is spelled out in a recent letter from Bishop Dorsey McConnell.

McConnell has expressed reservations about the theology behind the church's marriage rite, which the bishop approved for use in the diocese in November.

That was before a federal judge in central [Pennsylvania](#) in May struck down the state's law defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman, effectively making [same-sex marriage](#) legal in the state.

Diocesan spokesman Rich Creehan says the latest move doesn't mark a change in church teaching or the bishop's position, but merely gives clergy who choose to marry same-sex couples the legal power to issue legally binding marriage certificates.

## **Pope appeals for international action to help Iraq's persecuted Christians**

**Pope Francis asked Catholics around the world to pray for tens of thousands of Christians from villages in north-east Iraq who were forced from their homes in the middle of the night by Islamic State militants.**

Catholic Herald - The Pope also made a "pressing appeal to the international community to take initiatives to put an end to the humanitarian drama underway, to take steps to protect those involved and threatened by violence and to ensure the necessary aid for so many displaced people whose fate depends on the solidarity of others," the Vatican spokesman said earlier today.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the spokesman, told reporters the Pope was appealing "to the conscience of all people and every believer," repeating what he had said on July 20 after a similar forced exodus of Christians from Mosul: "May the God of peace create in all an authentic desire for dialogue and reconciliation. Violence is not conquered with violence. Violence is conquered with peace. Let us pray in silence, asking for peace."

Last night fighters belonging to the Islamic State attacked the predominantly Christian town of Qaraqosh and other villages in Ninevah province, said Chaldean Patriarch Louis Sako of Baghdad. "The Christians, about 100,000, horrified and panicked, fled their villages and houses with nothing but the clothes on their backs," he added.

In an appeal, the patriarch described the scene as “an exodus, a real ‘via crucis’” or Way of the Cross. “Christians are walking on foot in Iraq’s searing summer heat” toward Iraqi Kurdistan. “They are facing a human catastrophe and risk a real genocide. They need water, food, shelter.”

The central Iraqi government appears incapable of protecting its citizens, the patriarch said, and there is no cooperation or coordination with the regional government.

The Islamic State fighters, he said, are taking advantage of the power vacuum “to impose their rule and terror. There is a need of international support and a professional, well-equipped army. The situation is going from bad to worse.”

Cardinal Fernando Filoni, the former nuncio to Iraq and current prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, said the Islamic State militants are “chasing out thousands of Christians.”

“We are facing a serious humanitarian situation,” Cardinal Filoni told Fides, the congregation’s news agency. “These people have been left to their own devices with a closed border in front of them and they don’t know where to go.”

“The Christians had to abandon everything, even their shoes, and barefoot they were forced toward Iraqi Kurdistan,” a region already overwhelmed with displaced people, the cardinal said.

Chaldean Sister Luigina, a member of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate, told Fides that Islamic State fighters “arrived in force last night at 11 and, using loudspeakers, ordered the people to abandon their homes. The people were forced to flee in their pajamas.”

“Qaraqosh, the largest Christian city in Iraq, and all the surrounding villages were emptied of their Christian residents,” she said. “We still do not have precise figures on the number of displaced, but keep in mind that the Ninevah valley was also sheltering Christians thrown out of Mosul in the last few weeks.”

Qaraqosh was home to an estimated 50,000 Christians. It is located about 20 miles from Mosul, which was captured by Islamic State forces in June.

The Christian Aid Program, CAPNI, issued a statement today describing how Islamic State troops overran other villages and towns throughout the area. The women and children from Alqosh, it said, were evacuated to Duhok, but the bishop, clergy, men and youth stayed behind “with the strong will to defend and protect it.”

Read more:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-28686998>

## **Christian Aid scales up its response to the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone**

**Christian Aid has scaled up its response to the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone to target 3.8 million people across the country with potentially life-saving advice on how to avoid contracting the deadly disease.**

The charity is working through five local partner organisations and 800 community volunteers, reaching out to communities in 10 of the country’s 14 districts through existing structures set up to deal with HIV and livelihoods.

The aim is to combat widespread community fear and distrust about the disease and its causes which has so far hampered efforts in Sierra Leone to curb the outbreak, and build the confidence of communities to support the Ministry of Health’s response.

Working through the Methodist Church of Sierra Leone (MCSL), Network of people living with HIV (NETHIPS), the SEND foundation, Rehabilitation and Development Agency (RADA) and Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJ), volunteers are alerting communities to basic preventative measures and encouraging them to use local health facilities for early diagnosis and treatment.

Increasing awareness about the signs and symptoms of Ebola, they stress the need for basic precautions such as hand washing with soap and water, and the importance of informing local health ministry officials when people are sick so they can transport them to the local primary health units.

In many remote areas partners are putting up posters but in some places, where illiteracy is high, such as in Kailahun district where the first cases emerged, community radio is also being used to reach people.

However, while hand washing is key to good hygiene, in remote areas water is not always easily available which is a further problem.

Theresa Bagrey, Christian Aid senior programme officer for community health and HIV, explains: “There is a lot of panic in poor and remote communities. They have been confused by mixed messaging and there is a lot of mistrust in the health system, so the communities don’t always believe what the government is telling them. It’s vital, therefore, to speak to communities through their local and faith leaders, and our partners who are already trusted having worked with them on HIV education and livelihoods projects.”

Another problem is that of stigma, an already familiar obstacle in the fight against HIV. Once a member of a family is diagnosed with Ebola then the whole family is ostracised by the community. The disease is having a real impact on the culture of extended family in Sierra Leone, a culture that means people look after their sick relatives, making it difficult to advise people not to touch their family members who are ill and encourage them to inform the Ministry of Health immediately. Women are also at greater risk of infection as they are often the primary care givers within the family.

Ms Bagrey adds: “This situation is very challenging for our partners as it is the first emergency response they have been involved in. The government of Sierra Leone is responding well, but with limited means. They are co-ordinating case management, Epidemiology and laboratory surveillance, prevention control communications and psychological support alongside organisations such as ourselves. There is a lot of commitment from the President and health workers are putting themselves at risk to treat patients.

“The majority of churches in Sierra Leone are taking the outbreak very seriously and seeing it as part of their responsibility to support the Ministry of Health to enforce preventative education messages about the virus.”

## **WCC expresses deep and shared concern at Ebola outbreak in West Africa**

**The World Council of Churches has expressed a “deep and shared concern” to its member churches in West Africa over reports concerning “the Ebola crisis and its devastating impact on the lives of men, women and children living in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Nigeria.”**



“What affects one, affects us all”, wrote Dr Isabel Apawo Phiri, associate and acting general secretary of the WCC, in recognizing the anxiety and isolation of patients and their families as well as the risks faced by “the many caring local and international health service providers who are giving medical care and support to those at risk or already infected by Ebola.”

Expressing encouragement to governments, relief agencies and the medical community, the WCC called for renewed emphasis on “the accurate sharing of information about the disease so that the people can identify the symptoms quickly and seek medical help.”

The letter to the Liberian Council of Churches and intended for all Christians in West Africa calls on churches and their congregations “to seek out appropriate ways of supporting our affected brothers and sisters, particularly through our Christian health services in the affected countries, who are over-stretched and lacking many of the basic necessities and resources to deal effectively and compassionately with this crisis.” Phiri assured those affected by Ebola of the active prayers of believers everywhere.

## **Book Review - Rowan's Rule: the biography of the archbishop**

**Archbishop Justin Welby: risk-taker and reconciler**  
*by Andrew Atherstone, reviewed by Mark Chapman*

The Tablet - The current and the previous occupants of the throne of St Augustine at Canterbury could hardly be more different. Rowan Williams, who served from 2002 to 2012, is someone of prodigious intellect, with a theological wisdom ranging across virtually the whole of the discipline. He had made a name for himself in academic life in both Oxford and Cambridge before becoming Bishop of Monmouth. But Williams was also a man of profound angst-ridden spirituality, shaped by both Anglo-Catholicism and Orthodoxy; and not particularly interested in strategy or in leadership, at least as conventionally understood. As Rupert Shortt makes clear in the new edition of his sympathetic yet critical biography, Williams’ perception of the role of the bishop – like his understanding of Christian discipleship more generally – was determined by “Christ-likeness”, a willingness to take on the suffering of others, particularly the outsider. This could lead to him seeming strangely isolated. As one of his friends remarked, “The habit of agonising inwardly made Rowan curiously unreceptive to the attempts of others to support or challenge him.”

For Williams, theology was about living with questions and encouraging further thought – everything had to be pondered carefully and cautiously and there were very few certainties. This approach was not always to prove helpful. A man whose theology was honed by the *via negativa* of the Fathers or Teresa of Avila was bombarded by constant criticism from both liberals and conservatives, inside and outside the Church. And yet he resisted oversimplification and never uttered a platitude, which in the world of the soundbite was a high-risk strategy. His refusal to take sides meant that friends often felt betrayed (as with the fiasco over the aborted appointment of the openly gay Jeffrey John as Bishop of Reading, shortly after Williams' succession). As archbishop, Williams, known for his earlier support of committed same-sex relations, decided to suspend his own opinions for the sake of unity. But his own plan for holding the Anglican Communion together (the Anglican Covenant) and his efforts to secure women bishops in the Church of England were both to flop, partly through a lack of firm leadership and poor media-management.

Rowan's Rule reads like a catalogue of failures by a brilliant man in the wrong job. Shortt is particularly critical of Williams' forays into politics, which are seen as impractical and unrealistic. Williams was considered gullible (especially by the conservatives), a poor time manager (or an overly generous pastor), and a poor judge of character. As one of his colleagues put it: "His distaste for management meant that he surrounded himself with people who didn't necessarily have the necessary complementary gifts." But, as Shortt recognises, Williams has left a rich legacy. He may have made many mistakes but he got people talking and thinking about God, leaving us with a "thirst to pray more. It is a rare gift." And this is where his greatness lies: strategies are quickly forgotten, as are differences over the issues of the day, but the legacy of Christ-likeness can last for ever. The lasting memory of Williams may be of a great public intellectual who made Christianity sound exciting and credible (almost in spite of the Church).

Of course, it is far too soon to begin to assess his successor's legacy. What is clear, however, is that he is completely different. As Andrew Atherstone reveals in the updated edition of his remarkably well-researched biography, Williams' successor, Justin Welby, makes no claim to theological depth. He converted at Cambridge to student Evangelicalism which mutated into the sort of middle-class enthusiasm of the Alpha franchise associated with Holy Trinity Brompton, influenced by charismatic Evangelicalism. His earlier background was in the oil industry rather than in academic theology, and this was followed by risk-taking leadership in two English cathedrals (Coventry and Liverpool). But there is also pain in his background – he came from a broken home, and was raised by an alcoholic father who failed to pay his fees

at Eton (and who was briefly engaged to Vanessa Redgrave); later, he lost a daughter in a car accident.

So far, Welby's track record reveals that unlike his predecessor he is clearly a strategist who can set targets and work out ways of reaching them; he has been prepared to appoint intelligent advisers and to focus his energies where he can make an impression. His credibility rests not in theological profundity but in a very different sort of intelligence. His experience in business and in the ministry of reconciliation in Coventry has given him a very different approach to conflict management: he made use of "facilitated discussions" over women bishops which forced conversation between the factions and led rapidly to the measure being accepted – without any need for "decisive" (or divisive) leadership. So is Welby simply a middle-class Evangelical with political nous?

There seems to be rather more to him than that. He has close links with the Chemin Neuf community and has been keen to surround himself with people from different parts of the Church of England. His directness and lack of pomposity, qualities shared with Pope Francis, can be disarming (as when he once asked me why there were no theologians among the bishops). His form of risk-taking reconciliation might have a great deal to contribute – not just to the Church of England and to the Anglican Communion, but to relations with the Roman Catholic Church and to the wider world. Let's see.

## Press Review

### Tel

Article on how no one could have foreseen that commemorations of the anniversary of the First World War, which have been years in the planning, would coincide with so many new wars. The TV and radio review states that the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, noted the grim paradox in his Radio 4 *Thought for the Day* on Monday morning, "We watch and feel for those suffering," he said, "fear for those not born." His final plea, to end war by making friends with our enemies, was heartfelt but, alas, unlikely to be widely translated into action.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/tv-and-radio-reviews/11014642/The-unbearable-collision-of-new-wars-with-old.html>

### Ind

Report that thousands of minority Iraqis have been stranded on a barren mountaintop, fleeing slaughter by Sunni extremists. Humanitarian agencies have estimated that between 10,000 and 40,000 civilians remain trapped on

Mount Sinjar since being driven out of surrounding villages and the town of Sinjar on Sunday. It states displaced families said they have buried young and elderly victims of the harsh conditions in shallow graves, their bodies covered with stones. Iraqi government planes attempt to drop bottled water onto the mountain, but have so far reached few of those marooned.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/thousands-of-minority-yazidi-iraqis-marooned-on-mount-sinjar-face-the-choice-of-dying-of-thirst-or-surrendering-to-the-isis-fighters-who-surround-them-9652646.html>

## **BBC**

Report that two men have been charged after a Norfolk church memorial lychgate to the soldiers of World War One was "destroyed" when it was hit by a car. The vehicle crashed into the gate at St Nicholas Church in Ashill, near Watton, on Friday. Two men have been charged with failing to stop after a road traffic collision. The Rev Jane Atkins said it was "amazing" the stone memorial plaque mounted inside the gate's base was still intact as "nothing else has been saved - it's utterly destroyed".

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-norfolk-28682357>

## **BBC/Mail/Mirror**

Report that hundreds of people gathered to celebrate the life of veteran British actress Dora Bryan whose funeral was held at St George's Church in Kemp Town, Brighton. Bryan, known for her roles in Last of the Summer Wine and Absolutely Fabulous, died on 23 July, aged 91. They state the Revd Andrew Manson-Brailsford, who led the service, said Bryan had been heavily involved in the church and the Kemp Town community. He said she had faced losses including that of her daughter Georgina, and her own personal demons, but she had never lost her faith.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-sussex-28681835>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/pa/article-2718148/Rousing-send-Dora-Bryan.html>

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/tv/tv-news/dora-bryan-funeral-church-filled-4001730>

## **Mail**

Report that Pope Francis has warned of the dangers that twitter and the internet can bring. Speaking to German altar servers, the pontiff said young people 'waste too many hours on futile things' and this is distracting them from 'what is really important'. He added that futile activities include chatting on the internet and smartphones, and watching TV soap operas.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2718165/Smartphones-futile-distract-important-things-Pope-warns-young-people-dangers-using-gadgets-much.html#ixzz39g6Da37w>

## Guard

Report that North Korea has apparently declined an invitation to send Catholic believers to a mass celebrated by Pope Francis in Seoul later this month, a South Korean Church official said. In a letter, the North's state-run Korean Catholics Association (KCA) cited Seoul's refusal to cancel an upcoming joint military drill with US forces as the main reason for its decision. Pope Francis is to conduct a special Korean reconciliation mass in Seoul on the last day of his visit to South Korea between 14-18 August, and church officials in the South had sent several requests to Pyongyang to send a group of Catholics to attend.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/06/north-korea-rejects-mass-pope-francis-seoul>

## Blogs

**Guard:** Andrew Jones: Collective worship in schools requires a rethink

<http://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2014/aug/06/collective-worship-schools-students-religious-devotion>

**Brother Ivo:** Is it immoral not to militarily confront ISIS?

<http://brotherivo.com/blog/2014/08/06/is-it-immoral-not-to-militarily-confront-isis/>

**Archbishop Cranmer:** Canon Andrew White: "The governments and media of the world may have forgotten us.."

<http://archbishop-cranmer.blogspot.co.uk/2014/08/canon-andrew-white-governments-and.html>