

## Bark the herald angels sing



Dogs of all breeds and sizes were barking around the Christmas tree in Christ Church Cathedral on Tuesday (December 12) for the annual Peata Therapy Dog carol service. A record number of dogs and their owners, along with people in caring facilities who enjoy visits from Peata dogs, filled the cathedral for the wonderful service.

The Peata service has been organised for the last 15 years by Lesley Rue. It was led by Dean Dermot Dunne and sung by the girl choristers. The Dean, who blessed the dogs during the service, said the day focused on giving thanks for creation and in particular for dogs who give so much comfort and solace to humans. He said it was also a reminder that we need to look after creation.

The gathering of so many dogs in one place could be a recipe for disaster but all the animals were on their best behaviour and there were only a few good natured barks exchanged.

A total of €725 from the collection taken up during the service will go to the Peter McVerry Trust for their work with homeless people.

The dogs and their owners enjoyed tea and mince pies afterwards.

Peata is a voluntary organisation which provides a pet therapy service to caring institutions. Its visiting scheme involves approved volunteers and their dogs who generally pay weekly visits.

## **Carol service support for Newtownbutler pipe organ installation**



### **The Galloon combined choir rehearsing for the Community Carol Service**

A Community Carol Service was held in Galloon Parish Church, Newtownbutler last Sunday, which will leave a music legacy for years to come. A voluntary collection at the service was for an organ fund to install a Lewis pipe organ in the church.

The service featured Newtownbutler Primary School Choir and the Galloon group's Combined Choir.

The proposed organ which was originally in Carrickfergus Methodist Church was built in 1906 and is number 766. Organs by Lewis are a rarity in Ireland although this one is exactly contemporary with the much larger 3-manual instruments built by the same firm for the Presbyterian Assembly Hall, Church House, Belfast (1906) and First Presbyterian, Rosemary Street, Belfast (1907).

The musical quality is exceptional and very characteristic of the work of this builder. From a comparatively small number of stops the organ is capable of wide tonal variety; the 'full organ' is forthright and thrilling, including a fine trumpet stop on the Swell manual but equally there is a good range of contrasting quilter flute and string-toned stops or real beauty.

The organ has been regularly maintained by the Wells-Kennedy Partnership, Lisburn since 1981, initially through association with the firm of JW Walker and Sons. In 2008 the existing Carrickfergus Methodist Church building was demolished to make way for a new purpose built complex, in which the organ could not be retained. It was agreed by the church authorities that the organ would be removed to safe storage by Wells-Kennedy in the hope that one day a suitable new home could be found, thereby

preserving this worthwhile example of our musical heritage.

Galloon parishioners hope that through their work and your support that this new home will be in Newtownbutler.

## **Cork graduates in pastoral care**

Friday 24th November was graduation day for pastoral care students at Cork University Hospital. In the Chapel of Christ our Saviour two people from the United Dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross,

Hilary Dring (Carrigaline Union) and Sylvia Helen (Kilgariffe Union) graduated with four other colleagues at the end of a very busy twelve week Clinical Pastoral Education Unit. The Bishop, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, attended the graduation ceremony, and congratulated Hilary and Sylvia.

Hilary and Sylvia described CPE as a programme that provided: ‘an excellent balance between experiential, practical and theoretical learning.’



**At the CPE Graduation were (l-r) CPE Supervisor, Canon Daniel Nuzum, and graduates: Monica O'Donoghue, Piotr Delimat, Hilary Dring, Robin Thomas, Sylvia Helen and Dave Cribbin**

It enhanced our personal growth, learning and development as well as our knowledge of pastoral care and chaplaincy. We were blessed with talks and input from multi-faith, national and international lecturers from places such as CUH, Marymount Hospice, Bon Secours Hospital, Mercy University Hospital, UCC,

Canada and the UK. “We benefited from a wealth of knowledge, grounded in the work people do in their fields of expertise. We shared times of prayer, reflection and learning with the other students and had supervision under the excellent tutelage of Dr. Daniel Nuzum. Placement on wards in CUH enabled us to put all the learning into practice.

“We visited many different people; some very ill and in hospital for a long time, others maybe only there for the day. Being present with patients and their families in their vulnerability during a difficult time in their lives and being allowed to share in a little of their journey was a real privilege.

“We were humbled by their courage and resilience and left with a feeling that people are truly amazing. For us it has been a gift and an opportunity which came our way; we are so glad we responded. Thank you to Daniel Nuzum for his leadership and care as supervisor and to the hospital staff for their welcome to us all. The whole CPE process engaged us physically, emotionally, spiritually and psychologically. We had a sense that all the diverse experiences we have had in our lives were coming together like strands of wool, and were being woven into a single thread or purpose. Throughout the 12

weeks we felt we were in the place God wanted us to be.

“We found it demanding and intense at times but also wonderful, fulfilling and life affirming. It was truly worthwhile.’

## **Sub-Aqua Christmas tree in Kilkenny Cathedral festival**

The Kilkenny Christmas Tree Festival is under way in St. Canice’s Cathedral.

“This is the third year for the festival and so far 125 trees of all shapes and sizes are in situ,” says Dean Katharine Poulton.

“The trees are made by individuals, family groups, local businesses, schools and charities. This year Kilkenny Sub Aqua club have an entry, there is an entry which is a collaboration between Kilkenny College TY art students, Cois Nore Cancer Support and Paul’s shop to highlight Cancer support services in the community. There is something for everyone at the festival with tea, coffee and goodies to enjoy as well as a stall with craft and home made produce.





This is an amazing event organised by the community in St. Canice's and the Kilkenny Union of Parishes, but it is an event for the whole community.

Proceeds will go to Kilkenny Model School, St. Canice's National School (to buy an instrument for each school) and the Kilkenny Union of Parishes.

## Cork's interfaith calendar launched at City Hall

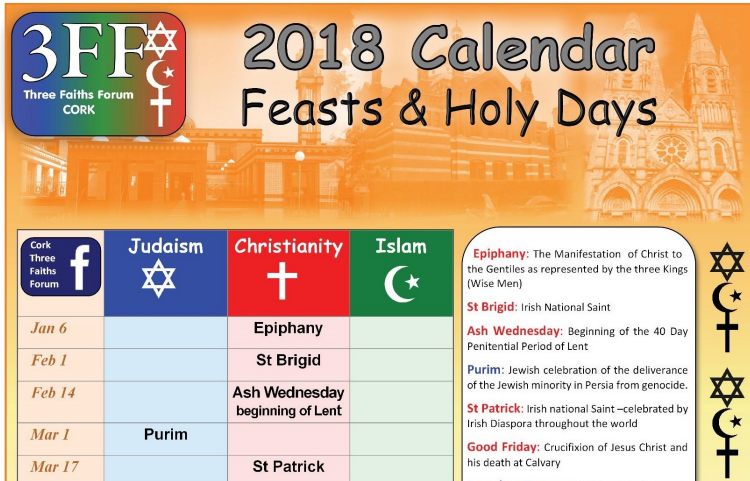
The Lord Mayor of Cork Cllr Tony Fitzgerald launched a new interfaith calendar at City Hall yesterday (Wednesday) at a ceremony attended by representatives of the city's Christians, Jews and Muslims.

The calendar is the first of its kind produced by Cork's Three Faiths Forum, which was established just two years ago.

It features the main Jewish, Islamic and Christian feasts and holy days during 2018 and provides an explanation as to the significance of each of those feasts and holy days.

Speaking to CatholicIreland.net, Gerry Forde, a member of the Three Faiths Forum, who is also Justice Officer with the Society of African Missions said, "We hope to share the calendar in schools and faith communities around Cork."

Although schools are being invited to download the free calendar for their students, this novel venture is aimed at everyone, including churches and institutions, according to Gerry Forde.



“It is intended to create an awareness that we are a multi-cultural multi-religious society now and to give people a little bit of understanding, awareness and acceptance of that diversity.

“It is a simple calendar with a one-line explanation of the particular feasts in the different religions. Our aim is to increase people’s acceptance that there are different faiths present in Ireland today and help them understand that we can all live with and get on with each other.”

Of Lord Mayor Cllr Fitzgerald’s hosting of the official launch on Wednesday, Gerry Forde told CatholicIreland.net that it was “a recognition that Cork is a very diverse place and there is a need

to cater for diversity and a need for co-operation between different diverse groups in society.

“There has been a massive change in Ireland over the last 20 years, especially the growth in the Muslim population – there are now about 70,000 Muslims in Ireland.”

The Three Faiths Forum is an initiative of a number of individuals from the three Abrahamic faiths in Cork. “We all trace our roots back to Abraham and that makes it easy for people to sit down together.”

According to Gerry Forde, these include three members of the Church of Ireland, a Catholic priest, the OLA provincial Sr Kathleen McGarvey, a member of the Jewish community, individuals like Forde himself, Methodist Charles Pyne and Sheikh Ihab Ahmad, the Imam of the mosque in Blarney Street and other Muslims from the mosque in Tochar.

“It has been growing slowly. It is only now that we are at the stage that we know each other well enough to do something together and this is one initiative.”

Three Faiths Forum, also known as 3FF, was set up in the UK over 20 years ago. It works to build

good relations between people of different faiths, beliefs and identities.

According to the [www.3ff.org.uk](http://www.3ff.org.uk) website, it creates spaces in “schools, universities, and the wider community where people can engage with questions of belief and identity and meet people different from themselves”. This enables people “from different backgrounds – both religious and non-religious – to learn from each other and work together”.

The new interfaith calendar is available on Cork Three Faiths Forum’s Facebook page and websites such as the Society of African Missions as a downloadable resource. <https://www.facebook.com/Cork-Three-Faiths-Forum-1896238627255020> Or email: [3ffcork@gmail.com](mailto:3ffcork@gmail.com)

## **Pain in the faces of mothers in South Sudan whose children are starving, is ‘devastating’, Irish Christian Aid chief**

Rosamond Bennett, Chief Executive of Christian Aid Ireland, recently returned from South Sudan where she witnessed the hopelessness and

hunger faced by millions in the conflict-torn country.

She described the pain in the faces of mothers whose children were starving, as ‘devastating.’

This Christmas, for every pound donated to the Christian Aid Christmas Appeal, the UK Government will also give a pound, meaning even more mothers and children under-five across Sub Saharan Africa will be saved from the life-threatening effects of malnutrition.

Rosamond said: “In South Sudan, I witnessed intense poverty. In the villages I visited, people are eating just one meal a day, made with only one ingredient. After months and months of living like this, energy levels are low and many people, especially children, are suffering from malnutrition.

“Seeing how hungry and malnourished some of the babies are and then the pain in their mother’s faces, who know they have no food for them, was devastating. Some of the people told me that they know they won’t be here next spring. Recent heavy rains destroyed their crops, which they were depending on. They said, Christmas is non-existent for us this year.”



**Aluel, a single mother of four, with her youngest child.**

Earlier this year, famine was declared in parts of South Sudan: the first time it was declared anywhere in six years. More than three years of conflict had displaced nearly four million people, disrupting harvests and leading to devastating food shortages. Although the famine was averted, the crisis in South Sudan has reached unprecedented levels – nearly six million people are facing severe food insecurity. If left untreated, acute malnutrition – the most extreme form of food crisis – can lead to death.

Aluel used to run a small business selling tea and bread at her local market, which provided enough money to feed her family. As the situation in South Sudan deteriorated, inflation rose to 800 per cent, meaning her earnings could no longer buy enough food to put on the table.

The mother-of-four could only provide one meal a day for her family, and sometimes that meal would consist of nothing but leaves. Christian Aid partner organisation SPEDP (Support for Peace and Education and Development Programme) is providing cash vouchers to people, like Aluel, struggling with acute malnutrition in South Sudan, so they can buy essential food in local markets to help their families recover.

“Before Christian Aid intervened, life had become very difficult. As a family, we urgently needed help,” said Aluel. With support from SPEDP, she received cash vouchers, allowing her to buy enough food to feed her children.

“I saw the health of my children improve drastically as they then started eating three meals a day,” she added.

Your donation could help Christian Aid prevent many thousands of unnecessary deaths from



malnutrition. Just £5/€5.67 could provide a cash voucher to provide enough food for a family for four days, and £150/€140 could provide 10 families with fishing gear.

Donations made to the Christmas appeal between 6 November 2017 and 5 February 2018 will be matched up to £2.7 million through Aid Match. The UK Government's match will fund Christian Aid's work in South Sudan.

Please donate at <http://www.christianaid.ie> or call Dublin 01 4967040 or Belfast on 028 9064 8133.

## **ExxonMobil concede defeat in climate change battle with Church of England**

The global oil giant ExxonMobil have finally caved in to shareholder demands – led by the C of E's Church Commissioners – to set out how the business will be affected by efforts to halt climate change. The announcement came two years to the day after the breakthrough [Paris agreement on climate change](#). To mark the anniversary, the French President, Emmanuel Macron, brought together the President of the World Bank, the Secretary General of the United

Nations, international leaders and “committed citizens from around the world” to review its implementation and discuss new ways to “address the ecological emergency for our planet.”

ExxonMobil say that will provide shareholders with information on “energy demand sensitivities, implications of two degree Celsius scenarios, and positioning for a lower-carbon future.” The demand was led by the Church Commissioners and New York State Comptroller Thomas P DiNapoli, who filed a joint motion asking Exxon to report on how its business model will be affected by global efforts to limit the average rise in temperatures to below 2-degrees Celsius. With strong opposition from Exxon’s Board, the motion failed to pass at the 2016 AGM. But, in spite of continued opposition, [the resolution was passed at this year’s AGM in May.](#)

“We welcome ExxonMobil’s commitment to implement the resolution passed earlier this year and disclose the impact of measures to combat climate change on its portfolio,” Edward Mason, Head of Responsible Investment for the Church Commissioners for England, said in response to the announcement. “Climate change is one of the most significant long-term risks investors



## **ExxonMobil's oil refinery in Baton Rouge**

face, and it is essential that companies confront the challenge that it poses. We look forward to continuing to work with Exxon and others on this issue.”

The motion put forward by the Church Commissioners is part of its programme of active engagement with companies as part of its ethical investment policy.

A number of significant announcements were made at yesterday's Paris summit. The World Bank said it would phase out finance for oil and gas by 2019; the European Commission – the executive arm of the European Union –

announced funding of €9 billion (Euros, approximately £8 billion GBP) for investment in sustainable cities, clean energy and sustainable agriculture; companies including Axa and the ING bank announced partial divestments from fossil fuels; and Microsoft founder Bill Gates announced that his charitable foundation would spend \$300 million (USD, approximately £225 million GBP) to help smallholding farmers in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia adapt to protect their farms from droughts, heatwaves and floods caused by the effects of climate change, [The Guardian newspaper reports.](#)

One notable world leader who was absent from the summit was US President Donald Trump, who announced in June that he was [pulling the US out of the 2016 Paris agreement.](#) The former Governor of California, film star Arnold Schwarzenegger, sought to reassure participants that Americans were still committed to tackling climate change, [according to the Business Green website.](#) “The private sector didn't drop out, the public sector didn't drop out, the universities didn't drop out, the scientists didn't drop out, the engineers didn't drop out – no-one else dropped out,” he said. “Donald Trump pulled Donald Trump out of the Paris agreement, so don't worry about that.”

Meanwhile, a project to [install solar power farms on church-owned lands in Africa](#) is beginning to take off. The initiative, which was sparked by a chance conversation the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby had with an Israeli NGO on his visit to the Holy Land in April, will see spare church lands used to produce electricity from solar panels.

In Malawi, the Diocese of the Upper Shire is embracing the solar farm project in partnership with Gigawatt Global and the Interfaith Centre for Sustainable Development . Bishop Brighton Vitta Malasa met with Gigawatt Global's project managers is working on an a memorandum of understanding with the country's Energy Ministry.

Archbishop Albert Chama, the Primate of Central Africa, together with a delegation from Zambia, also met with the project managers of Gigawatt global and the project is moving forward.

The Anglican Church of Burundi has signed a memorandum of understanding; and its provincial development officer, Leonidas Niyongabo, is visiting four communities with engineers from Gigawatt Global to analyse electricity demand and to prepare micro-grid solutions.

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