



## Christian Aid call for 30 volunteers to skydive 12,000ft for a great cause



**Joanne Wilson, Sarah Lennon, Kerri Todd, Tim Reynolds, Matt Alderdice, Zoe McCandless, Laura Turley and Mel Wiggins MBE**

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Do you have what it takes to jump out of a plane?

A search is underway to find 30 volunteers to skydive 12,000ft for a great cause.

Christian Aid is looking for a group of courageous people to take to the skies and skydive 12,000ft in aid of projects in Latin American and Africa. The skydive hopes to raise money towards supporting Christian Aid's 'Breaking the Barriers' project in Africa and Latin America. Every £1 raised will be worth £5 thanks to EU match funding.

The project aims to increase rural women's jobs and income in the sustainable energy sector, improve working and living conditions, promote gender equality, and strengthen women's social status.

Mel Wiggins, who was awarded an MBE in 2017 for her services towards fighting human trafficking in Northern Ireland, said: "Christian Aid's skydive challenge is going to be a massive leap of faith for all of us. None of us have done anything like this before, but it's made easier knowing that we are doing it with other women and men who are also passionate about this campaign and cause.

"We are really inspired by Christian Aid's work to empower women in the developing world and want to be part of showing our support for them. This is our way of standing - or jumping - in solidarity."

Christian Aid Ireland's, Church and Community Officer, Tim Reynolds, added: "A skydive is on many people's bucket list. What's great about this skydive is that you can fulfil one

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of your bucket list items while raising money for a great cause. Plus, every £1 you raise will be worth £5, thanks to EU match funding. That's five times the number of lives you can help transform."

Mel and her friends are all part of the Assembly Members Community, which Mel began in 2016. Assembly is a community for creative women in Northern Ireland and a space to connect with others and enjoy the simple pleasures.

The skydive will take place at Wild Geese Skydive, Garvagh, along the north coast and each participant will complete the skydive with a BPA-certified instructor.

Those interested can choose one of two days to complete their skydive, September 8 or 29. To register visit [www.caid.ie/skydive](http://www.caid.ie/skydive), email Christian Aid's office on [belfast@christian-aid.org](mailto:belfast@christian-aid.org) or call Tim Reynolds on 028 9064 8133. Participants are asked to raise or donate a minimum of £500 to take part.

## **Archbishop of Canterbury urges British government to intervene on violence in Nigeria**

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has asked the British government to support Nigeria in the short-, medium- and long-term to find a solution to the increasing violence in the country. The death toll in Nigeria continues to rise in clashes between Fulani nomadic herdsman and settled farmers. The [AFP news agency reported](#) on Saturday that



scores of people were killed in four days of violence last week across northeast Nigeria. And there are conflicting reports that more than one hundred soldiers are missing, feared dead, after Boko Haram overran a military compound in the area.

In a follow-up to a question from Baroness Cox about the violence in Nigeria this afternoon, Archbishop Justin said: “I am sure the [minister] shares my deep concern about the violent attacks on Christians” and he told members of the House of Lords about the recent [attack on the Archbishop of Jos’ compound](#) which resulted in the death of his friend.

“The minister has rightly said how complex the situation is, but can she answer more specifically what assistance the UK government can do in the short-term to strengthen the government of Nigeria in its role in enforcing security and local mediation; in the medium-term to ensure reconciliation

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which will enable the lives and economies of farmers and herders to be protected; and in the long term, actively and tangibly to support regional efforts to combat the effects of climate change – the development of desertification which is exacerbating ancient rivalries?”

Responding on behalf of the government, the Conservative Peer Baroness Goldie said that she was “very concerned” about the archbishop’s report and that that the UK government had offered support to Nigeria’s Vice President. “We stand ready to support Nigerian-led initiatives,” she said.

She explained that the government was urging the European Union and the United Nations’ Office for West Africa and the Sahel “to extend their influence and develop sustainable solutions to the conflict, including support for community conflict resolution initiatives which we believe are essential.”

She sought to assure the archbishop that “we are considering options for how the UK can support reconciliation at local levels. We cannot ignore the fundamental causes for the violence and so we are reviewing HM Government’s support for Nigeria in, for example, as the Most Reverend Primate suggests, tackling climate change.”

## **Pope Francis to visit Baltic nations in September**

The Vatican have released the details of Pope Francis planned visit to the Baltic countries of Lithuania, Latvia and

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Estonia which will take place from 22–25 September. The visit to the Baltic countries, which was announced in March, will mark Pope Francis' first



Apostolic Journey following his visit to the ninth World Meeting of Families which takes place in Dublin from 21–26 August.

Pope Francis will follow in the footsteps of St John Paul II who visited the country in 1993, twenty-five years ago. The four day visit will take Pope Francis to two important Marian Shrines , two major ecumenical encounters and places that commemorate each nation's fight for freedom from oppression.

Abortion and the disintegration of families have been serious challenges for the church and society in these three former Soviet republics, according to past reports from bishops during their visits Rome.

In a 2015 meeting with bishops from Latvia and Estonia, Pope Francis also addressed the need to adequately transmit church teaching on marriage and family life.

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The Pope told the bishops in a written address that God had chosen them to 'work in a society that, after having long been oppressed by regimes founded on ideologies contrary to human dignity and freedom, today is called to face other insidious dangers, such as secularism and relativism.'

It will be Francis' 24th trip abroad and bring the total number of countries he has visited outside of Italy since his election to 38 nations.

## **Derry churchman at heart of C of I Bishops' Appeal**

The work of the indefatigable Albert Smallwoods has been recognised formally by the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe, which held a lunch in his honour at Londonderry's Waterfoot Hotel on Monday afternoon to acknowledge his work for world development.

Mr Smallwoods, who had chalked up 40 years as a member of Bishops' Appeal, was accompanied by his wife, Vivian, and the lunch was hosted by the Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Ken Good. Also present were the chairman of the Diocese's Board of Mission and Unity, Rev Canon Paul Hoey, its secretary, Joanne Miller, and board members Sylvia Donnell and Claire Henderson. The chairman of the Church of Ireland's Council for Mission, Rev Adam Pullen, also attended.



Paying tribute to the guest of honour, Bishop Good described Mr Smallwoods as a stalwart of the Church of Ireland at parish, diocese and central Church levels, and said his contribution to Bishops' Appeal – and world development – would still be remembered in one hundred years' time.

Rev Pullen said the work that Mr Smallwoods and his colleagues had done through Bishops' Appeal had made an impact far beyond this island. He said there were many people around the world whose lives had been improved immeasurably as a result of Albert's efforts.

Mr Smallwoods has an impressive record of service to the Church and to the wider community. He was a member of Bishops' Appeal Central Advisory Committee from 1979 until this year, and for eight of those years was the Church of Ireland representative on the Board of Christian Aid. He is a former vice-chairman of the Church of Ireland Youth Council and was Director of the Bishop Eames Community Peace Prize. In 1974 he became the first lay person to chair

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the Diocesan Youth Council. Next year will mark the fiftieth anniversary of his first formal parish role: he was appointed auditor of the Parish of Glendermott in 1969.

In his other activities, Mr Smallwoods has been a President of the Scout Movement in Northern Ireland and NI President of St John Ambulance; he has served on the Road Safety Council of Northern Ireland and the N. Ireland Home Safety Council; he was named Pensioner of the Year in 2002, Volunteer of the Year in 2005 and was awarded an MBE by the Queen in 1992.

## **Irish Church needs radical overhaul in its outreach to young people**

The Irish Church “needs to waken itself to the urgency” of the need to relearn the ability to speak the language of faith to young people, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin has said.

In his homily for the ordination of two priests belonging to the Salesian order, who are originally from Vietnam, the Archbishop of Dublin said Irish religious culture is changing.

The main body of the membership of Irish Catholicism and its leadership belong to an age and cultural group that is in many ways foreign to the culture of young people. The Irish Church needs to waken itself to the urgency of this situation.

The ordination of Frs Dominic Binh Viet Nguyen and Paul Binh Xuan Tran took place at St Patrick’s College Maynooth on Sunday.

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In his homily, Dr Martin recognised that there is uncertainty about how to proceed in order to engage with young people and that change is not easy.

“Just as Don Bosco encountered much resistance from the mainstream Catholic structures of his time, there will be a sort of passive resistance today. Change is painful. There is, however, no alternative. Catholics must learn new ways in which they can win young hearts for what the teaching of Jesus involves,” he said.

Quoting from Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, who said the challenge for the Church today is “to witness to God in a world that has problems finding Him”, the Archbishop said the Irish Church has to relearn the ability to speak the language of faith authentically in a world where that language may be alien.

“The Church in Ireland needs a radical overhaul in its outreach in faith towards young people and where better to begin than by reflecting on the life of Don Bosco.”

The call to disciples, he highlighted, is the “very opposite to a consumerist driven rushing for the non-essential” and the near divinisation of the superfluous and the transient in life.

“‘Going out’ is an essential part of being a believer. It is an essential part of being a Christian particularly today, when the life of many Christians and of the Church community has become fearful and timid regarding faith.”

He said the Church as a faith community should be active and present in society, drawing attention to suffering and repression of any kind and being alongside those who suffer.

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Christian belief has and will always have its contribution to bring to the formation of society.

## News briefs



**+++Prayer request** - Rev Dave Gray (above) is PCI's chaplain serving in Queen's University Belfast, Stranmillis and Union College. Pray for Dave, assistant chaplain Lynn Guiney, and the new interns (Lyndsey & Ian) and students coming to Derryvolgie in September. <http://bit.ly/2cgVbSa>

**+++Holywood in Peru** - The Holywood Parish Peru team have been working in Ventanilla, a poverty stricken community in Lima.

They've been doing kids ministry, which includes puppets – always a huge hit – and had over 100 kids with them on Saturday!

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Please continue to pray and to follow them on Twitter where you'll find several videos.

[@palasantoteam54](https://twitter.com/palasantoteam54)

**+++Green church awards** - The Church Times is looking for churches and Christian organisations in the UK that are using gardens and green spaces creatively for well-being. Nominate a [#greenchurch](https://twitter.com/greenchurch) project and you could win £2000: <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/green-health-awards> ...

**+++North Belfast rural dean** - The Rev Brian Lacey, rector of the United Parish of St Peter and St James, Belfast, is the new Rural Dean for North Belfast. In 2010 Brian was ordained as Curate Assistant in the Parish of Kilconriola (Ballymena) and Ballyclug, and he has been rector of St Peter and St James since June 2013. He takes over as North Belfast Rural Dean from the Rev David Lockhart, who is moving to the Parish of Larne and Inver, Glynn and Raloo.

**+++Financing C of E cathedrals** - A £40m Govt fund has helped prepare cathedrals for First World War Commemorations, as the Bishop of Worcester calls for continued dialogue with Govt over cathedrals funding. <https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/repair-fund-ps40m-prepares-cathedrals-first-world-war-commemorations> ...

**+++Google's "doodle" celebrates Big Bang theory priest** - Google's "doodle" for Tuesday, July 18 celebrates the 124th birthday of the Belgian priest who formulated the Big Bang theory. Fr Georges Lemaître was professor of

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physics at the Catholic University of Leuven and proposed a theory that said the universe was constantly expanding from a single first point. He named this the “hypothesis of the primeval atom”, or the “Cosmic Egg”. He also proposed what later become known as “Hubble’s law” and “Hubble’s constant” two years before Edwin Hubble.

**+++French football player’s generosity** - France’s Kylian Mbappe ( a 19 year old), is donating 100% of his pay (\$29K per game + \$350K bonus for winning the World Cup ) to a charity that gives free sports instruction to hospitalized and disabled children.

**+++The Big Shift campaign** - calls for a shift in energy investment from fossil fuels to renewable energy. Breaking the Barriers aims to put this into action, increasing access to sustainable energy for rural women [\*\*#BigShift\*\*](#)

[\*\*@EU Commission @bigshiftglobal\*\*](#) <http://caid.org.uk/QaP8zq>



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