



CNI



The view from Corrymeela towards Scotland

The Kirk collaborates with Corrymeela to create peacemaking resource

The Church of Scotland has teamed up with Corrymeela to create an innovative new resource designed to use the power of the Bible to resolve conflict.

The Corrymeela Community, who have more than 50 years' experience working across

churchnewsireland@gmail.com

community divides in Northern Ireland, has built a 'spirituality of conflict' website with a host of free downloadable Bible readings on conflict resolution in a variety of contexts.

The original idea came from the leader of the community, working with the Mission and Discipleship Council of the Church of Scotland, the Iona Community, Irish School of Ecumenics, Place for Hope and the Coventry Centre for Peace and Reconciliation of the Church of England.

The reflections are in tune with the Presbyterian, Catholic, Anglican and Pentecostal backgrounds of the participants.

Rev Norman Smith, convener of the Mission and Discipleship Council, said: "Many people associate the Christian scriptures with conflict yet within them there is a great deal about resolving conflict and reconciliation.

"We are pleased to be a part of producing this new resource which will allow people to explore the many different facets of conflict that affect our world today."

Fiona Reynolds, probationary minister at Pollokshaws Parish Church, is using content churchnewsireland@gmail.com

from the website as part of a four week study during Lent.

She said: “I get pained when I see relationships breaking down because people were not able to speak honestly, or listen well. I want people to be able to find ways to manage the situations and find out what is going on for them.

“Whilst we are not expecting the congregation to all become experts at conflict resolution they may find a way to explore the text differently and in turn deal with conflict in a different way.

“If through this series we can sow seeds within ourselves, then when a situation of conflict comes us we will be able to find ways forward.”

<https://www.spiritualityofconflict.com/>

Pope's letter for Dublin World Meeting of Families presented

Yesterday (Thursday 30 March) in Rome, details of a *Letter* from Pope Francis were released by Cardinal Kevin Farrell, Prefect of the Holy See's new office for Laity, Family and Life, and the Archbishop of Dublin, Diarmuid Martin. The *Letter* invites families from around the world to

take part in the pastoral preparations for the ninth World Meeting of Families which will take place in Dublin from 21 – 26 August 2018.

Planning for this national and international celebration of faith is well underway. A dedicated office and support team has been established and later this year a nationwide programme about the family will begin throughout Ireland, with an emphasis on Pope Francis' teaching and reflections.

In his letter published a short time ago, Pope Francis said “ My thoughts go in a special way to the Archdiocese of Dublin and to all the dear Irish nation for the generous welcome and commitment involved in hosting such an important event. May the Lord recompense you as of now, granting you abundant heavenly favours.”

At yesterday's news conference which was held in the Holy See Press Office, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin said, “The Church in Ireland – and especially my Archdiocese of Dublin – is aware of the privilege that Pope Francis has assigned to it but is also aware of the challenge that the Pope has placed on its shoulders. The challenge is not just of organising a large world event, but of recalling for a modern society such



as that of Ireland, with its complex mix of secularisation and faith, how important the family is for the future of Ireland and of the wider society especially in Europe.”

The World Meeting of Families promises to be an occasion that will reflect on the faith experience of families from many parts of the world as well as on the challenges and celebrations, which characterise the ups and downs of day-to-day family life.

Archbishop Martin outlined how the celebration in Dublin next August will be prepared by

extensive teaching on the meaning of family love and on the role of the family in society. He expressed the hope that it would be “a moment of renewal for the Church in Ireland with wide involvement of lay faithful.

It will be a moment in which the role of the family can be understood in greater depth. It will be a moment in which families can regain confidence in carrying out their mission in the context of a Church which is merciful and which accompanies them in the ups and downs of their lives.”

Both Cardinal Farrell and Archbishop Martin expressed their hope that the August 2018 meeting will not be a one-off event, but rather a chance for the whole Church to deepen its reflection on the Pope’s words in ‘*Amoris Laetitia*’, seeing the family as a vital resource for sharing the message of God’s love with the world.

Responding to a question at yesterday morning’s press conference about a possible papal visit as part of the World Meeting of Families 2018, both Cardinal Farrell and Archbishop Martin shared their hopes that Pope Francis will be able to attend the event.



Irish missionary agency responds to South Sudan crisis

As the crisis worsens in South Sudan and East Africa, the Church Mission Society Ireland has continued to discuss with its Global Partners how best to support them as they respond to the suffering on their doorsteps.

The current food shortages have added to what was already a humanitarian disaster in South Sudan – thousands of innocent people being slaughtered; hundreds of thousands forced to

flee their homes and seek refuge in other parts of the country or in neighbouring countries.

Speaking about the latest developments, CMSI's Partnership Coordinator for South Sudan, Linda Abwa commented:

“CMSI welcomes the various emergency appeals that have been launched in recent weeks and we encourage people to support these appeals. The suffering in South Sudan has gone largely unnoticed for far too long – this recent turn of events is part of a much bigger story of turmoil and devastation.

“We ask for continued prayer for the Church in South Sudan, which has been working tirelessly in recent years to care for the displaced, the hungry and the hurting. The Church is one of the main sources of hope and help in this crisis – it's often where people turn in times of need. We want to stand with our partners and champion their work.”

In addition to its own South Sudan Appeal (details on the CMSI website), CMSI is providing opportunities to find out more about the crisis and to pray for the Church in South Sudan. Three 'drop-in' prayer days have been organised for the coming weeks. They will each run from 10am to 2pm and will feature various interactive

prayer stations as well as an opportunity to contribute to a 'Book of Blessing' for each of CMSI's four partner dioceses in South Sudan.

- Saturday 8th April – Dromore Cathedral
- Saturday 29th April – Ballyrashane Parish
- Saturday 13th May – Kill O' The Grange Parish

On **Friday 19th May**, CMSI will host a special event about the South Sudan crisis and the Church's response. The guest speaker will be Bishop Anthony Poggo, who is the Archbishop of Canterbury's Adviser on Anglican Communion Affairs and was formerly Bishop of Kajo-Keji Diocese in South Sudan. The event is taking place in Grosvenor Hall, Belfast and will include contributions from other agencies, as well as opportunities for discussion and prayer. Further details will be announced in the coming weeks.

Cardinal Nichols to take four imams to meet the Pope

Cardinal Nichols is due to travel to Rome with four imams next week for an audience with the Pope.



Cardinal Nichols with imams at a vigil following the terror attack last week

The meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday when, after an audience with the Holy Father, the group will attend a meeting at the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue which will be addressed by its president, Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran.

The delegation will then visit the British embassy to the Holy See.

It is understood that the meeting with the Pope has long been planned and is not related to the terror attack in Westminster last week.

Cardinal Nichols has a history of commitment to religious dialogue. While he was Archbishop of Birmingham he opened a centre in the city to promote dialogue between Christians and Muslims called Maryam House.

The cardinal told the Italian ANSA news agency: “Next week I will bring four Muslim leaders of Britain to Pope Francis to say that religious leaders want and are committed to building relations.”

He also spoke about last week’s London attack, which left five people dead. He said it had “nothing to do with borders”, explaining: “The attacker was a man born in Britain, who grew up in Britain.”

Speaking to the BBC about the attack last week, the cardinal said: “We have to be very clear about two other things. One is that we utterly condemn and reject this kind of mindless violence it has no justification, it has no credibility, it has nothing to be gained – no kudos to be gained – in this behaviour.

“And also we have to make sure we do not give space in our response to hatred. If we make enemies out of people who are our friends then we are falling into the very trap that the violent

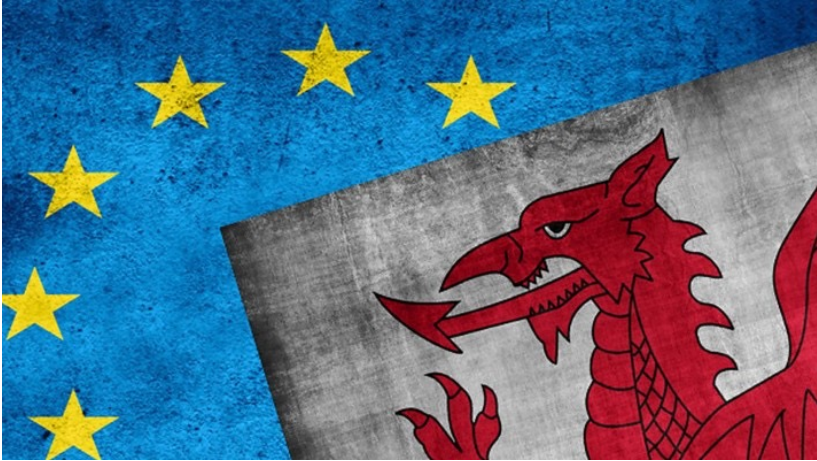
people want us to fall into. So there is no space for hatred for those who are our friends.”

Put people first post-Brexit, urge Welsh Bishops

Welsh bishops are calling on the UK Government to put people first as it negotiates the country's exit from the European Union.

As the Prime Minister triggered Article 50 to begin the process of leaving the EU, the bishops of the Church in Wales said inequality and disadvantage needed to be addressed in order to build a better Wales post-Brexit.

They said, “The vote to leave the European Union exposed deep divisions in society. Whilst some have benefitted from economic prosperity and the opportunities to travel, work, study and trade freely across European boundaries, for others, these things have been irrelevant. The causes of division and disaffection do not all lie with our membership of the EU, and if we are to build a better Wales post-Brexit, it is essential that we recognise and address each and every inequality and disadvantage which damage our



sense of solidarity and of belonging to one another in our community.

“With this in mind, we urge those responsible for negotiations to prioritise the protection of human rights; to offer pro-actively security to individuals and families who have come to live within our borders; and to maintain the employment rights, safety standards, and environmental protections which have developed in common with our European partners over the past 40 years. It is equally important to continue support to those areas of Wales which are most affected by economic disadvantage, to promote the rural economy, and to support sectors which rely on European markets

“As Christians we recognise our common identity as children of God. Political differences will not marr our relationships with fellow-Christians in Europe and beyond, particularly through the worldwide Anglican Communion. We pray that Europe will continue to be a beacon of peace, hope and mutual endeavour across national boundaries; and that these will be qualities and endeavours in which we can continue to play a part.”

The Welsh bishops are:

Bishop of Swansea&Brecon, John Davies

Bishop of Bangor, Andrew John

Bishop of St Asaph, Gregory Cameron

Bishop of Monmouth, Richard Pain

Bishop of St Davids, Joanna Penberthy

C of E archbishops to attend Spring Harvest

Archbishop Justin Welby and Archbishop John Sentamu will speak at the festival, whose theme this year is unity.

The Archbishops of both Canterbury and York, the Most Revds Justin Welby and Dr John Sentamu, will be joining those attending this year's Spring Harvest.

Archbishop Justin will be at the Butlins resort in Minehead on Palm Sunday 9 April and Archbishop Sentamu will be in Skegness on Tuesday 11 April. The title of Spring Harvest this year is 'One for All' and the theme of the event is 'Unity'. Both Archbishops are known for their concern on this issue, with Justin Welby in particular popularising the concept of 'good disagreement' – how to disagree without being disagreeable; being gracious without compromising and the Archbishop of York on 'how to disagree Christianly'.

Malcolm Duncan, who has written the material accompanying the unity focus of the 2017 event, said 'It is a vital question for us to consider at this time. It is a much bigger issue than just how congregations and denominations relate to one another. God does not want us to build fences and to hide ourselves away from one another. He wants us to be one. There is enough suspicion and criticism outside of the Church without us bringing it inside as well. If we want the Church to do better at unity, we need to work out how to help those of us who are part of the Church to become more like Jesus and treat one another the way he would.'

Those attending Spring Harvest this year will be challenged to consider, among other things, how

to disagree well, what Biblical unity across denominations and networks could look like, and what it means to stand with persecuted Christian brothers and sisters across the world.

The unity theme will be going beyond Spring Harvest to most of the UK's other major Christian festivals and events as part of a wider commitment by Christians to declare that they are united by far more than the issues that divide. Entitled '17:21' and based on the words of Jesus' prayer in John 17:21, the initiative will see hundreds of thousands of Christians across a number of festival declare their joint allegiance to Christ.

Malcolm Duncan, commenting on the plans said, 'Spring Harvesters and hundreds of thousands of other Christians across this year will join together in a shared and united commitment: to declare that we are one in Christ, one in the gospel and one for the sake of the world. I am excited at what God will do with and through Spring Harvest this year and look forward to it with real anticipation.

'When the Church stands together in the purposes of God, there is a commanded blessing. I believe we are in a significant time of opportunity for the Church in the United

Kingdom, Europe and around the world. Spring Harvest has an important part to play in God's purposes this year and we are asking God to make us a catalyst for effective mission and the furtherance of God's Kingdom across the world.'

Second complaint over 'abusive and derogatory' comments against gay cleric as pressure builds on Church in Wales

A second complaint has been lodged as pressure builds over alleged homophobia by the Church in Wales after a senior gay cleric was blocked from being appointed a bishop.

Jeffrey John, currently Dean of St Albans cathedral, won more than half the votes in the electoral body but failed to secure the two-thirds necessary to be appointed Bishop of Llandaff. His name was then barred from further consideration despite unanimous support from local church leaders in the diocese.

Now four senior members from the decision-making standing committee in Llandaff have filed an official complaint after allegations of

homophobic remarks against Dr John during the election process were revealed by Christian Today.

The comments were 'abusive and derogatory, demeaning their relationship and sexuality' and went unchecked by the body's chair, a source told Christian Today.

Asked about the complaint a Church spokeswoman confirmed: 'We have received a complaint from four members of the Standing Committee of the Llandaff Diocesan Conference. The complaint is not on behalf of the Standing Committee.

'It has been referred to the Legal Sub Committee which is a body in the Church in Wales assembled to consider legal and governance matters.

'It is too early to say whether the deliberations of the Legal Sub Committee will have any effect on the timing of an announcement.'

The second complaint will further raise tensions and comes after a separate objection was made by five members who were present at the electoral college.



Dr Jeffrey John outside St Albans Cathedral, where he is currently Dean.

The electors said the remarks 'prejudiced' Dr John and made the whole process 'invalid'.

In a letter to the Church's most senior executive Simon Lloyd, they wrote: 'We object to the raising at electoral college of the matter of sexuality or civil partnership status, in direct

contravention of the Church in Wales's own policy that sexuality or civil partnership status is not a bar to appointment as a Bishop.

'We consider that this action was deeply inappropriate, and prejudiced the electoral college proceedings so as to render them invalid.'

Both complaints will now be investigated by a legal committee in the Church and the appointment may be on hold until the investigation is complete.

In response to the first complaint Mr Lloyd said: 'The timescale is a matter for the Legal Subcommittee and is dependent upon the amount of analysis required and how many times they need to meet. The deliberations of the Committee cannot and should not be hurried.'

The Church in Wales has strongly denied the allegations of homophobia and that Dr John was blocked.

A statement from the Church read: 'Neither homosexuality nor participation in a civil partnership are a bar to any candidate being either nominated or elected as a Bishop in the Church in Wales. Moreover, this was made clear

to members of the Electoral College by its President, the Bishop of Swansea and Brecon.'

GET CNI HEADLINES EACH DAY

on Twitter or Facebook

Click on logo at CNI Home page

www.churchnewsireland.org

+ Please share CNI with your friends

www.churchnewsireland.org