

Archbishop of Canterbury visits new church initiatives in Scotland

C of I cleric says testimonial ‘not a defence of’ paedophile

Irish Examiner - A priest who described daily Mass-going paedophile, Patrick Barry as a “spiritual man” said his court testimonial “was not a defence of” the convicted man.



Canon Bob Hanna

Canon Bob Hanna confirmed that his Church of Ireland “at top and local levels” have queried why he gave a testimonial on behalf of the former school principal in court earlier this month.

Canon Hanna released the statement after one of Barry’s 11 victims said after his sentencing that she was ‘disturbed’ by the priest’s testimonial.

At Ennis Circuit Court, Judge Gerald Keyes sentenced Barry, aged 80, to 11 years in jail with the final five suspended.

The girls were aged between 9 and 13 when the abuse took place at Moyasta NS between 1964 and 1985.

However, prior to sentencing but after Barry’s conviction of 59 counts of sexual assault against the girls, Canon Hanna described Barry as a ‘spiritual man’.

In the testimonial penned by the Ennis based priest, it stated that Canon Hanna has known Barry for 20 years.

Canon Hanna said: “Padraig’s life of faith was intertwined naturally and gently with normal human pursuits...

The image presented by the conviction seems such a shocking aberration from the generally held picture of a genial, courteous and fulfilled and happily retired professional man whose erudition in local history and culture and church music would make him forever engaged and an enthusiastic neighbour to all.”

Canon Hanna said “Padraig de Barra would have been the last person one would have thought to be involved in any act that would hurt or offend a child”.

Canon Hanna also referred to Barry’s victims in his testimonial speaking of “embracing in love and empathy the real people who live with their tales of hurt and loss”.

In response to the victim’s comments, Canon Hanna said last night: “I fully understand her feelings and those of her fellow victims following the immense hurt which has accompanied them over past decades up to and including the sentencing of Mr Barry. Of course, unreservedly, I would want to make this support even more resonant now that the judge has pronounced...

“Without qualification, the ladies who have suffered this abuse have and deserve my first and greatest sympathy.”

Canon Hanna said that at short notice, he was asked to give a background testimonial for Mr Barry.

“The testimonial was seen on my part to be merely rounding off a personal picture of the man alongside other testimonials. It was not a defence of the man who was convicted.

“I didn’t have the proper opportunity to meet with the offended ladies and offer my condolences as a priest and perhaps I might soon have that.”

Canon Hanna said: “Please include me firmly among the many who stand with the abused known and unknown, hurt and confused at this story of horror surfacing so belatedly from school children of yesteryear but all too real on our doorstep as damaged adults. Justice has been seen to be done, now we must help each other to pick up the pieces.”

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/cleric-says-testimonial-not-a-defence-of-paedophile-298927.html>

Also

<http://www.irishmirror.ie/news/irish-news/crime/victim-paedophile-school-principal-he-4589255>

MPs help Seagoe church with memorial funding

Portadown Times - DUP MPs David Simpson and Jeffrey Donaldson MP have joined forces to help Seagoe Church of Ireland obtain funding for their unique World War One war memorial located at their church gates.



MPs David Simpson and Jeffrey Donaldson MP have joined forces to help Seagoe Church of Ireland obtain funding for their unique WW1 war memorial.

Mr Simpson hosted a visit for Mr Donaldson, who is the chairperson of the WW1 Centenary Committee in Northern Ireland.

Both men were intrigued as to the detail on the gates and the war memorial's status as one of a kind.

Speaking following the meeting with church officials Mr Simpson said, "Jeffrey has been leading on the WW1 commemorations here in Northern Ireland and across the UK.

"I thought it was very opportune time to host a meeting regarding the restoration of this historic memorial where the names of brave men are etched.

"Behind every name is a story of a valiant soldier and it is our duty to preserve and educate our generation and the generations to come of this great sacrifice.

"Mr Donaldson spoke very openly regarding progressing this project and I look forward to working with the church officials, Jeffrey and the WW1 grants departments to try and ensure that this rich piece of history is restored to its former glory and that the stories are remembered in the right and proper way."

Parish Concert raises £800 for Poppy Appeal

Newtownabbey Times - One recent commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War 1 saw St Patrick's Church of Ireland, Jordanstown host a concert with the New Irish Choir and Orchestra called 'Greater Love', providing music and true stories reflecting on the lives of Irish men and women who gave so much for others from 1914 - 1918.

A packed audience toe-tapped to well known songs like It's a long way to Tipperary, Colonel Bogey and Pack up your Troubles. The real stories of lives lost were gently weaved in and out of the music, climaxing with a reflection on Jesus Christ, who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Also present was the Mayor of Newtownabbey, Alderman Thomas Hogg and representatives from the Whiteabbey Branch of the Royal British Legion.

Profits from the event were donated to the RBL Poppy Appeal.

St Patrick's Church Curate and event organiser, Rev Jonny Campbell-Smyth said: "It was wonderful to see the church completely full, and to hear such positive feedback about the evening.

"The event has brought together people from across the community at this important time, helping us all appreciate the sacrifice made by those at war and those left at home. Due to the positive response we are delighted to be able to give over £800 towards the Poppy Appeal."

The 'Greater Love' production was created by New Irish Arts, the organisation founded by modern hymn writer Keith Getty which works in partnership with the church to present Christianity through the arts.

The concerts, which feature spoken word, music, multimedia and live visual art, are designed to appeal to a broader spectrum of people than just those who would normally attend church-based concerts.

DUP to introduce bill to exempt religious people from equality laws

Pink News - A DUP politician in Northern Ireland has unveiled plans to introduce a 'conscience clause' – which would allow religious people to ignore equality laws and discriminate against gays.

Asher's Baking Company made headlines this year when it [refused the request of a gay rights activist for a cake showing the message 'Support Gay Marriage', above an image of Sesame Street's Bert and Ernie.](#)

The Equality Commission has since stated that this act broke anti-discrimination laws – but the bakery says it will make a stand for its 'Christian' principles.

Today, MLA Paul Givan has pledged to introduce a private member's bill which would effectively void parts of equality laws – by allowing religious people freedom to discriminate against gays based on their 'conscience'.

He said: "This clause will enhance equality legislation.

"Equality is about ensuring that everybody in society is allowed to live out their lives.

"We now are heading towards a community where it's not just about live and let live – people are now saying, 'you need to affirm my particular lifestyle and if that goes against your conscience, you have to do that'.

"That's not equality; that's intolerance."

He has the backing of First Minister Peter Robinson, who told delegates at the DUP conference: "I have become increasingly alarmed at the uneven pitch upon which rights and equality issues are played out. More and more the balance is tipped against people of faith.

"This has been recently demonstrated by the treatment meted out to the Ashers Baking Company.

"I believe in freedom of conscience. There will often be competing rights and freedoms but, nobody should be compelled or coerced into supporting, sanctioning or promoting views or opinions which conflict with their strongly held religious convictions."

"The publicly-funded Equality Commission has launched an unjustified attack on a small Christian family business. This is simply bullying.

"I contend that the Equality Commission is seeking to use the Ashers case to add a further layer of restrictions on Christian behaviour and practice.

More at -

<http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2014/11/23/northern-ireland-dup-to-introduce-bill-to-exempt-religious-people-from-equality-laws/>

Archbishop of Canterbury visits new church initiatives in Scotland

The Archbishop of Canterbury is completing a two-day visit to Scotland. His visit to Scotland marks the last of his 38 visits to fellow Anglican primates – the most senior of the bishops or archbishops in each autonomous Province of the Anglican Communion – during his first 18 months in office.

Archbishop Justin is being hosted by the Most Rev David Chillingworth, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane and Primus of the Scottish Episcopal Church.

Addressing the Church of England's General Synod last week, [the Archbishop said the Anglican Communion "exists and is flourishing"](#) despite its diversity of views and with many Anglicans living in places of conflict and persecution.

Yesterday morning Archbishop Justin met with Scotland's new First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon. He then met with representatives of other churches and faith groups in Scotland before meeting with the College of Bishops of the Scottish Episcopal Church to discuss the Church's role in society and a range of matters within the worldwide Anglican Communion.

Today the Archbishop will visit the Dundee Centre of Mission – a new Church Army project in the Diocese of Brechin, based in St Luke's Church, Dundee. St Luke's is currently being transformed into a cafe style church where worship and meetings can take place in a relaxed, social setting and plans are underway for an after-school club to be opened there. Part of this project includes working with St Paul's Cathedral, Dundee as there is a recognition that despite its growing congregation there are many people right on the Cathedral's doorstep for whom traditional models of church can be difficult.

Following a meeting with clergy from the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld & Dunblane, the Archbishop will join the Episcopal congregations of Aberdour, Burntisland and Inverkeithing for a brief Act of Worship in St Columba's Church, Aberdour. This visit will also encourage a new initiative which is known as the Fife Church Graft.

This is an initiative between the ABI Churches (Episcopal churches in Aberdour (St Columba's), Burntisland (St Serf's) and Inverkeithing (St Peter's) and St Paul's & St George's Church in Edinburgh. The main objective of this initiative is to establish a Contemporary Family Service -

Connecting Friends, Family and Faith - to help the local community connect with one other.

The Archbishop will then meet a wider group involved from the community at St Fillan's Churchhall, Aberdour before returning to London tomorrow evening.

The visit to Scotland is part of the Archbishop of Canterbury's [series of visits](#) during his first 18 months in office with primates across the worldwide Anglican Communion. The Communion has around 85 million members, spread across 38 Provinces in more than 165 countries. Each of these provinces is autonomous, with its own system of governance.

Wales: Bishops make Fair Trade appeal

Welsh bishops are appealing for congregations to switch to Fair Trade teas and coffees after services and events to help promote justice in the global food market.

The Church in Wales is on course to become the first Fair Trade church province in the Anglican Communion – but it needs 10% more of its congregations to join up before it can reach the landmark.

So far 60% of its churches have committed to using Fair Trade tea, coffee and other products where they can and to learning more about Fair Trade issues. When it reaches 70%, the Church will receive Fair Trade accreditation from Fair Trade Wales.

The bishops made the appeal at an ethical Christmas Market during a landmark Church conference in Llandudno over the weekend. The Time Is Now conference was devoted to looking at ways in which churches could best serve today's communities and was attended by more than 240 people from across Wales.

The Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, John Davies, said promoting equality and justice for people who produce so many of the products we take for granted and use each day was a key Christian concern. He said, "We have made great strides towards becoming a Fair Trade province and we're very nearly there. I hope all our churches will respond so that we exceed the 70% target and help to ensure that our refreshments do not come at the cost of other people's exploitation."

The Revd Carol Wardman, the Bishops' Adviser for Church and Society added, "We're delighted that so many of our churches have committed

themselves to using Fair Trade products (especially tea and coffee), and to praying and raising awareness of the importance of Fair Trade. We're not far from our target now and we're pleased to promote it at this conference. Fair Trade is an important part of the Church's 2020 Vision to reach out with Christian love in action, and a great way to show solidarity with producers all over the world."

The Church in Wales has a number of Fair Trade champions, across its six dioceses, and each of them tries to keep Fair Trade on the agenda of their churches and communities.

For details on how to become a Fair Trade church, please see <http://www.churchinwales.org.uk/society/becoming-a-fairtrade-province/>

Media digest

Guard

Round up of Christmas programmes lists *Desert Island Discs* on Radio 4, on 21 December, which will feature the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby. <http://www.theguardian.com/stage/2014/nov/23/-sp-best-festive-shows-this-christmas-uk>

Mail

Interview with singing Lilly Allen mentions that she has found an unlikely champion in the Bishop of Tewkesbury, Martyn Snow, who praised her work for its anti-misogynist stance.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/event/article-2842844/Lily-Allen-wouldn-t-jealous-m-poster-girl-all.html#ixzz3JxpBjOS1>

Tel (yesterday)

Interview with the new Rector of St Bride's, Rev Canon Dr Alison Joyce in Fleet Street, who it speculates is a likely candidate to be a bishop. She talks about women in the church being on a 'huge journey that's still unfolding.' She also says she prefers working at the coalface as a priest with a congregation rather than what she describes as the more removed role of a bishop.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11247619/Women-bishops-The-hate-mail-was-always-from-other-Christians.html>

Tel/Mail

Reports on how the wife of the Rev Stephen Vincent says she has forgiven him, since he lost his job and has had to leave his vicarage home after having

an affair with a parishioner. They state his wife Erin Vincent, has remained with her husband and says she believes "everyone deserves a second chance". A spokesman for Lichfield Diocese said that it was continuing to offer support to his family.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11248217/Sex-texts-cost-married-vicar-his-job-and-home.html>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2846609/I-forgive-says-wife-vicar-cheated-churchgoer-Priest-sacked-exchanged-hundreds-lurid-texts-member-congregation.html>

Guard/Ind

Article on examining what's behind the snap Ofsted inspection last week which found Sir John Cass Red Coat School, a Church of England secondary with a large Muslim intake, to be 'inadequate'. It says the reaction to Operation Trojan Horse, which has introduced no notice inspections, is a wild attempt to assert a worldview that only knows what it most hates, rather than what it believes. It looks as what it describes as double standards over sex segregation in schools. *Independent Columnist*, Yasmin Alibhai Brown, writes on the issue of extremism in schools saying that all religious schools distort and shrink young minds.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/nov/23/swamp-success-school-racially-profiled-ofsted-political-frenzy>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/sadly-it-needs-to-be-said-again-being-a-muslim-is-not-a-crime-9878718.html>

Guard

Report on new stone carvings at St George's Chapel, in Windsor Castle which it says now include an Earth Mother, the Hindu elephant god Ganesha, and a mouse with a human ear growing out of its back. Architect, Martin Ashley, leading the restoration project, said he was proud of the dean and chapter for accepting the sculptures, which he described as 'full of imagination, wit and intelligence' in the spirit of the chapel's medieval originals.

<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/nov/23/modern-day-grotesques-st-georges-chapel-windsor>

Times

Report on how divorce has a devastating impact on the children of divided couples, leading to poor examination results and driving them to abuse alcohol or drugs, according to a survey commissioned by Resolution, the 6,500-strong association of family lawyers in England and Wales. It states almost two thirds of children whose parents divorced said that the break-up

affected their GCSEs. One in eight said that they had turned to drugs or alcohol to ease the stress.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/life/families/article4276297.ece>

Tel

Further report on Home Secretary Teresa May talking on BBC's Desert Island Discs in which she said she was deeply influenced by her father, the Reverend Hubert Brasier, an Anglican vicar, who died in a car crash in 1981. Choosing two hymns among her discs, including When I Survey The Wondrous Cross, she said her Christian faith was still a central part of how she approaches issues, but added: "It's right that we don't flaunt these things here in British politics."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/conservative/11247946/Theresa-May-on-Tory-leadership-clothes-and-her-Desert-Island-Discs.html>

Star & Mail

Further reports on the memorial service for murdered aid worker Alan Henning at Eccles Parish Church in Eccles, Greater Manchester.

<http://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/411617/Memorial-service-for-murdered-aid-worker-Alan-Henning-held-today>

[http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2845668/SAS-quad-bike-squads-kill-8-jihadis-day-allies-prepare-wipe-map-Daring-raids-UK-Special-Forces-leave-200-enemy-dead-just-four-weeks.html?](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2845668/SAS-quad-bike-squads-kill-8-jihadis-day-allies-prepare-wipe-map-Daring-raids-UK-Special-Forces-leave-200-enemy-dead-just-four-weeks.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)

[ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2845668/SAS-quad-bike-squads-kill-8-jihadis-day-allies-prepare-wipe-map-Daring-raids-UK-Special-Forces-leave-200-enemy-dead-just-four-weeks.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490)