

Bishop's whistle-stop preaching tour supporting women's literacy projects in Africa



Bishop Michael Burrows with Phyllis Grothier, All-Ireland President of the Mothers' Union and the Reverend Margaret Sykes, Diocesan President of MU at Carlow Museum

The Church of Ireland Bishop of Cashel, Ferns and Ossory Michael Burrows is currently undertaking a rapid road tour which began yesterday Wednesday September 13.

Visiting over 66-plus church and schools during his whistle-stop tour, he will present a short sermon outside each chosen venue. Each 5-minute reflection will be based on a text from one of the 66 books of the Bible and will focus on the empowerment of women through literacy.

All money raised will go to Mothers' Union and Feed The Minds women's literacy projects in Ethiopia and the Congo via the Bishops' Appeal Fund.

Bishop Burrows undertakes what he calls 'peregrinations' every two years and previous events have included his one-day rapid rail trip 'Stations at the Stations', a cross-county vintage vehicle event and a church organ playing marathon across the Diocese that encompasses seven counties – Carlow, Kilkenny, Laois, Tipperary, Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow.

“This is a journey, through all the books of the Bible, with an emphasis on what is often hidden – the presence and the role of women,” the Bishop says.

“The tour is about getting out and about in the Diocese, reminding ourselves of how well off we are really, highlighting the value of education and the particular importance of educating women – as many have said ‘when you educate a woman you educate a family’.

Particularly in the developing world, it is women who share the benefits of their education with their families, who work effectively for equality and opportunity and who together hasten the breaking in of the Kingdom of God.

In this journey not only do we consider the gifts and potential of women as humans sharing the image of God, we also explore feminine imagery surrounding the divine.”

Route 66 will take place September 13 - 29 2017. Approximately 10 venues will be visited on each of seven days during that time. Report and photo courtesy The Kilkenny People

Cross-community support for vandalised Derry C of I church

Politicians from the three main political parties in Londonderry visited Christ Church this morning in a joint show of solidarity with the congregation following this week’s break-in at the church. The



Bishop Donal McKeown and politicians from the three main political parties in Londonderry visited Christ Church in a joint show of solidarity with the congregation following this week's break-in at the church.

Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, Rt Rev Ken Good, described the incident – during which the intruders defecated and urinated inside the church – as “sacrilege”.

The politicians who called at the church to express abhorrence at the desecration and support for the parishioners included MLAs Gary Middleton (DUP), Raymond McCartney (Sinn Féin) and Mark Durkan (SDLP). Alderman Drew

Thompson who chairs the local PCSP also attended, along with Cllr John Boyle. Independent councillors Gary Donnelly and Sean Carr visited the church earlier.

The various politicians met the Rector of Christ Church, Archdeacon Robert Miller, who showed them the extent of the damage caused. The Bishop of Derry, Dr Donal McKeown, who is based just across the street in St Eugene's Cathedral, also visited Christ Church to convey his horror at the incident.

The vandals who smashed their way into the church – apparently through a stained glass window – caused extensive damage to the church organ, which is regarded as one of the finest instruments of its kind in Ireland.

Archdeacon Miller said a decanter, used during Holy Communion services, had been stolen during the break-in. Vases of flowers were knocked over and a bible was removed from the lectern and thrown into the church sanctuary. The organ will be out of action for the foreseeable future.

Bishop Ken Good – who visited the church shortly after the vandalism was discovered – said the break-in would come as another setback to parishioners who had had to face

many challenges in recent years. Christ Church was seriously damaged in an arson attack 21 years ago, after which a new organ was installed – the one damaged this week.

Bishop Good says he would love to sit down and have a conversation with the intruders. “I feel compassionate towards those who did this,” the Bishop said on local radio, “because I don’t know what their lives amount to if this is what they have to contribute to society. I’d love to talk to them, to meet them, to sit down and have a conversation with them because there are greater things that they could be doing with their lives than this.”

Bishop Donal McKeown said. “It was with disappointment and sadness that I heard about the vandalism in Christ Church and the desecration of this important place of worship. There has been a long-standing relationship between the congregations in Christchurch and St Eugene's Cathedral across the road. I know from talking to parishioners in the Cathedral that they are terribly shocked by this wanton act.

“This is very distressing for Archdeacon Robert Millar and his parishioners and we want to stand with them at this painful time. We will do what we can to help the Church of Ireland congregation

get their beautiful church back to its original state so that their regular worship of our common Lord can be resumed”

SDLP Councillor Deputy Mayor John Boyle said: "I am saddened to hear of the break in and vandalism at the Christ Church in the city. This is repugnant behaviour and it is sickening to think that the church has been targeted in this way.

"Churches perform an important role in our society and an attack of this nature is a challenge to the entire community. It's my understanding that the church organ was damaged in the attack. This has caused a lot of upset for church users of all denominations and has been particularly distressing to members of the congregation.

"My thoughts are with the clergy and congregation of this long established place of worship. I have no doubt that the entire community will rally round to provide support at this time."

Ulster Unionist Councillor Mary Hamilton said: "I was absolutely disgusted to learn of the vandalism inflicted on Christ Church, Church of Ireland on Infirmary Road in Londonderry.

"This was a truly despicable attack on a place of worship and whoever was responsible must be caught and punished.

"I welcome the condemnation of this incident from other political parties in the City and the support which the Church community has received from across the board."

Archdeacon Miller said he had been heartened by the huge level of support he had received since news of the break-in emerged. He has issued an open invitation to the whole community to attend next Sunday morning's service at Christ Church, which will begin at 11 a.m., to show solidarity with the parishioners of Christ Church.

Minister assures Protestants of sensitivity in centenary commemorations

Protestants have been given direct assurance by Minister for Justice [Charlie Flanagan](#) that there will be "careful planning and most sensitive handling" of centenary commemorations over the next five years, Patsy McGarry reports in the Irish Times.

It followed comments by [Church of Ireland](#) Bishop of Cork Paul Colton that “among some in our Church of [Ireland](#) community (and I’m sure they are not alone) the commemorations [of the War of Independence and the Civil War] are anticipated fearfully and with a certain dread,” he said.

The bishop called for “careful thought and even more careful and sensitive commemoration. This country has to be cautious about how it goes about commemorating events of 100 years ago. Memories are still raw.”

Speaking on Tuesday, the Minister said, “I agree with [Bishop Colton](#). As Minister for Justice and Equality, I wish to assure Bishop Colton and communities of careful planning and most sensitive handling of these events. In this context it is fair to acknowledge that the 2016 events were well received and we will strike the same sensitive note for future events.”

Mr Flanagan was speaking in [Rathdowney](#), Co Laois, where he unveiled a plaque to commemorate the bravery of local man Lance-Sgt Jack Moyney of the Irish Guards who was awarded a Victoria Cross following the Battle of Passchendaele 100 years ago.

Among the attendance was British ambassador [Robin Barnett](#), author and former *Sunday Times* columnist [Kevin Myers](#), as well as members of the Irish Guards Association and the Royal British Legion.

Mr Flanagan said: “Shamefully as a State we lost our memory of Ireland’s involvement in the first World War once we achieved our independence. Events such as this in Rathdowney help us recover our memory of that period of history. I am proud that as a nation we are now embracing the past in a more inclusive and generous way. In so doing, we are merely facing up to reality.”

The unveiling marked the centenary of Jack Moyney’s heroic actions as a then 22-year-old member of the Irish Guards in Belgium on September 13th, 1917, when, after holding out in enemy territory for 96 hours, the Rathdowney native led his 15 men in a charge through enemy ranks to safety.

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/religion-and-beliefs/minister-assures-protestants-of-sensitivity-in-centenary-commemorations-1.3218741>

Trying to convince unionists of the benefits of a united Ireland is 'insulting'

One of Northern Ireland's most senior Orangeman has described the current push to persuade unionists of the benefits of Irish unity post Brexit as "insulting", the Irish News reports

Grand Secretary of the Orange Order, Rev Mervyn Gibson said he "finds it insulting when people even try and convince me of a unionist place in a united Ireland."

"I'm British, I was born British, I will die British and I want no part of a United Ireland, I can't be bought, I can't be bribed," he said.

"I've signed a few Irish passport forms but I wouldn't apply for one on principle because I'm British.

"To assume I would want to change or could be convinced is like saying you could convince people in the south to re-join the Commonwealth, they would be aghast, they would be offended and that's how I feel when people try to persuade me to be part of a United Ireland.

"So, no, I don't want to be part of a United Ireland, I don't care if I'm financially worse off, I'm not for sale," he said.

Rev Gibson added that despite the late Martin McGuinness' IRA past the Orange Order found it easier to deal with the former Deputy First Minister, saying Gerry Adams leading the party without his influence "should make the country nervous".

"For me I think Adams is very unpredictable, with McGuinness previously there was a predictability, I think you could deal with McGuinness easier than you could with Adams.

"There were certainties there but that all went with the Robinson and McGuinness era.

"What we have now should make us all nervous, not just unionists, I think it should make the country nervous," he said.

More at -

<http://www.irishnews.com/news/2017/09/11/news/trying-to-convince-unionists-of-the-benefits-of-a-united-ireland-is-insulting--1132706/>

Stewardship of the planet must begin with better conversations, Archbishop Clarke

Most Rev Richard Clarke, Archbishop of Armagh writing in the recent 'Rite and reason' column in the Irish Times expresses the need for better conversations about the future of our planet.

The Archbishop began stating -

It is a truism that we are living in a culture of adversarial anger. We most readily discover our identity not by establishing what we are, but in finding and vilifying those who are against us.

A cursory engagement with social media will horrify most of us. It reveals a pervasive if anonymised defensive rage. It is an inchoate anger that can also present itself – even more dangerously – in the casual savage violence visible throughout our island.

And it may, indeed, also be a component (albeit clearly not the only element) in the rise in suicidal ideation that threatens so many young lives.

In an apparent corollary, civic discourse (and not merely within political life) is likewise being steadily degraded as a stark binary pose on all

issues becomes the predominant public mindset – no reasoned discussion, simply some new scheme presented with a minimum of nuance and a surfeit of self-righteous assertiveness.

The routes of reasoned persuasion have been replaced by the hasty production of battle-lines. In the midst of this is it not sensible to suggest that more wholesome conversations are needed in our public discourse? In particular, we surely need to consider together not simply the latest momentary squabble but far deeper matters.

Perhaps the most pressing of these is how we human creatures are to face into the future beyond our own individual and immediate tastes and requirements.

What is it to be a responsible human person in a world spiralling out of control? These are serious conversations that those of religious faith and those of humanist conviction should be able to hold, and with a mutual respect and common purpose....

...The Archbishop later comments - we would surely find common cause in the sentiments of [Vatican II's Pastoral Constitution on the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*](#) (31), "One is entitled to think that the future of humanity is in the hands of those who are capable of providing the

generations to come with reasons for life and optimism.”

Such will be the incremental advances in both robotic and computer technology that it is estimated that by the year 2040 at least 50 per cent of jobs undertaken at present by people in every sector of the workplace in the developed world will be done, and more efficiently, by machines.

As more and more people become unneeded in the workplace society will contain an ever-larger proportion of people who are, in material terms, use-less, and consequently without power or influence.

More at -

<https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/rite-reason-stewardship-of-planet-must-begin-with-better-conversations-1.3217017>

US Episcopal bishops head north to Alaska

A 130 strong worldwide assembly of Episcopal bishops will meet in Alaska for the first time this month for a series of meetings and blessings in Fairbanks and Interior villages.

Rt. Rev Mark Lattime, the Bishop of Alaska, said in an interview this week that he's been inviting his fellow bishops to Alaska since he became bishop seven years ago. He learned last year that the House of Bishops had chosen Fairbanks for its fall 2017 meeting.

“This is a historic event,” he said. “I have been extending the invitations, sort of tongue in cheek, not expecting anyone to ever take me up on the offer. But with the new presiding Bishop Michael Curry, he said, ‘Sure, we’re going to come.’ So here they come.”

About 128 bishops and about 78 of their spouses are scheduled to be in Alaska on Sept. 21-26 for one of the body's twice-yearly meetings. The assembly will include meetings, services and trips to eight Interior bush communities.

“We thought it would be important for those that are able and willing to have an opportunity to travel out to one of our villages and to experience what life and ministry is like out there,” Lattime said. “The bishops are also very interested in hearing from the people a little bit about how climate change and economic pressures and all of those things have affected their culture and their traditions.”



The worldwide Episcopal Church's House of Bishops is seen during a 2016 meeting in Detroit. There are 128 bishops signed up to attend the first ever House of Bishops meeting in Alaska from Sept. 21 to Sept. 26 in Fairbanks.

At the main meetings at the Westmark Hotel in Fairbanks, the bishops are expected to take up letters to the church on subjects such as racial reconciliation and care of creation (the Earth), Lattime said. A letter to the church is a kind of

non-binding recommendation from the church's religious leaders.

The Episcopal Church is an American Christian church that split off from the Church of England after the American Revolution. It remains part of the larger Anglican Communion. The first Episcopalian missionaries arrived in Alaska in 1887, and today the state is home to about 6,800 Episcopalians among 48 congregations. Many congregations are in the Upper Yukon River region, where early missionaries came.

Like the U.S. Congress, the leadership of the Episcopal Church is divided into two houses, the House of Deputies — it includes lay leaders and clergy — and the House of Bishops. Bishops are faith leaders of geographical areas, which in the case of the Diocese of Alaska, includes the entire state. Most Episcopal dioceses are in the U.S., but there are a few international dioceses, including in Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe and Taiwan.

In Fairbanks, the House of Bishops meeting will be before a meeting of church leaders within the state from Sept. 28-30.

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