

## **CNI Evening Post May 29**

### **You have a Christian duty to vote on June 8, Northern Irish Catholic bishops tell Westminster electorate**

Northern Ireland's Catholic bishops have urged all those eligible to vote in the forthcoming Westminster elections to do so, saying it is a Christian duty to use their democratic franchise.

The churchmen have identified key issues that voters should ponder before deciding how to cast their vote, including: endemic child poverty, which affects more than 100,000 Northern Irish children; the ongoing reductions in funding for education and health care; the potentially destabilising impact of Brexit; the right to life of all human beings from conception to natural death; and the impact of climate change and global warming.

“The Christian vocation to transform the world in the light of the Gospel commandment to love

includes the duty to participate as informed and co-responsible citizens in the democratic process,” says the statement issued jointly by Archbishop Eamon Martin of Armagh, Bishop John McAreevey of Dromore, Bishop Noel Treanor of Down & Connor, Bishop Donal McKeown of Derry and Monsignor Joseph McGuinness, diocesan administrator of Clogher. (More in Tuesday’s CNI News)

## **Tearfund 'disappointed' as Trump stalls on climate change deal**

The international Christian organisation Tearfund says it is "disappointed" at Donald Trump delaying a final decision on a major climate change pledge. In contrast to the leaders of six other world leaders at a G7 summit in Italy, the US President said he would decide next week on whether to support the Paris Agreement.

## **USPG stands with Philippines' church following 'illegal arrest' of bishop**

Anglican Mission Agency, the USPG is standing in solidarity alongside the Philippines Independent Church following the arrest of a bishop on what it describes as 'the spurious

charge of illegal possession of firearms and ammunitions’.

The Rt Revd Carlo Morales, Bishop of Ozamis – together with his wife, aide and driver – were arrested by police earlier this month. Bishop Carlo and his companions were in a vehicle with Romel Salinas, a consultant of the National Democratic Front (NDFP), a group which promotes ‘national freedom and the democratic rights of the people’.

The police had a warrant for the arrest of Mr Salinas, but no warrant for Bishop Carlo and his companions. According to human rights lawyers - the Union of People’s Lawyers in Mindanao (UPLM) - the arrest of Bishop Carlo was therefore illegal.

The Rt Revd Rhee Timbang, Bishop of Surigao, told USPG: ‘We are deeply saddened and furious about the way Ozamis City [police] treated the arrest and detention of Bishop Carlo Morales and his company. They were treated as common criminals; in fact they are in detention cells together with common criminals. The bishop’s lawyer was barred from being present during the inventory of materials allegedly confiscated from them, and likewise from talking to him initially.’

## **Scottish university to train ministers in Malawi**

A Scottish university has entered into a unique partnership to provide additional training to ministers in one of the world's poorest countries. Aberdeen University has teamed up with Zomba Theological College in Malawi to ensure students no longer have to come to the UK to study special Masters degrees. It is the first UK institution to take a theological postgraduate programme and teach it to church leaders in the African nation, which has strong links to Scotland.

The initiative is supported by the Church of Scotland which is partnered with the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian. (CCAP)

## **Relics of St Oliver Plunkett to be venerated in Cavan next week**

The annual pilgrimage of relics of St Oliver Plunkett to Cavan takes place on Tuesday 6 June.

This will be the fourth year in a row that relics of the 17th century martyr will travel to the Kilmore Diocesan Pastoral Centre, which is located in the

grounds of St Patrick's College, north of Cavan town.

Normally, the relics are kept at St Peter's Church in Drogheda, but thanks to the Knights of St Columbanus in Cavan, it is becoming a custom for some of the relics to be put on display in the Diocese of Kilmore on the Tuesday following the June bank holiday.

"It really is a lovely day," says the diocesan centre's director Seán Coll. "All kinds of people, of all ages and all backgrounds, turn up throughout the day to pray before the relics, seeking St Oliver's intercession for whatever their own private intention may be."

The relics will arrive at the centre at 10 am and will be available for veneration until 10 pm on Tuesday evening. Mass will be celebrated in the chapel at 1.15 pm by Fr Kevin Fay, chaplain to St Patrick's College and Loreto College, Cavan, for those doing examinations at this time, again at 5.45 pm by Fr Ultan McGoohan, director of Kilmore's pastoral services, and at 8 pm by Bishop Leo O'Reilly. Music for the evening Mass will be provided by St Mary's Church Choir, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim. Before each of the three Masses, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be

available – from noon to 1 pm, from 4.30 to 5.30 pm and from 6.30 to 7.45 pm.

Born in Oldcastle, Co Meath in 1625, Oliver Plunkett studied at the Irish College in Rome before being ordained a priest in 1654. He became Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all-Ireland in 1657, at the height of the Penal Laws. While working on the reorganisation of the Irish Church, he was arrested and charged with treason.

## **Catholic missionary praised by George Clooney**

A Catholic missionary, the only doctor serving half a million people in a war-ravaged area of Sudan, has been honoured by George Clooney. Dr Tom Catena, who treats up to 400 inpatients everyday in the Nuba Mountains, has been awarded a prize in recognition of his humanitarian work. Clooney said Dr Catena, and all the Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity finalists, are "modern day heroes" who have put themselves at risk.

## **Message of reconciliation, truth and justice highlighted at German protestant gathering**

Reconciliation was once primarily seen as a message of the church but is now used by secular leaders trying to establish peace in communities torn by conflict and war, the World Council of Churches' (WCC) president for Africa, the Rev. Mary Anne Plaatjies van Huffel, has said at a major Protestant gathering in Germany. "To pursue punitive justice exclusively will not result in reconciliation," said South African theologian Plaatjies van Huffel in a bible study during the 24-28 May German Protestant Kirchentag, or "church festival," in Berlin. "Reconciliation has also to do with the uncovering of the truth and forgiveness."

## **Piano Recital Down Cathedral this Sunday**

Down Cathedral is presenting a Piano Recital by Gustavo Romero this Sunday (June 4). The starting time is 4pm, with all proceeds going to the Down Cathedral Organ Restoration Fund. Tickets (£15) can be purchased from: Down Cathedral Office, Down County Museum and Saint Patrick Centre, Matchett's Music (Belfast) and Michael McCracken (phone 077 7384 6028). Alternatively, recital-goers can pay the £15 admission fee at the door

