

Issue 65 / Summer 2021

n:vision

Transforming Community, Radiating Christ



**FROM THE CRADLE
OF CHRISTIANITY TO:
MAHAJANGA
IRAQ
NEW JERSEY
BOLIVIA**

**PLENTY OF INTERESTING
ARTICLES FOR SUMMER**

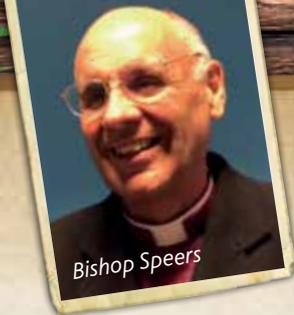
“

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.”

ACTS 1:8



Diocese of
**Derry +
Raphoe**



Bishop Speers

Mad Life

More Lockout than Lockdown

Thank you to all those who have been enquiring recently about my whereabouts.

I am still in the UK. Soon after I arrived here Madagascar had a series of lockdowns in various areas and the strict lockdown in the capital has just been lifted. The international airport has also been closed with just one Air France flight per week which arrives without any passengers and evacuates foreign nationals and diplomats. Ports are also closed to anyone entering the country, so for the time being nobody is allowed into the country.

However, the good news is that, at last, the President has agreed to the importation of the coronavirus vaccine. All the people who are corresponding with me are nervous about having the vaccine as they have heard that it comes from India or is unwanted in the USA.

Sadly, our new bishop of Toliara, Bishop Samitiana, has been very ill with Covid 19 but I hear that he is improving. He asked me to help prepare, via WhatsApp, the Rev Gaston Tsiavandeza, one of his deacons, for ordination to the priesthood, and in

particular to discuss with him Baptism and Holy Communion. Gaston is in the midst of the famine area and in his parish there have been over 1,000 baptisms this year, mostly adults. This deacon has actually participated in more baptisms in his short ministry that I have in my life long ministry! We have had some very interesting conversations about what is essential in life, about the powerful symbolism of water in a place where the drought has lasted 4 years, about the symbolism of eating at Holy Communion where people have died of starvation. It challenges us to reconsider how essential our spiritual nourishment is: the food and drink that sustains us on our pilgrimage to eternal life.

In Mahajanga diocese the building of St Andrew's church continues and currently I am in correspondence with the chairman of our Youth Organisation about the diocesan Youth Rally to be held in August. They have optimistically booked me to speak at that. Also they have optimistically asked for a grant towards travel and food for the delegates. It is to be held in the northern end of the diocese. Like everything else it would be so much easier to organise if I was in Mahajanga.

People ask me if I am using Zoom. Nobody in the diocese has an internet connection so that is not possible. However, I am belatedly learning to communicate via Facebook. Not being IT literate I don't understand why that works when the internet doesn't! My sessions on WhatsApp, etc frequently come to an abrupt stop when the power and/or the connection fails.

It all seems very strange sitting at my desk, overfed and comfortable, dealing directly with people in the midst of such distress. I certainly am very conscious of all our blessings. Thank you for your prayers and support throughout this prolonged time of uncertainty.

Yours +Hall



Editor...



I wonder how many readers remember this ...



Apparently split infinitives are now acceptable and editors can put away the red pens!

This issue of *n:vision* is all about **boldly going** - Christian witness expressed in multiple and diverse ways by both individuals and groups across our Diocese. Being Church in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe is to witness to the love of Jesus Christ and his message for the whole world - **to boldly go**.

Bishop Andrew reminds us of the meaning of our recent celebration of Pentecost, the birth of the Church through the power of the Holy Spirit, whose gifts equip us to be effective Christian witnesses as we exercise the ministry of the Spirit and become strong advocates for Christ in society. As always, "News from the Pews" in *n:vision* reassures us of the encouraging collaboration between clergy and parishioners as they explore the many ways that Christian witness finds expression in parishes right across our Diocese.

At diocesan level this edition of *n:vision* continues to report on the extent of Christian witness borne out by the inspiring work of our various ministries such as DRY, the Ministry of Healing and the extensive ongoing work of Mothers' Union. As always, our middle section reports on the life and times of CJ who, on this occasion, explains to our youngest readers that they can in their own special way give witness to the fact that our God is Big, our God is Great! I have included a two-page feature on pilgrimage, which is to travel under the direction of the Holy Spirit in order to give witness to the sacredness of special places associated with significant Christian events and with particular saints. This article also includes a challenge!

In continuing celebration of the 1500th anniversary this year of Saint Columba's birth you will find an article on his missionary life and work, as he **boldly went**, witnessing to Christ as Saviour and the Light of the world.

On the international stage our readers will find three specific articles on bold and courageous Christian witness. From Jerusalem, to Iraq, to Mahajanga, we read of brave witnesses, striving to survive, to grow in the Christian life and give strong witness to their faith.

This is the summer issue of *n:vision* so I hope you are able to make time to enjoy the read - from Traidcraft to Templars!

I offer my sincere thanks to all our contributors who help to make *n:vision* itself a medium for witnessing, which seeks to give encouragement and testimony to all our readers that the Christian Church is alive and thriving in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe. A special word of thanks to Gavin, Mark, Eric and David - *n:vision's* vital distribution chain.

Rev Canon Katie McAteer, the Editor
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Rejoice in the Lord always

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:4-7)

It was about sixteen years after the death of Jesus that Paul made his first missionary journey to convert Jews and non-Jews to Christianity. Paul's letter to the Philippians like others he wrote was to give guidance to the early Christian communities he had established. It is thought he was particularly fond of the Philippians and keen to express his appreciation of the practical support they had shown him in many ways.

Throughout the letter he encourages them to live out their faith in joy and unity. Some years ago (longer than I care to put a

number on) I was working in West Africa for the Girls' Friendly Society (GFS) which was supported by a worldwide project to work with branches and run leadership training sessions. I was in a branch meeting in Liberia when the leader asked us all to share the biblical verse which was most important to us. My head was spinning because so many different verses were going round in my head, so I decided to settle on verses which had been part of my daily reading that morning (Philippians 4:4-7). These verses have become a foundation of my faith and a go to for the many challenges and celebrations I have had during my life.

Life, as many would agree, is a journey. There are many bumps and bends on the way but also times to take in and enjoy the surroundings. I have been fortunate to experience God with me on my journey and I consider that a gift without measure. These verses I feel encourage us to recognise and acknowledge God working

in our lives and remind us to say thank you. I realise I do not always recognise and acknowledge his intervention but when I do, I am overwhelmed and remind myself - there are no coincidences with God.

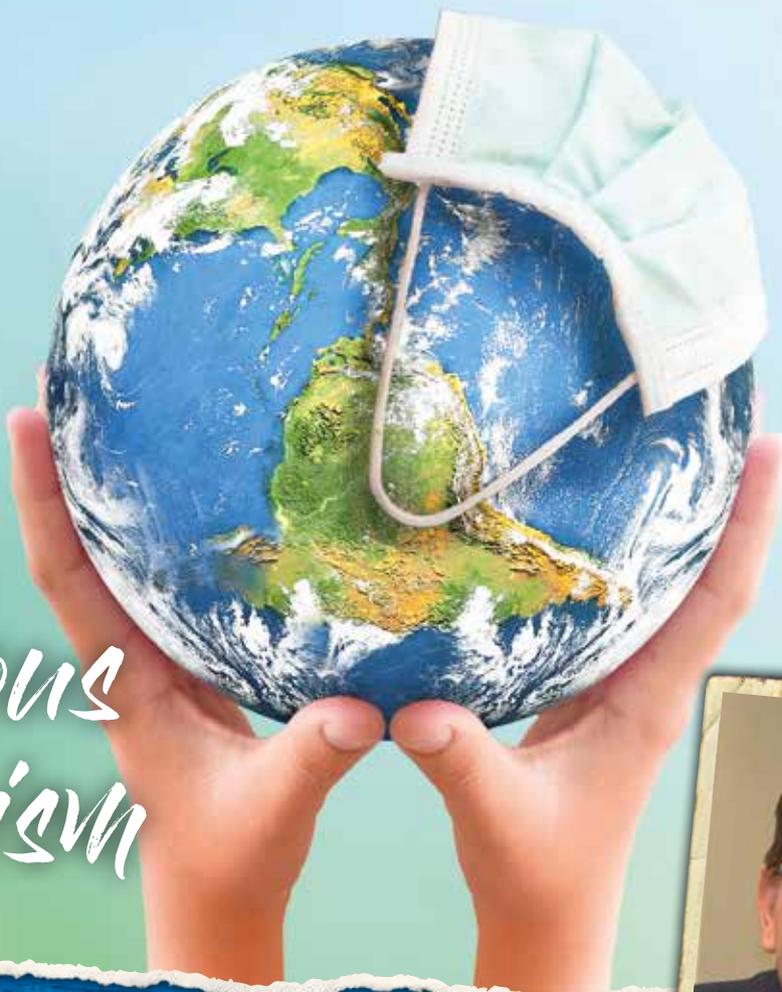
These verses also emphasise the Christian teaching Paul encouraged, that we should be inclusive to all and treat everyone the way we would like to be treated ourselves. I have had many challenges in my life, and I have been so thankful to all those, many quite different from myself, who have been there to support and guide me. Much of the witness of others in our lives is the evidence of God's implicit and never-ending love in his care for us and because of that, the assurance of this peace knowing that our outer circumstances can never take away the peace we have with God.

Eva Wright



**Bishop
Andrew**

writes...



Cautious Optimism



Dear friends,

Pentecost Sunday - often regarded as the birthday of the Church - assumed a special resonance this year, coming as it did, just a week after the reopening of our churches in the Raphoe part of our united diocese.

Reopenings, both North and South, have given us cause for hope and even cautious optimism as we continue to navigate our way through the worst global pandemic in over 100 years.

For me, one of the dominant words of this last year has been 'loss': the physical loss of loved ones, the loss of jobs, the loss of security, the loss of opportunities, the loss of spontaneity, and so much more loss.

Psalms 11:3 asks, "When the foundations are shaken, what will the righteous do?" The foundations of our society, indeed of our whole world, are shaking and perhaps the hope of Pentecost can help us in this time of uncertainty.

The disciples' world had been shaken after the Ascension; cowering together in the upper room, they were terrified and uncertain of the future until the Holy Spirit came upon them and transformed their fear into boldness and their uncertainty into unshakeable conviction. This is the same Holy Spirit who dwells in the heart of God's people today and who, I believe, can lead each of us through our present difficulties.

I want to share with you four words that I'd like you to reflect on, and that can help us understand the ministry of the Spirit.

COMFORT: Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as the Comforter. For me this speaks of God's intimate concern for us and the circumstances we face.

CHALLENGE: the Spirit challenges us to live our lives more effectively for God. We are challenged as to what is right and what is wrong, as well as to live out our call as children of God.

PRESENCE: it is through the Spirit that we experience the presence of God in the everyday as well as the extraordinary. The Pentecost 'gift' to us is the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

POWER: throughout the history of the Church, Christians have testified to the power of the Holy Spirit enabling them to do things they never thought possible and to live transformed lives.

When the foundations shake in your life, ask God for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit so that you will know His comfort and challenge, His presence and power.

+Andrew Derry & Raphoe

Daily Worship



...with the Church of Ireland

How can you put our well-known rhythms of worship from the Book of Common Prayer and daily Bible readings into your pocket anywhere you go? The answer, if you have a smartphone or tablet, is the Church of Ireland's Daily Worship app which shares readings and prayers for each day of the year.

The app, which is available for Apple and Android devices, seeks to help readers to grow in relationship with God through daily prayer, and to read and meditate on Scripture, perhaps by filling the time between meetings with worship or starting and finishing our days in His presence. Liturgies are provided for five regular services of worship - Holy Communion, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, A Late Evening Office, and Compline - and special services for feast days.

It can assist those who are preparing to lead worship, take intercessory prayers, or read from the Bible during a service. Daily

Worship can also be useful for preparing orders of service or screen projections for use in a parish setting or in other gatherings. It gives every reader an opportunity to reflect and connect with God amid the busyness of life, through readings and prayers which we share with Anglicans and other Christians across the world.

Bible passages are from the New Revised Standard Version and therefore may vary between the app and the Book of Common Prayer. Text sizes can be adjusted to suit the needs of the reader and the in-app calendar allows browsing by date to future or past readings; pages can be saved on your device for quick offline access.

If you have any queries about the functioning of the app, please email dailyworshipapp@ireland.anglican.org - however, if your question is regarding payment or refunds, please contact the appropriate app store directly. Pricing is modest at \$0.99 in the App Store and

£1.19 (or euro equivalent) in Google Play. In the sometimes listless days of lockdown, I've found Daily Worship helpful to make myself more familiar with our Weekday Intercessions and Thanksgivings, which cover every situation in life, and to recall and dwell on the comforting promises of the Benedictus: *'In the tender compassion of our God, the dawn from on high shall break upon us. To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death and to guide our feet into the way of peace.'*

And in these brighter times, all of us can be inspired and encouraged, in each passing day, by the words which God gives us and those which have been thoughtfully written to bring us closer to Him in prayer.

Peter Cheney is the Church of Ireland's Press Officer. For a browse through the Daily Worship app beginner's guide, please visit www.ireland.anglican.org/dailyworshipapp

Commercial Break ...



There are many organisations looking for finance to support what they are doing to look after our environment, the needs of people throughout the world, our churches, and many other issues. Online donations, money in jars and fund raisers are all ways of encouraging us to give. But there are other ways too that we can contribute to our own wellbeing and that of others based on our regular trips to the shops.

Like many other industries, cotton production in India relies on child labour. They and other workers are vulnerable to health problems in the processing of the cotton. They are expected to make 600-800 garments a day, and yet do not earn in a month enough to buy a t-shirt. This Fairtrade t-shirt is a beautiful fit and feel and washes very well. In wearing one of these you will have ensured that there is better protection for workers from the use of toxic chemicals, that living conditions for families will improve and that there will be opportunities for children to go to school.



By buying Fairtrade chocolate you will be ensuring that cocoa farmers in Ghana will be getting a fair price for their beans which, in turn, helps them to avoid using their children as child labour. Currently 1.56 million children in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire are used in this way. It also encourages them to use resources to improve the quality of their beans and the land on which they are grown.



Meru Herbs is a co-operative of family farmers who produce jams and sauces without the use of fertilisers and chemicals. They are focused on women empowerment, sustainable livelihoods, alleviating poverty, and improving the standards of living in Kenya.



Kenya is the third largest producer of tea in the world and yet 75% of the population live below the poverty line. Child labour is common and many of them die due to lack of treatment for preventable diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea, and malnutrition.... Oh, taste and see how good a cup of this tea will taste and you will be helping to overcome these issues.

Buying any item with a Fairtrade logo means you are helping to improve the dignity and quality of life for many... happy shopping!

Eva Wright

SAINT COLUMBA AND THE DERRY CONNECTION

Columba, or Columbkille (the dove of the church), was born in Gartan, near Letterkenny, on 7th December 521. (This year marks the 1500th anniversary of his birth). He died on the island of Iona in Scotland on 9th June 597 and is buried at Downpatrick close to the burial place of Patrick and Brigid.

Columba was the son of Fedelmidh, a descendent of Niall of the Nine Hostages, and Ethne who was of the royal house of Leinster. He was born into an important position in Ireland and was among the eligible group from which the next High King of Ireland would be chosen. Columba, however, decided to follow a different path in life and he studied at two of the great monastic schools of the time - Movilla, near Newtownards in County Down, and Clonard in County Meath.

He decided that he would prefer to follow the monastic life and in 546 he built his first monastery and school of learning in Derry (the place of the oak grove), not far from the present day Saint Augustine's Church. This monastery became the centre from which he and his monastic brothers spread out to found communities in other parts of the country. Part of Columba's life was marked by trials and tribulations and, due to a tribal feud (The Battle of Cul Dremne, near Sligo) in which many lives were lost, Columba decided to exile himself to a foreign place far from his native land.

In May 563 he and his twelve companions, including his uncle Ernan, sailed in a curragh from Shrove Head,

near Derry, to the island of Iona in Scotland where they built a monastery that was to be his home for the rest of his life. When the Cathedral was built between 1628 and 1633 it seemed appropriate upon its completion that, being the Mother Church of the Diocese of Derry, it should be given the designation 'Saint Columb'. Today, although any visual connections with Saint Columba have long ceased to exist, there are a number of artefacts in the Cathedral that remind us of our Patron Saint.

On entering the Porch one finds the original foundation stone of the Cathedral dating from 1633. Inserted into this stone is a small stone believed to be from the original Columban Church.

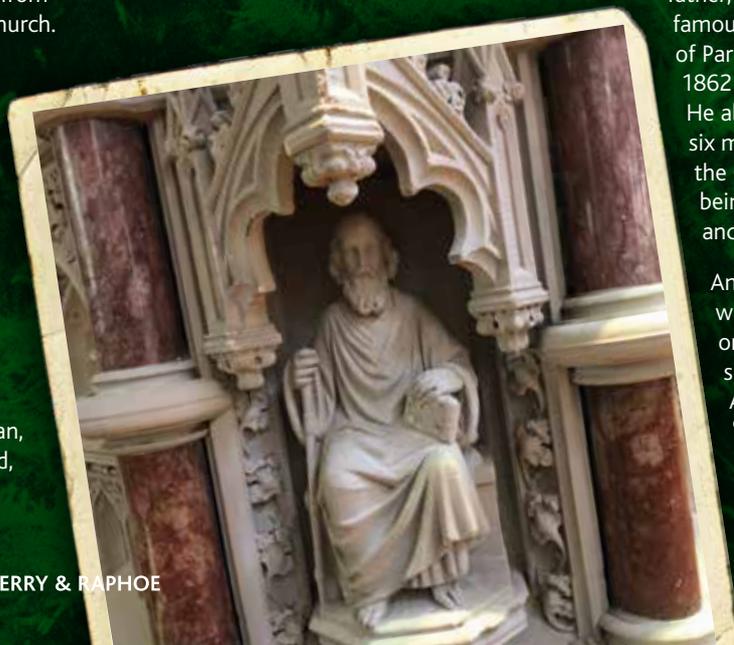
Built in 1164 this church, named Teampall Mor (The Great Church), is the church from which The Parish of Templemore (in which the Cathedral stands) takes its name. When translated, the Latin text on this small stone reads: 'The True God is in His Temple and is

to be truly worshipped'. The Great Church, it is believed, was in the vicinity of the site of the present day Long Tower Church. A round tower that stood on this site until the 17th century was one of the wonders of its day. In this period Derry became head of all of the Columban churches in Ireland.

While the Norman Invasion curbed the influence of the Abbey, it continued to exist until the 16th century, and the Teampall Mor became the medieval cathedral. The building was destroyed by an explosion in 1568 when it was being used as a gunpowder store. In the early 1600s, Sir Henry Docwra used the stones from Teampall Mor in the building of the walls and ramparts of the city. In the Vestibule there are two stone carvings depicting Saint Patrick and Saint Columba.

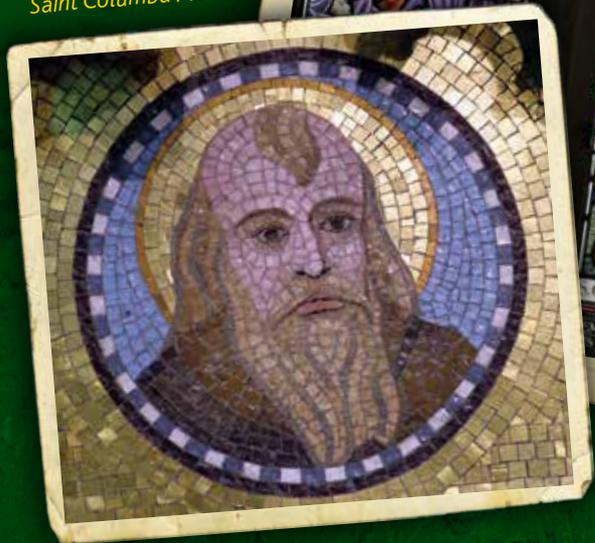
The figure represented in the centre of the pulpit, presented by The Reverend Canon Joseph McCormick, Rector of Saint James', Picadilly, London, in memory of his father, William McCormick, MP, a famous civil engineer and Member of Parliament for the City from 1862 to 1865, is of Saint Columba. He also is represented in one of six mosaics on the reredos in the Chancel; the other figures being the four Evangelists and Saint Patrick.

Among the 24 stained-glass windows in the Cathedral is one of particular note and sited in The Bishop William Alexander Chapel. The 'Columban Window', the gift of Mrs Corscaden Phillips



Pulpit at The Cathedral Church of Saint Columba

Saint Columba Mosaic



Columban Window in The Cathedral Church of Saint Columb

of Lanowlee Hall, in memory of William Phillips, JP, a local ship-owner, was designed by Clokey's of Belfast and A.L. and C.E. Moore, and dedicated on 17th July 1927. It depicts scenes from the life of Saint Columba. The first panel shows Columba and his companions leaving these shores in 563 for the island of Iona. The central panel provides enlightenment on how Columba, who had vowed he would never set foot again on Irish soil, actually overcame his dilemma to allow him to attend a special Convention of Drumceatt (578/9) outside the town of Limavady - by having sods of Scottish soil attached to his feet! The third panel depicts Columba's death on Iona on 9th June 597.

Columba, on his death bed, is believed to have said to his brothers: 'My children, these are my last words. Have real love for each other and peace'. The Cathedral Church of Saint Columb seeks to respect the Saint's final words in every aspect of its life and witness. Visitor and parishioner alike will, hopefully, discover that the Cathedral is a place of welcome for all; a place of

friendship, openness, acceptance and inclusiveness.

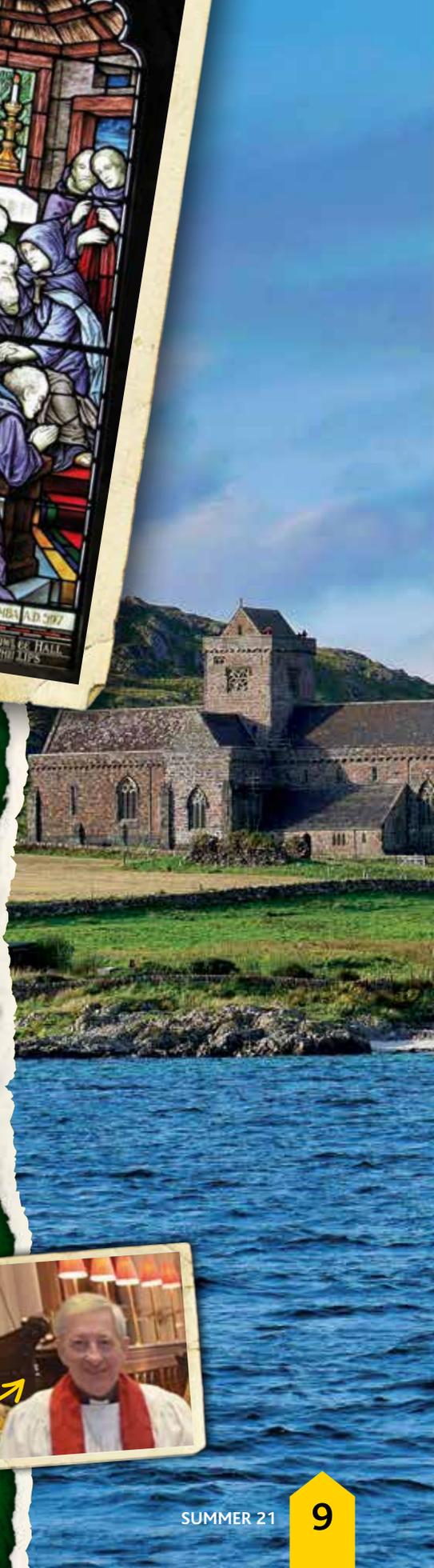
Since March 2020 the Cathedral has remained closed to visitors but, hopefully, in the coming months we will be able to reopen our doors and welcome many people to this building full of history and hallowed by generations of prayer and worship. We are, especially, looking forward later in the year to welcoming visitors to an Exhibition in the Chapter House of the Cathedral. The Exhibition, arranged by Ian Bartlett, Richard Doherty and Tim Webster, will focus on the life of Saint Columba. It will also feature the series of reproductions of folios from The Book of Kells executed by the late Cyril Morrison, an expert calligraphic artist.

(It is believed that the famous Book of Kells emanated from Kells, one of the monastic sites founded by Saint Columba).

***(The Very Reverend) Raymond Stewart
Rector of The Parish of Templemore and
Dean of Derry***



Photographs courtesy of Ian Bartlett



Recipes

to spice up your Summer

Beef Stroganoff

from **Chris McMenamin**,
Head Chef at Harvey's Point.

Ingredients:

1 white onion, diced; 20 button mushrooms, sliced;
20g garlic puree; 2lbs diced cooked beef; 1 tbsp
English mustard; 20g mixed herbs; 100ml brandy;
3000ml white wine; 750ml double cream.

Method:

In a pot sweat off mushrooms, onion, garlic, herbs
and mustard for 5 minutes. Add the beef and brandy.
Reduce the brandy completely and add the wine.
Reduce by half and add the cream. Reduce until the
cream coats a spoon. Serve with long grain rice.



Lavender & Honey Panna Cotta

from **Rachel Allen**

Ingredients:

10 stalks of lavender (2sp buds if already off the stalk);
300ml double or regular cream; 40g honey; 1 sheet of
gelatine; fresh raspberries or poached peaches to serve.

Method:

Pick the flower buds from the lavender stalks and place in a
saucepan with the cream and
honey. Place on a medium heat
and bring just to the boil, then
remove from the heat and allow
to infuse for 10mins. Place the
gelatine sheet in a bowl of
cold water for 3-5mins, until
softened. Remove the gelatine
from its soaking water and
squeeze out any excess liquid.
Rewarm the cream mixture
and drop in the softened
gelatine, stir to dissolve, then strain
through a sieve and divide into four serving glasses or
little pots. Leave in the fridge to set for about 3-4 hours.
Serve with fresh raspberries or poached peaches.



*Recipes from Chris McMenamin and Rachel Allen
reproduced by permission from Venerable David Huss.
Copies of A Donegal Cook Book available from him.*

Vegetarian Sausage Rolls

(just perfect for a picnic!) from Mums' Marvellous Meals collection of recipes available from your local Mothers' Union

Ingredients: (makes about 16/20 rolls)

1 x 340g pack of ready-rolled puff pastry; Oil for brushing the pastry; 2tbsp white or black sesame seeds.

For the filling: 1 x 400g tin of butter beans; 3 cloves of garlic; 100g walnuts; 2 tbsp tamari/soy sauce; 4 tbsp ground flax seeds; 1 tsp sea salt; ½ tsp smoked paprika; 1 tsp ground coriander; ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper; 2 tbsp oil; 2tsp dried Italian herbs.

Method:

1. If the pastry is frozen, defrost it according to instructions.
2. Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F, line a tray with baking parchment.
3. To make filling, drain and rinse butter beans and put them into a food processor with other filling ingredients, blend until smooth.
4. Place the sheet of puff pastry on the baking parchment and cut the pastry in half lengthways.
5. Divide the filling mixture in two, roll each into a long sausage and lay them along the two sheets of pastry.
6. Brush along one long edge of the pastry with oil or water and roll the pastry over the filling quite tightly with the seam underneath.
7. Brush the length of the pastry with oil and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
8. Cut each roll into bite size pieces (about 4cm long) and spread the rolls evenly on the baking sheet.
9. Bake in the preheated oven for 20 mins approx. until the rolls are golden. Can be eaten hot or cold.



Christian Aid *Just Scripture*

'There is a feeling amongst us all that we have been truly blessed through those two hours this morning.'

Richard, Manchester.

For the last couple of years Christian Aid has been connecting communities, in real time across the world, to discuss a passage of Scripture and how it can equip or inspire them to take action on injustice in a programme called **Just Scripture**. Inspired by Contextual Bible Study communities in South Africa and Intercultural Biblical Dialogue developed in Bolivia, it has truly been created in global partnership.

'I will never forget that moment as we discussed the healing of Namaan (2 Kings 5). We were talking all about the actions of the great military leader, the great prophet and the two kings in the story when our friends in Bolivia pointed out that the key person in the story was in fact the unnamed, marginalised slave girl. Our western views of power were well and truly challenged.' Laurence, Dublin.

A typical **Just Scripture** session includes worship, prayer, a chance to share our own contexts and an extended time of reading and reflection on Scripture. Insights are shared together and commitments to action are discerned.

We seek to strengthen harmony rooted in faith between communities across the world, and to grow the movement of people that challenge - and change - the systems and structures that perpetuate poverty and inequality across the world.

'The session was very reassuring and keeps us strong in the midst of the challenging issues of the times. We are one in our advocacy for a just world. So grateful for this privileged moment. Never have we done Bible Sharing across the seas before..' Boyet, Philippines.

We want to build a transformational relationship with our partners around the world. The **Just Scripture** programme allows both our partners and supporters to be changed through listening, reading and understanding.

If you or your community would like to get involved and run a **Just Scripture** session please contact us on 01 496 7040 or email Michael on mbriggs@christian-aid.org.

'We are one and so our home is with each other.' Manochia, Haiti.

christian
aid



Dublin Methodists take part in Just Scripture, Bible study with Bolivia

A life in the day of ...

Robin Swann

*Northern Ireland's
Minister of Health...*



This is my 10th year in elected office and, whilst I've held different roles from Committee Chair to Party Leader, I never thought for one moment that I'd be Northern Ireland's Minister of Health.

It's by far the biggest and most far-reaching of all the local Executive Departments, but most importantly it's the Department that has day-to-day responsibility for ensuring the health and wellbeing of the local population. In quieter moments it can still sometimes be a surreal feeling to think about the responsibility of the office, but I was raised to never duck away from a challenge!

My mother worked for many years as a hospital cleaner so I also see it as an opportunity to continue the family tradition of contributing to the Health Service.

Like everyone else, my family have our own personal connections to the NHS, from joyous moments of birth to the more painful moments that inevitably come with the end of life. Of course there are the many trials and tribulations that come in between. The Health Service was there when my son Evan most needed it - he spent the first year of his life in the Royal Victoria Hospital - so it was an honour to have been given the opportunity to lead the Health Service.

The last 15 months have been a daunting time for us all - no matter what job we have, where we live or whether we have a faith or not - Covid left no lives untouched.

The pandemic has tested us as a society and citizens like never before. I remember the day well that we found our first positive case - I was speaking at a drugs summit in Glasgow, attending along with the Chief Medical Officer. There have been some incredibly uplifting days since, such as when the first vaccine was approved and I was able to officially de-escalate the emergency Nightingale Critical Care Hospital, but unfortunately there have been many more challenging and troubling days.

What I remember most vividly from the start of the pandemic was the palpable sense of fear that was in the air last March. People across the UK were watching the scenes on their televisions. We knew this invisible virus was coming but no one really knew for sure how it would unfold. We just knew the weeks that followed were going to be difficult and so they were.

Many people naturally turned to their faith for comfort and quite often some reassuring familiarity. Like so many others I also took solace from my own personal belief,

not only at that time but in the period since.

I'm very conscious that I've sometimes been one of the public faces in the response to the pandemic. That has been a heavy burden. I signed up to it, however, when I became a politician but my family didn't, so that's why, when I get threats or deeply personal criticisms, I try to shield them from it as much as is possible.

Of course not everyone will have agreed with every decision I took, nor every statement I made but, no matter how tough things got, I knew I had the support of my family.

That is why after a long day in the Department I like nothing more than switching off at home and spending time with my wife Jenny, two kids and with the family Jack Russel.

Mary Good Reviews:

Jesus Feminist

God's Radical Notion that
Women Are People Too

by Sarah Bessey



I decided to read this book after hearing the author, Sarah Bessey, interviewed on one of my favourite podcasts. (Potter's Inn, Soul Care Conversations). I was so impressed by it that I have now sent a copy to each of the significant women in our family!

Bessey's style is more conversational than academic, weaving in a lot of accounts from her own life story in disarmingly helpful ways. The book is structured around the notion that we are a group of friends sitting around a fire on a beach, talking and sharing our ideas throughout a summer night. By returning to this concept throughout, she helps the reader realise this is a conversation amongst friends, not a haranguing diatribe seeking to browbeat one another; but instead reminding the reader that we must always approach one another in a spirit of love, not an 'I'm right, so listen to me' attitude.

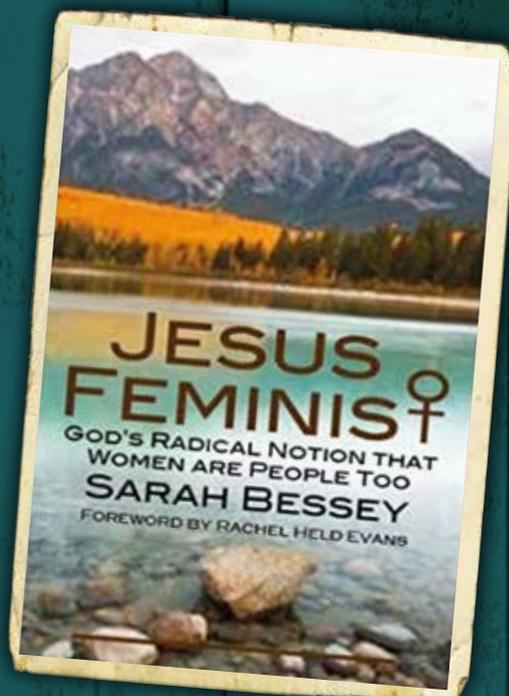
Chapters deal with issues like the truth that women are created to stand alongside

men, that we have unique, God-given characteristics that fit perfectly into the work of the kingdom as well as the more predictable themes of ordination and keeping women in the kitchen and home. However, Bessey also touches on women's wider roles within the church, women of history and scripture, and the 'church ladies'. Her main argument is that Jesus himself was the archetype feminist and so we can embrace the term in a new and wholesome way.

It is a challenging but, above all, inspiring book. One for both men and women, reminding us all that ours is a ministry of moving mountains, one stone at a time.

I commend Jesus Feminist to all - men and women alike - as chosen, loved, gifted and set free to serve in the world, the church, our kitchens, nurseries, businesses, indeed any corner in which we find ourselves.

By Mary Good



Create!

I come from a line of women who were able to create the most amazing things with their hands.

My Granny on my dad's side was the best baker I have ever come across and, no matter what I try, my Christmas cake is nowhere near as good as hers. My Granny on my mum's side could crochet and knit the most beautiful cardigans and blankets - there isn't a baby in our family who didn't receive the most amazing bundle of handmade gifts when they were born. My mum and my sister are both brilliant sewers. The handmade quilts they have hanging in their houses, and mine too, because of their skills, really are works of art. As for me, I try a little of everything!

Baking is something I do for fun. I tried sewing, mainly embroidery, and I did enjoy it, but I can't do anything in a straight line which made using the sewing machine a challenge, so I lay that hobby to one side. Then came crocheting. I used money both Grannies gave me for Christmas to take crochet lessons a few years ago and I was hooked, pardon the pun, from day one. It was challenging, learning to read patterns, the terminology, and simply not getting the wool tangled but I persevered with it and now there is always a project on the go. Friends who have children get a few baby blankets, more get added to the collection to go to the neonatal unit in the hospital, and other presents are made. Sometimes the projects can be more complex and need lots of thought. Other times it is muscle memory that goes from round to round, but all the time my mind is free to wander and think and often pray.

Sarah Bessy, a Canadian author who also knits, describes creating things as '... bringing order out of chaos, beauty out of emptiness, something out of nothing, and so we're glorifying Creator, we're reflecting Creator, we're testifying to Creator.' When I first read that, I thought wow! All the time I spend creating is actually glorifying God, taking the skills he gave me, the products that he helped to create and making them into something different is a way I can serve him, and others at the same time.

Creating anything takes time, patience, and work. Sometimes the end results are more than we expected, other times they are a disaster, and we have to go back to the drawing board, figure out where we went wrong and try again. There is a method to what we do, a comfort and familiarity which can be difficult to find in everyday life, especially at this time, but we can find examples of this in prayer, familiar services and worship. By doing this we take time to build our relationship with the Creator, to take comfort from him, and learn from him and others. For me, crochet is an escape, but also a chance to rest with God.

If you get the chance spend some time creating with the Creator!

Kirsty McCartney



BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

The Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem *Ordo Supremus militaris Templi Hierosolymitani* (OSMTH)

Venerable Robert Miller



Jesus's declaration on the Mount, "Blessed are the peacemakers", is a teaching I take seriously. I am passionate about peace and reconciliation. It is easy to love 'peace'; peace-making requires a lot more effort.

It also needs a team. You can understand my interest, therefore, after I was asked if I would consider becoming involved in an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) that was active in international advocacy, diplomacy and bridge-building. OSMTH International was establishing itself in Ireland. My first question was, "Who are OSMTH?" OSMTH stands for *Ordo Supremus militaris Templi Hierosolymitani*. For those (like me) who weren't paying attention in Latin class, that means 'The Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem'. It's a bit of a mouthful in both languages.

The Order is a modern, ecumenical Christian order of chivalry whose members undertake work, locally and nationally, in the fields of charity, volunteering and humanitarian relief, drawing their inspiration and values from monastic forebears and striving to meet the needs of a modern world. OSMTH takes inspiration from the traditions and highest ideals of the medieval Christian military and monastic order, the Knights Templar, who were founded by Hugh de Payens around 1118, to protect and support pilgrims. In a spirit of Christian compassion, OSMTH directs its own humanitarian work towards all people - irrespective of creed or ethnicity - who are afflicted by poverty, injustice, conflict or disaster. The Order aspires to be the modern organisation the original Knights Templar might have become, if their historical development had not been broken. Like other orders of military and monastic origin, whose traditions stem from Jerusalem in the Middle Ages, members have long put away their swords - other than for ceremonial

occasions(!) - turning their attention, instead, to charitable, cultural and humanitarian endeavours, and to reconciliation. Today's Templars in OSMTH seek, by personal example and collective action, to put into practice the highest ideals of the code of chivalry and the personal rule of Christian life, inspired by the original Templars' spiritual father, St Bernard of Clairvaux. It was clear from my initial conversations that OSMTH would offer international fellowship and support. Engaging would offer fellowship with other peacebuilders who have international experience and are motivated by their Christian faith.

I was eager to discover more: what did the values OSMTH espouses lead it to do in practice? I learned that the Order has a range of collective programmes in operation around the world. In choosing and implementing these, the modern Order seeks:

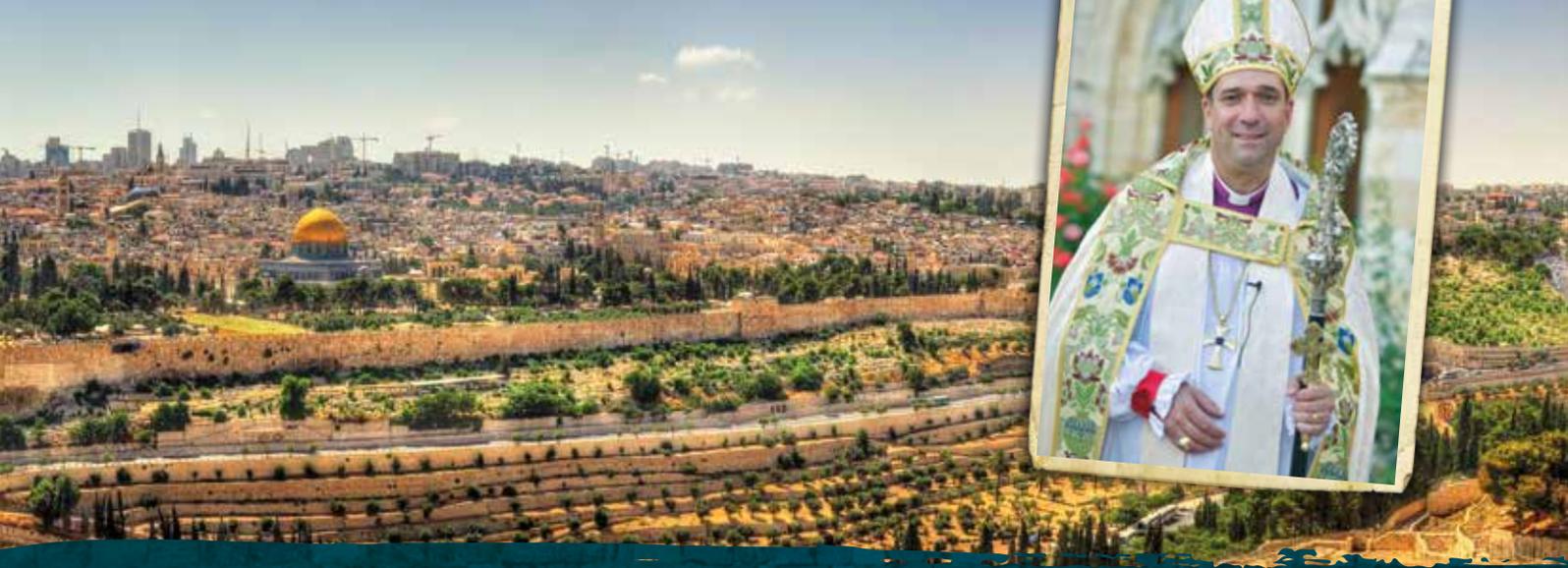
- *to promote dialogue among, and between, the Abrahamic faiths and the other great religions of the world with a view to establishing better understanding and greater tolerance;*
- *to assist Christian communities around the world, and especially in the Holy Land, whenever their human rights are at risk;*
- *to build bridges of understanding and support between the Eastern and Western Churches of the Christian faith;*
- *as a UN-recognised NGO, to support the United Nations and other international civil society organisations by active participation in disaster relief programmes, humanitarian aid, peacebuilding and sustainable development, that respect the full range of human diversity; and*
- *to advocate - through the United Nations and other forums - for human rights, with an emphasis on the status of women, religious freedom, peacebuilding, and the provision of clean water for all at an affordable price.*

At present, there are more than 20 members of OSMTH Ireland and, as such, we are termed a 'Commandery'. We are currently being mentored by the Grand Priory UK, until such time as we become the Grand Priory Ireland, hopefully in the not so distant future. We have chosen to name our Commandery after St Enda of Aran, who is considered the founder of monasticism in Ireland and whose feast day falls on March 21st.

The Commander in Ireland intends to carve out a role in promoting the vision and values of OSMTH across the island by assisting local charities and organisations which promote Christian values. Another logical 'natural fit' - drawing upon history and experience of our own peace process - would be in encouraging communities, organisations and local governments to work toward improving the lives of all our citizens. This role is consistent with supporting the Good Friday Agreement, which the Order considers fundamental to encouraging peace and reconciliation here and a worthwhile template for its work internationally. In the future, we hope to have representation in all four provinces in Ireland and local members working within their communities.

Membership is open to all. If you are interested in discovering more, please email Archdeacon Robert Miller (archdeacon@derry.anglican.org) who is Chaplain in the Commandery of St Enda. The Commandery is seeking to grow and eventually establish a Grand Priory in Ireland with the support of the Grand Priory of the United Kingdom. In the next issue I will be interviewing the international Grand Commander of the Order. In the next issue I will be interviewing the international Grand Commander of the Order.

You can also have a look on the Facebook pages OSMTH Ireland, and www.osmth.org



From the Cradle of Christianity

On 17th May Archbishop Hosam Elias Noam (Anglican Archbishop of Jerusalem) said, "Over the past week, we have seen the rapid escalation of violence throughout the Holy Land: in the air attacks launched against Gaza and Central Israel, in the rioting between extremists in ethnically mixed cities, and in the continuing conflicts between protesters and police over the pending evictions in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, of which Saint George's Cathedral is a part."

Archbishop Hosam concluded his statement: "I ask those within the Anglican Communion and all of Christendom to join with us in offering the following prayer".

Almighty and Everlasting God: Our days are in your hands; we lift up all those in the Holy Land who are victims of violence and injustice, that you might empower your Church to bring healing to the wounded, relief to the suffering, and comfort to those who mourn; we pray also that you would soften the hearts of all those involved in the recent conflicts, that they would be led to work for justice and lasting peace in the land where your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ first came to bring hope and abundant life to all people; these things we ask in his Holy Name. Amen.

On 19th May I spoke by phone to the Archbishop's Chaplain, Canon Don Binder, in his office in Jerusalem. Despite more pressing matters Canon Don



was most gracious in speaking to me about the life of St George's Cathedral in Jerusalem and Christian witness throughout the Diocese of Jerusalem. Whilst the world news has focussed on the recent upsurge in violence, Canon Don reminded me that this conflict is thousands of years old and is, in its present form, at least 100 years old. Uppermost in his mind were incidents surrounding the events of Ascension Day, May 13, 2021.

Despite the sadness and pain of the security situation in the country, the city of Al-Quds, Al-Sharif and the Palestinian people, the church celebrated with new hope and an atmosphere of joy in Saint George's Martyr Cathedral in East Jerusalem, the inauguration of the sovereignty of Archbishop Dr. Hosam Elias Noam, the Archbishop of Al-Quds and the fifteenth Bishop of Jerusalem Episcopal Rainbow, in the presence of Bishops from the Anglican world and former Archbishop Sohail Dwani, the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Lviv churches, priests and herdsmen from the West Bank, the coast, the Galilee, the delegates of the subjects and the communal institutions of the Holy Land, the patronage of Jerusalem, and diplomatic figures, a representative of the Palestinian Authority, as well as the Israeli Ministry of Interior concerned with Christian affairs.

Although some had raised doubts about proceeding with the Service of Installation and asked if it would be cancelled because of rocket fire and rioting, Archbishop Hosam

responded with an emphatic 'NO'. He added, "We need to offer the world some hope in this time of conflict. Jesus Christ is in our midst." The Service of Installation on Ascension Day was accompanied by the sounds of sirens, rocket fire and explosions.

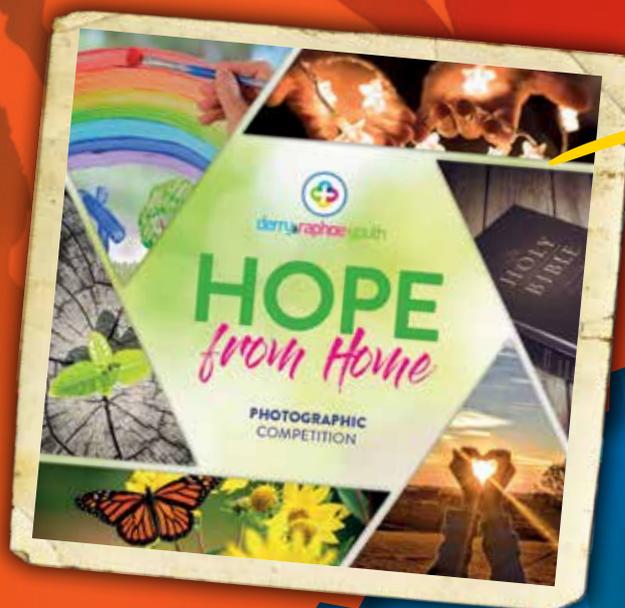
Of particular concern to the Diocese of Jerusalem at the moment is the plight of the Al Ahli Arab Hospital which provides essential medical services amidst the people of Gaza. Al Ahli Arab Hospital welcomes all who seek treatment, delivering services in a spirit of love and compassion, with special attention to the refugee and poorest of the poor. In a land where hardship is commonplace, the conditions in Gaza stand out. The Al Ahli Arab Hospital radiates a beacon of peace and hope.

Canon Don explained, "Through our institutions we preach the Gospel of Christ not so much with our voices, but through our deeds of love to all who come to us in need, without concern for their ethnic, religious, or political background. In these ways, we become Christ's messengers of reconciliation and peace."

As I assured Canon Don of our ongoing prayers, he asked especially that prayers continue during the fragile ceasefires.

By Rev Canon Katie McAteer

DRY Report



Forging Ahead – Returning to Youth activities

The Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD) is sharing advice for youth leaders and workers for returning to youth work activities as soon as possible, now that lockdowns across the island are continuing to ease.

Our National Youth Officer, Simon Henry, writes: "Firstly, it is important to acknowledge that youth ministry never stopped! The creative and innovative ways many churches, leaders, and youth workers across Ireland supported and continue to support young people during the Covid-19 pandemic are a testament to their faith in God, passion, resilience, and commitment. As we journey through this crisis, looking

ahead, we can begin to look to the future and how - on a carefully managed basis - we can restart youth ministry activities over the coming weeks.

It is important that we look to restarting youth ministry activities, however small, without any unnecessary delays, based on the latest government advice at the time - for the good of our young people's

socialisation, faith development and mental health."

Derry Raphoe Youth endorse CIYD's **Forging Ahead** as a way groups can meet as soon and safely as possible considering the local situation. However, Derry Raphoe Youth Board have decided to take this further.



Summer Kickstart

Derry Raphoe Youth have agreed that a bursary payment from the D.R.Y budget will be made payable to every parish / parish group who apply to run a youth activity over the summer. The Summer Kickstart Bursary will be £50 / €60 for each group of any size. This is to be used for a summer activity for young people over the summer months (June – October) and can be adapted according to the local needs and situation. The aim is to bless our precious young people over the summer months and remind them how much they matter to God and God's family. The Bursary can be claimed by the Rector / minister in charge who will fill in a simple form by emailing dryboard123@gmail.com. There are plenty of ideas shared in the Forging Ahead resource:

Lunch on the Lawn; a drive in movie; social events; Bible study; social action projects (a mini 'On the Move'); garden games; car treasure hunt in family bubbles; dropping off a card or gift to a young person's household, and so much more.

There are so many ways every parish CAN engage with their young people over the summer months in a way that is appropriate for the local context. All that is required is a bit of prayerful creativity and faith. So, let's FORGE AHEAD! and move into our Derry Raphoe Youth Summer Kickstart.

→ Winners!

During the month of March, Derry and Raphoe Youth held a photography competition to challenge the young people of the diocese to find hope wherever they could. Hope can sometimes feel far away especially in the challenging times of lockdown, but we know that God provides everlasting hope. We asked for them to explore the world God created and to take photos that represented hope.

We had some amazing submissions from the young people around the diocese and we asked Peter Cheney, the Church of Ireland Press Officer, to be our guest judge. He said "Well done to everyone who took part in this competition. The range of photos and the creativity of each of the photographers

was excellent. It's impressive to see how much hope we can find in our neighbourhoods so thank you for drawing it out for others to see and to encourage them too."

Megan, Rebekah and Erin were the three chosen winners for their submissions, and you can see how they each managed to capture very different and beautiful ideas of hope.

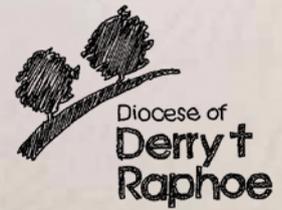
The prizes for this competition were a donation of £100 on each winner's behalf (£300 total) to Bishop Hall Speers in Madagascar, Bishops' Appeal and Buture Diocese Kenya, along with a personalised box from The Bookwell, a family run Christian book shop in Belfast, tailored to each of their faith and hobby interests.



Prizes



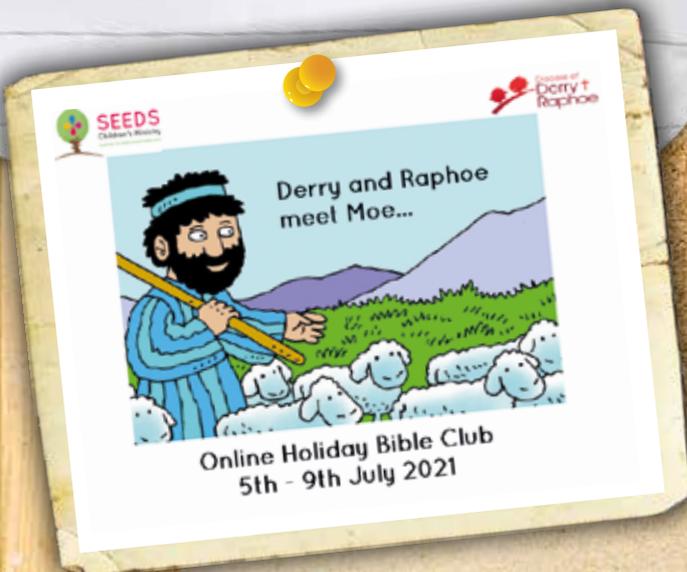
Diocesan noticeboard!



Robin Stockitt Retirement

We, in the Diocese of Derry and Raphoe, are preparing to bid a fond farewell to Rev Dr Robin Stockitt, who will retire in the early summer after 24 years in ordained ministry - seven of them as Rector of Donaghadee (Donemana). Robin had been a minister of the Anglican Church of Freiburg in Germany for over 12 years, before following the call to Tyrone.

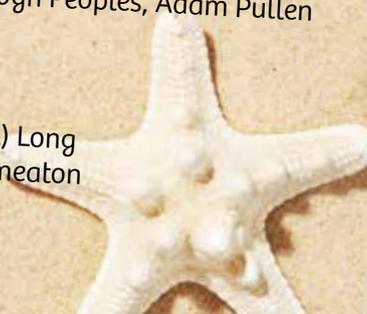
In Donemana, Robin was an engaging and energetic leader, organising memorable ceilidhs in Earlsgift Hall; a bicycle tour of Ulster cathedrals with more than a dozen fellow cycling enthusiasts; and, famously, a parish family fund-day (during which he was hoisted shoulder high by a local strongman). We thank God for Robin's ministry among us and elsewhere, and for his distinguished contributions to theology. We wish him a long and restful retirement, and wish Robin and Joan every happiness for the future.



Mothers' Union Logo competition
Highly Commended Sylvia Allen-
Hamilton Raphoe MU

Anniversary of Ordination (2021)

- (2016) 5 years, Nigel Cairns, Jonathan McFarland
- (2011) 10 years, Arthur Burns
- (2006) 15 years, Katie McAteer, David McBeth, Meruyn Peoples, Adam Pullen
- (2001) 20 years, Iuan Dinsmore, Irene Lyttle
- (1996) 25 years, Shiela Johnson
- (1991) 30 years, Gary Millar
- (1981) 40 years, John Blair, Paul Hoey, William (Bill) Long
- (1971) 50 years, Raymond Fox, Scott Harte, Brian Smeaton
- (1966) 55 years, Kenneth Kingston





Letter from **AMERICA...**

Dear Friends in Derry and Raphoe,

Shortly after we went into lockdown last year, all the weddings that I had scheduled for the Summer were cancelled. It was a shame for the couples but what could anyone do? I am the Director of one of the loveliest Chapels in New York City and in the Summer it is pretty quiet EXCEPT for when we have weddings. So it was even more quiet last year, but with everything going on I really didn't think about it much.

By the end of the Summer what I WAS thinking about was the new relationship I was in. We started dating towards the end of August and it's been great all along. So much so that in January I was ready to marry again (I've been divorced for four years). So while we were in Central Park sitting on a bench early one morning I looked her in the eyes and said "Will you marry me?" She replied quickly but not

in the way I expected or hoped for. "Only if you go first." What? Err, a long and awkward pause ensued. Eventually I said "I don't think that answered my question." To which she replied, rather matter of factly ... "Well I can only bury you if you go first." And I said "No no no, I said 'MARRY, will you MARRY me?'" And we burst out laughing and she said 'yes'.

We thought a June wedding would be nice but we wanted to keep it simple. What we learned was that that was not going to be easy. You see, ALL those postponed weddings from last year were now lined up for new licenses so they could get married this Summer and there were no appointments available to get a license at the registry office in NYC until the Fall. That's right, I said the Fall! Hmm ...

There's an "old" saying I made up, which is that there is nothing you can do in New York that isn't easier and cheaper in New

Jersey (which is where I am from). So what we did was get a license in good old New Jersey and on June 11th, which was my parents anniversary, we will have a VERY simple ceremony performed by a friend of mine. Given our proposal story I am sure that we will have a wee laugh at the line "until we are parted by death" and I'm also sure that it will be fine. Simple is good. It's a small example of how Covid has effected our lives. There have actually been lots of relationships that were born during Covid and the couples I have known have opted for the simple approach and the simple wedding. Maybe things will stay a bit more simple for a while. Maybe some things will stay more simple period. That would be fine with me.

Kevin
(Rev Dr Kevin Moroney)

Bishop Pat Storey Reviews:

AS THE SMOKE CLEARS

By Zoe Holohan

This is the kind of book review that doesn't have a clean, happy ending. Actually, it doesn't even really have a happy beginning - but it is an important book and a mesmerising read. I warn you that it can be quite graphic in its depiction of injuries and trauma, but that too is an important part of Zoe's story.

Zoe Holohan was the happiest bride on earth. She had met the love of her life a little later than most, and she describes her wedding day as glorious and so very happy. She and her new husband, Brian, had no idea of what was to come. On their honeymoon in Mati, Greece they got caught up in massive wildfires which surrounded their honeymoon villa. Zoe and Brian attempted to escape, and during the melee saved some wandering children who had got blindsided by the smoke. Zoe was rescued, but unfortunately Brian died. The story of their attempted escape and his death is fairly horrific, but no less so than the injuries and burns from which she had to recover.

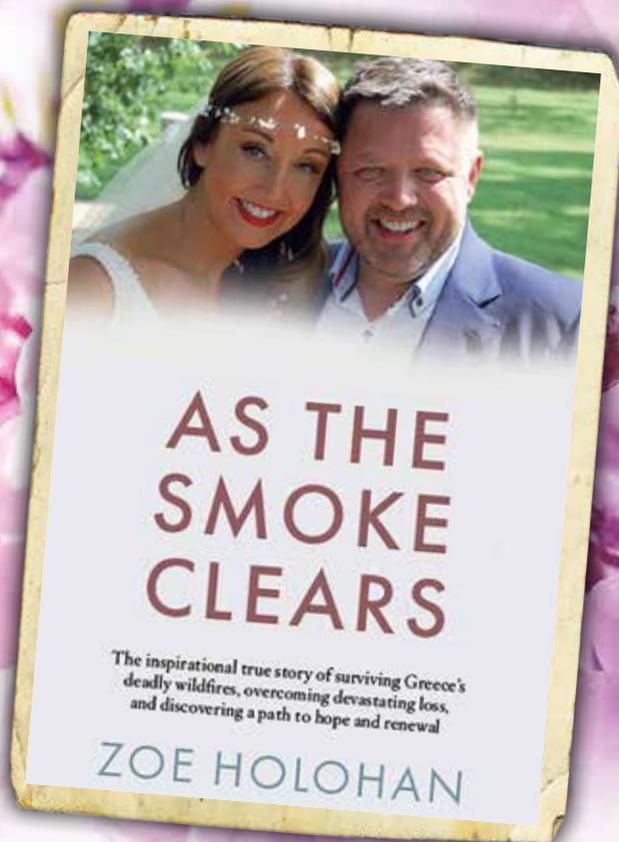
Whilst this sounds like a depressing book, it really isn't. It is a story of wonderful resilience, determination, and even, eventually, joy. Zoe had to spend many, many months in recovery in various hospitals - at first in Greece where she was treated with immense expertise and kindness - and then home in Ireland. Her story is one of huge sadness. She had lost her soulmate on her honeymoon in the worst possible circumstances. Yet Zoe who

writes with poignancy but absolutely no self-pity, is able to point the way to a slow and steady recovery.

Zoe never divulges whether or not she has an allegiance to any faith. To me that makes this story even more intriguing, as I can only envisage surviving such a trauma with the help and conscious support of God. My Christian faith would be the only thing that would give me the hope to carry on and I admire someone for whom this may not be the case. They would have to rely extremely heavily on their own resources.

I recommend this book if you have forgotten to be grateful. Bad things happen to good people and most of us cannot even contemplate what it would be like to lose your beloved husband in the aftermath of a joyful wedding day. Zoe Holohan writes well, with great empathy and honesty, and is on the trajectory of a slow recovery with the help and kindness of hospitals, friends and family. Yet it is still in her gift only to continue to want to heal and live afresh.

I greatly admire her honesty - there is no covering up of pain or sadness and the reader would need to pick the right time to read this. But it is an extremely worthy read. I rarely read autobiographies as I am such a fan of fiction, but I am an avid reader and I



picked this up after I saw Zoe interviewed on the Late Late Show by Ryan Tubridy. She impressed me with her poise, her ability to have humour in such darkness, and her commitment to live because that is what Brian would want for her.

It is a book to be read with care - nevertheless, it is a book to be read! It will leave you stunned but very, very grateful.



by Bishop Pat Storey

Diocesan Ministry of Healing...



How can I pray for the sick...?

Daily I pray for people who are sick or suffering. I expect it is the same for you. An important question to consider is how we can best pray for others to know God's healing? Below I share some practical steps that I have learnt over the years.

1. Comfort people

Sometimes people can withdraw from those who are sick because they don't know what to do or say. It is important when someone is going through a painful time to draw close to him/her by communicating regularly (this includes listening).

Actually asking, "How can I pray for you?" shows you care for them. Very few people have said no to me when I have offered to pray for them. C.S Lewis said, 'Pain is God's megaphone.' People can be at their most open to the Christian faith and the ministry of prayer in times of sickness.

2. Trust in God

When I pray for someone my focus is not on myself but on God. I invite God into the life and situation of the person. I remember and claim God's promises in scripture, for example Isaiah 40:29 'He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.' My thoughts shape the words of my prayers. Below is an example how I might pray for someone:

Dear Lord, I want to bring my friend to you. I know that he is not feeling well and is burdened with worry. I pray that You will give him peace in the midst of his pain; may he know you are close to him. Give him the confidence that healing will come. I pray that You will give his doctors special insight and wisdom as to what to do in the future. Show them how to treat and to relieve the pain and bring healing. I believe you, God, that you heal the sick. Thank you for what You will do! Amen

3. Pray with others

In Matthew 18:20 we learn praying together is powerful, "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." If you are given permission, share the prayer request with Christians you know will pray. When you experience an answer to prayer, share it with those who've prayed. Give God the glory when people are healed.

'So here's what I've learned through it all: Leave all your cares and anxieties at the feet of the Lord, and measureless grace will strengthen you.' Psalm 55:22

Rev Paul Lyons

The Joy of Pilgrimage

(Rev Canon Paul Hoey)



Those who do not see the attractions of the game of golf might describe it as "a good walk spoiled." I would describe pilgrimage as "a good walk enhanced".

The longest pilgrimage route I've ever walked was the Camino route to Compostela (420 miles), but I've also covered at least part of the routes to Iona and Lindisfarne, and here in Ireland, the St Patrick's Way in Co. Mayo, among others. In each case I've returned home physically fitter and spiritually renewed.

This summer, I'm hoping to cover part of the pilgrimage route to Canterbury Cathedral. So, what's the attraction? For me, it is about several things:

Place: there is something special about travelling to places which are beautiful in their own right, but also known for being sites where God has manifested his presence to those who've sought him in the past.

Slowing: a change of pace that enables you to notice things, in the world around and in

your own life, that you might easily miss in the whirlwind of activities that makes up life for many of us.

Openness: to new experiences, and to seeing and hearing God through encounters with people we might not otherwise meet intentionally: undertaking the journey because of a particular desire or need. My Camino walk was particularly transformative because at that time I'd experienced a lot of loss in my life. Somehow, doing the walk enabled me to let go and find peace.

Going with the flow: being ready to change direction and explore places that were not originally on your agenda. I remember being surprised to find a tiny little church hidden down a small lane and even more surprised as I sat in the silence of that building to have a profound and overwhelming experience of God's grace.

Challenge: deliberately putting ourselves in situations that are beyond our comfort zone. I'm someone who likes to have

everything planned in advance, so not being able to book ahead for a place in one of the Camino hostels was a distinct challenge. Yet I never failed to find a place with a good comfortable bed for the night, and nourishing, hearty food.

Company: on each of the walks I've done I met amazing people from all around the world, and of all ages and backgrounds. I still remember back to conversations I had and to moments of deep truth revealed in them. There's also something about walking in the footsteps of the saints of God. If they could finish the journey strong in faith, so can I!

Pilgrimage might not be for everyone, but an increasing number of people are rediscovering the joys of being a pilgrim. Isaiah 30:21 seems to sum up the blessing of walking an ancient pathway: "Whether you go to the right or to the left your own ears will hear Him. Right behind you a voice will say, "This is the way you should go."

“Putting one foot in front of the other, searching for meaning”

Rev Canon Katie McAteer

With restrictions still curtailing pilgrimage route further afield than these islands, you may like to consider walking one of the many pilgrim routes available locally.

In this year of the 1500th Anniversary of St Columba's birth details of trails in Ireland and Scotland associated with St Columba can be found on <https://colmcille.net/colmcille-1500/>

For more routes in Ireland consult: wildernessireland.com

For routes in Scotland, England and Wales go to britishpilgrimage.org and also on facebook.

Some pilgrimages can be completed in a day, others may take days or weeks. All Christian pilgrimages are walks of witness.

Or another idea: if pilgrimage can be understood as a 'journey of meaning and witness' we can be designers of our own pilgrimage - mapping and following our own trail of personal significance.

It can be a **physical** trail starting at your own front door and walking to your local

church and back, reflecting on all those who walked that way before you, praying for those you pass on the way.

You could walk around your parish boundary ('beating the bounds'), praying for all churches, congregations and communities.

Or, if you're feeling adventurous, what about walking around the diocesan boundary!

A pilgrimage can also be a **spiritual** journey - a planned journey through the Bible, reading (mentally walking) in the footsteps of a particular prophet, disciple or Our Lord.



IRAQ NEEDS CHRISTIANS

AND CHRISTIANS ARE PART OF IRAQ

Sarah Markiewicz talked to Christians in Iraq about the future of one of the Middle East's oldest and most diverse faith communities.

Until recently, most headlines involving Iraq have been about war, tragedy and destruction. This changed with Pope Francis' visit to Iraq in March 2021, instead showing the country from its best side and turning the eyes of the world to its Christian communities.

Tharaa A. Simaan, an Iraqi Christian from Qaraqosh, which was occupied by the Islamic State for several years, reiterates this: 'This was something special for the Christians and for all Iraqis. In the three days he visited Iraq we didn't hear about rockets or violence.'

Christianity in Iraq is a diverse mosaic: Living together in the same communities are a wide range of Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant churches including Chaldeans, Assyrians, Syriacs, Armenians, Latins, and

most recently Protestant churches brought by missionaries. Many of these communities speak Syriac, related to Aramaic - the language of Jesus. Iraq's Christian community has experienced persecution for decades, targeted, amongst others, by Saddam Hussein's Arabisation campaign, the sectarian violence which ensued after the US-led Invasion in 2003, and most recently through the occupation of areas by ISIS, not to mention suffering from the weak economy and lack of services experienced by all Iraqis.

There is no reliable way of ascertaining just how many Christians still live in Iraq. The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom estimates around 200,000.

The Pope's recent visit - the first ever trip

of a pontiff to the country - was intended to give Iraq back its dignity. Designed as a pilgrimage, his trip began in Ur - the place of origin of Abraham, the first pilgrim and regarded as the father of believers by Jews, Muslims and Christians - and ended in Mosul, Iraq's second largest city, which was under ISIS control for several years and now lies partly destroyed. The message of the trip was to highlight common origins and shared responsibility.

Father Olivier Poquillon is a French Dominican priest based in Iraq. He was instrumental in preparing the Pope's visit and says that in every detail it was symbolic. Especially historic and significant was the trip to Mosul, where only up to 70 Christian families have returned: 'The spirit of Mosul has always been coexistence between different faith communities.'



It was one of the few Ottoman cities where there were no walls between the different neighbourhoods.' At the Church Square in Mosul, the Pope reaffirmed his call for unity: 'Today, however, we reaffirm our conviction that fraternity is more durable than fratricide, that hope is more powerful than hatred, that peace more powerful than war.'

With ISIS now gone and reconstruction underway, many are asking whether the Christians will return to their areas of origin. It is still too early to know the answer to this question. However, what is clear is that the face of Iraqi Christianity has changed since the occupation by the Islamic State. The Dominican parish in the northern Kurdish city of Erbil is testimony to this. It offers a daily service in Arabic which is attended by an ecumenical mix of people from various backgrounds including Syrian

refugees and displaced Iraqis who found refuge in Ankawa, the Christian quarter of Erbil.

The Christian spirit is alive and well in Tharaa A. Simaan's community of Qaraqosh, even if the churches are visibly less full than they used to be. Before the pandemic there were about 500 weddings per year, and many abroad returned for Christmas and Easter festivities. In considering the future of Christianity in Iraq, Fr. Olivier says that Iraq needs Christians, and Christians are part of Iraq: 'There is no solution for the Christians without solutions for Iraq. They have always been a colour in a mosaic and without the rest of the mosaic you don't survive. It is like an ecosystem.'

One of the major challenges is to make sure that Christians are fully part of society. This

means getting out of the status of minority, which has both a legal and a psychological dimension, and attaining full citizenship. It is relevant for other segments of Iraqi society too. A major legacy of the Pope's visit was to reignite this discussion about shared origins and common humanity. For Christians in Iraq, but also for all Iraqis.

This article appears by kind permission of Dr Natalie K. Watson, Editor, Inspire.

Photos by permission of Tharaa A. Simaan.

Diocesan Manoeuvres!

Rev Graham Hare

Congratulations on your appointment as Rector of Drumragh with Mountfield.

Please tell our readers a little about yourself and your journey to Drumragh with Mountfield.

Many thanks. Together with my family, we are just delighted and are truly excited about our move to Drumragh with Mountfield. Hannah and I have three daughters; Bethany-Joy aged 8, Anna-Grace aged 6 and Lois-Faith aged 4, so family life is busy but full of fun. Hannah is a P1 teacher, currently working part-time. I am also a teacher by trade and loved my time in the classroom before spending ten years at Love for Life, an independent Christian charity. The call to ordained ministry is an enormous privilege and it is a true joy to serve the Lord and his Church in this role. Having served in our own home parish of Magheralin, then in St Mark's, Armagh and currently in Drumglass, Dungannon, we are now excited about settling into the community in Omagh. Having earnestly sought the Lord's will on this appointment, we have seen his hand everywhere in the process and are trusting the promise that he who calls is faithful.

What are you passionate about in ministry?

In John 10:10 we read the words of Jesus who said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." There is simply no greater joy than seeing people come to Christ

and then experiencing the fullness of life which he offers. Through faithful Biblical shepherding and engaging Bible teaching I am passionate about seeing people, of all ages, realise their value, worth and potential in Christ and growing in their desire to serve and proclaim him faithfully.

Please tell our readers a little about a person (living or dead) who has had an influence on your ministry.

It has been an enormous privilege to have been shaped and mentored by some fantastic people, but for me, the real heroes of the faith are those who have prayed for me, and many others, consistently over the years. There is a small number of people who pray for me daily - that is both humbling and inspirational and I know that it is they who have had the greatest influence.

How do you chill out?

A morning walking on the beach, an afternoon in a coffee shop with a good book and a slice of cake, and an evening around a big table with good friends enjoying great food.

What is your favourite food; music; holiday destination?

I am a big foodie so I love everything but have a pretty sweet tooth! I also love a variety of

music and always have some playing in the background. In terms of holidays, options have been a bit limited of late, but we love Donegal.

What book are you reading at the moment and why would you recommend it?

I tend to have a few books on the go at any one time. Currently I am reading 'Staying Fresh' by Paul Mallard which is a great read full of practical wisdom for anyone in Christian leadership. I love a political or detective thriller too and enjoy the James Patterson and Lee Child books when reading for pleasure.

What is the best advice you've been given?

Just before we became parents for the first time, we were naturally anxious about all that lay ahead. A very wise lady encouraged us to remember that we would never have enough wisdom to do it all on our own, and pointed us to James 3:17 where we are reminded that pure wisdom comes from God alone. As parents, particularly in times of change, we have had to lean on God for his direction about raising our family. Added to that is the daily 5p challenge to pray for our children - Protection, Purpose, Purity, Peers and Partner.



Rev Canon Judi McGaffin

Congratulations on your appointment as the first female Canon of St Eunan's Cathedral, Raphoe.

What challenges and changes do you think your appointment will bring to your ministry?

Being appointed by the Bishop was a huge surprise and it made me realise that I had never paid any attention to the role of a Canon! I am therefore blissfully unaware of the challenges and changes that I will now face! I am naturally a reflective person and so ask me this question this time next year and I may be better equipped!

How do you chill out?

Before COVID chilling out was, in the main, channelled into travelling abroad a couple of times a year! I was very bad at adding chill out time to my daily routine! However, COVID has allowed me to take a serious look at my whole life and I have now managed to get a rhythm that takes care of my spiritual, emotional and physical health! This rhythm is in itself "chilling". Chilling now involves devotions, walking, knitting, watching TV (WITH) my husband and reading. I do miss chilling with friends and wider family. However, with the lifting of restrictions, getting back to "relational" chilling will be good!

What book are you reading at the moment and would you recommend it?

The students and staff in the Church of Ireland School in Buncrana (St Mura's) each year take part in "READ DL". I also read the book that is chosen so that I can discuss it at our class assemblies! This year the book chosen was the "children's" book - "Brilliant" by Roddy Doyle. It takes the subject of depression and makes it accessible to children. A book with great language, pace and illustrations that everyone should read! I am also currently reading "Stolen Girls" by Patricia Gibeny, a murder mystery set in a small town in Ireland. It is the second book in the Detective Lottie Parker series. A bit hard to get into but worthwhile sticking with - on a lot of levels!

What is the best advice you've been given?

In any situation remember - TEAMWORK and COMMUNICATION! This advice was given to me when I was a very young dentist by a very wise man. It has stood me in good stead all of my life and over the past number of years



I would add another piece of advice to this - WITH HUMILITY!

Do you have a favourite charity?

Although I feel it is important to give to different charities as they need donations, I have 2 I give to regularly. I had cancer a few years ago and was supported through it by so many people - but in particular Macmillan Cancer - so that is one. The other is a Cat Charity that my mother supported - and when she died I decided to keep on giving regularly to that - I love cats as did my mum and this is part of her legacy!

What is your favourite colour?

Red or purple. But now, given my current situation, green may be my new favourite!

What is the best Canon pun you have heard?

Maybe a bit tangential but - I am looking forward to this new Chapter of my ministry!

Diocesan Manoeuvres!

Sarah Mac Bruithin

Congratulations on your appointment as Bishop's Secretary.

You were the Bishop's Secretary a few years ago. What have you been doing in the intervening years?

Thank you, it's great to be back. I've been enjoying life as a full time mum and wife! We've moved twice since I was last in the role - to Enniskillen and then to Castlerock. Whilst in Enniskillen I worked for a time in the Clogher Diocesan Office, and trained as a breastfeeding peer supporter. Most of our time in Castlerock has been in lockdown, but we've still managed to get to know a few people and make some friends.

What differences and challenges do you foresee in your role now?

Obviously it's now a different bishop, but otherwise the role is very much the same. At the moment I'm working from home, which has taken some getting used to. A lot more is done online and it will be interesting to see how much changes back to in-person changes post-Covid.

How do you relax?

I love walking on the beach or in Downhill forest with our labrador Feargal. During lockdown (along with many others!) I started making sourdough and have enjoyed experimenting with different recipes using the starter (natural yeast). My favourite so far is cinnamon buns but I've yet to master focaccia.

What book are you reading at the moment and would you recommend it?

I've just finished *The Grass is Singing* by Doris Lessing, which was a difficult read in some ways, but very well written. It's not a book I would have chosen, but I would definitely recommend it! I'm also reading *A Cheesemonger's History of the British Isles* by Ned Palmer, which is a fun mix of history, travel and all one would ever need to know about cheese.



What is the best advice you've been given?

Trust your instinct as a mother. I'm not always very good at doing it, but I find things go better when I do.

Do you have a favourite charity?

Chris and I both volunteered with Latin Link in Bolivia and I worked in the UK offices, so it is a charity very close to our hearts. I am still involved in mentoring and supporting volunteers in Latin America and enjoy attending events. The British Heart Foundation were also very helpful when my dad suffered a heart attack a number of years ago and so I have had some involvement with them and their work also.

DON'T FORGET YOU CAN PULL OUT MY SPECIAL PAGES FROM THE MAGAZINE!



It is so great to be back with you all. I am really happy that we are coming into the summer and I am really looking forward to all my summer adventures. How about you?

CJ News

NUMBER 27

I know that it has been a bit of a challenge for us all over the past few months. Hopefully we will continue to move back to the normal times that we have all been used to in the past.

I also know that this can also lead to worry for some of us as we start to do things normally again. We may find it a bit strange and we may feel unsure about how best to do things and do them safely.



We often hear people tell us to be strong. Who is the strongest person you know?

We all have different ideas on who is strong and who is not. Sometimes people we think are strong are not real life, like superheroes for example. We can think that people close to us could be the strongest. What we can all be very sure of is our God is real, He is not made up. God is very strong!

What we can be sure of is that our God is actually the strongest and is bigger than any problem that we may have to face or any worry that we may have. He is 'BIGGER' than everything and everyone else.



SING A SONG

My God is so big, So strong and so mighty,
There's nothing my God cannot do.
My God is so big, So strong and so mighty,
There's nothing my God cannot do.

The Mountains are His,
The valleys are His,
The stars are his handiwork too!

My God is so big, So strong and so mighty,
There's nothing my God cannot do.



Our God is so big, that He is even bigger than mountains, elephants, the sky. He's even bigger than the whole Earth. That's amazing isn't it?



If our God is so big, then what does that mean for us? We know that we can trust God to take care of us because He is so big, and so we should praise Him for all that he does for us.



This is a bible verse that is very important to me and one that I often think about. When I am worried, anxious or even feeling sad, this comes to mind.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE STILL AND KNOW THAT GOD IS GOD?

It means that we should not be so busy that we forget to thank God for all that He is doing for us. God is so big that sometimes we just have to stop and remember how amazing He is. We have got to trust him with what we hold in our hearts, that includes our worries and concerns, and take all of these to Him in prayer. This is what I do. Sometimes it can be so easy to get caught up in all our thoughts that we forget about how big our God really is. We need to take time to 'be still' and just be with Him.

BE STILL...

Sometimes I have to remind myself to 'be still'. I took some time when I was out walking to spend time with God and share all of my thoughts and worries with Him. I was reminded of so many things and how we really do have a 'BIG' God as I journeyed through my day.

I always enjoy walking and looking out into the ocean. Isn't it amazing, all the water in all the oceans God can measure in His hands. Just imagine how big God's hands must be.



ISAIAH 40:12
TAKE A LOOK!



If you go outside and look up at the sky you will notice it goes on for ever and ever. But to God, the heavens are only as big as his hands.

I just love visiting the beach. It has to be one of my favourite places. As I walked I could see sand stretched out for miles. It is just amazing that God can measure all the sand on the earth. How big is our God!

God is stronger and more mighty than anybody else. God is still God no matter what situation we find ourselves in, if we are having a bad day, if we are scared, sad or worried, we must take time to stop and involve God. We should pray for his help and thank Him for being bigger than any problem we may have.

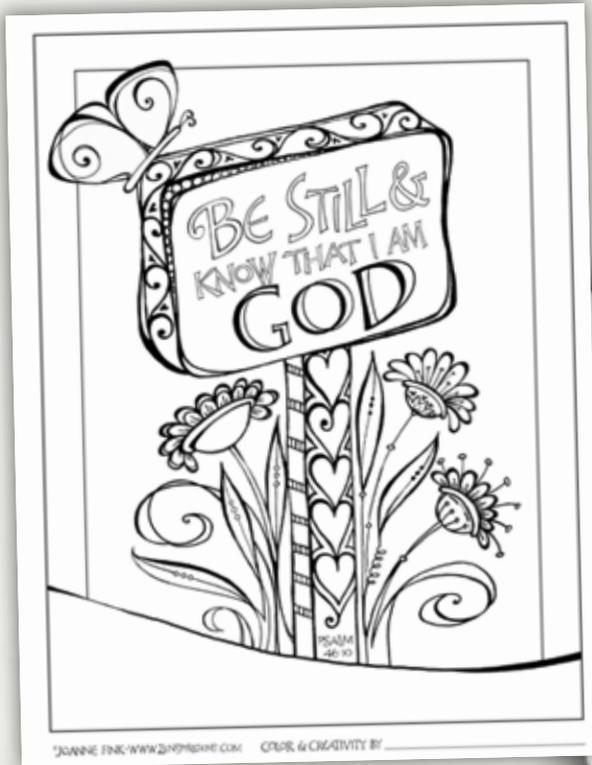


God can weigh even the mountains. Mountain are so small compared to our God.

AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD

CJ CHALLENGES YOU TO...

Let's colour!



my GOD
is so BIG
SO STRONG
and SO
MIGHTY

DESIGN A
PICTURE TO
SHOW HOW BIG
GOD IS.

A family challenge

Think about what 'My God is bigger than' and act out each one of your examples. Your family will have to guess what is being acted out. Take turns.

'My God is bigger than...'

e.g. Earth, an elephant, a lorry, the sun etc.
Write some more of your ideas below.



Pinwheel Craft

Materials

One square piece of heavy construction paper; Scissors; Thumb tack; Pencil with eraser; Crayons, colouring pencils and stickers for decorating

Method

- 1) Fold the paper on the diagonal from corner to corner. Open the paper up and fold on the second diagonal across the other two corners.
- 2) Make one cut along each fold beginning at the corner and cutting towards the centre. The cut should stop about halfway toward the centre.
- 3) Decorate each section of the square on both sides of the heavy construction paper using the materials available.
- 4) Take every other corner, one at a time and gently pull it up to the centre of the square.
- 5) When all four corners meet at the centre, take the thumb tack and push it through all four corners through the centre of the square.
- 6) Push the thumb tack through the eraser of the pencil.
- 7) Blow on the pinwheel and watch it spin!

This is to remind you that although we cannot see God, we know how big he is as the results of His work are all around us.

Gingerbread Men/Women

Ingredients

- 350g/12oz plain flour, plus extra for rolling out
- 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 125g/4½oz butter
- 175g/6oz light soft brown sugar
- 1 free-range egg
- 4 tbsp golden syrup

To decorate

writing icing (optional)
cake decorations (optional)

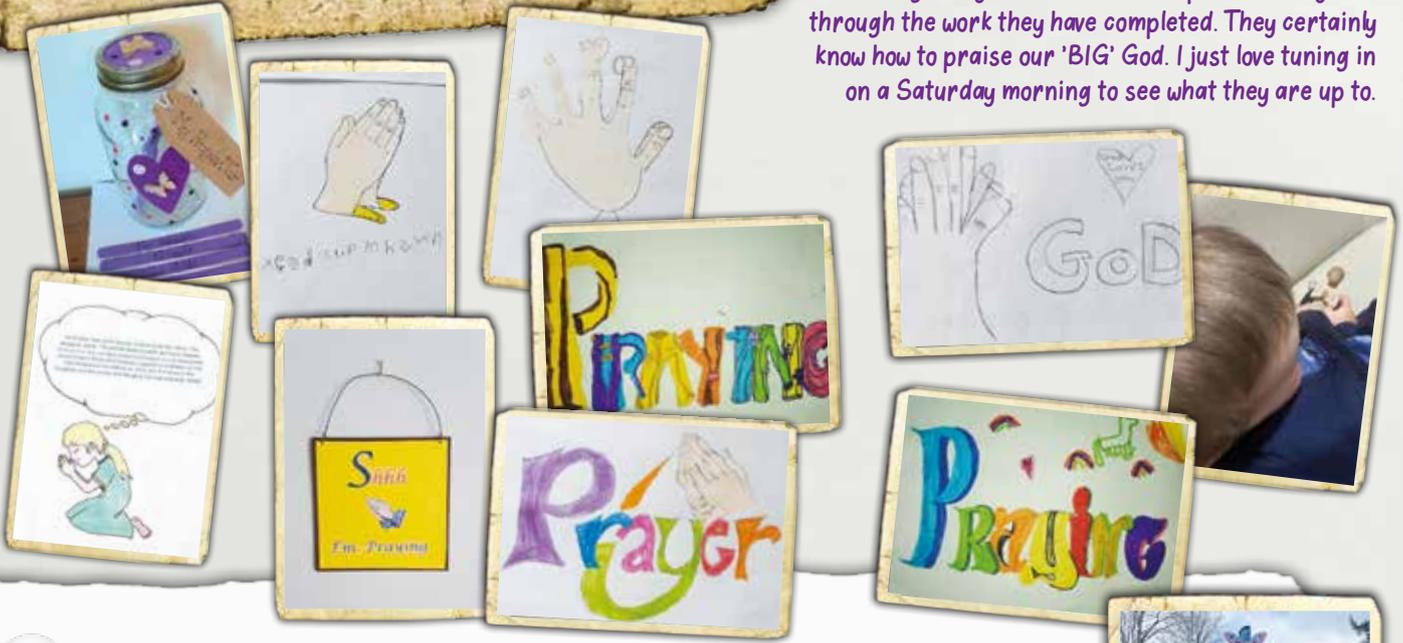


Method

- 1) Sift together the flour, bicarbonate of soda, ginger and cinnamon and pour into the bowl of a food processor. Add the butter and blend until the mix looks like breadcrumbs. Stir in the sugar.
- 2) Lightly beat the egg and golden syrup together, add to the food processor and pulse until the mixture clumps together. Tip the dough out, knead briefly until smooth, wrap in cling film and leave to chill in the fridge for 15 minutes.
- 3) Pre-heat the oven to 180C. Line baking trays with greaseproof paper.
- 4) Roll out the dough and use people cutters.
- 5) Bake for 12-15 minutes, or until lightly golden-brown. Leave on a tray to cool. When cooled decorate.

CJ... KEEPING IN CONTACT!

The Parishes of Fahan Upper and Lower continue to be very busy in their 'Praises' time on a Saturday morning. They have shown how important Prayer is through the work they have completed. They certainly know how to praise our 'BIG' God. I just love tuning in on a Saturday morning to see what they are up to.



On Easter Sunday Fahan Upper and Lower unveiled their butterfly cross which shows God living among us following the resurrection of Jesus. This really shows us that our God is so big, so strong and so mighty there's nothing our God cannot do. He sent his son so that we all would live. Isn't that amazing? I think so.



LET'S PRAY



God, thank you for being the biggest and best thing in our lives. Please help us to remember how wonderful you are and to share what is in our minds and hearts with you. Amen

Can you write your own prayer below, sharing what you have on your heart and mind at this time.



UNTIL NEXT TIME, TAKE CARE AND STAY SAFE!

Contact me on email
cj@derryandrapphoe.org

Mums *in* May...

Mums in May (MIM) is an All-Ireland fund, established in 2012 in celebration of 125 years of Mothers' Union in Ireland.

The fund, replenished by members every three years, is used to initiate and support outreach projects throughout Ireland and specific projects overseas. During Covid lockdowns, tackling loneliness and isolation and supporting those in our communities has been central to our outreach. Mums in May has provided funds to produce newsletters for members and, recently, an uplifting summer greeting card and packet of wildflower seeds for each member.

Last summer it funded bookmarks for our "Thank You" project to key workers and, just before lockdown, 150 children's books were presented to the children's library at Magilligan Prison Visitor Centre. Over the years the fund has subsidised Diocesan Family Fun days, events to encourage members and it helped to produce the Faith in Action, anniversary book which told the transforming stories of many members.

The fund provided the original seed grant for AFIA, Away From It All, days out, and helps to fund the assemblies and workshops in secondary schools during the 16 days of Activism, where gender-based violence and domestic abuse are explained and highlighted to students. At All-Ireland it funds training days, our Irish MU magazine 'Focus', prayer booklets and teleconferencing, enabling members who are unable to leave their homes to communicate.

This year, June Butler, All-Ireland President, plans sponsored walks of 21km, Covid restrictions permitting, over three days in each of the 12 Diocese in Ireland. Here in Derry and Raphoe, June, accompanied by Bishop Andrew, socially distanced of course, has already completed two walks, one in Castlerock on the North Coast and one in Londonderry. The North Coast walk wound its way past Haslett House towards Castlerock taking in the stunning views of the Mussenden Temple, Inishowen and Scotland. In Londonderry, the walk followed St Columba's Trail, from St Columba's statue in St Columb's Park, across the Peace Bridge to Derry's Walls, stopping at St Augustine's Church and St Columb's Cathedral. The third walk in Drumboe Woods, Stranorlar, Donegal, will be arranged when Covid restrictions are lifted. Members are raising funds for MIM too, by creating their own sponsored challenges, depending on their skills, (baking, knitting, walking, swimming, etc.) Each member is also supporting the fund with a "Count Your Blessings" calendar, whereby members donate for the wonderful blessings on each day in the month of May.

"Mum's Marvellous Meals", the Mothers' Union cookery book, produced last year before lockdown as the third strand of the fundraising, is now on sale in the diocese.

Donations may be given via the Just Giving Platform www.justgiving.com/fundraising/MumsinMay21

By Doreen Sidebottom



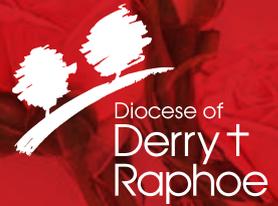
Bishop Andrew and June Butler at St Columba's statue, St Columba's Park



Walkers outside St Paul's Articlave

News for the pews...

Facebook details are included for parishes that use Facebook. PLEASE NOTE - you do not have to be on Facebook to access a parish page. Just type the parish Facebook name or address, e.g. @cccmsp into your search engine on smart phone or laptop/tablet etc and click on the parish page.



Templemore, Derry Cathedral

The Very Rev Raymond Stewart: Rector of Templemore & Dean of Derry Tel: 028 7126 2746
Email: deanofderry@stcolumbs.net



The Rev Canon John Merrick
Pastoral Assistant
Facebook: St. Columb's Cathedral



"The earth, O Lord is full of your steadfast love; teach me Your statutes" Psalm 119:64

Tuesday Service of Holy Communion
Before the first lockdown the last Tuesday morning Service of Holy Communion was held in Saint Columb's Cathedral 15 months ago on The Feast Day of Saint Patrick, Tuesday 17th March 2020. Having considered carefully the COVID-19 protocols the Dean and Canon John Merrick are agreed that the Tuesday morning Service of Holy Communion should begin again. (Tuesdays at 10.30am). COVID-19 protocols will continue to be observed. Parishioners (and visitors) will be required to sanitise their hands on entry. To wear a face covering on entry and exit and during the service - unless exempted from doing so.

To observe social distancing
Parishioners (and visitors) will sit in the

pews in the centre aisle of the Cathedral. Pews at the front will be filled first. The Sacrament of Holy Communion will continue to be administered in one form only - bread. Due to the restrictions, at present it will not be possible to serve refreshments after the service. I thank Canon John Merrick for his continuing assistance and I hope that the members of 'The Tuesday Group' will enjoy meeting together again.

Ordination Anniversaries

This is the time of the year when many of the ordained clergy are celebrating the anniversary of their ordination as deacons or priests.

We offer our congratulations to our parishioner The Reverend Mervyn Peoples who celebrates the 15th anniversary of his ordination as a deacon on The Feast Day of The Birth of Saint John the Baptist, Thursday 24th June; To The Reverend Patrick Lawrence

who celebrates the 40th anniversary of his ordination on The Feast Day of Saint Peter, Tuesday 29th June. He was the Curate-assistant of Saint Columb's Cathedral, 1981-1984.

To a son of the Parish, The Reverend Ronnie Lawrenson, who will celebrate the 50th anniversary of his ordination this month. To our parishioner The Very Reverend Cecil Orr who will celebrate the 64th anniversary of his ordination on Wednesday 7th July.

Service of Installation

The Service of Installation of The Reverend Colin Welsh, Rector of The Parish of Castledawson, as a Canon will be held in Saint Columb's Cathedral on Thursday 23rd September at 7.30pm.

Clooney

Rector: Rev David McBeth
Email: allsaintscloney@btinternet.com
Facebook: All Saints Clooney



Glendermott & New Buildings

Rector: Rev Canon Robert Boyd
Tel: 028 7134 3001

Facebook: [Glendermott and New Buildings Church of Ireland](#)



Curate Assistant:
Rev Iain McAleavey



The Sun is shining, and the holiday season is just around the corner. Those holiday plans may well have to be changed as we go from green to amber or even red and hopefully the other way as well. We hope and pray that you will make the most of your well-earned break over the summer period and find rest amongst some of the beautiful parts of our wee country.

We plan to continue with our present arrangement of services over the summer, 10.15am in Newbuildings and 11.30am in Glendermott each Sunday continuing to follow all the safety arrangements in place. We thank our churchwardens and stewards for all that they do keeping us in as safe environment as possible. It is good to see

the vast majority of our regular worshippers back at our shorter than normal services, and it is great for us as clergy to try and work out who is behind those masks each week, especially now that you are not sitting in your usual seats. Isn't it strange that the roof hasn't fallen in because you have had to sit in a different pew each week. Have we set a new tradition? Time will tell.

We congratulate all who were appointed to the Select Vestry this year and I am grateful to the Churchwardens for agreeing to continue in post for another year.

Confirmation services conducted by Bishop Andrew were held in both churches during May and we welcomed 26 new communicant

members into the church. It was good to see them all out at the next available Holy Communion Service. A 100% turnout was impressive. We look forward to seeing you regularly at the weekly services.

We offer our sympathy to all who have lost loved ones recently and mourn their passing. We as a parish will continue to pray that God will grant you his peace in these days. We offer our congratulations to all are newly married couples. The clergy nearly know the service off by heart at present, but it is good to see the restrictions being gradually lifted and allowing more friends and families to attend. We wish all the new couples every blessing in their married lives together.

Faughanvale

Rector: Rev Canon Paul Hoey
Tel: 028 7181 2462
Mob: 00447712873322

Email: dphoey@btinternet.com
www.faughanvale.derry.anglican.org
Facebook: [St Canice's Parish Church @StCaniceParishChurch](#)



As I celebrate 40 years of ordained ministry this month, I've been reflecting on some of the changes I've seen over that time. There are many: forty years ago, the Church of Ireland had 1400 full-time stipendiary clergy; today it has around 400: forty years ago, most children in NI were involved in Sunday School or church; today it might be something around 10% at the optimistic end of the spectrum: forty years ago, most weddings took place in church; today, it's about 1 in 5. Looking at these figures, it would be easy to become discouraged. They show that the Church is now on the edges of society rather than at the very heart as it used to be.

Actually, that might not be a bad place to be. Jesus, after all, having been excluded by the religious organisation of his day, worked, and

taught, and served from the margins of society, and it was from such a place that the majority of his followers were recruited. I wonder will we be able to learn, like Jesus, to serve from a place of weakness in society rather than a place of power? I hope so, for then we will discover the truth of his promise, that when we are weak we become strong, and when we are poor, we can become truly rich.

Building Fund

One way to maintain the witness of the Church for the future is by handing on buildings that meet the needs of and are attractive to a rising generation. That's why we are launching a Building Fund this month. Every parishioner will receive information indicating a variety of ways that they can be involved.

Bishop Andrew

Our Bishop will be with us twice on 20th June: at the morning service he will commend our Building Fund to parishioners. He will also be with us that evening at 6:30pm when 10 of the younger members of our church family are due to profess their faith during a service of Confirmation. Please pray for Alice, Ben, Bethan, Brad, Callum, Callum, Jack, Josh, Lewis, and Owen as they make their promises to serve Christ.

Church Memory Cloth

Parishioners past and present who would like their own names or names of loved ones to be added to the church memory cloth, please contact Roberta on 07720405550 or sinfurnishing@aol.com. A minimum donation

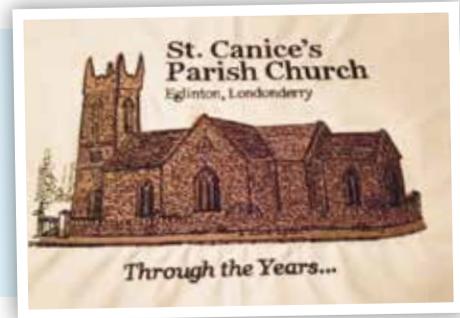
Continued on page 44...

Continued from page 43...

of £5 per name is suggested. The cloth will be displayed for all to see when complete and on special occasions.

And Finally... Over the years I've generally been underwhelmed by the reasons

that people put forward for not participating in church activities. However, I can't help but admire Groucho Marx's excuse: "I would never belong to a club that would have me as a member."



Cumber Upper, Cumber Lower, Banagher and Learmount

Rector: Rev David Slater

Tel: 028 7133 8214

Facebook: Cumber Upper & Lower, Learmount, Banagher Group of Parishes



Dungiven & Bovevagh

Rector: Rev Mark Loney

Tel: 028 7774 1226

Mob: 07720 321 283

Email: rev.loney@btopenworld.com

www: www.dungivenbovevaghparishes.com

Facebook: Dungiven Church of Ireland



'Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up' Galatians 6 v 9

Dungiven and Bovevagh Parish Churches have both been open since Easter Sunday. We continue though to provide a drive-in alternative on Sunday mornings in Bovevagh. Worshippers are able to gather in the car park and listen to the service being led from inside the church building. It is also possible to be inside and enjoy the service. We broadcast on a local radio channel too! The parish centre is also available, to which the service is relayed audio-visually. Our Dungiven congregation is steadily coming back, but as I am sure is the case everywhere, families and

children are thin on the ground. The advent of summer will perhaps not help matters, but we look forward to a flurry come September when we aspire to re-open our groups and fellowship opportunities more fully, circumstances permitting. It will all require a bit of good old patience.

Joyce Meier said that 'Patience is not the ability to wait, but the ability to keep a good attitude while waiting'. I find that very helpful. When we think about leadership we often think of constant action. Taking action is of course part of it, but not action

for the sake of action - it's thought-filled and purposeful. It requires the ability to pause and see things from a different angle. Anyone can see problems and attack them, but it isn't just about the here and now. Leading means having vision to see what can be ...not only about thinking outside the box, but recognising there is no box. So when we look up words connected with patience, we find great themes like endurance, perseverance, humility, persistence. It all sounds a bit uphill, but it is probably the sort of stuff that helps us grow in faith.

Balteagh, Carrick, Tamlaghtard and Aghanloo

Rector: Rev Rhys Jones

Facebook: Aghanloo, Balteagh, Caarrick and Tamlaghtard @TamlaghtardCofI



Then Jesus asked, "What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches.

As we have travelled through the lectionary scriptures each week since Easter we have endeavoured to permit the seed of God's word to take root and grow within our hearts and lives, and to ask of ourselves: 'What is our response to God's goodness and his call to grow in faith and togetherness? And what evidence can we offer that we are doing so?' Those questions will continue to shape our thinking over the summer months. Already however, the shoots of post-pandemic recovery and growth have begun to appear across our four parishes as a real sense of family unity & purpose continues to emerge:

The Horseshoe Fellowship

The Horseshoe Fellowship attracts good numbers each week to the Rectory where in fun and togetherness we perhaps begin to consider: 'What are we aiming at in life? What is our goal as Church?'



The Horseshoe Fellowship

The Parish Trekkers Walking club held its inaugural meeting in May in Roe Valley Park. Below are some of those who participated. Walking together reminds us that we journey throughout life with one another and that we never really travel anywhere alone. Many other excursions are planned and everyone of course is welcome to be part of our travels.



The Horseshoe Fellowship

The Big Picture Bible Adventure

Jennifer McNeil and her team from Children's Evangelical Fellowship will lead a week of activities, games, tuition & adventure, for the children across the four parishes in Drummond Cricket Club during the week beginning 7th June. We pray that God will abundantly bless all involved especially the children.

Small seeds perhaps, but as we continue to emerge from lockdown let us remember from small acorns mighty oaks do grow. We're just asked to plant them. Samantha & I wish every parishioner a restorative and peaceful summer. God bless you all.
Rev Rhys.



The Parish Trekkers Walking club

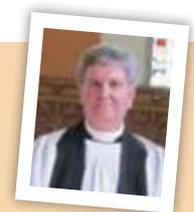
Tamlaghtfinlagan & Myroe

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Normality is beginning to return to Ballykelly and beyond. More traffic on the roads, more people in the town now that restrictions have been relaxed. We have more people returning to church too. We still wear the face masks and keep our distance but we are getting there, getting back to a new normal.

It is good to be able to meet friends and neighbours again. Our Presbyterian neighbours have been without a minister for over two years now. I happened to meet one of the congregation who told me of their quest for a new minister. In the course of our conversation he told me the following story. One Presbyterian congregation heard four

applicants for the vacancy. The first was rejected because he was a bachelor, the second because he was over forty, the third because he was bald, the fourth because he wore glasses and read his sermons.

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Continued from page 45...

In despair the minister in the neighbouring parish telephoned a friend to take the service the Sunday after the abortive election. He so pleased the congregation that they unanimously elected him.

It was only after he had been settled a few months that they realised he was

a bachelor, over forty, growing bald, wore glasses and read his sermons! Makes you think ! God works in mysterious ways.

Yes, it's great to be able to meet others again. Sadly the ease of restrictions did not come early enough for us to organise our usual "Fun Day" down at St. John's this year.

Hopefully next year we will be able to do so.

Our on-line services will have ended by the time this magazine appears. May I thank all those who helped make them possible and to those who joined us each Sunday.

Drumachose, Limavady

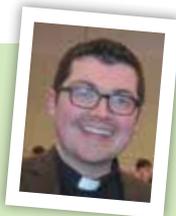
Vacant

Rural Dean: Rev Canon Harold Given Tel: 028 7776 2743

Castlerock, Dunboe and Fermoyle

Rector: Rev Chris MacBruithin

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Our Easter General Vestry was held on 12th April by Zoom. Congratulations to those appointed to serve the Lord in this way.

We thanked God for a beautiful day on 7th May when MU All-Ireland President June Butler visited the parish as part of her fundraising walks across each diocese. We were also joined by Bishop Andrew and our own MU Diocesan President Jacqui Armstrong. Branch Leader Marlyn Quigley devised the 7km loop, starting at St Paul's, Articlave, which turns 330 years old in June, down to Castlerock's seafront. Along the route, we enjoyed spectacular views of Islay and Jura, the Bann Estuary and Inishowen.

Liffock Surgery has almost completed its vaccination programme, using Christ Church Parish Hall in Castlerock. Practice manager Trevor Patton says, 'We are so grateful for the use of the parish hall. It has worked so well. We have vaccinated over 2000 people and not wasted a single dose.'



Our Confirmation group will be doing the next phase of preparation using social media. Candidates will be able to explore topics such as the Bible, prayer, fellowship and Holy Communion in this new format.

Kids' Club is still operating in remote learning mode, but with plans for some summer get-togethers.

Now that restrictions are easing, we are looking forward to reconnecting especially with our younger parishioners.

In an effort to welcome back younger members of both congregations, we celebrated Pentecost Day with an extra-special All-Age Service of Holy Communion. During the service, children and young people helped prepare the celebration of the Church's birthday, ready to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

We look forward to hosting CSSM again this summer, although their beach mission will of course be lower-key and look very different to other years. Even so, we pray they are able to share the Good News with children and families over the holidays, and we pray especially for good weather, as



this year most of the programme will be delivered outdoors in order to facilitate social distancing.

With caravan parks open again, and people spending more time at their holiday homes,

Castlerock and Articlave are getting busy. Normally, we'd be welcoming visitors and part-time residents into our churches. Let's pray that we can open the doors again soon to visitors in need of a quiet space to pray and reflect.



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"May we show Christ's love + teach his Word."



Camus-Juxta-Bann (Macosquin)

Rector: Rev Paul Lyons

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Facebook: St Mary's Church @camusjuxtabannconnections



'Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailling love and his wonderful deeds for mankind, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.' Psalm 107 v8,9

The past three months have brought many limitations for everyone. Yet as I reflect on what God has been doing there are many reasons to be thankful. We know the letters 'RTE' mean Radio Telefís Éireann, the Public Service Broadcaster of the Republic of Ireland but they also describe where God has been working in Macosquin

R - for the 'Rectory'. The refurbishment work on the rectory has been completed. The outside of the house has been painted and looks very well. The inside required an extensive renovation. My family and I are very

grateful for the kindness shown to us and for all the hard work and perseverance to complete the work during the difficult pandemic times. As a parish we are indebted to Mr Tommy Oliver, a faithful servant, for project managing the work.

T - for 'Tidy Up'. The parish worked alongside Macosquin Primary School and the local Community Association to tidy up our village in May. Over forty bags of litter were collected and this effort certainly helped the village to look better. Equally important was the bringing together of the local groups to work together. It was also a joy to see different generations working with a joint focus on improving our community. It's been a blessing to hear people wanting to do further outreach together across the summer. When we know what these plans are we'll let you know.

E - for 'Encouragement'. There is a desire to encourage more of the church family back to Sunday worship. 'Walk & Talk' is one of the ways we are trying to do this. This new initiative is on Wednesdays 7pm, during June, July and August, meeting at the picnic tables in Castlerock to go for a walk on the beach. Some of the young people might want to bring a ball and play whilst the adults walk. These evenings will allow parishioners to meet outdoors for physical exercise and have an opportunity to renew friendships. We've encouraged all generations to come along and bring a friend, family or pet! We aim to finish at 7.45pm and therefore should be home for 8!

Aghadowey

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We are back in church and baptisms are coming thick and fast. All these new names I have to learn! I'd hate to get a name wrong at baptism. I've even had a dream that I got a name wrong, so I write it into the service sheet big and BOLD so I don't get it wrong!

Friends of ours have just had a new grandchild. They don't have a name yet but as we are allowed 6 weeks to register and the baby is only 4 days old now there is lots of time. The grandparents said it will take the full 6 weeks as both parents are very indecisive!

Names are very important in the Bible and they are still something we want to think about. There are many books with the meanings of names and this has me thinking about crazy names, like Moon, Dweezil and, Diva...all children with a last name of Zappa!

Let's go back to Santa Cruz, California, in the '70's. It was a very different sort of place. What made it different was a group of people who lived there in great numbers. They were hippies - or, you might say, 'has-been hippies'. The Summer of Love had long since faded into a psychedelic sunset. San Francisco's

infamous Haight-Ashbury area had become gentrified. The "flower children" who'd once inhabited its "crash pads" now held down regular jobs. Many of these 'has-been hippies' had moved out to Santa Cruz, where the rents were cheaper.

This population of former flower children had a certain impact when their children hit the public schools. One of the things the teachers found difficult were the names of the first-grade kids. Those classes had their share of kids called Michael and Lisa and Margaret, but there was also Sunbeam, Time-Warp and Meadow. One teacher thought she'd seen just about everything when it came to names, until the first day of school came round, and she met a boy named Fruit Stand.

The teacher felt sorry for little Fruit Stand, having to go through life with a name like that, but she decided there was nothing else to do but make the best of it. All through that first day of school it was: "Fruit Stand, can you bring me the chalk?" and "Fruit Stand, are you ready to tell us about your family?" But this little boy seemed oddly distant. He participated in all the classroom activities, but he didn't seem very happy.

Finally, at the end of the day, it was time for the children to go to their buses. "Fruit Stand,

do you know the name of your bus stop?" the teacher asked.

No answer. That wasn't so strange, the teacher thought, because the boy hadn't said much all day. One of those shy kids maybe?

But no matter, the teacher had a trick up her sleeve. All the parents had been told to write the names of their children's bus stops on the reverse side of their name tags. The teacher turned over the boy's tag, and there, neatly printed in block letters, was the word "Anthony!"

Names are important! They're the labels we bear through life, the invitations we offer up to other people so they may know us better. Should somebody forget our name, or somehow misuse it, we feel hurt, even abused. That's probably how little Anthony felt, after spending his entire first day of school as Fruit Stand.

But don't panic, if you have a name as unusual as Fruit Stand or one you don't like very much just remember God takes note of our character and isn't interested in the names we are given by family, and the only name God is interested in is His name written on your heart. Amen

Kilrea, Tamlaght O'Crilly Upper & Lower

Rector: Rev Gary Millar
Facebook: The Parishes of Kilrea, Tamlaght O'Crilly Upper & Lower @kilreatamlaghtocrillyupperlower



Errigal & Desertoghill (Garvagh)

Rector: Rev Carmen Hayes

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Some of you, well those of you with good memories, will recall that I wrote an n:vision article back in March 2013 about this unwanted visitor that had been discovered lurking in the wee church of St Columba's, Draperstown, where I happened to be the Rector at the time. And I even introduced you to the horrible beast, whose name was Mr Dry Rot, the most hateful and destructive individual that I'd personally ever met, and why was that the case?

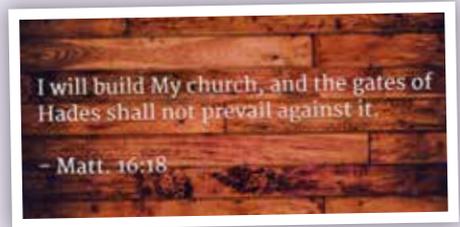
Well simply because Mr Dry Rot's modus operandi was (and believe me still is) to sneak his way into a building uninvited and then under the cover of darkness hide himself in the very structures of that building - so well that you'd hardly even notice that he was there. Yet all the while, he'd be causing lots of damage absolutely everywhere as the parishioners and I were sadly to discover.

And there's more, for once he'd got himself in his favourite position, that being in behind the very fabric of the building, he'd take root, set up camp, claim squatters' rights and make himself as hard to get rid of as the Herpes or even the Coronavirus. And if things weren't bad enough, the actual cost of trying to treat what is basically a cancer, a demon in the form of a plant, could be both costly and even crippling to the vast majority of congregations!

But why am I telling you any or all of that? Well I do so because it would seem that this Mr Dry Rot guy is a fan of mine because it looks like he's followed me from St Columba's to St Paul's in Garvagh or more accurately he's been happily and joyfully encamped there, fully engaged in his destructive actions for some time now - basically waiting to show himself on my arrival. However, on this occasion he's recruited some assistance. For Mr Dry Rot has joined forces with his

exceptionally good friend, another most hateful and destructive individual, called Mr Woodworm!

Maybe they think that it would take a full-on dual pronged attack to get the better of me and maybe they're right. But have they got me worried, anxious, or concerned? Well, they definitely would have IF it were my battle to fight but thankfully it's not. You see, in His Word (Matthew 16:18) the Lord has this to say: "I will build my church and the gates of hell (the demons, the dry rot and the woodworm) shall not prevail against it." Hallelujah and Amen!



Maghera & Killelagh

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The weather has at last changed and we are all enjoying some welcome sun on our backs. In more than one way it's been a cold month or two, as we again experienced a very strict Lockdown. For many of us the memories of holidaying on the Continent are again pulling at our heart strings. My family have all been vaccinated so I do look forward again to spending some time at my favourite Spanish village, La Cariheula. During these unprecedented days I

conducted a wedding ceremony with only 14 guests and to be honest I was a little apprehensive. I shouldn't have worried, as I knew all the guests and I was able to welcome them by using their first names. They had a beautiful service which culminated in the bride's dad purchasing a carryout from a local restaurant.

Today I conducted my first funeral service inside our Parish Church. Again I was slightly concerned as the family only invited 30

guests. I need not have worried as the soloist used her incredible voice to bring solace to the mourners and we all experienced a very meaningful service. Mentally, this Lockdown did challenge my prayer life. I found myself asking God to reveal Himself in old established ways and indeed new ways to bring me comfort and healing. As a family we had experienced a number of challenges and, coupled with the Parishes being closed, I confess I struggled a little. *Continued on page 44...*

Continued from page 43...

Recently, I was drawn to this story of the Wizard of Oz, a classic movie that helped me regain my confidence in God. The basic story is about Dorothy who gets trapped in her basement and she ends up in the mythical Land of Oz. The young girl's only desire is to find her way back home to her family. Her search for a solution leads her to make three new friends: The Cowardly

Lion, the Scarecrow, and the Tinman. Their adventures lead them to the Emerald City, in search of a wizard who will grant them their wishes. The lion is seeking courage, the scarecrow wants a brain, and the tin man is pleading for a new heart. It is a great children's tale with a very important message: Sometimes, you already possess the very things for which you are searching.

I now understand I was asking God for things I already possessed. I had experienced His Salvation – He loved me unconditionally and His Son Jesus Christ was guiding and even carrying me along the chequered pathway of life. God through His Holy Spirit was with me all the time, even through the Lockdown. What an awesome God we worship.

St. Tida's, Parish of Ballyscullion, Bellaghy

NSM in Charge: Rev Brian Hassan



Thankfully, as I write this, summer has arrived and as a typical Northern Ireland man I set about painting the garden furniture and getting some gardening done; then looked at my arms - as red as the soft cover of the Book of Common Prayer!

In Ballyscullion we reopened on Good Friday and our attendance numbers have been very encouraging as we have got back into the rhythm of worship. It is still a bit strange with no congregational singing but I have indulged in playing some praise music from Christian 'stars'. Our organist, Fred, underwent a serious operation towards the end of this current lockdown and is convalescing well at present.

We were very pleased to welcome Bishop Andrew to St Tida's on 9 May and we thank him for his very encouraging address and words to us as a parish. We look forward to him visiting us many times

in the future. Miss Anna Donnelly sang two wonderful solos during the service as she played her guitar. She has only turned 14 and taught herself to play the guitar during lockdown - quite an achievement!

I was delighted that all members of the Select Vestry happily remained in post for another year. As I was detached from the parish during lockdown I was so grateful to my two Wardens, Pamela and Wesley, who kept me informed and were my eyes and ears on the ground. Without them I would have been out of touch - thank you.

As we progress, the Select Vestry will meet on 15th June and the following Sunday we are encouraging the Sunday school kids and their parents to attend for All Age Worship in an attempt to ease them back in. The painters will be in over the summer months to give our lovely church a much needed freshen-up and, as the saying suggests, 'It's steady as she goes.'

During the long winter months of lockdown it certainly was a time to test our faith, but God will never push us too far. Even when we feel isolated and frustrated God is always there. He hears our cries and knows our concerns. I often think of Jesus when the darkness was closing in on Him in the Garden. He was frightened, He was worried, He even sweated drops of blood, so much was His concern, but He still carried on. We too must carry on, Covid cannot destroy our faith. The Lord is our Shepherd and He will be with us. Better days lie ahead and with faith - and a good dose of common sense - we will move forward and the House of God is the best place to be in. Hopefully, we will never close our churches again but one thing is assured, God will never close His love or presence from us.



Christ Church Castledawson

Rev Canon Colin Welsh: Rector and Rural Dean

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Question! Will the Church survive in a post pandemic world?

God empowers his people to survive and thrive in difficult times doesn't He?

The Bible is packed with stories about people that God empowered to overcome adversity. A few examples are: Noah, Joseph, Job, Moses, Gideon and of course Jesus and His disciples.

Each of these, and many others we read about in the Bible, had the patience, trust and determination, with God's help, to overcome the often worrying, challenging and even dangerous situations in which they found themselves.

We too, in the post pandemic church, must have the same steely resolve, the same trust and determination if the Church is to survive and thrive. And the good news is: we won't be doing it alone. The God of all Hope, the God of all creation, the God who through His Son, the Lord Jesus, has made a way for us and will be with us.

Our priorities may change during and after the pandemic. The old ways of doing things may have to be tweaked or even be radically different but the Holy Spirit and God's will for his church will not change. So YES! As Christ's Church, we will survive. Didn't Jesus himself say, "...and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The Apostle Paul writes: *"We pray that you'll live well for the Master, making him proud of you as you work hard in his orchard. As you learn more and more how God works, you will learn how to do your work. We pray that you'll have the strength to stick it out over the long haul-not the grim strength of gritting your teeth but the glory-strength God gives. It is strength that endures the unendurable and spills over into joy, thanking the Father who makes us strong enough to take part in everything bright and beautiful that he has for us"* (Colossians 1:10-14, MSG).

Friends, my prayer is that, having journeyed through this Covid pandemic and having had

to cope with the forced closures, revert to online worship services for a time and apply covid protocols before and during the return to church, that God would open up our hearts and minds to learn more of His will for our individual lives and for His Church, and how we can become the disciples God wants us to be.

May we be encouraged to meet safely together for **fellowship, discipleship, the study of God's word** (our guidebook) and to **pray** for God's continuing intervention in our lives and our churches. All this will lead us into serving God more faithfully in the church and supporting the community around us by focusing on the needs of others and reaching out to the lost.

Let's get ready to not just survive but thrive!

Have a blessed Summer.
Colin

Desertmartin and Termoneeny

Vacant

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Kilcronaghan, Ballynascreen Tobermore & Six Towns

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The Snowdrops, Bluebells and Cherry blossom around the Old Rectory were particularly beautiful this year, but now they lie dormant in order to reappear, God willing, in Spring 2022. With Spring, such as it was, behind us, nature now moves on to display the beauty of trees, covered with fresh green leaves. The Azealia's and St John's Wort are in full bloom, and I can see the first signs of flowers forming on the Hydrangea's, summer has arrived once more.

There is something very reassuring about the constancy of nature, with its rhythms and routines. Perhaps that is why so many hymn writers have turned to nature for inspiration.

Think of: All Things Bright and Beautiful. Can You Count the Stars? For the Beauty of the Earth. Or, a favourite of mine: How Great Thou Art. *Summer and winter, and spring-time and harvest, Sun, moon and stars in their courses above, Join with all nature in manifold witness To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.*

For more than 15 months now, the knowledge of God's great faithfulness, mercy and love, has been a very welcome constancy in our lives. Everything seems to have changed. The rhythm and routine of our lives has been disrupted, but hopefully, the more useful areas of our lives are simply lying dormant with the Snowdrops, Bluebells and Cherry blossom, ready to bloom once more. In the meantime, as we wait for life to burst into bloom, we can turn to the One who is constant, and in His word find some great advice as to how to spend this period of waiting. In Psalm 113 the Psalmist tells us that, the antidote to all of life's more difficult times, is praise; unending and unceasing praise.

Did you know that Psalm 113 is one of 6 Hallel Psalms? (Hallel meaning Hallelujah). These Psalms would be sung at the end of the Passover meal, which means that Jesus, would have sung these Psalms, on the night before his Crucifixion.

What an incredible thought! That Jesus the Son of God, knowing what He was about to

experience, sang praise to God, declaring God to be "exalted over all the nations," that "God's glory is above the heavens." for "God is enthroned on high."

Very appropriate really, since one of the outworkings of praise, is the reminder that we are trusting in One who is greater. As we look upward rather than inward, we direct our hearts and minds towards our God who transcends all of time and space. We have a BIG GOD, who is not limited by time, circumstances and events.

So today, can I encourage you to take a moment to reflect on your Great God, and allow those thoughts to translate to praise.

Praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord, you his servants;

praise the name of the Lord.

Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and forevermore.

From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.

Psalm 113 1-3

Ardstraw, Baronscourt, Badoney Upper & Lower and Greenan

Rector: Rev Ivan Dinsmore
Tel: 028 8166 1342 Facebook: Ardstraw Parish



Confirmation

18 of our young people were confirmed on the first weekend of June in three of our churches. We welcomed Bishop Andrew on his first visit to our Parish on June 4th in Lower Badoney to the first of three services, which became necessary due to the large number of candidates and the

need to observe social distancing. We are very grateful to Bishop Andrew for giving so much of his time, in what is for him a very busy season, to come twice to the parish in one weekend, so that we could comfortably and safely welcome our young people into full membership of God's Church in Confirmation. We were also very pleased to welcome

two young people from the Parish of Drumclaph and Langfield who joined with us to be confirmed. We are thankful that all of our young people are now confirmed, even though some of them had to self-isolate during the previous number of weeks.

Derry & Raphoe Youth (DRY) are beginning

an initiative called "Summer Kick Start" which will encourage parishes to host safe, socially distanced youth events over the summer. We have decided to host a special, socially distanced First Holy Communion and Barbecue in the Parish Hall, Dublin Street, as there was not a celebration of Holy Communion at the Confirmation services. God willing, this will be a celebration of the beginning of the end of the pandemic and of the parish moving

forward to the "New Normal". Although the COVID-19 virus will undoubtedly be with us for years to come, we hope that due to the successful roll out of the vaccines, we can look forward to the continued easing of restrictions and more freedoms in the months to come.

Please pray for our new communicants as they begin their days as full members of the Church. They are Molly Freeborn, Lucy

Freeborn, Lynsey Galbraith, Kenzie Moore and Dylan Moore, from Baronscourt. Andrea McConnell from Gortin, Mia Whelan, Ashton Hazzard, William Watson, Keelan Bradley, David Bradley, Logan Kerrigan, Lily Monaghan, Christopher Spratt, Jamie Duddy, Maisie Dunlop and Conor Finlay from Ardstraw Parish and Hannah Rankin and Joshua Dennison from Langfield Parish.

Cappagh & Lislimnaghan

Rector: Rev Canon Derek Quinn

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At last it looks as if we are starting to get back to some semblance of normality, but the fact remains that the pandemic that swept the globe has changed people and the world significantly. We are now living in what has been dubbed 'the new normal', and the question that faces the Church today is how does it respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities of these times.

In 1865 The Salvation Army was founded in London by William Booth and his wife Catherine. Their aim in starting that evangelistic organisation was to help the poor, the destitute, and the hungry, by meeting both their physical and spiritual needs, and in this regard they were essentially following the example of their Lord who spent His time on earth doing good, helping others, and teaching about the love of God. Today The Salvation Army boasts a worldwide membership of over 1.7 million people and is present in 132 countries, running charity shops, operating

shelters for the homeless and disaster relief, and providing humanitarian aid to developing countries. Sixteen years before founding The Salvation Army, William Booth penned a number of resolutions which only came to light following his death. On a faded and worn page was written in his own hand the following words:

"I promise...

THAT I will rise every morning sufficiently early (say twenty minutes before seven o'clock) to wash, dress and have a few minutes, not less than five, in private prayer.

THAT I will as much as possible avoid all that babbling and idle talking in which I have lately so sinfully indulged.

THAT I will endeavour in my conduct and deportment before the world and my fellow servants especially to conduct myself as a humble, meek and zealous follower of the bleeding Lamb, and by serious conversation

and warning endeavour to lead them to think of their immortal souls.

THAT I will read no less than four chapters in God's Word every day.

THAT I will strive to live closer to God, and to seek after holiness of heart and leave providential events with God.

THAT I will read this over every day or at least twice a week.

God help me, enable me to cultivate a spirit of self-denial and to yield myself a prisoner of love to the Redeemer of the world. Amen and Amen."

The Booths were an ordinary couple who did extraordinary things for God and their legacy continues right across the world to this day. There is much we can learn from their life and witness. May we, like them, always seek to put God first and to minister to others in His name.

Drumragh & Mountfield

Rector Elect - Revd Graham Hare www.drumragh.derry.anglican.org
www.drumragh.derry.anglican.org Facebook: St Columba's Church Omagh @stcolumbsomagh

The Dungannon curate, Rev Graham Hare, has been appointed Rector of the Parishes of Drumragh with Mountfield in County Tyrone, succeeding Rev Ian Linton who moved to Rathfriland and Ballyward in February last year.

The news was broken this morning to the Rector Elect's current parishioners in Drumglass (Dungannon) and shared with his new congregations about 30 miles away in Omagh and Mountfield Parish Churches.

Rev Hare, who is 38, is married to wife Hannah and the couple have three young children, Bethany-Joy, Anna-Grace and Lois-Faith. His appointment marks a return of sorts to the Diocese of Derry where, from 2005 to 2008, he was an RE

teacher in Lisneal College in Londonderry. He also worked for a number of years as general manager of the independent Christian charity Love for Life, which provides relationship training in schools.

The move to Omagh provides the new incumbent with an opportunity to renew acquaintances with an 'old boss'. After being priested in 2018, Graham served as Bishop Andrew's curate in Dungannon.

The new Rector said he was looking forward to this next phase in his ministry. "I'm leaving Dungannon with a heavy heart," he said. "Drumglass is a special place, with great people, but I'm convinced that the move to Omagh is of the Lord and I'm trusting in His sovereign grace. Hannah and I have spent time in Omagh over the last few weeks,



getting the feel of the place, and we've enjoyed the warmth of the welcome we've received. I'm really looking forward to meeting and getting to know people, and seeing them come to faith."

Rev Hare will be instituted into his new parishes at a Service in St Columba's Church in Omagh on Friday 2nd July.

Edenderry & Clanabogan

Rev Canon Robert Clarke: Rector and Rural Dean
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Forgive Me When I Whine

Today upon a bus I saw a lovely maid with golden hair; I envied her - she seemed so happy, and how I wished I were so fair; When suddenly she rose to leave, I saw her hobble down the aisle; She had one foot and used a crutch, but as she passed, she wore a smile. Oh, God, forgive me when I whine, I have two feet - the world is mine.

When I stop to buy some sweets, The lad who served me had such charm; He seemed to radiate good cheer, his manner was so kind and warm; I said, "It's nice to deal with you, such courtesy I seldom find"; He turned and said,

"Oh, thank you, sir", and then I saw that he was blind. Oh, God, forgive me when I whine, I have two eyes - the world is mine.

Then, when walking down the street, I saw a child with eyes of blue; He stood and watched the others play, it seemed he knew not what to do; I stopped a moment, then I said, "Why don't you join the others, dear?" He looked ahead without a word, and then I knew he could not hear. Oh, God, forgive me when I whine, I have two ears - the world is mine.

With feet to take me where I'd go, With eyes to see the sunset's glow, With ears to hear what I would know,

I'm blessed indeed - the world is mine; Oh, God, forgive me when I whine.

Summer Schedule

Due to Covid-19, the usual Sunday pattern of one church worship is not happening this year. Separate services will be held in each church each Sunday throughout July and August. These will be at 10.00am in Clanabogan and 11.30am in Edenderry.

Afternoon Tea-Treats

We are grateful to the Branch Leaders and Office Bearers of Edenderry and Clanabogan Mothers' Union who have delivered afternoon tea boxes to members of the

Mothers' Union. These gifts were funded by Fermanagh and Omagh District Council through the South West Age Partnership. Members were most appreciative of this gesture which helped reduce the feelings of isolation at this time.

Pause for Thought

"The fewer the words, the better the prayer."
Martin Luther

*Open my eyes that I may see
the Presence that is all about me.*

*Open my ears that I may hear
the voice that is quiet yet ever near.
Open my heart that I may feel
the love of God so close and real.
Open each sense, make me aware
of the Power and Peace that's always there.*

Drumclaph & Clare, Langfield Upper & Lower

Rector: Rev Robert G. Keogh

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<http://www.drumclaph.derry.anglican.org>

Facebook: Drumclaph ClareandLangfield



The vaccination program is going very well and thankfully vaccine hesitancy is at a very low level. It is the only way to escape from the problems of lockdown which has had an effect on hospital waiting lists, mental health and employment, particularly in the tourist sector. On the plus side, many people have been able to work remotely from home to save travelling to work which enables them to spend more time with their families.

Confirmation

Bishop Andrew visited our group of

parishes on Sunday April 18 and took confirmation services in Drumclaph and Lower Langfield churches. It was great that this eventually happened because with the pandemic many confirmation services have had to be cancelled throughout the diocese and our candidates have waited a very long time to be confirmed. This is an important step in the lives of our young people, and we trust that they will continue to grow in faith in their Christian lives

Recycling of Newspapers

The newspaper lorry picked up 10 tons of

newspapers from Drumclaph hall which raised £700-00. We thank the group of volunteers who helped to load the lorry and everyone who leaves in the newspapers which can be left in the wheelie bin in Drumclaph.

Point of Prayer

There have been a number of funerals recently in our group of parishes and we remember in our prayers those who have been bereaved of a loved member of their family.

Derg & Termonamongan

Rector: Rev Peter Ferguson

Tel: 028 8167 1362

Facebook: Derg Parish Church. Termonamongan Parish



Deacon Intern:

Rev Claire Henderson



*Reaching Up, Reaching In, Reaching Out:
for God, for Each Other, for our Community.*

In Derg and Killeter Parish Group we were delighted to return to in-church worship on Good Friday with Dean Raymond Ferguson

opening God's Word in both Derg and Killeter. On Easter Sunday we rejoiced with uplifting hymns of victory at all services. It was a great return to in-church worship and the sense of Easter hope and praise throughout this season has been felt even more this year. This sense

of hope continued when we held an Easter Praise Party with Bishop Andrew. This was an afternoon service for parents with children and young people. We enjoyed a fun quiz, some praise and Bishop Andrew delivered

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a memorable talk and certainly left his mark in Killeter! After both services all were treated to ice cream from an ice-cream van - always a winner. We enjoyed ice cream and chat outside in glorious Co. Tyrone sunshine. Easter was also significant for our Bright & Beautiful Campaign to restore St Bestius Church. On Sunday afternoon 18th April we held a Giving Day and Window Reveal. This was the first time for folks to see our newly installed All Things Bright and Beautiful stained-glass window. We celebrated the completion of Phase 1 and enter immediately into Phase 2. Thanks to everyone for their support.

Another source of real joy was to be invited to resume monthly worship in Silverdale and Parkview nursing homes in Castlederg. How moving it is to see and worship with our dear friends again.

In May we welcomed our BCMS Crosslinks mission partners Andrew and Eunice Moody. They shared about their ministry in Northern Uganda and into Southern Sudan through their work in the refugee camps.

Looking ahead to the summer months we plan to hold Sunday School Prize Giving services on Sunday 20th June 3pm in Killeter and 4pm in Derg - with chat over a cuppa, juice and treats afterwards (the eat treats will be provided, families to bring their own flask/juice). This has been a tough year for all our children and young people and we want to share God's love and give a special gift to all. Kirsty McCartney has kindly agreed to bring a message to everyone.

In June we plan to hold a Youth Kickstart Games Night and BBQ at Castlederg High School. This will be the first event with our young people face-to-face in some time and we cannot wait.

Gareth Porter (I.F.A.) has kindly agreed to come and lead our games.

Summer Madness Youth Festival plans to hold a 3-day non-residential festival at Coleraine University 2-4th July. All the usual Summer Madness programme will take place in a covid-safe environment. Groups are encouraged to attend on one day, 10am-10pm, and get the full Summer Madness experience in a day.

After meeting with our leaders we are already looking forward to Sunday School and Derg Valley Ducks Youth recommencing D.V in September in a revived and relevant format and programme. Journey Towards Confirmation will also begin in September. These are a few of the activities that have taken and God willing will take place.

Peter

Urney and Sion Mills

Rector: Rev Jonathan McFarland
Facebook: Parish of Urney Christ Church
and Church of the Good Shepherd @urneyparish



"And Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them" (Gen. 26:18).

Isaac had the misfortune of living in the shadow of a truly great father. Often it is exceedingly difficult for a son of such a father to achieve significance and recognition in his own right. The Bible does not describe any great achievements of Isaac as it does of his father. However, Scripture records several times that he "dug again the wells of water, which they had been dug in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them."

These wells were essential for the lives of both the families and the flock. Had it not been for these wells, they could not have survived. After Abraham's death, Philistines had destroyed these vital sources of refreshment and sustenance, and it fell to Isaac to rediscover and re-dig them. This story reminds us that each generation must re-dig the old wells.

I am sure that like me you have heard many people say that they do not want to go back to the bad old ways of living once this pandemic is over. If we are to see a fresh new start we must use the time and resources we have now to clear away the rubbish that has been blocking our relationship with God. If we permit the old sinful ways, to distract us from the things of God to the extent that

we forget where the wells of salvation are, for all practical purposes we will find that they have been stopped up, by the enemy, in the same way that the wells became blocked during the days of Isaac.

As we approach the summer we have an opportunity to take stock and to return to the Lord, our first love, and to seek His kingdom first.

Lord, grant us strength and wisdom to use what you have given us, to see a return to order and refreshment in this new season.
Yours in Christ Jonathan



Camus-Juxta-Mourne (Strabane)

Rector: Rev John White

Facebook: Christ Church, Strabane @ChristChurchStrabane

Our Vision... 'Preach the Word... be shaped by the Word'.

When is it OK to not be OK? Naomi Osaka the Japanese Grand Slam tennis winner has recently been in the news. Threatened with expulsion from the French Open because of her refusal to talk to the media, she revealed how she had struggled with bouts of depression.

A recent email from the Bishops Office featured a mental health survey called Mind Matters COI, which seeks to promote positive mental health. It aims to raise awareness of, and respond to the mental health needs of communities across the island of Ireland. Reports have expressed concern over the mental health of young people out of school for a year during Lockdown, whether it is not being able to interact with friends, or concerns over exam assessments, an issue which schools are seeking to address.

Through isolation... Through fear of the disease Through separation from family and friends ... Through concern about employment, or lack ...

If we really believe the good news is to "heal the heartbroken, announce freedom to all captives, [and] pardon all prisoners ..." Isaiah 61:1 Message

Those of you in the church could start talking about what people are really going through and find ways to meet them there. We need to show them the acceptance God shows to us. We must normalise the battles people have with depression so those who suffer from it will be willing to turn to us for help, comfort and community. Too often we heap shame on those who are struggling rather than help them come out of the darkness into the light. We are all broken in different ways. No particular shape of brokenness is worse or better than any other.

Of course, Jesus meets us right where we are. Just as Jesus forgave Peter for denying he even knew Jesus, and chose him to be a foundational leader of the Church. Jesus made it clear to His disciples, especially Thomas, while all of them had locked themselves in an upper room for fear that

they, too, might be arrested and suffer as Jesus did, he was willing to do whatever it took to lift His disciples out of their despondency. The encounter with Thomas, in particular, reminds us that our doubts and demands don't bother Jesus at all. He will still reveal Himself to us. And Jesus' message to Peter is the same to us today, especially if we are struggling with mental health issues - 'I love you. I see what you're going through. I know who you really are. My Father created you and wants you to thrive. I still have a purpose for your life'. Whatever we're going through, Jesus gives us the power to overcome. He has defeated death and He is more powerful than anything that could ever come against us. His victory is your victory. He invites us to share in His triumph, the ultimate win-win.

So it's OK not to be OK. But don't settle for a lifetime of 'not OK'. God is calling us into the light of His presence.

God bless and stay safe. John

Donagheady

Vacant

Rev Canon Paul Whittaker (Rural Dean)

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The Rev Dr Robin Stockitt has led his final Service of Sunday Worship in Donemana prior to his retirement as Rector of Donagheady (St James). He was joined for the occasion by another retiree, Rt Rev Ken Good, who preached the Sermon. "I want to thank Robin and [his wife, Joan] Joan for so many things," Bishop Good said in his address, "but particularly for the generous

way in which they have given of themselves to us as a parish, to us as a diocese, to us as a community and to us as a Church of Ireland." Bishop Good, who instituted Dr Stockitt into the parish seven years ago, talked about Robin and Joan's legacy in Donemana. They had made their mark, the Bishop said, and their mark had been a very positive one. "My sense was that this parish was ready and willing

to move forward, as evidenced by jigsaw and the Monday Club and other things I saw at the time. I thought that there was a willingness there for creative and fresh approaches to ministry.

The Bishop praised the Rector's skill as a "very gifted communicator" who was able

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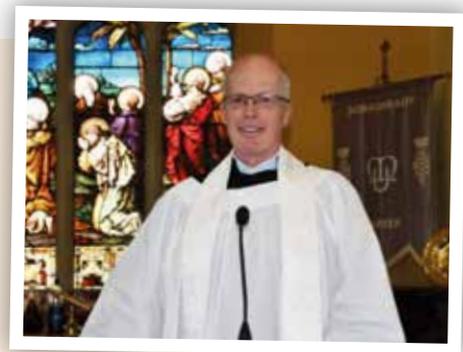
to make complex things understandable. Robin was flexible and adaptable, and ready and willing to take on a challenge. "What I think people appreciate as your legacy, and there are many things, is your genuineness and authenticity," Bishop Good said, "that there are no airs and graces - even though he might be a posh Englishman - there are no airs and graces about Robin, or Joan, they are real and without pretence; they are down to earth and easy to be with, and that's an important part of a legacy, so that people feel that you understood them, you related to them, you were interested in them, you were part of their life and of their crises and emergencies and joys and sorrows."

In his final words to his congregation, Rev Dr Stockitt reminded parishioners of the Diocesan vision statement - 'Transforming Community; Radiating Christ', which were displayed in St James' Church. "I was intrigued by those two words, 'transforming' and 'radiating'.

They spoke of a message and a way of living that transformed whole communities and enthused them with the qualities of heaven. And for that motto to become more than just words hanging on the wall, there had to be change, and risk-taking, and growth and experimentation, and excitement, and kindness and joy. So, I tried in my own way, these seven years, to fulfil that vision."

Dr Stockitt said he was glad that he and Joan had come to Donemana and glad that they had been accepted as blow-ins into parishioners' homes. "The past year has been a very challenging one for all of us. Many businesses will not survive the pandemic and if there's one thing that the pandemic can teach us it's that we can take nothing for granted. "Some churches, as well as businesses, may not survive, which leaves me wondering what is it about the church that makes it attractive, magnetic, [so that] people will be drawn towards [it]?"

"At a spiritual level, it's about a sense of the



sacred, isn't it? Church communities are always intended to be places where there's something beautiful, something awesome, something tangibly 'other' about them. And on a human level, churches are all about kindness. They're not about hierarchy, or position, or status, or power; they're not about jostling and elbows. It's just about kindness, that's all. How simple is that? How difficult is that?"

"So as Joan and I leave this place, we do so with gratitude in our hearts, to God, and gratitude to all of you who have enriched our lives. So, thank you. Thank you - all of you."

Leckpatrick & Dunnalong

Rev Canon Paul Whittaker: Rector and Rural Dean

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Our highlight of 2021 has to be the lovely Confirmation services we had on Pentecost Sunday 23rd May in Leckpatrick Parish Church. At 11am we had 7 Candidates from Leckpatrick and at 2pm we had 10 Candidates from Dunnalong. In his sermon, Bishop Andrew referred to the trials of the past year, during which the Coronavirus pandemic had wrought havoc around the world, claiming hundreds of thousands of lives and disrupting life everywhere, including in parishes the length and breadth of Ireland. "The very fact that we are able to have this Confirmation Service," the Bishop said, "shows us that things are getting better. For just over a year in the

diocese there were no Confirmations at all, so the very fact that we're able to do this is a good sign." Afterwards at both services we had arranged for an ice cream van to visit the church grounds after the services, and all present - young and old - were treated to free 99s. Please continue to pray for our Confirmation candidates.

On this Confirmation Sunday, remember what Bishop Andrew told us.

Presence - God's presents to you is his presence through the Holy Spirit.

Power - the power of the Holy Spirit will empower you.

Comfort - God's comfort through the Holy Spirit will give you peace.

Challenge - be challenged by the Holy Spirit to step out in Faith.

Series on the Beatitudes

Over the past couple of weeks the Rector has begun a series of sermons on what is known as the 'Greatest Sermon in the World' the Beatitudes in Matthew chapter 5. In our newsheet is a plan on what he will be sharing over July and August. If something happens and you can't make Church some week and would like a full text copy of the sermon then let him know and he will email it to you.



Jolly Church Outing

We are planning a Parish outing to Portrush on Saturday 4th September. We are hiring a bus to bring us all away for the day and it will be FREE! Seats will be on a first come first served basis and everyone is invited. The bus will leave Leckpatrick Church at 10am stopping to collect people in Bready,



Magheramason and New Buildings. We plan to leave Portrush at around 4.30pm. Sign-up sheets will be at the back of each Church.

Congratulations to our Former Parishioner

The Rev Judi McGaffin has made history after being appointed the first female canon in the centuries-old history of St Eunan's Cathedral,



in Raphoe. Rev Canon McGaffin said she was dumbstruck when she learned that she had been chosen to succeed Rev Canon Dr Bill Long who retired in March.

We congratulate all who were appointed to the Select Vestry this year and I am grateful to the Churchwardens for agreeing to continue in post for another year.

St. Augustine's, Londonderry

Rector: Rev Nigel Cairns
www.saintaugustines.co.uk
www.facebook.com/weechurch



Creche

We were delighted to finally relaunch our creche facility for the under four-year-olds within our church family. There are brand new resources and the creche area is looking fabulous. This was the final part of our Growing Lives grant project, which has now enabled us to give our entire children and young peoples' provision a complete make over. Well done to everyone involved, and it's great to see so many younger families returning.

Hospitality and Tourist Ministry

As soon as Governmental and wider Church policy permits, we are ready to open our doors to the 'staycation' tourists who might visit the city during the summer months. This year we have an exciting new addition to our tourist offering - churchCAFE. Some of you may have already seen our new patio space outside the main hall on the Bishop Street carpark side. It's a perfect area which lends itself to an outside café! It will be open on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 10am-4pm, throughout the Tourist Ministry season serving hot and cold drinks,

cakes and traybakes along with soups, salads, lunches and desserts. Planters for the area have been bought and the greenery softens the space as well as separating the outdoor furniture to ensure social distancing. We see this as a wonderful opportunity to engage in mission at a local level, and prayers that we can be good witnesses for Christ would be greatly valued. It's a huge undertaking for our team, so if you're in town, why not call in and give us a wee bit of encouragement.

Summer Programmes

Our plans are well advanced for our lunchtime concert programme each Tuesday from 1pm - 2pm in the church. Legislation permitting, they will begin on 22nd June, and run each Tuesday throughout the summer months. These events have been funded by DCSDC Heritage Animation Grant, and therefore all concerts are free of charge for visitors to enjoy. The grant also funds the programming element of Art Arcadia, which is based in our cottage and old schoolhouse. We look forward to the Art Arcadia programme being rolled out over the

next year. Admission to the exhibitions is free, and the dates coming up for the summer exhibitions are: *Aimee Melaugh: Opening Night 2nd July 2021 / Exhibition 6th - 10th July 2021.* *Peter Richard: Opening Night 20th August 2021 / Exhibition 24th - 28th August 2021.*

Columban Young Ambassadors

The Churches Trust are delivering an exciting new programme for post-primary young people. The programme aims to meet new people from Londonderry and Donegal who will learn together about Columba, progress skills in app development and complete an OCN endorsed qualification. The project will consist of a range of interactive fun workshops, outdoor activities, visits to some museum exhibitions and a scavenger hunt along the Columba Heritage trail. The programme began on Thursday 27th May and we have four of our young people involved. We wish all the young people participating from the various churches every blessing as they journey together over the next couple of months.

Christ Church, Culmore, Muff and St. Peter

Rector: Venerable Robert Miller,
Archdeacon of Derry
E rector@cccmsp.org
H 028 71352396

Website: www.cccmsp.org

Facebook Page: [@cccmsp](https://www.facebook.com/CCCMSP)

Our Vision: Transforming Community, Radiating Christ.



Rev Canon Katie McAteer, Pastoral Director
E pastoral@cccmsp.org
M 07813 885145



Mrs Angela Dobbins
Parish Administrator
E administrator@cccmsp.org

Psalm 33:22 'Let your steadfast love, O Lord, be upon us, even as we hope in you.'

Although much of my engagement with you all is still in the virtual world or by telephone it is good to be writing in the knowledge that we have been able to resume in-person worship across our whole group of parishes: in June we returned to Muff. I am going to use the Summer period to reflect on what I have learnt about how we engage with one another and build fellowship and community. Whilst we all acknowledge that there are challenging times ahead, I also believe it is good to pause and reflect on how God has been faithful to us during this past year. The Summer is a good time to do this. This very magazine gives you an opportunity to see how God has been at

work across our diocese and to be thankful.

One of the topics in my mind is discipleship: how do we nurture our faith; how do we challenge our level of understanding so we can be growing in our understanding and love of God? The Wednesday service has been a good time to draw together; I would like to look and see how we can build on this time in the middle of the week. I also want to help resource us to share our faith. I am more convinced than ever that following Jesus in your daily living is a source of hope, and reliance on God's strength is the place from where our real resilience to face challenging times comes. The verse from Psalm 33:22 reminds us of this; maybe you'll commit it to memory?

EACH ONE, REACH ONE - is a way to remind

us that as people of hope we are called to share it. So, as Summer begins, I am asking you to join me in praying that our parish numbers will grow. When we pray, we open ourselves to God's working through us as well as actively seeking to discern how He is at work in our world to answer our prayers. As we pray that we will draw people to our local Church family, I want you to be praying about who you will invite to come with you to our Church worship; with whom will you share our Facebook service invites? EACH ONE, REACH ONE is also a reminder to be actively connecting with one another. I know the Clergy have appreciated your messages of support and your prayers for us; we continue to keep you in our prayers.

Yours in Christ, Robert+

Moville, Greencastle, Donagh, Malin & Culdaff

Vacant

Rural Dean: Rev Canon David Crooks
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Mob: 00447871974658
Email: dcrooks@eircom.net

The death of Sammy Bredin of Cooley, Moville at the age of 84 years, is a cause of great sorrow to his wife of forty years, Sylvia, and their sons Robert and Samuel and their daughter Elizabeth and her husband Seamus and the six grandchildren. Sammy had been in declining health for a number of years. Throughout he was most lovingly and faithfully cared for by Sylvia and the family. Sammy had been a faithful and active member of Moville Parish for

many years, serving as a Church Warden for a number of terms. May he rest in peace, and may God bring comfort to the family. We sympathise also with the families of Miss Nary Walker and Mrs Margaret Henderson of Moville Parish, and Mrs Elizabeth Martin of Cloncha who died recently.

The four postponed Easter General Vestry meetings have now been held, and Church Wardens, Glebes Wardens, Secretaries,

Treasurers and members of Select Vestry elected. Thank you to all who serve the churches in any way throughout the year. John and Maureen Williams are most grateful for your prayers and good wishes as John continues to make some recovery from his illness. We are also most grateful to the four Parish Readers who are conducting Morning Prayer Services as Maureen is not at present available. They are Mrs Valerie McKinley, Mrs Rosina Doherty-Allan, Mrs

Linda Parke and Mrs Dorothy Carey. They are not permitted to preach, but they will be supplied with sermons which they can use. They are grateful for your appreciation and support.

I have arranged a sponsored cycle to raise funds for my brother-in-law, Bishop Hall Speers in Mahajanga, Madagascar. Bishop Speers needs about £50,000 in order to

make his diocese financially solvent, and to recruit, train, house, and pay clergy.

Bishop Forster and Bishop Speers have met, and our Bishop has kindly agreed to set up a diocesan project and ask each parish group to hold events, which hopefully will raise this sum. We have our own financial problems, and charity begins at home, but we are living in luxurious wealth compared to

the people of Madagascar. On Wednesday 7th July, I shall cycle from Moville to Newtowncunningham, 41 kilometres. I would greatly appreciate your support. Sponsorship cards are in circulation, and this event will be, hopefully, the contribution of the Moville and Donagh Group with Taughboyne, All Saints and Killea Group.

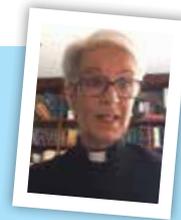
Fahan Upper and Lower

Rector: Rev Canon Judi McGaffin

Tel: 0769361154

Facebook: Fahanandbuncranachurchofireland

"Cherishing and connecting with all God's children"



We have been through an inordinate amount of change and challenge over the past 15 months or so - and now we are embarking on returning to in-church worship and reflecting on what we have learned as we have faced all the disruption.

This year as we again travelled through Lent with HOPE every household got sunflower seeds to plant and a thankyou card to send to someone who they felt might need a bit of encouragement! On Easter Day the art and craft that has been so carefully and thoughtfully created over the season of Lent was displayed in 2 ways! First all the pictures of hope - the word Hope made from everyday objects, snowdrops, lambs, churches, Mother's Day cards, buds and new life, palm branches and palm crosses - were expertly made into 4 letters to spell HOPE! We also had a huge flutter of butterflies made, painted, drawn and coloured which then "landed" on our empty cross to make it "alive" with colour and hope of a new creation! You can see the cross on CJs page in this edition and here is HOPE!

As the Easter season continued, we entered a month of Praise and Thanksgiving through praying the psalms together. Our "May Month of Prayer" consisted of everyone praying a verse of a psalm every day to

thank God for his boundless blessings - even through the challenging times we have and are still facing.

Bible study has continued to blossom over Zoom - and now that we have together read and discussed and prayed through the 4 Gospels, we look forward to looking at other parts of the word of God together into the future! Zoom has also been the communication platform of choice in communicating with St Mura's National School since they returned to in-school learning. We have been thinking in depth about the Lord's Prayer. The senior students have been creating their own illustrated copies of the Lord's Prayer and those in the junior classes are completing activity books around each of the petitions in the prayer. The Bishop will be joining us for our final Zoom of the year to talk to the students about their work!

Those students that are in 6th class who will be leaving to go to secondary education in September will be having a special celebration involving prayer before the end of the school year.

Over the summer we are looking forward to restrictions easing a bit more so that we can begin to meet together - not only virtually but in person - to begin to discern what it is God wants us to do to spread his word, not only within the parish bounds but "to all the ends of the earth"

As we return to in-church worship we will be continuing Facebook services too! Please keep in touch with us on our Facebook page fahanandbuncranachurchofireland for all the latest news!



Taughboyne with Craigdoosh, All Saints & Killea

Rev Canon David Crooks: Rector and Rural Dean

Tel: 074 914 0135 Mob: 00447871974658

Email: dcrooks@eircom.net



Congratulations to Alistair and Wendy Moore on the birth of a daughter, Tara, and to Rebecca and Ciaran Coyle on the birth of a daughter, Maddison Ruby, and to Robert and Tina Arthur on the birth of a daughter. Our condolences are with Jonathan and Anne Williams on the loss in stillbirth of their baby, Leo John. Such a tragedy brings great sorrow to all the family. We continue to hold Jonathan's mother and father, Maureen and John in our prayers, and hope that John will continue his recovery from his illness and be able to remain at home.

The death of five-week-old Baby Megan, infant daughter of Sean and Alison Moore, has brought sorrow and grief to their family. Her Funeral Service in St Eunan's Cathedral in Letterkenny was indeed a solemn and sad occasion. We assure Sean and Alison of our prayers at this time.

Albert Hepburn died on 19th May after a short period of illness, at the age of 87 years. Albert was a loyal member of Craigadoosh until increasing age made it more difficult to attend his place of worship. In thanking God for his life of quality, we sympathise with his wife Marty, his sons William and Eric and his daughters Irene, Caroline and Avril, and with all the grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

All the postponed Annual general Easter vestry meetings have now been held. The Church Wardens, Glebes Wardens, Secretaries, Treasurers and members of Select Vestry have been re-elected, and we thank them for all their service to the parishes.

People are delighted to be back to church. It is hoped that church attendance will recover as people realise their human mortality. We must learn to depend upon God much more.

I have arranged a sponsored cycle to raise funds for my brother-in-law, Bishop Hall Speers in Mahajanga, Madagascar. Bishop Speers needs about £50,000 in order to make his diocese financially solvent, and to recruit, train, house, and pay clergy. Bishop Forster and Bishop Speers have met, and our Bishop has kindly agreed to set up a diocesan project and ask each parish group to hold events, which hopefully will raise this sum. We have our own financial problems, and charity begins at home, but we are living in luxurious wealth compared to the people of Madagascar.

On Wednesday 7th July, I shall cycle from Moville to Newtowncunningham, 41 kilometres. I would greatly appreciate your support.

Conwal Union with Gartan

Rector: Rev David Houlton

Facebook: The Parish of Conwal Union @ConwalParish



Is Covid-19 Over Again?

Little did we realise when we had our Christmas 2020 services that we would not be able to worship God together in church for almost exactly 5 months! This was made all the worse looking across the Foyle to see churches opening, communal worship restarting, brides and grooms marrying and children being baptised.

There was no Big Dip in Gartan Lake to get the New Year off to a refreshing start; no Sunday School pancake parties; no parish socials for St Patrick's Day where Rev Heather and I could again demonstrate my

lack of dancing ability; and no Burns Night (no doubt the haggis was happy - being spared a cruel stabbing)! Very sadly we also couldn't give Canon Brian Smeaton and Sandra a big send off when they left for Dublin.

And now at the beginning of June there can be no outdoor diocesan celebration of Columba 1500 - we will only be able to have a short in-church celebration shown live online. But Rev David has contributed to an online series on the legacy of St Columba abroad, and Rev Heather is to participate in the unveiling of a memorial stone at the Colmcille Heritage Centre in Gartan on 9th June. "Next year in Gartan"!

Despite the problems, we found a lot of interest in the Services filmed in church. So have been "broadcasting" monthly from each church including: Mothering Sunday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday; plus once or twice on Sundays from the Rectory. We will probably continue Sunday morning prayers online at least until parishioners are happy to come out to church, and for those not able to come out any more we are setting up for long-term live broadcasting of Services from Conwal Parish Church.

Online has also proven very useful for people meeting midweek: in the autumn the

popular "Alpha Course" was well attended; during the winter even more people joined in for the "Prayer Course"; and as spring ends we are just finishing the "Bible Course". All three were great courses, with people who joined in saying how they felt closer to God, and able to pray and understand the Bible for themselves.

Finally, in the period since the last vision we lost one of Gartan's senior parishioners, and a long standing member of Conwal parish who had moved to near Church Hill sometime ago; we mourn with the family, friends and neighbours of Mary Gamble and Noel Scott.

Sunday Services for Summer 2021:

9am: Prayer at Home online from Conwal Rectory - on Conwal and Gartan's Facebook pages.
10.30: Morning Prayer or Holy Communion in Conwal Parish Church, Letterkenny
12.30: Morning Prayer or Holy Communion in St Columba's Gartan, Church Hill



Tullyaughnish, Kilmacrennan, Killygarvan & Glenalla

Rector: Rev Canon Harry Gilmore
Tel. 0749151013 Email: tkkgparishes@hotmail.com

Clondevaddock, Rosnakill, Portsalon & Leatbeg

Vacant
Rural Dean: Rev David Skuce

Clondehorkey, Cashel & Mevagh

Priest in Charge: Rev Canon George Irwin
Tel: 028 81659531 Mob: 07444642760
Email: wgirwin@btopenworld.com



Good to Be Back!

What a thrill to be back in our Church buildings for Sunday worship and fellowship. The worshipping congregation meeting regularly for prayer, sacrament and the proclamation of the Word is the central axis of the Church's mission and outreach to the community. So, it was with joy and relief that we resumed congregational worship on Sunday 16th May. Perhaps seldom have the words of the Psalmist seemed so meaningful: "I rejoiced with those who said to me 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'"

However, there is no room for complacency

and we must continue to keep closely to the health and safety guidelines. We must also be mindful that there are people who may still be reluctant about getting back into meetings and social events, until further progress is made towards a totally safe environment. Accordingly, Canon Irwin continues to broadcast a Service at 3pm on Sundays to facilitate those who cannot get along to the church. You can tune in to this on: facebook.com/wgirwin.

Christian Aid Week 10th - 16th May, 2021

Many thanks to all who contributed to Christian Aid this year. At the time of writing

a total of €600.00 has been donated. This is a very encouraging piece of "good news for the poor."

Episcopal Visit

We look forward to welcoming our Diocesan Bishop, the Right Rev. Andrew Forster to our Services on Sunday, 18th July.

Baptism

St. Columba's, Cashel
28th May, 2021 Riley Anna Moore
daughter of Brad and Leanne

Dunfanaghy, Raymunterdoney & Tullaghobegley

Rev David Skuce, Rector and Rural Dean, Kilmacrennan East & West Rural Deanery
Facebook: Holy Trinity, Dunfanaghy @holyltrinitydunfanaghy



Baptism

15th Sept 2020: Luke Tyson McLaughlin.

13th Dec 2020: Sam Tommy Alcorn.

29th Dec 2020: Katie Jane Boal.

Wedding

21st November 2020 - Mervyn White
and Ruth Stewart.

Funeral

7th February 2021 - Isobel Stewart, Kill,
Dunfanaghy.

We are delighted to welcome Luke, Sam and Katie into the Church and would also like to wish Ruth and Mervyn every happiness in their future life together. It was great that Isobel (Ruth's mother) was able to be present with us for that very happy day. We were deeply saddened when Isobel passed away in February, and we would like to extend our deepest sympathy to the Stewart and Boyd families on her death. After the long period of restrictions, it is

great to see the country open up. I would encourage you to continue to adhere to the Government guidelines. Our first in-person church service this year was held on Sunday 16th May. I would like to thank all those who have helped in facilitating the smooth running of the parish during the extensive lockdown period.

Each Sunday during the lockdown services were recorded and posted on Facebook. Once again, I want to express my thanks to Niall, John, and Denise for their technology skills and to Patrick for assisting with the services. On behalf of the parishioners of Raymunterdoney and Tullaghobegley I would like to thank the Revd. Father James Gillespie for allowing me use his radio technology to broadcast live services each Sunday from St. Finian's Church, Falcarragh.

Our Sunday School teachers continued to be very busy during the lockdown preparing work for our young people for the seasons of

Harvest, Advent, Christmas and Easter. This has been very much appreciated and my thanks also to Kirsty for the material she has been providing.

This might be a bit late (!) but I would like to pay tribute to the parishioners for their generosity to the special collections over Christmas. The sum of €1,520 in response to the Bishops' Appeal and €1,200 from the Christmas Fireside Quiz in aid of the Simon Community in Letterkenny. A further Fireside Quiz was distributed along with the Easter edition of the n:vision. Although, this quiz was free the sum of €370 was received in donations. This will be added to the Lenten box appeal of €1,590 in aid of the "Jeel al Amal Boys' Home" in Nazareth.

Please accept my apologies for no notes in the last two editions of the n:vision. I had compiled them but sadly sent them to an incorrect email address!

Gweedore (Carrickfinn & Bunbeg) & Templecrone

Bishop's Curate: Rev Liz Fitzgerald
Tel. 074 953 1043 Email: ea.fitzgerald@btinternet.com



As lockdown eases and churches are open for worship, I have been unable to return to parish life as I recover from quite major knee surgery.

I send my thanks to Canon Stanley Johnson for taking Sunday services, to the Rural Dean, Revd Skuce for providing emergency pastoral cover, to my Church Wardens and teams who ensured churches are reopened in accordance with government guidance, and all who have sent me good wishes.

I was reading psalm 6 a few days ago, and as I hobble around on my crutches, it made me smile: *"Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am weak; Lord heal me, for my bones are racked."* (Ps6:2)

We should always be mindful that when we do cry out for help - in times of trouble, sickness, or adversary, as many of us have over the past 15 months, we have a God who listens and cares and responds in love. I thank God for his continuing care for

both you and me; for our family and friends, especially as vaccinations increase, the risk of illness reduces and restrictions ease. I encourage you to call out to him, because;

"...the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping. The Lord has heard my supplication; the Lord will receive my prayer." (Ps 6:8a.9)

I look forward to being back in parish life by mid-late July, DV.

Ardara, Glencolumbkille, Glenties, Inniskeel & Lettermacaward

Bishop's Curate: Rev Robert Wray
The Rectory, Lackegh, Portnoo, Co. Donegal
Email: robert_wray@talktalk.net



Inver, Mountcharles, Kilaghtee & Killybegs

Bishop's Curate: Rev Lindsey Farrell
Tel: 074 973 6013 Email: lindseyfarrell@btinternet.com
Facebook: Inver and Mountcharles Church



Blessings and Baptisms!

We were truly thankful to open our church doors for in-person worship on Sunday 16th May 2021 with all the necessary precautions in place. There was a definite atmosphere of hope as we gave thanks to God for his protection and care during the pandemic. Our services continue online for the foreseeable future for those who are unable to return to church, or who perhaps are not quite ready. Who would have thought that Zoom and Facebook would have proved such a blessing in these times?!



Our return to worship has also seen a number of infants coming for Baptism. On Sunday 30th May 2021 Lucy Iris Margaret Shaw was baptised in St. Peter's Killaghtee. As I write these notes, we are preparing

for the baptism of Mason George Armstrong in St. John's Inver on Sunday 6th June, and the baptism of Jamie Robert Torrens in St. John's Inver on Sunday 13th June. It is a rich blessing to see so much new life coming into our churches as parents make that bold and confident commitment to raise and teach their children in the Christian faith.

As I write these notes we are preparing to bid a fond farewell to Revd Marcia Davenport. Marcia has lived and served in the parish of Killaghtee for 25 years alongside her husband Bob who passed away some years ago. Marcia has decided to return to the United States to be closer to her family. We will miss her warm and cheerful demeanour, her commitment to serve God and her devotion to St Peter's Killaghtee.

We hope it won't be too long before she returns on holiday.

Our parishioners have been busy fundraising despite the challenges of lockdown. In Inver and Mountcharles we had a very successful

clothing drive. In St. Peter's Killaghtee, a collection of scrap has been organised, with the sale proceeds going to the church. Killaghtee have also raised much needed funds by selling items donated on Done Deal. All of these efforts are sincerely appreciated, especially in the midst of such trying circumstances. I am reminded of the words of the apostle Paul who said, *'But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. '2 Cor. 4:7-12*

So, as we prepare to emerge further into the sunshine I give thanks to a God who is steadfast, a God who protects, a God who provides and a God who has promised to remain with us. And I thank you for your continued support, and for the ways in which you serve, all for the glory of God.

Drumholm, Kilbarron & Rosstownlough

Rev Canon Brian Russell: Rector and Rural Dean
Tel. 0749734025
Email: brianrussell117@gmail.com





Donegal, Killymard, Lough Eske & Laghey

Rector: Venerable David Huss, Archdeacon of Raphoe

Tel: 074 9721075

Email: donegal@raphoe.anglican.org

www.donegal.raphoe.anglican.org

Facebook: @DonegalGroupofParishes

Re-openings

We were delighted to be able to re-open our church doors for gathered worship on the Sunday after Ascension Day, 16th May 2021. It truly is great to be back, despite the understandable restrictions on numbers, service length, singing and face masks. We pray for the day when all these rules are no longer necessary. For now, we willingly accept these inconveniences as part of what it means to love our neighbours during a pandemic.

Confirmation

Sadly, due to public health advice in the Republic, our Confirmation services have been postponed until September 2021. Please continue to pray for the 14 candidates who are patiently preparing for their confirmation.

Easter Vestries

These were held online using Zoom. Fair play to everyone who logged into the meetings, some using video-conferencing for the first time. Many thanks to our

Churchwardens, Glebewardens, Secretaries, Treasurers and Select Vestry members for their work, and to all parishioners who have continued to give their financial offerings through the lockdown. Parish finances remain sound - thanks be to God!

The Mustard Seed

We're so happy to be re-opening for outdoor dining from 9th June and we can't wait to welcome old and new faces to enjoy friendship and refreshment at Donegal Town's first no-price-list café. During lockdown the Mustard Seed was part of the local food bank system, and also hosted numerous Zoom gatherings throughout the week.

Alpha in the autumn

We are planning to run an Alpha course for 11 weeks starting around September. This course, which has been attended by millions of people around the world, is highly recommended. Details will be available in due course on our website and Facebook page (just search for Donegal Group of Parishes).

Rev Robert Wray

We pray for healing and restoration for Rev Robert Wray of the Ardara Group of Parishes who was injured in a motorcycle accident recently.

How to Connect

Anyone is very welcome to follow us on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram etc. - just look for 'Donegal Group of Parishes.' We have regular online services (Sunday, Wednesday & Friday) and a recorded service accessible any time from any phone on 074 9710199 (from UK: 00353 74 9710199).

Funerals

Eileen Robinson 4th April 2021 Laghey
Georgina Morrow 16th May 2021 Lough Eske
May Montgomery 17th May 2021 Donegal

Marriage

Christopher McCaul & Rachel Wilson
6th June 2021 Killymard.



Stranorlar, Meenglass & Kiltcevogue

Rector: Rev Adam Pullen

Mobile 087 7547880 Email: adam.pullen@googlemail.com

Facebook; Stranorlar, Meenglass & Kiltcevogue CofI @smkcofi

Different times

Many months ago I quoted the Chinese proverb 'may you live in interesting times'. Thankfully we are living in 'different times', as we are getting used to a new normal. At the time of writing we are back into two of our church buildings for in-person worship. It is different to what we would have

known, masks, distancing etc, yet we have so much to be thankful for. While yes it has been immensely difficult for many, we can now, bit by bit, see others outside and return to a more personable life.

We are still continuing with our on-line and on the phone services. We are doing so this for

a number of reasons. Many can be part of the Church, the community of God, even if ill health, not being able to be there at that time or have moved away, led them to believe they weren't part of the Church. I'm reminded of one lady of poor sight who now due to the Dial-A-Phone service listens in each Sunday and feels more part of the

Church then she did pre-Covid. Indeed we have many join us near and far who are completely new and if you are reading this you are most welcome. Let's take head of the wisdom of Proverbs.

Proverbs 2:5-6

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.*

I never cease to be amazed how the Lord God brings good out of what can seem anything but good. I have learnt so much

in these times. How to do and get a service out via Facebook, Youtube and so much more. I am indebted to Elsie and John for all their help and support and to Karl and Brian for their help. Thanks to digital means we have been able to offer funeral services online so that while many cannot be there physically, they can be there in part, with those who are mourning and you can tune in from Newton to New York! Therefore let us cultivate an attitude of gratitude.

I leave you with the words from Give Thanks, by Don Moen
Give thanks with a grateful heart

*Give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He's given Jesus
Christ, His Son.*

*And now let the weak say, "I am strong"
Let the poor say, "I am rich
Because of what the Lord has done for us."*

One last little thing I was part of recording the RTÉ Sunday Service, which was broadcast on the 13th of June with the Council for Mission. Did you spot me?

Convoy, Monellan & Donaghmore

Vacant, Rural Dean: Rev Canon David Crooks

Tel: 074 914 0135 Mob: 00447871974658

All three of the postponed Annual General Easter Vestry meetings have now been held. The Church Wardens, Glebes Wardens, Secretaries, Treasurers and members of Select Vestry have been appointed. At each meeting, The Chairman thanked all who had served the Parishes on the Select Vestries, and who keep the churches all looking so neat and tidy both inside and outside.

I will be doing a sponsored cycle in aid of my brother-in law, Bishop Hall Speers.

Bishop Speers is Bishop of Mahajanga in Madagascar, which is a very underdeveloped part of the world. Bishop Forster has met with Bishop Speers, and they have asked that Derry and Raphoe parishes might organize fund raising events to raise money to enable the Bishop to provide rectories, rice fields and schools for his clergy. Many of the clergy have not been paid for years and have simply left their ministry. Despite our own financial problems, we here are wealthy compared to people in Madagascar. The cycle will be from St Ninian's Church,

Convoy to Donaghmore, to Monellan and back to Convoy, 27 kilometres, departing from Convoy at 11.00am on Tuesday 13th July. Your support would be greatly appreciated.

Every effort will be made to find a new Rector. In the meantime during the vacancy, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require pastoral support. Thank you also to the Revd Arthur Burns for conducting the services.



Raphoe, Raymochy & Clonleigh

Vacant, Rural Dean: Rev Canon David Crooks Tel: 074 914 0135 Mob: 00447871974658

Facebook: St Eunan's Cathedral @cathedralraphoe

At each of the three Easter General Vestry meetings which had been postponed, the Chairman thanked the Church Wardens, Glebes Wardens, Secretaries, Treasurers and members of the Select Vestries, and all who serve the parishes so faithfully and who maintain the churches and their finances during difficult times.

Work on the restoration of the Cathedral has now resumed and is progressing satisfactorily. It will be a pleasure to be able to return to our much-loved Mother Church. We are very grateful to the Revd John Deane and to Mr Peter Clampett for

conducting services until a new Rector is appointed.

On Monday 19th July, Colvin Beattie, Rodney Lindsay, William Laird, Geoffrey Devenney and I will be going on a sponsored cycle in aid of Bishop Hall Speers in Mahajanga Diocese in Madagascar. Bishop Forster has asked that all the parishes of Derry and Raphoe might organize some event to support Bishop Speers. The clergy of his diocese have not been paid for years, and are poorly housed. We would be delighted to raise money to enable Bishop Speers to recruit, train, house and pay a sufficient number of clergy. We

will depart from the Cathedral at 11.00am and cycle to Clonleigh, Raymochy and back to Raphoe. Your support would be greatly appreciated.

On Tuesday 7th December, there will be a special Diocesan Service in Raphoe Cathedral to celebrate the 1,500th anniversary of the birth of St Columba. The special Preacher will be the Primate, the Most Revd John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh, and the Choir of St Columba's Cathedral has been invited to sing Choral Evensong. More details will be announced nearer the time.



New Beginnings Thrift Shop

Eglinton's New Beginnings Thrift Shop is on the move - in every sense! The shop, an outreach of St. Canice's Church, has had such a successful start to trading that it's already having to expand to create extra space for the huge quantity of top-class items that have been donated for sale. From Friday 11th June the shop will have a new base at 6a Benbow Industrial Estate, on the edge of the village, just a minute's drive from Eglinton Health Centre. The existing shop on the Main Street will remain open until the end of July.

The new space has separate rooms for men's, women's and children's clothing, as well as a book and toy room, and an area for household and general goods. Many new items at unbeatable prices.



SPECIAL OPENING OFFERS!

All proceeds will be ploughed back into the local area, to help with the building of a new hall to serve the whole community, and to support local charities. Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday 10:00am to 4:00pm

Visit the New Beginnings Facebook page for details or call 07860809598.

PAUL MCFADDEN
DIOCESAN PRESS OFFICER

And finally....

A few years ago, during an inter-denominational meeting at the Diocesan Office, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Derry, Dr Donal McKeown, suggested that in years to come it wouldn't be religious difference which mattered in our society but religious indifference. The observation has stayed with me ever since.

Recently I read a new book by the comedian, Frank Skinner, called 'A Comedian's Prayer Book'. Skinner possesses one of the sharpest minds in stand-up comedy: he is lightning fast on his feet, extremely quick-witted and little escapes his gimlet eye. But a prayer book? It seemed a surprising change of tack for the 64-year-old Birmingham man.

Until recently, it appeared, his attention was focused on the seams of absurdity in life which he mined relentlessly for comedy gold. He honed his act and his brilliance earned him a legion of fans. The Evening Standard described him as "the king of stand-up". The Guardian said his way with a punchline was "masterful". The Sunday Times described his act as "beautifully confessional".

That latter verdict, in particular, must have made him smile inwardly.

It is often said that for many people the fear of public-speaking is greater than the fear of dying. It takes rare courage (or extreme recklessness) to walk onto a stage to try and make an audience laugh. I suspect it requires even more courage to share with the public your most intimate conversations with the Creator. In the past, the author had been open about his Roman Catholicism and about his battles with alcohol, but faith is a different matter altogether.

The Daily Telegraph said that inside the covers of 'A Comedian's Prayer Book' were "a series of highly personal, unguarded monologues by Skinner, directed to a silent God, with the reader invited to eavesdrop". In his introduction, Skinner himself writes that his book is "a bit like reading the Bible, except you only get one side of the conversation and all the jokes are left in".

The subject matter is diverse, ranging from the fate of his late mother to Christian statuary, and, at 106 pages, it is short, accessible and offers much food for thought.

I especially enjoyed Skinner's reflection on the nature of faith. He describes Doubting Thomas as "the only disciple who comes

with his own adjective" and concludes that faith is "so recklessly counter-intuitive", "so challenging", "so dynamically un-modern" that he gets excited just talking about it. Faith is, he says, "a privilege with a sell-by date".

Faith can be a hard sell in this increasingly secular era of fake news and instant gratification, but Skinner does it subversively, like a stealth Christian. The private person is very different, I suspect, to what most people imagine.

'A Comedian's Prayer Book' is often funny, although probably too gamey in parts for some tastes (caveat emptor). Perhaps, though, that occasional irreverence allows the author to reach parts that more orthodox Christian writers can't reach. There is one charge that certainly cannot be levelled against Skinner - that of religious indifference.

'A Comedian's Prayer Book', by Frank Skinner, is published by Hodder and Stoughton.

Back to Churches...



Returning to Church was really lovely. It's nice to be among people from my community again and see their faces. Sitting in Church helps me to stay focused and have a feeling of peace. I love listening to Marion play the Church organ and I felt a lot of joy when singing the hymns again.

**Amy Loudon (teenager)
Holy Trinity Church Culmore**



For over fifty years, when I go to church, I have been the occupant of the organ seat. I have played in many churches, seen choir members come and go and accompanied many brides up and down the aisle. To be told in 2020 that churches would be closed was beyond belief. Online Church was helpful and Utube had many to choose from but there's nothing like the "real thing". This time of church closure has made me realise how important church worship is to me and the sound of the organ, whether in chant or hymn, is literally music to my ears. As Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart remarked, "To my eyes and ears the organ will ever be the King of instruments."

Anne Reid, Organist, Christ Church Castledawson



On a beautiful May Sunday morning, the church bell tolling, I approached Holy Trinity Church with an air of excitement and anticipation. A heartfelt welcome extended by the Rector and Churchwardens, with Government protocols in place, I was escorted to a pew. Having completed my private devotions, I suddenly realised things had changed! The aroma of hand sanitiser filled the air, parishioners not in their accustomed pews faces hidden behind colourful face coverings, no organ music setting the tone for the service or choir members organising their books to lead us in worship. Setting these and other changes aside the most important thing was that we were gathered, once again, in God's house, 'Come let us worship'.

Roberta Merrick, Holy Trinity Dunfanaghy



During lockdown, many parishes - mine not included - provided online services which people appreciated. Being able to return to worship is a blessing. I have found that people have returned and are delighted to be able to do so. However, despite my assurances that Holy Communion can be celebrated in a safe manner, I have found that people are reticent about receiving. Hopefully they will become more confident. It is to be hoped that covid will teach us a lesson that we are mere mortals, and that God alone is sovereign and almighty and that we still depend on Him.

Rev Canon David Crooks, Taughboyne

n:vision Magazine, Diocesan Centre, 24 London Street, Londonderry BT48 6RQ

Articles must be with the editor no later than **12noon on 25th August 2021**.

Editor: kmcateer51@gmail.com or c/o The Diocesan Centre, London Street, Londonderry BT48 6RQ

Parish notes must be with the assistant editor no later than **12noon on 1st September 2021**.

Assistant editor: revpaul07@btinternet.com

THE DEADLINE IS NON-NEGOTIABLE

Magazines will be available for collection on **24th September 2021**.
(depending on Government and Diocesan guidelines at the time)

Disclaimer: Views expressed in n:vision may not be those of the Church of Ireland or the Editor.

Diocese of
**Derry +
 Raphoe**

