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FEBRUARY 2025

# CLOSE NEWS



## ▶ THE MEWS

Project updates on excavations and construction.  
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## ▶ BELLRINGERS

News from the Bellringers' AGM.  
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## ▶ CLOCK

Maintaining the tower clock.  
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## SERVICE TIMES



### Sunday

- 09:15 Eucharist (*said in the Lady Chapel*)
- 11:15 Choral Eucharist *or* Choral Matins
- 15:15 Choral Evensong

### Monday–Friday

- 09:00 Sung Matins (*during school term*)
- 11:05 Eucharist (*said in the Lady Chapel on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Festivals*)
- 17:30 Choral Evensong *or* Evening Prayer

### Saturday

- 11:05 Eucharist (*said in the Lady Chapel*)

**G**od has been worshipped in this place through the prayers and praises of countless generations. Worship lies at the heart of our life as Christians and we express our theology and belief through our liturgy. It is through these liturgical patterns of words and actions that we are formed and transformed.

We invite you to join us for any of the services here this month. If you are unable to join us in person, you can tune in to the online live stream of all services: [spcd.ie/live](https://spcd.ie/live)

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*Cover image: Part of a clay tobacco pipe with a grimacing face – one of many interesting finds during excavations for the Mews project.*

## **THE CLOSE NEWS EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**

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**T**he publication of *Close News* is made possible only as a result of the dedication of a number of people within the Cathedral Community. The Editorial Committee wishes to thank all those who have submitted content for publication. If you would like an item to be featured in the next edition of *Close News*, please contact Mrs Elizabeth Lowrie.



## THE DEAN WRITES...

THE VERY REVD DR WILLIAM MORTON

February 2nd is a very important day in the Church calendar. As The Feast of The Presentation of Christ in The Temple, also known as Candlemas, and falling exactly forty days after Christmas, it marks the occasion, when according to Jewish law, Joseph and Mary had to take the Baby Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem, bringing along with them two turtledoves to offer as a sacrifice, as a rite of purification after childbirth. What happens at the Temple is nothing short of miraculous. Two prophets encounter Jesus and understand there is something special about him.

First, there's Simeon, who, as the Scriptures reveal, was righteous and devout, and who had been waiting day after day, for years upon years, to see the Messiah. But on this day, he takes the infant Jesus into his arms and, in the

words of the canticle *Nunc Dimittis*, proclaims: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel."

Secondly, there's another prophet, Anna, who had lived 84 years, and who prayed and fasted in the Temple night and day. On this day, however, she noticed that something was different. She finds Mary and Joseph, and the baby, and begins to tell about him, as Redeemer of the world.

Like Simeon, and Anna, we yearn for the coming of the Messiah, for all in this world to be put right: for the hungry to be fed, for prisoners to be set free, for the sick to be healed. We hope that our

prayer and sacrifice and faithfulness will be fulfilled: that equality will come for all God's people, that peace will prevail over the whole earth, that justice will conquer all oppression.

And so, we believe. We believe because we have been waiting. We believe because we have been watching. We believe because we have discovered the truth.

The hard truth of the Festival of Christmas, of the Presentation, is, in the words of Howard Thurman, simply this:

“After the prophets have spoken,  
When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,

When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with  
their flock,

The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among people,  
To make music in the heart.”

Let us work, pray, and give, to  
make it so.

Sincerely,  
*William*



## St Patrick's Cathedral Past Choristers' and Pupils' Association

# Quiz

**Date:** Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2025.

**Time:** 7.30 sharp (get there a little early to get seated ☺)

**Venue:** St. Patrick's Cathedral Grammar School  
St. Patrick's Close, Dublin, 2.

**Cost:** €40.00 per table of 3/4  
*Raffle on the night (loads of great prizes)*  
*Payable in cash or by card*  
*Price includes a glass of wine or soft drinks, nibbles, and fun!*  
*Additional snacks and soft drinks available for purchase.*

In support of the musical bursary for the grammar school scholarship programme and other SPCPCPPA events.

**Date for diary:**  
*Annual dinner*  
*Friday 11<sup>th</sup> April,*  
*2025.*

### PAST CHORISTERS' AND PUPILS' ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:

We have had a low uptake on membership subscriptions this year and encourage all past choristers and pupils to support us through membership. The Association assists both Cathedral schools, Cathedral Choir trips, and a substantial music bursary in the Grammar School. The annual membership fee is only €25.00.

**Please pay by bank transfer if possible. The Association's details are:**

ACCOUNT: St Patricks Cathedral Past Choristers and Pupils Association  
BIC: BOFIE2D | IBAN: IE82 BOFI 9000 1716 3121 80

For cheque payments, please make payable to "Saint Patrick's Cathedral PCPA" & return to:  
Louis Parminster, PCPA Treasurer, c/o Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Saint Patrick's Close, D08 H6X3

# AVRIL BANNISTER

## OBITUARY

**A**vril Bannister, who died on 10th December in the care of the staff at The Bons Secours Hospital, was a lady who definitely left her mark upon her beloved Saint Patrick's Cathedral. Avril joined the Cathedral congregation in 1977 when her son, Jeffrey, became a chorister.

Her membership of the Cathedral was a thoroughly active one, a truly 'hands on' approach. It was her willingness to volunteer, to get involved, and never to mind getting her hands dirty, which endeared her to so many with whom she made, and maintained, friendships which were to last until the end of her life. The life-long friendships were fostered by working side by side, and connecting with, other members of the Church, all striving towards a common goal.

The degree to which Avril held the Cathedral so dear to her heart can be seen from the fact that her volunteering, and precious links with Saint Patrick's, was to last for in and around almost five decades – a wonderful achievement, and one for which we offer our sincere thanks to Almighty God.

Avril was the last member of a small group of volunteers – among them her late husband, Norman, and Joe and Marjorie Darling - who assisted with the cleaning of the Cathedral on Saturdays. Very important to Avril was the cleaning of the brasses, particularly the eagle lectern, which was her pride and joy to

polish – always in the hope that nobody would tarnish it by putting a finger on it! There was also her involvement in the Flower Guild, no doubt arranging flowers: this was another area to which Avril attributed great importance – and little wonder, because she enjoyed her garden in which she would spend many hours maintaining it and making it beautiful.

As a volunteer, Avril enjoyed greeting those who came through our doors whether to visit or to worship. Interestingly, it was in this way that Avril was to encounter a young man here for tuition on the organ many years ago. His name was Brian McKay, who is now Fr Brian McKay, a member of the Carmelite Order, and one of our œcumenical Canons on the Chapter of the Cathedral. How good it was to have Canon Brian not only taking part in Avril's funeral service, but also, serendipitously, playing the organ.

Another area of Cathedral life which Avril greatly enjoyed, and to which she contributed abundantly in terms of her time, talents and gifts, was through her membership of the Friends of Saint Patrick's, and her years of sterling service as a member of the Council of Friends. Whether it was for the annual service of the Friends, or for some of their events, Avril gave of her best in help and support. She was the epitome of what a Church volunteer should be. As well as her huge contribution at Saint Patrick's, Avril also found time to volunteer for many years



*Avril Bannister with Canon Brian McKay.*

with Dublin Zoo.

We shall miss Avril from our midst. Her family, who were so important, and dear to her, and who meant the world to her, will miss her most acutely. We offer our sincere condolences to Jeffrey, to his wife Canjoe, and to their daughters (Avril's grandchildren), Siobhán and Gráinne, who have been living with Avril for the past number of years as they study in Dublin.

Avril's life of dedication, loyalty, and faithfulness throughout her years of outstanding service, and her tangible contribution in honouring God and

contributing to the beauty of this ancient house of prayer, provides us with unfathomable inspiration as we continue on our earthly journey. Avril exemplified the kind of faith that does not demand the spotlight, but instead, shines brightly in quiet, consistent acts of love and service. Her life reflected the light of Christ to all who knew her.

In the words of Saint Paul to Timothy, Avril has 'fought the good fight, she has finished the course, she has kept the faith.' May she rest in peace and be raised in glory.

*WWM*

## CONDOLENCES

Sincere condolences are expressed to Stuart Nicholson, Master of the Music, his wife, Victoria, and daughter Charlotte, and family circle, on the death of Stuart's father, Brian. We also remember Colette Garry, and her husband, Brian, and family, on the death of her aunt, Lucy; and the family circle of the late Mary Magowan, Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock. All who mourn are assured of our thoughts and prayers.



## A SHOT FROM THE CANON

THE REVD CANON  
CHARLES MULLEN

**T**rains and aeroplanes are identified by fleet numbers; often they're also given a name which reinforces their identity, just like giving your car a name. Forms of transport are inanimate, so is this irrational? Not when we consider the Psalmist singing of God 'calling the stars by their name' which resounds with us who, at baptism, are given the name by which we are known to God and to one another. We call on the name of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who knows each of his flock by name. This naming plays a defining role in an intimate, living relationship.

*CM*

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Jesus—be that name our treasure,  
Name beyond that words can tell;  
Name of gladness, name of pleasure,  
Ear and heart delighting well;  
Name of sweetness, passing measure,  
Freeing souls from sin's dark spell.

*From a 15th-Century Latin hymn  
trans. John Mason Neale (1816–66)*

Fight valiantly under the banner of  
Christ;  
Live as a disciple of Christ, fight the  
good fight, finish the race, keep the faith.  
Confess Christ crucified,  
proclaim his resurrection,  
look for his coming in glory.

*From The Book of Common Prayer 2004,  
Holy Baptism 2*



# SUNDAY SERVICES & PREACHERS

## DAILY SERVICES

Please see Page 2 for our normal pattern of daily worship.

## SUNDAY 2ND FEB 2025

09:15 – Eucharist (*said*)

11:15 – Choral Eucharist

15:15 – Choral Evensong

*Canon in Residence:*

**THE VERY REVD S. A. FARRELL,  
M.A. (OXON.), LL.M., B.TH.,  
F.C.L.R.**

*Prebendary of Monmohenoek*

## SUNDAY 9TH FEB 2025

09:15 – Eucharist (*said*)

11:15 – Choral Matins

15:15 – Choral Evensong

*Canon in Residence:*

**THE REVD C. W. MULLEN,  
B.TH.**

*Prebendary of Rathmichael*

## SUNDAY 16TH FEB 2025

09:15 – Eucharist (*said*)

11:15 – Choral Eucharist

15:15 – Choral Evensong

*Canon in Residence:*

**THE REVD P. R. CAMPION,  
B.A., B.TH., M.A., M.PHIL.**

*Precentor*

**LIVE**  
**STREAM**

If you can't make it in person to our services this month, remember: you can tune in for free online.

## SUNDAY 23RD FEB 2025

09:15 – Eucharist (*said*)

11:15 – Choral Matins

15:15 – Choral Evensong

*Canon in Residence:*

**THE VERY REVD N. J. W. SLOANE  
B.A., M.PHIL., M.A.**

*Chancellor*

## FORTHCOMING FEAST DAYS

The Feast of Saint Brigid is celebrated on Saturday 1 Feb 2025.

## SERVICES & MUSIC LIST

For an up-to-date and comprehensive list of forthcoming services, please visit the monthly Services & Music List on the website.





## THE ADMINISTRATOR WRITES...

MR GAVAN WOODS

Work on the Mews project continues. The major excavations are now complete. This is good news as there was an element of risk to progress should significant structures or burials have been located below ground. At all times our archaeologist, Linzi Simpson, was at hand during this process to record all that was unearthed by the contractor. You will see in the photographs that a layer of 19th-century cobbles were found just below the tarmac surface of the yard. At the entrance from the close to the Dean's garden, where new steps and a wheelchair lift are to be located, the footings of houses were found along the boundary wall with what was once Mitre's alley. Below these again were walls associated with older, possibly medieval, structures.

A cess pit was excavated here too which would have been to the rear of these modest dwellings and a range of domestic items were recovered including

many broken clay tobacco pipes. You can see one in the form of a grimacing face in the image on the front cover!

Inside the Mews a large structural wall and chimney breast running the full height of the building has had the ground floor element removed with the upper section pinned and supported by a new steel structure. This has opened up the ground floor and created the large space for the community and education hub that will be located there.

The internal wall plaster has been removed, revealing the bones of the building. We can see that part of a much older structure have been incorporated into the current Mews in the north east corner. Very probably this was an 18th-century stable associated with Swift's Deanery, which was seriously damaged by fire after his death.

Throughout original elements of the Mews have been retained and repurposed, including redundant or damaged floor timbers. This is not only

good practice but increases overall sustainability too, retaining the embodied carbon within the building and reducing the associated greenhouse gas emissions of the works.

A tremendous amount of work lies ahead. In February the reroofing

will commence and continue through to April. Kelbuild are still working towards a completion date of November this year and I would like to thank them, the architect and all the associated professionals for the excellent progress to date. *GHW*



## SUPPORT US

If you would like to support the Cathedral's mission and work, please consider donating securely online. You can scan the QR code or visit: [spcd.ie/support](https://spcd.ie/support)





## BELLRINGERS' AGM

### *From the Dean...*

**O**n Tuesday 28 January the AGM of The Society of Bellringers of Saint Patrick's Cathedral was held in the Deanery. It was most encouraging that there was an attendance of almost forty members. As Patron of the Society, it was a privilege to chair the meeting. I wish to commend the officers and members for their commitment and enthusiasm, and I wish to thank them for their tremendous service to the Cathedral in maintaining the wonderful tradition of issuing the call to worship by the ringing of the historic bells. I was delighted to have the opportunity to pay tribute to Mr Derek McEndoo who has completed ten years and Ringing Master in the Tower. I thank Derek for the tremendous leadership which he has shown so graciously over those years in recruitment, training, and in encouraging

new members, and all with the great help and support of his wife, Kathleen. Derek has been faithful, conscientious, and dedicated in this important role, and is ever willing, gracious, helpful and meticulous in all his undertakings. I was pleased to make a presentation to Derek on behalf of the Cathedral. It was fitting that members of the Society presented Derek with some gifts as well. We offer Derek our heartfelt thanks for everything which he has done for the Cathedral and in the advancement of bellringing. I wish Derek, and Kathleen, many more happy years here in Saint Patrick's among their friends.

Congratulations to Mr Robert MacDonald who has been elected as Ringing Master in succession to Derek. Robert has given faithful service over many years, and I wish him every blessing in his new post.

*Pictured above: Members of The Society of Bellringers of Saint Patrick's Cathedral who attended the AGM in the Deanery on Tuesday 28th January 2025.*

## *A tribute to Derek McEndoo for a decade of leadership in the belfry...*

Derek McEndoo retired as Ringing Master of the Society of Bellringers of St Patrick's Cathedral (SBSPC) on 28th January after over a decade in that role. He inherited a very loyal group of ringers, almost all of whom had been taught to ring by Charlie Reede. In 2015, the year Charlie died, SBSPC had 22 members, 17 of whom still belong to the Society. In a world where the global bellringing community is concerned about dwindling numbers, it is remarkable that SBSPC today has 50 members, about 40 of whom are active. The retention of members from a decade ago along with the recruitment and training of new members is a hallmark of Derek's leadership in the belfry.

He has been particularly proactive in welcoming prospective ringers to the tower, giving them an opportunity to feel, from the end of a rope, a bell weighing about half a ton turning through a full circle. He followed up with those who showed interest by inviting them to training for beginners on Saturday mornings, and, for those who stood the pace for nine months or so, to join Tuesday evening practices with a view to contributing to Sunday service ringing. All of this required leadership and teamwork. Recently, he took the initiative to expand the team of trainers by organising an expert tutor from the Association of Ringing Teachers to give a workshop last July to those interested in teaching ringing.

Derek brought fresh thinking to not only to recruitment and training,

but also to health and safety and to safeguarding in the belfry. He sought the appropriate involvement of SBSPC members and, in particular, of the committee, whilst maintained an excellent working relationship with the Dean and Cathedral staff downstairs. Last November, he organised a bell maintenance course, again led by an expert in the field, to build our capacity in keeping the bells in good and safe working order.

Other measures of Derek's achievement as Ringing Master include a significant increase in the number of times ten and twelve bells have been rung for Sunday service and promoting ringing of quarter peals and other advanced ringing in the Cathedral. Indeed, it was under Derek's leadership that St Patrick's won the prestigious Murphy Cup for the first time since 1938!

Most weeks for the past decade, Derek led the ringing in the Cathedral four times a week. He contributed in important ways to ringing in other towers, St Audoen's, and Blessington in particular. Derek and his wife, Kathleen, have shown enormous dedication to the belfry and Cathedral for over half a century, and, in particular, during the past decade during Derek's tenure as Ringing Master. They have encouraged and inspired! For this the ringers and the Cathedral community, in general, are most appreciative. We hope that Derek's successor will, in a similar way to Derek himself, build upon the successful band they will inherit while continuing to develop the Society by putting their own particular stamp on things. Not an easy act to follow!

*Contributed by members of SBSPC.*

# THE FLY AND THE SNAIL: A TALE

Q: Where in the Cathedral would you find a fly and a snail working together?

A: In the tower clock.

Now read on...

The tower clock was made in 1864 by Gillet and Johnston of Croydon. I've been keeper of the clock since 2018, my responsibilities include regulating the time and making observations. I send photographs of mechanical issues to the horologist, Steve Dutfield of the Cumbria Clock Company, who can guide me by 'phone camera filming to do remedial work on site if the clock stops.

The clock room is 107 steps up the tower staircase, above the ringing chamber and below the belfry. The clock is mounted on an iron frame, housed in a large wooden case with access doors for regulation and maintenance tasks. The clock has two faces over five metres in

diameter, north- and west-facing. It has two operating 'trains', a going train and a striking train. Each is powered by a heavy weight which, when it reaches the bottom of its travel, is re-wound by an electric motor activated by a switch and connected by a chain: the clock has fully-automatic winding.

If the clock is running too quickly (striking before the hour) it's slowed by stopping the pendulum for the required number of seconds, as the hands can't be wound anticlockwise. If it's running too slowly (striking after the hour) there's a winding-on handle at an auxiliary clock face linked to the clock hands. At the beginning of daylight savings time in March I wind on the clock, which takes less than a minute. In October, the adjustment takes exactly an hour...

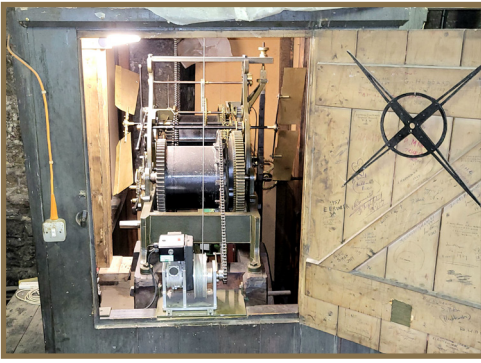
The going speed of the clock is regulated by a weight-tray attached to the pendulum near the top, the



*The north face of the clock.*

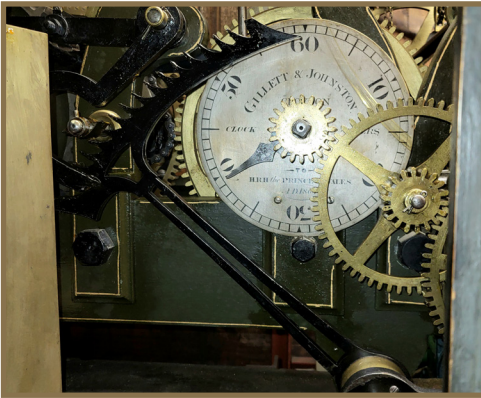


*The connection from the clock to the west face hands.*



*Photos clockwise from top-left:*

- 1) The mechanism with the electric winding motor at the front.*
- 2) The striking mechanism and weight, and the winding chain.*
- 3) The fly on the left, the snail to its right*



weights effectively raising or lowering the pendulum's centre of gravity. The regulating weights are, rather charmingly, pre-decimal pennies. When the clock is going slow, a penny is added to the tray; when it's going fast, a penny is removed. An old penny weighs 3.8 grammes, and the pendulum is about four metres long, so regulation is remarkably finely tuned. The clock is generally accurate to plus or minus one minute per week: 1 in 10, 080 minutes.

The clock strikes the largest (the tenor) bell every hour with the correct number of strikes. The striking train is regulated by a snail which engages in a rack. The rack looks like part of a gear wheel, and the snail looks like a hook, distressingly un-snail-like. When the

clock has struck nine the snail allows the rack to drop to the tenth groove, ready for the next hour. A fly which looks like an aeroplane propeller, distressingly un-fly-like, spins rapidly during striking to control the striking speed. A spring keeps the hammer just off the bell so that, once the hammer has struck, the bell can sound fully.

I enjoy keeping the clock: the fly and the snail are good company. Safety is a primary concern, so I always advise the staff before I visit the clock room, taking a walkie-talkie with me to be in contact with them. I take care on the stairs never to fly up and down. There I'm like the snail, my other clock room companion.

*Canon Charles Mullen  
Photograph credits CM*

# FRIENDS' CHRISTMAS IN THE DEANERY

Our annual Christmas evening took place on Saturday 7th. December 2024 in the deanery. It was lovely to be back in the deanery after last year's necessary displacement to the Cathedral. Because of Storm Darragh the attendance was a little down on previous years but we were able to meet and chat in the dining room while being served with wine, soft drinks, savouries and, of course, mince pies, all generously supplied by the members of the Friends' Council. We were also grateful to membership secretary Ruth Thompson for supplying the very welcome hot mulled non-alcoholic wine, warmly received by those Friends who were designated drivers for the evening.

We then went upstairs to the drawing room for the entertainment part of the evening.

This consisted of music by Rev Canon David Oxley and his merry band of Close Singers. Their contribution included the lovely 16th. Century traditional Latin carol *Gaudete*, the

Cornish traditional *Sans Day Carol*, arranged by John Rutter, *Nazareth* by Charles Gounod and *Deck the Halls*, arranged by David Wilcocks. After a break to give the singers a breather, in which we carried out our raffle, the Close Singers continued with a rousing medley of Christmas songs (*Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, *Winter Wonderland*, etc) all arranged by Canon Oxley himself which helped everyone get into the Christmas mood.

The evening ended with our usual communal carol singing, led by Canon Oxley.

We are extremely grateful to Canon Oxley and his singers for making the evening what everyone regarded as a hugely enjoyable one.

Thanks to our council who provided the goodies and helped on the night and, of course, as always we are enormously indebted to Dean Morton and Mrs Morton for not only allowing us use their lovely home but for the warmth of their welcome and their hospitality.





# HOLY WEEK & EASTER 2025

## AT SAINT PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL

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### **PALM SUNDAY**

**Sunday 13th April**

11.15 Choral Eucharist

18.00 Saint John Passion *by J.S. Bach*

performed by the Cathedral Choir & Orchestra

**Monday 14th April**

17.30 Choral Evensong

**Tuesday 15th April**

17.30 Choral Evensong

**Wednesday 16th April**

17.30 Choral Evensong

**MAUNDY THURSDAY**

**Thursday 17th April**

17.30 Choral Eucharist & Stripping of the Altar

**GOOD FRIDAY**

**Friday 18th April**

11.15 Choral Matins

14.00 Liturgy of the Cross

**HOLY SATURDAY**

**Saturday 19th April**

19.00 Christus *by Francis Pott*

performed by Cathedral Organist David Leigh

**EASTER SUNDAY**

**Sunday 20th April**

11.15 Choral Eucharist

15.15 Choral Evensong & Sermon in Music

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**ALL ARE WELCOME**

For more details of these services, please visit our website

[www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/easter25](http://www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/easter25)

# VERGER TEAM OUTING



Our vergers gathered recently for a Team Training and Outing. Pictured on the left are vergers Mr Louis Parminter, Mr Derek Tobin, Mr John Kinirons, Ms Colette Garry, Mr Aaron Hoey, and Mr John Reardon with the Dean and Fr Mullen after Eucharist. On the right is the team with the Dean and assistant verger Mr Thomas McTague enjoying a day out at the Guinness Storehouse.

# AN ODE TO SAINT BRIGID

According to legend St Brigid went to the local chieftain to ask for land on which she could build her church, a convent and a hospice for the poor.

At first, the chieftain declined her request, but due to her persistence, he eventually agreed to grant her the land that could be covered by her cloak.

Brigid laid her cloak on the ground, and miraculously, it expanded to cover a vast area, now known as the Curragh of Kildare. There, Brigid established her foundation, allowing her to show her deep love for God through her hospitality to strangers and her care for the poor.

## SAINT BRIGID'S CLOAK

*St. Brigid spread her cloak  
and the voice of God spoke,  
that all that dwell here shall never know  
fear.*

*So her church rose around the fabric of her  
robes, as the threads embraced the fair and  
beautiful land of Kildare.*

MC



# TRAD FESTIVAL 2025 RECAP

At the end of January, Saint Patrick's Cathedral proudly welcomed back TradFest, celebrating its 20th anniversary in grand style. This landmark occasion brought together a diverse range of world-class musicians who graced the historic stage of the Cathedral, delivering an unforgettable blend of traditional Irish music and contemporary styles.

The festival featured an impressive lineup, including renowned artists such as Aoife Scott, Wallis Bird, Frankie Gavin & De Dannan, and the legendary Eric Bibb. Each performer brought their unique sound to the stage, offering festival-goers an eclectic mix of music, from soulful ballads to lively jigs and reels. The Cathedral's acoustics provided the perfect backdrop for such intimate yet electrifying performances.

Every evening, the Cathedral was filled with an eager crowd, and the

atmosphere was nothing short of magical.

The energy was palpable, with audience members swaying, clapping, and singing along to the music that reverberated off the Cathedral's stone walls. TradFest continues to be a much-anticipated event that celebrates the rich musical heritage of Ireland, and this 20th anniversary edition was no exception, leaving everyone in attendance eagerly awaiting the next festival. *EC*



# VISIT FROM TEELING DISTILLERY



Our neighbors at Teeling Whiskey Distillery recently called in for a visit.

Teeling staff members were treated to a guided tour of the Cathedral's ground floor and tower by our vergers. Here they are braving the steps up to our roof.

*Photo courtesy of Derek Tobin.*



## FIRST FORTNIGHT FESTIVAL RECAP

**W**e were thrilled to begin the new year by partnering with First Fortnight, a charity that challenges mental health stigma through arts and cultural action. For the first two weeks of January 2025, First Fortnight brought incredible events to Dublin, and the Cathedral was delighted to host two events: Dublin at Dawn and the Art of Mental Health.

Dublin at Dawn saw participants brave the icy cold January mornings and climb to the cathedral roof to see the sunrise. We had an incredible response to this event with not even the frost dampening spirits, in fact it added to the experience and made the spectacular view of Dublin even more magical.

The Art of Mental Health was a remarkable evening of music, presented in collaboration with Sing Ireland and the Centre for Contemporary Music. Composer Norah Walsh premiered a choral composition inspired by First Fortnight's mission to eliminate mental health stigma. The Laetare Vocal Ensemble, conducted by Róisín Blunnie, delivered a performance that highlighted the uplifting and therapeutic power of collective singing.

Overall the festival was a resounding success and we can't wait to take part again next year and continue to support First Fortnight's important message of looking after your mental health.

*EC*

# MAY THE 4TH BE WITH YOU

Join us for a fun-packed recital for all ages to mark Star Wars Day, performed on the Cathedral's mighty 1902 Willis Organ by organists Stuart Nicholson and Harry Meehan.

Sit back and enjoy live performances of these iconic scores played on one of Ireland's largest organs – all 4000 pipes of it. The intergalactic programme includes music from all 9 films from the Skywalker saga with a few other Sci-fi classics thrown in for good measure.

*Tickets available at [stpatrickscathedral.ie/events](http://stpatrickscathedral.ie/events).*



## SPONSOR A CHORISTER 2025

This year the Cathedral Choir will be embarking on 2 tours, the first to Madrid with the Senior Choristers (boys & girls) in the Spring, and the second to Winchester Cathedral in the UK with Schola Patricii in the summer.

These tours are a fabulous experience all involved but can only happen with your support, so if you are able to please give generously.

*Thank you for your support.*

Name:

Address:

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Please make any cheques payable to "St Patrick's Cathedral" marking the reverse Sponsor a Chorister and return to the Master of the Music, c/o Saint Patrick's Cathedral, Saint Patrick's Close, Dublin 8.

# CATHEDRAL CONTACTS



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## WILL US WELL

**W**hen making or amending your will, please consider including a legacy bequest to the Cathedral. If you are interested in supporting us in this way, let your solicitor or will-writer know that you wish to make provision for the Cathedral in your will.

For more information, please contact the Cathedral Administrator, Mr Gavan Woods, at *adminstrator@stpatrikscathedral.ie*

## SAFEGUARDING

The Cathedral's Safeguarding Policy can be viewed on our website.

If you have a general enquiry or any concern relating to safeguarding at Saint Patrick's Cathedral, please contact the Safeguarding Officer:

**Ms Kelley Bermingham**  
Community & Safeguarding Officer

*safeguarding@stpatrikscathedral.ie*  
+353 (0) 86 103 0931

If you recognise a safeguarding emergency in which a child or vulnerable adult is in danger, Tusla Child and Family Agency can be contacted on +353 (0) 1 856 6856.

# SUPPORT US



The ministry of Saint Patrick's Cathedral is made possible entirely through the support of individuals like you. The donations which we receive from people all over the world support our worship and music tradition, education programmes, and community outreach work, as well as contributing towards the vast cost of maintaining this historic building.

If you would like to support the Cathedral's mission and work, please consider donating securely online. You can scan the QR code or visit: [spcd.ie/support](https://spcd.ie/support)



# STAY IN TOUCH

You do not have to wait until the next edition of *Close News* to see the latest updates from the Cathedral! Why not follow us on social media or visit our website for up-to-date news and information? From our website, you can also sign up to our digital newsletter in order to receive news straight to your email.



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