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Many challenges for prayer

It is still early days for the new coalition, but the gentle reshuffle at the top of government does not indicate a better approach on key issues of concern.

The Programme for Government recommits to a ban on so-called conversion practices. This is despite a former Minister admitting it was “proving tricky” to concoct a law that didn’t breach human rights. The Government’s promotion of illegal drug use and radical transgender ideology also seems set to continue.

How the new ‘hate speech’ law is implemented will be

very important. Too often the accusation of ‘hate’ is used to shut down debate. There are activists who will try to use this law to punish those whose opinions they don’t like.

Our new legal case on behalf of Northern Ireland pastor Clive Johnston defends the hard-won freedom to preach the Gospel in public. Preaching Christ crucified is a stumbling block and an offence to many, but it is not against the law.

There is much to pray about. We’ve included a ‘tear-off and keep’ prayer bookmark to help you.

New coalition committed to advancing oppressive ‘conversion practices’ ban

Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, supported by members of the Regional Independent Group, have committed to advancing a new ban on so-called conversion practices.

Last year, the previous Government pushed back its plans for a new law, admitting that the process was “extremely complex”. But the new coalition’s Programme for Government still pledges to “Advance legislation to ban conversion practices”.

The Christian Institute’s Director Ciarán Kelly pointed to the experience of



◀ Micheál Martin, Taoiseach

Simon Harris, Tánaiste ▶

other countries, where attempts to legislate in this area were proving to be “fraught with legal difficulties and human rights challenges”.

He observed that the law already protects people from abuse and coercion,

making it “difficult to see what else can be banned, except legitimate free speech on sexual ethics and gender ideology”.

A Government-commissioned study published in 2023 found little or no evidence of

‘conversion therapy’ in Ireland.

A poll carried out for The Christian Institute in November the same year showed that voters wanted the Government to focus on healthcare and housing, not a new law on conversion therapy.

Govt-sanctioned Dublin heroin centre 'facilitating poisoning'

Addicts are poisoning themselves with illegal drugs at a Government-sanctioned 'shooting gallery' in the centre of Dublin, a city councillor has warned.

The drug room operated by charity Merchants Quay Ireland (MQI) opened in December. It allows users to inject heroin and cocaine without fear of prosecution, but Cieran Perry believes it is simply "maintaining people in addiction".

Accusing the 18-month pilot project of failing to help people off drugs, the Independent Councillor argued that it was simply letting them "continue to poison themselves".

Following its opening, CEO of MQI Eddie Mullins said:



"maintaining people in addiction"

CIERAN PERRY

"People who use our services every day — for needles or for crack pipes — are carrying drugs when they go in, and they're carrying drugs when they leave. The only difference now is that they consume their heroin or cocaine on the facility."

The Irish Examiner has described the facility as "the only building in Ireland where you will have to show you have illegal drugs in order to get in".

In a recent statement, An Garda Síochána said possession of controlled drugs outside the centre "remains a criminal offence", but explained it is taking a "balanced and proportionate approach to policing in the environs".

CI backs pastor facing prosecution for gospel preaching in censorship zone

The Christian Institute is providing legal support to a retired pastor facing prosecution for preaching the Gospel in one of Northern Ireland's eight abortion censorship zones.

Pastor Clive Johnston, 76, from Strabane was preaching on John 3:16 near Causeway Hospital in Coleraine on Sunday 7 July 2024 when he was cautioned by police. An officer claimed Pastor Johnston was breaking the 'Safe Access Zones' law, even though he had



made no reference to abortion.

The zones were introduced in 2023 after pro-abortion lobbyists claimed they were necessary to protect abortion centres'

staff and visitors from protestors.

On 21 March, at Coleraine Magistrates' Court, the grandfather of seven denied a charge of seeking to 'influence' people

accessing abortion services.

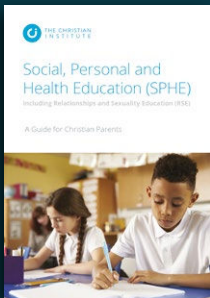
The Institute's Simon Calvert said: "We have amazing gospel freedom in this country and we encourage Christians to use that freedom so that more people will hear about the love of God. That's why we've taken on this case. Prosecuting someone for preaching John 3:16 near a hospital on a quiet Sunday is an outrageous restriction on freedom of religion and freedom of speech."



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the.ci/SPHEbooklet

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Carol Nolan plea: 'Keep men out of our women's sports'

Independent TD Carol Nolan is calling on sporting governing bodies to ensure biological males are banned from female-only categories in Ireland.

Deputy Nolan has been raising concerns around this issue for a number of years. She now believes the tide is turning against the demands of "radical gender ideologues" who have underplayed the consequences of allowing men to compete

against women and girls – a situation she describes as "nothing short of ludicrous".

The Offaly TD backs the protection of all female-only spaces, including the provision of single-sex accommodation in prisons and on hospital wards.

She made her latest plea in light of President Trump's recent Executive Order: 'Keeping men out of women's sports'.



Carol Nolan TD

British politicians unsettled by assisted suicide controversies

British MPs are growing increasingly concerned about a dangerous assisted suicide Bill, with key safeguards being disregarded by the committee tasked with scrutinising the legislation.

There was outrage after what was billed as the 'ultimate safeguard' – the involvement of a High Court judge – was ditched. Others are troubled at how the committee has been "heavily skewed" in favour of assisted suicide.

The Bill intends to allow those in England and Wales deemed to be terminally ill and with less than six months to live to receive help to kill themselves.

A Special Oireachtas Joint Committee has called on the government to legalise assisted suicide. The policy shift was championed by former People Before Profit TD Gino Kenny, who lost his seat in the November election.



Dublin hospital CEO wants more Down's syndrome babies aborted

The CEO of the country's busiest maternity hospital has said it should be legal to abort unborn babies diagnosed with Down's syndrome after the current 12-week limit.

In an interview with *The Irish Times*, Professor Sean Daly argued that women who discover their baby has an extra chromosome should not have to travel abroad to "interrupt the pregnancy".



Prof Daly, the Master of the Rotunda in Dublin, complained there has been "too much of a focus" on what people living with the chromosomal condition "contribute to society". He also called for the three-day

reflection period before having an abortion to be scrapped.

Existing tests can detect Down's with up to 99 per cent accuracy. It has been estimated that around 90-92 per cent of unborn babies diagnosed with the

condition are aborted.

The most recent figures from the Department of Health show that 10,033 abortions were carried out in 2023, 23 per cent more than in 2022. The majority – 98 per cent – were performed before twelve weeks. Of the total, 28 were performed to prevent a risk to life or "serious harm" to the mother's health.

McDowell: 'McEntee's hate crime law is the high point of wokeism'

Former Tánaiste Senator Michael McDowell SC has criticised the controversial new hate crime law for promoting gender ideology.

Snr McDowell fears that the Criminal Justice (Hate Offences) Act 2024, which came into force at the end of last year, has brought the "notion of gender" into law "through the back door".

In pandering to the idea that there are "unenumerated genders", the Senior Counsel branded the Act "the high point of wokeism".

During the law's passage through the Seanad, Senator Sharon Keogan took almost 25

minutes to read a list of nearly a thousand 'genders' that could be included under its terms.



Michael McDowell SC

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CHRISTIANINSTITUTE



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Registered office: The Christian Institute, Wilberforce House, 4 Park Road, Gosforth Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8DG, UK

Tel: 0044 191 281 5664 | Email: info@christian.ie | Web: the.ci | Published in March 2025

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THE CHRISTIAN
INSTITUTE



Tear off and keep

Pray continually

1 Thessalonians 5:17

SUNDAY

PRAY With thanksgiving for all of God's blessings on Ireland.

MONDAY

PRAY For dangerous plans for assisted suicide to be rejected.

TUESDAY

PRAY Thanking God for His gift of marriage and the blessings it brings.

WEDNESDAY

PRAY That families would remain free from intrusive state interference.

THURSDAY

PRAY That plans to restrict preaching and prayer through a new 'conversion therapy' law would be dropped.

FRIDAY

PRAY For our work supporting the freedom of Clive Johnston and others to publicly preach the Gospel.

SATURDAY

PRAY That the Lord will bless the Institute's plans to develop its work in Ireland.

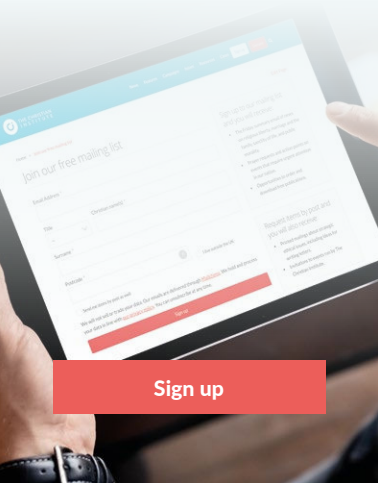


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