
COVID-19 Coronavirus: Ireland, appeal from Church leaders. “Protecting one another from unseen enemy”. Gratitude to health workers, applause from balconies

The leaders of the main Churches in Ireland, who are holding a weekly videoconference to exchange views, released a joint statement at the end of their “meeting” today, in which they acknowledge that “deserted streets and roads are not signs of abandonment, but of love”, a way of “protecting one another from this terrible unseen enemy” to an extent that perhaps has never been seen before. Church leaders express their “greatest admiration” and gratitude to healthcare workers and all those who, in various ways and fields, work “for our wellbeing”. The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, William Henry, the Archbishop of the Church of Ireland, John McDowell, the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, Sam McGuffin, the Catholic Archbishop, Eamon Martin, and the President of the Irish Council of Churches, Ivan Patterson, encourage all to show “our collective appreciation as a grateful community for those who work in our health service” by sharing in a round of applause from our balconies at 8pm on Thursday evenings. And once back inside to “join with us in offering a prayer of thanksgiving to God for all those whom we have acknowledged in our round of applause”. “God willing, once the pandemic is past”, the leaders conclude, “we will also have a renewed and strengthened sense of community on this island and a new understanding and deeper appreciation of one another”.

Gianni Borsa