



## US Christians oppose racist rally

Christians have taken to the streets of Virginia to oppose a white supremacy rally in the US state on Saturday which turned violent.

A 32 year old woman died when a car ploughed into a crowd of people protesting against the gathering in Charlottesville. A 20 year old man has been charged with second-degree murder.

Church leaders in the state and further afield condemned the rally on Saturday which was protesting at plans to remove a statue of the

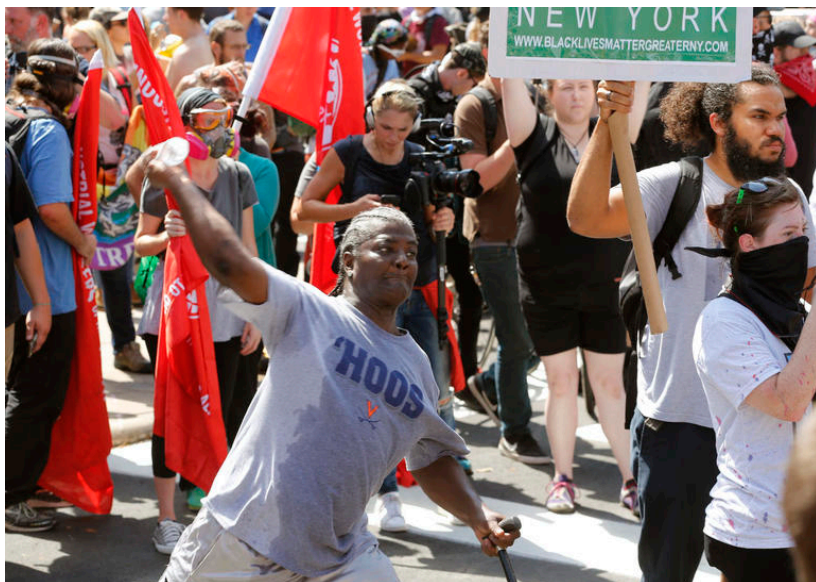


Confederate general Robert E Lee. It was the largest meeting of white nationalists in a decade.

Bishop of Southwestern Virginia Rt Rev Mark A Bourlakas said: "I strongly condemn the violence and hate currently taking place in Charlottesville.

"There is no place, whatsoever, for white supremacy or hate-filled rhetoric in the streets of Virginia or anywhere else in this country."

Events took a further tragic turn when a Virginia State Police helicopter flying above the rally crashed in a wooded area, claiming the lives of the pilot and a trooper.



The clashes were condemned by US President Donald Trump "in the strongest possible terms" who described an "egregious display of hatred, bigotry and violence on many sides".

In opposition to the rally, the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia staged a peaceful demonstration and prayer event in the city's Emancipation Park.

In a joint statement realised beforehand, bishops from the diocese said: "We Bishops of the Diocese of Virginia stand together with the Charlottesville Clergy Collective (CCC), working in opposition to the so-called "Unite the Right" rally..."

The governor of Virginia, Terry McAuliffe announced an emergency and police wearing riot gear were deployed to disperse crowds.

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo from the US Catholic Church said "On behalf of the bishops of the United States, I join leaders from around the nation in condemning the violence and hatred that have now led to one death and multiple injuries..."

"We offer our prayers for the family and loved ones of the person who was killed and for all those who have been injured. We join our voices to all those calling for calm"

A federal civil rights investigation has been opened by the Department of Justice into the deadly car incident.

## **Poignant new exhibition shows fabric of NI's Troubles history**

A poignant and unique exhibition which has the name of every person killed in the Troubles hand sewn onto linen handkerchiefs has opened in Londonderry.



**Lycia Trouton, whose exhibition of Irish linen embroidered with the names of all the Troubles victims is in Derry's Central Library**

The Linen Memorial is a haunting and stark visual reminder of the 3,721 deaths which took place during the Troubles.

The exhibition was brought to life after Belfast-born Canadian artist Lycia Trouton read the book *Lost Lives*, which examines every death.

The work commemorates those who died from 1966 to 2006 after the artist commissioned 51 embroiderers from around the globe to hand sew the names of victims onto small squares of crisp white linen. The names are hung from the roof and appear in chronological order.

Each of the small linen squares has 10 names and they are connected to the squares above and below them.

The names of IRA and UVF volunteers sit alongside murdered RUC men, and those of civilians and dead British soldiers sit alongside victims of state killings.

"Every single name is hand sewn," says Lycia.

"I had 50 women and one man from all corners of the world sew each one individually. A name takes an hour to sew in. When they were sewing the name, some of them would have been already aware of the victim's story. Some of them would have looked up the person, some of them didn't wish to know. I had different reactions.

"I had a lady who did Reiki healing and she felt that she sensed something when sewing the names. I had a lady in Belfast who wanted to embroider her own loved one's name."

Each linen handkerchief is not only a visual symbol of each life lost, but is also a nod to Northern Ireland's colonial textile industry.

"Linen is part of the history of Northern Ireland in Edwardian Belfast" she says.

"Handkerchiefs are a symbol of goodbye, there's ecclesiastic linen and Egyptian linen was used to surround dead bodies. That is why we used that material."

Lycia, who was born in Belfast and moved to Canada when she was three years old, said that people who visit the exhibition, which has travelled all over the world, like to leave mementoes. She also explained that embroiderers would sew a piece of their own hair into some of the names.

"I have a whole set of mementos, including a thousand origami cranes from Japan, personal mementoes, letters, essays, poems and guitar songs. Some people liked to pin things to their loved one's name.

"At times I would have an embroiderer sew a piece of hair into the first name. This came from Victorian times when people would wear a piece of hair in a locket or a piece of jewellery, like a memento mori. So there are strands of the embroiderer's hair and strands of my own sewn into some of the names, linking each other personally."

The Linen Memorial has travelled the globe, firstly from artist to volunteer embroiderer then back to artist and then into the public domain



through exhibitions in the US, Australia, Canada and the UK.

## **Derry Bishop urges people to get involved in running of church with only two priests currently training locally**

The Bishop Donal McKeown of Derry has urged more lay people to get involved with the running of the church after it emerged that only two priests are currently training to join the local diocese.

There are two seminarians currently studying to take up postings in the Derry, with a diocesan spokesperson adding that it expects another two students to have also taken up studies as of September this year.

At present, the the Diocese of Derry has 75 diocesan priests in active ministry, plus one Indian priest (working with the Syro-Malabar rite), one Polish priest (working with the Polish community) and three other Irish priests from different religious congregations.





The Syro-Malabar Catholic Church is an Eastern Catholic Major Archiepiscopal Christian Church in full communion with Rome.

In addition, there was an ordination in the local diocese in in each of the last three years, Fr Sean O'Donnell in 2015, Fr Chris McDermott in 2016 and Fr Malachy Gallagher this year.

However, speaking to the Derry News this week, the Bishop of Derry, Dr Donal McKeown, that 'challenges' still exist for the church in finding new personnel, adding that it was also vital for lay people within the diocese to be developed so that they are 'fit for mission'.

"The challenge for Church is not just to find personnel to maintain traditional structures but

how to look forward, and not back, and adapt in such a way that we cease to be focussed on maintenance, and develop laity and clergy in a way that they are fit for mission – making, forming and sending new disciples of Christ,” the Bishop said.

He added that there still remained a ‘huge demand’ for spiritual support in the local diocese, and that a ‘change of culture’ was needed to ensure that lay people became more involved in evangelistic activity.

“Yes, I keep encouraging people to pray for more vocations to priesthood and to religious life as there remains a huge demand for spiritual support and growth,” Bishop McKeown added.

“But there is also a parallel call to laity to take up their various apostolates that are part of being a Christian.

“That change of culture will involve a diocesan wide process of training and formation.

“So I find this an exciting and energising time as we become a missionary Church in Ireland.”

He continued: “Away back in 1979 Pope John Paul II said in Ireland that each generation ‘is like

a new continent to be conquered for Christ'." -  
Report courtesy of Derry Now

## **Freedom of Borough for Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant Mrs Joan Christie OBE**

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council is to confer the Honorary Freedom of the Borough on Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for County Antrim, Mrs Joan Christie OBE.

Elected Members agreed on the hugely prestigious award to the Queen's official representative at a meeting of the Council on Tuesday 8 August.

It followed a motion proposed by Councillor Billy Ashe and seconded by Councillor Audrey Wales MBE.

Mayor of Mid and East Antrim, Councillor Paul Reid, said: "The Freedom of the Borough is the highest accolade the Council can award a citizen and Mrs Christie is a hugely worthy recipient.

"She has worked tirelessly in her role and has been a true ambassador for Her Majesty and our area.



"I am delighted that this decision has been taken and look forward to honouring a truly outstanding individual."

Cllr Ashe's motion read: "That this Council confers the Honorary Freedom of the Borough of Mid and East Antrim on Mrs Joan Christie OBE.

"This award is in recognition of Mrs Christie's commitment and service as Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for the County of Antrim.

“Through her service, Mrs Christie has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to County Antrim, and an outstanding contribution to Mid and East Antrim.”

At Tuesday evening’s meeting, Cllr Ashe said: “Mrs Christie has been extremely active as Lord Lieutenant.

“I have had the privilege of serving terms as Mayor of the old Carrickfergus Borough Council and also the first Mayor of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and I have witnessed first-hand Mrs Christie’s devotion and dedication to the people of our Borough and County Antrim.

“She is held in very high esteem by our residents and has been a sterling ambassador for Her Majesty the Queen.

“Mrs Christie has served the position with great devotion and enthusiasm.”

He added: “Mrs Christie has a dedication that should be set as an example to all in public service.

“Mrs Christie has also shown unique ability to make us all look at the bigger picture, bringing us all together and focused on a County Antrim basis.

“It is for her commitment and service to County Antrim as Her Majesty the Queen’s representative that I am pleased to formally propose this motion tonight.”

Cllr Wales said: “It is a real privilege for me to second tonight’s motion that this council confers the Honorary Freedom of the Borough of Mid and East Antrim on Mrs Joan Christie OBE in recognition of her commitment and service as Her Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant to the County of Antrim.

“I have known Mrs Christie for many years and was delighted when she was appointed to serve as Her Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant in September of 2008.

“I always knew Mrs Christie was exceptionally busy and committed to her role. However, during my terms as Mayor of our predecessor council of Ballymena and last year as Mayor of Mid and East Antrim I discovered just how busy she really is.

“Her dedication is inspiring, in particular how supportive she is of all the community groups and young people across the county.”

She added: “Mrs Christie has brought a unique focus to the role of Lord Lieutenant and brought

an exceptional commitment and energy to the position.”

The award will be officially conferred at a special ceremony at a later date.

Mrs Christie is a member of Agherton Parish, Portstewart.

## **Rights group joins fight to secure legal recognition for humanist marriages**

A human rights campaign group has intervened in a court battle over whether humanist marriages should be legally recognised in Northern Ireland.

Liberty has lodged a submission to the Court of Appeal in Belfast pending the resumption of a high-profile hearing involving model Laura Lacole and Leeds United and Republic of Ireland footballer Eunan O'Kane.

The couple originally won a landmark case to have their humanist wedding in June recognised in law.

However, Northern Ireland's Attorney General John Larkin and Stormont's Department of





Finance challenged the outcome of the High Court decision before the Court of Appeal.

Days before the ceremony, the Appeal Court judges adjourned the case but granted the couple interim permission to have a legally binding humanist ceremony.

The appeal case will resume next month, when the wider issue of the status of future humanist weddings will be argued. Humanist marriages are already legally recognised in Scotland, but not in England and Wales. They are recognised in the Republic.

In legal arguments submitted yesterday, Liberty urged the Court of Appeal to uphold the High Court's ruling.

Martha Spurrier, director of Liberty, said: "This is a case of discrimination, plain and simple.

"All this couple is asking for is the chance for humanists to express their beliefs on one of the most important days of their life.

"The High Court's ruling was a landmark in rights protection - to take a step backwards would be a sad day for progress and fairness."

Ms Lacole and Mr O'Kane first launched the legal bid after learning their planned humanist wedding in Ballymena's luxury Galgorm Resort would not be recognised in law.

For such recognition, they were told they would need to have a separate civil ceremony.

The couple took the case against the General Register Office (GRO) for Northern Ireland and Stormont's Department of Finance.

Mr Larkin also participated in the hearing because it touched on devolved Stormont legislation.

In the original High Court judgment, Mr Justice Colton quashed the GRO's refusal to grant Ms Lacole and Mr O'Kane legal recognition, finding

such a position breached the couple's rights under the European Convention.

Humanism is a non-religious belief system that rejects the concepts of a higher deity or afterlife.

Humanists adhere to a scientific view of the world, and believe humans steer their own destiny.

## **Bible Society wants to hear your story**

Throughout history, many great acts have been inspired by the Bible, the Bible Society states.

“It was Scripture that inspired William Wilberforce to fight tirelessly against the slave trade, Elizabeth Fry to bring prison reform by teaching convicts to read and Martin Luther King to lead a powerful campaign of peace for racial equality.

“The Bible impacts all kinds of people in all walks of life, so we set off to find more stories of God at work through his word. We've been sharing weekly first-person accounts on our Facebook page as part of a 'My Bible' series and have now gathered the first seven on our website.



Whether you connect with a former financial manager convinced of God's existence by the words of Colossians 1; a student worker sustained by the words of Isaiah or an 82-year-old who's recently rediscovered the Bible, we hope you feel uplifted by these stories.

### Go to My Bible

“We'll be updating My Bible with a new story every week, so check back regularly for more inspiring stories of the Bible at work.

“If you've got a story of how the Bible has impacted your life, we'd love to hear it. Email [mybible@biblesociety.org.uk](mailto:mybible@biblesociety.org.uk) and we'll be in touch. “

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