



The Rev Gordon Craig is a Church of Scotland minister but his parish is a bit different from the norm. See report this issue - An Offshore parish

Remembering Srebrenica in Belfast

Belfast Cathedral received a visit from members of the Northern Ireland branch of 'Remembering Srebrenica' on Sunday July 16.

The group met to walk to St Anne's from Belfast City Hall as part of the commemoration of the twenty-second anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica, a town in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The massacre on July 11 1995, which took place during the Bosnia War, killed more than 8,000 people, the victims being mainly Muslim men and boys.

The group was accompanied by Church of Ireland cleric, the Rev Colin Hall-Thompson, Chaplain to the Mission to Seafarers, Belfast, who was asked to join the fledgling Northern Ireland 'Remembering Srebrenica' soon after its establishment last year.

['Remembering Srebrenica'](#) is an inter-faith group which aims to honour the victims of the genocide; to learn lessons from those events and to seek to build better, safer and more cohesive communities for all.

As chaplain to the Mission to Seafarers, much of Colin's work is with people from other faiths.

To mark the anniversary and to honour the memory of the victims of the genocide, the group hosted a commemoration event at Belfast City Hall on July 10, when they were joined by

survivors who spoke about their experiences 22 years ago.

Colin said: “We try to keep the memory of the massacre alive and remember it for the purpose of peace and reconciliation.”

Colin visited Srebrenica in May this year with an inter-faith and cross-sectoral delegation led by the Chair of ‘Remembering Srebrenica’ Northern Ireland, Peter Osborne. Victims Commissioner Judith Thompson also took part in the trip

The visit aimed to remember those who lost their lives in the genocide and to learn about the challenges that victims and survivors still experience many years later. [Learn more](#). Colin said the commemoration events this month were the first organised by this new Northern Ireland ‘Remembering Srebrenica’ group. He added:

“Where we go from here in terms of promotion remains to be seen, but we have all pledged to be involved in activities to remember Srebrenica and to promote peace and reconciliation.”

Cloyne to put itself on tourist trail

Plans are being drawn up to bring in more tourists to an East Cork village by opening up a

30m-high round tower and 11th century cathedral, The Irish Examiner reports.

Cloyne Community Council has been in discussions with the owners of the two monuments, the Church of Ireland, and has commissioned an expert report by archaeological consultants on the best way of preserving and putting on show the treasure trove of history in the area.

The Dean of Cloyne, Rev Alan Marley, said he was anxious to see the tower reopened to the public.

It was built in the 10th century as part of a monastic settlement founded some centuries earlier by St Colman. The tower has been inaccessible for around 15 years due to safety concerns.

“That is not going to be an easy project in itself and we will need help from bodies which can provide grants,” said Rev Marley. “Just opening up the tower on its own isn’t the end of it, we need to offer other options in the area for visitors.

The cathedral is open for services and a sextant can open it up on other occasions by appointment to view its magnificent interior.

However, Rev Marley said that a group called Friends of Cloyne Cathedral formed to help maintain it also run concerts and other events within it for the public.

Last year, they organised a weekend focussing on the life of John Mortimer Brinkley (1763-1835), who was Bishop of Cloyne and the first Royal Astronomer of Ireland.

He was also president of the Royal Irish Academy and President of the Royal Astronomical Society.

“We ran the event in association with Blackrock Observatory and a lot of people came,” Rev Marley said.

A music festival will take place in the Cathedral from September 15-17 featuring a number of acts including Red Hurley.

Rev Marley said Cloyne, home to Cork hurling heroes Christy Ring and Donal Óg Cusack, is also rich in GAA history.

Rev Marley said the village could put on a heritage exhibition and try and tie itself in with other venues in East Cork, such as the Jameson distillery and Ballycotton lighthouse as venue for excursions from cruise liners berthing in Cobh.

Belfast man commissioned as a Church Army evangelist

John Menagh of Willowfield Parish, Belfast, has been admitted and commissioned as a Church Army evangelist at a ceremony in Sheffield.

John came to faith through a Church Army evangelist in his home parish of Willowfield in Belfast. He now works as outreach coordinator for the church. John also oversees numerous evangelistic events and ongoing mission initiatives in the area. He is also involved in running Alpha courses, door-to-door ministry and various discipleship groups.

John said: “Today has been a great day. It feels special to be part of the Church Army family and everyone has made me feel so welcome. The Church Army training I’ve received has helped me to be introspective in both recognising my strengths and working on my weaknesses. My plan now is to continue growing and working in my role as outreach coordinator.”

The event, held on 16 July at the Wilson Carlile Centre in Sheffield, was attended by over 130 people. The service was led by the Bishop of Leicester, Martyn Snow.

New Church Army Evangelist Jane Emson was also admitted and commissioned. Jane has been working for several years as a faith development worker for the Parish Church of Saint John the Baptist Owlerton in Sheffield.

John and Jane will be continuing in their ministry to the people of Belfast and Sheffield respectively.

Weekend's ordination in Oranmore is a first for Co. Galway parish

Deacon Declan Lohan, a former barrister, is to be ordained a priest for service in his home diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora.

Bishop Brendan Kelly of Achonry will preside at the first ever ordination in the Co. Galway parish of Oranmore when deacon Declan Lohan is ordained a priest for service in his home diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora.

The ordination takes place at 3pm on Sunday at the Church of the Immaculate Conception and will be attended by up to 60 priests. The music for the liturgy will be a collaboration between the choirs of Oranmore and Maree.

Rev Lohan, who was ordained a deacon last year, attended Scoil Íosaif Naofa Primary School and Calasanctius College in Oranmore.

He studied for a degree in Arts and Law at NUI Galway after school.

His parents Matt and Mary Lohan, from the Coast Road in Oranmore, run a woodwork and joinery company at Carnmore.

After a gap year teaching English in China, Rev Lohan studied law at King's Inns, Dublin and qualified as a barrister in 2008, going on to practise in both criminal and civil law at the Four Courts in Dublin and on the Western Circuit.

In his spare time prior to entering seminary he worked as a volunteer with the Legion of Mary and with Youth 2000 in Dublin, Galway, England and France.

Rev Lohan began his training for the priesthood in 2007 in Toulon, France, returning to complete his studies at St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

Speaking ahead of his ordination this weekend, Rev Lohan said, "choosing the path to priesthood has made me deeply happy."

Canon Michael McLoughlin, the diocesan administrator in Galway, Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora, said the day would be “hugely important” for Declan, for his family, for Oranmore, for the Diocese and for the Church.

“We rejoice and we are glad. I pray that Declan will find joy and fulfilment in the service of God and the service of the people of God. I ask that they would embrace him, make him welcome and keep him in their prayers.”

Newly ordained Fr Declan is due to offer his First Mass in Oranmore Church on Monday 24 July at 7pm.

Finaghy rector's gift of robes for new bishop in Burundi

The Rev Louise Stewart, rector of Finaghy and Upper Malone Parish, delivered armfuls of handmade clerical robes to the offices of Church Mission Society Ireland (CMSI) this week.

Louise had had a very busy weekend of sewing and CMSI were delighted to receive such beautifully and lovingly made robes which are destined for a friend of Louise's – the Rev Aime

Joseph Kimararungu, Diocesan Secretary of Gitega Diocese, Burundi.

Louise and her parish hosted Rev Aime in 2014 during the CMSI 200th anniversary. They have remained in contact since this visit and when Louise heard the news that Rev Aime was to be appointed Bishop Coadjutor for Gitega Diocese, she wanted to do something to mark this special occasion.

With some dressmaking skills and a flair with fabric, she set about making Rev Aime his own set of clerical robes. Jenny Smyth, CMSI Mission Director, said, “For Louise to take such time and effort to mark this significant occasion for Rev Aime and the Diocese of Gitega speaks volumes about the impact of face to face contact and personal connections.”

CMSI said Rev Aime would be delighted with such a thoughtful gift. “We pray for him and Bishop John Nduwoya in this period of transition in Gitega Diocese,” the organisation stated.

Archbishop of York leading teenagers on pilgrimage to Taizé

Teenagers from five schools in northern England have set off on pilgrimage with the Archbishop of



York, Dr John Sentamu, to Taizé in France. The Taizé Community is an ecumenical monastic order of more than one hundred brothers, from Catholic and Protestant traditions.

Archbishop Sentamu said; “Taizé is an extraordinary place, a place of trust, joy, simplicity and compassion. My Young Leaders Award encourages people to look beyond themselves in the service of others. To be able to join with young people from more than 100 countries in sharing food together, worship and learning is a wonderful experience, and each time I have returned from Taizé I have returned blessed, inspired and encouraged by others”.



Dan Finn, the Director of Archbishop of York Youth Trust, said; “This is the second group of Young Leaders that have chosen to extend their learning of the Awards with a pilgrimage to Taizé. There is something for everyone at Taizé, a chance to meet new friends, to join in and volunteer with others, to pray and to study in small groups. It is a place of incredible welcome which is something the Young Leaders will be exploring in depth as part of the structured workshops at Taizé on migration, asylum seekers and refugees”.

In addition to the normal youth meetings, this week at Taize there will also be special sessions on the theme of migration. Speakers include Archbishop Sentamu; Father Michael Czerny – Migrants & Refugees Section at The Vatican; Catherine Wihtol de Wendenformer, Research Director at the National Centre for Scientific

Research (CNRS); Pascal Brice, director of the French Office for the protection of refugees and stateless persons (OFPRA).

Founded in 1940 by Roger Louis Schutz-Marsauche (known as 'Brother Roger'), the Taizé Community every year attracts over 100,000 young people from around the world. Kay Brown, Chaplain at Abbey Grange Church of England Academy Leeds, said: "It is such an amazing opportunity to explore what faith means in an open and questioning environment, to experience and be involved in music in a new way and to meet so many new people from across Europe and beyond. I am sure everyone who goes will be challenged and inspired in equal measure and I look forward to seeing the growth in all of us through this week."

An Offshore parish

The Rev Gordon Craig is a Church of Scotland minister but his parish is a bit different from the norm.

For it is largely to be found in the North Sea – one of the most inhospitable and dangerous environments on earth.

His flock? The hardy men and women who work in the UK's oil and gas sector, both on and offshore.

The UK Oil and Gas Chaplaincy role was officially established by the industry following the Piper Alpha offshore disaster in 1988, which claimed the lives of 167 people.

Mr Craig, a former RAF chaplain who is based in Aberdeen, provides an insight into his unique role - ecumenical in nature - to support people of all faiths and none.

[In an interview with the Church of Scotland's Life and Work Magazine, the chaplain, who has held the post since 2012, said: "My work revolves around my offshore trips.](#)

"If possible two trips a month and depending on the frequency of helicopter flights these trips last between two and four days.

"Every trip is different but I aim to brief the entire crew on the role of the Chaplaincy as soon as practical.

"In particular I inform them of the work of the Oil Chaplaincy Trust Fund.



Oil and Gas Chapel within the Kirk of St Nicholas in Aberdeen.

“This fund provides financial support to UK oil and gas industry workers, past and present, and their direct dependents, who find themselves in a position of hardship through no fault of their own.

Mr Craig supports people the families of people who have died at work.

“The hardest part of this ministry is supporting people in their loss,” he said. “Like chaplaincy in any field the work means you are ministering to

people of a working age who are not meant to die.”

Mr Craig, who is also convener of the Church of Scotland Committee on Chaplains to HM Forces, said the vast majority of offshore deaths occur as a result of natural causes.

“This doesn’t make these tragedies any easier for the families to cope with,” he added.

“At the beginning of the shift they have said goodbye to their loved one in the full expectation that they will be returning soon.

“Every offshore death is sudden and unexpected and brings with it all the issues surrounding such loss.

“Crews are very tight knit and any offshore death sends ripples through the entire crew.

“Every now and again I make an unscheduled offshore visit to conduct an Act of Remembrance to allow a crew to honour one of their own who has passed away.

“The offshore workforce is a close knit community and when someone dies it has a huge effect on their colleagues.”

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