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the Irish churches**



## **Rev: Local viewers get revved up about the unholy hour comedy hit is being aired**

**It's the award-winning comedy that has inspired devotion among its faithful flock of viewers and provided BBC2 with its highest ratings for a sitcom.**

**Belfast Telegraph** - But while the rest of the UK was sitting down to enjoy the critically-acclaimed series Rev at 10pm on Monday, viewers in [Northern Ireland](#) were subject to local scheduling, having to wait until almost midnight to tune in.

Back this week for a third series, *Rev*, starring [Tom Hollander](#) and [Olivia Colman](#), is becoming something of a cult classic, with television critics and viewers alike commending its plausible portrayal of a vicar with an inner city parish.

The Bafta-winning series has even won praise from the [Church of England](#) itself, and the Rev Richard Coles is an adviser on the show.

However, in Northern Ireland tweaks in scheduling meant viewers tuned into an Irish language double bill instead – a repeat of newsroom drama *Scup* and *Filiocht Anois*, an animated exploration of poetry. The local shows were followed by current

affairs programmes *Newsnight* and *Stormont Today*, with *Rev* finally airing at 11.50pm.

[Belfast](#) Telegraph television critic Joe Nawaz said he was disappointed with the scheduling.

"The BBC comedy *Rev* is one of the very best things on television," he said.

"Yes, we can watch one of the best comedies the BBC has done in years on iPlayer two days later during a quickly eked-out lunch break, in a bus shelter or the like. I'm depressed even saying that sentence.

"But I have a much better idea. Put *Stormont Today* and obligatory 'cultural' programming on during daytime to compete with the likes of *Loose Women*, and those multitudes who find gratuitous footage of chuntering MLAs and dramatically-trained Gaelgoirs indispensable can learn to set their TiVos."

It's not the first time viewers here have been unhappy with local television scheduling. Popular shows like *Have I Got News For You* and *Gardeners' World* have also been put back to allow for regional programmes to air.

But media commentator Don [Anderson](#) pointed out that both BBC NI and UTV had responsibilities to make – and broadcast – local programmes.

"The BBC and UTV in Northern Ireland have a requirement from different authorities to produce programmes relevant to audiences in Northern Ireland," he said. "They have to put these programmes somewhere. That is the conundrum. More at -

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/entertainment/news/rev-local-viewers-get-revved-up-about-the-unholy-hour-comedy-hit-is-being-aired-30125663.html>

## **Elderly priests urged to wear panic buttons**

**More than 80 priests in Meath have received advice on personal safety after a number of attacks on their homes and churches in recent years.**



Irish Examiner - Elderly priests, many of whom still serve ministerial positions into their 80s, have been urged to wear panic buttons in the wake of past incidents in which priests in the diocese have been tied up and assaulted.

Parochial houses, churches, and sacristies have been hit by thieves in search of money or valuable objects. Heating oil has also been a favourite target of robbers.

Clergy from all over the diocese, which includes parts of Westmeath and Offaly, were given the safety advice at their annual Diocesan Assembly in Dalgan Park, Navan on Monday.

In the last few years, priests have become “an easy target”, according to Meath Crime Prevention Officer, Sgt Dean Kerins who was invited by the clergy to give the talk.

He said: “Since I took up this position four years ago, I’ve become aware of numerous thefts on priests and in church grounds. There hasn’t been a spike in attacks on the clergy but incidents have been consistent over a number of years.

“Unfortunately, priests have an open door policy for people, which increases the risk to their personal safety.”

Among the advice given by Sgt Kerins was to photograph and keep an inventory of all possessions and to take precautions when admitting people to their homes. More at -

<http://www.irisht Examiner.com/ireland/elderly-priests-urged-to-wear-panic-buttons-263239.html>

## **Belfast invite proposal for Pope Francis**

**Pope Francis is set to be invited to Belfast, it has been revealed.**



UTV News - Councillors are expected to debate a motion asking the pontiff to come to the city if he ever visits the Republic of Ireland.

SDLP councillor Pat McCarthy, who tabled the proposal ahead of next week's meeting at Belfast City Hall, said it could help send out a positive message.

He said: "A papal visit to Belfast, endorsed by everyone, would send out a strong message to the rest of the world about how we are progressing, especially after the failure of the Haass talks."

Mr McCarthy wants the Stormont Assembly to extend a similar invitation.

The only papal visit to Ireland was in September 1979 when more than a million people turned out to see Pope John Paul II in Dublin's Phoenix Park.

A planned visit to Armagh was cancelled by the Vatican after the IRA murdered the Queen's cousin, Lord Mountbatten, and ambushed 18 soldiers a month earlier.

"Times have changed," added Mr McCarthy. "I would love to see the pope in Belfast if he comes to Ireland." Last month, the Irish senate unanimously agreed to formally invite Pope Francis to Ireland. More at -

<http://www.u.tv/news/Belfast-invite-proposal-for-Pope-Francis/aa83b729-6760-468d-a6d6-101380571e4f>

## **Bid to change marching band stereotypes**

**An initiative has been launched in a bid to challenge perceptions of marching bands in Londonderry.**

UTV News - Derry City Council and the Londonderry Bands Forum will work together to educate young people on the history of bands, their instruments, and different views on parades.

The bands forum was set-up in 2012, in recognition that bands can be perceived as political rather than musical or cultural - and to boost awareness of the community work they are involved in.

Co-ordinator Derek Moore said: "Many people see a stereotype rather than the bigger picture when they think about marching bands.

"The bands forum is happy to work with everyone to help them understand the culture better.

"Developments such as the musical performances by local marching bands in the All Ireland Fleadh are beginning to change perceptions - but there is need for further educational work."

The newly published 'Marching Bands Activity Sheet' has been developed in partnership between the Londonderry Bands Forum and the Community Relations Team in Derry City Council.

They hope the educational initiative will help to change perceptions of bands.

More at -

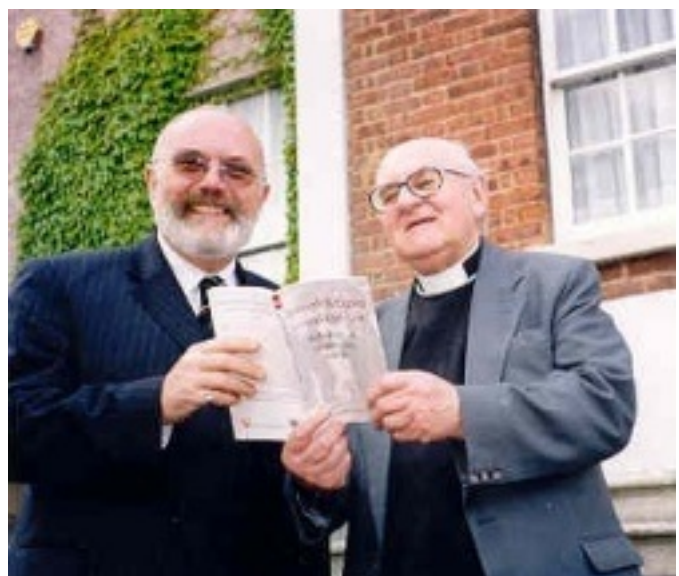
<http://www.u.tv/news/Bid-to-change-marching-band-stereotypes/6fab2105-e21c-45b0-9ff7-f59c954a2f34>

## Dean Griffin returns to Derry

**The former Dean of [St Patrick's Cathedral](#) in Dublin, the Very Rev Dr Victor Griffin, will be in Derry today (1.05 p.m.) to speak at St Columb's Cathedral.**

Derry Journal - Dr. Griffin, a former Rector of Christ Church in Derry, will be back in the city as part of a series of Lenten lunchtime addresses organised by the Church of Ireland locally.

Dr Griffin, who is renowned for his



forthright views on a range of issues, will address the subject of “Looking Back...Looking Forward” in his Derry talk.

The series of talks is designed to help people, during the season of Lent, examine their lives and to think of ways in which they, and all of us, can create a better environment.

## Sunday shame of Larne car vandals

**Larne church-goers leaving morning worship on Sunday found that their cars had been damaged in an act of wanton vandalism.**

Larne Times - Seven vehicles were maliciously scored close to St Cedma’s Church of Ireland.

The owners – including recently appointed trainee cleric Heather Cook – returned to their vehicles to discover that paintwork had been scratched with a blade.

The vehicles had been parked at Inver Road and at the war memorial car park nearby between 10am and 11am.

Police are said to believe the attack was random, but it happened just days after a vehicle was similarly scored outside the Gospel Hall at Curran Road. More at -



<http://www.larnetimes.co.uk/news/local-news/sunday-shame-of-larne-car-vandals-1-5961786>

## Lifetime service to BB honoured



**Few people have given more service to the Boys’ Brigade movement than Tommy Hanlon who – along with his devoted wife Phyllis – will head for Hillsborough Castle next month to pick up his richly-deserved MBE.**

Portadown Times - Tommy was awarded the ‘gong’ in the 2013 New Year Honours List and the presentation was

due at Buckingham Palace in the summer. But due to unforeseen circumstances, he and Phyllis were unable to make the trip, so the investiture will be in April.

Tommy has been in charge of St Mark's Junior BB (formerly the Life Boys) for 51 years, and when the announcement was made just over a year ago, it was reported with a 50-60-70 angle. At that stage, he had hit the half-century mark in charge of St Mark's (3rd Portadown) Juniors; his service to the Brigade totalled 60 years "man and boy"; and he was about to reach that milestone of life of three-score-years-and-ten (70).

He will be making the journey to Hillsborough with his devoted wife Phyllis by his side, for she has been an officer with him for 46 of those years, "and Phyllis totally shares this honour with me".

Tommy has, of course, a plethora of pictures of his Juniors who have won prizes and awards, not just with the Portadown Battalion, but on the Northern Ireland scene, with 3rd Portadown being one of the strongest in the province. "At one stage, we had 100 boys, but nowadays it averages about 30." More at -

<http://www.portadowntimes.co.uk/news/your-community/tommy-to-be-rewarded-for-a-life-of-service-to-the-boys-brigade-1-5950494>

## Chaplain who pushed for for church in hospital

**The Reverend Eric Crooks, who died recently, was a well-known Church of Ireland clergyman with deep roots in the Portadown area and in Dundonald, where he was rector at St Elizabeth's for 20 years.**



**Belfast Telegraph** - The use of Dundonald Presbyterian Church was granted for the funeral service because St Elizabeth's is undergoing renovations.

His son Jonny said: "My father would have a smile on his face – for a Church of Ireland minister having a funeral service in a Presbyterian Church."

He said that Portadown was the starting point for his father's journey in life, "a journey with Jesus in the Boys' Brigade, the Church Army, Oakhill training and the ordained ministry".

The Reverend Crooks was a supporter of Portadown Football Club, particularly when the team was doing well, and also had a great passion for people.

"He had the skill for talking, for coming alongside, giving comfort, laughing, listening, giving help and understanding, crying with, celebrating, consoling, building up, and more importantly bringing God into focus and praying with people," his son said.

The Reverend Crooks also served in Bolton in England, Lurgan, Loughbrickland/Donaghmore, and at All Saints' [Belfast](#).

He was also for many years a chaplain to the Ulster Hospital at Dundonald.

"As chaplain he pushed for, and finally saw the hospital build, a church, for reflection, a place to offer God's help to patients, staff and family," Mr Crooks added.