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Wednesday, 20th August 2008

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Rain lashes tears as Buncrana remembers

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19 August 2008

By [Donna Pryce](#)

More than a thousand people, sheltered by a sea of umbrellas, poignantly turned out in force to remember the Buncrana boys and Spanish visitors tragically killed in the horrific Omagh bomb, ten years ago.

Despite it pouring it down with rain the Buncrana community united, as it did a decade ago, to once again mourn its loss.

A special open-air mass was held in Knockalla Drive, the housing estate where Sean McLaughlin, aged 12, and Oran Doherty, aged eight - who were murdered in the atrocity - lived.

Observing the huge crowds - a mixture of children, grandparents, parents and teenagers, some weeping, some clad with candles - Father Eddie McGuinness said it was clear the boys have not been 'forgotten and still largely live in your minds'.

He told the packed-out estate: "I think your presence here tonight is the greatest testimony, ten years later, you have not forgotten.

"The hurt still continues in many people's lives."

The mass paid tribute to Sean, Oran, James Barker, aged 12, Fernando Baselga, aged 12 and Rocio Abad Ramos, 23, who were all killed in the explosion.

Fr McGuinness said: "I want the message to come out from our hearts, from all of us, from Omagh that enough is enough.

"We have suffered for many many years in all sides of religious differences and political differences and we have to ring that message out loud and clear, at the end of the day people suffering most are the poor, the children and the innocent.

"We must be able to live in peace with each other, I hope that the loss of these lives was not in vain."

Local singers sang heartbreaking ballads throughout the ceremony including REM's 'Everybody Hurts'.

Grief-stricken mums Bernadette Doherty and Patricia McLaughlin, brought up photos of their beloved children during the offertory procession.

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Gifts also included Sean's wrist watch - the one he wore on that fateful day - as well as sweets Oran bought in Omagh before the blast.

Bidding prayers were read from a host of people, remembering all the 31 victims of the single worst terror attack in Northern Ireland's troubles' history.

A prayer was read by Spanish coordinator Paula Helguero, who has been visiting Buncrana for the past 20 years.

Youth leader PJ Hallinan read out the beautiful poem 'Our Brief Rainbow' while another, emotional, bidding prayer was a poem written by Sean, called 'The Bridge'.

Fr McGuinness told the congregation it was a 'privilege to be here tonight' and thanked people for having the graciousness and spirit to attend.

He said the 'community's solidarity here tonight is a contrast against the savagery of that day'.

The full article contains 445 words and appears in Journal Tuesday newspaper.

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