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07:10 NEWS: Service to remember Troubles victims

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The lives of more than 3,500 people who died during the Northern conflicts will be remembered during a service later today.

The names of the dead will be read out by the congregation of the Dublin Unitarian Church in St Stephen's Green at the Good Friday ceremony.

The annual act of commemoration, which is now in its seventh year, is the only religious service of its kind in Ireland

From noon, church members will solemnly read out the names of those who lost their life.

They will start alphabetically with Anthony Abbott, a soldier from Manchester shot dead by the IRA in Ardoyne in North Belfast in 1976.

At around 3pm, the list will finish with William and Letitia Younger, an elderly Protestant man and his daughter, who were beaten, stabbed and shot by intruders in their home a mile further north in Ligoniel in 1980.

Chronologically, the sad litany will start in 1966 with John Patrick Scullion, a Catholic storeman shot by the UVF, and end in 2007 with Denis Donaldson, the IRA double agent.

Occasionally the Minister, Rev Bill Darlison, will briefly interrupt the litany to say a short prayer.

Assistant minister Rev Bridget Spain said the reading of the names illustrates powerfully the terrible, random nature of death in war and civil conflict.

"All human life and death is in this mournful list," he said.

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“British soldiers, IRA volunteers, loyalist paramilitaries, Ulster policemen and women, gardai, part-time UDR men, prison officers, civil rights marchers, judges, businessmen, farmers, taxi drivers, social workers, and children of all ages (including a six-month-old baby in Germany).

“People killed walking home from the pub, people killed while watching football on the television, people killed in church; people killed on trains, people killed out walking and shopping and visiting in London and Birmingham, Dublin and Monaghan, Belfast and Derry and Omagh and a score of other Northern Irish towns and villages.

“The names of all these lost lives are read out 'simply and starkly'.”

Most of the names have been taken from the book of that name by distinguished Northern Irish journalist David McKittrick and four colleagues.