

## Background to Day of Reflection

The idea for private reflection was part of an original recommendation made in 2002 in the Report of the Healing Through Remembering Project June 2002. This report followed a public consultation on ways of dealing with the past.

Following local and international research into the recommendation for a Day of Reflection HTR invited people to take the opportunity to privately reflect on Thursday 21 June 2007.

An independent evaluation of the Day indicated substantial support for the continuation of this initiative. As a result of feed back 21 June has been marked each year since 2007. Evaluation of the Day has also continued which has indicated ongoing and growing support for the Day.

Full and summary copies of the evaluation are available from the HTR office.

## Support Services

HTR has engaged with a number of organisations and groups to ensure they are aware of the Day of Private Reflection, and are prepared to meet the needs of their members, or the public, regarding this Day.

If you require further support please contact our freephone support information line 0800 5878 747 (ROI +448005878747 nb calls charged) for details of relevant support services and agencies.

This line will operate from 19 June - 25 June 2009 to provide support information as appropriate.

## Who We Are

The Day of Private Reflection is an initiative of Healing Through Remembering and its Day of Reflection Sub Group.

Healing Through Remembering (HTR) is a cross-community organisation focused on ways of dealing with the past relating to the conflict in and about Northern Ireland. The organisation is made up of a range of individuals from different political perspectives and social experiences and has been in existence since 1999.

Below is a list of members of the Day of Reflection Sub Group

### Members of the Day of Reflection Sub Group

Seán Coll	Nichola Lynagh
Kevin Cooper	Michaela Mackin
Michael Culbert	Frances McCandless
Harold Good	Tommy McCay
Maura Kiely	Kevin Mullan
Alastair Kilgore	Trevor Ringland
Heather Kilgore	Bernice Swift

# A Day of Private Reflection

## 21 June



### Contact Details

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## What is the Day of Private Reflection

The Day of Private Reflection on Sunday 21 June each year is an initiative promoted by Healing Through Remembering (HTR).

The Day of Private Reflection is offered as a day for personal, private and individual reflection, for example, at home or at work, within a family, group or organisation.

It is offered as an inclusive and positive experience that emphasises a commitment to a peaceful new society. It provides a voluntary opportunity for everyone in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Great Britain and further afield to reflect upon the conflict in and about Northern Ireland and the future that is before us.

It is not anticipated that public events will be a feature of the Day at this stage.

The Day of Private Reflection will be evaluated this year to inform the decision on whether to proceed with this initiative in subsequent years - and if so in what format.

## Why 21 June?

The date was chosen following thorough research into possible dates for such a day. This highlighted that there is no single date in the calendar year which is not the anniversary of the death of at least one person in relation to the conflict.

It was felt that 21 June, the summer solstice and the longest day of the year, was a symbolically important day. The hours of light and dark could be seen as a symbol of the hope and pain in our society. It is a day that is forward-looking and backward-looking at the same time. It is a day which represents a pause in the cycle of nature, a moment to reflect. Furthermore, the day's significance is related to a naturally occurring event and nature makes no distinction between races, creeds or political perspectives.

## Purpose of the Day of Private Reflection

The Day of Private Reflection offers an opportunity for us all:

- to acknowledge the deep hurt and loss caused by the conflict in and about Northern Ireland,
- to remember the men, women and children who on a daily basis live with the consequences of the conflict,
- to reflect on our own attitudes that might have the potential to negatively impact on others and society,
- to reflect on what more each of us might have done or might still do to uphold and enhance all other people's right to life and quality of life, and
- to make a personal commitment that, as we begin to move forward as a society, such loss should never be allowed to happen again.

## Getting Involved

The following are some suggestions, made by groups and individuals, of ways of reflecting that you may like to consider:

- Reflecting in a moment of silence
- Saying a prayer
- Sharing thoughts or reflections with others
- Meditating
- Reflecting on an appropriate poem or story
- Recording your memories and hopes in a book or journal
- Visiting a place of worship or other special place

While the emphasis is not upon events for the Day of Private Reflection, all groups can be involved by raising awareness among their members and/or offering a place where reflection could take place, facilitating reflection, or assisting in developing materials which would aid and enable meaningful reflection.

## Materials

Information, guidance and promotional materials for the Day of Private Reflection have been developed. These include:

- Postcards
- Bookmarks
- Leaflets
- Posters
- Wallet Cards

All materials are free of charge and can be ordered from the HTR office or online at [www.dayofreflection.com](http://www.dayofreflection.com)

A list of other resources which have been developed is available in the resources section of the website.

These include:

- Words for Reflection
- Ideas for Youth and Education Participation in the Day of Reflection
- Fact sheet on the Conflict in and about Northern Ireland
- Christian Reflection Liturgy
- Using the Arts to Aid Reflection – by the Community Arts Forum
- Out of the Depths – by the Centre for Contemporary Christianity in Ireland

Organisations and groups are encouraged to develop their own materials to aid reflection and to facilitate their members' engagement with and participation in the Day of Private Reflection.

## Endorsements

The website lists a number of individuals and organisations who have endorsed the Day of Private Reflection. It also gives details of activities that are taking place on the Day.