

Dear Friends,

Margaret and I have just returned from our first ever visit to Eire. Crossing – and returning – on the ferry from Fishguard and Rosslaire respectively, and the smoothest of crossings both ways (contrary to what many 'kind' people had told us to expect), the holiday came off to a calm start as well as a smooth end. And the bits in between were not bad either.

Thought for
the week



with the Rev Preben
Andersen

What a beautiful country, and how charming and welcoming the Irish people! Nothing was too much trouble, and 'no worries' seemed to be the stock answer to most things. The roads were mainly quiet, the landscape varied and beautiful, and the whole atmosphere relaxing and comforting, which of course is what you pray for on holiday. We marvelled at the crystal factory and Viking museum in Waterford (where, being Danish, I could say hello to my forefathers!), the Titanic experience in Cobh, the blarney stone at the top of the castle, and visits to Tipperary (a long, long way away!) and Cork, to mention but a few attractions. Not forgetting the beautiful cathedrals and churches we were able to fit in.

All this has made me think how Paul and his missionaries in the early church must have enjoyed travelling too, making converts in the process, enjoying God's beautiful creation, and marvelling at all that is good and true and lasting, but which often - and sadly - we take so for granted.

Ours may have been only a 6-day 'hop', but we have returned with lots of happy memories, so if there are any Irish people out there reading this, thank you for keeping your countryside so beautiful and maintaining such a spirit of welcome and faithfulness for your visitors to enjoy. It has meant a lot to us both.

Next month I shall hope to look back on Remembrance Sunday, which as I write is only a week away, especially as this year, and thanks to the British Legion, Margaret and I are about to experience something quite special. Until then, God bless you.

Rev Preben Andersen