

Irish Minister Blesses US With 'Cross Walk'

Along with 22 of our 44 U.S. presidents, Davy Crockett and Neil Armstrong, Ireland wants to give the U.S. another gift: the cross. Jack McKee, senior pastor of New Life City Church in Belfast, plans to do a six cycle tour with the cross in tow. Commencing on Sept. 23 and ending on Oct. 25, just shy of the **presidential election**, McKee hopes to remind American Christians to keep their eyes on the cross.

"This was what God wanted us to do ... for the purpose of reminding the **church in America** to stay focused on the cross," he said. "For whatever reason, whether its political reasons or whatever, some have lost sight. I want to challenge them and to encourage them to refocus on the cross."

McKee plans to begin his U.S. tour in Los Angeles on Sunset Boulevard, where Arthur Blessitt began his ministry in 1969. He and his team of four other cyclists will travel to Phoenix, San Antonio, Houston, New Orleans, Jacksonville, Fla., and they will end their journey in Washington, D.C. Accompanied by an Irish-American bagpiper, McKee will walk with the cross through some cities and plans to stop at local churches to speak with congregants.

"[I hope] the church in America could be challenged to start again to get back to the real message of the cross and recognize that the message of the cross is not there to divide us as believers but it is there to unite us," he said. "The cross is the great common denominator."

McKee has a history of literally carrying the cross into adverse situations. In 2000 he organized a Cross Walk, that drew 500 marchers to help stop the Loyalist Feud, an Irish civil war that claimed 11 lives and wounded many others. And

when the Irish protestants and Catholics began to fight, he did a 40-day Cross Walk around the wall that divided the two communities. McKee wants to bring these types of reconciliation efforts to U.S. cities.

“I would hope that there’d be those along the way that would be touched by what we’re doing and lives would be radically changed, ” he said. “We’d also want to encourage them not to lose sight of Ireland.”