

# Wexford PEOPLE

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## Clonard to host Notre Dame Choir

CLONARD parish is gearing up to play host to the Notre Dame Folk Choir from Indiana, America, in the coming weeks.

A contingent of sixty students from the prestigious American university will travel to Wexford and stay with host families in the Clonard parish on May 22 for five days.

While visiting they will participate in a variety of activities aimed at forging links between the Irish and American Catholic communities.

They include a prayer service at 7.30p.m. mass on Friday May 25 and a choral service at the Scoil Mhuire First Holy Communion mass on Sunday May 27 at 11.15p.m.

Of course this is not the first time that students from Notre Dame have visited Clonard.

In fact four students from Notre Dame have been living and working in the Clonard parish for the past two years as part of a special transatlantic programme facilitated by Clonard parish.

The four students are Jessica Mannen, Molly Mattingly, Dan Masterton and Kurt Nowak.

All aged between 18 and 22, the



■ Molly Mattingly, Dan Masterton, Kurt Nowak, and Jessica Mannen of Notre Dame.

group have been living at Cluain Dara and working at Clonard Church for the duration of their stay.

Their work includes arranging church music for masses and religious ceremonies, along with providing supplementary religious education to the local schools and a variety of other activities which work towards supporting the Catholic community in the area.

Jessica Mannen, originally from Oregon, is one of the students participating in the programme.

Jessica is nearing the end of her

two year stint on the programme and is delighted to have been apart of it.

She explained that one highlight of her work so far has been working with fourth and fifth class students at local schools and helping them arrange their own mass services.

The students take on the challenge of arranging all of the music and readings on their own. As it happened, Jessica studied Theology and Music at university, an experience which has certainly stood to her throughout her work in Clonard. However, as she goes on to explain, official qualifications in this area are not a prerequisite for acceptance on to

the programme.

This programme is funded by Clonard parish and a not-for-profit organisation in America.

It is certainly unique from many other cultural exchange programmes in so far as its sole objective is to support the Catholic faith, however judging by the surge in applications for a place on the programme it seems that their are a number of young people willing and eager to play their part in ensuring religion plays a pivotal part in everyday life.