

A smiling woman in traditional Maasai attire, including a patterned shuka and multiple beaded necklaces, is shown from the chest up. She is holding a small, translucent globe of the Earth with both hands. The background is a blurred natural setting with a tree trunk visible on the right.

the missions

handbook

1500 years of Irish
missionaries bringing
Christianity to new
communities
worldwide



THE GAVINARA FAMILY, WHO ARE SUPPORTED BY OXFAM, IN MALAWI WORK TOGETHER TO DEHUSK THEIR MAIZE HARVEST THAT WAS GROWN USING DROUGHT-RESISTANT SEEDS. ABBIE TRAYLER-SMITH/OXFAM.

SOW THE SEEDS OF A BRIGHTER FUTURE

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BEHIND ENOUGH TO TAKE CARE OF YOU.

TO PEOPLE AFFECTED BY POVERTY,
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Fields of Life is an international development charity founded in 1993. It is our vision to see meaningful and real change occur in the lives of whole communities in East Africa through holistic and sustainable development which empowers people living in extreme poverty and helps them to help themselves restoring their dignity and providing hope for their future.

The work has expanded beyond Uganda with project work undertaken in Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo and more recently South Sudan. The mission of providing sustainable community development focuses now on four main thematic issues such as provision of:

- **quality education**
- **clean water**
- **health promotion**
- **income generating projects**

To date Fields Of Life have:

- Constructed 110 Schools (95 Primary / 15 Secondary) between 1997-2013 throughout East Africa.
- Over 45,000 children are currently being educated.
- 3,300 very needy and vulnerable children are currently being sponsored through their primary & secondary education.
- Drilled more than 330 boreholes, providing safe, clean drinking water to more than 350,000 vulnerable people in the poorest communities.
- The health programme has been rolled out to 24 schools since 2012 in which nearly 12,500 children have directly benefitted from the health promotion programme
- More than 3,000 families have been assisted through income generation projects.



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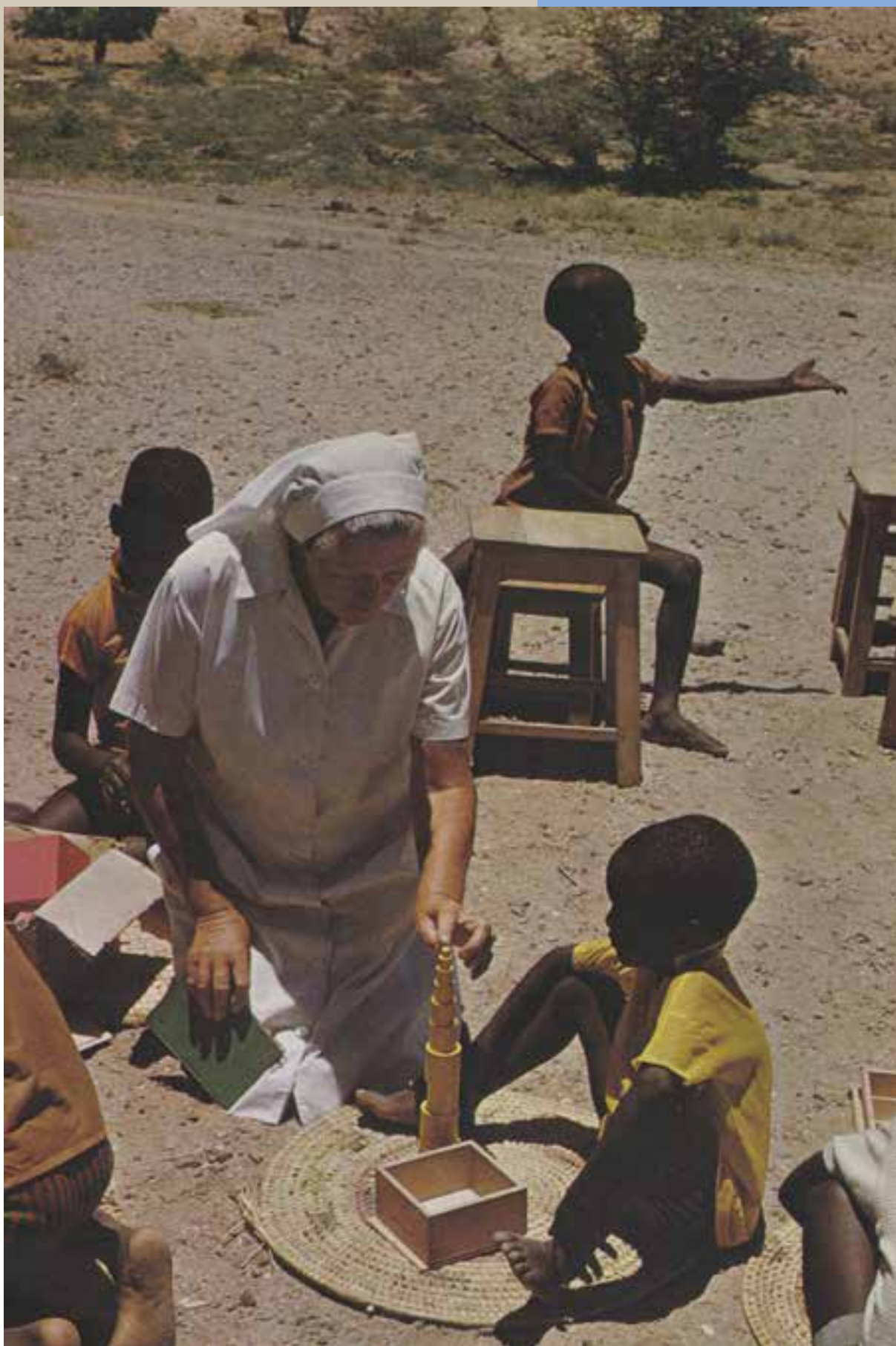
FOR 1500 YEARS

Irish Missionaries have travelled the world to bring Christianity to new communities.

The first documented Irish missionary was St. Columba, one of The Twelve Apostles of Ireland, who travelled to Scotland around 563 to set up an Abbey on the island of Iona. Over the next few centuries, this settlement became one of the most significant Christian and Scholastic centres in Europe. St. Aidan was a scholar of St. Columba's monastery and from 635 was responsible for the construction of churches, monasteries and schools throughout Northumbria. He was loved for his charity and dedication to the disadvantaged, as well as his gentle approach to Christian conversion.

One of the most successful Irish Missionaries was St. Columbanus who was born in the Kingdom of Meath in 543. While studying in Bangor Abbey around 590, he organised a mission to Continental Europe and over the following 20 years, established a number of monastic centres throughout France, Germany, Italy, Austria and Switzerland. By the 11th century, the teachings of Columbanus had spread across Continental Europe, through his many disciples and over 100 monasteries had been established. By the 15th century, many of these monasteries were in decline, due to financial issues and fewer missionaries being sent from Ireland. Ireland was going through a reformation of its own, with a move from Celtic to Roman Christianity which saw a more formal and enclosed organisation. Ireland was no longer ruled by Catholics and priests had to travel abroad to study.

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❏ *A missionary must learn to live within the community and listen to their needs and wants. A missionary cannot impose their own ideals on a community but rather teach through integration.*

Many continued their teachings in Italy but were not encouraged to go further afield as with the earlier missions. Ireland was now considered a mission field and when their studies were completed, priests were encouraged to return home to help maintain a Catholic presence.

The Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 was the beginning of Catholic Emancipation in Ireland. Many Irish congregations founded in Europe came to help the church in Ireland, including the Spiritans, Society of African Missions (SMA) and Medical Missionaries of Mary, who still have a presence here today. Ireland's interest in Africa began with these Missionary Societies and by 1916 there were over 6,000 men and women missionaries throughout Africa, Asia, Latin America. The following decades would see huge changes as missionaries had to deal with social justice, environmental issues and it would also see the emergence of a new secular missionary movement as volunteerism became fashionable.

Irish missionaries have worked in the most remote and marginalised communities throughout the world and have risen to unrelenting challenges to assist people in need. Our history of famine, conflict and loss has helped us to empathise with those in similar situations today. It is an incredibly selfless individual who leaves their home, with all its familiarities and comforts, to devote themselves to making life better for others. Throughout the centuries, spreading the Christian message was done by members of religious orders but with the development of the modern world, many lay-people feel a vocation to help the disadvantaged and can be as effective in spreading Christian values where most needed. The role of a missionary is not clearly defined. In a world where religion has become unfashionable to young people, how can a missionary show the world that spirituality and something to believe in will help them in life?

Many of the people I have met on the journey to develop this publication have devoted their lives to God but admit that religion plays only a part in what they do. Their ability to integrate, educate and challenge their new community is necessary to achieve any success in their position and has less to do with the organised religion we experience in Ireland. A missionary must learn to live within the community and listen to their needs and wants. A missionary cannot impose their own ideals on a community but rather teach through integration.

As recently as the 1960s, there were thousands of Irish missionaries throughout the world. Every parish knew a Missionary and many families had brothers and sisters who were members of a missionary organisation. Today, there are an estimated 1,500 Irish missionaries worldwide and yet the majority if today's missionaries come from the countries western missionaries infiltrated throughout the last century.

Telephony, Social Media and affordable transport have made the world more accessible. Vaccinations and medication have helped prevent death and suffering. Communication and dialogue between world leaders continues to keep many nations peaceful despite threats of war. And yet, communities, both abroad and at home are still in need of guidance and assistance. The selfless dedication of Missionaries is reflected in every educated child, every successful crop, every working well and every available medical facility but most importantly, the ability to improve the quality of life of whole communities through their dedication and selflessness.

K. Mooney

MISSIONARY STORIES

3 SISTERS SHARE THEIR STORIES



Sr. Rosarii O'Sullivan

from Athea, Co. Limerick became a Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Apostles in 1944 and set out on her first 'missionary journey' into Africa as a teacher in 1951. Sr. Rosarii is now retired at Ardfoyle Convent in Cork and from the banks of 'the Lovely Lee' she looks back on the

years with boundless energy and joy as she recalls the years among the peoples of northern Nigeria where she spent some 40 years as a missionary. In her own simple and humble way Sr. Rosarii sums up the story of her life in two words "Deo Gratias"



Tis well I remember the first night in Lagos, we were met by two OLA Sisters and we edged our way through the throng of bright eyed, dark, friendly faces to a rickety lorry which brought us with our fourteen well packed crates to St. Mary's Broad Street, Lagos.

**"Bliss it was in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young (and a missionary)
very heaven"**

(with apologies to Wordsworth, the parenthesis is mine)

That is how I felt on the 21st of November 1951 as I landed with four OLA companions in Lagos, Nigeria where the Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles were the first missionary Sisters in 1873. As if touched by the Pentecost flame that changed fearful fishermen into fearless apostles, young French and Irish girls responded to the urgent invitation of the SMA pioneer priests. *"In Lagos you die, let them come quickly those who want to bring Jesus to souls and souls to Jesus"*

Some (missionaries) survived a few months, the longest two and a half years in what was then a cluster of fishermen's huts, a paradise for mosquitos and according to a British surgeon, *"the father and mother of all fevers"* on her first return journey, Sr. Antoine Fuohy from near Abbeyfeale, died at sea in 1907, while Sr. Salese, Ellen Leahy, Athea worked there from 1908 to 1935. Of course the discovery of quinine and the introduction of Christian Education have brought about far reaching physical and social changes since then.

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To my joy I met up with my sister Liam (O’Sullivan) that evening. We talked well into the night sharing home news in dim lamp light at 90 degrees while mosquitos hissed and danced around us. Heading 600 miles north for Kaduna, the capital of the north next day where I was to spend the next 30 odd years. Kaduna was even then a mosaic of many of ethnic groups of diverse origin, religion, language and tribal customs, and they somehow managed to live in relative peace and harmony. I set foot in Sacred Heart College, Kaduna, one of the first to train primary teachers. It was run by Sr. Gregory Dillon from Abbeyfeale, a woman of faith, vision and courage. Long before Vatican 2 declared that *“schools served not only to form Christian youths but also to raise human dignity and promote human conditions”* our Sisters had embarked on programmes of education, especially for women that gave them a new self-awareness and enabled them to express their personal and national hopes and aspiration in their own rich cultures.

The day’s routine began at 5.15 a.m. with Morning Prayer, mass, hostel work; breakfast and classes up to 2p.m. followed by lunch and the evenings were devoted to games, athletics, red cross, girl guides, various societies and library, all part of building up good inter-religious dialogue and interpersonal relations! On Saturdays there was preparation for teaching practice, home science classes and the cleaning of the parish church! The Legion of Mary, Bible study, home visitation, hospital and prison visits were all part of the school curriculum. Life could be tough too, especially for the women who spent long hours farming and harvesting or, with a baby on the back, carrying loads to the market returning home to spend long hours preparing food for the extended family - family life and values were always a priority.

I spent the next six years in Queen of Apostles College, Kakuri, and the first girls’ secondary school in the north of Nigeria. So that indigenous girls may prepare for secondary education, St. Anne’s Primary School was built and we scouted far and wide to fill it! Sr. Philomena Woulfe, also from Athea, was in charge of the project. One morning she found the dormitory empty and the girls trekking happily along the railway line back home. (Education for girls was not well established in those early days.) With some encouragement they returned and years later they were the first educated women and the nucleus of Christian homes. I recall the 6 man team of Her Majesty’s Inspectors who pried into our hostels, classrooms, office and games’ field for three days, their

report was quite favourable and senior Cambridge results matched it. The school’s emphasis on the extracurricular activities such as debates and quizzes Christmas plays and operettas, netball matches and sports got high praise. Another major historical event celebrated with great pomp and pageantry was the Queen’s visit to Nigeria in 1956. And of course Independence in 1960 was another major historical and unique Celebration. Excitement, joy and happiness, pride and self-confidence filled the air – unforgettable moments. But we had our sorrowful moments too. Soon afterwards Sr. Assumpta Cronin from Cork nearly died of meningitis, a little boarder searching for water was drowned and I got news of my mother’s death. All happened together!

As missionaries we are forever on the move to where the need is greatest. And so I was on the road again to Marymount Secondary School in Benin in the Mid-western region of Nigeria where I was to spend the next two years in the education and formation of young women and children: I was soon recalled to OLA Training College, Akwanga, in the north, to give a helping hand in the college which was being upgraded. This coincided with the period of the civil war in Nigeria and we were privileged to share the little we had to the many in need of medication, food and shelter as they were fleeing for safety from perilous roads and situations.

I was privileged to be part of the formation of The Sisters of Our Lady of Fatima - an indigenous group of Sisters in Jos, from 1975 to ’78. Now a thriving Congregation the Sisters involved in education, medical work and a wide range of pastoral work all over northern Nigeria. My journey continued and this time it was down to Shendam Government Girls’ Secondary School. It was still in its infancy and of non-denominational multi-ethnic groups. The heat was oppressive, the hostels were disused houses, and the classrooms vacated offices! Students fetched river water and studied by limp light. Things began to take shape and we were greatly assisted by many parents and husbands of past students who had not forgotten our industrious and economical mission methods! Meantime Government took over all mission schools, and Queen of Apostles College became Queen Amina College. I was happy that one of my past pupils was appointed Principal of the college.

I returned to Jos in 1981 where preparations were in full swing for the first National Eucharistic Congress where Papal delegate, hierarchy, clergy and religious plus

thousands of laity assembled for three days and nights around the Eucharistic King in adoration, praise and petition in the finest African tradition. A year later we had a similar experience in Kaduna with the visit of Pope John Paul 11. It was good to be there, they were great days!

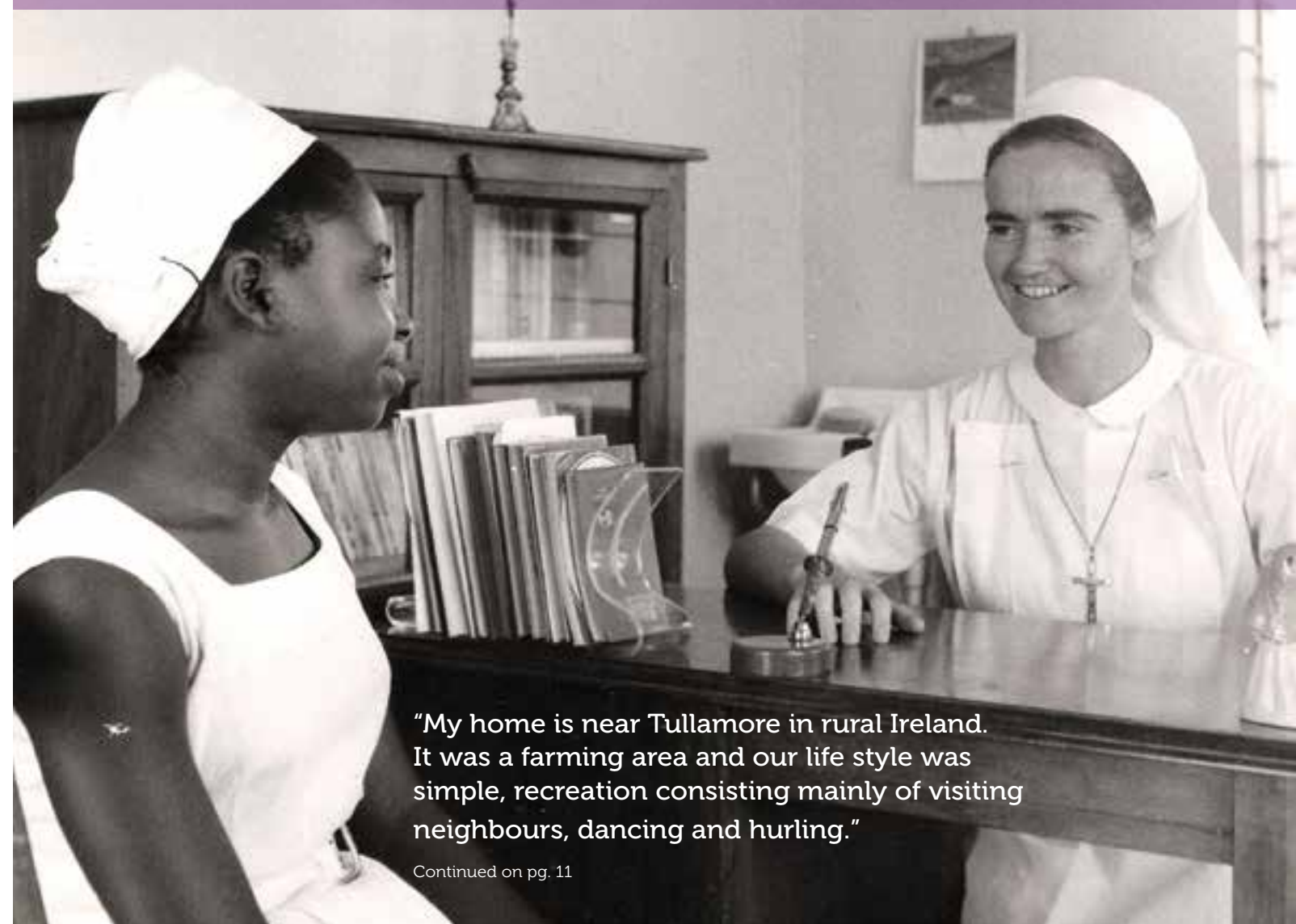
And my final teaching post in Nigeria was in the Minor Seminary in Jos with two other OLA Sisters, preparing young men for the priesthood – a great privilege indeed. Today Nigeria has a well-established and vibrant Church

with enthusiastic laity and many vocations to the religious life.

So, like Ulysses, *“I’m part of all I’ve met”*, enriched and energised by these cheerful, friendly people, generous in poverty, patient and hopeful in adversity and always grateful.

As I look back over the years all I can say is *“thank God”*.

SISTER CORONA O’BRIEN told us of many years on mission in Africa, working with others to improve the situation of women. She continues to be involved in healing work today.



“My home is near Tullamore in rural Ireland. It was a farming area and our life style was simple, recreation consisting mainly of visiting neighbours, dancing and hurling.”

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Promoting the wholeness of all peoples

After I entered MMM I trained in general nursing and midwifery in our training school in Drogheda. I was then sent to Obudu, Nigeria, where I started a midwifery training school for primary school graduates. It consisted of six months in both classroom and wards. When my MMM sister, Loreto, became ill, I returned to Ireland to care for her. I then obtained a certificate as a clinical nursing instructor and returned to Nigeria. I worked as relief matron in Ogoja, Ibadan, and Ondo.

In 1977 I qualified as a nurse-midwife tutor in Scotland. Back again in Nigeria, I taught in our midwifery training school in Afikpo. There I was challenged by the high number of maternal deaths, often from obstructed labour. Many mothers came to the hospital with their uterus ruptured. Other consequences, in addition to the loss of the child, such as vaginal fistulae, affected them for the rest of their lives. I decided to try to minimize this. In 1984 I was fortunate to get leave from teaching and took a basic four-month Christian course in Sierra Leone.

It also seemed relevant to educate local girls who had no opportunity for secondary school.

Working with local people

I now set about contacting the women in the rural communities. Many did not come for antenatal care and it was considered a weakness to deliver in hospital. I met with the chiefs and other men and explained that all women would not need to come for delivery. If they came to the antenatal clinic some would be able to deliver at home with the local midwife. I started a course for these midwives.

It also seemed relevant to educate local girls who had no opportunity for secondary school. Many did not have primary education. With much help from Misereor, Gorta, and Trocaire I converted a building in the local church compound. I built a classroom and dormitory to accommodate some of the hundreds who wanted to train in domestic science and agriculture. Most of the teachers



were volunteers. It was a very practical three-year course. We accepted students because of their poverty, not necessarily because of their academic ability. Their talents were rewarded when they finished. We were able to give sewing machines to many due to the generosity of Trocaire and the Irish people. As the girls earned money from their sewing they gradually repaid us.

I then got a machine from England for making roof tiles. This gave employment and helped to raise funds for the school. After six years I handed over the management to a young Nigerian woman. It continued until a few years ago when secondary education became free for all in Abia State.

Alert to new situations

In 1990 I returned to Ireland to be principal tutor in our midwifery school. I first updated in the National Maternity Hospital in Dublin and obtained a Fellowship in Nursing in the Royal College of Surgeons. I also completed an MSc in education to help our student midwives.

In 1998 I went back to Africa, this time to Kabanga, Tanzania and taught in our midwifery school. In 2006 I returned to Ireland.

I am now 76 years old and retired from formal activity. Though I am still working I no longer have the pressure of preparing students for formal state examinations. I am busy in our Motherhouse treating Sisters using chiropody, healing massage, and reflexology.



Fr. Edward Galvin



Fr. John Blowick

In just a few years the Missionary Society of St. Columban will celebrate a 100 years of service to the proclamation of the Gospel in 15 countries around the world. Both the Missionary Society of St. Columban and the Missionary Sisters of St. Columban came about from the vision of two young priests with a like minded passion and desire to share the Gospel beyond the shores of Ireland. This took place between 1916 and 1920 when providence brought together the two men Fr. Edward Galvin and Fr. John Blowick Co-Founders of the Society.

Edward Galvin on loan to the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, heard from a Missionary about the religious situation in China and Volunteered to go there himself. Four years later he returned to Ireland and sought the support of the Irish Church. John Blowick who had recently been appointed to the faculty of St. Patrick's College Maynooth and had long been troubled by the thought of the countless Chinese people still untouched by the Gospel resigned his teaching position to go as a Missionary to China.

The hopes of the two men converged in the vision of a new Missionary Family in the Church.

The Society takes its name from St. Columban, Ireland's Missionary to Europe in the 6th century. It was known as the Maynooth Mission to China and was formally launched in 1918 as a missionary society of diocesan priests. This in itself was unique as until then all such movements were religious congregations. They found others who embraced their vision and the first Columbans went to China in 1920, to take on its challenges of language, culture and to support and live among its suffering poor.

Within a few years the Columban Society of priests had spread to England, USA, Australia and New Zealand. To inform people of the new missionary effort and to have the support of the Church a Mission Magazine was started. The Far East. It was an instant success and for close to 100 years it has been the primary means of communications with

the supporters of the missionary effort. Later Magazines were launched in USA and Australia and there followed others in the Philippines, Korea and in South America.

At first the vision did not extend beyond China, but the Gospel call was 'Go make disciples of all nations, and gradually the vision widened to the Philippines (1929), Korea (1933), Burma (1936) and Japan (1948).

When Mainland China was closed to Missionaries in the 1950's, the Society responded to the urgent call of Latin America (1951) and Columban Missionaries went to the poor in the new urban settlements in Peru and Chile. The Society also responded to the Missionary needs of the Church in Fiji and later to Taiwan, Pakistan, Brazil, Jamaica and Belize.

The Initial Vision has also broadened in different other ways. The Columbans who originally drew its members from the English-speaking world now invites to membership young people from all the Churches within which we work.

Over the last twenty years the Columban Lay Mission Programme (LM) has grown with virtually every region sending and receiving young Lay Missionaries. There are presently 50 Lay Missionaries in ten different regions across the world.

In other ways the Vision has not only deepened but widened. Under the promptings of the Holy Spirit, the Church in our time is challenging the injustice of structural poverty and spiraling violence with more emphatic insistence on the basic implications of the Gospel. As Columban Missionaries in today's world we see this concern for justice and peace as central to our Apostolate. And within the concern for justice and peace we have come to see that concern for the earth needs to be at the heart of all such issues. As Pope Francis says in this connection, God forgives all the time, Man sometimes, but Nature never. Consequently environmental concerns are central to Columban Missionary action.

Today a greater appreciation of the Kingdom values in the world's cultures and religions has led us to an increasing awareness of the need to engage with peoples of other religions and to promote an authentic enculturation of the Gospel.

For present day Columban Missionaries as for our founders the vision has continued to grow.

Malachy Smyth SSC
(Communications Office)

Sr. Mairead Gorman spent most of her mission life in Ethiopia. She told us of the challenges of dealing with famine and working with nomadic peoples.

I am from Armagh, Ireland, in the countryside about five miles outside the town. I am eighty-two years old and am based in Drogheda. Before I joined MMM, I was a shorthand typist-telephonist. Later I became secretary to the manager for the company for which I worked. After I entered I trained as a nurse in England and as a midwife in Drogheda.

Responding to needs

My first missionary assignment was in 1968 to Kitovu, in Masaka, Uganda, where I was local bursar. I was assigned to Ethiopia in 1976 but because of the political situation there I couldn't get a visa right away. In the meantime I worked in Tanzania. I worked on the wards in Kabanga Hospital and spent a lot of time in the mother and child health (MCH) outreach clinics with Sister Damien Corcoran (RIP). In Namanyere Hospital, I was with Sister Lelia Cleary. It was similar to Kabanga but was a smaller hospital with fewer outreach clinics. In 1980 there was widespread famine in Ethiopia. I was in Namanyere and got an urgent message on the radio-telephone to get myself to Nairobi. Sister Joanne Bierl, now on our Congregational Team, was also assigned to Ethiopia and was awaiting her visa. She was based in Kenya. Now our visas had come.

Joining resources

We spent our first year in a very remote area called Kamba, in Gemo Gofa Province, doing famine relief work. Fortunately the famine in this area hadn't reached the stage where we had to set up feeding camps. There was a lot of malaria among the children and adults, as well as chest infections, diarrhoea, etc. Once they got the necessary treatment and food it was surprising how quickly their condition began to improve and more serious famine was prevented. The numbers attending were overwhelming, but with the good support of our team we learned to cope. The Catholic Secretariat and the Ethiopian Government sent in adequate supplies of food and medicines.

When the famine was under control and we were able to withdraw from the area, we were invited by the Spiritan Fathers to open a clinic among the Borana nomads. This was another challenge and a new and enriching experience. After doing a needs' assessment, a curative



clinic was built and MCH outreach clinics established all over our catchment area. Later a community health project was developed when Sister JoAnn Mullen joined us. This included providing borehole wells. Water is a precious commodity in a semi-desert area. We also helped with small scale farming, income generating projects, women's promotion, literacy, sewing and other household skills, and hygiene. We gave HIV/AIDS education on a daily basis. I worked mainly in the curative clinic, in MCH, and in HIV education.

Ready for new challenges

Later I worked in our mission in Mique, Sidamo Province. Once a nomadic people, they are now settled. We had a curative clinic and a nutrition unit. Unlike the Borana children, those in Mique were very malnourished. The activities were similar to those in Borana. The big changes I saw when I came home were that people had better houses and a better lifestyle in general. They could afford more modern conveniences. There were many positive things. At the same time, I feel there is too much commercialism. There are big stores and supermarkets and all kinds of things made attractive to buy. Do we really need all these things? It is sad to see smaller shops close down and the big stores taking over.

I am now working in Aras Mhuire, a facility where some of our Sisters receive nursing care. I am involved in pastoral care, but as with my mission experience this includes miscellaneous jobs! It is a privilege to be able to help those who have given so much in their lives to others.

In Conversation with

Fr. Owen Lambert



Village community in Pemba, Zanzibar in conversation with their religious leaders Juma and Ahmad and Owen Lambert on the HIV-Aids crisis for children

ETHIOPIA

Christianity, under the Oriental Orthodox Church, has been present in Ethiopia since 1 AD and declared the state religion by King Ezana the Great in 330 AD.

Today, 60% of Ethiopians are Christian with The Ethiopian Orthodox Church still the largest of the Christian organisations with 45 million members, followed by the Protestant church with 13 million members and the Roman Catholic Church with 500,000 members.



People of Bonga Village, Keffa discussing the food and water situation with Owen Lambert

Father Owen Lambert spent 30 years as a Missionary in Ethiopia. He grew up in Wicklow and studied Economics and Psychology and Theology before being ordained in the Holy Ghost Spiritans Congregation in 1973. He was one of the first students of Kimmage DSC in 1974, where he undertook a Diploma in Development Studies and shortly after completion, at the age of 29, was appointed as a Missionary to Ethiopia. Father Owen arrived in Ethiopia at the beginning of a Civil War that would last until 1991 and leave 1.9 million people dead. The first cases of HIV were detected in Ethiopia in 1984, with a confirmed case of AIDS first documented in 1986. AIDS grew rapidly in urban areas of Ethiopia in the late 1980's but when the Marxist Derg Army was demobilised in 1991, one in four of the 400,000 troops were HIV positive. They returned to their homes, families and villages with no information, support, counselling, medication or treatment and this fanned the pandemic of AIDS throughout rural Ethiopia for years to come.

Currently up to 3 million people in Ethiopia have AIDS, with over 4 million children orphaned, many as a consequence. With young parents dying from AIDS, grandparents and communities are left to care for the children. With few professionals or working adults, 25% of households in Ethiopia are headed by children.

Father Owen Lambert returned to Ireland in 2003 and set up AIDS Partnership with Africa to generate awareness and support for the people with AIDS in Africa. The organisation works within the social structure of each region and aims to give them the skills and education to support their own communities.

Aid Partnership Africa [APA] works to save lives, prevent human suffering, limit the devastating impact AIDS has

on human development, and the slide into critically low levels of poverty by working within the social structure of each region and providing them with the skills and education to support their own communities. APA strive to create an environment where children can realize their rights, including those of survival and development, health, education and protection from abuse and neglect.



R-L Archbishop Timateos, Orthodox Archbishop of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia meeting the late Augustine O'Keeffe CSSp and Owen Lambert CSSp.

“This vision that inspired the creation of APA has been born out of family homes across southern and northern Ethiopia - where so many beautiful people are no more. It rises to shine out from the laughter and again the tear filled eyes of beautiful children left to journey forward without the loving presence of their parents. From the life giving determination of elderly grandparents who have lost their beloved sons and daughters and who now in the evening tide of their lives are entrusted with caring for their grandchildren of tender age. From the dedicated service and care of health personnel, careers, counsellors, Muslim and Christian people alike and their spiritual leaders - all have touched and inspired it. The family and the friends, a mother's humanity, indeed of the humanity of every person and out of being personally there for 27 years with that part of humanity where people are hurting most grievously.

Finally out of the personal belief and experience that our humanity can be so noble, generous, thoughtful, so caring and so dedicated to others and rise above and beyond the ME. We can rise to embrace with full awareness and willingly share this moment of global human tragedy by confronting the crises which HIV/AIDS presents”.- **Fr. Owen Lambert CSSp.**



For children affected by AIDS

To play, to learn, to have food and health
To be loved, secure and safe.

These are the rights of every child, rights robbed by a virus and robbed twice over in countries crippled by debt and paralysed by trade rules designed to benefit the rich and powerful.

Loving God, vanquish our complacency at our injustice to these your children.

Remove all traces of empty conscience-salving charity. Make us, instead, committed to sharing our resources – your resources – with those who need them most: to seeking, in justice, to remove the debt burdens of the poorest, to working tirelessly so that all your children might know again the joys of playing, learning, living, loving and being loved.

Ann Smith/CAFOD

... IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH AFRICA....

TOGETHER WITH YOU
Fighting Aids Together With The People Of Africa

Look! Our lives are in your hands. ACT Now!

“look
to each
other’s
Interest
and not
merely
to your
own”

Phil.2:4
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"CHILDREN ARE PEOPLE; THEY GROW INTO TOMORROW, ONLY AS THEY LIVE TODAY"

Friedrich Froebel, 19th Century Educator

Malawi in central Africa is a country with a population of fifteen million people, with fifty per cent under eighteen years of age. At a global level, Malawi is rated one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world.

In an environment of never ending poverty, without many essential life sustaining supports, exacerbated by a high incidence of HIV/AIDS, many vulnerable children become disengaged from family and community, migrating to the streets of the major centres of population in a futile effort to escape hunger, hardship and humiliation. Disengaged from minimal support they quickly become labelled "street children", with consequent rejection and

marginalization by the community, leading in time to abuse, exploitation and in some cases a violent death. For these children their 'today' is one of loss and their 'tomorrow' is without hope.

In 1994 the Irish Brothers of Saint John of God founded a community based mental health service in the city of Mzuzu in Northern Malawi.



Through their involvement with the local community they came face to face with the reality of children on the streets of the city and the ensuing physical and psychological trauma experienced by the children, their guardians and the community. In keeping with their *mission to bring Christ's healing, love and compassion to suffering humanity in the manner of Saint John of God*, the Brothers and their co-workers with the support of the traditional and civil authorities established in 2002 the **Umoza Children's Program** for the rehabilitation and repatriation of these children found living on the streets of Mzuzu.

Today the **Umoza Children's Program**, in partnership with Kindernothilfe (KNH), a German children's aid NGO, uses a child rights approach in the provision of sustainable opportunities for vulnerable and marginalized children to develop their full potential, through their right to provision, protection, and participation. The program operating out of four drop-in centres, situated in four of the largest townships in the city, reaches out, not only to children condemned to street life, but to their siblings, guardians and the community.

Six hundred and thirty-six boys and girls are registered. Five hundred and twenty children are fully supported and integrated back into the primary school system. Fifty one have gone on to boarding secondary schools. In 2013 two boys having completed the MSCE exams, qualified to sit the University entrance exam. The focus of the program has moved from the care of the individual child found on the street, to the empowerment of the 'family unit' to address the underlying issues leading to family break-up.

'Community' representatives are involved in the management of the drop-in centres and the on-going development of sustainable opportunities for the children's development. Guardians participate, through guardian support groups, in improved care of their children. Guardians are offered training in positive parenting; literacy classes; self-help groups;



income generation initiatives; training in child protection and child rights. The program champions child rights and is the lead organization in the promotion of child rights and child protection among Community Based Organisations providing care for orphans and vulnerable children in Mzuzu and its environs.

Children, migrating to the streets of Mzuzu, from other districts of Malawi are with the support of the police victims support group; social welfare; and the juvenile justice forum encouraged and assisted in repatriation to their home community. Prior to repatriation each child is assigned a social worker, who hears the child's story; contacts the child's community; ensures that their immediate physical, medical and psychological needs are provided for. The social worker accompanies the child to their home; advocates on their behalf, facilitating reconciliation within the family and acceptance by the community. Where available children and their families are linked to services within their districts for further support.

The **Umoza Children's Program**, through its integration into the life of the community, offers more and more vulnerable children the opportunity of a bright 'TODAY' which opens up the possibility of an even brighter 'TOMORROW'.



Saint John of God Brothers

Hospitality Care Compassion Dignity Excellence Justice Respect Trust

In fulfilment of Christ's command to care for the sick, Luke 10:9, today's **Hospitallers of Saint John of God** include as well as the Brothers, all those laity who help us fulfil Christ's mission of healing in the world. Our mission is to bring Christ's healing, love and compassion to suffering humanity through Hospitality in the manner of Saint John of God

Pray that John's vision of a more compassionate world may never die.

**Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God, Provincial Curia,
Granada House, Stillorgan, Co Dublin**
Tel: 00353 1277 1495
provincial.secretary@sjog.ie

WWW.SJOG.IE

NET MINISTRIES



NET stands for **National Evangelisation Teams**. We are Catholic Missionaries who share Jesus' gospel message with young people in a team format.

NET Ministries Ireland encourages young people to love Jesus and embrace the life of the Church. NET came to Ireland in 2004 and now recruits and trains teams to evangelise to over 20,000 youth every year in churches, schools, parishes, and dioceses across Ireland and within the Paisley and Glasgow dioceses of Scotland.

NET's mission, to encourage young people to love Jesus and embrace the life of the Church, is accomplished by:

- Proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus through a personal witness of faith
- Inviting young people to live for Jesus
- Forming young people in Christian character through the study and practice of our faith

- Equipping youth workers and young adults with the ministry skills needed for evangelisation

During his papacy, Pope John Paul II called for the youth to minister to the youth. Young people have a desire to share their faith and are stepping out by volunteering to share the gospel message with everyone they encounter and, in turn, young people are also waiting to be encountered. In this generation, the youth are hidden behind a screen and don't have the opportunity to experience anything different from what their immediate peers post on a newsfeed. NET provides an opportunity for young people to meet both of these desires: to give and also to receive on a personal level, to receive true friendship centered on an encounter with Jesus.



In spite of the town seeming small with nothing too exciting going on, my time as a missionary with NET in Delvin has been not just well spent, but amazing.

The five of us on team work with Fr. Seamus, the local parish priest of Delvin, to put on lots of events on for the youth here, stuff that I only wish was going on in my town when I was growing up; weekly youth groups (for each secondary and older primary students), weekly music sessions and youth masses every second week. We also just finished up with our Confirmation students last month and were able to journey with them as they began to make the Catholic faith their own. Watching them and praying for them as they received the Holy Spirit was such a beautiful and powerful experience.

There are so many different things - big and small - about my experiences here that have made this year so inspiring and beautiful, too many to count! In a town of about 500 people, there are so many young in Delvin who are willing to give up their free time from school so as to learn more about Jesus and grow in their relationship with Him; even some of these spend an extra night of their week with us so as to receive training on how to lead the youth group after our year on NET finishes! The young people here continue to inspire me in my own faith and I can only thank God for them.

One of the most amazing things I have witnessed is the faith of an 18 year old, who decided last year that he wanted to become Catholic. Every week for the past 5 months, my team member I would meet with him to teach him in the faith and to pray with him, doing our best to journey with him and to help him in any way we can.

But it's amazing how much Jesus has used us in the hour that we have with him every week – his desire to follow Jesus seems to grow even stronger every time we see him, so much so that now he's trying to get to mass every day for Lent! God is no doubt at work in his heart and ours!

Anthony.



TRINITY COLLEGE
The University of Dublin

Irish School of Ecumenics

The Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College Dublin.

The Irish School of Ecumenics is a cross-border, graduate institute in Trinity College Dublin, located in both Dublin and in Belfast, committed to the study and promotion of dialogue, conflict resolution, peace and reconciliation in Ireland and worldwide. The approach of ISE is thoroughly interdisciplinary, in its three taught M.Phil. courses and in its range of Ph.D. topics – thirty students are currently doing doctoral research in such interdisciplinary fields as politics, sociology, ethics, theology and interreligious studies. ISE's courses are internationally renowned for their innovative curriculum, embracing theoretical and contextually based research. Such research is at the heart of ISE, where students engage with crucial issues facing governments, international bodies such as the U.N., faith leaders, NGOs and peace organisations in an ill-divided yet increasingly cosmopolitan world. ISE currently runs three M.Phil. taught courses, two in Dublin and one in Belfast (these may be taken alternatively at diploma level) and an Evening Diploma in Conflict & Dispute Resolution Studies.

M. Phil. in Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies (IT & IS) - Dublin: this course promises a rigorous and challenging time of study in an increasingly significant field that has emerged from theological and religious studies scholarship. Drawing on the school's traditional strengths in ecumenics, IT & IS offers course participants a critical grasp of theoretical and practical issues involved in understanding inter-religious and inter-cultural realities.

M. Phil. In International Peace Studies (IPS) - Dublin: Ireland has gained a strong international reputation for peace studies. ISE's International Peace Studies (IPS) course, regarded as pioneer in worldwide terms, is the longest-running of its kind on the island. Courses take account of perspectives from political theory, human rights, development and gender studies, and from conflict analysis and resolution processes. Our students are immersed in a forefront course of study that examines the causes and consequences of war and armed conflict, but so also in research on the resources and norms for, effective, ethical and sustainable peace building policies.

M.Phil. in Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation (CRR) - Belfast: this course provides unique and unparalleled opportunities to learn about conflict transformation in the class-room and through varied community encounter and civic engagement opportunities. It combines taught modules, experiential modules, and independent research. The course is designed to suit the needs of specialists already working in the fields of conflict resolution and reconciliation, those new to the study of conflict resolution and reconciliation and those seeking to build towards a career in this field. Some modules are offered in week-long intensive blocks to accommodate the needs of busy professionals.

Diploma in Conflict and Dispute Resolution Studies (CDRS) - Dublin: This evening course examines the causes of conflict in corporate, statutory, voluntary, political, and community-based settings and provides training in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes such as adjudication, facilitation, ombudsmanship and mediation, and addresses internationally significant commissions and tribunals on post-conflict justice. Through an alliance with Mediation Forum-Ireland those who complete the CDRS course will have an

opportunity to have their names included in the relevant specialist panel of Accredited Mediators. The course is also accredited by the Mediators' Institute of Ireland. The course enjoys a twelve year success record.

Graduates include trade unionists, members of the Garda Síochána, lawyers, senior policy makers in human resources and industrial relations, civil and public servants, members of the Probation Services and NGO leaders. Teaching takes place from September to April. There are two sessions (six hours) per week over 24 weeks, and two Saturday workshops.

Opportunities for ISE students and graduates:

These courses attract students from every continent and during their time at ISE they have the opportunity to interact with established international scholars, leaders and diplomats in these fields. Students develop their capacity to think analytically and about some of the most pressing issues of our world, in an environment that values multicultural perspectives, intellectual rigour, creativity and best practice.

These competencies provide a solid foundation for a range of career and service opportunities. ISE graduates, at every level of society, help to shape public policy, and motivate others by their imaginative leadership. They are employed in a wide range of fields, including: the diplomatic service, international organisations such as the UN, NGOs, as workers in health, education, the media, and in church and community based organisations. Others continue to Ph.D. and higher research. Furthermore, their studies at ISE often prove a catalyst for change both personally and professionally.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

M.Phil. students can study full-time for 12 months or part-time for 24 months.

The Master in Conflict Resolution will be delivered through short-block intensive modules.

Full details about these courses or all relevant closing are available at the following websites:
www.tcd.ie/ise/; www.tcd.ie/Graduate_Studies.

To apply on line – please refer to:
www.tcd.ie/ise/_study/apply/

Applications will be considered after the closing dates only if places remain available.

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My Story DEO MWANJE

My name is Deo Mwanje. I am from Uganda and I would like to share my life story.



I was born in Uganda, deep down in the village, about 100 miles from the city centre of Kampala. I have one mother who came to Uganda alone at the age of 14, as a refugee. She ran away from the first genocide that was occurred in 1940 in Rwanda. My father had been a successful man with 300 acres of land and a friend of Haile Selassie but he lost everything during the Civil War. Having only one mother and one father is very unusual in Uganda as we exist in extended families and if you have trouble with a parent, you go to your Aunt or Uncle for advice or help. My Mum and Dad were not married, they lived together for some time but separated when I was about 7 years. I lived sometimes with my Mum and sometimes with my Dad. It was quite challenging as my Dad was an alcoholic and introduced me to alcohol when I was very young. My Mum had her own difficulties.

I remember the day my Dad told me to go to school. I was 10 years old. He said, "go to school and I will bring the tuition fee". I went to school for a whole year but my Dad never turned up to pay my tuition, so I had to leave. I went to another school, 10 miles away, leaving early to walk there each day. My father told me the same thing -go to school and tell them I will bring the tuition. I didn't think that I was lying to these teachers because I believed my father would pay the tuition as he had said, but he never turned up. If one school chased me away, I had to find another one, so I attended 4 different schools. When I was in school, I was taught to sew banana leaves to use as wrapping paper and I sold these banana leaves in the market to earn money to buy my books and pencils. I was very bright in school so the teachers were very patient with me but after 4 years, I now had a problem of the debt from all the schools in my surrounding area. Each school was within a 10 mile radius, so I would often meet

“Having only one mother and one father is very unusual in Uganda as we exist in extended families and if you have trouble with a parent, you go to your Aunt or Uncle for advice or help.”

the teachers and they would say to me “how come your Dad has money to drink alcohol but he has no money to pay our tuition?”. This was very difficult for me because I desperately wanted to be in school but the teachers demanded money and I could do nothing about that.

I became angry with the world - angry that I had only one Mum and a Dad who was an alcoholic, so when I was 14, I decided to join the army. I heard you got to use a gun and I wanted to scare all the people who were mean to me and demanded money from me. There was a truck that would come to my village and recruit children to be soldiers so I made my way towards it with the intention of enrolling but I got there too late and it had already left. I had to find something else to do, as there were no longer any schools in the area that I could attend and I wanted to get away from my village. I met a man who came to the village to find children to work for him in the city.

Continued on pg. 25



Sheridan Stained Glass

Sheridan Stained Glass has over 30 years experience specialising in the conservation, restoration, preservation and protection of stained glass windows. Our skilled team of artists and craftsmen are well versed in the traditional techniques of stained glass creation which places us in a unique position as regards the conservation and preservation of historic stained glass windows.

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Parish of Drumlish & Ballinamuck.

This parish, wedged between two great learning institutions – St. Mel’s College, Longford and Moyne Community School (formerly Moyne Latin School) has a long history of missionary involvement. Many priests, sisters, brothers and lay people left these parts to bring the Gospel to the four corners of the earth and continue to do so to this day. Its wonderful that the Missions Handbook will reflect the faith, courage and generosity of these people and the families who supported them. In these more challenging times we recall the Russian proverb: “There is more light than can be seen through a window”. The Missions Handbook recalls that ray of light and urges us again to “go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News”.



St. Mary's Drumlish St. Patrick's Ballinamuck

www.drumlishparish.ie

My Story

DEO MWANJE

The man gave me the address where I could find him in the Capital City (Kampala) and I had to work very hard to get the money to pay for my transport there. I made the journey by bus at 14 years old and it was the first time I have travelled in a vehicle. I remember the experience - I'd never seen anything like this - the trees were chasing me from the fields, I felt dizzy with the movement.

I came to the city with a great focus - I wanted to work hard and earn money but most of all I wanted to buy a bicycle. The reason being was the richest man in our village owned the only bicycle - it was very rare to see a car.

When I came to the city, I had many experiences. I knew nobody but the man who had come to our village. I went to work for him, selling food on the streets. The food would be baked at home and placed in a basket that I would carry around the city on my head. When all of your goods were sold, you would return to have the basket refilled. I worked very hard for this man but I wanted to save my money for a bicycle and I knew nothing about banking, so asked the man to keep my money safe for me. I saw people with sandals and I wanted to buy myself a pair but I did not have the money. One day I found a red right foot sandal and I took it home, hoping that one day I would find its match. Eventually I did find a blue sandal but unfortunately it was for the same foot! I was 16 before I had my first pair of shoes.

I worked from 7am to 5pm. Whatever was baked and put in the basket, had to be sold. It depended on the connections you made and who you knew would buy the produce. After about 2 years, I thought I must have enough money to buy a bicycle and I had plans to travel home to my village to look for my father who I understood was now homeless and my mother who I had not seen nor had any contact with in all that time. I went to the man and asked him for my money. He said I could have it in a few days. A week later I asked him again and got the same reply. The third time I asked him he grabbed me by my clothes and told me if I ever asked him for my money again, he would kill me and throw me in the ditch. I knew this man was capable of what he said because I had seen him with a gun and he was one of the Idi Amin soldiers, so I had no choice but to leave. I ended up living on the street.

I lived with various groups who did drugs and slept in ditches and abandoned buildings. I had to learn how to protect myself and how to survive. I became a street

fighter to earn money. I used drugs - sniffed petrol, marujana - this was a weed that grew everywhere so it was a cheap drug. One day the city council tried to arrest me and I beat them up. I was taken to court and put in prison for one month. I was 17 years old. It was a horrible experience. They made us work from 7am to 4pm - using our hands to dig the land- your hands would be cut and bleeding every day. I was brought back to court after one month but for some reason they released me - possibly because of my age - 17 year olds were not supposed to be taken to the National Prison.

“My father was a Catholic and I never knew what my mother believed so we were not a religious family and had never even spoken about prayer”

When I left prison, all I wanted to do was commit suicide. I couldn't go home to my village because I was so ashamed that I had no money and I had been in prison. I returned to the gym where I had trained to be a street fighter but I did not return to my friends as I knew they would try to stop me from killing myself. I chose to isolate myself and plotted my suicide.

I was sleeping alone in an abandoned house one night when I had a dream that would change my life. I dreamt I saw a moving star, coming towards me - it became so bright that I could no longer look at it. I covered my face and suddenly a voice spoke to me. I had a wound on my right foot since childhood and it started to itch. The voice said, why don't you remove the upper skin and find out what is itching inside you? I questioned it, why would I remove the skin of a wound that is healing, but I started to remove the skin anyway and as I did, a cobra appeared out of my foot and went to attack me. I was terrified but as a child, I did not receive comfort when I was scared or upset so to make myself strong, I had made up the name Butterfly Kilometre Screw Spanner Unadjustable. I had vowed never to be adjusted.

Continued on pg. 26

Columbans Ireland



The Society takes its name from St Columban, Ireland's missionary to Europe in the 6th century.

It was first known as the Maynoth Mission to China and was formally launched in 1918 as a missionary society of diocesan priests.

This was something unique, as until then all such movements were religious congregations. They found others who embraced their vision and the first Columbans went to China in 1920, to meet the challenges of its language and culture and to share the suffering of its poor.

To find out more about what we do, or to subscribe to our newsletter, please visit our website.

Contact Us
St Columban's, Dalgan Park, Navan Co Meath, Ireland
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My Story

DEO MWANJE

The voice said to me, “Why don’t you pray in Jesus’ name and ask him to remove the cobra?”. I knew nothing about prayer or Jesus. My father was a Catholic and I never knew what my mother believed so we were not a religious family and had never even spoken about prayer. So I replied to the voice, what should I do? The voice said, pray to Jesus to remove the cobra. So I closed my eyes and shouted Jesus, pulling the head of the cobra off my foot - I fell from one side of the house to the other. It was very dark. I woke up from the dream and it was as though the cobra had just come out of my foot. While I sat there, one side of the room became bright and Jesus appeared to me and said “I have set you free, now you can follow me” and started to walk in front of me. I got up and began to walk after him but he went through the wall and I hit my head trying to follow him!

I had taken drugs in the past but I hadn’t taken any that night so I was very scared. I started to think about the cobra and about Jesus. If a real cobra had been in my foot I would have been dead. Also, I did not think Jesus could be serious - why would he ask me to follow him through a wall that he knows I cannot walk through? So I spent the night wondering what to do, crying and shaking with fear and confusion.

In Uganda there is a market place where all the street kids come to steal food. I had met a lady there named Jolli who was very kind to me and often gave me food for free. I did not know why Jolli was so nice to me. She was the only friend I had. Jolli is still my friend today and is a Pastor in Uganda.

The following day I sought out Jolli to tell her about my dream. When I did, she started crying and she said Deo, I am a christian - all my life I have prayed to see Jesus but I have never seen him. Maybe Jesus is the one who removed the cobra from you. If it was really Jesus, why would he leave through the wall where I could not follow? I asked. Maybe God is trying to tell you something, said Jolli. You need to get down on your knees and say to Jesus, If you are real, take me where I can find you. That seemed very simple so I said out loud, “Jesus, if you are real, tell me where I can find you”. Many days past and every day I would say these words. Then one day, I heard a voice tell me to walk down a road. When I got to the crossroads, I asked “where should I go”, but the voice had disappeared. As I stood there, I heard music coming from the church so I entered and experienced an amazing feeling of peace. I stayed to listen to the preacher who spoke about God and love and



forgiveness. I had been rejected my whole life so struggled to understand what love was. My mother beat me because of what my father did to her and I never understood why I deserved this. I knew nothing of love but I could feel it in the church that day.

After the service, the preacher invited us to give our lives to Jesus Christ. I went straight up to the top of the church to the Administrator and told him my story. He was shocked but prayed for me to receive Christ. The next day, I did not know what to do with myself. I had never felt peace like this before and I wanted to share it with all the other street kids. I went back out to the street and started preaching what I had heard in the church: God is Love, God is Forgiveness. I tried to persuade boys to come to church. While I preached, people would give me food and some even gave me money so I never had to steal again. I found out that when you preach, good things come to you!

It was a means of survival at first but the people I preached to started to come to church. Each time the Pastor would say, how did you hear of us/who sent you and they would reply Pastor Deo sent us. Very few people knew me at the church and my English was not very good. One day, a new couple came to the church and said that I had sent them. A Canadian missionary by the name of Paul Mahon was new to Ethiopia and asked them where is this Pastor Deo? They pointed to me. I did not know what to do so I tried to run out of the church but the missionary had seen me. He sent some ushers to find me and to find out where I was living. A young man came and asked if he could walk home with me but I was still living rough, so I said no. When I came to church the following Sunday, this man told me Paul Mahon wants to know where you stay. I had to tell him, honestly, I don’t have anywhere to live. So Paul Mahon said ‘I have a free house - why don’t you leave where you are and come

and live with me’. Communication was a problem at the beginning because I did not speak English but he found a lady to teach me to read and write and I learned a lot. Paul Mahon became my family. I continued to preach in the market place and on the streets and live with Paul and after one year my English was good enough to enter Bible School.

I went there and failed the interview because I just didn’t have what it takes. Paul fought for me and told them if

I live here. The 3rd place is called Kosovo - named for the similar gangland warfare that took place in Russia. The 4th place is called Monaku - which means a place of great disadvantage. Long ago the King put all the poor people in this area. And so I went to work.

In June 2001 I planted my first church. We started with 3 people. It was a very difficult time. 50 metres from the church there was a witchcraft shrine and many people believed in witchcraft. We met many witch doctors but



I didn’t make it after one year, they could drop me from the school. He knew I was a passionate evangelist. So I worked very hard and got my Diploma in Theology. It was a turning point in my life and in 2000 I was invited to preach in Amsterdam by Billy Graham. When I came back from Amsterdam, my pastor said, now is the time for you to go and plant your own church. I did not feel ready to do this. I am not a Pastor, I’m an Evangelist. Please do not get rid of me and I did not want to leave the only family I knew. I felt very bad at the thought of leaving but Paul said it was time for me to go. I had been a Christian for 10 years.

Paul Mahon had said to me, look at the gifts God has given you. What can you do with these gifts to show God your thanks. What do you need to serve the Lord? I found out I needed four things to serve the Lord: I need something to eat, I need clothes and I need somewhere to live. Paul said, I know God will always make sure you have those simple things.


I was taken to four slum areas where I would plant my church. The name of the first place was Lusaze - meaning death has struck another one - it comes from the killings by Idi Amin. Years ago they had nowhere to bury all the dead bodies so they put them in this place. Whenever the tractor would come with the dead bodies, the dwellers would say - ‘death has struck another one’. The 2nd place was called A Place of Holy Guns - it is a place to go when you are a criminal or need to go underground - hooligans

from growing up on the street, I had the courage to fight back. Paul Mahon visited me and said, Deo, I’m not scared of where you go - I know you can make this work. He left Uganda for Canada soon afterwards and I never saw him again.

In front of the church was a garbage dump and when I saw the kids picking through the food, I remembered how life had been for me on the street. When I was on the street, I was a problem to everyone but I was treasured in God’s hands. I realised I had to help these children and the organisation Treasured Kids was born. Treasured Kids currently reaches out to over 600 children. We have an Orphanage, an Early Child Development Programme, a Child Sponsorship Programme and a Youth Development Programme, as well as a church with 400 adult and 700 child members. With the guns who I led to the church from this community, we have planted another 5 churches in other slums in the city.

So from the humble beginnings, that is where we are. I credit all this work to Paul Mahon and his compassion and love for me.

www.deoministries.org
PO Box 3689, Kampala
Tel: 0312513385



St. Patrick's Missionary Society



We are an International Missionary Society, with over 80 years of practical experience at the centre of life in twelve different developing countries in Africa, South America and the Caribbean. Our task is to reveal Jesus Christ and his Gospel to those who do not know him.

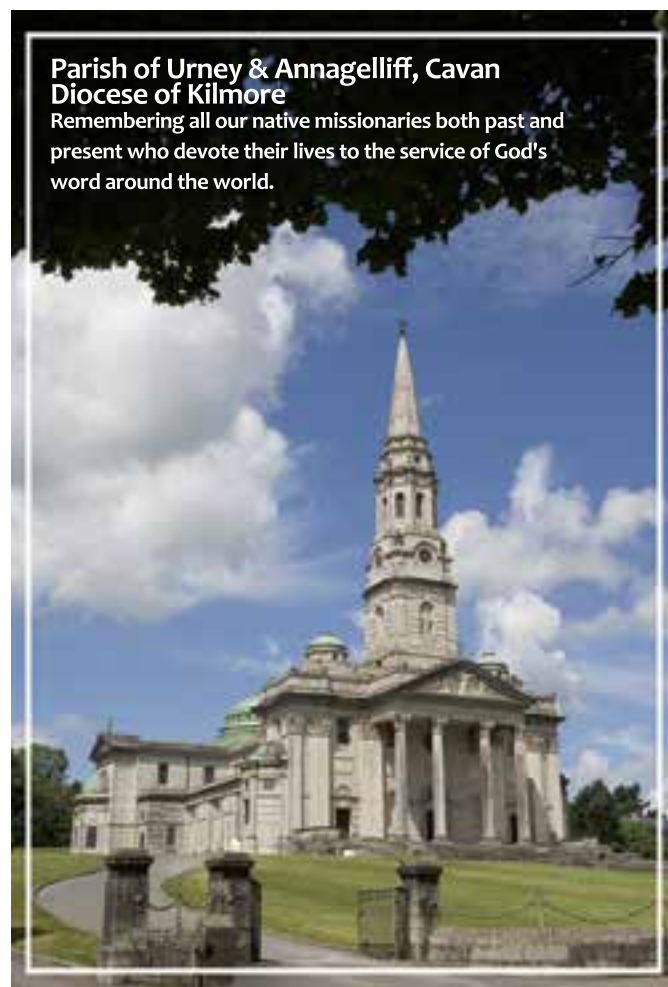
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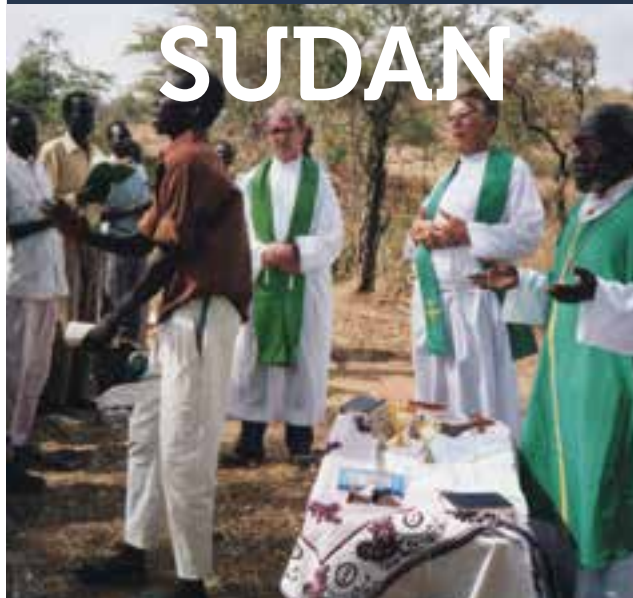
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Parish of Urney & Annagelliff, Cavan Diocese of Kilmore
Remembering all our native missionaries both past and present who devote their lives to the service of God's word around the world.

BRINGING HOPE IN WAR-TORN



SUDAN

The Kiltegan Fathers, also known as St Patrick's Missionary Society, were founded in 1932 and began their work in Nigeria. They now work in fourteen countries, including eight in Africa.

In 1983 a group of Kiltegan Fathers moved into the south of Sudan at the invitation of Bishop Paride Taban, of the Diocese of Torit. It was a very poor area, that had been devastated in the First Civil War which lasted from 1955 to 1972. The hope was to bring the Good News, and health care and education, to very disadvantaged people. As it turned out the Second Sudan Civil War had broken out a few weeks before they arrived. So from the outset the group found themselves in a difficult and dangerous situation. However they stayed there throughout the war, in solidarity with the people.

It was therefore very exciting when the Civil War ended in 2005. And even more so in 2011 when, after a referendum, the south of the country became independent of the north, and the Republic of South Sudan was born, the world's youngest state. The discovery of oil brought the promise of prosperity, which would be needed for the rebuilding of the nation after the ravages of war.

Sadly on December 15, 2013, fighting broke out among soldiers in Juba, the capital of South Sudan. Since then the south has teetered on the brink of civil war. NGOs, the United Nations and many embassies have evacuated their workers for safety. The Kiltegan Fathers, along with many other missionaries, have chosen to stay with the people, as they did throughout the earlier conflict. Their presence there is a tangible sign of hope for a people who face despair. The motto of the Society is 'Christ's love compels us.' Missionaries are still willing to risk their lives for the Gospel. *Fr. Tim Redmond*

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Comhlámh (pronounced co-law-ve) means solidarity; it is the Association of Volunteers and Development Workers.

It was founded in 1975 by Irish people returning to Ireland having served on a voluntary basis in a whole array of roles such as nurses, doctors, carpenters and teachers in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Over the years it has developed to include new communities living in Ireland and those working here for local and global justice. Comhlámh helps members to stay engaged in raising understanding of issues of global justice and has campaigned on issues to do with Apartheid, Aid, Debt, Refugees and global Trade.

As an Association, we promote responsible international volunteering through a Code of Good Practice. It is a set of standards for organisations involved in facilitating international volunteer placements in countries of the Global South. The focus is to ensure overseas volunteering has a positive impact for the three main stakeholders: the volunteer, the sending agency, and the local project and community. We currently have 40 Irish volunteer sending organisations signed up to it. Between them they sent over 2,000 volunteers in 2012 from Ireland. We work with these organisations to support them in their work and ensure their practices integrate good practice in volunteering. Comhlámh's Volunteer Charter is a guide for people volunteering overseas. It sets out seven principles that aim to encourage responsible responsive volunteering. By signing the charter volunteers show their support for the principles set out.

As part of our work we run courses to help people explore their motivations and expectations of becoming a volunteer, we also run courses on global development issues to help people see the interconnectedness of our world and help them get involved in action for change.

We are the voice for returned volunteers and development workers ensuring that their social welfare rights are protected while providing the necessary support service to help people overcome challenges of coming home and settling back in, and also continuing to stay engaged with issues here in Ireland.

We are a member led organisation with various groups coming together to work on key global development issues. Our Trade Justice group which has worked for years on unfair trading rules and is preparing to lobby MEP candidates during the 2014 European elections on fairer trade relations between Europe and Africa. Another very prominent group is our Focus Magazine group who have been busy producing Ireland's leading magazine on global issues with 93 issues to date. **See the advert in this publication and sign-on to receive a copy.**

As a membership organisation we are enabled to challenge the root causes of injustice and inequality – globally and locally. Some of our most pro-active times in Comhlámh were during some of society's worst. Comhlámh was a beehive of activity against apartheid in the 1980's and the centre of much refugee solidarity work in the 1990's. Today with Climate Change likely to have very serious consequences for all of us on this planet, Comhlámh's work is not yet done.

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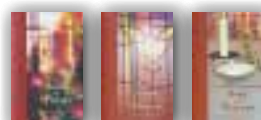


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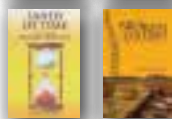
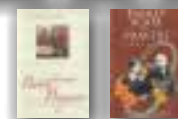
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Mission as Interfaith Dialogue

REFLECTIONS FROM NORTHERN NIGERIA

“THE GROWING
NEED TO REPLACE
CONFLICT WITH
PEACE”

Paper presented at the Conference on
Mission Today and Tomorrow,
All Hallows College, Gracepark Road,
Drumcondra, Dublin, 5th – 6th June 2013

Kathleen McGarvey, OLA

Undoubtedly, many of us here may be very interested in all that is going on in Nigeria either because we hold this country close to our heart having worked there or because of all we hear on the news about religiously framed terrorism, ethnic and religious riots, insecurity, corruption and what not, all bad news! There is a lot of good news that could be told about Nigeria, a country with a population of about 160 million with Christianity and Islam being the major religions, neither religion predominating at national level. Nigeria is divided into 36 states, nineteen of these forming what we call Northern Nigeria, where the majority tribe is Hausa Fulani of whom at least 98% are Muslim. In the north there are numerous other minority indigenous tribes as well as many members of non-indigenous tribes who are Christian. This religious and ethnic configuration is an important detail since it is in fact the focus for the contestations, claims and counterclaims that are at the root of much of the conflict there.

Continued on page 36



The Churches are in the Diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise.

Gowna church (top) was built in 1903 and
Mullinalaghta (below) in 1939.

The parish has the unusual distinction of having
Gowna church in Co Cavan in the Province of
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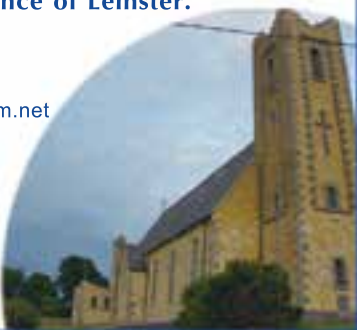
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St James', Carracastle



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*In thanksgiving for contribution of Irish
Missionaries in the past. In prayerful
solidarity with the Irish Missionaries
of today.*



St Joseph's, Rooskey



Like most Africans, Nigerians are deeply religious people. In their daily lives, most Nigerian Muslims and Christians live together in peace most of the time, many are friends, some are intermarried, most work, study and play together on a daily basis, sharing life as human beings in a multi-religious society must do. However, taken together with other forms of inter-communal violence among various groups and ideologues in Nigeria, tension between Christians and Muslims has cost the country tens of thousands of innocent lives¹. In recent times, the very real insecurity threat caused by the growing presence and terrorist tactics of the so-called Boko haram, which is an umbrella term for a franchise of political, religious and economically motivated interests, and the concurrent government response of excessive military force to supposedly counter this insurgency, add an even more preoccupying dimension to mission in Nigeria today.

However, the aim of this presentation is not to explain Nigeria's problems, but rather to reflect, with Nigeria as a case study, on why and how the Church must give priority in its missionary endeavours to situations of conflict so as to be an agent of peace, to 'replace conflict with peace' as the title given to me for this presentation states. I discuss briefly the relationship between four issues: mission, development, conflict and peace, and without going into any great details about it, I believe the logical link between these is and must be dialogue as a necessary path of mission. I give a brief

overview of the causes of conflict in Nigeria and then go on to highlight some challenges involved in peacebuilding today. Most of what I say is a result of my reflections as I work in dialogue, particularly with women, in the very complex conflict situation in northern Nigeria. I conclude with some recommendations for us as Irish missionaries as we look back at our past and move forward within our new reality as Church. It is my privilege to have with me as my co-presenter at this Conference, my colleague in dialogue, Amina Kazaure, who is the Muslim Coordinator of our Women's Interfaith Council in Kaduna.

Relationship between Mission, Development, Conflict & Peace

Let me say that conflict cannot be replaced; it can be managed. Conflict is an inevitable part of life and it can be managed negatively (through violence in one form or another) or positively, transformed into something life giving, that is, it can be transformed into peace. Peace is not the absence of conflict or of war. By and large it is 'that situation of justice and rightly ordered social relations that is marked by respect for the rights of others, that provides favourable conditions for integral human growth, and that allows citizens to live out their lives to the full in calm and joyful development'². Since conflict in Nigeria, as in so many other parts of the world, takes on a religious colour, or religion is a strong factor in much of the conflict experienced, then religion must be part of the transformation process.

Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* tells us that mission, which is the responsibility of every baptised person, "is to further the progress of poorer nations and international social justice, as well as help less developed nations to contribute to their own development" (n.5). Obviously our mission as Church cannot be reduced to development, as though the two were synonymous, but our mission, to be a sign and an instrument of Communion, obliges us to be concerned for the joys, hopes, griefs and anxieties of all people (*Gaudium et Spes* 1), especially the poor and those in underdeveloped countries, and to be actively involved in changing this situation. Similarly, working for peace is an inherent part of mission and of this we are very much reminded this year as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris*.

Does peace come from development or development come from peace is a question I often ask myself. In Northern

Nigeria, where we work for peace and the promotion of women, we continuously remind citizens that we must live in peace if we want social security and development and we tell our government that there will be no peace unless there is justice and transparent accountable leadership. We seem to be contradicting ourselves: telling the people to live in peace and simultaneously telling the government that people will not live in peace unless there are the basic indices of development. The result of violence is that lives are lost, homes and businesses are destroyed, industries are closed down, money meant for development of social infrastructure is poured into security measures, possible investors are turned off, and among the people unemployment increases, the cycle of poverty continues, grievances increase and again violence erupts. As they say, violence begets violence and this is so true. Much rhetoric surrounds the term 'development' in government discourse with respect to both international and national funds but little visible development results and certainly there is no real strategy to key in citizen participation in production and improving their own lives by means of infrastructure. Instead, corruption is a part of daily life, politics is an economic affair, there is impunity in leadership, elections are tampered with, public funds are swindled, public educational

As a missionary I am automatically identified with a religious community and thus I cannot be impartial to the conflict: whether I like it or not, I am involved.

and health facilities barely function, roads are treacherous, there are little or no employment opportunities, the vast youth population is left idle and hopeless, and violence erupts. And so the cycle continues, and religion is very much a part of it, either because the poor have nowhere else to find hope or because the easiest way to gain political favour, or to heighten insecurity and make money out of security, is to play the religious or ethnic card. Development and peace are Siamese twins and which of the two comes first and is

more dependent on the other is a hypothetical question. As Paul VI said in *Populorum Progressio*, "Development is another name for Peace" (n.27) and equally we might say underdevelopment or poverty is another name for conflict. In all of this, religion is embroiled, as a factor that is close to people's hearts and thus, while it has the potential to be a moral authority, a prophetic voice, a conscientious and organized instrument of positive change, it can be and is so easily manipulated for evil.

As a missionary it would make little logical sense for me, in a situation such as Nigeria, to plan or work for development without considering the damages and setbacks brought about by conflict and violence. It would equally make little sense for me to think that I can call peace from the sky unless I am concerned for the issues of poverty, underdevelopment and injustice that are at the basis of the conflicts which are too often expressed violently and along religious lines. Conflict and underdevelopment go hand in hand. Hence, to be engaged in development and not challenge the issues of injustice which are at the heart of the grievances which sometimes are expressed in violence, is rather irrational.

Furthermore, as a missionary I am automatically identified with a religious community and thus I cannot be impartial to the conflict: whether I like it or not, I am involved. The issues causing the conflict may not be religious in themselves but they so often result in a polarization along religious lines; hence, as a 'religious' person I am involved. I can continue in my teaching or nursing or running my parish, but one way or the other I must either promote prejudices against other religious groups, be passive and say nothing either for or against (however silence is often the greatest violence), or I can promote openness and forgiveness. Whatever I do, I am doing something. It is simply not possible to do nothing – impartiality is not possible. Personally, I see this as an obligation to do something positive: to be involved as one promoting reconciliation, dialogue and peace.

Causes of Conflict in Nigeria

Many Nigerians are very critical of the colonial enterprise and see that so much of the suffering endured today is a legacy inherited from that phase of history. The well known Scramble for Africa resulted in the formation of many colonial states and the eventual post-independent African nations which we have today.

Continued on page 39

¹ Toyin Falola: *Violence In Nigeria: The Crisis of Religious Politics and Secular Ideologies* (University of Rochester Press. 1998); *Nigeria: Violence Fuelled By Impunity* (Human Rights Watch Report. London. May 22, 2005).

² Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Religions for Peace: A Call for Solidarity to the Religions of the World*, Darton-Longman-Todd, London 2002, 1.

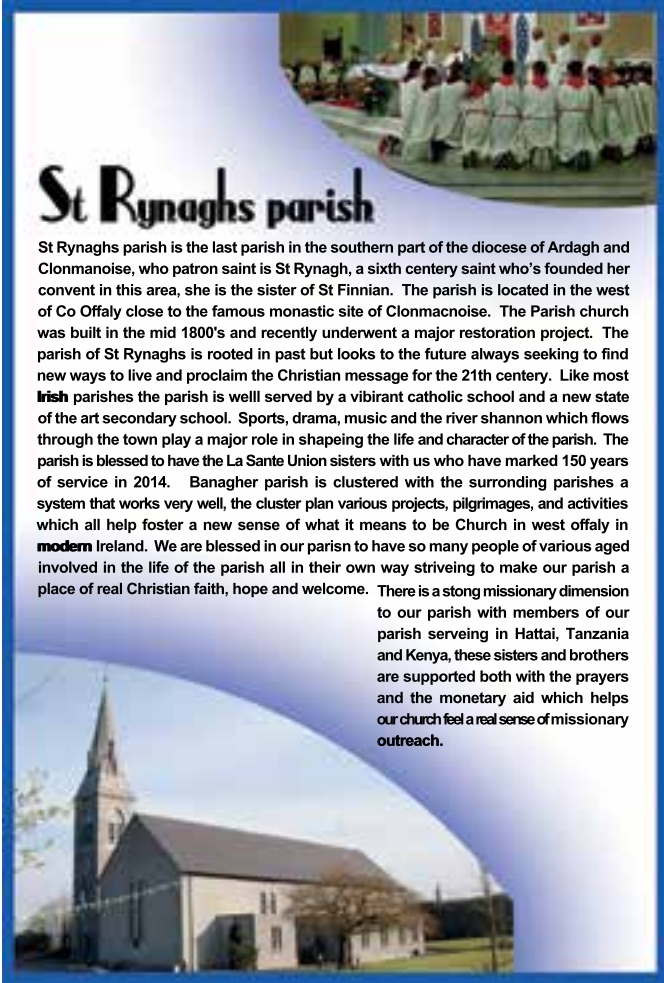
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St Rynaghs parish

St Rynaghs parish is the last parish in the southern part of the diocese of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise, who patron saint is St Rynagh, a sixth centery saint who's founded her convent in this area, she is the sister of St Finnian. The parish is located in the west of Co Offaly close to the famous monastic site of Clonmacnoise. The Parish church was built in the mid 1800's and recently underwent a major restoration project. The parish of St Rynaghs is rooted in past but looks to the future always seeking to find new ways to live and proclaim the Christian message for the 21th centery. Like most **Irish** parishes the parish is welll served by a vibrant catholic school and a new state of the art secondary school. Sports, drama, music and the river shannon which flows through the town play a major role in shapeing the life and character of the parish. The parish is blessed to have the La Sante Union sisters with us who have marked 150 years of service in 2014. Banagher parish is clustered with the surrounding parishes a system that works very well, the cluster plan various projects, pilgrimages, and activities which all help foster a new sense of what it means to be Church in west offaly in **modern** Ireland. We are blessed in our parisin to have so many people of various aged involved in the life of the parish all in their own way striving to make our parish a place of real Christian faith, hope and welcome. There is a stong missionary dimension to our parish with members of our parish serving in Hattai, Tanzania and Kenya, these sisters and brothers are supported both with the prayers and the monetary aid which helps our church feel a real sense of missionary outreach.

The struggles most African countries are going through today of interethnic wars, broken democracies, poverty, are not at all unrelated to that sad history of slavery and colonialism. Today's neo-colonialism by way of loans, trade agreements, and so on, continues to enslave the continent. While I believe a lot of the pain in Nigeria, and other African countries, is due to internal corruption and greed especially among the elite and the leadership, itself a legacy inherited from the colonial system of country formation and the system of rule used while there, much is to be blamed on international intervention. One might say this is the real root cause and that today's conflicts are the outcome of that troubled past and today's neo-colonialism. In terms of more immediate causes of the conflict and the serious security challenges in the Northern States of Nigeria today are a variety of factors that tend to differ in emphasis, from one state to another.

These generally include economic issues and narrowing opportunities, resource-related conflicts (involving for instance land, territory, and water bodies), unequal access to political power and position among ethnic groups, the feeling of marginalization, issues around appointments into traditional leadership positions, all of which affect relationships between individuals and groups resulting in ever growing deep-seated suspicion and the inability to develop cooperative relationships. Due to overlap of ethnic identities with religion it often, unfortunately, finds expression in religion. There is growing polarization along religious fault lines in the northern states today. Many issues, including even the choice of leaders, tend to be viewed from the prism of a perceived religious divide. Religion often becomes the instrument of offence and defence; and a tool in the hands of people who utilise it to manipulate the consciousness of the people in the northern states. Furthermore, the weak adherence to the rule of law promotes impunity as well as a strong feeling of perceived injustice and helplessness from among the populace. The large pool of unskilled, unemployed and indeed unemployable youths, all of whom are ready tools for violence, drug abuse, criminality and insurgency is a major area of concern.

Radicalization of the religious space has also been a serious factor and while it is not the only reason for Boko haram, certainly the provocative and inciting preaching by some religious clerics has been instrumental in the rise of today's insurgency in the north.

Challenges in Working for Peace

Politicization of Religion

I think one of the major challenges in working for peace in northern Nigeria, and I believe it holds true for any conflict situation where religion is a major factor, is the whole politicization of religion in the complexities of the issues. When Hans Kung worked on finding a global ethics between the religions he recognized that religions have tremendous socio-political implications. Religion has a negative as well as a positive potential in society. In itself it is a social, historical and hence also political construct. I am not a political analyst but my experience in Nigeria has taught me that while the majority of the population will maintain that the problems are due to religion, and in truth the conflict in many parts does become a matter of Muslims versus Christians, the political manipulations of religion for economic and political gains is so much more intricate.

I recently watched the film Blood and Oil, about the conflict in the Niger Delta, another troubled part of Nigeria, and I was struck by the lies and manipulations that the film was able to show that lie at the root of the problems in Niger Delta; instead of being a simple matter of the international oil companies v. the local population, it is an intricate web of Mr A Politician in Nigeria and Mr B Oil dealer in Russia and Mr C Judge in England, with a lot of local oil bunkering and lies and innocent foreign workers and poor indigene citizens in between. A simple but seriously inadequate reflection that the Boko Haram issue in Northern Nigeria, seen on the surface as an attempt to Islamize Nigeria and remove all Christians from the North, and possibly initially founded on such an ideology, is in reality so much more complex. It involves so many factors including a web of lies, manipulations, economic deals, and personal interests, all not unrelated to oil in the Chad basin, the 2015 presidential elections, the money made by security agencies and their partners, and so on.

Surely, religion is a major factor in conflict situations across North Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan, but the rise of extremist groups in these places may indeed have much more to do with economic manipulations than with the views of any extremist clerics per se. Hence, a major challenge is, partly to become somewhat more street wise and politically astute, but also to remain above the superficial prejudices and stereotypes, stay firm in the belief in the transforming power of religion, and help others to do the same.

Continued on page 40

Volunteer Mission Movement (VMM)



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Role of Religions in the Interplay of God and Guns

The Scramble for Africa and the colonial enterprise were not done in God's name but certainly God's name and the superiority of Christianity were recruited into its service. Hence, I believe we have a moral responsibility to ensure that today we as Church, as missionaries, do not contribute in any way to more abuse or domination. This should not result in our being afraid to speak in God's name. Nor should it result in missionaries abandoning the wider notion of evangelisation in favour of development. Rather, I believe it obliges us to promote dialogue and to do mission in a way that is consistent with respect for the people within their culture and their religions. Inter-faith and intercultural dialogue is not an option but a necessary part of any missionary endeavour. This also obliges us to be actively engaged, through lobbying or whatever, in calling for

A major challenge I find in working in the field of dialogue and peacebuilding is that peacebuilding has in fact become an industry.

justice in international relations with the underdeveloped countries. Related to this is the responsibility we have to be careful of the way we speak of 'Africa' and mission when we seek financial aid. Only last year I heard my friend tell her eight year old son to eat his lunch and remember the hungry children in Africa! Justice in international relations demands respect much more than it demands compassion. While we missionaries, carrying the weight of our past sins and the sins of our Western nations, may be conscious of not showing any sense of superiority of religion or otherwise, the local churches have not necessarily imbibed that attitude. Hence, I think it is still very necessary to have western missionaries on the field, in so far as it is possible for us to be there, missionaries who are firm in their faith and missionary commitment but who also have a critical understanding of our past and a humble commitment not to repeat it, so as to help the local church learn from the sins of the past rather than to repeat them.

Building a Peaceful Identity as Christians

The weight of our past and the association of the Western world with Christianity, even today, is such that Muslims find it hard to believe that Christianity is a peaceful religion, a religion of morality and of right and just relations. Of course, if we consider it a matter for competition rather than for self-examination, we can say the same about Islam. But, I think it demands self-examination and hence as a missionary Church, we have a responsibility to give evermore authentic witness if we are to redeem our name. In Kaduna as in some

other parts of Northern Nigeria, a typical characteristic is that issues tend to be viewed from the prism of a perceived religious divide and religion easily becomes the instrument of offence and defence. When trouble erupts, as for example in the post-election violence of April 2011, it becomes a full blown Muslim v Christian war. Many Christians, even leaders, insist that any harm done by Christians to Muslims is as a result of self-defence, retaliation attacks for offences suffered and thus is considered somehow less deserving of criticism. Self-defence is given a very wide definition: if Christians are killed in one part of the city, to kill Muslims in another part is 'self-defence' since it is only in this way that 'they will stop killing us'. The point I want to draw our attention to is the readiness of Christians to turn to violence, even if in the name of so-called self-defence. To work for Peace in such a situation demands educating people

and helping them to find non-violent ways of defending themselves and of 'retaliating'.

Define the role of religion in a democratic state (what is it to be secular?)

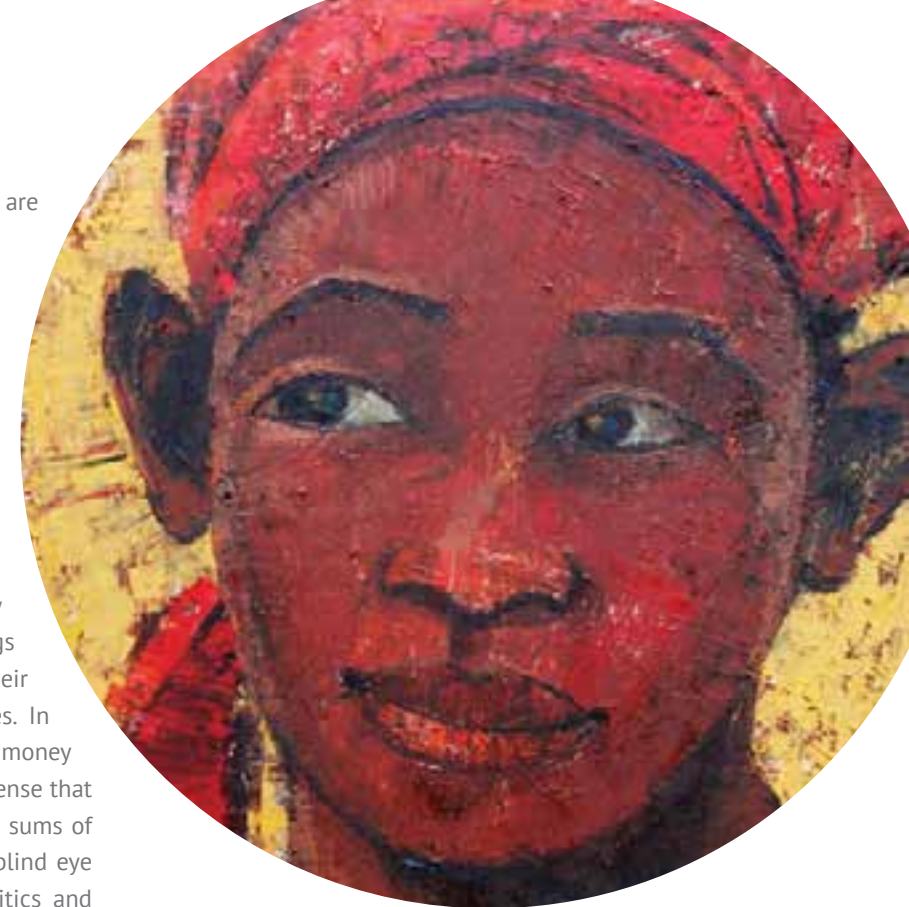
I believe another challenge in the area of peacebuilding is to find ways of developing an understanding of the role of religion in a democratic state. Nigeria is a democracy but yet government funds are poured in to finance Muslims on pilgrimage to hajj in Mecca, Christians on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and other Christian sites, state chaplaincies, and so on. The role of government in religious affairs and of religious figures in political affairs is increasing by the day. In Nigeria, with the shari'a debate in 2000 and with so many of the other conflicts that erupt there, it is obvious that the role and place of religion in society has not been sufficiently clarified. To follow in the footsteps of France or even Ireland, in its attempt to purge all traces of religion from the public space, does not seem the best response in a pluri-religious country such as Nigeria. Similarly, to allow religion have the major role it has in political affairs and in the lives of so many citizens who cling to it as a life saver since all else has failed, is not the response either - and is not practical in a pluri-religious nation. Given that religion is so much a part of everyday life in Africa and Africans are by nature religious people, it is said, I believe much more discussion must be held so as to find the practical and acceptable way in which all religious adherents are given an equal playing field in all parts of the country and the state ensures as 'referee not

patron' that the religious freedom of all citizens are respected.

As Church, besides promoting dialogue and freedom of religion, I believe we have a responsibility to help Catholics overcome the dichotomy that seems to exist between religion as cult and everyday life. Maybe that is the form of Catholicism we had in Ireland and thus brought on mission: a sacramental, institutional, self-focused, religion of piety, catechism being the question and answer type. We must somehow form Catholics who allow the values and teachings of their faith to influence their public lives and their choices in their places of work and their homes. In Nigeria, certainly not all good Catholics donate money and not all who donate are crooks, but there is a sense that many 'Good Catholics' are those who donate large sums of money for church institutional structures, with a blind eye turned to their engagements in the field of politics and of business or even in terms of adherence to customary practices which may in fact be inimical to the Gospel message. There is need to encourage greater moral clarity and interrogation of traditional practices among Catholics.

Peacebuilding has become an industry and a flag

A major challenge I find in working in the field of dialogue and peacebuilding is that peacebuilding has in fact become an industry. Nigeria is inundated with NGOs, established to bring peace and to promote harmonious coexistence. I imagine it is the same in many other troubled underdeveloped countries. Many NGOs do great work, undoubtedly. However, among the best wage paying institutions with which people dream of finding work are international development partners and aid agencies, and if not with these then with their partner NGOs and CSOs. People love to attend conferences and seminars and workshops on peacebuilding as it allows them the opportunity to sleep in a good hotel and eat sumptuous food and even get transport allowance and maybe per diem or seating allowance for having given of their time to come to receive the training. A favourite engagement of First Ladies and other politicians is to call for peace or to host peacekeeping events, often being little more than a political flag. Thus, peacebuilding is an industry and it is difficult to break this jinx. Some organizations, including our own Women's Interfaith Council try to awaken a volunteer spirit. For example, our women leaders are not paid for the many hours work they put into organizing and participating in our events, we rent cheap venues and give simple food, with no allowances given for



transport or anything else. This approach is still rather unique but it is a method I believe we must continue to use as it is only through sacrifice that peace will eventually reign.

Women's involvement in patriarchal culture and religions

We work with women faith leaders in Kaduna state. This was something I myself initiated in May 2010 and it has grown from strength to strength. The truth is that just as women's poverty and vulnerability in the region is greater than that of men, due in great part to a patriarchal culture, so too women's voices and their concerns are often times excluded from Government programmes of response and of mediation in times of conflict and in efforts at reconciliation and peacebuilding. Similarly, women are excluded from the mainline decision making levels in religious bodies, both Christian and Muslim, as well as prominent interfaith councils and state-sponsored religious bureaus. When interfaith events are organized, especially when it is by government or by influential circles, it is the male religious and community leaders who are invited.

For example, in 2012, after the outbreak of violence in June, a State Committee on Reconciliation was established in Kaduna, consisting of sixty men (as in, male). People objected so ten more were added, three of whom were women; the others included youth representatives and some other groups that had felt left out.

Continued on page 43

Religious Formation Ministry Programme



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Tel: + 353-1-2107921

Email: enquiries@loretohouse.com

www.loretohouse.com

In August 2012, a Committee was established by the Northern Governors Forum for Reconciliation, Security and Healing. It was initially all male with one woman; she objected so she was asked to get five other women to join her; I happened to be one of them and I admit the experience of working on that Committee was challenging but very enriching. And although the women were few, we ended up contributing far more than our fair share! Last month, in April 2013, the World Muslim League held its annual meeting in Sokoto, Nigeria – I looked at the list of those present, including the Christians who were invited to speak: all men! This is the norm. If women are invited, it is usually as an afterthought and as a symbolic gesture of 'gender awareness'! Thanks to international pressure, it is very important nowadays to be seen to show some sense of gender awareness! However, most often, if a woman is invited to speak, it will be on "women's issues". Hence, in work with women and for women in peacebuilding, serious obstacles due to patriarchy are encountered. However, this makes the work even more urgent and satisfying: bringing women together in a way which would be difficult to do with men, gives a strong witness and helps to make women's voices heard. Gradually I find we are becoming more and more known and we receive more and more invitations, maybe only to ensure the inclusion of women but we use that and thus make women's voice heard, at major events.

Difficulty of measuring results

We can put a lot of time, effort, and money into peacebuilding initiatives: meetings, seminars, workshops, conferences, advocacy visits, communiqués, roundtables, Peace Clubs, interfaith prayers, solidarity marches, media chats, and so on. We work through the women faith leaders, and hence when they bring our message back to their faith groups throughout the state, thousands of people may be reached through us. However, it only takes one person to throw a bomb and shout Allahu Akbar, or to burn a market, or to start a fight against another and turn it into a religious fight. It is not difficult to ignite violence, and for this violence to take a religious identity, and for this to spread. Hence, it is difficult to measure the outcome of our work and I believe this applies to peacebuilding work in general. Certainly, it is necessary to cure the ills of poverty and illiteracy and injustice that make it so easy for people to resort to violence and for this to ignite interethnic or interreligious tensions. People maintain this kind of development work is more effective than peacebuilding seminars.

However, we need both: we need to help people analyse the reasons for the conflict and to grow in mutual understanding

across religious lines, to develop friendships and to see that harmonious coexistence is possible. We also need to work on empowerment so as to overcome the poverty and the injustices. One is easier to measure than the other. Both are necessary.

Specific challenges from a missionary perspective: *Overcome the bad reputation of religion*

Religion has a bad reputation in relation to war and peace. Yet, as Hans Kung said, and I must totally agree with him, there will be no peace between the nations without dialogue between the religions. This is for many reasons, the most obvious and pragmatic being so much of the strife experienced in the world today, not only in Nigeria, is very much coloured by religion. However, religion has been a positive source of hope, strength and inspiration for people to challenge and non-violently confront situations and structures of injustice; religion is a teacher of positive human values; and religion is for so many people and in many societies a moral authority of peaceful, just and right human relations. As missionaries, we are seen as people who propagate a faith, a religion. Hence, I believe we have a responsibility to believe in our religion and to ensure religion is taught and practiced as a positive and not a negative force.

Undoubtedly, religion has an equally bad, if not worse, reputation in relation to patriarchy and to gender equality and this reputation applies across the board to all religions. In what I think is a typical example of Orientalism, in the West Islam tends to be shown as the faith which is most demeaning of women, but I think the fact that women of all faiths are developing strong versions of feminist religious discourse speaks the truth more fully. Although the struggle for gender equality is generally thought of in terms of developments in secular discourse, a matter of legal provisions and so on and so forth, I am convinced that there will be no gender equality in so many parts of the world without the intervention of religions, simply because religion is such an influential factor in women's recognized roles and rights in most developing societies. Hence, our involvement in women's or gender-focused theological discourse and our support of that within the various religions is, I believe, a necessary engagement in our mission for peace. This is a delicate area; many of the women I work with are not at all critical of their religions as taught or practiced. However, when we look more closely at concrete experiences of women, then we begin also to challenge interpretations and the women add their voice to learning or supporting more gender friendly interpretations.

Continued on page 45

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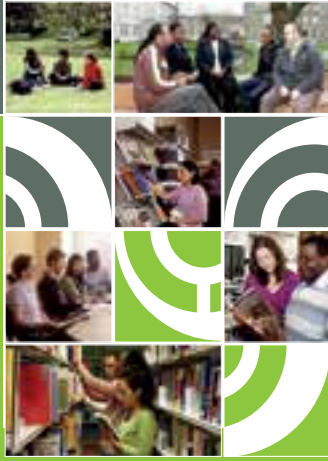
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Working together with people of other faiths on Justice and Development

Working for peace and working for development is not the responsibility of the Church alone but is one we can only carry out in respect and dialogue with people of other religions. Our definition of justice and of development cannot be understood only within a Christian or a Western framework. Other peoples have their cultural understandings of development and these are shaped and influenced by their religious beliefs and by their faith communities. Hence, to work in mission towards making present those values of God's kingdom, which we may speak of as indicative of development, necessarily implies respectful dialogue with people of other religions and cultures. As we are told in the document *Dialogue and Mission*: "any sense of mission not permeated by [such] a dialogical spirit would go against the demands of true humanity and against the teachings of the Gospel" (DM 29). In this context I would advise missionaries to ensure that all their development projects are done in dialogue with the people who are to be its beneficiaries and this must be done with respect for their cultural as well as their religious views.

Being a foreigner: advantage or disadvantage

Working for Peace as a foreigner has both its pros and cons. On the pro side I would say that my being white, not a Nigerian, contributes in no small way to the success of the Interfaith Council which I initiated and coordinate. Many women admit that it is because of me that they persevere in coming to our meetings and cooperating in the work. (I pray that by the time I leave, they will have imbibed the vision deeply enough not to need me as an excuse.) When there have been serious crises, women have come to me, or I have gone to them, and they have spoken honestly from their heart about their fears and distrust of the other 'group'. Together we have been able to talk it through and muster up the courage and the forgiveness to continue working together with Muslims/Christians, as the case may be. If I was a Nigerian, I would be more easily associated with the other group. The fact that I am a Reverend Sister, as they call us Religious in Nigeria, is also an important factor, since in general the Catholic Church is viewed with greater respect than many other Christian denominations, many people have gone through schools or hospitals run by Sisters and have learnt to respect us, and as a Religious I am seen as a religious leader.

Continued on page 47

HIV TREATMENT IN NAMIBIA

Kate Mukanga discusses the options open to Namibia to ensure the country's impressive progress continues.

> HEALTH PAGE 3

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN SAUDI ARABIA

The relationship between criminal law and Sharia law is a complex one when it comes to domestic violence.

> GENDER PAGE 5

GAZA FREEDOM RUNNER

Nader al-Masri is an Olympic standard runner who has had to turn down offers to compete in races worldwide. Find out why.

> SPORTS PAGE 8

FOCUS

ACTION FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE.

February 2014 | Published By Comhlámh | ISSUE 93

www.comhlamh.org

A day of action against Direct Provision Photo credit: Irish Refugee Council

Lives Put On Hold.

Ireland's Direct Provision System Is Leaving People In Limbo For Years.

Between 1993 and 2008, the number of people seeking asylum in Ireland went from 6 a year to just fewer than 11,000 a year. In the late 90s, as a means of

life away I want to work. I want to contribute".

The Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) is the government agency that was set up to manage and run the system of Direct Provision. At the end of June 2013 there were a total of 14 accommodation centres spread throughout 16 counties. These

It is fair to say that Direct Provision was set up with the intention of being a temporary accommodation solution, the thinking being that asylum seekers would be in the system no longer than a year. However, because of

man put it. "Sometimes I think we would be better off in prison. At least in prison you're going to be released". The solution to this is twofold. Firstly, to improve the legal system so that

"Sometimes I think we would be better off in prison. At least in prison"

COLM ASHIE
Comhlámh Staff

The collapse of the "Jama Place building in Bangladesh last April, brought the working conditions of textile workers in Asia to the forefront of public attention. There was public outcry as the plight of these workers, and the global fashion brands involved in perpetuating it, became public knowledge. This moved the issue up the international agenda and sent ripples across the industry. In Cambodia tens of thousands of workers took to the streets in protest, demanding that a living wage be paid to them. In the photo above a striking garment worker shows spent cartridges from police and military shootings against recent demonstrations. The strike action has threatened to bring the country's

EST. 1978

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“If we want to educate and empower women I believe there is more chance that this will be done through FOMWAN (Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations of Nigeria) or the CWO (Catholic Women’s Organization) or other faith based organizations in which women participate regularly and which are trusted by their religious and community leaders, than through other conduits.”

In fact, for our large interfaith events, apart from our small meetings as Executive council and so on, I always wear the veil, something that is totally against every feminist principle in my body, but it is a concession I make because I realise the importance of uniform and of position in Nigeria and the fact that the veil gives me that standing of a religious leader which enables people to respect the Women’s Interfaith Council which I am seen to represent.

The other side of the coin is that as a foreigner, it is all too often said that I am not really part of the situation: “if there is trouble, Sr. Kathleen can just go home, we must stay here to pick up the pieces”. Hence, that distance from the issue in a sense makes me always different, always an outsider, hence somewhat less credible as a witness of the possibility

of forgiveness and openness to one another. In fact, when I speak some truth that people may not want to hear, the usual response is that I don’t understand, “Sister, you don’t understand the psychology of these people”; Sister, you were not here during the shar’ā crisis in 2000 or the Kafanchan crisis in 1989 or the Maitatsine riots in the 80s. Hence – my commitment to dialogue is seen to be a fruit of my naivety, my innocence, my not having experienced the violence. I can do nothing about this, except remain confident and convinced! That said, I would like to add that I have found great acceptance in Nigeria, even in the very high profile Committee on Reconciliation, Healing and Security of the Northern Governor’s Forum: my opinion is listened to and taken seriously and in general I am treated as a co-national, something which makes me very proud.

Contribution of Irish Missionaries (yesterday, today, tomorrow)

A critical look at our methodology of mission

Firstly, I think this Conference is an opportunity for us to look back critically at the methods of the past, recognise whether and how we may have failed in promoting an attitude of interethnic and interreligious openness and dialogue, whether and how we might have helped establish a Church that is arrogant in its own sense of theological and institutional superiority, whether and how we may have formed Catholics who are not committed to social responsibility, whether and how we may have brought a Catholicism that did not sufficiently dialogue with the local culture and customs many of which were strengthened rather than challenged in their patriarchal and other elements. We might find that the missionary enterprise may actually have been stronger in some of these areas than the local church is today. In so far as this the case, we can, with the benefit of hindsight, ensure that in our various ways of outreach to the local church, whether by the Irish missionaries who still go and will go, or whether through the training we give to those from the young Churches who come here for formation or are members of our congregations, our analysis of these questions is included.

Be prepared to fund faith communities

Secondly, I should like to request continued support for faith bodies and for the work of the indigenous members of missionary congregations who are inheriting from their Irish predecessors the development of projects that people in their local areas, from their faith and cultural perspectives, envision together.

Continued on page 49

The OLA Way



*You shall be
my witnesses*

**Women Apostles:
Called and sent**

**Rooted in the Word of God:
Personal and community
prayer**

**Who dare to be seeds
of hope: To make God
known and loved**

The OLA Today

The Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles are a group of international women religious, dedicated to spreading the Good News through the service and witness of their lives. The OLA sisters are in nineteen countries across three continents and continue to fulfil the missionary dream of their founder Fr. A Planque SMA, to be of service to the Gospel particularly with the people of Africa.

The OLA Way

We were founded in 1876 especially for Africa. We strive to meet the needs of people wherever we are through our varied ministries. These ministries include: education, healthcare, community development, empowerment of women, pastoral care, catechesis, inter-religious dialogue and mission awareness.

Women in Communion

Promoting women and the marginalised is a priority in all our apostolates. In solidarity with like-minded people, we also engage in non-violent action for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Which 'Way' for you?

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Would you like to become a volunteer? Email: volunteering@olaireland.ie

Is God inviting you to join our lay missionary movement? Email: imm@olaireland.ie

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Ardfoyle Convent, Ballintemple, Cork.

For example, if we want to educate and empower women I believe there is more chance that this will be done through FOMWAN (Federation of Muslim Women's Associations of Nigeria) or the CWO (Catholic Women's Organization) or other faith based organizations in which women participate regularly and which are trusted by their religious and community leaders, than through other conduits.

International lobbying

Undoubtedly, as Irish missionaries we still have great authority through our lobbying efforts in the UN or other international political and legislative arena. I have never been involved in this but I know of the Africa Faith and Justice Network and many others that I believe are to be very much commended and supported in their important work. No doubt, the fruits are so hard to measure but many drops make an ocean and thus the more international pressure that is put, for accountable leadership, for transparent elections, for gender equality, for non-violent options... the more chance there is that things will change.

Formation of personnel from the young Churches

The fragmentation among Christians in Nigeria and in many other African countries is sometimes blamed on the negative relationship that we Catholics from Ireland had with our Protestant counterparts. The negative view of Muslims has no doubt been influenced by the negative view we as Church once held of Islam. I think it is important that in the Kimmage Institute, Mater Dei, Maynooth, the Irish School of Ecumenics, and so on, which are all well recognized Centres of formation for personnel from the young Churches, we give an ecumenical and dialogical missionary formation. I also believe some basic training in political analysis is necessary as we study religions and the challenge of co-existence. It is important that the formation we give encourage a critical study of missionary methods in Africa today. Africae Munus somehow alludes to this when it says: "Given the great ferment of peoples, cultures and religions which marks our age, Catholic universities and academic institutions play an essential role in the patient, rigorous and humble search for the light which comes from Truth. Only a truth capable of transcending human standards of measure, conditioned by their own limitations, brings peace to individuals and reconciliation to societies" (135). Peace in Africa, the Pope tells us in Africae Munus, is conditioned by interreligious relations. Hence "it is important for the Church to promote dialogue as a spiritual disposition, so that believers may learn to work together, for example in associations for justice and peace, in a spirit of trust and mutual help" (AM 88). Hence, in forming

personnel from the young Churches, it is important to form them in a way that teaches them to search for answers in dialogue with the cultures and religions which shape their society and our world at large and to thus be able to bring reconciliation and peace to their lands.

Conclusion

The Lineamenta for the African Synod, n. 35 stated as follows: "No nation can prosper in an atmosphere of insecurity. No meaningful development is sustainable in a society replete with mutual rancor, bitterness and hate. Mutual prejudices hinder cooperation and exchange, and rob a people of a hope of a great nation." The post-synodal exhortation, Africae Munus, tells us that the difficulties encountered by the countries and particular churches in Africa are not so much insurmountable obstacles, but challenges pushing us to draw upon the best of ourselves: our imagination, our intelligence, our vocation to follow without compromise in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. Hence, this challenge remains.

The conversation must continue: How can we as missionaries continue to help overcome the many obstacles encountered in the young churches we have done so much to help establish? How can we do this in a way that promotes a form of evangelization that is not exclusive, not divisive, but that is inclusive of all people of whatever religion, and helps to build a nation where the values of the Kingdom are palpable by all people? "If all of us who believe in God desire to promote reconciliation, justice and peace, we must work together to banish every form of discrimination, intolerance and religious fundamentalism" (AM 94). I pray we can continue to do so and I hope some of the points I have raised in this paper will help us to do this.

Many thanks for your witness as missionaries ad extra ad vitam, your support for my own mission, the invitation to speak here today, and for your attention.

The Parish of Ardagh and Moydow



St. Brigid's, Ardagh

The seeds of christianity in **Ardagh, Co. Longford**, were planted by St. Patrick when he appointed Mel as bishop in 435. For the next 1000 years Ardagh continued to be the cathedral town of the diocese with the bishop residing there. The ruins of the cathedral are still to be seen in the village. The present Gothic style church within view of St. Mel's original foundation is regarded as one of the most ornate of its type.

The seeds sown at Ardagh continue to bear fruit to the present day.



St. Mary's, Moydow

Parish liturgies and celebrations, which are available on **99.7FM** band radio, are enhanced by participation from a wide spectrum of the parish community.

With so many people involved and sharing gifts and talents, in creating a community of faith, there is a tangible energy and vibrancy in the parish.

www.parishardaghmoydow.com
Email: ardaghmoydowparish@gmail.com



The Franciscan Missionaries of St. Joseph is a small, international religious community currently serving in the U.K, Kenya, Uganda, The Netherlands, Ireland, Ecuador and the U.S.A.

As Franciscans, we open ourselves to persons who are the most isolated, vulnerable, voiceless and marginalized in our society.

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Contact: www.fmsj.co.uk
or local contact:
Sr. Margaret Loneragan on 056 8832281

Kimmage Development Centre

Celebrating 40 years in 2014



Kimmage Development Studies Centre is based at Kimmage Manor, in Dublin, Ireland.



It was established in 1974 by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (also known as the Spiritans or the Holy Ghost Fathers) initially to provide education and training to intending overseas missionaries, and from 1978 onwards to cater for the training needs of the growing development NGOs and volunteer sending agencies.

From the beginning, the programme of studies welcomed participants of all backgrounds, cultures, nationalities, religious persuasions, and to date has accommodated students from over 65 different countries, drawn mainly from Africa and Ireland but increasingly, also from Asia, the Caribbean and Latin America.

Kimmage Open & Distance Education (KODE) was set up following the successful piloting of distance learning courses, primarily in East Africa, in 2007-2008. It is a blended learning package for learners to work through materials at their own pace and in their own time, and gain understanding and key skills in subject areas such

as Project Cycle Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, Governance and Accountability, etc. To date it has six different courses on offer, including **Child Protection in Development Practice** and Understanding and Addressing **GBV**, and a team of tutors providing support in countries as diverse as Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Uganda and Zambia.

Another programme which reflected the determination of KDSC to reach out to wider groups of development workers and to diversify its range of activities was the establishment of the Kimmage East Africa programme in 2007.

Continued on pg. 53



Little Sisters of the Poor
Ireland & Scotland



"Little, be very little, hidden by humility in all God wants from you, as being only the instruments of his work."

OUR WORK

As Little Sisters of the Poor our mission is to care for the elderly in the spirit of humble service as bequeathed to us by our foundress, Jeanne Jugan. Her message to the novices of her time was:

"Making the elderly happy, that is all that counts", and her message is still timely, if not more so, today.

Our vow of hospitality involves us in the 'temporal realities of the time and country in which we live.'
(Constitutions of the LSP)

"What happiness to be a Little Sister of the Poor"
(Jeanne Jugan)



Our desire as Little Sisters of the Poor is to follow Christ as our one and only necessity so as to make him the centre of our life. We are dedicated to the care of the elderly of all nationalities and beliefs and we are sustained by both a daily personal and community life of prayer.

www.littlesistersofthepoor.ie

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Kimmage Development Centre

The Kimmage East Africa programme was based in Tanzania, and saw KDSC working in partnership with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and other local NGOs, to design innovative tools and approaches for use by pastoral civil society and government in tackling the differences in power that impede policies and institutions from achieving equitable natural resource management, central to people's livelihoods and poverty reduction.

In September 2012, Kimmage DSC was awarded a contract to provide specialist information and guides services in the Irish Aid Volunteering and Information Centre, O'Connell Street, Dublin 1. Our team of guides, led by our coordinator, provide information to members of the public on volunteering, development education options and other related queries, deliver workshops to visiting school groups, and assist in the mounting of exhibitions in the Centre. We see this as another opportunity to build connections with the development sector and the wider public.

Boniface Isenge



**Boniface Isenge is currently studying
for an MA in Development Studies at
Kimmage DSC.**

Born in Kenya in 1974, Boniface entered the seminary of the Spiritans Holy Ghost Fathers in Tanzania in 1996. He studied Philosophy for three years and then went to Lushoto for one year of Novitiate. In August 2000, Boniface undertook Theological studies and in 2002, travelled to Ethiopia for his one year Attachment. In 2003, he returned to Lushoto to complete his studies and was Ordained in 2005. He returned to Ethiopia where he worked as a Missionary until 2013. When he completes his studies in July 2014, he will take up a Missionary post in Southern Sudan.

Despite having nearly 9 years of missionary work experience, Boniface feels that a formal education is necessary to meet the needs of the modern world.



"The course material is very practical and gives me the courage to believe I can understand the needs of a community and apply my skills in accordance with their needs, from farming and sanitation techniques to education and tolerance".
"The lecturers deliver the course with great passion, listening, and understanding the needs of each student". Boniface is thoroughly enjoying his time at Kimmage DSC and has found it to be an extremely friendly and open environment.

FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIES OF MARY

We are women; religious sisters, committed to living a Gospel way of life, in inter-cultural communities with a strong global network of shared vision, shared resources and shared responsibility; women who have experienced a call to follow Christ in the path traced out by our foundress Helene de Chappotin, and Francis of Assisi who inspired her vision.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT:-
Sr. Helen, Cold Ash Centre, The Ridge, Cold Ash, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG18 9HU
Email: fmmimesvoc@yahoo.co.uk Phone: 0044 (0)1635 865353
or check out our websites: www.fmmii.org www.fmm.org www.fmmvocations.org

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E: info@allhallows.ie
W: www.allhallows.ie

Church of Ireland Theological College

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F: (01) 492 3082
E: admin@theologicalinstitute.ie
W: www.theologicalinstitute.ie

Carlow College

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F: (059) 914 0258
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W: www.carlowcollege.ie

Centre for Global Development

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Cork
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W: www.ucc.ie

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W: www.dwse.org

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W: www.dcu.ie

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E: info@iadt.ie
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W: www.kimmagedsc.ie

Mater Dei Institute of Education

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W: www.spd.dcu.ie

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For further information on making a Will, please contact Rachael Hurley:

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Email rhurley@irishcancer.ie





Jeanne Jugan our foundress was born on 25th October 1792 in Cancale, a fishing port on the north coast of Brittany, France.

When Jeanne was only three and a half years of age her father who was a sailor was lost at sea and so her mother had to work very hard to make ends meet for her young family of four. From this it is easy to see that Jeanne 'knew' poverty right from childhood.

It was from her mother that Jeanne learned her prayers and the tenets of her Faith. She also learned how to rely totally on God.

Jeanne left home at the age of fifteen or sixteen to work 'in-service' at the manor house of a neighbouring family. Her employers were kind and were always ready to give something to those who came knocking at their door – a gesture which gave Jeanne an insight into the needs of those less fortunate members of society.

It was during these years that Jeanne received a marriage proposal from a young sailor and according to local custom, she asked him to wait. He did – for six years – after which time he renewed his proposal. She then decided she would not marry and astonished her mother by telling her: **“God wants me for himself. He is keeping me for a work which is not yet founded.”**

LAUNCHING OUT INTO THE DEEP

When Jeanne was twenty-five she left Cancale for St. Servan and took a position in the local hospital of 'Le Rosais'. Here she witnessed the terrible suffering of others, especially the poor and the elderly. Surely this was God way of presenting his CALL and VOCATION to Jeanne.

“GOD WANT ME FOR HIMSELF”

These words rang true in the winter of 1839. In her spare time Jeanne would visit the poor and assist them as best



she could. It was during one of her visits to Anne Chauvin, a blind and paralysed elderly woman that she realized she could into leave her alone to fend for herself. And so Jeanne took Anne in her arms, carried her home to her own lodgings and placed her in her own bed, while she herself moved up into the attic.

“The two lines of Jeanne's vocation, the human and the divine, join together to become one ... There is no turning back ... The limits of her little room have just exploded, together with those of her heart. They have been thrown open to embrace the world.”

Continued on pg. 59

PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY

St Patrick's College, Maynooth

Undergraduate Degree Programmes

- BA in Theology & Arts (BATH) CAO code: MU001
- BA in Theology (BTh) CAO code: MU002

The above programmes qualify under the Free Fees initiative and the Higher Education Grants Scheme. Mature students are very welcome to apply.


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The Higher Diploma in Theological Studies is a one-year part-time evening course. It caters for graduates of disciplines other than Theology.

* The Higher Diploma in Theological Studies is recognised by the Department of Education and Skills as entitling teachers holding Department-recognised degrees and teacher-training qualifications to teach up to 15 hours' Religious Education per week in a voluntary secondary school.

* Some postgraduate programmes qualify for the Higher Education Grants scheme and tax relief where applicable.


OPEN DAYS: Last Friday and Saturday in November annually (same dates and venue as NUI Maynooth)

Further information on courses may be obtained from:

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Parish of Tubbercurry & Cloonacool



Church of St. John Evangelist Tubbercurry

The community maintains a strong tradition of sport, athletics and cultural activities. In recent years the town of Tubbercurry has twinned with the town of Viarmes in France.



St. Michael's Church Cloonacool

Tubbercurry hosts the oldest Drama Festival in the country each March and a Irish Traditional Music Festival each July. The Marist Sisters have served the community in education and in pastoral care for over 100 years and continue to work in and around the parish. Many people from the parish have been missionaries in Europe, North & South America, Asia, Australia and Oceania.



And so Jeanne took Anne in her arms, carried her home to her own lodgings and placed her in her own bed, while she herself moved up into the attic.

Recognition of Jeanne's life and virtues was officially recognized by the Church on 13th July 1979 and then on 3rd October 1982 in the presence of 60,000 pilgrims from all over the world, Pope John Paul II declared her 'BLESSED'. We now eagerly await the day of her canonization. Please join your prayers with ours that this will take place in the not too distant future. We will keep the readers of our website informed.

Prayer to obtain graces through the intercession of Blessed Jeanne Jugan.

Jesus, you rejoiced and praised your Father for having revealed to little ones the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. We thank you for the graces granted to your humble servant, Blessed Jeanne Jugan, to whom we confide our petitions and needs (*here mention your requests*). Father of the Poor, you have never refused the prayer of the lowly. We ask you, therefore, to hear the petitions that she presents to you on our behalf. Jesus, through Mary, your Mother and ours, we ask this of you, who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit now and forever. Amen.

MISSIONARY

ALREADY during the lifetime of our foundress Jeanne Jugan, we had opened many Homes as far away as North Africa and the United States. However, the Congregation became truly missionary when eight Little Sisters arrived in Calcutta on 30th November 1882.



A rapid expansion followed, not only in Asia, but also in Latin America, Australia and the Pacific Islands. Others would follow - Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, Benin, South Korea, Samoa, with the most recent being the Philippines in 2005).

"With hearts opened wide, our missionary communities will adapt themselves to the customs of the country, learn its language and traditions and, in sincere dialogue, discover with joy and respect the riches that God has distributed to all peoples."

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The Death & Resurrection of Jesus 15 – 20 June Fr Denis McBride CSsR
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For further details of all Courses, Retreats & Weekends
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Christ in All hearts

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We the Redemptoristine Nuns are an enclosed contemplative community of religious women. Our life is centred around the Liturgy of the Hours, the Eucharist, personal prayer and contemplatives. Our monastery is in the heart of Dublin and plays a pivotal role in the local community life of the area. Local people join us for the daily celebration of the Eucharist, meditation and Evening Prayer. Our Life is enclosed, which is to say we remain within the grounds of the monastery, apart from the world, but holding the world in our heart in prayer. The Monastic day is passed in prayer, work and recreation. The needs of other people in the world are our great concern. As Cloistered Religious we make Altar Breads as a service to the Church but also depend on the sale of the Altar Breads for the financial upkeep of the Monastery and the continuation of our life. We also make personalized candles and write icons. We are a group of women who try to bring God's love to each other in Community and to the world in our outreach via webcam on www.rednuns.com

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**CHRIST
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Church of St. Finbarr South (The South Chapel, Cork)



This Church is located on the south side of the River Lee, just off the South Mall on Dunbar Street.

It is the oldest Catholic Church in Cork City (1766) and it is 'the mother Church' of the other south side Churches.

Nano Nagle lived here from 1718 to 1784 and founded the Presentation Sisters in 1775 to promote formal education of the poor.

Mary Aikenhead also lived here from 1798 to 1812 and founded 'The Irish Sisters of Charity' in 1815. The famous sculpture of the 'Dead Christ' by John Hogan (1800-1858) lies under the main altar.

Irish Retreat Centres

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GLANAULIN

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141 Glen Road
Belfast BT11 8BP
T/F: +44 (028) 90 501932
E: info@delasalleretreat.org
W: www.delasalleretreat.org

Collooney (Kilvarnet) is a rural parish in the Diocese of Achonry. The boundaries of the parish date from 1978, when a larger parish called "Ballysadare & Kilvarnet" were divided. The present parish comprises the ancient parish of Kilvarnet and part of the ancient parish Ballysadare.



Church of St. Fechin & St. Lassara, Ballinacarrow

There are two churches in the parish – Church of the Assumption in Collooney, which was consecrated in 1861 and the Church of St. Fechin & St. Lassara in Ballinacarrow, which was dedicated in 1904/1905, situated approximately 5 miles south of Collooney. There are 3 schools in the parish, Mary Immaculate Girls NS & St. Joseph's Boys NS in Collooney and St. Fechins NS, Ballinacarrow. The **Mercy** Sisters work in and around the parish.



Church of the Assumption, Collooney

Cloonaamahon, which is in the parish, was a former Passionist Monastery, now a Residential Care Home for people with intellectual disability.



www.ionainstitute.ie

The Iona Institute is Ireland's leading organisation promoting the place of marriage and religion in society.

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W: www.glendaloughhermitagecentre.ie

GLENDALOUGH TEARMANN SPIRITUALITY CENTRE

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W: www.tearmann.ie

GLENSTAL ABBEY

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HOLY HILL HERMITAGE

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W: www.knocklyonparish.ie/iona

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W: www.celticprayergarden.com

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Holy Faith Convent

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E: mcfldglasnevin@gmail.com

W: www.holyfaithsisters.org

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E: manresa@jesuit.ie

W: www.manresa.ie

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F: (01) 492 9635

E: marianellareception@gmail.com

W: www.marianella.ie

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E: mercycoolock@eircom.net

W: www.sistersofmercy.ie

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Co. Louth

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Co. Laois.

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F: (057) 862 6700

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W: www.mountstannes.com

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Co. Waterford

T: (058) 54404

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Think
ahead



“speak for yourself”

The purpose of Think Ahead is to guide members of the public in discussing and recording their preferences in the event of emergency, serious illness or death.



THE GIFT OF PEACE OF MIND FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

- What if the day comes when you are unable to make decisions for yourself?
- What if you are suddenly taken ill, are involved in an accident, or lose your ability to communicate?
- Do your closest family or friends really know your wishes?

Think Ahead is resource to guide people in discussing and recording their wishes around end of life. Think Ahead was developed by the Forum on End of Life in Ireland – an initiative of the Irish Hospice Foundation – following a year-long public consultation on issues around dying, death and bereavement.

Think Ahead is a citizen-led tool which encourages you to: **Think, Talk and Tell**



Think about what kind of care you would like; where you would like to be cared for; the kind of funeral you would wish to have; your views on organ donation; where you have put your key legal documents....

Talk about those wishes with those close to you and with professionals such as a GP, solicitor or accountant.

Tell people about the decisions you have made.

You may also wish to record those wishes and review them on a regular basis.

Think Ahead form and useful guidance and resources are available on www.thinkahead.ie



Servites O.S.M.

Today Servites, also known as the Friar Servants of Mary, are present among people of many cultures throughout the world. They were founded by seven merchants in Florence around 1233. Moved by the Spirit they committed themselves to witness the Gospel in fraternal communion and to be at the service of God and all people.

Servites challenge themselves and the world to be different through:

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Fraternity: Through prayer, community life and discernment, Servite Friars strive to be brothers to all as Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of Mary, came to be brother to all of us.

If you feel you may be called to serve as a Servite Friar, living as a pilgrim in the insecurity of this world please contact:

Vocations Director, Servite Priory, 25-27 Hermitage Downs, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.
For further information go to www.servitefriars.org



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W: www.loughderg.org

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W: www.columbacommunity.com

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W: www.laretraite.ws

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TRANSFORMATION FOR CHANGE

We live in uncertain times, a period of adjustment, and I believe that it is a privilege to live in this world of ours today. It offers people of Faith opportunities to speak about values, about integrity, about hope and to put those values into action on behalf of those who are poor and marginalized.



Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood



The FMDM presence in Ireland began in 1942 when our community in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway was established and we opened Portiuncula hospital which we ran for many years before handing it over to the Western Health Board.

Today we have 11 communities in Dublin, Ballinasloe, Killarney and Drogheda. We also have Irish sisters all over the world as they have responded to the missionary call to serve wherever they are sent.

Our ministry in Ireland was traditionally in health care, especially general nursing, midwifery and care of children with special needs. Today we have diversified to minister in retreat work, justice and peace, pastoral care, parish work, care of the elderly and needy in society, counselling and psychotherapy as well as collaborative ministry with other religious orders.

Contact in Ireland: Sister Anne O'Brien

Assisi, Harbour Road, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway

Tel: 090 96 42320 • Mobile: 087 635 6839 • Email: anneobrienfmdm@gmail.com

The Volunteer Mission Movement was founded in 1969 in answer to the call of the second Vatican Council for Catholic Laity to become more involved with the life and work of their Church.

The inspiration for the founding of VMM was Pope Paul's VI Encyclical Letter, *Populorum Progressio*, written in 1967. That encyclical redefined the Church's way of looking at itself and the world. One of the key phrases used in the encyclical was that "development is the new name for peace." Pope Paul VI later established an organization of the Church, the Pontifical Commission "Iustitia et Pax", whose primary task was to challenge Catholic communities, lay and non lay, to foster social justice between nations and work towards a more equitable society. The concept of authentic human development, later reiterated by Pope Benedict in his encyclical, *Deus*

Caritas Est, as integral human development was one of the key concepts of *Populorum Progressio*. That is also a key VMM principle. It is a very simple one; *authentic development* "must foster the development of each person and of the whole person."

The people who join with VMM today are invariably confident in their social and political responsibilities, but often less certain with how they should express their religious beliefs. To some degree this is related to a collapse in religious practice throughout many western European countries. The paradox we find is that with those who join VMM, their spirituality is vibrant and strong but they are more comfortable expressing their faith in action through international development rather than religious practice.

Continued on pg. 68



In many respects it sometimes seems that development is the new religion. Ironically it is precisely that focus on the marginalised and poor which is at the heart of the message of Christianity and the message of hope from the Prophet Isaiah quoted from Luke's Gospel, that the blind will see, the oppressed will be set free! That is the "Good News" which international development tries to bring through its programmes and through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

About 30 years after Jesus Christ was crucified St Paul wrote an extraordinary letter to the Thessalonians, a small basic Christian community in Greece who were losing hope and undergoing a major crisis of Faith. In his letter he stated that if you truly believe the message of Jesus, and have faith, you will live forever! Although there are many valid ways of interpreting that message, it remains today the central article of faith of Christianity.

Throughout the world today there is a crisis of belief and it is eroding faith. The Church is rightly condemned for its failures to protect the most vulnerable members of its church, children. The Catholic Church is in danger of losing its connection with the people of God and for many the crisis at the heart of the Church is exacerbated by the Vatican's dual position of wielding temporal (political) power as a Diplomatic State and at the same time representing itself as the Centre of spiritual authority for the global Christian community. Depending upon the crisis, the diplomatic language of "Sovereignty" and not the Christian language of "Faith" becomes the dominant mode of communication. This is a cancer at the very heart of the Church which Pope Francis seems to moving towards rectifying in his pastoral focus upon faith practice rather than preaching theology. While the extraordinary gifts of communications that permeate our lives today create a metaphorical Tower of Babel, they

also offer Christians a unique chance to break out of our parochial constraints and embrace our Faith anew. To do this however requires not only a new language, but a new mindset and a confident faith. Faith tensions often become apparent during social and cultural change such as today. Paul was essentially the first missionary and the hostile world he faced is probably not that dissimilar to one we live today; social unrest, disbelief, uncertainty, materialism and cynicism. Where then are the coalfaces of mission today? They exist on the pavements of our streets, in our homes, on our TVs, in an overly secularised society which challenge us to be relevant. The biblical lions of Daniels den for modern missionaries are probably the laity who react in anger and despair at their collapsing Church...a place where they once felt safe...protected. Of course, they, we, the laity, also share in the blame, for the Church is not a place where we should be safe. It is not an asylum for refuge; it should be a centre of hope and action. We all need to step out of our comfort zones and invent a new language; one that is relevant for our mission today, a language that is understood by the people living in the world of today. Such a mission however requires a Faith of the type which Paul had; a Faith that is palpable and visible in our lives, and in our actions.

The concept of integral human development is a key VMM principle, one that is easy to articulate but very difficult to practice. Like Christianity itself, it is subscribed to by millions worldwide but not always visible in our lives or our actions. While the dynamics of life has changed profoundly since VMM began in 1969, the value of faith and spirituality still holds real attraction for increasing numbers of people, particularly those who are drawn to VMMs development approach. In our current Strategic Framework 2014-2018, we emphasised our commitment to a global agenda in our decision to use the

VMMs vocational
presence and faith
based approach
positively impacts
upon the welfare of
the global poor.

United Nations agreed framework of the "The Millennium Development Goals" (MDG's) as the vehicle for our work over the next few years. We have also re emphasised the value of Catholic Social Teaching, the best kept secret of the Catholic church in that it is often quoted but seldom practiced effectively. In that regard Pope Francis is quite literally a God send ! VMM remains a Faith Based Development Movement committed to poverty reduction strategy policies which will significantly impact upon the lives of the global poor.

Such policies form common cause with many international donors, governments and NGOs and fits comfortably within VMMs Christian ethos of working with all, irrespective of politics or religion. VMMs vocational presence and faith based approach positively impacts upon the welfare of the global poor. Indeed such volunteer "vocationalism" is a real resource in a world where religion has been devalued through the failures of autocratic church leadership and where the numbers of religious, who previously undertook so much vocational work as their witness to faith, has significantly declined in Europe. Many people however

still maintain their ethical values and faith despite their disaffection with religion. In this climate, VMM plays a unique role in facilitating the participation of many who are disaffected in their struggle to reach out to the poor and marginalised and put their faith into action.

The current UN estimates show the number of people going hungry everyday has increased to 155 million while almost 100 million survive on less than €2 a day. When these facts are contrasted with other statistics which show that global spending on armaments rose last year to €1.3 Trillion, or 12 times the total development aid budget of the rich OECD countries, it shows where human priorities still lie and the challenge to organisations like VMM. As part of VMMs civil society advocacy work, we continue to promote social justice and the concept of global citizenship through speaking and working within local parishes at home and abroad. We recruit professionally qualified lay personnel, prepare them for overseas placements with selected partners and engage and support them on their return through our Offices in England & Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

The greatest challenge today however is the oldest one of all, not to proselytise or to try and change others, but first to change ourselves.

**Contact us and join in the work.
You can make a difference.**

Dr. Vincent Kenny. CEO – VMM

Sisters of the Irish Ursuline Union

The Ursuline Sisters were founded by St. Angela Merici in Italy in 1535.

In 1957 the first four Irish Ursulines set out for Kenya, East Africa.

"They continued the work of Angela who led them strong and sure in teaching, healing, working with and caring for God's poor" *Maisie McNabola*

Today Kenyan Ursulines continue the charisma of Angela.

Ursulines of the Irish Union
angemer@eircom.net
www.ursulines.ie



NGO's IRELAND



A non-governmental organization (NGO) is an organization that is neither a part of a government nor a conventional for-profit business. Usually set up by ordinary citizens, NGOs may be funded by governments, foundations or businesses. Some avoid formal funding altogether and are run primarily by volunteers. NGOs are highly diverse group of organizations engaged with a wide range of activities, and take different forms in different parts of the world. Some may have charitable status, while others may be registered for tax exemption based on recognition of social purposes. Others may be fronts for political, religious or other interest groups.



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9 - 16 Nov 2014 & 14 - 21 June 2015

Transition

16 - 20 Nov 2014 & 28 June 2nd July 2015

Gospels

23 - 27 Nov 2014 & 21 - 25 June 2015

RETREATS IN THE SUMMER

The team at St Mary's welcome groups or individual private retreats any time of the year. Bring a group for a short stay or retreat day at the monastery.

21st-25th July

Healing in the Spirit

Fr Jim McManus and Miss Marie Hogg

3rd-6th August

3 Day Silent Retreat

Fr. Tom MacCarte

11th-18th August

Retreat for Religious

Fr. Dan Baragry

"Celebrate our Call" PARISH MISSIONS

Redemptorists are happy to discuss renewals in 2014/15. Use the contact details below.

Redemptorist Centre of Spirituality

Telephone: 01738 624075

Email: stmaryskinnoull@btconnect.com

www.kinnoullmonastery.co.uk

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AIDS Partnership for Africa

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Alan Kerins Projects

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W: www.centreforglobaleducation.com

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Concern Worldwide

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Development Perspectives

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W: www.icosirl.ie

Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA)

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W: www.ifpa.ie

Irish Missionary Union (IMU)

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E: info@imu.ie
W: www.imu.ie

Irish League of Credit Unions International Development Foundation

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Dublin 2
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F: (01) 614 6701
E: info@creditunion.ie
W: www.ilcufoundation.ie

Irish Red Cross

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W: www.kade.ie

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W: www.nutureafrica.ie






'Jesus Christ, the King'

'Our Lady of Knock, Queen of Ireland'

The Order of New Knighthood of Our Lord and His Holy Mother

offer our spiritual and temporal support to everyone involved in the Catholic Missions.

We are a Lay Catholic Order of Knights (men), Oblates (women) and Servants (men and women) formed in 2009. The mission of our Order is 'to work for the Reign of Our Lord Jesus Christ over the world and over every nation'. We have recently published 'The Divine Rights of Jesus Christ' (Volumes 1-4). Thank you to all who are working for the continued growth of our Order worldwide.



For more information on our Order and other Publications, Days of Prayer and Meetings visit our website: www.orderofnewknighthood.com or email us on: info@orderofnewknighthood.com or send request in writing to our postal address: Order of New Knighthood, P.O. Box 49, Milltown D.S.U., Monaghan, Republic of Ireland



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Reaching out in Love

...Make every instant of your life count

Are you called to join us?

Our English word 'mission' comes from the Latin word for 'sending'



THE FUTURE OF MISSION



The term mission is loaded with meaning for me and probably for you too. What do we mean when we say mission? This needs to be understood if there is a future for mission. Our English word "mission" comes from the Latin word for "sending." Being a Christian includes being sent into the world as a representative of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." The mission Christ gave to the church is very clear. After His death and resurrection he commanded his disciples to share the gospel which is the good news about Jesus Christ. He said in Matthew's Gospel, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (*Matthew 28:19-20*).



In the Great Commission our mission is to proclaim Christ as the only way to abundant, eternal life. We are to reach out to all nations.



By this He was referring to as people groups without a Gospel witness. Christian mission however, is not limited to overseas ministry. While believers should faithfully support those who go to various parts of the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ, all Christians have a mission to share Christ on the home front with family, friends, co-workers, and the community. The Christian mission of sharing Christ does not end there. The commission was to make disciples – not immature believers. Thus, Christian mission involves not only evangelism but also discipleship.

This Great Commission applies to Christians today. Rather than a burden, obeying His call brings joy and reward in heaven. We should fulfil our mission not out of duty but out of love. In the New Testament Jesus tells us to “love

the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and to love your neighbour as yourself”. If we truly love God we will love our neighbours and we will want to serve them and we should be concerned for their total welfare, which is the well being of their soul, body and community. Our concern should then lead to practical programmes of evangelism, relief and development. We should not just prattle and plan and pray, like that country vicar to whom a homeless woman turned for help, and who promised to pray for her. She later wrote this poem and handed it in to a regional officer of Shelter:

I was hungry; and you formed a humanities group to discuss my hunger,

I was imprisoned; And you crept off quietly to your chapel and prayed for my release.

I was naked; And in your mind you debated the morality of my appearance.

I was sick; And you knelt and thanked God for your health.

I was homeless; And you preached to me the spiritual shelter of the love of God.

I was lonely; And you left me alone to pray for me.

You seem so holy, so close to God
But I am still very hungry....and lonely....and cold.

It is my conviction that mission has a future because it is God’s mission and we are his co-workers. He calls us to spread the good news of Jesus Christ and to bring hope to different people wherever they are.

The early Christians motivated by their love to reach out to those in need preached the Word of God. In Acts 6:1-7, we read the story of the ministry of Jesus’ disciples.

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They were overwhelmed trying to teach the word of God when there were such immense physical and economical needs of their people going unmet. They rallied together and appointed seven helpers to take care of the needs of the people. The result? "The word of God spread." As you continue the history of mission through the ages, Christians have founded schools, hospitals and hostels for the outcast. Later they abolished the slave trade freeing slaves all over the world. They protected children from exploitation in factories and from ritual prostitution. They care and show the compassion of Jesus to the leprosy



sufferer and those afflicted with HIV/AIDS. They get alongside junkies and stay with them as they go through a period of withdrawal. They set themselves against racism and political oppression. They care for the blind, the deaf, the widow and the orphan. They get involved in the inner city, the slums and the ghettos. They seek in whatever way they can to serve the poor. The list could go on and on and we are called to serve this mission. We cannot do everything but God calls us to serve where we are gifted.

It is my conviction that mission has a future because it is God's mission and we are his co-workers. He calls us to spread the good news of Jesus Christ and to bring hope to different people wherever they are. We are to go out into the world which God created, the world into which Christ came and into which He now sends us. That is where we belong.

The world is the arena for mission in which we are to live and love, witness and serve for Christ. Jesus said, **"More than anything else, put God's work first and do what He wants. Then the other things will be yours as well."** The secret of being blessed by God is to participate in His mission for the world - to be a part of what He is accomplishing on earth. Fulfilling the mission you were made for will require you to abandon your agenda and



adjust to God's agenda. David prayed, **"Turn me away from wanting any other plan than yours."** Your mission has a future and begins the moment you say "yes" to God in obedience, faith, and love.

Trevor Stevenson



The Order of the KNIGHTS OF SAINT COLUMBANUS



We welcome into our ranks Catholic men, in full communion with the Church, who would wish to bring to the service of Christ their talents and skills towards the promotion of Christian values and principles in Society, for the greater Honour and Glory of God the Father.

The Order has four main objectives.

- To promote by personal and group action our Christianity in all phases of life
- To maintain and build a brotherhood of Catholic Lay men
- To honour and live the teachings of the Gospel
- To develop our members to live the teachings of Christ through their words, actions and deeds.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT:

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Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds."
But I say, "How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds."
James 2:18

www.knightsofstcolumbanus.ie

