



The Holy Family of Bordeaux in Britain and Ireland

Glory to God alone in Jesus Christ through Mary and Saint Joseph

February 2017

Volume 3 Issue 2

In this Issue

- 1 Editorial
- 2 Message from Gemma
- 3 Opening of Bicentenary Celebration
- 6 UNWRAP THE TRUTH
- 7 Youth News in our Parish
- 8 BRIDGES NOT WALLS
- 9 News from Communities
- 11 UPCOMING EVENTS



Bishop Nulty, Sr Kate and teachers with the JP II Awards Group in Newbridge Secondary School

EDITORIAL

We all love to give and receive gifts, not merely because of the gift itself but for what it represents in terms of love, friendship, or gratitude. Gift-giving is a practice as old as humanity itself. We only have to open the Bible to read of the extravagant gifts exchanged between powerful rulers as a sign of mutual esteem, or to cement treaties of peace. The Bible also contains much on the attitudes and dispositions we should have when we give.

It also teaches us how we should receive gifts and what gifts we should aspire to have. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, "Set your minds on the higher gifts", and then goes on to show them the best way of all, which is the way of love. Love is the basis of all we do for others and no one is excluded from this love. Gift is the theme of Pope Francis' Lenten message where he says, "*other persons are a gift*".

That is why using promises of gifts to deceive and coerce people is such a travesty of the very concept of gift with its evocation of grace, gratuity, and favour. This is what human traffickers do when they entice desperate people - women, children and men - to leave their country with promises of a better future abroad and then enslave them.

That is why a public art campaign, using an installation decorated to look like a gift box, is touring Ireland during the month of March to raise awareness of human trafficking (cf. P. 6). Inside, the horrific truth of what happens to the person deceived is revealed. The campaign is an attempt to ensure that no one can claim ignorance of this appalling crime, give some indications of how its existence can be detected around us, as well as inviting us to examine ways in which we might unwittingly be complicit in this modern slavery.



Message from Sr. Gemma (Unit Leader)

WE REMEMBER

This year we begin a period of reflection leading up to the celebration of the 200 anniversary of our foundation. This will be a time of reflection, remembering who we are, where we have come from and where we are going. I am struck by the two-fold meaning of the word “re-member” – calling to mind and coming together again. We call to mind our past story and, in the re-telling of that story, we come together as members of the one Family. This is what we aspire to during this time – to draw more closely together as one Family of five vocations as we retell the story of our Family in preparation for the bicentenary in 2020.

Story - telling, as we know, is very important; we humans are story-telling creatures. We have been telling stories for thousands of years and we continue to be fascinated by story in our love for fiction, TV dramas, and films. When we come together, our conversations are often interspersed with stories about ourselves or others, or happenings in the world around us. Stories provide a way of comprehending our place in the world; they help us to structure our understanding of events and they root us in history, thereby providing us with a sense of belonging and identity.

Our Scriptures are full of stories. As we see from the Old Testament the Jewish people were a people who remembered and who chronicled their memories as stories. They weren't passive in remembering. Instead, they actively set aside time to retell stories, recalling God's hand at work in their lives. And that ritual of remembering propelled them forward, giving them confidence that the God who was faithful to their forbears in the past could be trusted to be with them in the future.

Jesus also used stories or parables to deliver his message. Parables were a common form of teaching in Judaism and they had the advantage of being easily

remembered and of communicating profound, divine truths in simple, everyday language that appealed to the heart and spoke immediately to the simple people of his day.



We have set aside this special time to remember. We look back in thanksgiving for all the blessings given to us in our 200 year history. We also look forward to new beginnings – to future times of possibility. Just as we have responded to the challenges of the past, we pray that we will be given the grace and courage to respond to the challenges that await us in the future.

This time of Jubilee calls us to deeper conversion and a new beginning in living out the Gospel. It will be a time for asking questions like: What is in need of liberation in the Holy Family? In what ways are we being called to practice forgiveness? What are the calls we hear coming to us from a world that is divided and suffering the effects of war, terrorism, racism, sexism, lack of communion? What contribution are we being called to make to draw all people into the one Family of God? Can this be a new springtime for us – a new Pentecost?

We must never forget that we have already been gifted with the power to live in communion, to forgive and to work for justice.

“Declaring a Jubilee is an act of faith and hope and an act of conviction that grace, goodness and holiness exist despite our brokenness. Despite war and violence there is forgiveness. Despite inequality there is prophetic justice. Despite slaughter, our world looks toward Bethlehem where a new world order aches to be born”. (Maria Harris: Proclaim Jubilee: Spirituality for the 21st Century)

OPENING OF BI-CENTENARY CELEBRATION

PROVINCIAL HOUSE, LONDON

On Sunday, 5th February, the five members of the community in Aberdare Gardens met together with lay associate Rose Chee, to celebrate the opening of the bicentenary celebrations.

We began by spending time in silent prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, thanking God for the immeasurable blessing our Family received on 3rd February 1822 when our Lord appeared in the Eucharist to the first community in Bordeaux.

After 20 minutes of silent prayer, we reflected on the meaning of jubilee.

The custom of Jubilees began in the Old Testament and continues today in the Church. Throughout the years there have been numerous jubilee celebrations in the Church, the last one being the Jubilee of Mercy, declared by Pope Francis.

Jesus referred to the custom of Jubilee when he went back to Nazareth to begin his public ministry.

“He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.



He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4: 16-30)

Here, Jesus was proclaiming Jubilee to the people at Nazareth. And he reminds his listeners about the meaning of Jubilee - forgiveness, restoring liberty to all those who were enslaved and restoring a truly equitable and just society – a new society was the term used by our Founder.

Jesus whole ministry subsequently was a realization of Jubilee. He went about proclaiming good news to the poor, healing the sick and restoring sight to the blind. We, his disciples are called to follow in his mission, to live and proclaim jubilee wherever we are. Jubilee is not a one-time event but a way of life.

Now we are at the beginning of an important time in the story of our Family. We are declaring jubilee for the next three years in preparation for the bicentenary. We begin a period of reflection leading up to the celebration of the 200 anniversary of our foundation. This will be a time of reflection, remembering who we are, where we have come from and where we are going.

We commented on the two-fold meaning of the word “re-member” – calling to mind and coming together again. We call to mind our past story and, in the re-telling of that story, we come together as members of the one Family. This is what we aspire to during this time – to draw more closely together as one Family of five vocations as we retell the story of our Family in preparation for the bicentenary in 2020.

After our prayer and reflection we congregated in the dining room to enjoy a celebratory tea and later in the afternoon we received a visit from Bishop Nicholas Hudson who was making a pastoral visit to our parish

It was a very pleasant friendly meeting with the Bishop. He was interested in learning about our Founder and the international Family he founded. He inquired about the ministry of each one of us.

The day ended with a visit to the chapel. There, the Bishop joined us in praising and thanking God for all God’s favours to us and imploring God’s blessing as we embark on this three-year reflection in preparation for the celebration of 200 years of our life as *Holy Family*.

Aberdare Community

NEWBRIDGE

Launch of the Bicentenary Preparation



Gathering in Holy Family School Hall, Newbridge

united with members of a much wider Family throughout the world and that this “being in communion with our worldwide Holy Family” is what makes us who we are.

On Saturday afternoon, 4 February, over 50 members of the Family of PBN gathered in the Holy Family School for the official launch of the bi-centenary celebration. Catherine Moran welcomed everyone and then Claire spoke in enthusiastic and inspiring terms about the significance of the occasion for all. As she spoke spontaneously and without notes much of what she said is not recorded. Below are a few of the main ideas.

Claire began by stating that the main purpose of the gathering was to launch the opening of the bi-centenary celebration. She said how good it was to see that four of the five Holy Family vocations were represented there that afternoon. It was a reminder to us, at this time, that we are

consequently, the way we will celebrate this bi-centenary is by living the gift of who we are as members of one Family, a Family that reaches out to our greater worldwide Family. It was also emphasised that it was a grace filled occasion to be gathering on this day to begin celebrating two hundred years of Holy Family life, and that the Founder himself would be very proud of all that has been lived and achieved over the last 200 years.

But the question we ask is, how will we celebrate? Over the next three years we will work, pray and reflect together through deepening the richness of our Charism and trying to live it with courage and enthusiasm.

We then read our Bi-Centenary prayer. Claire read the first part as a reflection inviting us to stop and ponder on the words. The second page we prayed together.



Family Focus

The Family Focus Team, taking advantage of the occasion, had arranged for some input and reflection on the Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia*.

Before getting to that, however, time was given for the participants to mill around and get to know one another by chatting to those they did not know. The buzz in the room was great and it was with some difficulty that all were prevailed upon to take their seats again for the next part of the



Getting to know one another

With the forthcoming World Gathering of Families due to take place in Ireland in 2018, the *Holy Family* Focus Team decided to prepare by taking up some of the topics in *Amoris Laetitia*. A working sub-group was formed, comprising Srs. Bernadette Deegan, Kate Cuskelly, Eileen Ryan, Secular Member Margaret Lay Member Esther Keogh, and Fr. Brian Kavanagh. Sr. Catherine Moran was co-opted on to this working group.



Esther Keogh



In preparation for the meeting, all the participants had been asked to read and reflect on chapters 1 and 9 of the exhortation. The members of the sub-committee, in turn, gave a brief input sharing the fruits of their own study and reflections on different points raised by Pope Francis in these chapters. Their words were illustrated by concrete, relevant examples from life today with which all could identify.



Fr. Brian

Discussion on a variety of issues relating to the Family continued around the usual cup of tea. This was just a beginning and, a very enjoyable, beneficial one as all agreed. There will be more to come.



Sr. Bernadette

UNWRAP THE TRUTH



GIFT Box from outside



What you see inside

GIFT Box is a unique way to raise awareness about human trafficking and gather knowledge on the issue.

STOP THE TRAFFIK and the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) have teamed up and created it.

The large walk-in boxes, set up in strategic places on streets, campuses, inside buildings or any suitable public place, invite you inside with enticing promises and offers of a better life, an education, a good job, a loving relationship...

But once inside you are presented with a different reality.

The GIFT Box will be touring Ireland in March, a joint initiative of the Loreto Sisters and APT (Act to Prevent Trafficking) with the support of the Department of Justice.

It will visit Drogheda, Dublin, Limerick, Tralee, Galway, Athlone, Maynooth and back to Drogheda and returning to Belfast from where it came to the Republic.

It will be erected at the Central Bank, Dame Street, Dublin, early on 4 March and taken down by 2.30 on 6 March after Minister for Justice and Tánaiste, Frances Fitzgerald, has paid a visit.

Loreto College, St. Stephen's Green, will host it on the 7th and it will go to DCU on the 8th – 9th.

Then it is off to Limerick, Tralee, Athlone, Galway.

It will arrive in Maynooth late on Sunday, 26 March. It will be erected early on Monday 27th in NUI Maynooth on the North Campus, near the John Hume Building.

It will move back to Dundalk on Tuesday 28th.

Síle McGowan

Worldwide, more than 20 million people are held in slavery for
Cheap labour
Sexual exploitation
Theft or vital human organs
Sham marriages
Enforced street begging.

YOUTH NEWS IN OUR PARISH

On 2 December last almost 300 young people from Kildare and Leighlin Diocese received their Pope John Paul II Award from our Bishop Denis Nulty. Over 60 of these young people attend school here in Newbridge: in Holy Family Secondary, Patrician Secondary and Newbridge College. This award is presented in recognition of the voluntary involvement of young people in their local parish and in the wider community.

This **Good News Story** was celebrated in a special way at 7 p.m. Mass in Cill Mhuire Church on Saturday, 4 February. All who received this award were invited and encouraged to join the parish community for this special event; their parents and family members were also warmly welcomed.

Another group of young people was commissioned at 7 p.m. Mass in St Conleth's Church on Sunday 5 February as they journey towards their Pope John Paul II award. We are very heartened by the fact that several of this new group are already actively involved in our parish and have made a very significant contribution to our recent Faith Friends Programme with our Confirmation Candidates.

A group of our young people who attended the World Youth Day event in Poland last Summer continue to get together for times of reflection and sharing. Members of this group have become involved in the monthly Taizé Mass in the Parish Church, helping prepare the Altar, Reading Prayers of the Faithful, and Communion Reflections. This group meets in the *Holy Family* Convent. They are currently involved in planning ways to expand the group and welcome new members. There is a strong social aspect to their meetings and a delivery of Pizza is always on the agenda.

Another very hopeful sign is the recently formed AMADEUS GROUP. This youth group meets in the Parish Centre on Station Road on Friday nights from 7 p.m. - 8.30 and is geared towards boys and girls in First Year Secondary school and those in 6th Class Primary level. This group, led by young adults from our parish, is described as a Fun, Faith and



Bishop Nulty, teachers and JP II award students, Patrician Sec. School Friendship Group and would be an excellent follow up for those Confirmation candidates who attended the Faith Friends Programme.

All of these initiatives are real ways of keeping our youth connected to their faith and to the Church at a time when we often hear people lament the fact that so few young people attend our Liturgical celebrations.

Reaching out to our youth and welcoming their involvement is very much in keeping with the thoughts and challenges which Pope Francis offers us. In one of his most recent letters to young people he announced a Synod in October 2018 on the topic of young people and faith. In this letter he encourages young people and says, *"I want you to be the centre of attention, because you are in my heart."* He goes on to say, *"A better world can be built as a result of your efforts. Do not be afraid to listen to the Spirit. Do not delay when your conscience asks you to take risks in following the way of Jesus. The Church wishes to listen to your voice, your sensitivities and your faith; even your doubts and your criticism. Make your voice heard; let it resonate in communities and let it be heard by your shepherds of souls. St. Benedict urged the Abbots to consult, even the young, before any important decision, because as stated in the rule of St Benedict, 'the Lord often reveals to the younger what is best'."*

Sr. Kate Cuskelly

BRIDGES NOT WALLS

In recent weeks, I have often found myself engaged in conversations about the many global challenges facing society today. Where, on the one hand, there is a movement to recognise our inter-connectedness, our essential unity, our coming together in and through our diversity, the creation of networks of communication, on the other hand there seems to be an upsurge in nationalism, isolationism, racism, separation, division, and discrimination. Sometimes the latter appears to take over and overshadow all the good that is in our world, in the face of which there is a danger of feeling powerless and remaining silent. But silence is not an option when faced with actions that go counter to Christian values based on our essential oneness, the respect for human dignity, and the need for all people to be treated equally.

So, when I first heard from Sarah of the JRS (Jesuit Refugee Service), and later Avaaz, about the protest taking place in London against President Trump's ban on Muslims and his misogynistic attitude to women



my immediate response was that I must go; I must support this protest. As a Congregation, we have taken the option to put our energies and resources at the service of refugees and vulnerable people 'on the move'. So, with three of my sisters, I joined the members of JRS group who had gathered in protest. This is a vital part of the work of JRS; while accompanying and caring for the most destitute and



Holy Family Sisters join anti-Trump protest

often forgotten of society, it is necessary to speak on their behalf whenever the opportunity arises and this was one moment to do so. Very recently Fr. Michael Czerny SJ, just appointed to the new Vatican Department for Integral Human Development, said: "The way a country responds to the needs of migrants and refugees is a 'thermometer' of the well-being of that society." And I would venture to say the "thermometer" of any Christian group.

As the numbers of protesters increased we became separated from the JRS group, and yet there remained the awareness that we were united with the group who were somewhere among the many thousands of people. Squashed like sardines, with little possibility of movement, it was remarkable how friendly everyone was. United by a common desire to stand for people who were being marginalised and discriminated against, for a brief moment we were one.

In this there is hope, a visible expression of our connectedness as human beings, and the desire for a more just and equal world. Given the level of support at such short notice, we can believe that many people are awake, aware and concerned, and that good will overcome and shine through the dark shadows that are around today.

Sr. Margaret Muldoon

NEWS FROM COMMUNITIES

PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATION IN NEWBRIDGE

The feast day of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles, on 8 February, was celebrated by the Newbridge community in union with the whole Family throughout the world.

On this special day, we also marked the anniversaries of Religious Profession of seven Sisters in our Community. Among them were Sisters Catherine Evers, Roseanne Power and Vincent Whelan who were marking the seventieth anniversary of their Religious Profession, .



Traditionally, celebrations are kept on Saturday and so 18 February was earmarked.

For weeks beforehand, bundles of post arrived as also did family and well-wishers. On the evening of the 17th, the Staff of the Care Unit presented the Jubilarians with a beautiful bouquet of white flowers and, nestling in a white rose, was a 'platinum jewel'. So thoughtful.

We celebrated the Jubilee Mass on the 18th with Fr. Paul Dempsey, our Parish Priest presiding. It was followed by a banquet in the beautifully decorated dining room. It was a fitting setting to mark two hundred and ten years of commitment to God in the *Holy Family*.

All three Sisters shared memories of times past. They began their journey here in Newbridge in August 1945, with Ita Keane and the late Margaret O'Ryan. Just imagine, their four-to-six weeks stay in Newbridge was due to difficulties in procuring visas to travel to Rock Ferry!

Their memories went to ration books and rationing, blackouts, six months in Bordeaux etc. How fitting, that seventy years later they would be hale and hearty to share their stories. The gathering in the Dining Room came to a close with the cutting of the cake, champagne and photographs.

Saturday 18 February 2017

"My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour".

11.30 a.m. Mass
 12.30 p.m. Lunch
 3.45 p.m. Group Rosary
 5.00 p.m. Tea

Happy Platinum Jubilee to Srs. Roseanne, Vincent, Catherine E



Fifty Years a Priest

Holy Family Priest Associate, Fr Charlie Byrne, who resides in Newbridge, recently celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood.

With his fellow ordinands, he took a trip to Rome where they were received in audience by Pope Francis.

The Newbridge community set aside a day to celebrate with him.



CELEBRATION OF THE MIRACULOUS BLESSING in ROCK FERRY

February 3, was truly a family day here in Rock Ferry. Fr. Bernard celebrated Mass for us in the Convent chapel at 11 a.m. Many parishioners, Lay Associates and our Secular member, Eileen, were present.

In the afternoon we had a Holy Hour mainly organised by Fr. Bernard. Once again our chapel was nearly full and there was a wonderful feeling that this was a really happy Family day not only for us but also for the parishioners who joined us.

As we had the bicentennial prayer, many asked if they could take it to say daily. Who knows what blessings on occasions like this may be showered upon us through our parishioners' prayers?



UPCOMING EVENTS

March 2017						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Ash Wednesday St David's Day	2	3 Women's World Day of Prayer World Wildlife Day	4
5	6	7	8 International Women's Day	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 Death of Mother Trinity Noailles (1850)	17 St. Patrick's Day	18
19 Feast of St. Joseph	20	21 World Down's Syndrome Day International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	22 World Day for Water	23	24 International Day for the Right to the Truth concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims	25 Earth Hour Lights out from 8.30 - 9.30 One hour without light worldwide* Reception of first Lay Associate Foundation of the Secular Institute 1824
26	27	28	29	30	31	