



The Holy Family of Bordeaux

in Britain and Ireland

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

October 2015

Volume 1 Issue 8



Holy Family Sisters who gathered in Arran Road on 31 October to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the foundation with Fr. Patrick Sweeney who presided at the Eucharist and gave the homily

Editorial

In this Issue

- 1 Editorial
- 2 Message from Gemma
- 3 At the Ploughing Championships
- 4 BEACON Anniversary
- 5 Synod Snippet
- 6 Year for Consecrated Life
- 9 Action for Refugees
- 11 Global Action
- 12 Upcoming Events

BREAKING NEWS in this last week of October was the announcement of the new Unit Leadership Team. It was greeted with joy and hope by the sisters of the Unit.

Every such new appointment, though it may herald change, is both a beginning and a continuation as we are constantly moving forward together in our common mission. Leadership and membership have been part of our reflections for quite a while. Now would be a good time to revisit the booklet, **LEADERSHIP/MEMBERSHIP IN THE HOLY FAMILY**, containing the input given at workshops on the topic by the last Leadership Team.

In these challenging, depressing, wonderful, tragic, exhilarating times the call for all of us is “to deepen our sense of responsibility for the life and mission of the Family” (Prov. Chapter 2014) and engage fully in the life of the Unit, the Institute and the wider Family.

So, we welcome our new Team knowing that, by our mutual collaboration and trust, “we bear witness to the hope that some day all the children of God will be gathered together into one and the same family” (Const. Art 41).



Message from Sr. Gemma (Unit Leader)

GOOD NEWS



These days, the media seems to be presenting us with nothing but bad news – atrocities, brutal wars, destruction and death on an industrial scale resulting in hundreds of thousands of people on the move, desperately seeking safety.

Is there any good news? Indeed yes. One piece in particular is especially heartening – the incredible human kindness and generosity being shown to those in distress. Ordinary people everywhere have been moved to compassion by the plight of the endless stream of refugees fleeing the horrors of war. Impatient with the totally inadequate response on the part of Governments, they have got together to offer practical help – giving their time and money, opening their homes and putting pressure on Governments to do much more.

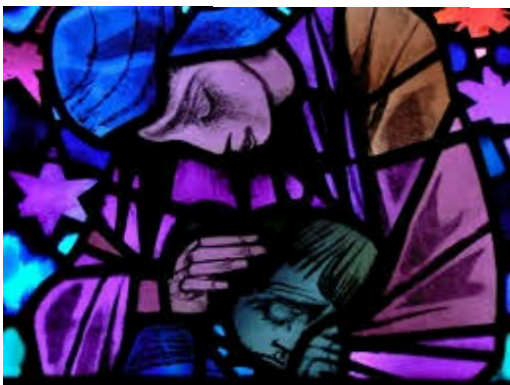
In Ireland the advocacy group, Uplift, has set up a 'Pledge a Bed' campaign inviting people to share their homes with refugees. Within three hours of its inception, over 1,030 Irish people had signed up.

In Brussels, local families stepped forward to host more than 500 refugees who were camped in a park while waiting processing of their applications for asylum.

And ordinary people in the UK, without any humanitarian training have been travelling to Calais to deliver donations of food and clothing to those languishing in the so-called jungle camps at the entrance to the channel tunnel.

The power of social media has brought us together to do something extraordinary - to offer support and solidarity to those in need.

Everywhere we look we see evidence of human goodness and compassion. Being made in the image and likeness of a loving, compassionate God, we too are capable of being transformed by love, enabling us to move out of our comfort zones to meet others in their vulnerability and need.



Our compassion, like that of the Good Samaritan in the Gospel is not a fleeting sentimentality. Rather it comes from a profound identification with the other as brother or sister and from the deep conviction that, as members of the one family, we are responsible for one another. The Good Samaritan didn't just give alms to the wounded man lying on the road and then go on his way. Rather he brought him into his life, took responsibility for him in his vulnerable state and treated him as a brother.

We too are being invited to go to the other side of the road, to go where the hurting is, to share the other's brokenness, confusion and anguish.

As Archbishop Koch of Berlin recently said during the Synod: "The Holy Family were refugees and this Family became a blessing for us all... Does God perhaps today also want refugee families in particular to be a blessing for us? At this Synod we must also speak about these [refugee] families and we must speak about ourselves as the new family of Jesus, the family of His Church, which does not erect any walls or barbed wire. The refugee families are part of us and we of them. We are a blessing for each other."



A Day at the Ploughing Championships



Each year during the month of September an agricultural show takes place in Ireland. It is Europe's biggest Agricultural Show. It attracts thousands of people and enjoys huge media coverage over the three days that it takes place. This year the event took place in the heart of rural Ireland, in Ratheniska Co Laois. It hosted over fifteen hundred exhibitors in stalls (large tents) all having something to offer, plus the actual ploughing championships themselves and for the interested farmer, various breeds of cattle, sheep and pigs from all over Ireland and abroad were on show.

To visit the fields where the actual ploughing took place was to be transported back in time to another era. It was fascinating to watch the horses and the ploughman (it was men who worked the plough) work together to create that perfect furrow. I was reminded of Patrick Kavanagh's poem: "Plough Horses"

*Their glossey flanks and manes outshone
The flying splinters of the sun.
The tranquil rhythm of that team
Was a slow flowing meadow stream
Seeing with eyes the Spirit unsealed
Plough horses in a quiet field.*

One of the tents was sponsored by the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin. During the three days people were welcomed in, offered free tea/coffee and a friendly chat. There was a quiet space where people could enjoy a moment of calm away from the milling crowds outside. They were entertained by visiting choirs, could listen to poetry readings, not to mention being greeted by Bishop Nulty in his wellington boots!

One section of the tent was set aside for members of Religious orders where they could meet and interact with people and talk about their Congregation. This area had a number of simple games (ice breakers) which proved very popular with both young and old. These allowed for ease of communication, fun and often lead to questions about the Congregation they were representing and further information about them

On the second day of the show Holy Family Sister, Mairead Behan, who was there representing the *Holy Family*, took her place for over four hours at this section of the tent.

There, meeting with both young and old she was able to share something about herself and our Holy Family story. When it was time to go Mairead was very surprised to find that she had been there for most of the day and still felt energised, both by the joyful atmosphere and the warmth of the people.



A good day out!

Claire McGrath
Clane

NEWS FROM BRADFORD



Tenth Anniversary of BEACON

On 26 September Bradford celebrated the 10th Anniversary of BEACON (Bradford Ecumenical Asylum Concern). BEACON'S motto is "Welcome the stranger" and they do this through:

- "Hosting" - welcoming a destitute asylum seeker into their home while that person tries to open a new case in the hope of receiving permission to stay in this country.
- "McKenzie Friends" - who accompanying asylum seekers to Court and offer them support in whatever way they can.
- "CHAT" - a Drop-in Centre for Asylum Seekers, offering them friendship, support, English classes and a welcome cuppa...

Srs. Maria, Nasreen and Teresa of the Bradford community have long been connected with BEACON and asylum seekers through cooking, women's club, befriending, supporting, and other ways.

"It has been a great joy for us to belong to this movement. We were present at the anniversary celebration and had also been asked to cook and serve a big pot of a biryani and salad, which proved very popular."

Some quotations from the talks on the day:

Traditional Irish proverb: "It is in the shelter of each other that the people live."

Rabindranath Tagore: "When one knows thee, then stranger is none."



City of Sanctuary

City of Sanctuary is a movement committed to [building a culture of hospitality](#) and welcome, especially for refugees seeking sanctuary from war and persecution. Its network of local groups includes boroughs, towns and cities across the UK and Ireland, all committed to building this culture of welcome across every sphere of society.

The first City of Sanctuary in the UK was Sheffield and was started by Dr. Indejit Bhogal, a Methodist Minister.

BRADFORD is the second *City of Sanctuary* in the UK, but now there are 60 Towns/Cities which have this status in the UK and Ireland.

Aims and hopes

- * To build a deeper understanding of each other as human beings.
- * To build relationships of respect and mutual trust with the "strangers" we meet.
- * Accept each other as human beings
- * Hospitality is the core of all faiths.

As individuals

- * Be HUMAN and call others to be human
- * Be HOSPITABLE and call others to be hospitable
- * Challenge hatred, contempt, ill informed attitudes

The movement has spread to Perth in Australia and Montreal in Canada.

Teresa Edwards

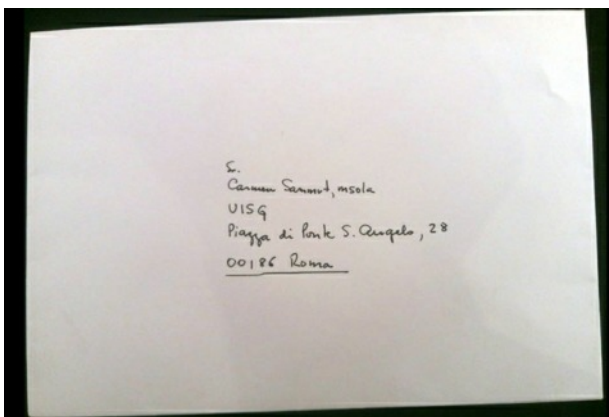
Synod Snippet (from the National Catholic Reporter)

The President of the IUSG (International Union of Superiors General), Sr. Carmen Sammut OLA, and two other religious sisters representing the UISG were among 32 women who participated in the 2015 Synod in non-voting roles alongside the 270 prelate-members.

The UISG leader had an opportunity during the synod on 16 October to meet privately for a moment with Pope Francis. She took the opportunity to ask the pontiff if he had received a number of letters her group had written to him that focused particularly on expressing their availability to provide input should the pope want to consider more deeply his expressed desire for greater roles for women in the church.

The Pope indicated he had not received the letters. She then invited him to take part in the next triennial general assembly of the IUSG, taking place in May 2016.

Sr. Carmen said she received a hand-written note in the mail from Francis the next day, in which the pontiff promised a general audience with the some 800 women religious coming to Rome for the gathering. The letter was handwritten in Spanish, with the envelope even addressed by the pope, who gave a return address of: "F., Casa Santa Marta, Citta del Vaticano."





YEAR for CONSECRATED LIFE

*In Dioceses and Parishes events are taking place to highlight this special Year for Consecrated Life. They have raised new awareness of the gift consecrated life is to the Church and, in some cases, a desire to learn more. It is Pope Francis's hope that this Year will "become an authentic **Kairos**, a time rich in God's grace, a time of transformation".*

An Ongoing Event - Evening Prayer in St. Teresa's Church, Clarendon Street (Dublin)

Every Thursday, from 4 December 2014, after the 5.30 p.m. Mass, a different CORI religious Congregation or Society leads the evening prayer choosing whatever format and theme it deems appropriate. It includes an introduction giving a short account of the group.

The aim is to provide an opportunity for laity and religious to pray together, learn about the different Congregations/Societies, meet and speak with one another. The service is live streamed from St. Teresa's so it can reach a wider congregation.

On 8 October 2015 the *Holy Family* were invited to guide the prayer. Srs. Bernadette and Máiréad (Clane) undertook to organise the event, supported by Srs. Claire and Síle.



Creation was the theme of the prayer.



Claire introduced the service by giving an account of our origins, the historical context of the time (1820) drawing parallels with our own time, Fr. Noailles's totally new founding inspiration of an Association that would include all vocations in the Catholic Church.

Síle led the service. with readings and prayers done by Máiréad, Colette, (Arran Road), Aneta (Poland) and Rose Sullivan (Lay Associate).

The physical congregation was small, composed largely of religious women and men; there is no way to gauge what the virtual congregation was like. Those present showed a lively interest in the Family of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles and an appreciation of the prayer. Our thanks to Sr. Catherine and Irene Kavanagh (Lay Associate) for printing the leaflets.

Pope Francis had a special word for young religious, telling them they "are the present" as they are already taking an active part in their Institutes but at the same time they "are the future" soon to be "called to take on roles of leadership". He urged them to be actively "engaged in dialogue with the previous generation".

World meeting for young religious in Rome

Four Holy Family sisters, three contemplatives and one apostolic, were among the roughly 5,000 young consecrated men and women from all parts of the world who gathered in Rome from 15-19 September to take part in the World Meeting for Young Consecrated Men and Women. The meeting was entitled *'Wake up the World – Gospel, Prophecy, Hope'* and was organised by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life as part of the Year of Consecrated Life.



HF Srs. who participated in the meeting for young religious

The aims of the meeting:

- to have a formative experience through Biblical, Theological-Charismatic and Ecclesiological reflections on the fundamental elements of Consecrated Life;
- to offer the possibility of sharing one's reality, desires and formation expectations;
- to celebrate and witness the beauty of one's vocation.

Each morning the participants gathered in the Paul VI Hall in Vatican City to listen to the keynote speeches on vocation, community life and mission. In the afternoon, the participants were divided into language groups in various locations in Rome and had the opportunity to express and share their feedback. In the evenings, there were various itineraries on offer:

- *The Pathway of Announcement*: (missionary night in central Rome);
- *The Pathway of Encounter* (helping socio-ecclesial organizations, like Caritas, St Egidio Community, Talitha Kum),
- *The Pathway of Beauty* (guided visits to the Vatican Museums and the Sistine Chapel).

The program included three events that were open to all people:

- a Prayer Vigil in St Peter's Square presided by the Secretary Archbishop of CIVCSVA,
- a Eucharistic Celebration in St Peter's Papal Basilica presided by the Prefect of the Congregation,
- an evening of music and witnessing in St Peter's Square.

On Saturday 19 September there was a great Memorial Celebration of the Saints and Martyrs of Consecrated Life. It was a joyful, faith filled celebration which gave our young people great space to

Pope Francis invited "every Christian community to experience this Year above all as a moment of thanksgiving to the Lord and grateful remembrance for all the gifts we continue to receive, thanks to the sanctity of founders and foundresses, and from the fidelity to their charism shown by so many

2 Parishes and a Diocese remember their Consecrated Members from Lil Meagher

Moneenroe

Religious and priests who came from, or who had worked in, Clogh/Moneenroe parish were invited back for a special Mass on 2 August, the same day as Sr Anne's golden jubilee was celebrated. They were asked to write a little about themselves and to send this to us with a photo. We asked if they would do this even if they could not come. Sr. Anne gave the homily. (It will be published elsewhere)



Srs. Frances, Anne and Lil
Moneenroe Community

The response was great.

We put each one's story and picture up in the church. A candle was specially made for each one with her/his name on it. At the offertory of the Mass we went up around the altar and recited a common vow formula together.

The candles were delivered to those who could not come, namely, a Sister who lives in Japan, a Poor Clare, a Carmelite, two De La Salle Brothers, a Capuchin Priest, and 3 diocesan Priests.

Maureen, now in Newbridge, sent this message.



Sr. Maureen O'Mahony

Holy Family Sister

From Kerry

Lived in Moneenroe

1982 - 1989

Maureen worked in the Moneenroe Parish visiting families, baby sitting to give couples a break.

The bicycle was her mode of transport.

Maureen wishes to be remembered to all and is grateful for the warm welcome she always received.

Rathdowney/Errill

A committee has set themselves the task of putting together a book on all Religious who came from their Parish. We were asked to write the story of our vocation. the ministries we are/were involved in, countries we lived in.

Those Religious who have died will have this done for them by family members. Again, we see that a very big number came from this small area, including five Holy Family Sisters:

Visitation Whelan Marguerite Moroney, Margaret and Clare Marie O'Connell, Pauline Harney, Lil Meagher

Magherafelt

I was on my way to visit the sick when the thought came to me, "We have done so little to celebrate the year of Consecrated Life".

So, I indicated right and went into St. Pius X College where I have already done some work in the RE Department and suggested to Mrs. O'Neill (Head of R.E.) that I would be happy to share some thoughts on the history of the Holy Family of Bordeaux since we had celebrated 125 years of ministry in Magherafelt this year.

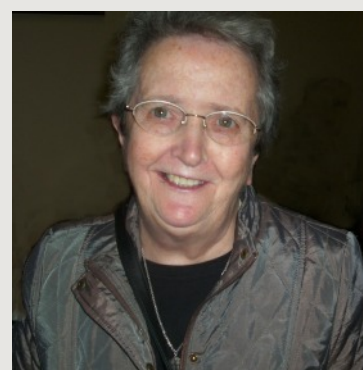
The suggestion was warmly welcomed and plans were set in place to address each of the five Year 5 classes - 150 students in total. The response both from Staff and students was great and so at the end I discussed with Mrs. O'Neill the possibility of setting up a small group of Holy Family Youth. I explained what would be involved. She was keen and said she would put the suggestion to the students and just see if any were interested.

Meantime I went off to Medugorje and when I returned to St. Pius X for some feedback twelve students were waiting "to learn more and to come closer to God". Surely there could be no better motive. So for the records H.F.Y Group was set up in Magherafelt on 21 October, 2015 .

Thank God for the inspiration and a big thanks is due to Mrs. O'Neill who gave the venture her full support. Thanks also to Sr. Kate who provided the Guidelines and gave me every encouragement. We have taken "REACHING OUT" as our motto. This "REACHING OUT" will be in the home, in school and in the wider community. Sr. Kate has provided our first set of H.F.Y badges. Together, have great plans for the future!

With God's help we shall go forward.

Margaret Bradley



Sr. Margaret
Magherafelt Community

Upcoming Event in the Diocese of Ossory

Each Order/Congregation in the Diocese has been asked to write a short story about their:

Founder - Charism - Emblem - Ministries in the diocese and throughout the world .

All of these are being put together by the *Adult Faith Team*.

On 29 November there will be a display of the above in

St Kieran's College, Kilkenny, from 10am until 4.30pm.

All are invited to St. Mary's Cathedral for Mass after that to be celebrated by Bishop Seamus Freeman.

Action for Refugees



This is why over 50 Holy Family Sisters, Lay Associates and Consecrated Seculars gathered in the convent, Newbridge, on 23 October, to reflect together and come up with suggestions on how we can implement the commitment made at the Provincial Chapter 2014 on how to “use our resources of personnel, houses, finances and skills on behalf of those who are displaced”.

To help us in our deliberations we asked David Moriarty of the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) to speak to us. In his address he centred on the work of the JRS in Ireland and gave a clear, comprehensive account of how they operate. Most of what he said in his talk can be found on the JRS website: <http://www.jrs.ie/>

Using this, and further information, ideas and insights gleaned from a question and answer session after the talk, and ongoing conversations over lunch the participants had an open forum to see what action could be taken in the immediate future.



It became evident that quite a bit is already being done on an individual basis in Ireland, such as making contact with those who are in direct provision centres in Ireland and, in the UK, opening communities to refugees who need somewhere to stay.

There is a desire and willingness for us to move towards a more organised, collaborative effort, recognising the need to draw on the help of others – individuals and groups – with more knowledge and expertise in ways to support and accompany asylum seekers and refugees, and in matters such as advocacy/lobbying.

The next step is to
‘Go Forward’
with faith and courage.





Sustainable Development Goals

On 25 September, world leaders gathered in the UN to adopt a set of global goals to **end poverty, protect the planet**, and **ensure prosperity for all** as part of a new sustainable development agenda. The SDGs are a set of 17 goals and 169 targets aimed at resolving global social, economic and environmental problems to be met over the **next 15 years**, beginning on 1 January 2016. The SDGs replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which were adopted in 2000 and expire this year.

For the goals to be reached, everyone needs to do her/his part: governments, the private sector, civil society and people like us.

We can get involved at once by telling everyone about them.

Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

UPCOMING EVENTS -

November 2015						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 All Saints Day	2 All Souls Day	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 International Day for Tolerance	17	18	19	20 Universal Children's Day HF Meeting	21 in Crewe
22	23	24 Feast of St. Théophane Vénard , Priest & Prayer Friend of the HF	25 International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women	26	27	28
29 Peoples' Climate Marches prior to Paris Conference	30 COP21/CMP11 Conference begins in Paris Feast of St. Andrew					

And a final question...

