



# The Holy Family of Bordeaux

## in Britain and Ireland

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

September 2016

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Srs. Margaret Muldoon, Evelyn Hanley, Carmel Bateson, Brigid Davis  
at the London march

## EDITORIAL

One more *non-binding* Declaration has come from the UN! It's called *The New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants* and "expresses the political will of world leaders to save lives, protect rights and share responsibility on a global scale". We are told it contains "bold commitments both to address the issues we face now and to prepare the world for future challenges"; that it also contains "concrete plans for how to build on these commitments".



All this is true as even a cursory glance over it shows. It is a lengthy read, 25 pages in all, but worth having on our laptop or kindle for ready reference when questions about its implementation arise, as they surely will, because it is not going to happen tomorrow or even next year. As in so many such documents, the verbs are conjugated in the future. Paragraphs begin with phrases such as: "We will address...", "We will make efforts...", "We will take measures...".

That is why civil society, all of us, need to keep the pressure on our governments to ensure that this is not just one more beautiful document to be consigned to the archives of history. We are doing this by joining public demonstrations and signing petitions, by our actions in reaching out to refugees, sharing our homes and skills with them, as well as searching for other, creative ways to welcome people faced with the awful necessity of fleeing their homes and homelands.

## Message from Sr. Gemma (Unit Leader)

### IN PRAISE OF LEISURE

Summer is over, September has come and gone and, in this part of the world at least, it is back into the routine of work, school, and daily life in general.

For some it is a struggle to cope with what has been termed “post holiday blues” but for others it is a relief to get back to the structured life of work where we fill our time with the many activities that can sometimes leave no space for reflection or prayer.

For many of us, leisure actually raises difficulties; we can feel uneasy about unfilled time. Time spent doing nothing is time lost, time wasted, time without value. And yet isn't that a pretty good definition of contemplation? Time spent simply being in the presence of God, not doing anything, not asking for anything, just wasting time in the presence of the Holy One, empty, and waiting to be filled, in an attitude of openness and surrender.



Beatrice Bruteau makes the point that leisure is essential if we want to live a life of contemplation: “The contemplative life has always required an attitude of leisure, and leisure has often resulted in contemplation”. *Radical Optimism*. (Sentient Publications 2002)

An attitude of leisure is not just a cessation of activities but a state of soul, a contemplative and spiritual attitude consisting of an inner silence. It is receptivity to the world and an embrace of who we truly are. When we engage in contemplation we become vulnerable. We are invited to let go of our usual responses, our usual thoughts and allow ourselves to be transformed.

Contemplation is a prerequisite for fruitful action. Bruteau writes, “Many people say that it is difficult to practice contemplation in our secularised society. But our society is “secularised” precisely because contemplation is not adequately practised. These two work in a circle: the general environment of our consciousness either supports or hinders our contemplative life, and our contemplative life (or the lack of it) gives (or fails to give) spiritual dimensions to the surrounding world.” *The Grand Option* (Notre Dame Press 2001)



So many crises - global climate change, trafficking, poverty, violence and war - cry out for action. Yet, action without contemplation can result in frenetic activity that eventually becomes joyless and soulless. Conversely, if our contemplation does not send us out on mission, then we are in danger

of becoming self-absorbed and individualistic. Meister Eckhart states that “What we have gathered in contemplation we give out in love”. Constance FitzGerald, OCD, says, “...contemplation is not a validation of things as they are ... but a constant questioning and restlessness that waits for and believes in the coming of a transformed vision of God ... a new and integrating spirituality capable of creating a new politics and generating new social structures.” (*The Call to be a Mystic* ([www.iccdinstitute.org](http://www.iccdinstitute.org))).

The call to contemplation is addressed to all of us. May we respond to this call which comes from the One who speaks in everything that is, and who most of all speaks in the depths of our own being.

## WORLD MIGRANT CRISIS - NEED FOR ACTION NOT JUST WORDS

On 19 September, as we will have been aware from the wide news coverage given to it, 193 Global leaders gathered at the U.N. headquarters in New York for the first of two high-profile days of meetings on the issues of migration and refugees.



In a Report published in May on this matter, the UN Secretary General wrote: "If one lesson can be drawn from the past few years, it is that individual countries cannot solve these issues on their own.

International cooperation and action to address large movements of refugees and migrants must be strengthened."

It was the first time the United Nations General Assembly convened a summit at the level of Heads of State and Government to discuss migrants and refugees, in order to seek a better international response. The Summit saw member states adopt a set of *non-binding* commitments, known as the New York Declaration.

Click here to read the [Declaration](#)

On 20 September, President Obama hosted the Leaders' Summit on Refugees, to appeal to governments to pledge significant new commitments for the support of refugees. The summit focussed exclusively on refugees and was co-hosted with Ban and countries seen to have done most for refugees, such as Jordan, Mexico, Sweden, Germany, Canada and Ethiopia.

It is estimated that there are more than 65 million people displaced globally - the highest figure since World War II - and it has put serious strain on the international community's capacity to respond.

Of these:

- 3.2 million are asylum seekers (people seeking safety in a country that is not their own and who are waiting for a decision on an application for refugee status)
- 21.3 million are refugees (people living outside their own country who cannot return due to a well-founded fear of persecution)
- 40.8 million are internally displaced persons (people who have to leave their own home due to violence and abuse)





## REFUGEES ARE WELCOME HERE

This was the focus of a March held in London on Saturday, 17 September, to highlight the plight of refugees in advance of the two crucial summits of world leaders on 19 and 20 September.

The charity coalition, Solidarity with Refugees, that includes JRS, Cafod, Caritas, Christian Aid, Oxfam, Amnesty International, Refugee Council and others, worked together to organise the March in central London for 16 September. It was aimed at showing the government of the UK and indeed those of the world that we care about refugees.

We have all seen images of the tragedies unfolding in Syria, the Mediterranean Sea, Greece, the “jungle” in Calais and many more. Added to this there is concern for the injustices and inefficiencies of Britain’s own asylum system.

Preceding the March, an ecumenical service of hope for refugees was organised by Cafod, Caritas, Christian Aid, JRS and others. The theme of the service was “CHANGE THE STORY.”

As Pope Francis says: *“we ourselves need to see, and then enable others to see, that migrants and refugees are brothers and sisters to be welcomed, respected and loved”*

We were reminded that the media stories we read about refugees too often promote fear and resentment and prevent those



Srs. Carmel and Brigid march in London

seeking safety from finding a welcome. The invitation addressed to the participants was to share positive stories from our direct contact with refugees, stories inspired by our deep listening to refugees telling their own story; not only listening but allowing their stories to touch our lives and through us the lives of others.

We were further invited to ponder the questions:

*“What if we listen to God’s story that changes our story from stranger to sibling?”*

*What if, open to hearing and trusting in God, we change the story of the world so as to create a future in which our common*

*humanity is recognised and refugees are treated with dignity and respect?”*

A replica of the Lampedusa Cross was solemnly carried to the altar. We recalled that the original crosses were made by a Sicilian carpenter, Francesco Tuccio, from the wood of the first boat that sank off the island resulting in the death of 349 refugees. Those crosses



were offered to survivors as a

symbol of their rescue and a sign of hope. In this service the cross was offered as a symbol of hope for a new story.

A refugee woman, Victoire, told her very moving, personal story which was followed by the story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 30-36) ending with the question: *"Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"* We were given time to reflect on, *"What does that question mean to us today?"*, and in the context it no doubt touched our hearts in a new way and brought this challenging question of Jesus very close to us and directly into our reality.

Finally, the Cafod team asked us to write a short message of hope on cards provided. These will be used at a special event organised

for the end of the Year of Mercy and shared with refugees. Leaving the Church, we proceeded to join the March merging with the crowd already on the move and becoming immersed in a sea of banners from a great variety of organisations.

The *Holy Family* were represented by members from Provincial House, Clapham and Gabriel's Road. There were also many individuals with their own banners, including children, and elderly people walking with the help of an aid. The March took about two and half hours so it was remarkable to see how the young and the frail joyfully took part. Indeed, the large number of young adults present was also a sign of hope for change.

The banners carried messages of welcome, love, peace, respect and

solidarity. Many called for the recognition of equality for all peoples, respecting the fact that we all belong to "ONE HUMANITY".

We could experience that sense of being one, being connected as we walked in the crowd. It was good to be there. For a brief time, we were no longer strangers to one another united by our common conviction that we must stand up for the welcome of refugees. The March took us past Downing Street where a large number remained chanting,

*"Refugees are welcome here."*

Others proceeded to Parliament Square, a short distance away, to listen to various speakers calling the UK government to respond quickly, generously and positively to the plight of refugees.

Perhaps the experience may be best summed up in the prayer used during the ecumenical service

*God who changes our story from stranger to sibling, help us to change the story.*

From frustration to freedom, for those stuck in refugee camps.

From panic to peace, for those separated from families.

From trafficking to safe passage, for those on perilous journeys.

From despair to hope, for hearts weary with grief.

From worry to hospitality, for minds uncertain of change.

From crisis to opportunity, for countries providing a home.

From foreigner to family, as we were welcomed by you.

may we never miss meeting your gaze, in the eyes of our sibling, the stranger.

Amen

## Waltham Forest Inter-Faith Walk Healing in Harmony

Saturday, 4 June 2016, was an exciting day for the Waltham Forest Inter- Faith Women, the day organised for an Inter-Faith walk. It was a full day event from 8.30am - 4.45pm. Altogether eight different places of Religious worship were visited by nearly 35-40 participants, most of whom were Baha'is. There were three Catholic nuns, including myself.

At every stop there were prayers, sharing of their worship, time for sharing and asking questions which helped the participants to get to know more about the history, their way of worship, and above all, taste the hospitality and the welcome of different religions. There were a few UK citizens who had been to India and Sri Lanka who wanted to deepen their knowledge of other religions and to be part of the group in



from them about their beliefs and to realise they are peaceful and harmonious people. I experienced their caring by the way they cared for the elderly during that walk.



solidarity with them. I met many from Mauritius, South Africa and the UK who are of Indian origin, Hindus by faith but who became very strong Baha'i devotees.

The Baha'i faith is based on the unity of humanity and the belief that the world should be run as one country for the benefit of everyone. Also they believe that it is the difference between us which makes life interesting, and that we should cherish these differences, not ignore them. It was fascinating to hear

Our first visit was to Bhakti Yoga Centre. We got a wonderful reception from the ladies who run the Hare Krishna Temple, and one of them gave us an enthralling talk before playing the Sitar for us. A brilliant start to our day. Our next stop was at Katpaga Vinayagar Temple in Bedford Road where we were warmly received with music, a play and delicious food. It was fascinating to see St. Mary's Church, one of the oldest buildings in the borough. A couple belonging to the Church explained the 900 years' history of the Church. There was an Inspiring talk by parishioners of their faith and experiences. The church bells are currently away being repaired and events are planned to celebrate their return.

At the next stop, a Mosque, we were delighted to see the results of renovations and the designated area for ladies. At the top floor a gallery exposes brilliant views across London. After a talk, questions and answers, we were treated to a splendid lunch for which we were most grateful.

Then, to Whipps Cross hospital's little chapel which is in the heart of the hospital providing much needed support. There was a talk from Pastor Tristan before he handed over to the Baha'i. The assembly there, gave us well chosen readings on the theme of our walk "Healing on Harmony" and the most beautiful songs. We also visited Leytonstone and Wanstead Synagogue where Rabbi Paul Braham opened the door for us on a Saturday which is not normal. We were delighted to be welcomed by the newly elected Mayor Cllr. Peter Harrington and his Mayoress, Susan Harrington. The Mayor asked us to remember him on 2 October, his inauguration day.

Waltham Forest Interfaith's final stop was Gurdwara Sikh Sangat in French Road. Our day ended here and for those of us who had started the walk at 8.30 am and were now a little weary, we couldn't have been in better hands. A talk, a meal and time to relax and reflect on the day. We all agreed that this walk had been very special. We had all felt calm and at peace. Walking together in harmony had indeed been healing.

I am very grateful to the Waltham Forest Women Interfaith Group for their invitation to be part of this enriching day with valuable experiences. May their genuine efforts will be blessed and be continued.

Sophie Bastiampillai, Woodford

## MUSLIM EXTREMISTS MARCH

**T**he Inter-Faith walk was in stark contrast to a march by around 50 members of Muslims Against Crusades (MAC) and Waltham Forest Muslims (WFM) that took place on Saturday, 30 July.

Muslim extremists calling for democracy to be replaced by Sharia law marched through the borough from Leyton Tube station to Walthamstow.

Carrying black flags and loudspeakers, the protesters set off from Leyton Tube station at 1.20pm. They chanted slogans such as 'democracy - hypocrisy', 'Sharia for UK' and 'Secularism go to hell'.

Source



## Holloway Endings

**B**efore the summer break, St Gabriel's Road community hosted an ecumenical, multi-faith barbecue in our garden to say farewell to Holloway Chaplaincy team. Thankfully the weather was in our favour and all were able to enjoy the beauty of the garden as well as a great spread of 'bring and share' food.

### Holloway's Final Day

To mark the closure of Holloway, a Garden Party was held on 16 July for staff and their children. The women had already relocated to other prisons in June. A glorious day for children

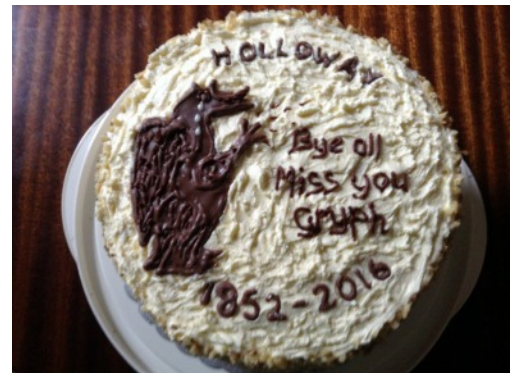


Holloway Garden Party

to enjoy the beautiful grounds and see where their parents had worked.

Visitors had the chance to visit a typical 'cell' and see some of the art work left by the residents.

There were refreshments galore including cakes baked by staff relating to the closure. Mine got 2<sup>nd</sup> prize!



Prize-winning cake  
Congratulations, Kathleen

At 4 p.m. all processed out of the prison, the gates were closed, the Governor and an officer in Dress Uniform went up on the roof and the Flag was lowered to 'the Last Post'. Needless to say there wasn't a dry eye. The last person out the gate was Maggie who had been an officer there for 47 years and was the first person into the present building as it replaced the old Victorian building.



Final exit



Chaplaincy Team in St.Gabriel's Road garden



## ORGANIC GARDENING

Some years ago I began leading sessions on organic gardening with the children and parents of St Matthew's primary school. Each class has a raised bed and there are also several plots used by parents. We have a fruit area, a bug hotel and a rockery and an area designated for wild flowers.

No garden is complete without good compost bays. The children with their parents and teachers take on the sowing, weeding and then, in the autumn, the harvesting. Digging potatoes is like magic and they are absolutely amazed with their discovery that they grow in the garden. Most experiences are limited to buying potatoes and other vegetables in the local supermarket in a plastic bag. Gardening is always the

witness the new seeds of hope they sow for each other.

I am also involved with a gardening project known as Project 6 which supports adults recovering from the misuse of drugs and alcohol.

We have an allotment in a most scenic

setting overlooking Howarth, the home of the Bronte Sisters. As we dig and weed many stories are told, past regrets are voiced and plans for a better future are visualised. Motivation and peer to peer support is important for this group.

Each year in September we enter some of our produce from the different projects at an Organic show in Saltaire, a little historic village very near Bradford. Everything is judged, as nature intended, on taste. The categories cover over seventy classes of fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers to attract butterflies and bees. We were really surprised with the prizes we were awarded this year. This has been a source of encouragement and an additional bonus for these groups who can celebrate success. The photos tell the story of the displays.

This ministry can be summed up in the quote from "The Happiness Habit", by Daniel O'Leary

In the end just four things matter:

How well you have lived;  
How well you have laughed;  
How well you have learned;  
How well you have loved.

Maria Crowley, Bradford



best part of the school day and links very well with the science programme.

In addition, I garden with a refugee group on a weekly basis. We grow and harvest many exotic vegetables and fruits in keeping with their culture. This can be a very therapeutic experience for this group who are not allowed to work and can find it a great challenge to live with so much time on their hands.

Gardening can cut across cultures and languages and creates an environment of fun and achievement. For some of these men and women it is a life-line at a very difficult and uncertain time in their life. Despite the reality of stories told and lived this inspiring group continually are positive and really encourage each other especially at down times. It is a privilege to

## WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES CONGRESS

The World Meeting of Families, initiated by Pope John Paul II in 1994, is held every three years and is sponsored by the Pontifical Council for the Family. It is the world's largest Catholic gathering of families. Each Meeting has a theme that energises and enlivens the event while adding great depth of meaning to our understanding of families.



Pope Francis decided that the 9<sup>th</sup> World Meeting of Families will be held in Dublin from 22 - 26 August 2018, with the theme *"The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World"*.

At a Press conference announcing the event, Archbishop Martin said the Dublin Meeting will be prepared for by a process of catechesis based on Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (*The Joy of Love*) and this will take place right across the Church in Ireland during 2017 and 2018. It is hoped that something of that catechetical

process will be shared with other Churches around the world, especially in Europe. Archbishop Martin said the Dublin World Meeting of Families, more than earlier Meetings, should be a world event even in its preparation.

*"The World Meeting of Families in Dublin will hopefully be a festival of witness to the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ. The vocation of Christian couples, supported by the Sacrament of Marriage, is a call to witness to that love and to experience the joy of bringing the love of Jesus to those who are troubled and challenged,"* said Archbishop Martin.

See more at: [CBI](#) and [Dublin Diocese](#)

### *Has the Holy Family of Bordeaux a place in this gathering?*

The idea that this event is of particular importance for the *Holy Family*, as such, was launched at the Lay Associates AGM in Ireland this year. Whether there is a role for us, as a Spiritual Family, can only become apparent as the preparations get under way.

Like all organisations, movements, religious congregations and groups in the Catholic Church, we will be involved in our parishes. The gathering will be prepared over a year by prayer, and other events in which we may participate. No doubt there will be calls for volunteers to help in a variety of ways during the week of the meeting itself, as was the case at the Eucharistic Congress, and we may be able to offer our services.

In this connection, a meeting to be held in Dublin on 22 October, *"to incorporate the launch of the World Meeting of Families 2018 in Ireland and an opportunity to meet and engage with different movements and associations"* may give a clue.

## ROCK FERRY CELEBRATES

### A 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday

On 2 August we celebrated Sr. Kieran's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. The evening of the 1<sup>st</sup> we had a special prayer service for Kieran. We were all very happy next day as Fr. Brian OMI officiated at Mass and Kieran did the first reading which was a great joy for all.

Fr. Brian gave a very meaningful homily addressed mainly to Kieran. He stressed her devotion and commitment, firstly as a Holy Family Sister and then in her ministry as a teacher and the wonderful example and dedication shown through her love for the children that she will have passed on, not only to those she taught, but, through them, to so many others.



We are reminded in our Constitutions of the importance of celebration: "the celebration of certain feasts strengthens the bonds which unite us".

This was felt as a very memorable occasion, not only by the Community but also all our staff. Kieran thanked all for a wonderful day and also would like to thank all who sent Masses, gifts and prayed for her.

## ART THERAPY

Here in Rock Ferry our art classes and activities are an important part of the Sisters life. We are privileged to have Mary O' Dell a very good artist come once a fortnight to help our Sisters with art. All look forward and enjoy the afternoon with Mary and as you see we have already got some lovely displays. This is just the beginning of I hope many.

Sr. Joan Farrell

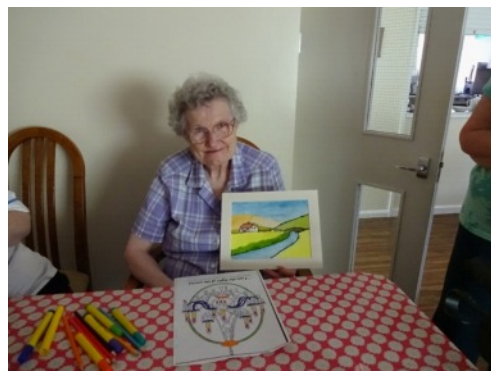




## ARTISTS AND THEIR WORK



Sr. Josephine



Sr. Ita



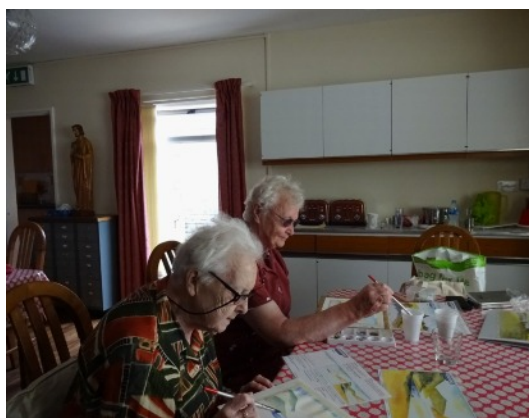
Sr. Helen



Mary Catherine and Sr. Hilda



Sr. Hilary



Srs. Doreen (who, sadly, is no longer with us) and Alacoque

## Fenor Bog

Thoughts after a visit to Fenor Bog, Co. Waterford (Ireland), in 2009



Rooks in tall cedars by the tiny Church  
squawk and squawk endlessly,  
inviting us on to the boardwalk of re-cycled plastic lumbar-  
(an ingenious invention by the locals,  
enabling visitors to walk dry-shod through Fenor Bog)  
We welcomed the invitation  
and stepped gingerly on to the boardwalk  
for the afternoon was full of thick drizzle.

Large clumps of tussock sedge  
lined the sides of the boardwalk,  
the jagged edges of their long leaves  
deterring invaders;  
while water-horse-tail, bog-bean, ragged-robin,  
mint, marsh-orchid and the many-headed bog cotton  
together with vetch, meadow-sweet, scabrous,  
clumps of rushes, royal ferns  
and bull-rush (those 'natural snorkels')  
all shot through this water-logged,  
immensely deep soup of peat, to greet us.



It was early July.  
No blackberries yet.  
No basking butterflies on the ground that day.  
No buzzing bees or swallows  
chasing flies across the Bog.  
No dragon-flies skimming reeds in search of insects  
No frogs, newts or sticklebacks  
visible in the tinkling drain water under the bridge.



But, instead:  
Mosses of brilliant yellow and gingery brown,  
Others of emerald green dotted with salmon pink.  
Heaths and heathers sprinkled with  
the yellow and orange of bog Asphodel,  
ruby reds of cranberry flowers  
and the frothy flowers of bog-bean-  
a storehouse of natural variety  
flanked by willow and alder; home to a million species!  
Dreary and dead?  
No! Never!  
Not Fenor Bog!

I thought of Teilhard de Chardin and how he said,  
"By virtue of the creation and still more of incarnation  
nothing here below is profane for those who know how to see".

Margaret Bradley

## Ilia Delio: *Is Religious Life attentive to Jesus?*

Global Sisters Report August 2016

**T**o follow Christ requires self-emptying, a continual letting go and inner flow in surrender to God's loving embrace. This letting go and flowing into God is God breathing new life in us; it is living in the Spirit of God's entangled love. Out of this shared energy of love flows the life of Christ. In other words, we do not so much follow Christ as the life of Christ flows from us, as we become united to the Spirit of love, drawn ever more deeply into the mystery of God. This Spirit of truth, light and newness of life encourages and enkindles us to do new things. Those who have made a radical difference in the world, such as Martin Luther King or Dorothy Day, have lived deeply in the Spirit of prayerful union in love.

Is religious life today grounded in the Spirit of new life or has it become overly complacent? I am well aware of the many good works religious women and men have undertaken works that have helped the poor, the homeless, the environment, those in prison and those who live in darkness. But the structural core of religious communities has become too corporate and institutional and this structure has afforded a domestication of the Gospel life.

To live in a radical commitment to the Spirit is to live in the anxiety of the now; the moment of in-breaking future; to live poised for the next moment of divine surprise. It is understandable that communities strive to care for their members but the institutionalisation of such care, and the excellent care which many communities provide, has rendered many members self-indulgent and naïve to the real daily struggles of millions of people. Is this really a radical commitment to Gospel life?

Our world needs committed Christians who drink from the well of the Spirit. When religious men and women become comfortably centred in their private lives, when their anxieties are centred only on themselves and their needs, then one must question the purpose of such a life. What is this religious life existing for? *Whom* is it existing for? Whether wearing a habit or no habit, or living in community or apart from community, the religious person today is the one who lives on the edge of the uncomfortable, the uncertain, the unknown, the chaotic, nurturing interiorly a deep wellspring of divine love which embraces and encourages us to breathe new life into a world struggling for life. The irony of Christian life is that action is not primary; rather, it is being attentive to the Spirit so that every moment is lived in the self-surrender of love.

Jesus assures us that the Spirit is God's deep abiding presence. God breathes through us as life steps into the future. In his final appearance Jesus asked his disciples to "go" into the world and "announce" the Good News. Go to places you have never gone before, say things that are unthinkable, do not fear, for the One who is with you has already gone before you.

The Gospels are the spiritual counterpart of the Big Bang — inviting us to be part of God's magnificent work of creating and loving the world into something new. We do not "follow Jesus" to do the same things Jesus did; rather we listen to Jesus and breathe in his words of life as we breathe out new life in a world struggling for more life, more justice and more unity in love. To love is to create, and to create is to imagine the new. In the words of Francis of Assisi, "let us begin anew."

Submitted by Gemma



## UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2016						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4 St. Francis of Assisi Creation time ends World Animal Day	5	6	7	8
9	10 World Mental Health Day	11	12	13	14	15
16 World Food Day	17 Holy Family Priest Associates Formation Session Martillac	18 European Anti Trafficking Day	19	20	21	22 HF Priests Formation Session ends
23	24 United Nations Day	25 Holy Family Priest Associates General Assembly	26	27 Birthday of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles (1873) Founder of the Association of the Holy Family	28 HF Priest Associates General Assembly ends	29 International Internet Day
30	31 Pope Francis goes to Sweden for the 500 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation					



More prize winning produce from Bradford gardens