



# Family Links

*Glory to God Alone in Jesus Christ, through Mary and Saint Joseph*

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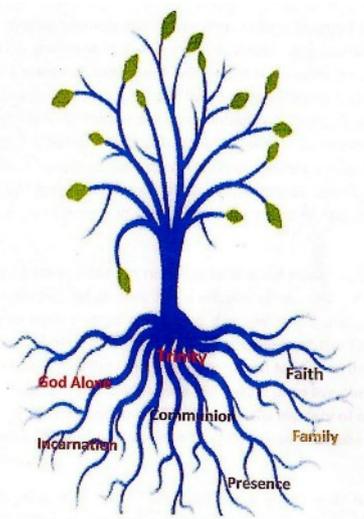
Srs. Margaret Bradley, Margaret Muldoon, Áine Hayde, Claire McGrath  
Facilitators for "Roots" Retreats in Britain and Ireland

## Editorial

There is something fascinating about trees. Poets have written movingly about them seeming to sense something more in them than appears outwardly. The calm, quiet strength of a tree, "...that looks at God all day, / And lifts her leafy arms to pray" (Joyce Kilmer), speaks of the unseen, silent, anchored roots that sustain the tree and enable it to produce leaves, flowers and fruit for centuries, and invites the birds to nest in it. No wonder, then, that our Founder's dream of the *Holy Family* Association as a great tree remains a powerful symbol for us.

Two groups in our Unit (two still to have the experience), have spent a week entering more deeply into the roots of our *Holy Family* spirituality. Such an experience is very personal and not everything can be shared. However, it seemed all would agree that the way the four topics that are being presented to the *Holy Family* this year intensified for all a sense of the oneness and wholeness in each of us and in all of creation. Contemplation awakens in us the power, that divine spark in all of us, by which the whole cosmos becomes more unified in love.

If all those sparks of divine life and love in the *Holy Family* members, in everybody, were to come together blazing in one great light, might there not be a greater "flaring forth" than the first?



## Leader's Message

### THE WOMEN WHO SERVED JESUS

The stories of Jesus' appearance after the resurrection have enormous appeal for us, not least because of the prominent role of the women who, from the very beginning, were disciples of Jesus and followed him as he went about teaching and preaching. Scripture doesn't specify just how many women disciples travelled with Jesus but Mark tells us that there were many. They remain largely anonymous, serving quietly and faithfully, supporting Jesus and the male disciples "from their own possessions" (Luke 8:3). We know the names of some of these women – Martha and Mary (Luke 10:36), Mary, the mother of Zebedee's sons, Mary Magdalene, Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward and Susanna" (Lk. 8:33).

In Luke 23:27, we learn that many women followed Jesus after his arrest and wept as they watched him carrying his cross to the place of execution. Mark (15:40-41) tells us that a large group of female followers kept vigil from a distance. When it was all over and Jesus' body was taken down from the cross, "the women followed Joseph of Arimathea and watched how Jesus' body was placed in the tomb. Then they went to prepare some sweet-smelling spices for his burial". (Lk. 23: 35-36).

While the male disciples were huddled together, hiding from the authorities, it was the women who came to the tomb on the day following the Sabbath with all they needed to anoint Jesus' body and it was they who were the first to learn that Jesus had risen. Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene who is given the task of telling the other disciples (Mk. 16:11) but they did not believe her and dismissed the women's account as women's tales that were unworthy of credence.

Finally, Jesus appears to the unbelieving disciples and he "rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those women who had seen him after he had risen" (Mk. 16:14). Women remained faithful throughout. They did not abandon Jesus and flee when he was arrested; they stood by him at the cross; they bought ointments and oils from their own resources and they were first at the tomb to witness that he had risen and were commissioned to go and spread the good news.

Many unnamed women's lives were affected and changed by contact with Jesus. Poet Denise Levertov, inspired by Diego Velazquez's painting entitled "The Emmaus Supper", imagined how Jesus might have touched the life of a young slave girl who served in the kitchen in the inn where Jesus and the two disciples had supper. Velazquez does not choose Jesus and the disciples as the main subject of his painting but rather a young woman who is marginalised at every level by her mixed race, gender and class. Jesus and the two disciples are in the background, glimpsed through what seems to be a serving hatch. In the foreground is the young servant girl, ear cocked attentively, eavesdropping on the conversation between Jesus and the disciples.

The painting captures the moment when the girl suddenly realizes that the man who is speaking and explaining the scriptures, is none other than Jesus. It is such a revelation to her that she seems to have to lean against the table in shock. She recognizes the Resurrected Christ, probably even before the two disciples did! They were blind to Jesus' identity even after the long walk in his company

from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Yet this young woman recognized the risen Jesus in the ordinary context of her kitchen. "God is found in the pots and pans." (Teresa of Avila)



Sr. Gemma  
Apostolic Sisters

What is going through the mind of this girl as she strains to hear what is being said in the next room? We imagine that she recalls her experience of meeting him, of hearing him speak as if to her alone, of the impact his words and actions had on her and of how she felt transformed by this meeting. Levertov, in her poem suggests that she is recalling being a witness to his saving actions in favour of the poor and the excluded – people just like her. And as we contemplate the painting we can imagine that she would have longed to be able to sit at table with Jesus and join in the conversation!

But as a servant she would have been invisible - to the disciples perhaps - but not to Jesus. She would not have dared to even speak unless spoken to first. However let us dare to imagine! Perhaps when she brought in the wine jug, Jesus looked at her, remembered her and invited her to sit with them and hear his teaching. Perhaps when she finished her task that night, her heart was burning within her and she too set out for Jerusalem having made the life-changing decision to give her life to spreading the Good News.

As we read these post resurrection stories, may our hearts also burn within us and send us out with renewed energy and enthusiasm to spread the Good News!

## The Servant Girl at Emmaus

(inspired by Luke 24:13-35)

*She listens, listens, holding  
her breath. Surely that voice  
is his—the one  
who had looked at her, once, across the crowd,  
as no one ever had looked?  
Had seen her? Had spoken as if to her?*

*Surely those hands were his,  
taking the platter of bread from hers just now?*



*Hands he'd laid on the dying and made them well?*

*Surely that face—?*

*The man they'd crucified for sedition and blasphemy,  
The man whose body disappeared from its tomb,  
The man it was rumoured now some women had seen  
this morning, alive?*

*Those who had brought this stranger home to their table  
don't recognize yet with whom they sit.  
But she in the kitchen, absently touching  
the wine jug she's to take in,  
a young Black servant intently listening,*

*swings round and sees  
the light around him  
and is sure.*

Denise Levertov

WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS, Lucilla,  
and blessings as you use your new skills in the service of our Unit





## SABBATICAL IN An Tairseach

**G**reetings to all of you from An Tairseach, Dominican Ecology Centre, Wicklow. This is a beautiful place to be for a sabbatical; ten weeks looking at God's wonderful Universe, and getting inserted into the whole story. But let me start at the beginning of my journey.

I travelled to Ireland on 26 February and spent six days in our house in Griffith Downs. Strange, isn't it, that it bears my name? The third day after I arrived we had a very heavy fall of snow with the result that most transport, by air, rail and road completely stopped. I even wondered if I would be able to travel to Wicklow on Sunday, 4 March, but fortunately by then the buses were running. The two hour bus ride brought us through the beautiful countryside of Ireland. I had the company of one of our Holy Family Sisters, Lucia McGuckin, who was also following the same course.

On our arrival in Wicklow we soon found the Ecology Centre where we were to stay. A warm welcome was accorded to all the participants as we entered the door. After a refreshing 'cuppa' in the foyer, where I met some of the others attending the course, one person came up to me and greeted me in Urdu. He was Michael Liston, an Irish Spiritan, working in Mirpurkhas, Hyderabad. I was thrilled to be in touch with Pakistan. On being shown my room, I was delighted to see the wonderful view of the sea from my bedroom window. At supper that evening we met the rest of the group.



Inspecting, admiring plants grown at the Centre



A group of Participants

We are 22 in all, from the five Continents. The majority are Missionaries either on Sabbatical or recently having returned to their Provinces after many years abroad - in Burma, Pakistan, Jordan, Zambia, Peru, Chile. We hail from New Zealand, Australia, Korea, China, Sri Lanka, France, Nigeria, U.S.A., Ireland and UK.

Our first week was spent getting acquainted with one another, listening to each other's stories as well as the stories of the Staff. We had a tour of the house, ecology garden and shop on foot, as well as viewing different PowerPoint presentations of the locality by Sr. Colette. On the whole it was a gentle way of introducing us to the nine weeks ahead. Wednesday afternoon was supposed to be a visit to Glendalough but the place was snowbound and the outing had to be cancelled. A visit scheduled for the following Wednesday also had to be cancelled because Glendalough was flooded.

After the first week of introductions, being led gently into the place and surroundings, the second week saw us immersed in the programme we were to follow for the next nine weeks, theoretical as well as practical. Most days we have lectures, morning and afternoon, from different speakers with optional sessions after supper. These are very interesting, two

of which I like very much - Sacred Dance and Dreams.

Topics for the sessions are very interconnected. Ecology, Bible and Theology are expertly given by Sr. Colette, Director of the Ecology Centre, Cosmology by Bro. Mark McDonnell, Climate Justice by Fr. Sean McDonagh, the Mystics by Sr. Mary O'Driscoll, Creation and Evolution by John Feehan. There is also practical and theoretical input on soil, seeds and sustainability, ecological footprints, embodiment, earthing, grounding and mindful movement in nature.



Way of the Cross at Glendalough

Before the four day break for Easter, at the end of March, we had the Stations of the Cross in the beautiful setting of Glendalough, a journey with Jesus as we travelled along the way, connecting very much with

nature and the environment.

Most of the participants went away for Easter and returned, to take up the course on 2 April.

Sheila Griffiths, An Tairseach, Wicklow

## SUMMARY of 'ROOTS' RETREAT



...as you received Jesus as Lord and Christ, ... be rooted in him and built up on him, held firm by the faith you have been taught, and overflowing with thanksgiving. (Col. 2:7)



## DO YOU REMEMBER JOAN?

Joan Booth (Consecrated Secular) died in Manchester on March 6. She was in her ninetieth year and died in the house where she had lived since she was six years old. Her funeral Mass was celebrated in St. Cuthbert's Church where she had received her First Holy Communion and been confirmed.

Joan had been a dedicated *Holy Family* Consecrated

Secular for many years and had been in leadership roles for several years when there was a group of Seculars in Britain. In recent times, she suffered greatly from arthritis and for the past few years had dementia. She was very well cared for by two of her nieces who are retired nurses.

I used to visit her from time to time with Eileen, another Consecrated Secular and a long-time friend of Joan. However, for the past eighteen months or so, we were unable to visit because of Joan's declining health. We kept in touch with her nieces and they kept us informed about her health situation. In February, they told us that she seemed to be



approaching the end and gave us the sad news of her death on the day she died. May Joan rest in peace and reap the reward of long years of service in the *Holy Family*.

Before her funeral Mass, we (Eileen Callaghan, Joan Farrell and I) were in her home chatting with the family and looking through a

photo-graph album which her nieces had prepared to give "outside" carers some idea of the person she was and the life she had led. I was delighted to find the above photo and I wonder how many of you who are in it remember her.

She is in the front row on the extreme right. It is interesting to note that four Vocations are represented in the photo. The Priest Associates wouldn't have existed at the time. Obviously, the photo was taken in Martillac and I would be very grateful if some of you could let me know what the occasion was and what date it took place.

Áine Hayde, Woodford



## Holy Family and JRS together for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Since we committed ourselves to the ministry of hosting refugees and asylum seekers, the communities of Clapham, St. Gabriel's Road and Woodford Green have been working with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). This is an international Catholic organisation, operating over 50 countries worldwide. The Centre in UK is based in London.

In the Day Centre, the staff and volunteers come to know the refugees by name. The people who come to JRS are destitute. Many have been sleeping on the streets and live in fear of arrest and detention. In the U.K. there is no time limit on detention. Some have been waiting for 15 years to have their asylum claims accepted. The Day Centre supports, on average, 215 destitute refugees a month. It provides a small travel allowance to pay

for bus passes, toiletries, and a hot meal as well as a place to relax in safety and friendship.



The Hosting Scheme run by JRS in which we are involved, arranges for destitute refugees to be hosted for periods of 3, or sometimes, 6 months. Most of the hosting in this area is done by religious communities although families and couples have also participated. While hosting, the JRS hospitality co-coordinator supports us throughout the stay.

There are follow-up meetings to reflect together and share experiences. This is a help for the staff to get a better idea of how things are going on the ground. Through the sharing it was felt that, generally speaking, hosting is a positive experience.

Brigid Davis, Clapham

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### IMAGINE A WORLD WITHOUT BORDERS

We can imagine anything, so, what about a world without borders? Borders are, after all, artificial dividing lines separating people into ethnic, linguistic or cultural groups, or even dividing them across such groupings, as happened when European colonisers drew arbitrary lines across Africa, Asia, and Latin America, for their own convenience. This caused much of the political and economic chaos that followed decolonisation.

Europe's boundaries have also been redrawn many times and disruption came about when the Iron Curtain came down. The worst type of border, usually done from political expediency, is that which divides countries, as ongoing events in the far East and nearer home demonstrate.

Now that we are living in a global society and transnational business and affairs can be carried out without crossing physical borders, perhaps a world without them is becoming less utopian.

In Europe, the Schengen Agreement has eliminated border checks between the nine countries that form part of it. Is it possible the whole world could become a Schengen area and we can do without borders?

While we await that day we can foster good relationships and forge friendships across borders. Our *Holy Family* is a Family without borders and, by believing in and sharing our gift of communion, we can help to make the dream a reality.

The Organisation **Global Justice Now** has produced a video advocating free global movement. To view the video, [click here](#). Thanks to Teresa Edwards for sending it.



## God Alone in all Things



As I moved to this place I stepped back  
so that my size 6 would not crush an ant.

The birds soared gracefully in the sky.  
A fly landed on my hand  
and stayed a moment.



Bees buzzed by  
as the gentle stream sang its own song.



The dandelions held hands  
and called on the big leaves to join them.  
They named out the daisies, cowslips, buttercups,  
Violets, shamrocks, clocks  
And beckoned to the ones they could not name.  
I told them my name  
and my heart danced with them  
to the music infused into us  
by the God who lives in all things.



The great trees surrounded us  
and when moved by the gentle breeze  
Clapped their leaves to the rhythm of the music.

The clouds played 'hide and seek' with the sun  
and the music chimed on,  
gathering us to seek what gives life, to move  
forward.



This is a holy space, a together place  
I knew love.



## OUR HOLY FAMILY ONLINE PRESENCE



### *Extract from The New Media and the Work of Evangelisation, an address delivered by Archbishop Eamonn Martin of Armagh*

“The Catholic Church has always advocated the use of whatever media are available to it in bringing the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Over fifty years ago, at the Second Vatican Council, one of the first decrees issued by the Council fathers, *Inter Mirifica*, was on the media of social communications. Its first paragraph reads:

‘Among the wonderful technological discoveries which men of talent, especially in the present era, have made with God’s help, the Church welcomes and promotes with special interest those which have ... uncovered new avenues of communicating. The most important of these inventions are media such as the **press, movies, radio, television** and the like. These can ... reach and influence, not only individuals, but the very masses and the whole of human society...’

Note the welcoming and positive tone of the message for these ‘wonderful technological discoveries’. Mention of ‘press, movies, radio, TV’ seems miles away from **smartphones, tablets, Netflix, Skype, Twitter and Facebook!**

Christians always made use of all forms of media to spread the good news – whether it be parchments and scrolls, high crosses, art, stained glass, illuminated manuscripts, the printing, television or radio. **We must welcome the use of so-called ‘new media’ in this task.** Many parishes have websites, there are ‘sacred spaces’ on line, priests on Facebook, the pope on Twitter, i-Catholic, soul waves radio and many more.

### “Interconnected for Mission in our Digital World”

This is the theme of a meeting for *Holy Family* communications personnel in the Religious Institute to be held in Rome from 21 - 31 May.

So, perhaps it’s time to look at how we, *Holy Family* members in Britain and Ireland, are interconnected for the Mission. We have our *Family Links* and our Website.

The new *Family Links* is just taking off.

According to our reports from Google Analytics, the website is visited fairly frequently, even in areas where the *Holy Family* is not present. We can’t tell whether this is by design or accident but it is always good to have a visit.

A website could be considered as a storehouse where we keep all the information we want to communicate about who we are and what we’re about, adding to it and removing from it as occasion demands.

However, if we want to get our message out quickly to as many people as possible, the way to do it is by using other media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube..., whichever suits us. Twitter, with its 140 character limit, seems to be the preferred medium now.

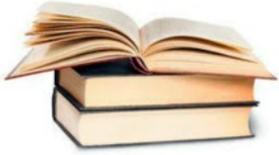
Nevertheless, I have made a start at setting up a Facebook account which those with their own Facebook page can access by typing **HolyFamily Bordeaux** in the search space.

Neither the cover picture nor the photo is permanent. They are random choices simply to get started and can always be changed to something more representative of the *Holy Family*. Also, it will be confined to ‘Friends’ only, not the general public, until we get the feel of it and know what we are about.

Our next step, then, is to start a conversation among ourselves about how we can use our page to share our *Holy Family* message among ourselves and, later, with the wider world.

## A Senior's Version of FACEBOOK

For those of my generation who do not, and cannot, comprehend why Facebook exists: I am trying to make friends outside of Facebook while applying the same principles. Therefore, every day I walk down the street and tell passers-by what I have eaten, how I feel at the moment, what I have done the night before, what I will do later and with whom. I give them pictures of my family, my dog and of me gardening, taking things apart in the garage, watering the lawn, standing in front of landmarks, driving around town, having lunch, and doing what anybody and everybody does every day. I also listen to their conversations, give them "thumbs up" and tell them I "like" them. And it works just like Facebook. I already have 4 people following me: 2 police officers, a private investigator and a psychiatrist.



## BOOK REVIEWS

### THE CELTIC WHEEL OF THE YEAR, by Tess Ward

This is an ideal book for those who would like a change from *The Office* for Morning and Evening Prayer. It contains seven different seasonal prayers for each month of the year, incorporating Celtic Christian and Celtic pre-Christian spirituality.

Written in a poetic, meditational style and using very down-to-earth language, the prayers express the presence of God in all things and trace our spiritual pilgrimage as, enfolded in Love, we journey through life in the seasons' rhythms of each year. Praying through the year with this book, we celebrate both Celtic festivities and Christian feasts.

The interconnectedness of all things is woven right through the prayers. Attention is drawn to the often un-noticed colour and excitement of our everyday lives, and all aspects of our lives are touched on –

our place in the universe, our relationship with each other, sexuality, work, leisure, emotions, faith etc. – and God's presence suffuses all. We feel included whether we live in the bustle of the city, the peace of the countryside or beside the healing movement of the ocean.

The general introduction includes a section with suggestions on how to use the book and, very helpfully, each month begins with an introduction to the seasonal themes and includes Biblical and spiritual references which are embedded in the prayers.

The author's use of the English language may appear rather quirky at times but this in no way detracts from the depth and beauty of her thought nor the attractiveness of the prayers.

Áine Hayde (Integrated Spirituality Team)

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This book is published by O Books (2007). It is available in Paperback from [amazon.co.uk](http://amazon.co.uk)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

May 2018						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 <b>St. Francis Laval ((1623-17080) Bishop of Quebec, 1<sup>st</sup> Bishop to celebrate a feast of the Holy Family in his diocese</b>	7	8	9 Europe Day	10 Ascension of the Christ (Britain)	11	12
13 Ascension of the Christ (Ireland) World Communications Day	14 "roots Retreat begins in Rock Ferry and Newbridge	15 International Day of Families	16 End of Retreat	17	18 <b>Blessing of the Association and the Councillors' crosses by Pius IX (1851)</b>	
20 Pentecost Sunday	21 Communications Session starts in Rome	22 International Day for Biodiversity	23	24	25	26
27 <b>Trinity Sunday Foundation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Community Srs. of Loreto 1820</b>  Africa Day (Ireland) In Farmleigh, Phoenix Park	28	29	30	31 End of Communications Session		