



The Holy Family of Bordeaux in Britain and Ireland

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

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Srs. Evelyn, Carmel, Brigid at march for women's rights

EDITORIAL

WALL... the most divisive word in the English language just now?

Walls are all around us. They are used to keep people in and to keep people out, to imprison and exclude, to shelter and safeguard. There are invisible walls of gender, of race, of religion, walls that divide the rich and the poor.... The negative connotations of the word are being brought starkly before us by events in the USA.

But, looked at from a positive perspective, walls also bring a sense of comfort and protection. Within the walls of our own home we feel secure and have a sense of belonging and acceptance. In the Bible there are hundred of references to walls. In the Old Testament, it was a cause of utmost desolation for the Jews whenever the walls of Jerusalem were destroyed. Their one aim was to build them up again. Only then could they feel they were a people, a nation once more.

The Book of Nehemiah, infamously used at the **religious service** for the inauguration of President Trump, is entirely about this. While the walls represented safety and security for the people, there is also a metaphorical meaning to be drawn from the constant rebuilding of what had been thrown down. The collapsed walls symbolised a people that had fallen away from God, their "rock and salvation". Building the walls again meant the relationship was restored.

In the New Testament Paul tells the Ephesians, "You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Jesus Christ is himself the cornerstone" (Eph. 2, 20). In 1 Peter 2: 4-5 we read, "...set yourselves closer to ((God) so that you, too, may be living stones making a spiritual house...." So we can see that we, the people of God, make up the walls of the city of our God.

There will always be walls to build and walls to pull down. May we always know when to build and when to pull down.



Message from Sr. Gemma (Unit Leader)

BE A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

As we begin this New Year I am reminded of a poem by Minnie Louise Haskins entitled: "The Gate of the Year":

"And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the Year: "Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."

And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."

None of us knows what the New Year will bring. But for many it feels as though we are stepping into a dark, unpredictable future. The conflicts that have been causing such devastation and suffering to millions of people around the world show little signs of ending.

The changing political landscape around the globe is also deeply troubling. This month Donald Trump was inaugurated as the 45th President of the United States, heralding, in the eyes of many, the start of uncertain and fearful times. If he abides by his campaign pledges, international agreements on climate change may be in danger of being revoked; the future of NATO could be in jeopardy.

But above all, immigrants, people of colour and members of minority groups in the United States are fearful of what a Trump presidency may mean for them in a country where the "other" is being characterized as dangerous and to blame for all the ills affecting society.

Trump's slogan "Make America great again" echoes the Brexit campaigners' mantra "Take back control of our country". These slogans point to a disturbing rise in a narrow nationalism – what Rolheiser calls an *"unhealthy form of tribalism where we are concerned primarily with taking care of our own.... It is America first! England first! My country first! My state first! My church first! My family first! Me first!"*. (The Catholic Herald: 27 June 2016)

There has also been a notable rise in extreme right-wing movements in Europe over the past few years, resulting in the increasing popularity of politicians

such as Nigel Farage of UKIP, Marine Le Pen of the National Front in France, Norbert Hofer of the Nationalist and Anti-Immigration Freedom Party in Austria and Geert Wilders in the Netherlands whose Party for Freedom is vehemently opposed to immigrants.



Speaking at a ceremony to induct new cardinals, Pope Francis raised the alarm about how these movements can quickly give rise to prejudice and hatred. He urges us to recognize the *"epidemic of animosity"* that often comes with popular nationalism.

Referring to the rise of populist politics in Europe and Trump's presidential victory in the US, the Pope warned of *"how quickly those among us with the status of a stranger, an immigrant or a refugee, become a threat and take on the status of an enemy – an enemy because they come from a distant country or have different customs... or because of the colour of their skin, their language, or their social class or because they think differently or even have a different faith"* (20 November 2016).

We are now being challenged anew to embrace the view that we are more than citizens of separate nations, members of different ethnic groups, and followers of different religions. Socrates proclaimed: *"I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world"*. Yes, we are citizens of the world. We are all members of one human family, brothers and sisters of one another, having been formed in the same great flaring forth 13.7 billion years ago.

When we see ourselves as separate - separate nations, separate faiths and ideologies, we create the problems we now face – violence, discrimination, hatred and war.

May we move into the New Year, trusting in God and remembering that *"there can be no peace, no world community, no real brother and sisterhood, and no real church community, as long as we do not define ourselves as, first, citizens of the world and only second, as members of our own nations"* (Rolheiser *ibid*).

NUN RECEIVES MBE

Headlines such as *Nun's work for peace brings her MBE award* and *Former Ballinascreen nun receives MBE* stood out boldly on local



Sr. Rose

newspapers in Ulster early in the year when the New Year Honours List was published in 2017. The nun in question is *Holy Family* Sister Rose Devlin, currently a member of the Magherafelt community. The MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) is awarded by Queen Elizabeth of England for an outstanding achievement or service to the community that will have had a long-term, significant impact and stand out as an example to others.

Sr. Rose has been awarded an MBE for her cross-community work in schools across Northern Ireland. She became involved in peace and reconciliation work more than 20 years ago. In the Christian Education Movement (CEM), she worked alongside Presbyterian Ministers organising, facilitating and delivering conferences for secondary school children from different religious backgrounds. Exploring difference and celebrating diversity were the overarching themes of these



Sr. Rose with Bishop Donal McKeown

conferences as they tried to break down community tensions.

During the dark days of the "the troubles" she was often on the road as early as 6.30 am travelling to schools across the province. The welcome extended to her by Principals and Heads of Religious Education, as well as the mutual understanding and friendships that developed made it all worthwhile. Another bonus was the welcome extended to her, a woman and a Catholic religious sister, by a group that, up to then, had only had men involved.

The award came as an unexpected, but pleasant, surprise to Rose. She accepted it on behalf of those who had supported her in her work, among them her own *Holy Family* sisters and Lay Associates, the people of Ballinascreen, and the SPRED (Special Needs Religious Education) helpers.

Although no longer involved in cross-community work in schools, Rose believes it needs to continue. "I pray daily," she says, "for greater mutual understanding, not only among the youth but especially among adults, whose influence is immense."

Adapted from Derry Post and Mid Ulster Mail

We rejoice with Rose and thank God for her giftedness
as we await the Award Ceremony which will take place in Buckingham Palace
on 2 March 2017.

Gathering for Vow Day in Aberdare



Saturday, 17 December, was to be an exciting and happy day at Aberdare Gardens. The community had been getting ready for this day by way of decorating the house, wrapping gifts, preparing the food, laying tables and, most of all, decorating the newly bought Christmas Tree.

Fortunately, two more pair of hands were also there to help, as Catherine and Kathleen joined us after the Council meeting.

The day dawned and we were eagerly waiting our sisters from Woodford Green, Clapham and St. Gabriels Rd.

At 2 pm, Gemma led us all in a very meaningful prayer service based on our option, “Live in a state of Exodus”, reflecting on our responsibility, sensitivity and commitment towards the homeless and refugees. This was followed by renewing our commitment.

Then all of us went for the festive meal, a combination of East and West, which I believe all enjoyed. The house was filled with laughter, chatting, greetings during the whole afternoon which brought the Christmas festive mood in advance.

All of a sudden, someone reminded us of the “big event” in the evening, finals of *Strictly Come Dancing*, which made most of the sisters hurry back home!

Sr. Chandani, Aberdare



Srs. Chandani, Sandra, Sophie

That all may be one...



I was walking, some weeks since, in a beautiful grove. The trees were some distance apart, and the trunks were straight and rugged. But as they ascended higher the branches came closer together, and still higher the twigs and branches interlaced and formed a beautiful canopy.

I said to myself, our Churches resemble these trees. The trunks near the earth stand stiffly and widely apart. The more nearly towards heaven they ascend, the closer and closer they come together, until they form one beautiful canopy, under which the (people of God) enjoy both shelter and happiness.

Then I thought of that beautiful prayer of the Saviour, "That they all may be one..."

M. Simpson DD



Women march for Peace

Women's marches were held in dozens of cities around the world on Saturday, to voice their concerns over the incoming administration of President Donald Trump. In London more than 100,000 women walked from the American embassy in Grosvenor Square to Trafalgar Square – among them were individuals and representatives from many Christian churches and organisations.

Pat Gaffney, General Secretary of Pax Christi told ICN: "Pax Christi thought it important to have a



Srs. Evelyn Hanley and Brigid Davis

cooperation, service, peace, inclusion, respect... all pointing to the values and vision that so many work for today."

Professor Tina Beattie, founder of the international forum Catholic Women Speak, said: "While CWS brings together women from across the spectrum of the Church, we share the fundamental principle that women have a right and a duty to speak and be heard in ways which respect our human dignity and equality, and our right to full participation in politics, society and religion. That is why we decided to march today. CWS women marched in cities around the world, including Washington DC, New York, Madison, St Louis, Houston, Ottawa, Sydney and London."

Among the banners were the slogans: 'Women peacemakers say no to fear and division and yes to peace and justice.' 'Refugees and migrants welcome here', 'Cut military spending; Fund human needs', 'Women's Rights are Human Rights', 'Love Trumps Hate' and 'Toddlers for Resistance'.

Source



peace and justice presence at the Women's March today. We had two aspects to our message: 'No to fear and division', this speaks to our world today and the dangers of scaremongering and scapegoating especially the vulnerable and marginalised. The second – 'Cut military spending – fund human need', addressed the global obsession with military spending which seems likely to increase under the new US administration. It was heartening to see a connection between messages that were being shared today: justice, equality,

MENDING WALL

by Robert Frost

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
 That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
 And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
 And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
 The work of hunters is another thing:
 I have come after them and made repair
 Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
 But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
 To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
 No one has seen them made or heard them
 made,
 But at spring mending-time we find them there.
 I let my neighbour know beyond the hill;
 And on a day we meet to walk the line
 And set the wall between us once again.
 We keep the wall between us as we go.
 To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
 And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
 We have to use a spell to make them balance:
 "Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"
 We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
 Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
 One on a side. It comes to little more:
 There where it is we do not need the wall:
 He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
 My apple trees will never get across
 And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
 He only says, "Good fences make good
 neighbours."
 Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
 If I could put a notion in his head:
 "Why do they make good neighbours? Isn't it
 Where there are cows? But here there are no
 cows.
 Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
 What I was walling in or walling out,
 And to whom I was like to give offence.
 Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
 That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,
 But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
 He said it for himself. I see him there
 Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
 In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
 He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
 Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
 He will not go behind his father's saying,
 And he likes having thought of it so well
 He says again, "Good fences make good
 neighbours."

Every year, two neighbours meet to repair the stone wall that divides their property. The narrator is sceptical of this tradition, unable to understand the need for a wall when there is no livestock to be contained on the property, only apples and pine trees. He does not believe that a wall should exist simply for the sake of existing.

UPCOMING EVENTS

February 2017						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1 Féile Bríde St. Brigid of Ireland	2 World Wetlands Day	3 Commemorat ion of the Miraculous Benedction in 1822	4 World Cancer Day	5
16 International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation	7	8 Death of our Founder 1861 St Josephine Bakhita Day of prayer against Human Trafficking	9	10	11 Our Lady of Lourdes World Day of the Sick Founder's Funeral, 1861	12
13	14 St. Valentine's Day	15	16	17 The Flight into Egypt	18	19
20 World Day of Social Justice	21	22	23	24 World Sustainable Energy Day	25	26
27	28 Shrove Tuesday					