



The Holy Family of Bordeaux

in Britain and Ireland

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

May 2015

Volume 1 Issue 5

In this Issue

- 1 Editorial
- 2 Message from Gemma Pentecost
- 3 Leadership and Ministry
- 4 Mísean Cara
- 6 Migrants Mass
- 7 Holy Family Youth
- 9 World Day for Social Communications
- 11 Upcoming Events



Leadership Workshop, Emmaus Conference Centre, Ireland - 16 May 2015

Editorial

As this issue goes out it would be hard to ignore the elephant in the room. The overwhelming YES vote in the Irish referendum on same-sex marriage must give us thought. The euphoria in the country was palpable, even contagious, almost affecting some who voted NO.

Most see it as a victory for equality, solidarity, compassion and love, and these were certainly the main reasons so many voted in favour. It also indicates, if we were not already aware of it, that Irish people are not swayed by what the hierarchical Church tells them to do. It is evident that large numbers of Catholics, including priests and religious, and especially the youth, voted YES.

This is in spite of the fact that the No campaign was well reasoned, measured and equally compassionate for the suffering of the LGBT community in the past, even if the language was less emotive. Though disappointed, the chief spokesperson for the campaign graciously conceded defeat.

What next for the Church? Archbishop Diarmuid Martin admitted the Church in Ireland needs “to reconnect with young people” and will “have to stop and have a reality check, not move into denial of the realities”. Some have already asked, “which reality”? That the Hierarchy is aware of the need for a change of approach in how to “share Gospel joy with the young Church” is evidenced by a March gathering in Maynooth (cf. Intercom, June 2015, p. 28).

But, it is the task of the entire Christian community to evangelise the young and, indeed, one another. How, then, can we help to find ways of channelling the enthusiasm young people, and the not so young, showed in turning out for this referendum into equally strong enthusiasm for the Gospel, our source of joy?



Message from Sr. Gemma (Unit Leader)

IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE SPIRIT



This month when we celebrated the great feasts of Pentecost and the Trinity, I reflected on the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit from the very dawn of time. The very first Pentecost is the original flaring forth – the Pentecost of creation when “the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2) and the universe came into being. The life-giving Spirit fills the universe, gives it oneness and unfolds the potential of matter and of living things. “You send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the earth” (Ps 103:30). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of newness; the Spirit of new beginnings.

Another great Pentecost moment – a moment of newness - was when Jesus embarked on his public life and was baptised in the river Jordan. John says: “I saw the Spirit descend as a dove and it remained on him” (Jn. 1:32). The Spirit remained with Jesus all during his public life and before he left “to go to the Father”, he promised that we too would be gifted with the Holy Spirit: “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever — the Spirit of truth” (John 14: 16-17).

Then, 50 days after the Resurrection of Jesus, 10 days after his Ascension, we have the fulfilment of Jesus’ promise. In the upper room, as the disciples cowered in fear, they heard a rushing wind and “there appeared to them tongues as of fire ...that rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit”. It is the Pentecost of new beginnings – the birth of the Church - and the disciples were inspired and emboldened to go out and preach the good news to the whole world.

Pentecost happens all the time. Every spring is a Pentecost, with new life springing up all around us after the seeming deadness of winter. Every time there is a breakthrough in our understanding of God; every time we work to build communion; every time we reach out to the displaced; every time we are inspired and emboldened to follow Jesus in new and radical ways, Pentecost happens.

I believe that our response to our General and Provincial Chapters and to Pope Francis’ call to leave our comfort zones is a real Pentecost moment for us. May we, with the help of the Holy Spirit “bring fire to the earth, so that the presence of God may be seen in a new light, in new places, in new ways”. (Joan Chittister: Prayer for Pentecost)

PENTECOST



Today we feel the wind beneath our wings
 Today the hidden fountain flows and plays
 Today the church draws breath at last and sings
 As every flame becomes a Tongue of praise.
 This is the feast of fire, air, and water
 Poured out and breathed and kindled into earth.
 The earth herself awakens to her maker
 And is translated out of death to birth.
 The right words come today in their right order
 And every word spells freedom and release
 Today the gospel crosses every border
 All tongues are loosened by the Prince of Peace
 Today the lost are found in His translation.
 Whose mother-tongue is Love, in every nation.

Malcolm Guite

Leadership and Ministry

When we seek to discover the best in others, we somehow bring out the best in ourselves.

William Arthur Ward

The recent workshop led by members of the Provincial Team on Leadership, emphasised the fact that we are all leaders. This has lead me to reflect on how we, as Holy Family Sisters exercise our leadership role in our very varied ministries.

“Effective leaders are people who have a capacity for relationships. Effective leadership is about helping others develop their own capacities for leadership whether within or without the Institute.”

This quotation would suggest that one of the main ways of discerning if we are effective leaders is in our ability to empower others to take the initiative, to assume responsibility and to lead, when they are ready to do so. My guess is that we, as Holy Family Sisters and Lay Associates, have many opportunities to assume leadership roles and help others gain confidence in assuming theirs. Each of us can only speak from our own situation and I use one example to reflect how this is being exercised within the Parish of Celbridge/Straffan, the largest Parish in the Archdiocese of Dublin.

For a long time now we have heard that the future of the Church lies in the laity taking responsibility/leadership both in the Church and for the Church and this would seem to be imperative as the number of ordained ministers dwindles. More and more we see lay people getting involved in work that previously “belonged” to the priest. One such area is that of Funeral Ministry. Last September I was asked by the Parish Priest to train, prepare and support a group of people who would work in collaboration with the priests as part of a Funeral Ministry Team.



Funerals are a way of expressing our thoughts, beliefs and feelings about the people we love who have died. This work involves not only praying with the family but visiting the bereaved family, supporting them in their loss, helping to prepare the Liturgy with them, assisting at the Funeral Masses, leading the Prayers at the Funeral Home and at the Service of Committal.

This ministry requires commitment, sensitivity, empathy and compassion but also an ability to look at our own losses and how we have, or have not, grieved them so that we do not allow our unresolved grief to “get in the way” of being with people in their grief.

Following a time of preparation and discernment we are now ready to commit. Some people who had volunteered felt during the course that they were not ready for what can be a challenging ministry and withdrew. On Sunday 14 June, twelve members of the Parish will be commissioned for this ministry.

All of them have the courage and the willingness to serve, to assume responsibility and to participate in the mission of Christian care for the bereaved. Is this the way of leadership in the Church of today and for the future, our contribution being to facilitate it?

Claire McGrath
Clane Community

Who/What is Misean Cara?

Misean Cara was established in 2004 by the Irish Missionary Union at the request of the Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade working through the Agency for Personal Services Overseas (APSO). It is an intermediary organisation given the task of distributing public funds to missionary organisations in support of their development work among poor and marginalised people in developing countries.

The membership consists of 89 religious and lay missionary organisations, including the Holy Family of Bordeaux. Members work in the areas of education, health care (including HIV and AIDS), urban community development, rural development, income generation, water and sanitation, the environment and human rights.

Since its establishment Misean Cara has disbursed over €138m in Irish public funding to its member organisations who work to reduce poverty in more than 50 countries globally.

Organisation

Like any Body dealing with such huge sums of money, Misean Cara has a highly organised and efficient structure of governance with strict controls, accountability, monitoring and auditing of funds. The Board of Management, Project Officers and office staff work closely with membership representatives, called Mission Development Officers (MDOs).



Eucharistic celebration in Adam and Eve Church for 10th anniversary of MC in 2014



Ritual in memory of deceased missionaries during 10th anniversary celebration

Types of Project

Misean Cara supports the projects of member organisations that reinforce efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and which express the enduring values and distinctive ethos that missionaries bring to development work. The Micro Project Support Scheme (MPPS) funds project up to €50,000 and the Project Support Scheme (PSS) up to €100,000. There is also a Multi-Annual option in the PSS which means a project can be put in place over a number of years, usually three. The funding in this case will be greater.

There is a success rate of 75% in obtaining approval for projects. Misean Cara is anxious to help all cases but each application has to meet their very stringent requirements. Key words are development and sustainability.

The Holy Family and Misean Cara

The Holy Family became a member of Misean Cara in 2012. The local Unit Leadership is the body through whom funding for projects is channelled to the recipient abroad and who has to sign the contract and is ultimately responsible for the good management of the project funds. The leadership Team in the recipient Unit has to sign off on the project so there is no possibility of one member acting unilaterally.

I became the MDO and wished I hadn't as soon as I started to apply for the first project. The MDO has to draw up the project application, all of which is done online. It is a time consuming task requiring endless emails tweaking to and fro between the Field Officer (the person on the ground out there) and the MDO.

So far, two projects have been submitted to Misesan Cara for funding. The first, to build a multi-purpose hall for a relatively new school in Lesotho to serve the school's needs and to



Srs Theresia Selete, School Principal and Síle McGowan in the hall



The 700 + students assembled inside the hall

provide the local community with a place to hold meetings, have craft fairs, community celebrations and Church services was approved. The hall is in use even though the flooring has still to be laid and the electricity installed.

The second, for a similar project for Holy Family Nursery School, Buhara, Uganda, has just been approved and we will soon be signing the contract and get the funds. It also took hours of our time. Sr. Rathini (from Sri Lanka) is the driving force behind the project.



3-5 year old pupils at Holy Family Nursery School, Buhara, Uganda

Migrants Mass Southwark Cathedral 4 May 2015

Most of our cities in Britain and Ireland are cosmopolitan and home to migrant communities who have come to seek refuge from oppression or to improve their situation. Many of the new migrants are Catholics and their presence often enlivens our liturgy. Their contribution is celebrated in special ways in some dioceses in our countries. On Sunday, 24 May, the annual Festival of Nations Mass was celebrated in the Pro-Cathedral, Dublin, with Archbishop Diarmuid Martin presiding. Below is an account of a similar celebration in Southwark Cathedral.

The Migrants Mass celebrated its 10 years in operation since its initiation by Cardinal Murphy O'Connor in 2006. It has insisted over the years on a more just treatment of adults, rooted in Catholic Social Teaching, and has inspired the London campaign "Strangers into Citizens". The Mass and the business meeting afterwards of the London groups with the politicians in Westminster gives a profound witness of the dignity and value of human labour. The day also coincided with the feast day of St. Joseph the Worker.

Some of us know personally or through the media many migrants with particular problems: e.g. health, employment, legal issues, education, housing, benefits and access to food. These experiences as HF religious have made us reflect on how well we can respond to their needs, through our welcome, education, accommodation, food agencies and employment opportunities.



Many parishes were represented in the procession before Mass, sporting banners of all sizes, including one from Kilburn ably carried by many Filipinos. The atmosphere of musical accompaniment, vibrant Caribbean songs, and colourful costumes, all contributed to a semi-carnival atmosphere only muted by the arrival of 6 bishops and numerous clergy, including many ethnic chaplains. Many children in long blue saris and rosebud head-dresses carried flowers, while many Afro-Caribbean groups were adorned by bright and colourful national costumes, again with huge matching head-dresses. Various social action groups were there – "Telco", "J. & P." and Workers Rights groups.

The Mass progressed with differently styled motets in different languages sung by the cosmopolitan Congregation. The Nigerian group sang and swayed rhythmically up the aisle bringing the gifts. Sunlight streamed through the stained glass windows on to the participants. The Intercessions were also in a multitude of languages, praying mainly for their causes of justice, respect and recognition for all the services provided by the migrants. It was moving to hear and see such a witness of solidarity within the Church community.

During his homily, Bishop Peter Smith spoke of the Holy Family, who had been refugees in Jesus' early life. Our migrant sisters and brothers were also like them... and were often rejected and exploited. The bishop called on all politicians to redress the wrongs done to these people. As Christians we have to counter this through our acceptance of the innate dignity of each person, to help the destitute and all those wronged by society. Our Church had to be a home for all without barriers. We needed to celebrate the cultural wealth and the diversity of each member, and their contribution to the wealth of the nation.



Sandra Harrington
Woodford Community

HOLY FAMILY YOUTH

The first group of Holy Family Youth in Ireland was set up in Holy Family Secondary School, Newbridge in 2012. I would like to acknowledge the major contribution of Lay Associate, Edel Mulligan, in collaborating with me to establish this group.

Holy Family Youth or HFY, as the young people decided to name it, is a group of Senior Students who commit themselves to living out their Catholic/Christian Faith in visible and tangible ways within the school, in their families, and in their local neighbourhood.

Their inspiration is the person of Jesus and our Founder, Pierre Bienvenu Noailles.

Their motto is

*LIVE MY FAITH THROUGH POSITIVE ACTION
SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS
BE FAMILY & BUILD FAMILY*

Participation in Holy Family Youth involves:

- completion of an Application Form giving reasons for interest
- a one to one interview to establish motivation
- willingness to undergo training in Leadership Skills & Team Work
- openness to personal prayer, reflection and evaluation
- commitment to attending weekly group meetings
- signed permission of parent/guardian is also a requirement.



HFY 2015, planning for school re-opening in Sept. with Sr. Kate and R.E teacher, Marie-Louise

Holy Family Youth Projects

HFY help plan and carry out a special programme of Welcome & Support for First year pupils. The emphasis is on helping the First Years settle into life in Secondary School. Special events are planned to facilitate bonding and help reduce the stress and worry associated with moving into second level education.

Much attention is given to helping create a sense of community and care within school and the phrase

BE FAMILY & BUILD FAMILY

could be said to be the HFY mantra.

As well as being involved with First Years at a Social level, the HFY group also helped in the Faith Formation of the new pupils by assisting the School Chaplaincy Team in the provision of a Retreat and times of reflection for the new pupils.

In addition to the important role which HFY play in the lives of the first year pupils they also are actively involved in many other aspects of school life and also in outreach to projects in the wider community. The group help in fundraising for the local St. Vincent de Paul Society & the Jack & Jill Foundation. During Lent they coordinated the collection and sorting of food items in school for the Parish Share Food appeal.

Deepening their relationship with Jesus and developing their understanding of the dream of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles is central to the formation of Holy Family Youth.

A strong bond exists between HFY and the Sisters in the Convent thus helping to continue the story and keep alive the ideals of Pierre Bienvenu Noailles.

Opportunities are offered for special times of prayer and reflection in the Convent Chapel and also to meet and chat with the Sisters.

HFY members are encouraged to become active within their local parish. Some of the young people are training to become Eucharistic Ministers while others are involved in peer ministry such as Faith Friends in a Confirmation group. For the past two years during Lent HFY girls helped plan and lead Morning Prayer services in the local parish church before their school day began.



A HFY group meeting with the sisters in the care Unit, Newbridge

Hopes and plans for the future of Holy Family Youth

Now that the structure of HFY is well established within Holy Family Secondary School, the hope is to continue and expand the in-school programme while developing a deeper sense of outreach to projects in the wider community. Within our school chaplaincy team we are also beginning to look at ways of continuing the contact with group members after they leave school, go into third level education or pursue different pathways in life. This continuation of HFY into adulthood is something a couple of girls have expressed an interest in. We probably would have to come up with a different name for such a group but the ideals of Jesus and the charism and dream of Pierre Noailles remain relevant for all times and ages.

Perhaps a fitting mantra for the next phase of Holy Family Youth would be the words of our Founder:

“Go forward, scattering on all sides the seeds of good works”.

Kate Cuskelly .
Sonas Christ Community



OTHER HOLY FAMILY YOUTH GROUPS?

We know they exist in at least two other countries - Sri Lanka and Lesotho. Perhaps they could start networking in the way young people know best, through social media.

World Day for Social Communications

Was anyone aware that the World Day for Social Communications was celebrated this year on Sunday, 17 May, – the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord and the Sunday before Pentecost? It was noted in the Liturgical Calendar but was there any mention of it during Mass?

The *World Day for Social Communications* is the only worldwide celebration called for by the Second Vatican Council (*Inter Mirifica*, 1963). It was to be celebrated on the Sunday following the Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord when that feast was celebrated on a Thursday. Now that it is mostly celebrated on the following Sunday there is no mention of the Day for Social Communications in our churches.

The theme of the Pope's message this year was, not surprisingly:

Communicating the Family: A Privileged Place of Encounter with the Gift of Love.

Bishop Eamonn Walsh, IBC Communications Commission, summarise the main point of the message as follows:

- In the family, we learn to embrace and support one another, to discern the meaning of facial expressions and moments of silence, to laugh and cry together with people who did not choose one other yet are so important to each other.
- More than anywhere else, the family is where we daily experience our own limits and those of others, the problems great and small entailed in living peacefully with others. A perfect family does not exist. We should not be fearful of imperfections, weakness or even conflict, but rather learn how to deal with them constructively. The family, where we keep loving one another despite our limits and sins, thus becomes a school of forgiveness.
- When it comes to the challenges of communication, families who have children with one or more disabilities have much to teach us. A motor, sensory or mental limitation can be a reason for closing in on ourselves, but it can also become, thanks to the love of parents, siblings, and friends, an incentive to openness, sharing and ready communication with all. It can also help schools, parishes and associations to become more welcoming and inclusive of everyone.
- In situations apparently dominated by hatred and violence, where families are separated by stone walls or the no less impenetrable walls of prejudice and resentment, where there seem to be good reasons for saying 'enough is enough', it is only by blessing rather than cursing, by visiting rather than repelling, and by accepting rather than fighting, that we can break the spiral of evil, show that goodness is always possible, and educate our children to fellowship.
- Today the modern media, which are an essential part of life for young people in particular, can be both a help and a hindrance to communication in and between families. The media can be a hindrance if they become a way to avoid listening to others, to evade physical contact, to fill up every moment of silence and rest, so that we forget that 'silence is an integral element of communication; in its absence, words rich in content cannot exist'. The media can help communication when they enable people to share their stories, to stay in contact with distant friends, to thank others or to seek their forgiveness, and to open the door to new encounters.

- The great challenge facing us today is to learn once again how to talk to one another, not simply how to generate and consume information.
- The family is a community which provides help, which celebrates life and is fruitful. Once we realise this, we will once more be able to see how the family continues to be a rich human resource, as opposed to a problem or an institution in crisis. At times the media can tend to present the family as a kind of abstract model which has to be accepted or rejected, defended or attacked, rather than as a living reality. Or else a grounds for ideological clashes rather than as a setting where we can all learn what it means to communicate in a love received and returned. Relating our experiences means realising that our lives are bound together as a single reality, that our voices are many, and that each is unique.
- Families should be seen as a resource rather than as a problem for society. Families at their best actively communicate by their witness the beauty and the richness of the relationship between man and woman, and between parents and children. We are not fighting to defend the past. Rather, with patience and trust, we are working to build a better future for the world in which we live.

Click [here](#) to read the full text of this year's World Communications Day Message from Pope Francis.

LATE NEWS



On Friday, 29 May, seven HF Sisters met with two representatives of the NBSCCCI (National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church) in Arran Road to review our policy statement and update us on recent developments.

More on this in the next issue.

In the meantime, each community might ask itself:

how well each sister knows the contents of our statement, where it is kept and if it could be found in an emergency, who are our designated child protection officers?

See our website for the statement

<http://www.holyfamilybordeaux.org/safeguarding-policy-statement/>

UPCOMING EVENTS - June 2015

June 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Foundation of HF Contemplative Sisters (1859)	2 Final Profession of the three Foundresses (1822)	3	4 The first three Foundresses made their Act of Consecration (1820)	5 World Environment Day Ordination of Fr Noailles (Eve of the Trinity, 1819)	6 First Mass of Fr Noailles (Trinity Sunday 1819)
7	8	9	10	11	12 Our Lady of All Graces World Day against Child Labour	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 Lay Associates Assembly Liverpool World Refugee Day
21	22 *International Teams of Participation meet in Rome	23	24	25	26 International Day in support of Victims of Torture	27
28	29 End of Int. Teams Meeting	30				

*Srs. Margaret Muldoon, Claire McGrath, Aine Hayde, Síle McGowan, from the B & I Unit will be participating, as will Mary Slaven.

Thank you

Sisters Margaret and Claire Marie O'Connell, wish to thank most sincerely the many kind Sisters in the Province who sent them Mass Cards and messages of sympathy on the sad occasion of the death of their sister, Mrs. Rita Sweeney. R.I.P.

On behalf of APT, Sr. Síle McGowan would like to thank the communities of Newbridge (including some friends), Sonas, Moneenroe and Clane who sponsored Fr. Gerry Campbell on his run to raise awareness of Human Trafficking and raise funds to help them in their efforts to eradicate this evil crime. Together they collected €130.