

EXCHANGE APRIL 2013

FROM THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

This month we have the NEP prayer for the General Chapter prepared by Barbara Bailey and we know that some communities are already lighting their candles at meal times for the intentions of the Chapter. We are now at the stage of having area meetings in preparation for the General Chapter. What you send in will be a help to the delegates as they prepare for their participation in the Chapter. We ask for your contributions to be in by the beginning of May if possible.

The dates for the meetings with delegates after they return from the General Chapter are as follows:

Carlisle – 15th July

Upminster – 20th July

Liverpool - 23rd July

Ferrybank -30th July

Dublin – 1st August

Beziers –

If you are not able to attend the meeting in your own area, you can make arrangements to take part in another meeting, if it is convenient.



HEARTS BURNING WITHIN US AS WE JOURNEY.

Kathleen Buckley



NEP PROVINCIAL CHAPTER 2013
PEN CHAPITRE PROVINCIAL 2013

This story is about a couple (let's call them Lucy and Andrew) and their 2 children aged 10 and 12.

One night recently my door-bell rang. I opened it to see Lucy standing there, bedraggled, trembling and crying uncontrollably.

'Lucy, what's the matter' I asked. She didn't reply but just sobbed and sobbed. Eventually she cried out "**my children, my children, my children. He's threatening to kill them**", (he meaning her husband). Through her tears she went on to explain that her children live in continuous fear and anxiety because he makes the threats in front of them. The domestic violence has been going on since they were married 14 years ago but she kept quiet about it because he threatened to kill her if she dared utter a word. She slit her wrists 3 times because she was at the end of her tether and felt she couldn't cope any more. When she was pregnant with her little girl he shoved her downstairs and as she struggled to get up he kicked her in the stomach.

As we continued to chat I was conscious that Andrew was at home with the children and they could be in danger. I suggested I would take her home. She accepted. When she tried to open her front door he had locked it on the inside. I will never forget the look of panic on her face, wondering if her children were safe. She screamed and screamed which forced him to open the door as he wouldn't want the neighbours to know there was anything wrong.

He dragged her in by the hair of her head. I followed but inwardly I was trembling. He pushed her into the kitchen and took a knife out of the drawer. With knife in hand he walked threateningly towards her and sneered 'so you've told Sr. Kathleen everything'. I had no option but to stand in front of her thinking 'this is it, I've had it'. I risked asking Andrew for the knife and to my dismay he handed it over. At that point he collapsed onto the chair and feebly apologised to Lucy and me.

Fear and anxiety continue to be written on Lucy's and the children's faces. Lucy says 'my dignity is shredded, I feel crushed to pieces and I feel like nothing' She says she feels as if she's screaming but making no sound. 'I am so drowned in sadness', '**filled with compassion he looks into the abyss of human suffering so as to pour out the oil of consolation and the wine of hope**' **Phil 2:6**. The threats to kill the children still continue but the agencies are now involved.

Please pray for this family.



JPIC news - **Some more ECO Tips**

1. Choose energy-efficient appliances & use Energy -efficient light bulbs
2. Buy recycled paper products and use both sides of paper
3. Walk/use public transport/carpool where possible
4. Buy locally grown food
5. Buy organic and Fairtrade
6. Buy minimally-packaged products & always bring your own cloth bag

THE IF CAMPAIGN *Dorothy Ward*

This campaign hopes to make 2013 the beginning of the end of the global hunger crisis. This campaign has been signed by many charities, including Trocaire, Sciaf, and Cafod.

IF we force governments and investors to be honest and open about the deals they make in the poorest countries that stop people getting enough food.

IF governments keep their promises on aid, invest to stop children dying from malnutrition and help the poorest people feed themselves through investment in small farmers.

IF we stop poor farmers being forced off their land, and use the available agricultural land to grow food for people, not biofuels for cars.

IF governments stop big companies dodging tax in poor countries, so that millions of people can free themselves from hunger.

(see “the if campaign” on line (Christian Aid, Oxfam, Unicef)

LOBBY: For the English houses remember that the day for lobbying your MP is the 15th May 2013. Contact your local CAFOD Office for organisation of transport.

BEREAVEMENTS

Our sympathy and prayers are with:

Sr Brigitte Dalton on the death of her brother, **Edward Dalton**, who died on 6th April

The Drumcondra Road Community (No 72) on the death of **Sr Josepha O'Sullivan** who died on 9th April at the age of 76 years and in the 57th year of her Religious Profession

The Arrowsmith House and Seafield Communities on the death of **Sr Brendan O'Donoghue** who died on 9th April at the age of 98 years and in the 78th year of her Religious Life

The Sisters of the Brazilian Province on the death of **Ir Maria Enelita Freire de Mello** who died in Rio de Janeiro on 7th April at the age of 92 years and in the 65th year of her Religious Profession

MARY BRIDGET FITZGERALD *sent by Kathleen O'Keeffe [from a New York Newspaper]*

“Sister Bridget Mary Fitzgerald, R.S.H.M., who was appointed by Pope Paul VI to the Sacred Congregation for Religious in Rome, died on 22nd September at Marymount Convent, Tarrytown. She was 88.

Formerly known as Sister Joachim, she taught at Marymount College, 1956-1962 except for a year serving in Zimbabwe. She taught and later was community superior at the Marymount International School in London, 1962-1967.

She was one of four women religious appointed to the Sacred Congregation for Religious, now the Congregation for Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, by Pope Paul VI in 1967. This made her one of the first women ever to serve as a Vatican official.

She held this position until 1981 when she continued to work in Rome as a tutor and parish minister. She then served as Vicar for Religious for the Diocese of Wrexham, Wales 1988-1995. She was archivist at her congregation's mother house in France, 1995-2000.



Nuns of the RUN * A talk to mark Foundation Day in Barrow.



Sister Anne Murphy, RSHM PhD, who worked for a time at the UN as an intern, visited Barrow on 28th February to give an interesting and enlightening talk, entitled “It’s Our World Too”. She told of the work done at the United Nations Organisation in New York City by priests, nuns, and monks – the Religious at the United Nations – the RUN. Most of their work is done at the lower levels of the UN through Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), often dealing with peace and justice issues for small groups of people who cannot get their government organisations to take up their cause.

Sr. Anne commented that the UN is a far from perfect organisation, suffering from the faults that come with all human organisations, but the world is a much better place because of it and would be much worse without it. The UN touches each of our lives in many different ways, many that we don't even notice. We certainly get news items on a daily basis making us aware of its wide and diverse roles. Unfortunately too many of these relate to wars or natural disasters.

She showed how the UN Charter and the way in which it works to maintain peace and sustain human life has strong links to Christ's Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes. "Blessed be the peacemakers, the peace builders, the peace keepers, and the peace maintainers". We are all familiar with UN service men and women, international aid workers and local staff wearing the pale blue UN clothing working in all sorts of environments – usually hostile ones – so that people may have life. This mirrors the sisters' own motto, set by their founder: "That all may have life (in Christ)".

Many of the images used to illustrate her talk will stay in our minds for a long time. For those who were not able to come, the content of the talk and the presentation will soon be posted on the joint parish website on www.sacredheart-bif.org.uk or www.stcolumbas-walney.org.uk. People can see what the UN actually does throughout the year by going to You Tube and watching the video report "United Nations Year in Review 2012" at <http://youtu.be/jjnF56u195g>. The UN website www.un.org will keep anybody busy for ages.

This event, which took place at Sacred Heart church, Barrow, was organised by Sister Pierre Dullaghan, one of the Sisters at the town's Sacred Heart of Mary Convent, to mark the annual celebration of Foundation Day. This year, it is 164 years since the Institute of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary (RSHM) was formed in the small town of Béziers in southern France. From these humble beginnings, the RSHM is now an international Institute with sisters working among communities in many areas of the world. Visit www.rshm.org to find out more.

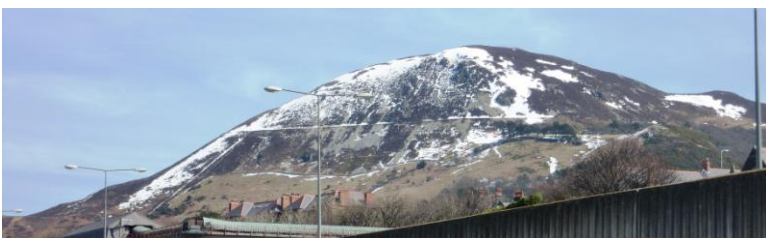
* With apologies to Jonathan Lynn, who wrote and directed the film "Nuns on the Run", a 1990 British comedy film starring Eric Idle and Robbie Coltrane, produced by HandMade Films.

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SUNFLOWERS MEETING:
NODFFA Thursday 4th - Sunday 7th April.
Barbara Bailey

The sun was out to greet seventeen of us coming from France, Ireland, England Scotland, and Wales! Lambs in the fields, daffodils and a backdrop of snow covered hills (including Jubilee) hinted of Spring though there was always a biting wind.



Our opening morning prayer, with symbols of a bowl of water and a towel, focused us on service in our mission and specific ministries. As the delegates and the Provincial Council were beginning some preparation for the Province report to the General Chapter immediately after our meeting, we were asked to brainstorm on risks and opportunities we might see in the next six years. Much of our discussion recalled the calls and conversations of the Provincial Chapter and we were aware the feedback from the area meetings coming soon may bring further ideas.



A welcome afternoon break gave us the chance to relax with each other by mountains, sea and shops. The next day, after a hearty rendering of our General Chapter song “As we journey” we continued our discussions which were stimulating and life-giving, as well as being hard work!



Further brainstorming produced ideas about possible symbols that might help convey some of the deeper aspects in the presentation of the report.



The Grand National then became our focus, with a sweepstake and other bets (despite our expert Ellen being absent): much noise and excitement from winners and losers.



Celebrations continued into the evening with special congratulations to this year’s new sixty year olds (the youngest in the Province) and those turning seventy.

Next year’s meeting is planned for Thursday 24th –Sunday 27th April 2014