

Pastoral Ministry in the Caring Centre, Ferrybank : Paula and Deirdre

On the 14th May 2010 our new Care Manager – Anne Costigan – took up her position in Madonna House, Ferrybank. We – Deirdre Kavanagh and Paula Murray work with her and with the other Carers who are employed by the community. Anne is responsible for the overall running of Madonna House and the health care of the Sisters. Our responsibility is primarily to be present to the Sisters who need special care due to diminished health. We accompany them spiritually and socially. We are aware of our charism 'That all may have life' and to make it the experience for all whom we are accompanying in their years of retirement.

Deirdre



Deirdre and Paula
with the Sisters on
various occasions
in the Caring Centre.



Paula

Ministry in the Bon Pasteur Caring Centre, Béziers, France : Dorothy Ward



I joined the Bon Pasteur community, Béziers in March 2002. I was just another member of the community but had responsibility for the health of the sisters there. As all the sisters were elderly 85-99 it was obvious that they had varying needs physically and spiritually. It was important for me to treat them peacefully and respectfully as they prepared for the latter part of life.

I thought it was important that, as sisters of the Sacred Heart of Mary, they felt that they still belonged fully to the Institute and had a ministry at this stage of their lives. I liked to keep them up to date with the news and ask them to pray for various intentions. Older people can have a great ministry praying for the needs of others.

Although for many years of my life I had nursed people who were dying I found it more difficult to nurse my own religious sisters – especially when it came to funerals – because there was a special relationship there. These were my sisters in a true sense. We were in the same community and had a deep spiritual and human bond. Seven of my sisters died while I was there from March 2002 to October 2008. I feel very blessed to have had this experience of ministry.



Pastoral Ministry in the Caring Centre, Liverpool: Kathleen O'Donovan



For the past ten years Kathleen's ministry has been taking care of our elderly and sick sisters in Arrowsmith House in Liverpool. She says that for her what is really important is expressed in their Mission Statement:

***"Arrowsmith House is the HOME of our elderly and sick sisters.
Our mission is to enable all to receive and give life in an atmosphere of loving care and support"***

Being a carer and a home maker on a day to day basis involves a wide spectrum of skills and activities: managing the carers, giving communion, seeing to the personal needs of the sisters, welcoming visitors and much more. Arrowsmith House adjoins Seafield SHM Community and Kathleen values their involvement in helping out in this ministry.

Looking back over the years Kathleen says :

" It has been a privilege to be with our elderly sisters at this stage of their lives. They are still living life to the full and even though they have their struggles, there is always a deep sense of joy and serenity.

It has been life-giving for me and encourages me in my own commitment. Sitting and praying with those who are dying as they move into fullness of life especially has a grace and blessing for me."



Kathleen with Sr. Brendan