

# Exchange/Echange

## Northern European Province

## Province de L'Europe du Nord

October 2017

[www.rshm-nep.org](http://www.rshm-nep.org)  
[www.rscm-pen.org](http://www.rscm-pen.org)

### Au revoir La Devèze!



On Sunday, September 7, 2017, the Christian community of the parish of Our Lady of Reconciliation in La Devèze said "good-bye" to our sisters Marie-Jean, Marie-Paule and Lucienne who have just joined the community of the Good Shepherd in Béziers. "Living stones", well rooted in the neighborhood and the parish for 32 years received a warm THANK YOU for their various engagements in catechesis, liturgical animation, floral decoration, reception, groups of sharing the Word of God and above all for their presence in the heart of each by their friendship. One page turns and another is written for them and for the parish. The gifts offered to each one will remember the shared friendship and the faithful support of prayer.  
Thérèse-Marie, rscm.

### ON THE FEAST OF OUR LADY'S BIRTHDAY THE NEW COMMUNITY WAS BORN.

A big thanks to Ursula who, with gentle firmness, helped us lay the foundations of our new life together. The many cards received and the white roses have touched us a lot. Your encouragement has been valuable to us as we go into the future with faith and confidence. We travel the road together with the assurance of your support and prayer. A big thanks to each one of you.

Lucienne, Marie-Jean, Marie-Paule, Christiane, Bernadette, Françoise, Thérèse-Marie



### THANKSGIVING FOR SR. MONIQUE'S FORTY YEARS OF PASTORAL WORK IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY



On Sunday 3 September in the beautifully decorated parish church there was a very joyful celebration of Mass, which had been prepared by all the mother catechists in thanksgiving to God for Sr. Monique's forty years of pastoral work in the local community.

Monique was extremely touched by the presence of her four nephews and nieces and that of so many people who came to show their appreciation of her presence among them.

At the aperitif which was provided by the local authorities, the mayor expressed the gratitude of the village and presented Monique with a



medal of Arthez... the first of its kind. He spoke of her role in the midst of the people and of his personal joy at having met her. I spoke briefly on behalf of the congregation. Monique then set out for Betharram and a new adventure in faith.

Bernadette McNamara



## Talk given by Sr. Mary Murray before the Requiem Mass for Sr. Therese R.I.P on Friday the 8th of September 2017

Therese was born near New Inn, County Tipperary on July 10<sup>th</sup>, 1920. She was the only one of her siblings to be born there as her four sisters and three brothers were blessed to be born in the North of Ireland! Therese always saw herself as a Tipperary woman. Her parents sent her to Ferrybank as a boarder when she was fourteen in 1934. Four years later she entered the newly opened Novitiate in Ferrybank.

Therese, as a Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary was first and foremost a person totally dedicated to God and God's will for her. The love of Christ compelled her and enabled her to:

- Accept all the calls she heard and followed in Ferrybank from her entry into the Community in 1938 until 1975, first in the day school and in the amalgamated school of boarders and day girls and as coordinator of the local community (1968-1975) just at the time when Vatican 11 was in the air. She was very open to the call to renewal without getting side-tracked by superficial changes.
- The love of Christ enabled her to leave Ferrybank in 1975 and go to Tallaght where she was appointed Formation Directress and also taught in our school in Roslyn. That same love enabled her to make the a very radical change in her early 60's to go to Zambia for ten years to share in the RSHM mission there, helping in the formation of the young Zambian sisters and engaging in spiritual direction.
- That same love brought her first back to Tallaght and then to the new community of Castleoaks in Ferrybank where she involved herself as best she could in the local Parish community and on the boards of the Primary School and the Convent Secondary. She gave much help to the negotiations that led to establishing of Abbey Community College and served on its Board for several years.
- As her capacity to walk declined, she accepted gracefully to go to Madonna House and received gratefully the care she needed. The loss of one's independence is difficult for everyone and Therese found it so but she always said that she realised how much she had to be thankful for and she tried each day to show her appreciation to all who looked after her. I know that her quiet accepting presence will be sadly missed by all who live and work there.

She loved her family very much and spoke of you all with great warmth and affection. She had so many nieces and nephews and grand nieces and nephews that it was hard to keep up with who was who.

She also cared very much for all the past pupils that she kept in contact with over the years. She had a great rapport with the Ferrybank and Dublin past pupils when they were active and with Past Pupils who always contacted at Christmas.

As a person Therese was graced with a firm, steady temperament quiet free from mood swings personality which made her and easy to live with person. she had the gifts of understanding and compassion for people and at the same time was not afraid to be direct and clear thinking in her approach when the situation required. She enjoyed repartee as the carers know and had an impish sense of humour which manifested itself especially when she played Scrabble and took a gleeful delight in triple scores.

You may know that Therese and I have been good friends since I came to Ferrybank in 1968 as a still very green and shaky religious, not yet finally professed and still trying to find my vocation as a religious. Therese was both exemplar and mentor – a soul friend, an anam cara as the Irish says.

People who help fashion our life in a positive and constructive way are gifts to us and I believe that all of us who knew Therese would agree that she was a gift to us in Madonna, to the RSHM Community, to the church and to those who came in contact with her. There is much more I could say but Therese would not wish too much speech so I will end with these encouraging words from "Benedictus"

*"May you, Therese, continue to inspire us*

*To enter each day with a generous heart*

*To serve the call of courage and love*

*Until we see your beautiful face again*

*In that land in which there is no separation*

*Where all tears will be wiped from our mind*

*And where we will never lose you again."* (John O' Donoghue)

*"May the two arms of Christ enfold her and may she rest in God's Paradise of Grace" (Ag Criost an Siol)*

The Madonna House Community wishes to thank all who looked after Therese in such a caring way, all who came to her funeral and those who sent mass cards and condolences to the community.

To all of my Sisters - A very sincere and heartfelt thanks for your kindness, sympathy, the Masses offered and phone calls on the occasion of Joyce's death. They are an enormous help at this sad time. In appreciation a Mass has been offered for you all - GWEN

## REMEMBRANCE

I am aware that all of you have already heard the sad news of the sudden death of Johanna Bambridge on July 6th, 2017. As Head of Marymount School Paris, she was appointed by the Board of Directors in 2014. I had the opportunity of meeting her several times at Marymount especially on Friday evenings when I go there to join the Community. Johanna was always full of energy and would welcome me to every special event in the school even if I could not honor her invitations. She also included me in whatever treat she organized for the Sisters such as a concert in a very special place like La Sainte Chappelle that some of you may have had the privilege of visiting or a show with garlic songs and dances of the 17th. and 18th. century at the Salle Gaveau. Not alone that, she had an amazing sense of solidarity with the poor. Thanks to her awareness, the school gave support in many different ways to the women in the day shelter where I am involved.

These few lines are simply a remembrance of her good deeds and a token of gratitude for her generosity and thoughtfulness. Johanna showed great consideration for the Sisters and always looked upon the school as the continuation of the RSHM mission. Together with her own gifts and experience, she embodied the RSHM motto « that all may have life ». Her great sense of duty drove her to give fully of her own life for the good of the school.

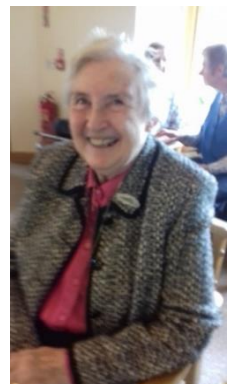
May Johanna be now at peace and rest with God and drink forever from the fountain of eternal life.

Sr. Brigitte Dalton

Celine

## JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

Celine and Dolores who celebrated their platinum jubilees and Eileen who celebrated her diamond jubilee, were very moved by all the greetings and mass cards they received . To all a big "Thank you!" The three Ferrybank communities celebrated in style on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August. The celebrations began with a Mass celebrated by Fr Ray Dempsey who delivered a very comprehensive homily on religious life, which was





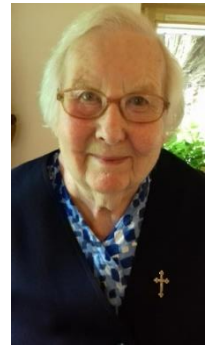
very much appreciated by all the sisters. The Mass was followed by a delicious meal prepared with much love and care by the Madonna House staff. Madonna House was a sea of colour with congratulation cards and decorations. It was a fitting recognition of 200 years of RSHM commitment.

Eileen's day was made complete with the presence of her brother and nephew. The family were delighted to share the moment with Patsy who is well known to them so it was an opportunity to look back, reminisce and

share accounts of people who passed through their lives and with whom they have little contact now.

My Platinum Jubilee was a very joyful occasion. The day began with a very meaningful Eucharist, followed by a delicious meal provided by Madonna House. Then, we, the Jubilarians, were free to do as we liked. I retreated to my apartment to remember and to reflect on the past seventy years.

I recalled the various communities I'd lived in - twelve in all. God is surely "a God of Surprises" because no sooner had I settled in a house than I was moved to another. God definitely had a plan for me. No community is perfect, all have their ups and downs, but during those early years I was very much influenced by the older sisters whose unselfish hard work, and kindness to me, as a young nun, impressed me deeply, and I thanked God for the legacy of Pere Gailhac and Mother St John. Spiritual guides tell us that each way of life is a pathway to God if we have the courage to take it. Jesus is the source of our unity and He sends us forth to bring the message in whatever way we can.



Time has flown by and now at the age of 91 I have the opportunity to stand back, to ponder, to wonder and to thank God for all that He has done for me. G K Chesterton expresses this beautifully in a poem.

"When all my days are ending  
And I have no song to sing  
I think I shall not be too old  
To stare at everything  
As I stared once at a nursery door  
Or a tall tree or a swing"

Dolores

### SISTER KATHLEEN MCCARTAN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE.



60 years of service should be celebrated – and that is what happened in Lisburn on 1<sup>st</sup> July. At 10.00 on that Saturday morning many of Kathleen's family and a large number of parishioners gathered in the parish church to celebrate Kathleen's long

service with a Mass of Thanksgiving. Fr McCaughan PP congratulated Kathleen and



highlighted her various ministries particularly her time as Principal of St Joseph's School, Lisburn and her continuing ministry as hospital chaplain. The contribution of the RSHM over the years was duly acknowledged with great appreciation. Members of the congregation, Kathleen's family and friends gathered in the Parish Centre afterwards for refreshments and sharing of memories. It was a very joyous occasion and a real celebration – with not one but two cakes!

Following the parish celebration Kathleen's family and the SHM sisters present moved to the Ballymac Hotel for a lovely lunch.

We thank God for Kathleen's service as an RSHM and are proud of her witness as a religious in the diocese of Down and Connor.

Mary Gough

*I had a really wonderful jubilee celebration at community and parish level. My sincere thanks to so many people and communities who sent greetings, prayers and masses. A Mass of thanksgiving has been offered for you all. Kathleen*

#### 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING OF ROSLYN PARK

It all began for me when Sr Martin Murray sent me a copy of a letter from Joan Stearn (from my time) inviting people to the Celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the opening of Roslyn Park, September 1947 and to reactivate the Past Pupils reunion.

Another step for me happened in our Cemetery on the 8th of September after we had laid Sr Therese RIP to rest. Groups stood chatting, remembering, recalling. Someone addressed the person beside me "Catherine, you would remember that" and suddenly the penny dropped for me and I asked the said Catherine "Are you Catherine O'Carroll?" She said "Yes. and who are you?" "I'm Teresina", and suddenly we were back to 1948 when I started my teaching career in Roslyn Park and Catherine was in what we called Kindergarten 2.

Memories! Later she told me "When you said Teresina, I immediately recalled Oh the Mother who taught us after Santa Claus!" (the name they had for Betty who was Sr Stanislaus at that time). We then proceeded to Madonna House to become reacquainted with our 97-year-old Santa Claus.

Next day. Saturday 9th Sept I went to Drumcondra and Patricia, Anne Kavanagh and myself set out for the Celebration at the Talbot Hotel Stillorgan. The drinks reception started at 7pm followed by dinner at 8pm. There were already 300 past pupils around, including a few men (not from my time) Names became familiar as they came to meet us. I could go on for a week as they stirred up so many memories-Mabette, Elizabeth, Pauline, the Tanhams etc. and they explained their then and now names.

- Entering the dining room, the tables were arranged according to the year people attended school 56, 60, 75, 80 etc., so they dined with the year group of finishing school.
- We were told we did not need name badges as we were on Table 1! As the evening wore on and more and more people came to talk more and more memories were stirred up as people asked for Mother so and so of that time. Memories of First Communions in Star of the Sea were recalled. They remember us making books for the them and when they went to bed their parents enjoyed praying/reading them. Does anyone remember the books?
- On October 5th Catherine, Pauline Curran and Joan Stearn came to visit us in Ferrybank just to continue the conversation.
- Some people won't know the latest of Roslyn. REHAB Ireland have worked there very successfully since the 80s. Last year they sold to the State but leased it back for 2 years while they got their all-in-one premises built (Roslyn is on 3 sites) town houses, apartments etc.

were spoken of for a while, but the latest is that it has been sold to the Education Authority and is to be reopened as a School. I do not know the date. Teresina O Byrne

## REFLECTION CHINA SEPTEMBER 2017

In early 2017 I received a call from China to return there. It took some time to see how this could become a reality. It was important to discern and listen to the voices around me from 'Yes, Go, keep the Relationship going', to 'Mind your health', Ageism and the quiet voice of Blessing!

This China outreach came originally through All Hallows. The overall responsibility and organization remains with Fr. Hugh O'Donnell CM (83) Vincentian Chinese/Taiwan Province. Hugh is well known to Priests and Sisters throughout China. He organizes for them an annual month's Leadership Program in De Paul University, Chicago.

I am very happy to arrange and share with you 'A Time to tell the Story' of my recent time in China. In the meantime, these images, maps and reflection will give a flavor of my journey.



On arrival, the Sisters of St. Joseph, at the North Church in Beijing were my base. This Congregation was founded by a French Vincentian, Monsignor De a Place, late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was dispersed during the Cultural Revolution and was re-



founded in 1988. They are diocesan and their ministry at various levels is mainly with The North Church, The South Church and the East Church in Beijing and outreaches form these. The sisters strike me as being a very hard working group. I moved out from St. Joseph's and returned there three times in September. It was a place of refreshment and solace. My first journey from Beijing took me 90Km South East, by 'Super Train' to Tianjin, to the Sisters of Charity. I had the opportunity on three previous occasions to be with them, to share their life and ministries. This time, I also had the experience not only of Formation, Religious Life, but also of Leaven for Mission. My belief is that we receive in order to pass on. We worked well together for four days. These Sisters have a special place in my heart. They were founded by a Vincentian after the Cultural Revolution, they work with Lepers in remote areas, youth, Chinese Medicine, the poor elderly who have neither relatives nor finance, and they run a home for 12 elderly people. In all of these ministries they are dependent on donations.

Having returned to Beijing and rested for two days, the second journey was from Beijing 440 Km South to Handan, to the Sisters of The Consolation of the Holy Spirit. This was for an eight-day retreat with Fr. Hugh and me. Eleven of the twenty-five sisters were preparing to make/renew their temporary vows immediately after the retreat. I was very impressed by their prayer, silence, music and singing during the retreat. Their ministry is mostly with medical/ Chinese medicine, catechetics, youth and summer camps for small children. Twenty of the sisters work in the diocesan hospital.



Madeline Fitzpatrick

## GLOBAL NETWORK OF RSHM SCHOOLS

It was in a spirit of immense joy and excitement that 69 participants gathered in Bogota Colombia for the Inaugural Conference of the Global Network of RSHM Schools in June 2017.

It was only two years since our inception as a Global Network and to have achieved so much in that time is due to Sr. Roz's vision and commitment to the network and our own Sr. Philippa's support and encouragement, along with the work of the coordinating committee, as we strove to articulate a Mission Statement, Terms of Reference and Prayer for the Network.



The Conference participants came from all our Provinces and Regions and the schools founded by us – Eastern and Western America; Brazil, Portugal, Zambezi and just me from the NEP. We received a tremendously warm and vivacious welcome from our Colombian Marymount Schools.

Roz set the tone with a wonderfully inspiring talk for which she received a standing ovation. Her presence there was tremendously encouraging for all. Speakers came from Colombia, and from the coordinating committee and spoke to us of the importance of education in leading and preparing young people for a global world, according to the values of justice and peace.

One speaker really challenged us, Fr, Jose Leonardo Rincon SJ, Dean of the Faculty of Education and president of the Jesuit Schools in Colombia. He spoke of the 'theology of leadership' and identified 14 attributes of God in relation to leadership. It was just superb and if anyone would like a copy of my notes I would be more than happy to share them.

The liturgy, the sharing, the input, the discussion and the amazing food, as well as some 'carnival' experiences, really made our Conference an occasion of joy and great pride in being associated with our RSHM schools.

The link to the conference website is :

<http://www.1stgeneralmeetingrshm.marymountbogota.edu.co/index.html>

*I hope you get a sense of the conference from looking on the conference link above with all the photos.*

Mary Jo Martin

## NEWS FROM BRAZIL

Misean Cara spent two weeks in Brazil during September. Seamus Collins, who worked with Trocaire for many years, had the task of monitoring the projects while Christian, who is a recent employee of Misean Cara is assigned to the role of mentor in South America. He came on an experiential visit to learn about the Brazilian reality and methodologies used in the implementation of projects. We, RSHM, have five projects in Brazil, two being run by our Brazilian sisters in the state of Bahia and three in Joao Pessoa, Paraiba where we served for many years. Just a flavour of one of the projects :

**LIGHT OF THE WORLD NURSEY** in Mangabeira, Joao Pessoa, takes care of children between three months and six years. The nursery opens at 6 :30 each morning including Saturday. The 42 children are from very poor and



extremely dysfunctional families where domestic violence and drug addiction are the norm. The project is selective because it attends families who have a desire to change their life style by working, studying or both. The project depends on community health agents to recommend families who are likely to avail of the services offered by the project. Each family pays a small monthly fee which contributes to the smooth running of the project. The fee is not fixed but is agreed with parents or guardian according to the circumstances of

each one. The project has eight staff members who are fortunate to have a fixed salary with all their legal workers' rights which is rare for nursery staff. The families of all eight staff depend on the nursery salary for survival. The impact of the project on the lives of children, staff and families is remarkable, the most prominent being undernourished, aggressive, unhappy children becoming sociable, friendly, mannerly and happy. Parents/guardians have a complete life change both within the family and in the community. They take greater care of their children, are less violent and aspire to become worthy citizens with a desire to change their circumstances and offer a better future to their children. Kate Nolan

#### IN MEMORY OF DOM JOSE MARIA PIRES

One of the reasons we chose to go to Joao Pessoa, in the Archdiocese of Paraiba, was because Maria de Lourdes Machado and others who were advising us told us that it was a diocese where we would receive help to insert ourselves into the lives of the poor, as there was a good pastoral structure under the guidance of the Bishop, Dom Jose. Dom Jose was the first black Bishop in Brazil, appointed in September 1957 and then, during the II Vatican Council, sent as archbishop to Paraiba, a neighbor to Dom Helder Camara. He was warned by some not to follow the ways of Dom Helder, who was called a communist. From then on, they were firm friends, both committed to doing all they could to encourage the poor to fight for their rights and to work for democracy, supported by the framework of the Basic Christian Communities in the dioceses of the north East. Dom Jose walked every day from his house to the curia offices in flip-flops, talking to the young street workers, earning their living by 'minding' cars, and others he met on the way. We could go to his house, knock on the door and go in to talk to him without ceremony. He was a prophet for our times, in his simplicity and his defense of the poor and oppressed. In our early years in Joao Pessoa he closed the cathedral to celebrate the Christmas midnight Mass in the square in front of the Governor's Palace, where families who had been put off their land with violence were camped under black plastic sheeting, as a protest, hoping to gain the right to return to their homes. Dom Jose started the first Human Rights center in Brazil, to give legal support to any who were treated unjustly and to help organize the poor to fight for their rights. When Mary came back from doing the ISL course and had nowhere to attend clients, Dom Jose allowed her to use his office in the curia.

Dom Jose died on 27<sup>th</sup> August this year. The date was one more thing he shared with Dom Helder who had died in 1999 on that day. It was also the anniversary on the death of Dom Luciano Mendes, another Brazilian Bishop with the same commitment to the poor. One writer from Paraiba said "This date, when three great witnesses to the Love of God, who were courageous prophets at the service of the poor, should be known as the National Day of the Prophetic Voice, to remind us that the love of God comes through the defense of human rights and to help us to renew our commitment to the project of Jesus of Nazareth, so that the day of liberation of the poor, which they dreamed of and for which they worked tirelessly, will come quickly."

Dom Jose was 98 when he died. I was fortunate to have visited him when in Belo Horizonte in January at the JPIC meeting. A week after his death we received in the post (which takes a long time from Brazil) an invitation to the mass and celebration marking his 60 years as a Bishop.

*From Mary Jo McElroy, on behalf of the RSHM who lived in*

*Joao Pessoa and felt supported by Dom Jose.*



## NEWS FROM THE ZAMBEZI REGION

**OUR RSHM ASSEMBLY IN LUSAKA**, August 28-31, was an important moment for the Zambezi region. we took a step forward in our five-year strategic plan. we were happy to have the members of the general council with us, Rosamunde, Maria Emilia, Philippa and Mary, and they added much to our time together. present also was Mike Greally, our consultant.



## 60 ANNIVERSARY OF RSHM IN ZIMBABWE

Sunday, September 17, 2017 was a day of gladness and rejoicing for the Region as we gathered in Holy Name Parish, Mabelreign, to celebrate LIFE for all. It was such a blessing having Roz and Philippa, Florence and many members of the Region from Zambia with us to celebrate the 60 years of our RSHM life in Zimbabwe. Representatives of other Religious Congregations, including Illumina LCBL and Janice MM, joined over one thousand parishioners to show their gratitude and appreciation for the presence of RSHM in Zimbabwe down through the years. Fidelma and Denise were specially remembered as well as all RSHM both living and dead who served in Zimbabwe. Enjoy the photographs and greetings in this communication. You will appreciate a special poem which was composed and recited by our parishioner and resident poet, Pearl Black. We are so grateful to her for dedicating this beautiful and thought provoking poem to us:

You are the sacred daughters of a divine king  
The fearless companions of our mother Mary  
Handpicked by Christ, that the light of His Love  
may shine  
You are the temples of the Sacred Heart  
You are mothers of our church, the Holy Name  
Your wombs have given birth to the wonders of  
Christ  
The flame of your spirits shine a light on your  
children  
We have watched you steadfastly grow  
We heard you laugh without fear of the future  
Courageously offering your lives to sacrifice  
Not for yourselves,  
But that we may have life and have it to the full  
We heard your prayers silently piercing through  
obstacles  
We felt your kindness floating generously on  
your tongues  
The Holy Spirit clothing you with strength  
Not for yourselves,  
But that we may have life and have it to the full  
We have seen your feet dancing in the path of  
our mother  
Like tongues of fire falling for decades over and  
over  
Not for yourselves,  
But that we may have life and have it to the full

That they may know and love God,  
Your lives proclaim His purpose  
We have seen you carry the poor out of sorrow  
We have seen you comfort the widows  
You have carried their tears in your hearts  
Not for yourselves,  
But that we may have life and have it to the full  
We have heard you singing gently over the  
years,  
Songs of hope, Songs of joy, Songs of victory,  
Songs of pain, Songs of love, Songs of salvation  
Not for yourselves  
But that we may have life and have it to the full  
So today we celebrate you,  
For you are the sacred daughters of a divine  
king  
You are the fearless companions of our mother  
Mary  
Handpicked by Christ that the light of His Love  
may shine  
You are the temples of the Sacred Heart  
You are mothers of our church, the Holy Name  
Your wombs have given birth to the wonders of  
Christ  
The flame of your spirits shine an immaculate  
light on your children  
And with every morning you awaken  
Rising with each generation



Your lives proclaim His purpose  
We witnessed dignity descending upon you  
Then he came for all to have life and have it to  
the full.

Margaret Tracey

There are over five hundred pictures of the celebrations on Facebook at the following link:

<http://bit.ly/2ywkb1P>

Thanks to all who contributed to the October edition. Many of our sisters from other provinces and regions receive the Exchange so it would be great to hear from you too. It would serve as a means of achieving our 2026 objective!! Please sent any articles, messages or whatever you would like to share by December 15<sup>th</sup> for our Christmas edition.

Kate

