

**Exchange/Echange**  
**Northern European Province**  
**Province de L`europe du Nord**

**December 2017**

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



*May you have  
the gift of Faith,  
the blessing of Hope,  
and the peace of His Love  
at Christmas and always*

*With love from the NEP Provincial team  
Ursula Ellen Kathleen Rosemary*

**RSJM'S FOND FAREWELL TO KINGSTON**



In 1955 the first sisters from the EAP came to the Coombe Estate in Kingston, Surrey and Marymount set deep roots in this beautiful setting. Sixty-two years later, assured that the RSHM ethos and the vision of Gailhac is firmly cherished, with the school flourishing, student enrolment growing and the Administration of the school in strong lay leadership, the three present RSHM in resident, Sisters Michelle Phelan, Breda Shelly and Kathleen Connell, bid a fond and grateful farewell.

In its infancy the Main House was home to students from Marymount College, Tarrytown's Junior Year Abroad Program (JYAP) attending Universities in London. The community also started a High School offering the American high school diploma. The Surrey location proved to be too distant from London for the JYAP but the high school prospered, additional facilities were added, and the boarding department grew. Even with its ongoing development the campus always maintained its beautiful spacious garden. In the early days the boarding facility accommodated children

from diplomatic families, international businesses, etc., and were mainly American. With the introduction of the International Baccalaureate (IB) the student population changed and students hail now from China, Japan, Russia, Germany, England and about 40 other countries as the IB is recognized as a University Entrance qualification worldwide.

It will be sad to leave the many wonderful people we met here - especially our colleagues in education and the countless friendships we have developed over the years and this beautiful, peaceful campus but God is calling us to other mountains where we will encounter Him anew. Our being here in England has offered us many international experiences which have enriched our lives. We have had the opportunity to meet sisters from other Provinces and Regions and to be open to other cultures. However, many new, rich and communal experiences will open up before us. This is not goodbye to Europe and friends but only farewell as world news, emails, twitter, facebook and skype will allow us stay in touch.

We give thanks that there are others to carry our work based on the examples and teaching we have shown while with them. Our prayer for each of us as we say au revoir echoes the words of Gailhac: May what God has begun in us live, grow and become ever more perfect.

Breda Shelly

## FERRYBANK PAST PUPIL SETS UP A "NO OVERHEADS" CHARITY TO HELP UGANDAN SCHOOL CHILDREN



Ursula Flynn is a past pupil of the Sacred Heart of Mary Secondary School in Ferrybank, Waterford where she attended school during the years 1961 to 1967. Ursula and Harry took a trip to Uganda with World Vision Ireland in October 2015 to see the type of projects they were involved in and were so moved by the plight of the rural dwellers there that they went back out to Tiira Village, Eastern Uganda, not far from the border town of Busia in April 2016 and selected 20 families with 70 school-going children between them to support. They purchased mattresses and blankets locally and distributed them to the families before they returned home. They put structures in place with local volunteers to distribute food to the 8 destitute families included. They also made arrangements to send the 70 children to school, pay for the uniforms and exercise books

as well as to supply a porridge lunch each day. Ursula and Harry Knox returned to Tiira Village in December 2016 and assessed more families to be supported. This resulted in a total of 35 families accepted with the school fees for their 112 school-going children for the 2017 school year being paid. They returned again in November 2017 to oversee the finances and to check the progress of the children. They accepted another 25 families into the project and now over 200 children at both primary and secondary level will have their school fees paid for 2018.

While all of this was going on, in a parallel process the paperwork was being completed to ensure that Opportunity Knox Charity would be registered with the Charities Regulator and with Revenue. The Registered Charity Number 20106164 and the Revenue Chy Number 21754 were all given by February 2017. A website [opportunityknox.ie](http://opportunityknox.ie) was created and all official documents relating to the Charity as well as a record of the work

and finances of the Charity can be examined there. 2016 was a difficult time for charities in Ireland, withdrawing it fully from the many charities operating in the Country- In an effort to get people to support the Charity Ursula and Harry came up with the idea of a "No Overheads" Charity as a means to attract donors.

This involves Ursula and Harry donating sufficient funds to cover all administrative and personal expenses and so guaranteeing that 100% of any donation from a member of the public would be used directly to pay school fees as well as a blanket and a mattress (where needed) for the school children. The families chosen are the poorest of the poor families in Tiira Village. Most live in mud huts with grass roofs and the children lie on a sack on a floor made from a cow dung mixture. Now the children have a comfortable night's sleep and go to school with the necessary copies and wearing their uniform as well as having a porridge lunch each day. Opportunity Knox has also built a colourful playground in Tiira Village for all the children who live in the village and surrounding area.

The Charity was launched in Ursula and Harry's home parish of Kilmacow in April 2017 and has been generously supported by relatives, friends, neighbours, and fellow parishioners. Harry and Ursula donated 23,500 Euro during the first year and received public donations of 6,500 Euro. This is a 5 to 7-year project and the founders hope to donate 10,000 Euro per year for the next 5 years to cover all costs and to obtain 10,000 to 15,000 Euro in public donations in order to meet their target of providing 5 years' education for 200 or more children. Gold-mining is very evident in Tiira Village and often, until now, children have had to get involved in that dangerous and unhealthy activity in order to find money for their fees and school books. Now several boys who had left school for a life of gold mining have returned to school and they stay away from mining.



No Employees, No Salaries, No Expenses, No deductions.

[www.opportunityknox.ie](http://www.opportunityknox.ie) [info@opportunityknox.ie](mailto:info@opportunityknox.ie)

Donations for Ursula's mission can be transferred to: Bank of Ireland, The Quay, Waterford. Account name: Ursula Knox, Account number 62007312. IBAN:IE67BOFI 90619562 0073 12. Sort code: 90-61-95 or donations to Sr. Dolores.

## MINISTRY ON MERSEYSIDE

For the last seventeen years I have worked with people with disability. In the year 2000 when I came to Liverpool a chance encounter with a man in a wheelchair led me in that direction. Patrick had lived in Belmont Park, Ferrybank for seven years and he was then living with the Brothers of Charity in Thingwall, Liverpool. Working at Thingwall for one and a half years was one of the most satisfying work experiences because of the variety of activities we planned and participated in.



Nugent Care, the Archdiocesan Charity, advertised for a Catechist for children with disability. I visited families in their homes and children in their special schools. As well as sacramental preparation, with the help of volunteers, we try to offer ongoing formation to young people in the form of Reflection Days and Retreat/self-catering holidays in Penmaenmawr. We have monthly meetings of Faith & Light, a sister



group of L'Arche. Belonging to this international group widens our circle of friends in the North East & West of England. We visit different communities every year, go on pilgrimages and holidays. We also have weekly social groups/clubs. Sr. Anne O'Connell was involved with these in 1960s. We reminisced with her about her involvement when seventeen of us visited the community. We were in Barrow for the ordination of a Deacon.

Fundraising for the Good Shepherd Fund and preparing Masses in the north & south of the diocese opened up opportunities to visit the many primary and secondary schools in the Archdiocese each year. It is always encouraging to meet past pupils of Seafield in the various schools. As recently as this week the head teacher of the primary school choir singing in our Advent Carol Service told me she went to school in Seafield.

Linking with catechists from other dioceses gave rise to 'The Living Fully' Conference in Rome in 2016. This was a fully inclusive gathering with two streams, one practical and experiential programme and the other academic. Both groups shared prayer in the morning and evening and coffee breaks and lunch. Eight of us attended including five of our friends. We enjoyed the hospitality of the Generalate community.

In response to the Jubilee of Mercy in 2016 another conference was held in Rome "Catechesis & Persons with Disabilities" This gathering attempted to demonstrate that our church is inclusive and ready to listen and learn from people with disabilities. At local level a lot of work still needs to be done. A group of French Contemplative Sisters with and without Downs Syndrome gave a moving account of their foundation. It was a blessing that Pope Francis met every single delegate, 420 including over 100 deaf people from different countries. Throughout the conference there was a real sense of "no them and us, only US". We are now planning to take an active part in the Eucharistic Congress in Liverpool 2018. The last seventeen years have been life giving for me. For this I am grateful.

## JUBILEE JOY FOR CASTLEMILK



The good people of Castlemilk had much to celebrate last month as the parish of St Margaret Mary's celebrated its diamond jubilee. Archbishop Tartaglia offered a Mass of Thanksgiving for the 60th Anniversary of the Parish and Church of St Margaret Mary which is a well-known landmark at the top of the hill leading through the large housing estate. Addressing the large congregation, the Archbishop confessed the area had not been familiar to him until recently. He said: "Before I was Archbishop, I had rarely ever been in Castlemilk or to St Margaret Mary's. Since becoming Archbishop, I have been here a good few times now. I have always enjoyed coming among you...!"

The sense of enjoyment was shared by parishioners, old and new who gathered to mark a major milestone for the community which has changed dramatically over the last six decades. Archbishop Tartaglia said: "Erected as it was

in the late 1950's when Castlemilk was a developing housing estate with a very numerous population, an imposing building as it is, situated very close to the main road through Castlemilk, St Margaret Mary's Church has always been a landmark in Castlemilk. And that landmark said: God is among us, God is near us, God loves us, welcome to the house of God. "And this remains the purpose of St Margaret Mary's Church in this community — to be a sign of God's presence and nearness and of his love for his creatures. Even in these days, when people seem to want God less but really need Him more, this Church continues to say: God loves you and welcomes you".

Extract from "Flourish" – November 2017 (Teresina O`Byrne)

## ZIMBABWE



We (DOMCCP-Mutare) are receiving funds from Misesan Cara for two projects, classroom block for Early Childhood development and a Youth Empowerment program. These two grants will have a very positive effect in our communities. We send a big thank you to Breda Shelly and Kate Nolan who steered these two projects to funding stage. *Eveline Murray*

### BEREAVEMENTS

Portugal, Fatima: Sr. Fernanda Maria Augusta Jorge dos Santos -22 July 2017

EAP, Tarrytown: Sr. Denise Osterhaus - 1 August 2017

Portugal, Fatima: Sr. Maria Odete Ribeiro - 8 August 2017

WAP, Pasadena: California: Sr. Virginia Marie Joseph - 15 November 2017

Portugal, Fatima: Sr. Maria de Fátima de Sá Correia - 19 November 2017

NEP, Penmenmawr: Sr. Pauline Stott – 17 November 2017

We were all deeply saddened by the news of Pauline`s sudden passing. We have fond memories of her. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Noddfa Community.

The Noddfa community wishes to thank all communities and Sisters who had Masses offered and sent cards and messages of sympathy after Pauline's sudden death. Thanks too to those who came to the funeral. There will be a card about Pauline sent out with the Christmas card. If anyone would like a personal copy of the card, please get in touch with Noddfa.

On behalf of the family I thank each one of you for your prayers, support, Masses and emails on the death of my sister, Maureen. I thank those who travelled to Scotland to attend her funeral. My brother-in-law, John and the family were overwhelmed by the cards we received. Margaret

We remember in a special way, during this Christmas season, all who have died during 2017: our RSHM sisters, family members, friends and the families of all who have died in tragic circumstances throughout the world.

### WE REMEMBER THEM

At the rising of the sun and its going down, we remember them.

At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter, we remember them.

At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring, we remember them.

At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer, we remember them.

At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of the autumn, we remember them.

At the beginning of the year and when it ends, we remember them.

As long as we live, they too will live, for they are now a part of us, as we remember them.

When we are weary and in need of strength, we remember them.

When we are lost and sick at heart, we remember them.

When we have joy we crave to share, we remember them.

When we have decisions that are difficult to make, we remember them.

When we have achievements that are based on theirs, we remember them. As long as we live, they, too, will live; For they are now a part of us, as we remember them.

### CHRISTMAS GREETINGS



Agnes and Catherine send prayerful good wishes to all our communities in lieu of cards. May you all have a peace filled Christmas and many blessings in the New Year. A donation will be given to the Vincent de Paul

Wishing all our sisters a Happy Christmas! May you be blessed with Peace and Joy at Christmas and throughout the New Year. A donation will be given to help needy families in the parish.

Love from Breda, Dorothy, Rosemary and Kathleen (Manor Park)

Dear Sisters,

It's Christmas once again. Jesus is born .... God has come near!  
May His close presence be with you during this festive Season and throughout 2018.  
I will be with you in prayer and thanksgiving at the crib.  
Love, Brigitte

*Goodwill, joy and peace to all our sisters at Christmas time and throughout 2018 from the Castle Oaks Community - Esther, Freda, Patsy and Mary. A donation has been given to the Society of St Vincent de Paul on your behalf.*

*May the love of our Saviour, Jesus Christ surround you during this Christmas season and always. We remember you in our prayers. A donation has been given to St. Vincent de Paul. With love from Madonna House community.*

*May the peace, joy and hope of the Christmas season be with you now and throughout 2018. A donation has been given to St. Vincent de Paul. Love and prayers from the Grianan community.*

### **Annunciation**

**By Denise Levertov**

*We know the scene: the room, variously  
furnished,  
almost always a lectern, a book; always  
the tall lily.*

*Arrived on solemn grandeur of  
great wings,  
the angelic ambassador, standing or  
hovering,  
whom she acknowledges, a guest.*

*But we are told of meek obedience.  
No one mentions courage.  
The engendering Spirit  
did not enter her without consent.  
God waited.*

*She was free  
to accept or to refuse, choice  
integral to humanness.*

*Aren't there annunciations  
of one sort or another  
in most lives?  
Some unwillingly undertake  
great destinies,  
enact them in sullen pride,  
uncomprehending.*

*More often those moments  
when roads of light and storm  
open from darkness in a man or  
woman,  
are turned away from*

*in dread, in a wave of weakness, in  
despair  
and with relief.  
Ordinary lives continue.  
God does not smite  
them.  
But the gates close, the pathway  
vanishes.*

*She had been a child who played, ate,  
slept  
like any other child—but unlike others,  
wept only for pity, laughed*

*in joy not triumph.  
Compassion and intelligence  
fused in her, indivisible.*

*Called to a destiny more momentous  
than any in all of Time,  
she did not quail,  
only asked a simple*

*Christmas greetings to all my RSHM  
sisters from Ann (Murphy RSHM)*

Thank you to all who sent material for the Exchange and I look forward to receiving more items for the next Exchange which I would like to receive by 3<sup>rd</sup> of February 2018. Kate

The next Provincial Council meeting is from 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

