

EXCHANGE/ECHANGE
NORTHERN EUROPEAN PROVINCE
PROVINCE DE L'EUROPE DU NORD

October 2018

WWW.RSHM-NEP.ORG
WWW.RSCM-PEN.ORG

CELEBRATIONS!

I would like to thank my wonderful family and friends who shared my jubilee day with me. Thanks, also to all who sent greetings, gifts and remembrance in prayer. A special thanks to the Madonna community and staff who welcomed me and my family in such a caring and gracious manner. It is at such occasions that one feels part of a wider network and connections with so many people.

Patsy



A very big thank you for the wishes, prayers and gifts received on my 60 years of religious life. The happy and unexpected presence of Bernadette was a great joy for me. The Eucharist was celebrated by one of the Fathers of Betharram of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The day was also marked by an aperitif and a festive meal with the residents of the Retreat House. This stage of my life lived in communion with other religious was

also a great grace.

Monique

I had a great jubilee day and would like to thank all who shared the day with me, who sent greetings and who remembered me in prayer. The Sisters here in Ferrybank made the day very special and I had the privilege of having many family members to celebrate. The presence of so many children from my family gave the day a special flavor and added vitality to the day.



Máire

BEREAVEMENTS: Eileen Doyle, Sr. Kathleen Hamilton's sister who died on August 31st. We remember Kathleen & her family at this sad time.

Paddy Whooley, Sr. Joanna's brother, who died on September 19th. We remember Joanna and her family in our prayers during this difficult time.

Sister Ermelinda Pereira Gonçalves who died in Ubá, Minas Gerais, Brazil on the 10th of September. Sister Ermelinda was 89 and in the 63rd year of her religious profession.

Sister Mary Dunne who died on August 17th. Ursula gave the homily at the requiem mass and detailed the long and committed life that Mary lived. These details included her pride as a Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary and her commitment to the charism of the Institute, her great contribution to education, her pastoral and liturgical work in the parishes where she lived and her untiring energy to Make God known and loved.

My family, relations and friends would like to thank everyone for all the masses, prayers and support during Mary's illness. The expressions of sympathy and union in prayer along with support during the funeral were greatly appreciated. The family were overcome by the warmth of the lovely celebration of her life.

Many thanks to all. Mary will continue to be with us. Donations have been made to the palliative care center.

Catherine Dunne

Sister Betty Comerford who died on the 29th September. Betty was 98 years old and in the 79th year of her religious profession.

Fr. Crotty celebrated the mass and spoke of how Betty valued her family, her religious sisters and that the community was the focus and center of her life. "As we mourn Betty we also celebrate her life, her long and full life and that for Betty the words of the preface today are apt and true, "life has changed and not ended", passing from this her earthly home to her heavenly home with the Lord". Betty was by disposition a positive person..... I recall her in the community room as a happy person, a person of inner peace and contentment. And the happiness she had herself she gave to others for she was a person filled with the joy of the Lord".



CELEBRATING THE 100 YEAR LIFE!

The 16th Positive Ageing Week takes place from Monday 1st October (UN International Day of Older People) to Sunday 7th October and the theme for 2018 is 'Celebrating the 100 Year Life'. The 2016 Census revealed there were 456 centenarians in Ireland – an increase of 17% since the 2011

Census. www.positiveageingweek.com

Positive Ageing Week is organized by Age Action and kindly supported by Bank of Ireland.

Billy O’Keeffe, Program Manager, Age Action said, “More than half the children since 2000 can be expected to reach their 100th birthday, according to a recent study. The benefits of living longer and getting older are immense and they affect all parts of our lives from our finances to our health and leisure. The focus tends to be on the negative aspects of ageing, so we forget to enjoy the good things. Positive Ageing Week is all about exploring all the positive aspects of getting older and celebrating with the older people in our communities”

Various events were organized such as Bonobox, hearing specialists, **Richard Parry, Head of Global Accounts, Doro Phone** ‘The mobile and technology provider for seniors’ to highlight the use of mobile and smart phones with special features especially designed to provide easier communication for older people; visit to the **Stella Cinema, Rathmines, Dublin; How to Age Well; opportunities for free hearing tests among others.**

NEWS FROM SCOTLAND – yes! we are still alive and thriving.

Two important events for the Catholic population in Scotland which have taken place in the past two years

On 3rd September 2017 more than 100,000 people from across the world watched on line as Scotland was consecrated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in front of a 5,000-strong crowd of pilgrims, on an historic day that was recognised by the Scottish Parliament. It is the first time that such an event has taken place in Scotland.

I was delighted to be one of the 5,000 who came from all over Scotland and beyond braving the weather to take part in this momentous celebration which took place at Carfin Lourdes Grotto, Scotland’s National Shrine dedicated to Our Lady.



Just as the procession began the heavens opened but that didn’t dampen the enthusiasm, excitement and spirits of all those present. As Archbishop Tartaglia said there was a wonderful air of community and celebration as people from all round the country and beyond socialised -some enjoying the beautiful grounds of the Grotto and others being welcomed in Xavier Centre where snacks and refreshments were served all day.

Unfortunately, I was unable to write this article at the time. I am writing it now because of the special place that Our Lady and the Grotto at Carfin have for me ever since I was a child. Maureen often went on her way home from work.

1918 – 2018 The centenary of the 1918 Education (Scotland Act)

The Act saw Catholic schools transfer from Diocesan control to state governance.

Many celebrations have been taking place in Scotland throughout the year to mark this historic moment. The highlight was to be an outdoor Mass in Falkirk Football Stadium on 14th June. However, despite the wonderful weather we experienced this Summer, that day saw high winds and torrential rain and as a result for safety reasons it had to be cancelled at short notice. A sad day for all as the majority of the 8,000 expected were already on their way.

This year First Minister Nicola Sturgeon gave the Cardinal Winning Lecture.

Nicola Sturgeon: 'Catholic schools shaped modern Scotland'

'The act was a 'national success story' and a 'very courageous and far sighted compromise' between the Church and the state 'with very few parallels elsewhere.'

'We should acknowledge and appreciate the strength and vigour of the Catholic Schools sector.'

To celebrate the centenary the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES) commissioned Scottish artist, Bernadette Reilly to write an Icon of Jesus the teacher. The Icon is making a pilgrimage around Scotland visiting every Diocese. The Icon is in each Cathedral throughout the week and goes to selected parishes in the 'four corners' over each of four weekends.

To help the catechists in each Diocese SCES has produced two Powerpoints – Reflection on the Icon and History of Catholic Education in Scotland, also a Holy Hour and a Novena.

Having completed the Award in Catholic Theological Education for work in parishes in June, I will be one of three catechists in our Parish to lead the celebrations in our area.

The course was a two year one evening a week course, paid for in equal parts by the archdiocese, the parish and the individual.

We studied Scripture, Theology, Dogma, Sacraments, Liturgy and Catechesis which ran throughout all the topics. We did not write essays we had to give presentations either in a parish or to the group on our own or working in groups of two or three.

Margaret Lee

A.P.T. ACT TO PREVENT TRAFFICKING.

'Beauty will save the world'

Perhaps we can say only beauty will save the world. A friend of mine added recently, "the harmony of architecture, art, music and the word are essential to humanity and are at risk to some degree today."

In our work against Human Trafficking sadly the beauty and dignity of the human person is disregarded for profit. All involved in this commercial business where the person is a mere commodity are sadly hardened and lack the 'eyes'



to see the beauty of God's creation in each person. We have launched into our year's planning in APT, networking with other groups, visiting schools, participating in open days and exhibitions, lobbying to get convictions from the Sexual Offences Act before it is too late and preparing for a conference/conversation next year. Your prayers are greatly appreciated. Remember the children exploited in the cobalt mines in DR Congo, in sweat factories, the refugees at risk in their plight with prostitution their only choice to survive. Remember also the girls and women trafficked into prostitution here in Ireland and abused.

'Give us a heart of love, Lord for all who have been trampled on, who are trafficked and living in fear'.

Catherine Dunne

VOLUNTEERING AT WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES (21-26 AUGUST 2018)

Ireland was host country for the World Meeting of Families that took place in Dublin this year. Pope Francis joined in for the last two days celebrating the final Mass in the Phoenix Park on the 26th August.

I was privileged to be one of the seven thousand volunteers assisting pilgrims taking part in the various events celebrating many aspects of family life. Much has been written before and after the event expressing various attitudes (positive and negative) to the changing face of the Catholic Church in Ireland and throughout the world, but I will just share my personal reflections as a volunteer prior to and during the two day visit of Pope Francis.

During the year, all volunteers received training encouraging us to be a welcoming presence to the pilgrims and a special uniform was supplied to each one displaying the crest of the world meeting of families and the word Volunteer in big print – all conveying our availability to be of service to the many visitors from overseas and all parts of our own country.

Prior to the arrival of Pope Francis on Saturday 25th of August, numerous workshops were held in the RDS and an Exposition of all aspects of Christian life were on display in the main Hall of the RDS and a special celebration of the Liturgy took place in the main arena each evening. a truly wonderful witness to the commitment of all races and cultures to Christian values. Being able to facilitate the smooth movement of so many people was a truly wonderful experience. However, it was on Saturday that the real surge of joy and happiness erupted when the Popemobile entered Croke Park (our National Football Stadium) for his grand tour. The tense anticipation as everyone awaited his arrival gave way to joy and excitement as the 70,000 plus people in the stands erupted into a chorus of welcome. After circling the Park, the Holy Father was entertained by a wonderful feast of Music & Dance interspersed with testaments from various families representing the



struggles and joys of family life in various parts of the world. The crowds seemed to be spell bound and applauded at every possible opportunity and towards the end of the evening waved their “lit up” mobile phones providing a wonderful splash of light as they swayed to and fro in what looked like a public response and a commitment to moving out to spread the light and joy they were experiencing to all and sundry. Another special moment happened when a young teenager from the travelling community requested “a selfie” with the Holy Father - a request he readily agreed to amid thunderous applause and which he seemed to thoroughly enjoy. (We heard later that her parents had forbidden her to bring her phone on stage, so she slipped it up her sleeve and “released” it at the appropriate moment!)

What impressed me most was that all through what was a jam packed two days in which every minute was filled, the Holy Father was seldom seen without a smile on his face- except perhaps when in dialogue with our heads of Church and State and in his meetings with victims of clerical abuse. When he spoke of the mistreatment of individuals in the past – he expressed his “pain and shame” over the failure of the Church to tackle those scandals. During his visit to Knock shrine and at the final Mass in the Phoenix Park he again prayed for forgiveness for the “open wound” of Church abuse in Ireland and called for “firm and decisive action” to secure “truth & justice” in the future. While he was unable to fit in a visit to the people of the North of Ireland, he sent them a “warm greeting” assuring them of his “affection and prayers” for the restoration of the peace process there. Many people from the North –including political Leaders travelled to both Knock and Dublin to see him.

Some of our Sisters were present in both Croke Park and the Phoenix Park so we have had many happy moments reminiscing on the uplifting experience. Those unable to be present savored the event on T.V along with the 1 Million other viewers watching – the highest number to take up on any one event.

Finally, when Pope Francis was not using the Popemobile, he chose to travel in a small blue Skoda another visible sign of his commitment to a simple life style and since his return to Rome this has been donated to Crosscare, an Agency dedicated to helping the Homeless – a cause close to the heart of the Pope as he demonstrated by fitting in a visit to the Capuchin Day Centre into his packed schedule during his short stay in Ireland. This center provides meals for over 300 people every day and the man behind its setting up – Bro Kevin Crowley is now 83 years old and still going strong! Pope Francis spoke with several families who use the service and thanked Bro Kevin and the

volunteers for the way they help so many people without taking away their dignity “that’s the face of Jesus Christ” the Pontiff said.

I conclude with the words of Michael Kelly, editor of the Irish Catholic who put words on my thoughts summing up the challenge of Pope Francis as he visited our country, namely the invitation to “embrace every day a more authentic and joy-filled living out of the gospel.

Ellen O’Leary

THE CANONIZATION OF ARCHBISHOP OSCAR ROMERO

Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador was assassinated in 1980 while saying Mass. Archbishop Oscar Romero is the most prominent victim of the 75,000 people who were killed in El Salvador’s bloody civil war, from 1980 to 1992.

‘A church that doesn’t provoke any crisis, a gospel that doesn’t unsettle, a word of God that doesn’t get under anyone’s skin, a word of God that doesn’t touch the real sin of the society in which it is being proclaimed – what Gospel is that?’ Oscar Romero

He will be canonized on 14th October 2018. The AMRI Justice Desk along with the Loyola School of Theology will mark this important occasion on **Tuesday 16th October 2018 from 7-9pm in Loyola School of Theology, Trinity College, Dublin (Room G16)**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Closing celebration of Barrow community – 20th October with mass beginning at 12:10. Ursula and Kathleen will attend.

Rathmore Board of Governors – 7th November – Ursula.

Extended Family in Penmaenmawr from 9th – 11th November.

REMINDER

The chapter begins on the 15th and ends on the 18th. We are advised to arrive around 14:00 hours for registration and the first session will be at 16:00 hours.

Articles for the next Exchange by 12th December, please.

