



# NEA NEWSLETTER



## APRIL 2021 NEWS

*(The following was a spontaneous piece of writing by Sr Maire Brid Mackey when, during a retreat, the group was asked to write their reflection.)*

### LIFE - Reflections on an egg!! (A dream – so topical, just now!!)

So fragile!

So vulnerable!

Warm roughness! –

brindled, brown and speckled!

An egg, a small brown egg!

beautiful – and holding beauty,

beauty yet unborn – potential beauty,

beauty of wing,

of flight,

of hue,

of song.

Beauty of LIFE –

all life – my life – God’s life in me,

God’s life in others,

given me –

for what?

=====

To crush it

break it – so easy, so very easy!

spoil its beauty,

kill its life –

(a slimy squashy mess!) –

offal – to be thrown aside in disgust.

So easy, - so very easy to be ungentle!

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Or set it aside,

let it be – admire it,

render it sterile.

Never to wing aloft on the wind,

to turn, to glide, to sing ...

keep life imprisoned – enshelled

in a narrow cramping globe –

beautiful, but impotent.

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Or nurture it – in patience

as a mother-bird, her egg,

in patient, quiet content

to wait the silent point of birth,

to wait and watch,

to warm it with my care,

to feel, to hear it

pulse and throb to life.



To know the thrill of creation

of CREATION,

of birth,

of flight,

of joy,

of mirth.

To wait in constant, listening, patient care

until, through death

beauty, life

springs forth –

and all is changed.

*Maire Brid Mackey*

From **'Do It Now'** by **Berton Braley** (contributed by Dolores Carroll)

If with pleasure you are viewing any work a man is doing,  
If you like him or you love him, tell him now;  
Don't withhold your approbation till the person makes oration,  
And he lies with snowy lilies o'er his brow.  
For no matter how you shout it, he won't really care about it,  
He won't know how many tear-drops you have shed;  
If you think some praise is due him now's the time to slip it to him,  
For he cannot read his tombstone when he's dead.

.....

If he earns your praise, bestow it; if you like him, let him know it,  
Let the words of true encouragement be said;  
Do not wait till life is over, and he's underneath the clover,  
For he cannot read his tombstone when he's dead.



JOANNA'S  
80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY  
...in lockdown and Holy  
Week !



We manage to celebrate against all odds here in The Park !  
Due to lockdown and also the fact it was Holy Saturday, we limited our celebration of Joanna's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday to afternoon tea. We so missed our sisters in Manor Park. It was a joyous celebration of 80 years, and so many of them spent with great dedication, devotion and zeal at the service of others through her ministry. Indeed, Aline captured this when she said that Joanna was truly 'a daughter of Gailhac'.

Needless to say the celebrations will continue and once out of lockdown we will enjoy being 'normal' again !



In our prayer we remembered all our sisters and send you our love and blessings for good health in these most difficult times.

*M.J.Martin*





**Celebrating Easter in our Naomh Bríd bubble!**

### **Why I wake early - *Mary Oliver***



Hello, sun in my face.  
Hello, you who make the morning  
and spread it over the fields  
and into the faces of the tulips  
and the nodding morning glories,  
and into the windows of, even, the  
miserable and crotchety—

best preacher that ever was,  
dear star, that just happens  
to be where you are in the universe  
to keep us from ever-darkness,  
to ease us with warm touching,  
to hold us in the great hands of light—  
good morning, good morning, good morning.

Watch, now, how I start the day  
in happiness, in kindness.

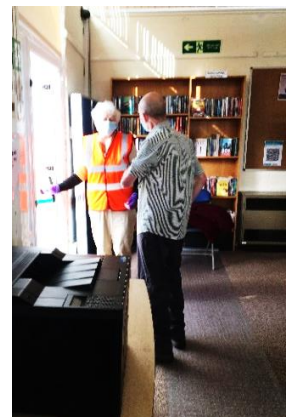


### **Helping with the vaccine roll-out in Penmaenmawr**



Two members of the Noddfa community have been acting as volunteers for the roll-out of the Covid 19 vaccine in Penmaenmawr. As there is no longer a surgery in Pen, it takes place in the library in Pen. The important jobs include taking people's temperature and giving a warning about the step at the exit door!

*Mary Jo and Patrice*



## SUNFLOWERS zoom meeting 9 April 2021



Twenty-four 'sunflowers' zoomed in for our meeting on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April. After some time of joyous greetings and seeing each other for the first time in a year or more Breda led us into a transformative encounter based on the Emmaus journey and we were united with our sisters and brothers throughout the world and in our local areas who have been seriously impacted by the pandemic. Barbara then led us into reflecting how we had experienced the pandemic and what we had learned about ourselves in the

past year. Zoom put us into 'rooms' where we found three or four others and had a very enriching sharing in these small groups. After half an hour we were recalled to the big group where we were free to share on the small group experience. Now it was time to look to the future and various suggestions were raised. Eventually, it was decided that a meeting, which would be open to all our sisters in the Area as well as the Extended Family, would take place between now and Christmas. The topic for this will be 'Evangelical Non- Violence'. Mary Jo McElroy will get a speaker and the JPIC and Formation teams will work on the prayer and other logistics. After a very joy filled and enriching afternoon much appreciation was expressed to the Formation Team for organising the meeting and to Noddfa for scheduling the Zoom meeting and for superb hosting. *Philippa*

### 23 April - Feast of St George, Patron of England



**1. ST GEORGE WASN'T ENGLISH** - He was actually born in the 3rd century AD – more than 2,000 miles away in modern day Turkey.

**2. HE WASN'T A KNIGHT EITHER** - Although George is often depicted as a knight in shining armour it is more likely that he was an officer in the Roman army.

**3. ST GEORGE WAS A MARTYR** - St George died for his Christian faith. He was executed for refusing to make a sacrifice in honour of the pagan gods.

**4. HE NEVER VISITED ENGLAND** - but his reputation for virtue and holiness spread across Europe and his feast day – the 23rd April – was celebrated in England from the 9th century onwards.

**5. THE DRAGON WAS ADDED LATER** - Images of George and the dragon survive from the 9th century – 500 years after his death. Originally these may simply have been representations of the battle between Good and Evil.

**6. ST GEORGE WAS A SAINT FOR 1000 YEARS BEFORE THE 'HOLIDAY'** - St George was canonised in AD 494 by Pope Gelasius but a feast day of St George has been celebrated in England for hundreds of years on 23 April, which was possibly the date of his martyrdom. England shares St George with Venice, Genoa, Portugal, Ethiopia and Catalonia among others as their patron saint and many of these places have their own celebrations and ceremonies in his honour.

**8. PEOPLE TURNED TO ST GEORGE FOR PROTECTION** - During the Middle Ages St George's protection was invoked against several nasty diseases, many fatal and with infectious causes, including the Plague and leprosy.



A musical interlude for Madonna House and their neighbours.



On Tuesday 13 April a group called the 'Mobile Music Machine' arrived at Madonna House and entertained the residents and Staff with a beautiful selection of well-known tunes. The group included the Irish tenor Anthony Kearns. Anthony sang in Italian, English and Irish and won the hearts of all. It was fine enough to sit outside and, thankfully, the rain held off until after the finale. The Sisters were kept warm with colourful blankets but were not cold enough to refuse the ice-cream distributed by the manager, Bee, and the Carers! A lovely interlude during the lockdown!

From Ellen on behalf of the JPIC Team

## EARTH DAY 22 April 2021



The theme for Earth Day 2021 is **RESTORE OUR EARTH** – and it is an opportunity to explore innovative ways of taking care of our planet.



For ideas see the website: [earth day 2021 ideas](#)

Remembering **Sr Marcella Power** who died on 21 April in Madonna House – *Sr Clare O'Keeffe*

Marcella had a long association with the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, not only because of her two aunts – Sr Marcella and Sr Veronica. Due to her mother's illness, Marcella, an only girl, was sent to boarding school here in Ferrybank at the tender age of 8 where her aunt, Sr Veronica, looked out for her. It must have been a lonely time for a little girl who longed for home.

When Marcella finished school, her mother having died at this time, she looked after her father, James and her brother John. She was considered in her locality, Monmohogue and beyond, to be a very eligible young lady and fancied by not a few suitors. In local parlance she was 'a good catch'!

I can remember then the consternation when news spread that Marcella was leaving home to enter the Novitiate here in Ferrybank in 1947. But there was admiration, too, at her generosity and self-sacrifice in responding to God's call to serve him in this way. This call Marcella answered every day of her long life serving God in others wherever she was.

Many of us have our own memories of Marcella. I was fortunate enough to live in community with her in the early days of Roslyn Park, Dublin. With the formidable Mother Canice Forristal as Superior, Marcella was considered mature and wise and could be trusted '*to think for herself without having to seek permission*' unlike the rest of us! She was a shoulder to cry on in those austere days with her listening ear, compassion,



words of wisdom, sense of humour and her famous homemade biscuits, with a bite, to stave off the hunger from those of us burning the midnight oil – which was frequent in those days.



During her long life Marcella served the Institute in many places and capacities. I think she will be remembered especially for her tireless missionary work with the Fillipino community in the Pallotine Parish in Rome. There she served beyond the call of duty, a fact endorsed by our Bishop Emeritus, Laurence Freemna, during his last visit to the community when he asked especially to see Marcella.

Back in Ferrybank, her spirit of faith and zeal spurred her to seek out the homeless and disadvantaged in Lady Lane, while working with the Vincent de Paul Society until she was 88 – a testament to her love for God in the poor and marginalised and to the spirit and charism of our Founder Jean Gailhac.

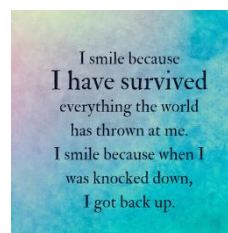
A woman of deep faith and prayer with many interests, Marcella, in her later years here in Madonna House never ceased to appreciate the Carers who looked after her with such dedication. They will miss you Marcella. We will all miss you. May you receive the fullness of God’s blessings in your eternal home.

## WE ARE SURVIVORS!

*Changes in the lives of those born before 1940 – source unknown*

*Sr Dolores Carroll reminds us of these ‘facts’. Many of you may have seen them but they are worth recalling.*

We were born before TV, penicillin, polio shots, frozen foods, Zerox, contact lenses, videos and the pill. We were before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens, before dishwashers, tumble driers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip-dry clothes...and before man walked on the moon.



We got married first and then lived together (how quaint can you be?). We thought “fast food” was what you ate in Lent, a “Big Mac” was an oversized raincoat and “crumpet” we had for tea. We existed before house husbands, computer dating and “sheltered accommodation” was where you waited for a bus.

We were before day care centres, group homes and disposable nappies. We never heard of FM radio, tape decks, artificial hearts, word processors, or young men wearing earrings. For us “time sharing” meant togetherness, a “chip”

was a piece of wood or fried potato, “hardware” meant nuts and bolts, and “software” wasn’t a word.

Before 1940, “Made in Japan” meant junk, the term “making out” referred to how you did in your exams, “stud” was something that fastened a collar to a shirt and “going all the way” meant staying on a double decker bus to the terminus. Pizzas, McDonalds and instant coffee were unheard of. In our day, cigarette smoking was fashionable, “grass” was mown, “coke” was kept n the coalhouse, a “joint” was a piece of meat you ate on Sundays and “pot” was something you cooked it in. “Rock music” was a fond mother’s lullaby, a “gay person” was the life and soul of the party, while “aids” just meant beauty treatment or help for someone in trouble.

We who were born before 1940 must be a hardy bunch when you think of the way in which the world has changed and the adjustments we have had to make. No wonder we are so confused and there is a generation gap today — but — by the Grace of God, we have survived!

**BATTLE SCARS JUST  
REMINDE US THAT  
WE SURVIVED**

**WE HAVE  
SURVIVED. THERE IS  
PLENTY OF LIVING  
TO DO.**



**WE ARE SURVIVORS!**