

Seven RSHM (including Kathleen Connell and Breda Shelly from Kingston) joined some 68 male and female religious for this day entitled: *Knowing Our Place: Religious Life In Today's Church*

Dr Gemma Simmonds CJ and Dr James Sweeney CP facilitated the day and posed some important questions for us to discuss and go away with. Here are some of them for your reflection and discussion to!

We invite people to come and see; what do they see?

How can we live community in ways that convey life?

What do think are the chief signs that Church gives to the world today?

In what way does Religious life stand as a particular prophetic sign of the life of the Church?

What is the particular form of Charism of Apostolic Religious life?

Why has Apostolic Religious life seemingly experienced a deeper crisis than other forms?

What is the significance of the New Movements for the future of Religious Life?

CONFERENCE OF RELIGIOUS IN SCOTLAND Annual General Assembly and Meeting 2010

Castlemilk Community

The 2010 annual general assembly and meeting of the Conference of Religious in Scotland was held in Glasgow on 30th October. All three of us from Castlemilk community attended.

The CRS executive gave an account of activities since last year's meeting, with reports from the various forum groups; Vocations, Justice and Peace, Against Human Trafficking and Care of the Elderly. This gave a sense of how vibrant and active each group was. Activities included taking part in 'The Wave' to demonstrate against climate change, research on how churches can assist people who are trafficked, a conference on the theme of Poverty in Scotland, and discussion on common facilities for care of the elderly in Scotland. The papal visit was deemed to have been a significant event in the life of the Church in Scotland. For the occasion, the CRS made a power point presentation on the contribution of religious communities to the Church.

Sister Catherine Skelton reported on the Institute of Religious Life, which emerged a few years ago from initiatives of the Conference of Religious in England and Wales to 'foster a theological vision of Christian religious life today through study and research'. She spoke about its history and its hopes for the future. An outcome of this was the decision to put in place a small group who would begin to reflect on religious life in the context of Scotland and how to take that reflection forward.

Brother Patrick McGuire (Society of Missionaries of Africa) was elected to replace Sister Maureen Donohoe (Columban Sisters) as President of the Conference.

FROM THE FORMATION TEAM

These are an update on the reflection groups - it's great to see them flourishing and to see new groups starting up

FERRYBANK

We, sisters from Madonna House, Grianán Close and Castle Oaks Communities, meet together every week for a 45 minute period of prayer and reflection on scripture. We feel that this sharing of our faith experience helps us to live better the life and teaching of Jesus, as we try to apply the wisdom of scripture to our daily lives. We often speak and discuss the problems of the world and we hope that this too helps us to make the connection between the life of Jesus in scripture and our own lives.

LONDON AREA

The London Reflection Group has had two meetings, April, 2010 (Upminster) and September 2010 (Kerrison Road). The next meeting is planned for February, 2011 (The Park). Kathleen O'Donovan and Breda Byrne circulated well in advance the respective topics for reflection and sharing ; April: The Cosmic Christ –From Paul to Teilhard de Chardin & Matthew Fox, September : “The Resurrection and physical creation “ (Fr. Ronald Rolheiser). Both topics provided a wealth of material and resulted in a great richness of sharing, both of the given texts and the Sisters background reading. In February there will be a viewing of the D V D “The age of Stupid” —a promise of further interesting sharing.

LIVERPOOL AREA

This group came together in 2007 as a response to the Provincial Assembly, 2006. Present were Sisters from Noddfa, Preston, Seafield and Fazakerley. Topics discussed have been Cosmology, Chapter Documents, Collaborative Ministeries , Salvation History, Teilhard de Chardin, and recently there was a visit from a Muslim cum Christian speaker. Occasionally books read are shared. The group enjoys coming together and are enriched and supported by the mutual sharing.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Dunmurry and Lisburn Communities come together on a regular basis to share and celebrate. Our reflections together have mainly centred on prayer. Our June meeting was on some thoughts from the A.G.M. of CORI that Sr Mary Dunne attended. For the October meeting Sr Catherine Dunne was invited to share her experiences of the JPIC meeting in Brazil. A February meeting is to be arranged later. These reflection meetings are open to all sisters and perhaps free travel will encourage cross border trips.

FRANCE

Somain and Le Rheu started in October 2010. They met for 3 days and enjoyed sharing, walking and great meals. They shared on province planning, community projects and spirituality; and are planning on inviting some others to the next meeting.

BÉZIERS

Sisters from the La Devèze Community having been meeting regularly with Françoise and Ursula (in previous years Bernadette) to reflect on ministry in Béziers, topics from the Province Planning and Formation Guidelines.

REFLECTION GROUPS

Reflection Groups are encouraged to ‘advertise’ the date time and topic of their meetings in Exchange/Echange so that other Sisters outside the area can join them, as indeed visitors do from time to time.

Another suggestion is that Reflection Groups continue to share Through Exchange, but particularly some of their insights and Learnings from the meeting as well as Resources they have found useful.



BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT FOR CARE CENTRES:

All our Care Centres now have Boards of Management they have been appointed as follows:

Arrowsmith House: Sr Patsy Butler (Chair) Mrs Chris Clowery, Mrs Sharon Daly,
Srs Gemma Hughes, Sr Gertrude McCarthy

Bon Pasteur: Sr Cécile Pommier (Chair) Sr André Dullaghan, Mme Viviane Gisone, M. P. Noë,
Sr Françoise Wyckaert

Madonna House: Mrs Sharon Daly, Sr Sheila Cronin (Chair), Mrs Anne Costigan
Srs Thérèse English, Paula Murray, Philippa O'Sullivan

We are grateful to them for this service to the Province and especially our sisters in our Care Centres.

SCHOOL GOVERNORS/BOARDS

Rathmore Grammar School: Sr Margaret Fielding will represent RSHM trustees on the Board of Governors as from January 2011. Many thanks to Mary Jo who has served on the board for the past two years and who will continue her association with the school through in Service Courses.

Abbey Community College: Sr Philippa O'Sullivan continues on the Board of Management where we are joint trustees with Kilkenny VEC

Jean D'Arc Cambrai: Sr Cécile Pommier continues to represent RSHM and the Provincial where we have "la Tutelle"

Maison Jean Gailhac: Sr Cécile Pommier continues to represent RSHM as ex officio member of the Council for the Association Jean Gailhac

BEREAVEMENTS

Our sympathy and prayers have been with:

Sr Maureen Breen on the death of her sister, **Essie Dwyer**, who died on 12th November.

Sr Mary Mullins on the death of her mother, **Maureen Mullins**, who died on 30th November.

Sr Mary Lambie on the death of her sister, **Nora Dryburgh**, who died on 30th November

It was a crisp autumn morning; the clock was ticking away at nine as small groups of RSHMs wove their way through Liverpool traffic to be at Fazakerley for our Gathering at around 9.30am. It was one of my many 'First Time Moments'... However, as we pulled up from Pen, Preston and Seafield we were met at the Open Door with a warm welcome of familiar faces that soon spun us into the usual RSHM chatter/gathering call, so this particular 'First Time Moment' was over as we settled into the 'Who's who' and the 'What's going on and Any Other News'!

After coffee Eleanor introduced us to our speaker of the morning Cameron Singh. The subject of his talk was Islam. Cameron a native of Pakistan was brought up there and later moved to Dubai, then on to Bradford and latterly Liverpool. Cameron, a Sunni Muslim by birth, is married and in recent years converted to Catholicism. He is an accountant by profession and is now taking a Masters in Religious Studies at Hope University. By way of introduction he spoke to us of his own search and journey into the church. His style was one of storytelling and having told his own personal story he then went on to give us a glimpse (because of the constraints of time) into Islam. This presentation led to good open discussion, it was informative, interesting, it certainly expanded our horizons and pushed back our boundaries and I think gave us an appetite to search and explore further 'World and Christian Religions'. Isn't this in keeping with what we are about these times as 'We commit ourselves to transcend our personal, cultural and national boundaries' Province Plan: Global Consciousness'



Suggested Reading:

Unfolding Islam by P.J. Stewart May 2008

Later we moved on to exchanging own ideas, new ones or otherwise re current issues. A few of the group had been to a work shop facilitated Bill Huebsch USA regarding the experience of church/Liturgy regarding:

- Changes that are called for today
- What are the signs of hope.....?

Suggested reading:

Grace: God's Greatest Gift by Bill Huebsch February 2010

Thanks to Kathleen Buckley for her gentle facilitation, to our sisters in Fazakerley for the hospitality and to all for making it such a worthwhile autumnal gathering truly:

'A season of mists and mellow fruitfulness'



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF ABBEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, FERRYBANK

Mary Gough

There was great excitement and joy on Monday 11th October when Abbey Community College, Ferrybank celebrated 10 years of its life. It was obvious that a lot of preparation went into the celebration. The huge hall was decorated with individual scrolls naming each past pupil of the school. The full school community attended the mass as well as many invited guests.



A large group of RSHM sisters was among these 'special' guests and we were proud to be part of this thriving college. At the beginning of the Mass symbols representing the activities of the college and flags representing all the nationalities in the College were presented. The music was most inspiring and the Transition Year pupils mimed a beautiful liturgical dance as a Communion reflection



To mark the occasion there were some congratulatory speeches from members of the Kilkenny VEC (who are co-trustees with the RSHM). Philippa, who is a member of the board of Management, spoke on behalf of the RSHM sisters and expressed her gratitude and congratulations to all who have been involved in this amalgamation. The Principal – Mr. Tommy Lanigan – as always, recognized and acknowledged the contribution of the SHM sisters in the formation of the College.



After the celebration of mass the guests and students moved outside where a specially composed piece was performed by a group of student drummers before balloons (one for each of the present students) were released over Ferrybank. We were blessed with a beautiful sunny day.



The celebrations then continued inside the College where all the guests were treated to a most appetizing buffet prepared by the canteen staff. The students had earlier received a 'party bag' and were happy to have a half day to mark the occasion!

I am very happy to be a member of staff in the College and to witness every day the mission of education, begun in 1879, maintained for 122 years by many RSHM sisters and now taken on by the staff of Abbey Community College. We can be happy that the mission started so long ago by a small number of RSHM has flourished and developed and that the RSHM spirit, complemented by that of Kilkenny VEC, is alive and well in Ferrybank - *'That all may have life and have it to the full'* through the work of education and formation of young people.

Mary Gough

On 7th November 2010 the first of many events took place in Castlemilk. It was a Mass to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of St. Martin's Parish during which Sr. Teresa McCarthy received the Archdiocesan Medal from Archbishop Mario Conti. The school choir and members from the other Churches joined with parishioners to celebrate this wonderful occasion.

On Friday 19th November 2010 in the magnificent surroundings of the Glasgow City Chambers, two hundred of the parishioners enjoyed a wonderful Civic reception at the invitation of the Lord Provost to mark the fiftieth anniversary and to give thanks to the parishioners for their contribution to the well being of the people of Castlemilk. Sr. Barbara Bailey was present for this event and also for the closing Mass which took place on 21st. November 2010.

This was a sad occasion for many and once again the church was packed to capacity some travelling back from Donegal to take part in this Mass. However as Archbishop Mario Conti said at the Jubilee Mass: "When you leave here for the last time I want you to be very proud of what has been achieved in St. Martin's parish over the past fifty years – proud of all that you and your family and friends have done and experienced."

Parishioners join Archbishop Conti for 50th Anniversary Mass at St Martin's ahead of closure.



Archbishop Mario Conti with St Martin's parish priest Fr William Monahan, Deacons Cairns and Kelly, Deirdre Foy, Jimmy Doran, Sr Teresa, Marian McGeever and Jeantette McGoughan who all received Archdiocesan medals.

Archbishop Mario Conti of Glasgow joined the parishioners of St Martin of Tours, Castlemilk, on Sunday for what was a particularly emotional celebration of Mass. St Martin's was celebrating its golden jubilee but it was a bittersweet occasion for parishioners as Sunday's Mass also marked one of the final celebrations as the parish will close at the end of this month. Speaking in his homily at Sunday's Mass Archbishop Conti said that the Mass did not mark the 'end of the story of faith in this area'. "It is rather the end of the chapter in which the parish and its church building have served as the focus of your life as Christians."

The archbishop spoke about the past 50 years of St Martin's parish, a story which he said, "is largely mirrored in the story of Castlemilk itself." A site to build St Martin's church was obtained in 1958 and the archbishop referred to the following decade as the 'glory days' of Castlemilk and of St Martin's parish.

Although numbers of parishioners have fallen over the years there has always been a strong sense of community within the Castlemilk parish, which was recognised following the Mass when the archbishop presented five members of St Martin's community with archdiocesan medals. Deirdre Foy, who has been parish organist at St Martin's for 42 years was presented with a medal alongside fellow parishioners Jimmy Doran, Marian McGeever and Jeanette McGoughan as well as Sr Teresa from the order of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

"Sunday's celebration was exactly what the parish needed", Fr Monaghan said after the event. "The atmosphere was fabulous and gave heart and meaning to the parishioners at this time.

[Extracts from the Scottish Catholic Observer 12th November 2010]

CONGRATULATIONS!

Catherine Dunne



Saturday 12th of November was a historic day of celebration in the Priory Institute Tallaght. At the end of ten years of assiduous work by Joe Kavanagh OP and Fr John Littleton and many others, not least the Dominican Order itself, the first graduates in theology were conferred in their caps and gowns! Families young and old came to share in the joy as grandparents, parents and a cohort of young people received their parchments.

Heartiest congratulations to Agnes Hunt who received a Diploma in Higher Education in Theology from Lampeter University/University of Wales. The day was a testimony to the calibre of laity in particular who have pursued their interest in developing the knowledge of their faith. One grandparent of 83 years received his degree and is making plans for his masters. The joy was palpable especially for the Dominicans as they saw their vision and hope come true of an increasing number of theologically educated laity for the future.

JPIC

Catherine Dunne



JPIC NEP

It is very encouraging when I go to schools to find that teachers are including Human Trafficking in their courses. Hopefully this will continue with the help of our resources and we will be 'redundant'. The response from students is very positive asking, "What can we do?" I refer to an excerpt from the letter to the Institute from our JPIC meeting in Belo Horizonte referring to our main speaker as a theme for some thought,

*"Priscila shared her experience and knowledge about our priorities through her theme
"Choose Life, Life in Abundance."*

Questions like Human Trafficking and the need for the Millennium Development Goals are only the tip of the iceberg. Globalization is at the base of the iceberg, specifically, capitalism, where all is considered merchandise. In this worldview women who are poor and marginalized suffer in a special way because of gender domination in a patriarchal system. This domination permeates culture, religion, etc., determining the place of the person in society. In this, no one is innocent".