

CONFERENCE ON MUSLIMS AND ISLAM

Ursula Canavan

Six of us, Christiane, Lucienne, Marie-Jean and Marie Paule from La Devèze, Françoise from the Bon Pasteur and myself from the Mother House, come together one evening each month to reflect, pray and share a meal. As we were discussing our Province Plan and the new Formation Guidelines, Lucienne asked if we would be willing to link in with our Diocesan Formation Programme and hold a conference on Muslims and Islam, given the increasing numbers of Muslims who live around us. She thought that we could muster enough people to make the conference viable as personnel from the Maison d'Enfants Jean Gailhac might also be interested. The reality exceeded our expectations as the response from our own sisters, from friends and from the Maison d'Enfants indicated that we would need quite a large venue to accommodate those who wished to attend. The Mother House Community offered to host the conference and the Maison d'Enfants to take care of the organisation involved and of the midday meal.

All was ready for Tuesday 8 February when about sixty people arrived on our doorstep. Sister Marion welcomed everyone, especially the staff and governors of the Maison d'Enfants, given their association with the Mother House. Mr Louis Marie Tisseranc, President of the Governors of the Maison d'Enfants, welcomed the guest speaker, Father Bernard Lapize S.J. who had chosen as his theme

« **Dialogue with Muslims:
One Islam but Divers Muslims
– Towards a Better Understanding** ».

He had lived among Muslims for 45 years,
35 of which were in Algeria.

We enjoyed his input which was both informative and entertaining, as he shared with us many concrete examples and personal memories of his experiences while living there



*Father Bernard Lapize S.J.
Mr Louis Marie Tisseranc and Sr Marion Shanahan*

What emerged above all was the common humanity which we share with those who are different from us, a humanity which challenges us to grow in respect for them as people, respect, too, for the beliefs, traditions and culture which they hold dear.



Sharing



Maison Jean Gailhac



To-day the 24th February was a reflection day with a difference as the Lisburn and Dunmurry Communities gathered together for the celebration. Together we attended Mass with the Congregation in St Anne's Parish Church and Fr McMullan prayed for the sisters and their work in the Parish. It was full speed ahead to Rathmore School as Mrs Therese Hamilton had invited us to Morning Coffee with the staff and students.



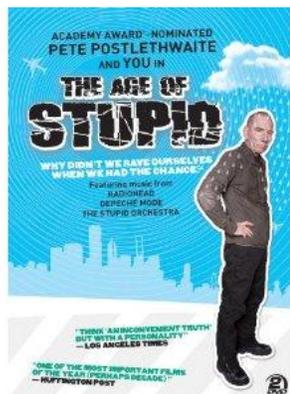
The school had taken this week as Foundation Week. French flags, bunting and emblems decorated the entrance. The sixth form students welcomed us and chatted cordially with us over coffee. It was lovely meeting some past pupils from St Joseph's Lisburn. What was remarkable was the lovely spirit of friendliness and hospitality. What was encouraging was the great work started by M. St. Brigid and continued by Srs Joan and Ursula is still appreciated and very much part of the ethos of the school under the direction of Mrs Hamilton and staff. Surely Ursula has left her mark on the school and our motto **"That they may have life"** is truly alive.

Our next stop was Dunmurry Community where we had our second discernment process. Sr Mary Murray led the prayer with the appropriately chosen hymn "Choose Life" followed by a reflection on Sr Terezinha's letter for the 24th. We could not but recall the absence of Máiréad who had been very much part of the previous discernment process.

A truly sumptuous meal prepared by Maeve, Malachy and Mary was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Chat and sharing went on until the late afternoon-a wonderfully life giving celebration of Foundation Day 2011.

REFLECTION GROUP LONDON 16TH FEBRUARY

Barbara



Nine of us from Upminster, Manor Park, Grange Road, Kerrison Road and the Park gathered in the Park community house for a viewing and discussion of the video **"The Age of Stupid"**. Much of our discussion focused on the difficulty of responding to such enormous problems regarding the waste and destruction of the limited resources of our planet. Nevertheless each of us decided we had a part to play and resolved to be extra conscious and careful of our use of water in future. Our next meeting is on 27th May from 2.00 – 4.00 in Manor Park.