

# EXCHANGE - ECHANGE

NORTHERN EUROPEAN PROVINCE \* PROVINCE DE L'EUROPE DU NORD

<http://www.rshm-nep.org>

February 2016

Greetings for  
Foundation Day  
24 February



Trusting in God's love,  
we learn to accept  
ourselves as we are  
and we grow in our  
capacity to accept  
others.

*Constitutions #17*

Ursula  
Bernadette  
Ellen

Kathleen  
Mary  
Rowan

***50 YEARS IN ZAMBIA***  
***ALUMBWE LEZA! Let us praise God***



Waving 'Goodbye'  
from Dublin airport.

A special audience with  
Pope Paul vi

M. Odile and Sr Agnes  
Hunt RSHM



## **THE RSHM MISSION TO ZAMBIA Part 2** (See last Exchange for Part 1)

.... The previous evening, having survived the arduous journey, we were treated to tea in the RSC (Religious Sisters of Charity) 'parlour' in the company of a white-winged Jesuit, Fr. John Counihan S.J. While John spoke in monosyllables, none of us had much to say due to the strangeness of the set-up. Fr. John was the Education Secretary and we gathered from him what we already knew i.e. that we would take responsibility for a new school in Choma. A year in Chivuna would give us great experience.

Next day and each day, we had Mass at 6.00 a.m. preceded by meditation, morning prayer, examen etc. We were plagued by mosquitoes as the mornings were dark. While Mass was in the vernacular, that was in Tonga. There was no leniency with regard to exercises of piety. Vatican II had not yet taken effect.

Teaching was tough going at the start since we had no time to acclimatise. There were 9 x 40 minute periods each day, the final period was devoted to hobbies. M. Odile chose the Orchestra as her topic and I chose Art. My class and I attempted to make rough sketches of instruments of the orchestra. Some of the sketches looked like strange animals but at least we learnt names of instruments. We had a lot to learn in our new culture. Our crate bearing records of orchestral music had not yet arrived and even if it had, there was no electricity.



Gradually we were growing into the School with our new pupils. We and the staff were fired with enthusiasm and drew on all our talents for the education of these eager pupils. So the term wore on and Easter came. With tests corrected and reports sent out, a trip to Choma had been planned for M. Odile and I. We had never been outside the precincts of the mission. This was exciting since Choma was proposed as the location of our new school. Choma was on the main Cape to Cairo road and that was a great asset. Fr. O'Loghlen SJ., the Superior of the Mission, lived in this little town. Fr. Denis Flannery SJ., was in the throes of opening a minor seminary in Mukasa, Choma, at that time. It was Easter and Fr. Flannery's Christmas cake had just arrived from his mother in Clontarf. The cake collapsed when unwrapped so we ate it from a dessert dish with a dessert spoon! It was delicious.



Fr. O'Loghlen was eager to show us three sites for our new school. This surprised us as we had expected to see a partly built school. The first was the present Mukasa Convent site which we thought was too close to the minor seminary. The second site was over the railway line and about three miles from Choma town. It was flat and covered with shrub savanna and would be an ideal site for our school. Fr. Des explained that the buildings would be simple and would go up quickly.

Back in Chivuna, the second term got underway and the weather had cooled down. After Easter, the Poinsettias, hibiscus, bougainvillea and frangipani were in bloom and together with fresh green grass, the brightness and the colour helped us to settle. We had responsibility for our classes and no more. We began to enjoy our teaching. However, things were to change drastically and without warning.



Mother Killian, Rectress, called M. Odile aside to convey to her that their Superior General was coming very soon and would like to have a word with her. M. Odile asked me to accompany her as her hearing was not good. Without any preamble, the Mother General requested that we take over the Chivuna School. It came as a terrible shock to us. The reason was that the RSC could not provide personnel for two large schools, one in Roma, Lusaka, and the one in Chivuna. We were very much opposed to this and made it known in no uncertain terms. We said a firm 'No' giving our reasons: no experience, no mission history, no management experience of providing supplies for a growing school, no experience of Cambridge Overseas Exams, no money, no transport. We assured her that we were happy with our classes and were content to wait for Choma, however long it took. We did not believe that we could be landed with this in such an informal manner. Our acclimatisation was disrupted and we felt uneasy. Where did this request come from we asked ourselves? What decision-making had gone on without our involvement? We had never seen ourselves plunged into anything so grand so quickly. Then, one day out of the blue, before we had time to consider our options, Bishop



Corboy S.J. and John Counihan S.J. came to inform us that the RSC were leaving anyway and the School was ours. Sr. Mary Raphael, the Principal, had already been missioned to Uromi, Nigeria. Other Sisters were easing out as well. We had no way of telephoning anybody, of getting advice and no time to discern. All of our ambitions for Choma, to plant our own spirit, our own ethos, in our new small SHM School went by the board. But then we thought that to transfer these ambitions to our girls in Chivuna would be a worthwhile challenge, and it worked. Instead of being miserable and questioning, we took on the school with a sense of peace and saw it as a blessing from God. Here I have to pay tribute to M. Odile who, in her failing health, showed great resilience, fortitude, courage and gentleness in undertaking such a mammoth task. She was an inspiration to all who knew her. Now fifty years later in 2016 and with very clear hindsight, I can see that M.Odile's decision was blessed.

I cannot go into details here in terms of the task ahead of us: the dimensions the school would take, recruitment of staff, teaching and ancillary, the provision of supplies, management etc. together with the drawbacks connected with no electricity and no water etc.

To end on a pleasant note, the good news of the arrival of Srs. Josepha and Veronica on November 22<sup>nd</sup> reached us. We were overjoyed. We asked for a Teachers' House as a convent and there the four of us formed the first SHM Community in Zambia. We spent many happy days reminiscing and, of course, planning. 'Ar dheis De go raibh anamnacha na Marbh.' Odile, Veronica and Josepha.

Agnes Hunt

## Remembering Regina

Extracts from the tributes paid  
by two of Regina's nephews

*'What can I say that will in any way come close to acknowledging such an amazing life. Christened Gertrude over 80 years ago one name was never enough and she became affectionately known as Regina and Gerty and Bobby... With so many siblings each branch of the extended family considered her to be their special additional member.*

*This was not the full story, as I recently came to realise that, like her name, she had three families who treasured her equally: her religious family, the extended King family and the Corduff community family. Each of these got her undivided attention and each was the richer for her involvement.*

*Recently she was honoured for her tireless commitment to Corduff and it was plain to see that day the true love and affection the community had for her. By the way they certainly know how to throw a party in Corduff!*



*I hope all her Corduff friends here today won't mind me, on their behalf, thanking her religious community for lending them Regina. What can I say about the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary? Obviously I always knew Gerty was a nun, remembering from my youth a petite face surrounded by the large veil and the large navy habit, but I never appreciated the Order as a community and family until Gerty's illness. The level of caring, level of love and strength of family is truly inspiring. On behalf of her other two families and all her other friends I take this opportunity to thank you, her religious family, from the bottom of our hearts for being the wonderful people you are.*

**Marcus**

*'She was the essential part of any family get-together. She brought us all together with a warmth that was more precious than gold. She made us all feel so special, so empowered, so loved. She loved all her grandnieces and grandnephews as she loved her nieces and nephews. She was not just a person of the past but a person of the present and the future. She was up to date and trendy and stylish. At any*

*party nothing tasted like Gerty's sandwiches or, in fact, any of her cooking ... mashed potatoes, bread sauce, turkey... She was a perfectionist. She always put giving first ... others first ... family first. Until recently she was like a sixty two year old. Despite putting on Olympic boxing gloves to combat her sickness the brightest of all lights has been extinguished. Like the butterflies she loved she has inspired us all to become better from small beginnings. So this celebration is not just one of sadness but of a life love. So, as she would say herself, we should pour a little 'medicine' and toast a life lived to the full.'* **Michael J**

## **Eulogy for Sr. Teresa Allan RSHM**

When the news came that Teresa had died the words that came into my mind were those Shakespeare famously used of Mark Anthony "There's a great Spirit gone" and they were going through my head most of the day. Teresa was indeed a great Spirit, a Force, and a loss to those who knew her in her prime.



Perhaps the greatest thing about Teresa was that she survived as a strong, lovable woman despite losing in childhood the people closest to her whom all of us rely on for a wholesome life. Teresa lost her Mother when she was a small girl and her father being a sea captain was too often away for close contact. Teresa was separated from her siblings and only met up again with her brother and sister later in adult life. Teresa's home was Upminster Convent - the community and the school - with holidays spent with Mrs. Green and her family. When she joined our congregation, she remained part of the Upminster community all her life until sickness brought her to Arrowsmith House, a few years ago.

There was one interlude-- during the war. Upminster school was evacuated to Clifton House in the Cotswolds, a country house which Teresa loved and in which she was very happy, for the period of the Second World War. One of the memories she loved to share with us, was staying up late at night to listen to Lord Haw Haw. If you don't know about 'Lord Haw Haw', let me explain. He was a renegade Anglo Irishman who after being rejected for British Citizenship, decided to throw in his lot with Hitler and assist the German propaganda machine. Night after night in an exaggerated English accent he would threaten that Britain was losing the war and would be annihilated. Teresa listened with horrified fascination. One night, Haw Haw told us that the town clock in Thame (close to Clifton) was ten minutes slow. Such accuracy was rather chilling. Teresa continued to listen. After the war Upminste moved back to its old home.



*Sisters Patsy, Teresa and Mary (late 1980s)*

Teresa trained to teach Juniors and became Headmistress at St. Mary's, Hornchurch, a school that was the envy of the area for its quality of teaching and its end of term concerts.

Teresa's prowess as a teacher earned her an M.B.E. in June 1989. I had the great honour of accompanying herself and Sr Patsy to the Palace. We were driven there in a Rolls Royce, lent by kind friends, which led a pursuing cyclist to cry out, 'Blimey, It's the Queen.' As you will see from the photos, Teresa wore her hat with pride.

An investiture at the Palace is a splendid experience. We sat there in the palace ballroom flanked by red-coated guardsmen. Most of the people receiving awards were so called 'ordinary people' who had done their job extraordinarily well. There were a few stars also, Rex Harrison (the actor) being among them. I remember Teresa being fascinated by the way the sword hilt passed from the hand of the equerry to the Queen's hand without either seeming to move a muscle.

After Teresa retired from school she continued to work in the parish with past pupils and their parents as long as her strength lasted. She had many friends in the area - Fr. Hayes, Michael and Dympna Bowes, Val Eland and Colette Dawson. Her cousins Marjorie and Peter were loyal and supportive friends who visited her regularly.

Like most strong women Teresa was not always the easiest person to live with. When I first joined her in Upminster, I didn't know what to make of her, nor she of me. We were like two boxers dancing round the ring wondering who would land the first punch. Gradually we became fast friends. Loyalty was always one of her great qualities.

So, I return to my opening thought, "There's a great spirit gone". May she pray for us all from her place in heaven, where she has at last found the peace she was seeking all through her life. May she rest in peace.

*Mary Lamble*

## **Teresa Allan, RSHM. Memorial Mass at 'Mary Mother of God' Church, Hornchurch, Essex.**

Hundreds of parishioners, friends and associates joined at a celebration of Teresa's life and educational and parish ministry on Wednesday 27 Jan. 30 years as Headteacher with the award of MBE from the Queen recognised the outstanding contribution Teresa had made to education. Two plaques, recognising Teresa's service to both school and parish have been made, one hung in the church and the other in the school. She will never be forgotten and, even though she was officially recognised by the Queen and carried the letters MBE, the letters that meant more to her were RSHM after her name. She was a great woman.

*Mary Jo Martin*

Thank you to all who supported me during my brother Tony's long illness. I appreciate all the letters of sympathy and masses offered for him. Mass has been offered for all your intentions.

*Rosie Cassidy*



Many thanks to all of you for your sympathy and Masses for Regina R.I.P. Your support and prayers during the time of her illness and her death were greatly appreciated.

*Judith and Catherine,  
Huntstown*

Our sister Ann McCartan and her family would like to thank you for the masses you offered for her husband Brendan RIP while he was in hospital and in the hospice. He died on 11 Dec 2015. Your prayers were, and are, very much appreciated and have given comfort and consolation to the family. Please continue to keep Anne and her family in your prayers. Many thanks.

*Deirdre and Patricia Kavanagh*

My sister-in-law, Therese, is anxious to thank everyone for remembrance in prayer over the past few weeks since her heart surgery. The Murphy family are grateful for all the good wishes and ask that the prayers be continued for Therese's full recovery.

*Anne Murphy*

Teresina and Renee's family would like to express their thanks to all Sisters and Communities who have been with them "all along the way....." on the occasion of Renee's death.  
To those who expressed sympathy and prayer in cards, phone calls and emails THANK YOU  
To each member of each Community who had Mass said for Renee. THANK YOU  
To each member of each Community who enrolled Renee in Dominican, Franciscan, Carmelite and Kiltegan Fathers Masses and prayers. THANK YOU  
To the Sisters from Waterford and Dublin who were with us in Myshall, at the foot of Mount Leinster on that wintry day, for the Requiem Mass and Burial. THANK YOU

*Teresina O'Byrne*

## *Thank you from the Novitiate Community*



### **First Profession Day – Belo Horizonte**

Many sisters and communities from all parts of the Institute sent messages of congratulations and good wishes to our newly-professed sisters and to the novitiate team, on First Profession Day, 23<sup>rd</sup> January. We would like to thank you. We felt that the

support and prayers of the whole Institute were with us.

It was a wonderful day of celebration and thanksgiving for the gift of five new members to our Institute. We hope to put a short account and some photos on the RSHM website soon.

On 24<sup>th</sup> February our first year novices, Aélita, Mary, Luísa, Celine and Precious will begin their second year of novitiate. We continue to count on your support and your prayers and we assure you that each of you will be remembered in our community prayer. Love from us all.

*Left to right: Fernanda, Izaura, Joanita, Margaret, Sandra, Sr Margaret and Sr Ana Helena*



**To watch the first profession ceremony  
on Youtube click on the link:**

**<https://youtu.be/oro5eD44fKs>**

# Meeting of the Province Leaders - WAP, EAP and NEP



Pictured: Sitting L to R: Pauline MacDonald, (Councillor WAP), Ursula Canavan, (Provincial NEP), Kathleen Keleman, (Councillor WAP), Catherine Patten, (Provincial EAP), Cathy Vincie, (Councillor EAP). Standing: Joan Treacy, (Provincial WAP).



My visit to Los Angeles was a wonderful experience. I am so grateful for the warm welcome and generous hospitality shown me by Sister Joan Treacy and all the sisters in the WAP. It was a pleasure to meet them and share something of their life and beautiful country. I had the joy of being with them for the Thanksgiving celebrations, of spending some time at their beach house, of some lovely walks along the Pacific coast and of visiting down-town LA with its spectacular cathedral.

I mustn't forget, however, that I was there to work! And we did work, the WAP and EAP councils and myself, getting to know one another better and sharing something of the structures, life and mission of our individual provinces. I found the experience enlightening and appreciate the closer bonds that have been created among us as we move forward into the future.

*Ursula*

# Institute Communications Meeting



Pictured: Sitting: Pauline MacDonald, RSHM (US), Susan Gardella, RSHM (US), Margaret Treacy, RSHM (Zambezi), Rosinha Pereira, RSCM (Brazil). Standing: Mary Gough, RSHM (Ireland), Mary Genino, RSHM, (Rome), Joanne Safian, RSHM (Rome), Cecilia Brizuela, (CA).

The first meeting of the Institute Communications Team took place in Los Angeles 13 – 19 January 2016. It was good for us to meet face to face and learn from each other's experience. Time was

spent discussing more effective ways of communicating within the Institute using the gift of modern technology. We examined the websites of the different provinces/ regions and discussed how our RSHM web presence might be improved.

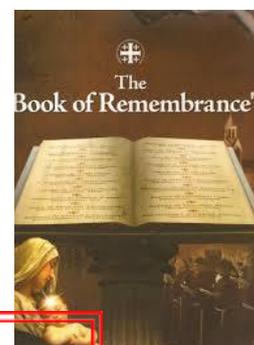
Two speakers – John Kiralla, who is Executive Director, Marketing and Communications, Loyola Marymount University and Sr Rose Pacatte FSP, who is Director of the Pauline Center for Media Studies, gave valuable and helpful input and advice.

On a personal level, my first visit to the USA was interesting and enjoyable. The Sisters of the WAP were most hospitable and generous in sharing resources and giving time to the visitors. I was delighted to have the opportunity to visit some of the sites of LA but especially to visit the Colleges and areas where the RSHM have ministered and to see the present communities. It was good to be able to visit the elderly sisters in the shared Care facility in Regina Residence, Orange County where I met, among others, Sr Gregory (Mary) Naddy (98) who was in school with Máire Bríd, Thérèse English and Betty Comerford.

Mary Gough

## Honour for Sr André Dullaghan

Sr Pierre Dullaghan, as next of kin to André, received a letter from the FRIENDS OF THE MUSICIANS' CHAPEL, St Sepulchre's Church, Holborn Viaduct, London, EC1A 2DQ asking permission to inscribe André's name in their Book of Remembrance. In this Book the names of musicians who have died are recorded and commemorated at an annual Service of Thanksgiving. The next Service will take place on Tues 26 April at 6.00 pm in St. Sepulchre's Church. This takes the form of a traditional Anglican Choral Evensong and is open to all faiths and none. Any RSHM Sister who wishes to do so is invited to be present.



Please  
note



Turn off lights

8.30 – 9.30

March 19 2016

Last year's Earth Hour was record breaking: 172 countries around the world and 10 million people in the UK turned their lights out. Join us again this year to be part of the world's biggest environmental event

## BEREAVEMENTS



### Our sympathies are with:

Huntstown community on the death of **Sr Regina King** 21 November 2015.  
Regina was 81 years of age and in the 61<sup>st</sup> year of her Religious Profession

Arrowsmith House and Seafield communities on the death of **Sr Teresa Allan** 25 December 2015. Teresa was 89 years of age and in the 68<sup>th</sup> year of her Religious Profession

The sisters of the EAP on the deaths of:

**Sr Sabyna Schmitz**, previously known as Sister St. Richard, at Marymount Convent, Tarrytown, 20 November 2015. Sabyna was 86 years of age and in the 67<sup>th</sup> year of her Religious Profession

**Sr Bernadette Da Silva** at Marymount Convent, Tarrytown, 29 November 2015. Bernadette was 92 years of age and in the 68<sup>th</sup> year of her Religious Profession

**Sr Barbara Carvalho** at Marymount Convent, Tarrytown, 22 December 2015. Barbara was 98 years of age and in the 75<sup>th</sup> year of her Religious Profession

The sisters of the Portuguese Province on the death of:

**Sr Maria Francisca du Assunção Gaspar Borges**, Braga 22 November 2015. Maria Francisca was 101 years of age and in the 72<sup>nd</sup> years of her Religious Profession

### We also sympathise with:

- **Sr Lelia O'Shea** on the death of her brother-in-law Reni (husband of the late Sheila) who died in Australia mid November 2015
- The **family of the late Sr Helen Courtney** whose brother John died mid November 2015
- **Sr Catherine Dolan** whose brother-in-law John Bold died 23 November 2015
- **Sr Betty Comerford** on the death of her sister-in-law, Claire Comerford, wife of the late Harry, who died 8 December 2015.
- **Sr Constance O'Sullivan** on the death of her niece Carol, Peggy's daughter, 11 December 2015
- **Srs Deirdre and Patricia Kavanagh** on the death of their brother-in-law Brendan McCartan, Anne's husband, 11 December 2015
- **Sr Mary Bridget (Bridie) Lyng EAP** on the death of her brother Thomas 11 December 2015
- **Sr Teresina O'Byrne** on the death of her sister Renee Fenelon 25 December 2015
- **Sr Gabrielle O'Regan** on the death of her brother Neil 10 January 2016
- **Sr Cécile Pommier** on the death of her sister-in-law Gisèle February 2016

**May those who have died rest in peace.**