



## Newsletter Teams of Our Lady – Irish Region

# Countdown to Super-Regional Gathering Celebrating 50 Years of Teams in Ireland

Issue 96

Spring 2014

**King’s Hospital School, Palmerstown, Dublin  
Friday 15<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2014**

In 1989 Ireland became a Region in Teams. Before that it was attached to Great Britain. John and Bernadette Blayney, who introduced Teams to Ireland in 1964, were the first Regional Couple. In January 2006, the Transatlantic Super-Region, which is one of twelve Super-Regions in the Movement, came into being. Great Britain, which had been a single Region, became three Regions, and together with Ireland, Trinidad and Tobago formed the new Super-Region. The Super-Region met under the same banner for the first time at the International Gathering at Lourdes in 2006. The first Gathering of the new Super-Region took place in 2007 at Swanwick, Derbyshire and the second in 2010 at the same venue. This year the third Gathering will be hosted by Ireland as we celebrate 50 years of Teams in this country. Some teams members will remember 1995 when Ireland hosted the meeting of the College of Teams at All Hallows. The event concluded with a memorable evening attended by almost two hundred people.

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### The Cause for the Beatification of Father Caffarel

The International Leading Team (ERI) have recently announced that the first phase of the work of the Cause will be formally submitted to Rome on 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2014. There will be an official ceremony in Paris to mark this on 18<sup>th</sup> October, and all Teams couples are invited. For those who cannot get to Paris, it is hoped that there will be local celebrations.

Further details to follow, but for now, please put the date in your diaries.

Antony and Janet Denman

Responsible Couple for the Transatlantic Super-Region

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## From the Regional Couple



Pope Francis has breathed new life into our faith and our world today. The theme for his 2014 Lenten Message is centred on how Christ 'became poor, so that by his poverty, [we] might become rich' (2 Cor. 8:9). The Holy Father himself has taken a similar path by shedding his office of centuries old pomp, protocol and indeed riches that could be seen as distracting from the true role of the Holy Father to lead not only by his faith but also by the example of his office. This is particularly relevant in today's world of multiple and ingenious distractions that often make us forget this simple message.

The significance of the Pope's new style of office can be further understood in his Lenten Message. In light of the above distractions, the Holy Father points out that since we came after Christ, we might be inclined to think this 'way of poverty was Jesus' way' and that we, in our time, can 'save the world with the right kind of resources.' This, the Holy Father points out is not true! 'In every time and place God continues to serve mankind and the world through the poverty of Christ.' God's wealth, he says, 'passes not through our wealth, but through our personal and communal poverty, enlivened by the spirit of Christ.'

2014 is a wonderful year of celebration for Teams in Ireland as we host the Super-Regional Gathering and celebrate 50 years of Teams of Our Lady in Ireland. Teams first came to Ireland in 1964 and at the outset were established in Dublin. They gradually spread throughout the country and today we have 34 teams. We are indebted to Pat & Carmel Cunneen and their animation team for their great inspiration, commitment and hard work in preparing for this momentous Teams Event in Ireland.

Breda & Tony Preston

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## **Mary Conway RIP. (80). Born. 1933. Died 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013.**



Mary Conway joined Team 6 Mullingar in 1989 along with her late husband Frank, who sadly died, aged 64 in 1999. As a couple their contribution to the Team was immense for the ten years. The Team benefited greatly from their involvement and their wise counsel on many occasions.

After Frank's passing in 1999, Mary continued her involvement as an integral member of the Team until her own untimely demise, following a short illness in June 2013. She was a member of Teams for 24 years and contributed handsomely to the movement during that time.

Mary trained as a Nurse in St. Michael's, Dun Laoghaire, and later combined her skills as Nurse in St. Mary's, Mullingar, mother to five sons, and Farmer/Teacher's wife at her home in Ballinea. Mary was a very bubbly, vibrant lady who was great company in any situation. In later times she took great satisfaction, and joy, walking with her dogs, checking fences and counting the stock on the family farm. Mary had a very wide circle of friends who will sadly miss her. Mary is now where she wanted to be, reunited with Frank, at the right hand of the Lord. May God grant eternal peace to them both.

Colette and Jimmy Lambe

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## **Father Charlie O'Connor SJ RIP**

Chaplain of Dublin Team 27 from 1991 to 2007

Fr Charlie was born in Ballybunion in Co Kerry in 1920. The early part of his Jesuit life was spent in Zambia but by the time he became chaplain to our Team he was living in a Jesuit Community in Monkstown, Co. Dublin, and involved in conducting many retreats. In 1979 he had begun to lead pilgrimages to the Holy Land aided by his friend and co-worker, Catherine McCann. Our team benefitted so much from his knowledge of the Holy Land as he had the gift of bringing our Scripture readings to life for us by his wonderful descriptions of each New Testament location.

Fr Charlie had a wonderful sense of humour and eagerly joined our team on away trips to Wicklow, Wexford and to Glenstal, and local trips to various venues including the Concert Hall and The Dogs in Shelbourne Park .

His final years were spent in the Cherryfield Retirement Home where he died peacefully amongst his community, on 3<sup>rd</sup> February this year.

Donal and Katriona O'Keefe, Team members with Fr Charlie

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## **Fr. Peter Francis Haughey OSA RIP**

Francis James Haughey was born in Dublin on October 1st, 1924.

He was received into the Augustinian Order at Orlagh in 1942, taking as his Religious name Peter. Since Rome was inaccessible due to war, Peter did his basic philosophy and theology studies in Orlagh, John's Lane and Raheny. Meanwhile (1945-49) he was studying for his B.Mus. Degree in UCD. He went to Rome in 1949 where he did further studies in both theology and philosophy.

He returned from Rome in 1955 and he was to spend the next 60 years serving in an mind-boggling variety of roles; teaching in a Preparatory school in England, a Secondary school in Ireland, Professor of Philosophy in Ballyboden, Milltown Institute, and in Jos Seminary, Nigeria, Master of Students in Ballyboden, Prior in several Augustinian houses, member of the Provincial Council, Secretary of the Province, Parish work in the United States and in Ireland. It will be obvious from that list of appointments that Peter was a versatile man and a willing servant. 'He went where he was sent' without hesitation! He joined Equipes Notre-Dame as Chaplain to Team 13 in Rath Cúil, Co. Bhaile Átha Cliath in 1998 and remained with us until 2004.

He was a highly intelligent man with an insatiable interest in life and in people. And it was not all idle curiosity. He had a strong empathy for people, especially for those in trouble, whether through ill-health or misfortune. He served eight happy years as Curate with Pádraig Daly in Ballyboden: from 1993 to 2001. It's amazing the number of Ballyboden people who asked for Fr. Haughey during the months of his final illness. Invariably, their concern was couched in terms of returning a favour: "He visited my mother every day when she was dying" or, "He visited me in hospital very often when I was very sick." To paraphrase the scriptures, "His good deeds were not forgotten."

Peter's health went into serious decline over the last couple of years. About a year ago he recognised that his condition merited more professional care so he left his beloved John's Lane and came to Ballyboden. He proved to be an uncomplaining patient, always considerate of other's needs. He was alert and calm up to his last few days, and he slipped away peacefully in his sleep on the morning of Ash Wednesday.

He is survived by his brother Noel, and his wife Elizabeth, his sister Evelyne (O'Riordan), his nephews and nieces. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam uasal.

Proinnsias Ó hAilín

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## From The International Leading Team

We write this letter in our role as the newly appointed Liaison Couple for the Eurasia zone. As we do so, we ask ourselves the question “Why did we so readily take on this responsibility which will occupy us until July 2019?” The answer turns out to be a very simple one. As Pope Francis says in his encyclical *Lumen Fidei*, “I delivered to you, what I also received” (1 Corinthians 15:3). How could we not accept when we have received so much as members of Equipes Notre Dame.

Our journey in married spirituality began in 1996 when we moved to a new parish where we bought a house to enable us to have Helena’s father live with us. Although we did not know about the sit down at the time, we had had a family “conference” to decide what we should do and everyone agreed that we should go ahead. It was a difficult decision to make as he was nearly 90 years old and we had two teenage daughters and we were not sure how it would work out. Sadly, Dad died before he could join us and it looked as though we had moved for nothing. However, God’s plan for us was soon revealed. We had never heard of Equipes Notre Dame but there was a team in our new parish looking for more couples. Rather reluctantly we decided to try just one meeting. Since then through our membership of Equipes Notre Dame we have developed in our love of God and of each other, made many dear friends and experienced the hospitality of team members who have opened their homes and their hearts to us.

Our previous responsibility was to set up the Transatlantic Super Region in 2006. This comprises a very diverse set of countries in Europe, Africa and the Caribbean. Great Britain is a protestant country where around ten per cent of teams members are Christians belonging to denominations other than catholic. Sometimes they are married to Catholics but there are also protestant couples. We ourselves are only in Equipes Notre Dame thanks to the expansion zeal of an Anglican couple. South Africa is also protestant but here the team members are almost exclusively catholic. The country is still trying to put the years of apartheid behind it and the Catholic Church is in the forefront of the initiatives to create a “rainbow” nation. Ireland is a catholic country but the number of worshippers has declined dramatically mostly due to sex abuse scandals within the Church. Trinidad, although largely Christian, has a significant Hindu population (30%) and in Malawi some people still adhere to tribal religions. There are couples in Malawi who, through their experience of Equipes Notre Dame, have had their tribal marriages blessed in church.

Added to these countries, our responsibility now includes the continents of Oceania and Asia, with teams in Australia, New Zealand, India, the Philippines and South Korea. Our priority is to get to know the team members in these countries and to learn of their successes and difficulties. In 2014 we will be visiting Australia and New Zealand to attend their super regional conference. These are only held every three years due to the huge distances and expense of travel. Altogether our zone covers a vast geographical area which has comparatively few teams but great richness in the diversity of Christian worship and cultures. At the end of our six years we will consider it a job well done if we have increased the number of teams in our zone and their understanding of married spirituality so that their commitment to Equipes Notre Dame encourages other members to say “I delivered to you, what I also received”.

Paul and Helena McCloskey

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## From the Spiritual Counsellor

My Very Dear Team Members,

For the Church, the year 2014 will be marked by the preparation for the next bishop's synod on the family or on the pastoral challenges for the family within the context of the new evangelisation. For us, as a Movement, it is obviously a topic of great interest, since our charisma and mission is to bear witness within the Church and in the world to the *joie de vivre* of the ideal of Christian holiness within marriage.

After *Lumen Fidei*, Pope Francis' first encyclical, we have received his apostolic exhortation to live and experience the joy of the Gospel. It is a topic upon which Pope Francis has insisted since the beginning of his pontificate. If Pope Benedict accentuated a concern for truth (a very important question which we should continue to be committed to for, as Jesus said, "*You will know the truth and the truth will free you,*" (Jn 8, 32), Pope Francis invites us to live and bear witness to the joy of being who we are, of being Christians within our different states, married, single, religious.

We know that today's world does not give us much to be joyful about and we are also aware of the very serious problems, which threaten and hurt the family. Problems which are transversal and which impact all continents and cultures. But the joy that Pope Francis asks us to live and bear witness to is a joy which comes from inside, from the heart, placated by the love that God places in our hearts, if we let Him engulf us in his grace and mercy.

The questionnaire which was sent out to the whole Church represents an assessment of the state of the family in today's world and suggests that one of the causes of the actual crisis facing the family, on the intra-ecclesial level, is to be found in the weakening or abandonment of faith in the sacrament of marriage and in the therapeutic efficiency of sacramental penance. The diagnosis could not be more precise. And here, we have a very important programme for us as a Movement, for each couple and each team: to deepen and renew our faith in the sacraments, which take charge of the whole of our lives, in the holiness of marriage, which can only be experienced by accepting the grace of the sacrament of penance and by nourishing it in the Eucharist.

Here, very dear Couples, is a strong appeal to deepen our charisma and mission in the Church, based on the celebration of these sacraments, without which no spiritual progress is possible.

I hope that you are all well. I take my leave of you and beg for you all the graces and blessings of God, our Father.

Father José Jacinto Ferreira de Farias, SCJ

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## From the Regional Chaplain

When you do this “Remember Me”

Desiring to grow in my appreciation of the Eucharist as Jesus’ self gift.

### April 2014

Matthew 26: 19, 20, 26-30

Revelation: 1:5-8

What do I remember about making my First Holy Communion and its effect on the early years of my life?

How have these experiences influenced the significance I give to the Eucharist in my adult life today?

### May 2014

John 6: 47-71

How does being part of a Community of Believers, e.g. Parish, Confraternity, Teams, help me to be committed to make the continual act of Faith which the Eucharist requires?

What have reverent moments of receiving the Eucharist taught me about the Love and Compassion of Jesus and my spouse?

### June 2014

John: 13:1-15.

Have I made the connection between Eucharist and Service which are shown by Jesus at the Last Supper?

Do I experience the Eucharist as strengthening and challenging to serve as Jesus did?

### July 2014

Isaiah 61:1-3, 6, 8-9

In what ways am I bread that is broken and shared with others on a daily basis?

What are the difficulties I experience when trying to live this way?

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## News from Around the Region

### Dublin

**8<sup>th</sup> December Mass:** This year for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception we gathered together in Marianella on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>, and at the earlier time of 7pm. Attendance was very encouraging. Fr. John O’Keeffe SJ, chaplain to Team 32, was chief celebrant and afterwards we enjoyed a cuppa with home baking and a chat among friends.

**Fundraising Event:** It was hoped early this year to have another fundraising event in the Dublin Sector to help solidarity funds for our 50<sup>th</sup> Celebrations. There are always costs which are not foreseen at the early planning stage. A round the table conversation in Marianella after our Mass was the genesis of another event: an evening of nostalgia – ‘**Dublin in the Rare Ould Times**’. Those who know Liam Clare are aware of his talents in presenting illustrated talks on Dublin. He has done it many times. “He will make a very entertaining evening!” we were told. Liam volunteered willingly and the date was set for 4<sup>th</sup> March. He approached preparations in meticulous fashion and, with his dedicated Team 19 about him, the blessing of the Foxrock Parish Centre, Robert Jordan from Team 40 ably supporting with Dublin songs, and Sean Mistéil as MC, we had a really marvellous evening! A free raffle was thrown in for good measure!

And there’s more……. A trusty band of helpers including Parish volunteers, Team 19 & Martha Wade-Team 31 topped the evening with refreshments, also echoing ‘times past’- scones, brack, biscuits, and the famous Dublin Gur Cake\*, Clove Drops, Brandy Balls, Cadbury’s Roses. What a feast on a Shrove Tuesday! Grateful thanks to all for their unstinting support, generosity and talent in making this event happen.

*\*These little sweet delights take their name from Dublin ‘gurriers’ or young people, supposedly up to no good; to ‘go on the gur’ meant to bunk off school. Since traditional gur cake is made from leftover stale bread, it was one of the cheapest things to buy from the baker, so young lads on the gur would buy pieces of this to fuel their school-skipping activities.*

The description above and recipe used by Martha is from the website:

[www.yourlivingcity.com/.../recipe-week-traditional-dublin-gur-cake/](http://www.yourlivingcity.com/.../recipe-week-traditional-dublin-gur-cake/)

**Summer Outing:** In view of our busy schedule around preparations for the Trans-Atlantic/ 50<sup>th</sup> Celebrations, our Sector Team has decided not to have a Summer Outing this year. However, to wind up that momentous weekend, there will be a Teams Tour to Glendalough for anyone and everyone who is interested.

**50<sup>th</sup> Celebrations:** Our Sector Team has been asked to help encourage bookings for this weekend. This ‘once in a lifetime’ event needs careful planning. The King’s Hospital School in Palmerstown, where it all takes place will require confirmation of numbers attending in the near future. *All members of Teams in Ireland are invited.* We appeal to anyone who has not already booked to do so without further delay. We look forward to seeing you there!

Booking may be done online: [www.equipes-notre-dame.ie](http://www.equipes-notre-dame.ie) or

Contact John & Elaine Cogavin: [cogavins@hotmail.com](mailto:cogavins@hotmail.com)

Joe & Áine Clayton

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**CELEBRATION: Teams Gathering**  
**King's Hospital School, Palmerstown, Dublin**  
**Fri 15<sup>th</sup> – Sun 17<sup>th</sup> August 2014**

**Theme of the Weekend: 'Heart Speaks to Heart'**

**50**

In 1964, the first Team came together in Dublin.  
We mark 50 years of blessings for Teams in Ireland with  
a Special Mass of Celebration  
on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Trans Atlantic**

The Super-Region is having its Gathering for the first time in Ireland.

Countries in the Super-Region:  
Great Britain, Ireland, Trinidad, Tobago,  
Malawi, Zambia & South Africa.



**'Heart Speaks to Heart'**



**Programme Includes**

Communicating with Love  
Our Faith Journey  
'Caoga Bliain ag Fás'-  
(A Trip down Memory Lane)  
Mass Celebrated each day  
Address/International Leading Couple  
Mixed Team Meetings  
Sit-Down

**How to Book**

This is a JOY-FILLED occasion,  
not to be missed ...  
...a lasting Memory for all members  
of Teams in Ireland.  
Early booking is advised,  
Rates for entire Weekend,  
B&B. Day, etc.  
Further details on Website,  
Booking now available online.

[www.equipes-notre-dame.ie](http://www.equipes-notre-dame.ie)

**NO R/C Weekend**

Celebration **REPLACES** the Responsible Couples' Weekend, which eliminates that expense for a Team. Several R/C features are included eg Mixed Team Meeting & Sit-Down. With greater numbers of couples attending, all Teams from the Irish Region will be greatly blessed and enriched.

**Home Accommodation for Visitors**

Thank you for offers so far. We have a few visiting couples already booked in homes who will experience our unique hospitality.

Many are coming from abroad.  
*Additional* accommodation ,  
before, during or after the Gathering  
both in Dublin and outside Dublin is needed.  
Do you have a spare bedroom?

**Would you like to help?**

Contact Regional Couple - Tony and Breda Preston, or your Sector Couple.

<<<< **Features include** >>>>

**Children's Programme**

Children and grandchildren under 16 attend free of charge.

Outdoor activities, Games, Art etc

Child Protection Programme in place for the weekend.

Details of full Children's Programme on the web

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Parents / Grandparents / Team Volunteers agree and sign up to the **Child Protection Protocol**.

**WITNESS**

We are featuring personal witnesses of children of Teams couples as part of the Main Programme – in person and in video clip format.

*See web site for example.*

Looking for more representation of Irish Children.

**PAST MEMBERS of TEAMS**

We will have **FORMER MEMBERS** to celebrate their contribution of the past 50 years.

**Please invite ALL past members you know.**

We do not have a complete record of names.

**Entertainment on Saturday Eve**



**Including traditional Irish Music & Dance. Also enjoy contributions from our friends from other Countries & Cultures**

**Memorial Book**

**A Book of Remembrance**

will be launched at the Gathering. Entered are names of over 50 deceased members of Teams, including chaplains.

Mass on Saturday will remember the deceased with a special **CANDLE CEREMONY**.

*We will invite spouse, or Team Member, or Sector Member to represent the deceased, always subject to wishes of family etc*

**Memorabilia Room**

Photos, Videos, Recollections, will be on display for the duration of the weekend. See elsewhere our request for material.

Further details on our Website:

[www.equipes-notre-dame.ie](http://www.equipes-notre-dame.ie)

## **Belfast**

Since the last newsletter we have had our December 8th celebration. Liam and Eileen Mc Kinney hosted the celebration in their home. This was a very enjoyable evening. Mass, celebrated by Fr Ephraim, chaplain to Belfast 5, was followed by a shared supper and lots of craic and games. The evening was very well attended by all three teams.

Both Maureen Mc Mullan and Gerry Mulhern were present.

Our three teams are meeting fairly regularly, but there have been some health problems since Christmas. Maureen Mc Mullan from Belfast 2 had a stroke a number of weeks ago. Thank God Maureen is now recovering at home. She has been inspiring through this illness, accepting the stroke with great faith and trusting entirely in God's love and providence to help her through the long weeks of recovery. We returned from a visit to Bangor hospital inspired and enriched by Maureen's faith.

Gerry Mulhern from Belfast 5 had surgery just before Christmas. Afterwards he unfortunately suffered a stroke. He is now recovering at home, under the care of Margaret.

We ask your prayers for both these couples.

Our sector retreat is scheduled for Sunday May 11th. This will take place at Tobar Muire retreat centre in Crossgar, starting at 9.30. We would warmly welcome any members from other sectors.

Love and prayers for all,

Declan and Deirdre Kennedy

## **Mullingar**

At time of going to press we are preparing for our annual retreat to be held on April 6<sup>th</sup> at St. Camillus Killucan. We are delighted to have Father Frank Monks, M.I. to lead the retreat. It will commence at 10a.m. and conclude after 4p.m. Mass. We are expecting Tony and Breda Preston, the new Regional Couple, to join us for the day.

As we prepare to participate in the International Gathering at King's Hospital School in August we hope that Tony and Breda's presence will encourage our members to attend this memorable occasion. Our Sector has been invited to look after the Sunday Mass liturgy, music et cetera.

Bishop Michael Smith, a Teams Chaplain for many years who was instrumental in bringing Teams of Our Lady to Mullingar, is due to celebrate the Sunday Mass at 3 p.m.

The indications at the moment are that a good number of our Sector will attend what promises to be a very special occasion.

We greatly admire the thorough efforts that the Dublin Sector has put into making the arrangements for the Gathering.

It remains for us all to follow through in order to make this time a time of blessings for Teams members and for our families.

We are confident that all our members are very enthusiastic to help as best they can.

We wish you all a happy Easter Season.

Frank and Margaret Fagan

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## Galway

Greetings to all Team members from the West of Ireland.

*Anois teacht and Earraigh*

*Beidh an lá dul chun síneadh.....*

After having been buffeted by continual storms in January we are now enjoying beautiful spring weather. As we write, the sun is shining in an azure sky, the temperature is in the high teens and we are rejoicing with Raifteiri that Spring has come.

Late last year team members in Galway met as a group just to catch up with each other and to meet the other Galway team members. We decided that it would be a good idea to meet in January for lunch. 20 team members from the three teams met on 12<sup>th</sup> January for a very enjoyable lunch in the Ardilaun Hotel. We had a room to ourselves and it was great to meet up with everybody.

Teams in Galway held their annual retreat in Glenstal Benedictine Monastery on the 23rd March. 15 people attended including the chaplain to Team 3, Fr. John Humphries, S.J. 9 travelled to Glenstal on Saturday. We were made most welcome by the Guestmaster, Br. Cuthbert, who looked after us and did everything possible to help us make the most of our visit to Glenstal. Paula and Gregoire Murphy from Limerick Teams visited us on Saturday night. It was great to see them. It was a wonderful enriching experience for all to share in the various liturgies from Lauds, Morning Prayer to Compline, Night Prayer and to experience Gregorian chant in all its prayerfulness and beauty. On the Sunday we all met for the Community Mass at 10 a.m. Some team members had been at the Morning Prayer at 7 a.m. After Mass refreshed by tea and scones Fr. Anthony spoke to us about the presence of God everywhere and then brought us on a tour of the Icon Chapel. After lunch Fr. Columba McCann guided us through a meditation on the Psalm, The Lord is My Shepherd. We had time for walks in the wonderful grounds, and had time for ourselves. The birdlife and birdsong were unbelievable.

All felt that the Retreat in Glenstal was well worthwhile and felt enriched by the experience.

We wish to extend our deepest sympathy to Ann Hutchinson, her family and extended family on the recent death of her mother, Mrs Belinda Horgan who died after a short illness at the age of 92. The day after her death Ann and Jack were blessed with another grandchild, Jane, 3rd child of Sheila and Eoghan Quigley.

We also extend our deepest sympathy to John McCarrick on the death of his sister Stella. May she rest in peace.

We wish all Team members a Happy Easter.

Brendan and Máire Kelly

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## Prayer Intentions

For the deceased:

Michael O'Connor, father of Catherine Pearce, Dublin, Violet Molloy, sister of Brian Moore, Dublin, Harry Meigh (with his wife Clotilde introduced Teams to Great Britain), Fr. Charlie O'Connor SJ, Dublin, former teams chaplain, Fr. Peter Haughey OSA, Dublin, former teams chaplain, Belinda Horgan, mother of Ann Hutchinson, Galway, Stella McCarrick, sister of John McCarrick, Galway, Ursula Grainger, Dublin, former Teams member.

For those who are ill:

Maureen McMullan, Belfast, Gerry Mulhern, Belfast

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## Dublin Sector Retreat — Some reflections

We had a very reflective retreat led by Fr. Bruce Bradley S.J. The theme was “Living in the Church of Pope Francis”.

Fr. Bruce gave five short talks with plenty of time for reflection after each talk including one silent coffee break. He recommended that we all get a copy of *Evangelii Gaudium* (Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Francis). Fr. Bruce also referred to the Fr. Spadaro SJ interview with Pope Francis (reproduced in full in “Studies” Autumn 2013 issue). The talks covered the following headings:

Getting into Sacred Space: The importance of making time to pray, no matter how incongruous it may seem. Mk 6;31-32 (Come away) : Mt 13; 1-23 (The sower) : Gal 2: 20 (He loved me)

A Jesuit Pope: Pope Francis' call and his mission to love. Pope Francis the “untier of knots”. His personal example. What is our mission / what does God want of me/us? Mt 16; 13-19 (Peter's mission) : Mt 28; 16-20 (Our mission)

“I am a sinner”: Pope Francis when asked who he was, said he was a sinner called by God. We are all sinners. What the world needs is healing. Mt 9; 9-13 : Lk 18; 9-14)

Prayer: The importance of making time for prayer. Whether we call upon God or not, He is always present. “Pray as you can, not as you can't”. Mk12; 28-34 (Greatest commandment) : Lk 10; 38-42 (The better part) : Lk 11;1-13 (Our Father)

In the evening we will be examined in love: We are restless until we go home to God. We search for meaning. Mika 6; 8. In the film ET, he was restless, “ET phone home”, and eventually goes home in the spaceship.

Many thanks to Fr. Bruce for a very gentle, thought provoking retreat with plenty of time to reflect.

Donal and Katriona O'Keefe

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For me the retreat with Fr. Bruce Bradley did not commence in an auspicious manner. His first offering to us was “getting into Sacred Space”. I thought it was all over the place until I realised that is what our heads are like. When we sit down to pray we are thinking of a thousand and one are like. When we sit down to pray we are thinking of a thousand and one things. My expectations had been that we would be considering the Pope’s message and how it related to our lives. What I had to do first however, was to sit in the space and allow the silence in. When I did this I was so much more receptive to the following sessions and was able to absorb the wisdom he shared in relation to the Pope and his immediate influence on the message of the Gospel, on Prayer and on living the evangelical life. There are many examples that I will try and live but the most telling one for me was one of his last ‘in the evening of life we will be examined in love’. Living that out on a day to day basis involves ‘respect and acknowledgement’ to all those we meet no matter how different our circumstances. Thank you to all who participated and made the weekend a very real shared experience. I particularly liked the initiative of Áine and Joe to have a silent coffee break! and of course gratitude and thanks to Fr. Bruce.

Joan O’Mahony

This retreat given by Fr. Bruce Bradley S.J. was a joyfilled occasion of faith, hope and charity. It was delivered with humour and a positive view of the future despite the many distractions that occupy most of our lives in today's world. These are a couple of highlights (of which there were many) which we took from the week end.

He began by talking about Pope Francis - a man who describes himself as a Sinner. He comes across as a man of great humility who loves people and whose prime mission is to bring the healing power of the Gospel to all. He is a man who is visibly a disciple of Christ. How blessed we are with such a person to guide us.

Father Bruce spoke much on the subject of love and about how it is only those we love whose existence we fully recognise - bears quite a lot of thinking about.

This short quote by St. John of the Cross – ‘in the evening we will be examined in love’ - is surely the perfect compass bearing to be followed in life.

Finally a couple of comments on prayer - two stand out - ‘if we are generous in giving time to prayer we will experience the benefits throughout our life’. ‘This type of prayer is no matter of routine, it is deliberate and earnest’!

David and Mary Orr



Liam Clare, Seán Mistéil and Robert Jordan at Dublin Sector Fundraiser, Shrove Tuesday

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## Super-Regional Gathering – Celebrating 50 Years of Teams in Ireland

### Request for Memorabilia

It is planned to have an exhibition of memorabilia at the Gathering. I would be very grateful to receive **photographs, videos or documents**, either electronically or by post. Any documents sent to me will be scanned and the originals returned. Please get in touch with me as soon as possible -

Paddy Quigley  
jacintapaddy@eircom.net

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### **Council for Marriage and the Family Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference**

#### *Marriage and Family at the Heart of the Parish*

In this year of the Extraordinary Synod on the Family convened by Pope Francis, you are welcome to a National Conference aimed at exploring together how parishes can support families in their calling to live, pass on and share their faith, given the pastoral challenges that face families today.

**Saturday, 14 June, 2014, 9.30- 4.00pm**  
Holy Cross Conference Centre, Clonliffe, Dublin 3

For further information and booking details contact:  
cmfconference@iecon.ie Tel: 0876220349

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## IDEAS FOR TEAM MEETINGS

There are as many ways for a Team meeting to run as there are Teams. The Dublin Sector Team thought that it might be helpful to share ideas learned from experience in their own Teams, from liaison visits, and from listening to how other Teams run their meetings.

The monthly Team meeting is a regular and important part of Teams life. Between meetings, we practice the Endeavours individually, as couples, and in our family life. Once a month we come together to pray, to reflect, to share, to support one another.

Through the diversity, there are four essential elements: We pray. We share a meal and our lives. We share on our practice of the Endeavours. We discuss a study topic. Teams find different ways to combine these elements. There is no prescribed order.

**Prayer** Some teams start with prayer; other eat first then pray. A Scripture reading is usually the basis for prayer. In some Teams the Responsible Couple selects the reading and leads the prayer; other rotate this task (say the couple who last hosted selects the reading) which might also include a short reflection.

**Sharing a meal** Some Teams sit down to a hot meal, others to sandwiches and a cup of tea. In some Teams the host couple cooks a dish, someone brings salad, another bread, another biscuits. In some teams everyone brings their own plate of food. Whatever suits the Team is best. But the meal should be simple. It isn't a dinner party.

**Pooling** This is where we share on what is happening in our lives. We don't just chatter. We support each other, and listen with empathy. Some people find it helpful to make a note before the meeting, to focus on what is important. A bell?

**Sharing on the Endeavours** Many Teams struggle with how to avoid this becoming a checklist report. We share on how the practice of the Endeavours has helped us in our lives in the the last month. What brought us closer together and to God: how might that help others. What did we find hard: how might our Team-mates help and encourage us?

**Study topic** The topics are endless...

**When?** For some Teams, the middle of the day suits better than the evening. Some prefer a weekday evening; others a weekend. Or a mix. One Team meets on the same date every month, sharing the random inconvenience of the day of the week on which that date falls.

**Housekeeping** Some teams circulate an agenda for the meeting: perhaps listing a Scripture reading for the prayer and reminding everyone of the study topic. Keeping to time is important, especially for couples who have to get home to younger children. The R/C can guide the meeting so that the appropriate amount of time is left for each part.

Eamonn Conlon and Patti Meek Dublin 34

Below: 8th December Mass Belfast and Dublin Sector Fundraiser Shrove Tuesday

