

# Keeping in Touch



June 2019

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## Editorial

New life surely seems to be blossoming in the Congregation. We continue to thank God for the many new vocations. In this edition we see that Uganda seems to be the place to visit with Lorna's stories (with a message) and Kieran's first impressions. All of Zambia seems to be studying and graduating, Sisters Yvonne and Trinitor are mentioned here but I know there are more on the way so well done to all of them. Of course new beginnings are also happening in the northern hemisphere; in Glasgow, lots of preparations are going on. In Harlow we can see the harvesting of years of labour - all as sweet as honey. Senior years are not preventing the sisters in Marian House caring for Gods creation in their new bird garden as well as taking every opportunity to celebrate life with big birthdays and jubilees. Sr. Siobhan is, as usual, as busy as a bee with her reflections and publications.

In these past few months we have said goodbye to Maureen O'Dwyer who helped us get funding for our many projects throughout the world and we said hello to Kieran Cunningham her replacement, who as mentioned previously, is already up and running so for those of you who work with Kieran, watch out for his coming to your area this year.

There are always many persons and situations that we are called on to pray for and we have every confidence that you storm the heavens when asked to do so, thank you all for your great support and don't forget to let us all know of what is happening. Your little bits of news are parts of the big jigsaw picture - it's not the same when a bit is missing.

With all our love to you all.

*Anne and Emma*

# SSHJM Exchange Visit to Uganda

On the 7th to 14th January, five members of the management staff of the (SSHJM), Households In Distress (HID), in Zambia travelled to Uganda on an exchange visit. The team members were, Sister Yvonne, Mr Mattias E. Kunda, our Director, Silvester Mbazima, Livelihood Coordinator, Sister Muda, OVC Education Coordinator and Richard C Mubanga - M&E Officer

The objectives of the visit were to exchange information with our sisters and staff in the Children in Need project in Uganda, addressing topics such as project management, administration, implementation, Special Educational needs and monitoring.

The main aim was to broaden knowledge for smooth implementation of project activities. The major envisioned outcome of the exchange visit is the improved well-being of the Households In Distress Programme beneficiaries in various endeavours of life. This we hope to achieve through adoption of new strategies and lessons learnt from our sister organization (CHIN) in Uganda.

The team from SSHJM- HID Programme of Zambia learned a number of lessons from the visit to SSHJM-CHIN Uganda. Some of the lessons are:

- The beneficiaries visited proved to be committed to their work and are applying the knowledge gained from training to improve their wellbeing.



- The Indigenous Micro Organisms (IMO) method is very important when it is fully utilized in implementing livelihood interventions as it helps to solve a number of challenges that are found in rearing livestock (especially pigs and chickens) and in crop farming.
- Ensuring that all beneficiaries have individual interventions at their homes as well as in groups is a good approach for sustainability.
- Kitchen gardens and home shops are a simple and effective way of promoting nutrition and income generation for beneficiaries at community level,
- Regular and intensive monitoring and supportive visits ensures that interventions are implemented in planned ways and prevents deviation from the original plans.
- Application of a clear approach to unsure participants is part of project implementation as it creates a sense of ownership in the beneficiaries and leads to project success

### Achievements

Increased exposure of some new members of staff to foreign ways of doing things for the first time, has given new perspectives of doing things and moving away from the 'business' model.

The team was able to learn and adopt the new IMO method; which is very different from the commonly accepted methods in Zambia.

Exchange visits, both local and foreign, are very critical to project implementation as they enable implementers and beneficiaries to gain new knowledge and have a wider perspective of the projects. Hence, exchange visits should be encouraged at all times and factored into annual plans.

Mr Kunda from Mbala getting to know the children in Uganda





## Alex's Story - 'I wanted to throw the baby away'

Recently I had the privilege of visiting Uganda. I heard and saw some very heart-warming things while I was there. This is Alex's story.

When Alex was born his parents very upset when they realized how disabled their baby was. His father felt he could not cope and left. His mother was in despair, she had a very disabled baby that she did not know how to care for and now her sole source of support had left her. She did not know how she would cope, and she wanted to throw the baby away.

Fortunately, she lived in A village where a home therapy support team from the project run by the sisters operated. When her situation became known the support group in her village rallied around her. They gave her a pig, which is a valuable source of income in Uganda (she now has two pigs). They helped her to set up a vegetable garden in the small area by her house. Now she has enough to help feed herself and Alex and sell the extra on a stall outside her house for extra money.

The Therapy Support Group showed her how to care for Alex and made special equipment for him at each stage of his development; he needs a bigger chair now and this being made for him. Maybe the most important thing that happened was the emotional support she received from the village group.

Now his mother loves Alex. He isn't expected to live to adulthood, but he is loved and she will mourn a child she loved and thank god she did not 'throw the baby away!'

*Sr Lorna*



## The Cow Who Got Herself Arrested

In Pabo, a small town in Uganda, lives a cow called Maizey who lives in the compound of the sisters, in her own house. She has a field to graze in, plenty of water and food and is cared for by the sisters and the staff.

So you would think Maizey would be a contented cow, wouldn't you? Unfortunately, this is not so. Maizey received her name because on her first day with the sisters she broke into a maize field and gobbled up the lot! She spends her days looking hungrily over the fence at the maize being grown by the farmer next door. Every chance she gets she makes a break for it – and is very angry when she is caught and brought back.

One quiet Sunday afternoon when the gate to the field had not been completely closed Maizey saw her opportunity! Off she went, through the gate, trampling the other vegetables on her way to the maize. Once there she settled down to contentedly eat the feast of maize surrounding her.

Unfortunately for Maizey her arrival in the field had not gone unnoticed by the owner of the field, who fetched some rope, tied her and tethered her.

Now the law in this area of Uganda says that if an animal gets into your fields and you capture it and tie it down the animal is arrested. The police come and take the animal to an Agricultural holding where it is kept until the owner comes and pays a fine for the damage the animal has done.

By late Sunday evening money had changed hands and Maizey had been brought back to her little house, where she is now under house arrest. Has she learnt her lesson? Only time will tell.



**Breaking news** – Maizey is pregnant. Will becoming a mum change her wayward ways?

## Kieran's first visit to Uganda

It was with great pleasure that I recently undertook my first support and monitoring visit as Mission Project Coordinator. The first country on my 'to visit' list was Uganda, a country that I only briefly visited once before.

I spent five days in total with Children in Need (CHIN). Sr. Jane Frances Nalwanga and the CHIN team arranged a packed schedule whereby I saw



the new Winefride Tyrrell (Nama) Training Centre in full swing with participants ranging from children with disabilities, women's groups, and youth groups all attending lessons ranging from tailoring, physiotherapy, arts and crafts, special needs education, carpentry, briquette and energy efficient stove construction. This coupled with the home

gardening, organic fertilizer brewing, and chicken and piggery enclosures, the centre was a hive of activity.

In addition to the Nama site visit much of my time in the proceeding days was spent in the village communities, with beneficiaries, seeing the community-based rehabilitation (CBR) programme in action. I

witnessed numerous successful vegetable gardens, crop plots, banana plantations, and pig sties all supporting the basic needs of the vulnerable households that we support.

However, my most memorable moment was in Bukerere, speaking to the parents of children with disability group who really revealed the value of CHIN's work;





through the locally trained support worker, the lives of parents and children with disability have improved no end, through support, training, physiotherapy, assistive devices, referrals, and bringing children and parents together to support one another. It really is transformative.

Next, I travelled north to Pabo, where I spent 4 days . Sr. Mary Costello, Victor Arop Programme Coordinator, and the WACFO staff also designed a varied schedule consisting of the Guadalupe House Rehabilitation Centre for those with disabilities, Victor Braun School for special needs, the Winefride Tyrrell Vocational Centre and demonstration vegetable plots. The recently constructed and prepared Vocational Centre and demonstration plot offers so much potential, whereby youths with disability will have the designated facilities and equipment to upskill, and WACFO can showcase its sustainable agriculture practices to communities near and far.

In the days that followed I also experienced WACFO's far reaching community-based rehabilitation (CBR) programme, in relation to disability and special needs, but also the extensive food and economic security programme. I met numerous communities being assisted with support in; home gardening, crop production, piggeries, fish farming, briquette making, village saving and lending groups, water management and conservation, and sustainable agriculture.



WACFO is currently taking part in a pilot sustainable agriculture programme with 6 other congregations spanning Uganda, Kenya and South Sudan. It offers so much potential around new ways of farming that if successful will be rolled out at a much grander scale, fingers crossed!

*Kieran Cunningham*

## SR. TRINITOR IN KENYA

### INSTITUTE OF SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOUS FORMATION, TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE.



Tangaza university College in Nairobi, Kenya, is recognized as constituent College of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). Tangaza has several institutes some of which are: Institute of Spirituality and

Religious Formation (ISRF), institute of social ministry in mission (ISMIM), institute of education to mention but a few. The University aims at **‘teaching minds, touching hearts and transforming lives’** and this remains its powerful motto.

I belong to the ISRF which was inaugurated in 1966. The institute provides professional training to those particularly preparing for ministry in the areas of spirituality/spiritual guidance and formation of young members of religious congregations. The courses offered in ISRF help one to become competent and confident in ministry.

The institute offers both Diploma and Master’s in religious formation/spiritual guidance and spirituality. Some of the units offered for the Diploma course include:

Spirituality of religious charism, spirituality of vows, spirituality of prayer, spiritual direction, retreat courses, stages of religious formation in relation to African stage of formation, religious life in Africa, scriptures like Judeo scriptures, synoptic gospels and the Gospel of John, human development,

human sexuality, psychology of consecrated vocations to mention but a few.

I found these courses to be enriching in all dimensions of life. they enhance spiritual growth, emotional growth and healing, psychological maturity and promote social wellbeing of an individual.

I thank Almighty God for giving me good health whilst at school, enabling me to remain focused in my studies and I pray that God will continue guiding me through out the remaining semester. I thank the leadership team for giving me this opportunity to study Spirituality and Religious Formation, and for their support during my time in Tangaza University college and I thank all the Sisters in the congregation. Together, we can achieve something beautiful for the church, for our congregation and for God in whose mission we share.

May God bless you all.

Sr. Trinitor Putapo.



*Congratulations to Sister Trinitor on being  
named the best student in class! Wow!*



## Leadership

Congratulations to Sister Yvonne on successfully completing a three year course in leadership. She travelled yearly to Kenya to complete the modules of the course which was designed for New leaders. Below is an outline of the course Content.

Date	Sessions	Study Area
<b>Nov 2017</b>	1	Exercise power received from God through the ministry of the Church in a spirit of service.
<b>July 2018</b>	2	Temporal goods and sustainability plan
<b>April 2019</b>	3	Gracefully handing over the custodianship of the patrimony of the Institute.

Sr. Yvonne says; The course has been most informative and I have learnt a great deal. It was also empowering because, as a newly appointed Unit Leader, I was unsure where to start. I was blank in terms of how to go about certain things. It has given me the skills to clarify many issues.

The group consisted of Major Superiors, Regionals and Provincials. We all learnt from sharing experiences and how each one handles certain areas that I never imagined existed. So good and important to know!

I am grateful to Sr. Mary and her council for according me the opportunity to do this course.

I was doing it with Sr. Jane Frances but unfortunately she was not able to come for the last module but please God she will be able to join the group behind us next year. Thank you for your support.

With love and prayer

Yvonne



# *Sr Pauline's Birthday Bash*

*A big  
congratulations  
to Sister  
Pauline as she  
celebrated her  
90th Birthday  
on 22nd June.*



*Sister Pauline was  
joined in Marian House  
by Sisters and  
friends.....*



## Prison Visit for Easter 2019

You may remember that I wrote earlier this year that when we were leaving the prison after serving the women a meal for Christmas, they pleaded with us that we come back to see them soon. At the time we could not promise anything as we needed to consult with the various people to see if it was feasible to visit again and to evaluate if we had the resources for a visit.

After some discussion with the authorities and among ourselves it was decided we would visit the women around Easter time. We visited on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2019.

Amazement again when I checked the number of women in the prison to be told 173 women and 9 children almost unimaginable considering the facilities avail to them.

We prepared 2 boiled eggs, two bread buns and a drink for each. The bread buns we bought at Bauleni Special Needs Project as the bread there sure is next to none in quality and we knew they would enjoy the lovely fresh buns.



**Our bakers in Bauleni proudly showing off their skills.**

It was strange to see two big pots of eggs on to boil; it was hard to know when they were ready as it took time to come to the boil. They were just right, hard boiled when we reached the prison. We took milk and yogurt for the children.

As we have visited so many times now the authorities know us and sadly many of the women have been there for years, they also know us so the security is not as stringent as it was the first few times we went. This

more relaxed entry makes it that little more pleasant for us to go in. The only requirement is we do not take any phones or cameras with us.

This time the women were ready with some hymns to welcome us. Sr Esther brought her guitar and the novices had prepared some hymns so again it was a wonderful happy hour in the prison. It never ceases to amaze me that the women can become so happy and cheerful as they do during our visit, they dance and sing as if they were at the party of the year.



**The very basics for us  
but a feast for others.**



We were informed on this visit that the areas where the prison is has been bought by an investor and the women will soon be moved 50 kilometers out of Lusaka to newly built facility. I am not sure how much that change will affect the women as some receive food and support on a daily basis from their families. To be 50 kms outside the city will make it impossible to them to visit on daily basis or even a weekly, I think.

For this time, we left them happy and thankful for what the Lord had provided for them, Again it is thanks to you at home who provided the necessary funds for us to be able to visit and bring that hour of joy and happiness to the women. They appreciate the visit and are really thankful.

May God bless and reward you all who support us in this venture.  
Love and thanks to you all from the women and us Sisters here in Lusaka.

*Sister Elizabeth Mooney*

## Feast of Father Victor Braun 2019

These Corkonians scrub up well for the camera!



We were delighted that so many sisters and communities with SHC's staff and service users were able and delighted to take the time to celebrate in prayer, songs, sharing greetings from around the world. One or two were unable to link in and were sad not to have the opportunity. We had a technical hitch from Sr Kathleen in California who

In Cebu they stayed up late and were ready with their song. Well done!



unfortunately was unable to present her excellent reflection on Fr. Braun but she was savvy enough to have sent us the transcript so that it could be shared. Sister Mary greeted all and then we just sat back and enjoyed it all including the cake cutting and the toast. The feeling of being at one with so many different ages, cultures and languages was especially beautiful. It was also lovely to acknowledge our extended family of SHC's, staff and those we work for who were present. We cannot give everyone the opportunity to be seen by camera but messages flew around from all the communities connected.

I am sure that both Fr. Braun and our dear Sr Winefride are proud.



In Chigwell they cut the cake twice and had a drink or 2 before the toast!

### Next Webinar

Sr Mary invited us (at least one sister from each community) to participate in the next webinar for sisters on the **Feast of the Sacred Heart, 28th of June.** This will be to present and discuss our care of creation. I hope everyone has noted it in their diary.

# A Journey towards Healing and New Life

As I ponder on the beautiful gospel message of Martha and Mary, I ask myself 'how can I, as an apostolic religious Sister, continue to deepen my contemplative life of prayer while serving God's people in our world today?'

I live in Liverpool and work part-time as a Marie Curie STARS nurse providing palliative care to terminally ill people in their own homes. We are a team of 8 nurses, 3 admin workers and a number of Carers who offer nursing and care support to terminally ill people in the last 3 months of life who wish to live out these precious days in the midst of their families, in the privacy of their homes. We accept referrals for patients of 16 years and upwards. At any one time, I may have a caseload of 12 very ill people and their families in any area of Liverpool.

Each time a referral is placed on my desk, I try to imagine what this diagnosis of a terminal illness means for this person and their family. Some have been ill over a number of years with a chronic condition such as kidney failure, heart failure or respiratory illness. Others may have been newly diagnosed with an aggressive neurological condition or cancer. For each one and their family, it is a life changing event.

Many have good family and local community support; however, a significant number live with the diverse challenges associated with poverty in all its dimensions. Some family situations are very complex where family communication has broken down and the ill person may be faced with travelling this sensitive terminal journey without the necessary social support that they need. On occasion families wish to withhold the 'truth' of the diagnosis or prognosis from the person. Deep discernment is needed as I try to sensitively respond to such a challenge. When speaking with the ill person alone, many tell me that they know that 'time is running out, I am tired and I am ready to go.' Some people or their families struggle greatly as a person approaches the end of life; They may fear the impact of their going on their loved ones; family or other relationships, or issues may need to be reconciled before they can 'let go'



in peace. However, with high quality care and good support, the greater majority make peace with their situation and receive the grace of a peaceful death.

My day begins with personal prayer and morning Mass at the beautiful Carmelite Monastery a couple of miles from the office or at St. Vincent's Church in the inner city. I am deeply aware that I cannot do this work alone and ask for the grace to draw strength from the God of all life in the Eucharist. As I knock on family doors, I often ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as I have no idea what awaits me in each new home. On many occasions I am deeply humbled by the graciousness of the sick, the courage of their families and often in the midst of great loss and suffering, a sense of humour prevails.

A strong team spirit offers mutual support to each one as we face the challenges of each day. As you will appreciate, the level of heartbreak that we witness could be depressing but we support each other especially through the most difficult situations. It is normal as one re-enters the office after a difficult visit to hear a colleague shout out, 'cup of tea?' which usually receives an affirmative response. Our occasional pizza evenings or cinema trips also help.

I return home to reflect on my day, rest, pray and savour my deepening need for silence. A part-time STARS role offers me the space to continue my Spirituality and Dementia care and Pastoral Care training to other congregations and allows some time for my creative writing energies to flow.

I appreciate the support of my Sacred Heart Sister family and the soul refreshing sound of bird song as I pedal my bike through a local park.

*Sister Siobhán O'Keeffe*



# Drumchapel - Glasgow

New  
Home

New  
beginnings



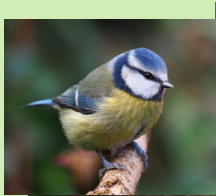
New blossoms

& new seeds a sowing,  
so where're you going?





# Marian House New bird garden



All creation praise the Lord



# Harlow Honey

Following the singing of the Exultet during the recent Easter Vigil Liturgy reminded us of the great significance of bees in our lives.

*“Accept this candle (Paschal) a solemn offering, the work of bees and of your servants’ hands, an evening sacrifice of praise, this gift from your most holy Church”*

At this time of year, insects, including bees, start to re-emerge from darkness into light. Again in the opening prayer for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter, we pray, “that we may and go forth in the light of day to stand in your presence until Eternity dawns”

Here in Harlow, we are fortunate to observe the bees coming from the hive as soon as the first sunny day arrives in late April. We observe them coming out at great speed to forage and to collect nectar which they bring back to the hive to make honey. We are told they travel a distance of up to three miles to collect the nectar.

Last Summer, due to the hot sunny weather we were able to harvest a good amount of honey. This year, weather permitting, we hope we will be blessed in the same way.

Our bee-keeping effort has generated some interest in our neighbourhood and parish. In addition, many people have signed up to follow bee-keeping courses run by Essex Bee-Keeping Association. What started in a small way to express our Mission Statement “Care of the Earth’ is now showing signs of expansion. People who take seriously the care of the earth, our ‘Common Home’ are very aware of the enormous importance of bees and insects in the whole cycle of pollination.

During the past few weeks the media has reminded us of the importance of saving our planet from the devastating effects of Climate Change. We saw news reports of people demonstrating in towns and cities of this country and across Europe with the message: “Save our

Planet” Another reminder that we recently had is the news of the miraculous survival of the bee hives on the roof of the sacristy of Notre Dame Cathedral from the devastation of the fire that enveloped the Church. What might this be saying to us?

Pope Francis in his great Encyclical Letter Laudato Si concludes with the following prayer:



*The poor and the earth are crying out.  
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,  
Help us to protect all life  
To prepare for a better future,  
For the coming of the Kingdom  
Of justice, Peace ,Love and Beauty.  
Praise be to You! Amen.*

*Sr Margaret*



## Farewell Mó!

After many years of working for the congregation Maureen O'Dwyer (Mó) has moved to pastures new. We wish Mó every success and blessings in her new role.

Mó sent the following message .....

*I wish to thank all Sisters and staff from the many missions and communities who were in touch to wish me well when I left the SSHJM in March. The many emails, cards and gifts were much appreciated and the icon of Fr. Victor Braun with the names of all the missions is a lovely memory of the last twenty years.*

*I am now settling into my new position as Mission Development Officer with St. Patrick's Missionary Society (Kiltegan Fathers) and am getting to know their missionary development projects and personnel. While the SPMS work overseas in nine countries in Africa plus Brazil and Grenada, I will initially be working and visiting, their many projects in the four African countries which receive Mísean Cara (Irish Government) funding, Malawi, Kenya, Nigeria and South Sudan.*



*With grateful thanks for all the support received from so many of you during the last 20 years. I am sure our paths will cross again as I am still a Sacred Heart Companion and will also be in touch with many through our charity, the Zambia Appeal Group.*

*Kind regards, Mó*

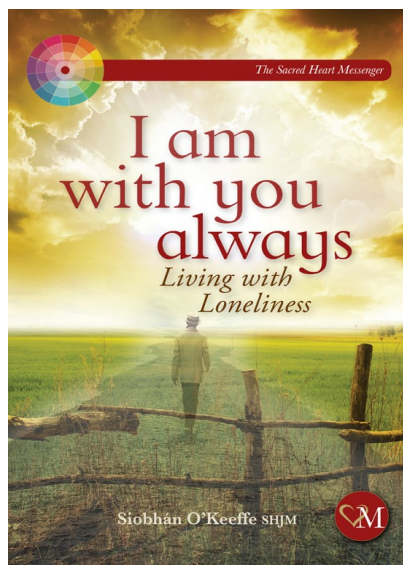
## St. Patricks' Day Celebrations - Uganda

Sr. Jane Frances Nalwanga and Sr. Mary Costello with colleagues Mary Moran and Fr. Tilman at the annual celebration at the Irish Embassy in Kampala celebrating St. Patrick's Day. Included also on right is Nicholas, a biker from Dublin, Ireland, who along with a friend, is cycling 12,000 km from Cairo to Capetown for charity and happened to be passing through Kampala, Uganda at the time of the celebration.



We were sad that the sisters in Uganda were unable to connect on the webinar on the feast of Father Victor Braun, it seems that their resident 'web wizard', Sr Anet was traveling from College where she is doing further studies. They did send good wishes to us all as we do to them. Especially we keep Anet in prayer that she is successful so that she continue to do great things for those whom she is called to serve throughout the Congregation.





Modern life can be lonely and can make it feel as if you are the only one who is lonely. Across society people are becoming more isolated from one another, spending much of their social life immersed in the noise and distraction of social media.

In **I Am With You Always: Living with Loneliness** author Siobhán O'Keeffe reminds us that we are never alone. Our relationship with God is a tether that holds to us through periods of loneliness in our lives and which links us to millions of other people –whether new mother, bullied child, conflicted soldier or overworked surgeon – whose experience and struggle with loneliness is similar.

**I Am With You Always** includes a guide to loneliness in Scripture and a series of reflections on how loneliness is experienced across contemporary society. It offers a practical application of scripture to real life challenges and speaks to people across all strata of society.

Siobhán O'Keeffe SHJM, a native of County Cork, is a Sister of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and a registered nurse. She offers spirituality and dementia-care training to religious communities and parishes in the UK and Ireland and is currently working in community-based palliative care in Liverpool.

Thank You .....

Sister Sophia

would like to thank you all for your prayers, Masses and good wishes that she and the family received during this difficult time of the deaths of her sister Betty, brother Michael and nephews Brian and Christopher. The family really appreciate the prayer support and of those who attended the funerals as Sophia, for health reasons, was unable to.

Sheila Celaschi

I would like to thank all who sent messages of congratulation when I was awarded the Winefride Tyrrell award in November last year. I was very surprised to be nominated and very grateful to receive such a lovely award.

Sister Pauline

Sends her thanks to everyone who sent her Masses, cards, gifts and greetings on her big 90th birthday. Especially to the community and staff in Marian House who take such good care of her.

*Jubilees on the 28th of August;*

*Ruby Sr Eileen McLoughlin*

*Golden Sr Lorna Walsh*

*Diamond Sr Catherine Lehane*

*Sr Celine de Jesu*

*Sr Marie Carmel*

*Sr Marie Majella*

*Sr Thérèse Cooney*

*Platinum Sr Mary Laura*



Editorial Team:  
Sister Anne Griffin & Emma Shaw  
Chigwell Convent,  
803 Chigwell Road, Woodford Bridge IG8 8AU  
Tel/Fax: 020 8506 0359  
Email: [communications@sacredheartsjm.org](mailto:communications@sacredheartsjm.org)

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