

# Keeping in Touch

SHJM



Autumn 2016



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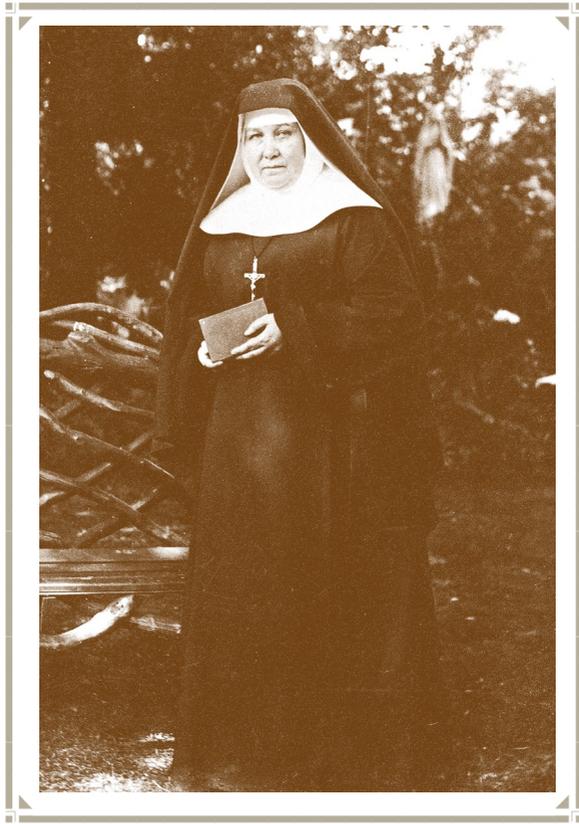
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## Editorial

*Welcome all, to our new Autumn edition with its original name of 'Keeping in Touch'. This helps us to differentiate from the reflections on special feast days and liturgical seasons. We start this issue taking time to recognise, acknowledge and celebrate the life of Mother Winefride Tyrell, our first Superior General of SSHJM 1903—1908. We hope to have more news of our celebrations in the next issue. We remember also 150 years of our original foundation, for this Sister Kathleen Laverty has provided us with a reflection on the history of Fr. Victor Braun p.9 and those early years. Sisters personal stories also help to enlighten us and encourage us in our own vocation and Sister Nora Hogan's story on p. 13 is a wonderful example to us all. In these past few months we have so much to thank God for; jubilees, birthdays, Inter-chapter Gatherings and meetings that all bond us in an ever closer way to help us to respond, not only as individuals, but with the many 'families' that we connect with, some of us even, were blessed with a meeting with Pope Francis p. 32. In November we remember our dearly departed sisters, family friends and benefactors. Without them we could not do all those wonderful things that we do in the name of the Congregation. Sister Pennie p. 25 reminds us of the importance of sharing our charism and allowing others to offer what they can in the mission appeals. Many of the missions in Africa, Cebu and El Salvador depend on our sharing and we rejoice in seeing a little of the lives and mission of the sisters in those parts of the world p. 19.*

*By the time many of you receive this we will be nearly into the season of Advent and this year again we (SSHJM) will be sharing daily reflections with you via e-mail, if you know of others who would be interested in receiving them please send me on their e-mail address (sorry we are unable to post to those who do not have email but that can be something that some of you could offer; to share in some way).*

*Anne and Emma*



*Mother Winefride Tyrell*  
*Co-founder of the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary*  
*Superior General 1903 –1908*

We thank God for the life of Mother Winefride for her courage, vision and faith in God that inspired her to found a new Congregation while at the same time continuing on in the charism of our first founder Father Victor Braun. It is often in the darkest moments that God will show us the way forward—if only we have the faith to rise to the challenge.

The centenary Mass of her death will be celebrated on the 29th of November 2016 with all those in our SSHJM family and friends who can join us.

Sister Rosemary Clerkin's booklet on her life will soon be available—we look forward to that.

# FEDERATION VICTOR BRAUN 150 YEARS CELEBRATION



We  
are

all aware of the great celebrations that took place in Versailles in October and the sharing of symbols that took place. Here we see our Leadership Team and Sr. Catherine Collins with our Congregational Leader Sr. Mary (proudly) holding the new icon of Fr. Victor Braun which was presented to the three congregations. In the background you can see the hanging that the Austrian Sisters presented, it depicts the three congregations, firmly rooted in and planted by Fr. Victor Braun. It was lovingly prepared by the people with special needs in Kühr, Germany. The French congregation presented each congregation with a symbol of the Sacred Heart which can be seen in the bottom left of the photo. All three symbols will be blessed on the 29th of October and will be on display in the Sacred Heart Oratory in Chigwell.

That day, of course will be dedicated to the memory of Mother Winefride Tyrell whose photo will also be blessed and permanently placed in the Sacred Heart Oratory.

## FEDERATION VICTOR BRAUN 2016 EXPERIENCE



Being 'first timers' in France was so exciting especially the 'walking in the footsteps of our founder, Fr. Victor Braun', visiting famous Churches like: St. Vincent de Paul, Our Lady of La Salette, Our Lady of The Miraculous Medal and the huge Basilica of the Sacred Heart (Sacré-Coeur) in Paris. Also meeting and getting to know the Sisters from France and Austria. It was a blessing to be together, sharing our experiences and insights where language was not a barrier.

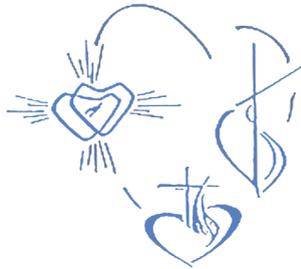
Themes, inputs, displays, liturgy and others were well chosen and prepared. As consecrated people we seek the face of Christ who is the center of our existence and we have to be courageous prophets of our times to address the pains of the poor.

Religious life is a living parable so every consecrated person must be encouraged to be faithful and committed in ministry, cooperate with the program of the Church that answers the needs of the time through attentive

listening and, of course, acting.

We have to live in the in the midst of the people and have the smell of the people around us as Jesus did to respond to their need—the way of being human is the way of God!

***Sisters Rosemary Kasembe, Esther Suico & Vilma Diaz***



### **Sister Esther's Personal Reflection/Conclusion:**

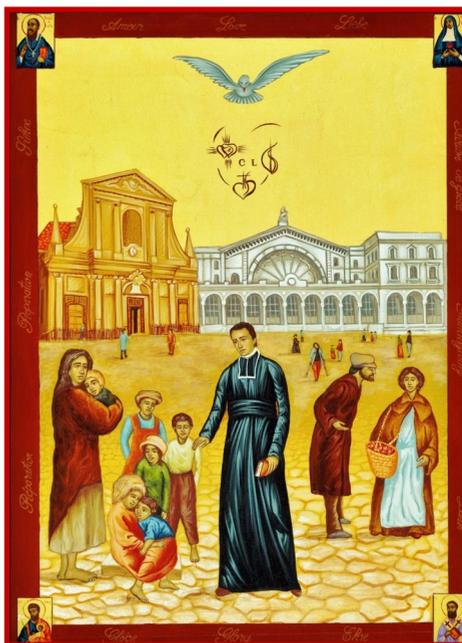
I am so glad and grateful for being invited by the Leadership Team to attend the Federation Victor Braun 2016 Gathering which for me was a great privilege and allowed me to develop a closer bonding with the Sisters of the three Congregations.

The relevant themes and inputs are very significant as they express the reality of what is actually happening and ask me how I will respond. In the same way, the Church and Philippine Government must unite and work together and attentively listen to the anguish of the majority (poor people) who are suffering from drug abuse, high crime rates and corruption. We really need a true leader who can discipline and change the evil system of society in order that peace and justice will prevail for the betterment of the people especially the poor and marginalized.

I am very optimistic that with God's grace and mercy I can bring hope and be an agent of peace. Being a consecrated prophet of today I need to listen attentively and act courageously to what is the right thing to do... based on the Gospel. I also believe in the saying that: "united we stand". This quote inspires me to communicate well and be united with others so that we will all win and be saved. May Joy, Hope and Confidence guide our lives!

## 150 YEARS THE CHARISM OF PERE VICTOR BRAUN CONTINUES

Our story begins in France when a frail boy from St. Avold, a town of the Alsace Lorraine Region, followed his dream of becoming a priest. Peter Victor Braun was nurtured by family and inspired by its history. From his youth he understood well the sensitivity of issues regarding religion, experiencing first hand government regulations of the post French Revolutionary period, still in force, that were both anti clerical and anti-Catholic. Peter Victor inherited from faithful parents and grandparents a great love for God, his Blessed Mother and the Church.



These forces: family-country-faith, formed his character. These were the life influences that drew him to the Heart of Christ and inspired in him the vision wherein Jesus Christ and the poor were of paramount importance.

Peter Victor Braun was born June 5, 1825. He died at age 57 years, a mere 16 years after founding our parent Religious Institute of Servantes du Sacre Coeur. It was 1866, just a few years after gathering a group of caring, dedicated women to his cause of rescuing young women from the train station in Paris that on October 17<sup>th</sup> he dedicated them to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. A man of deep sensitivity and compassion he had become aware of the plight of young women arriving unaccompanied at the train station in Paris. There they could be spotted and trapped into lives of slavery or prostitution. Today we are aware that human trafficking is growing ever more prevalent. Our Holy Founder not only knew of the 19<sup>th</sup> century French version of this cause of suffering, but he did something about it. He wanted us to see ourselves: as servants. Some of the young women

rescued in turn joined the group to help others and so, as in the case of so many other Religious Orders and Congregations before and after us, in “filling an obvious want” the stage was set for what would become our Religious Community.

It was Fr. Braun’s knowledge of German that initially brought him into contact with *“numberless young working girls of Alsatian or German origin, whose helpless and dangerous position, on first arriving at the capital in search of employment, was only too apparent. To establish some sort of home for these girls became a fixed intention in the mind of Pere Braun, and after looking around, in vain, for any who might be willing to undertake the work, he set about realizing a plan of his own.”*

Recently in Diarmuid O’Murchu’s book Evolutionary Faith I came across the following which touched me as being so applicable to us in our efforts to connect with our history in ways that come alive, not as dry history, but as part of our lived experience here and now.

“ ... there is something enormously profound in a child’s fascination with a good story, and therein is a connection with truth that rational wisdom can rarely if ever provide. The story of an event or an experience embraces a great deal more than the facts that comprise the story; it unravels and exposes the meaning behind and beneath the event or experience.”

We have stories handed on to us by word of mouth as well as in written accounts of our communal story. We delight to recall and recount the tale of the Postulant whose courageous vision brought us to England while Fr. Braun was separated from the Sisters during the Franco Prussian War of 1870 – 1871. That year of War had a major effect on the outcome of our history. When postulant Josephine Gibson attached herself to a Red Cross group and made her way to Stratford, London, England, our Congregational history was changed forever, and little did she know then that she was sowing the seeds of possibility for the creation of the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Likewise, separation from the Founder engaged in caring for suffering soldiers caused the German Speaking Sisters to find safety and then new life in Austria.

Yes, stories of their experiences help us know more than just the facts. We get a clearer understanding of the man from the Alsace, our Founder, Pere Victor Braun. Take the above story we have told and retold among ourselves over many years. Not only does it tell us of the young woman who brought us to England and the

Sisters willing to trust her with their futures but also it says something about our Founder. As in the above quote “it exposes the meaning behind and beneath” while revealing to us the man behind the title of Founder, a man who was willing to trust the action of even the very youngest of his congregation. He did not say to Josephine; “who do you think you are?” nor did any of the Sisters. He so supported the venture he gave Josephine the habit once she found her way to the front to tell him what she had done. And our establishment in England became assured when he himself visited there, and received the vows of the first Sister Servants. In fact, the first of all the congregation to make vows did so in London. He did not insist the Sisters return to France to make vows but encouraged to the fullest their move to a new land.

Other stories tell us of the character of this holy man. It did not come easy to him to realize he needed to quickly adapt to taking on new ministries. He had begun as a rescuer of Servant Girls in Paris and was reluctant to take on other roles until repeated requests for his Sisters opened his eyes. A pattern was created of serving, not only the poor, but responding where there was no one else doing the work.

And so when a family member of one of the Sisters fell ill, and other requests for Sisters to help the sick and orphans, it seems he pretty much threw his hands in the air and said it looks as if God wants us to serve the poor and that includes the sick, the orphan.

When Fr. Braun was chaplain and confessor to women incarcerated in Paris he had been instructed to lay on the ‘fire and brimstone’ but instead he spoke to the women of God’s love and compassion and above all his forgiveness. Pere Peter Victor Braun for whom Reparation was paramount in his gentle acceptance of humanity encourages us all as if saying down through the years I know you can do better and so does God and he is just waiting for you.

Reparation was so important to him he asked that it be an added vow, a special duty of his Sisters, symbolized by their wearing of the purple cord. He saw reparation as the opportunity to show tenderness and kindness towards all in trouble. He was loved by the women in prison who had never been spoken to with such respect and gentleness. I like to think about that when I join all our Sisters each day in saying our Act of Reparation, always mindful of my own need for reparation.

There is so much more could be said of our Founder and our amazing beginnings.

This short essay-meditation is written in honor of our Jubilee year of 150 years since our foundation.

## Sister Kathleen Laverty

<sup>1</sup>Devas, Dominic, OFM. (August 1928) *Chigwell* (pg.2 Beginnings)

<sup>2</sup>Ditto pg. 6

<sup>3</sup>O'Murchu, Diarmuid. DATE. *Evolutionary Faith: Rediscovering God in our Great Story*. (Maryknoll, New York. Orbis Books). 8

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, p. 8



Left; The author Sister Kathleen Laverty (tallest of the girls) and her family arriving in California - setting out for new horizons in 1958. It was a brave mother who set out alone with seven young children but at least they knew that Daddy would be (and was) waiting to meet them.

Right; Reception, as a novice, of Sister Mary Magdalene (now Sister Kathleen). She is our only remaining Californian and keeps the charism alive and thriving in the USA. Kathleen is a nurse midwife and spent many years in UK, Zambia and of course her beloved California. She may be physically alone but is always in contact with us through emails and Skype and she will be here in the UK soon and part of the Inter-chapter Gathering in Lusaka in December.



# Getting to know you

## Sister Nora Kathleen Hogan

I was born in Church Street, Cahersiveen, County Kerry, Ireland on September 22nd, 1930, the second eldest of nine children, born to Michael Hogan and Bridget Heaslip, both of Tralee, Co. Kerry. We were six girls and 3 boys.

When Mam was near the end of her pregnancy with me, the midwife, Nurse O'Connor, was awaiting a visit from her brother, Monsignor O Connor, from Australia, so she advised Mammy to walk to the White Strand (a beach 3 miles away) each day, so that I could be hurried along!!

Apparently I was in no hurry to be born, hence some members of the family still call me "Slow Coach" – all I know is I have a great love for that White Strand and water!!

I was baptised and given the name – Nora Kathleen Hogan. However, as a child, I was always, and still am, nicknamed "Daisy" after the popular song "Daisy, Daisy". When I was thirteen and a half Dad, very suddenly, became ill. He had rheumatic fever and was in the early stages of TB. He spent several months in hospital in Tralee and eventually came home to die, RIP. I was utterly devastated. I remember being so angry with God for taking Dad away from us. He was my confidant and best friend and now he was gone.

When I was seventeen I wrote to Rev Mother Antonia who invited me to come to Chigwell. I was overjoyed. *(The discernment process in those days happened after entering.)*



Daisy aged seventeen.

I entered Chigwell on January 15th, 1948. I spent my novitiate in Chigwell and continued my studies with Mother Mary Gertrude, RIP and did my G.C.E. exams *(school leaving certificate)*. At my 1st profession, August 1950, I received the name Sister Mary Thecla.

From 1950 – 1953, I was sent to St. John's school, Chigwell for experience in the classroom. This was a joyous experience for me, but it also entailed so much extra study in the afternoon and evenings.

The children were in Chigwell hospital and residential school - most were very delicate. They suffered from various illnesses e.g. asthma, eczema, or heart disease.

I enjoyed every minute. Sometimes children who were unable to write their letters home would dictate their messages and I would write for them. If their pocket money had run out they would write home for more.

One day the sister in charge called me to the phone. Martin's dad wanted to ask me why his son was sending a coded message when he had plenty of money. He is sending 'S. A. G.' on the back of the envelope, "why does he need a guinea?" (*a little more than one pound sterling*). Then I realised my mistake; I had been putting S.A.G (St Anthony Guide) on the back of the envelopes!! Poor man must have been so puzzled until I explained.

1957 - Word came that I was to go to Dagenham – St Peter's Junior School to relieve a Sister who was preparing to go abroad. I was very sad leaving Chigwell School, where I was so happy.

Bags packed, the car arrived to take me to my new community at the Sacred Heart Convent, Dagenham and my new assignment, St Peter's Junior School. I think all the children there were 'Corkonians' (from Cork, Ireland)! the Dads were employed at Fords, Motor Works. I must have been the only Kerry woman! I got to love Dagenham at first sight.

My first story of terror came when a Government Inspector for Physical Education (PE) arrived. It was my first experience of inspection after teacher training.

The children were 7-8 years old. They had to change into their PE kit, so the boys had to change discreetly while the girls changed and visa, versa. The inspectors greeted me warmly and then said she would return in a few minutes. Needless to say I was so nervous and the class were 'acting up! I thought I said to them "put your hands on your heads" but the children heard "stand on your heads"! The inspector came back quickly and saw the class doing head stands, she said "Sister, the children can't wait, they are so excited, bring them out straight away"! Thank God the lesson went well and it was only later I discovered, to my horror, what I had said – what panic can do to one!!!

November 1957 - Mother Mary Gertrude came with the news, that I had to be packed and ready by Monday morning as Henry, the driver, would come to take



*Sister Nora (seated) with her 'little' sister Marian.*

me to St. Joseph's, Sudbury, Suffolk, for my new teaching post. I was to teach the class of 8-11 year olds. In those days one never knew what was going to happen next!!

Over the weekend I went from 'Electric Light in the class, to 'Gas lamps', from 'Central Heating' to a huge coal stove in the centre of the room – and from 7-8 year olds to 8-11 year olds, all in one room.

My first reaction was "I'll go crazy". The first few months were a nightmare, but in time I began to love the experience – so challenging and rewarding – having the children for almost 4 years – seeing each one blossom, getting to know the parents and their struggles and especially the bond between the Sisters and the wider Parish community. I thank God now for the special 7 years I spent in Sudbury. It was a tremendous learning experience.

1978–1980 – a very different scene awaited me – St. Anne's School, Sacramento, USA. What a super welcome I received from my new community and Parish priest and where I spent two very happy years.

American children are never afraid to tell you what they think of you. One of my favourite stories is in St. Anne's School, 4th grade. I'd written "My favourite colour is .... I was soon told that I couldn't spell: that 'colour' doesn't have a letter 'u' and 'favourite' doesn't have a 'u' either. (*English USA v's English UK*)

Then another day I asked "who would volunteer to rub out the blackboard"? No answer! So I repeated my request, only to be told, Sister, if you look at the board you'll see that its 'green' and we call it the chalkboard, so you ask "who will erase the chalkboard"? The children weren't being rude they were just enlightening me!!

I really got to love their openness and honesty, but once again teaching 4th grade in Sacramento and our delightful Community was short lived.

1980 – 1986, Livingston, California – Sr. Gerard Dooher – may she rest in peace, thought I'd been long enough in Sacramento and was desperately looking for a Sister to open the new Kindergarten class in Livingston, California. Knowing I'd had so much experience with the younger children, she asked if I'd move to Livingston.

To my delight I discovered that the old Church was renovated and beautifully prepared for Kindergarten. Sister Gerard and the Priest , a saintly man, Father Francis, RIP, filled my every classroom need.

1986-1998 – On to St. Jerome's, El Cerrito, to teach 2nd grade. So many memories

flood my mind once again.

St. Jerome's parishioners treated us Sisters as their own. We were loved by all and we loved and continue to love them.

I know this what our Founder wanted and wants us to be and do "For you only one thing is important Jesus Christ and the Poor" (Fr. Victor Braun)

Having retired from teaching in 1995, I returned to Chigwell to study Spanish in preparation for my New Mission in – El Salvador.

Feast of Fr. Victor Braun, 1999 – 2001 – San Patricio – San Salvador.

El Salvador was one of the greatest experiences of my life. What struck me most was the endurance and suffering of the poor. Many hadn't even the basic needs, the vast difference between the rich and the poor was so obvious, so many families suffering the consequences of war years and deprivation. Yet despite being without the basic necessities of life that we take for granted, the children were so happy, loving and caring for each other too.

In 2001, I was there to experience and witness the devastation of two earthquakes. Homes were destroyed and the both children and adults were terrified. What struck me most was the concern and dedication of our Sisters for the suffering people. Their courage was palpable. So many family members and friends came to our help and over time homes were rebuilt and the new school opened.

2001-2012 – I was re-assigned to El Cerrito. I spent 1 year as Resource Teacher in the school helping slow learners. I retired from school completely in 2002 and went into Parish Ministry as a volunteer and I spent the next ten years visiting the sick and housebound. Such blessed years and what a tremendous experience once again.

In 2012 – I returned to my roots here in our great Cork Community; where I hope to continue to be of service wherever I'm needed. I thank God each day for my family, teachers, Sisters and friends, who have supported me and been part of the fabric of my life.

I'm so lucky to be a member of my Congregation.



# Inter-chapter Gathering 2016 Cork: there were

50



We also celebrated our 150 years and our youngest Sister present , Teddy Nankumbi and our most senior in age, Sister Margaret Healy, cut the cake for us which was yummy! - I'm so sorry to be missing out on the Lusaka cake in December.

# Golden Jubilee Celebrations August 2016

Our congratulations to Sisters Catherine Collins, Janet Finnegan, Sophia Law, Una Bridget Mulvey, Jane Margaret and Pierina Richardson who all celebrated their Golden Jubilee in Chigwell on 28th August 2016



The Mass was celebrated by Rt. Rev. Alan Williams SM, Bishop of Brentwood together assisted by Fr. David Fitzgerald, Fr. Anthony Chantry, Fr. Michael O’Kane, Fr. James Hurley and Deacon Peter Kelly.

## A big congratulations also to:



Sisters Mary Gerald Hardiman, Rosemary Clerkin, Eileen Hennebry, Marian Hogan, Patricia McKenna, Margaret Shanahan and Elizabeth Tobin who all celebrated their Diamond Jubilee this Year,

and to Sister Christine Hawkins who celebrated her Platinum Jubilee!

# NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD .....

## Zambia

Sunsuntila Centre in Mbala, through its livelihood programme which started in 2014 has to date empowered the parents/guardians of 124 orphans and vulnerable children with knowledge and skills in entrepreneurship and farming skill to enable them sustain their families. An additional 76 households will come into the livelihood programme in the last quarter of 2016.

Some of the guardians have started supporting their children with school fees and other educational materials.

## Stories of Change

**Misheck Botha** is a double orphan who lives in Mbala district of the Northern Province of Zambia with his elder sister. Botha, now 22 years, has been under the care and support of Sunsuntila Day Care Centre since he was 6 years old, when his parents died.

Due to his seriousness and hard work at school, Botha managed to obtain a division 1 with 6 points which has enabled him to get a place at the Copperbelt University (CBU) of Zambia to pursue a Bachelors of Arts in Education with Mathematics and Science.



Furthermore, Botha managed to secure 100% bursary from the Government of the Republic of Zambia Bursaries Committee after being recommended by Sunsuntila. It is hoped that once he completes his degree course that he will be able to gain employment and have a bright future ahead of him.

**Emelda Nachula** aged 51 is a single mother of four children. She also takes care of two orphaned grandchildren. Three of her children are in school and require various educational materials to attend school.

Emelda was trained in Business

Management and is now a vibrant entrepreneur who has taken to her business of selling vegetables and tomatoes with great passion. She has made significant economic progress and is now able to save in the bank every Friday.

As a result Emelda is now able to provide her family with at least two meals per day, pay school fees for her children and has bought land in a residential area. Emelda plans to build a house on the same plot. This has really broken the cycle of poverty in her family - her determination has paved the way to success.

**Lister Namusokwe** has built this house after receiving trained and through the Sunsuntila Livelihood Empowerment Programme and she became involved in farming.

**Beatrice Nayame** one of the 76 individuals to benefit from the Livelihood programmes shows staff, from the Sunsuntila project, her new land which she purchased after selling maize she harvested . Her little grandchild helps to weed the sweet potato crop!



*p.s that's Sr. Yvonne and not the little grandchild!!!!*



# The Philippines

## Kairos Programme

### Home School Based Education



On 14th August 2016, the SSHJM in Cebu launched a new project, the Kairos Programme – a Home School Based Education programme. This is a programme of empowerment, supporting the Lord’s most beloved, vulnerable children and young people in our care’.

Home Based Education is intended as an early intervention programme to support children with intellectual disabilities in their homes. All areas of development are covered by the programme – Infant Stimulation, Social Skills, Self Help, Cognitive Development, Language and Social Skills.



Children are usually visited weekly by a Volunteer Care Worker who works with the child on their individual programme and where appropriate, demonstrates to the parent or guardian the skill that should be worked on in the coming week.

**Community Based Education Programme**



We visit local Barangays (Councils) to impart basic education and awareness on the rights of every child particularly Children and Adults with Special Needs

**The Victor Braun Vocational Training Centre**

Work continues at this well-established vocational training centre which caters for the needs of 16+ young people with intellectual disabilities. It provides holistic education, social and life skills, in a very caring and nurturing environment. The Kairos Programme is administered from this Centre.





# Ireland

## Sean Ross Abbey The Cradle of Christianity in Roscrea.

*Lt. detail of the Book of Dimma, eagle  
symbol of St. John evangelist.*

Roscrea is a rural town just south of the geographical centre of Ireland. Historians tell us that in the 6th century Cronan 'came to his own native place. There he built the church called Sean Ross at the Lake of Cré in which there is a small island containing a monastery of very religious monks. Cronan was in this church for a long time and many miracles were worked by him there.' Tradition places the original site where the present church and graveyard now stand. 'Here Cronan founded his first monastery in the district. As the site was difficult for travellers to find, situated away from the main highway, Cronan abandoned Sean Ross and established his most famous and permanent monastery on the highway. The monastic town of Roscrea grew up there. (12th century Life of St. Cronan, Abbot of Roscrea.)

'We don't know whether the early site was abandoned completely or whether some of the disciples of Cronan remained. It disappeared from the records until 15th century when it was reused by some of the monks of Monahincha, a monastery approximately one mile away.' (Roscrea & District—George Cunningham)

This year is a special year in the history of Sean Ross Abbey. For many years we have been trying to get some conservation work done to ensure that this medieval monument is preserved for future generations and remains safe for the many visitors who come to it throughout the year. So, with the help of a few generous volunteers, we formed the Sean Ross Heritage Group and applied to the National Heritage Council for a grant.

On the 28th August, at the end of Heritage week, we began our celebration with a lovely prayer service conducted by Fr. Laurence OCSO, using prayers from the Book of Dimma which can be seen alongside the Book of Kells in Trinity College, Dublin. It was a great thrill to have the monks returning to this ancient

monastic site. Who knows? Next year we may be able to have a Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated within the Abbey Church!!!



Following the prayer service, we proceeded up to Corville House, the Victorian manor house which was once the home of Count O'Byrne and his family and in later years, our own Convent. Here George Cunningham gave us a very interesting presentation of the history of Sean Ross Abbey and its significance to the town of Roscrea. A few of our local musicians introduced the presentation with traditional Irish music, creating an atmosphere of friendly community.

The group of about 40 of the town's folk then gathered in the Abbey cemetery and Barry Noyce, Grounds Manager at Sean Ross and on-site Project Manager for the Conservation work, explained what is happening and what is our aim. To date the work is progressing slowly but surely. The proposed work will take a few years, we will do what we can each year with funds available.

To finish the afternoon's celebration, Barry took the group into the woods behind the house and showed them the Victorian Ice house – another historic feature of the property. The visitors were invited to bring a picnic. We were blessed with a fine sunny day, a rare treat in Ireland. The speakers and invited guests then joined the Community for light refreshments.

*Sister Margaret Dobbin*

# United Kingdom

## My experience of giving Mission Appeals in Scotland and England.

I started my Mission Appeal 2015 in Scotland where I was supported by Mary Selfridge, SHC, whom I can't thank enough as she was there to support me every time I went up, I was also supported by my Sister Kirsty whom I often stayed with. In the Mission Appeals both Scotland and England I try to give a talk that includes both the Gospel Message and our mission fundraising appeal.



My first appeal was in St Margaret's Cathedral in Ayr on the 18th April 2015 where we got a great welcome. On that Sunday they had a lovely 3 course dinner for the Parishioners which we were invited to. There was also a band playing and some people got up to dance it was a very enjoyable afternoon. When we went to Sacred Heart of Jesus & Mary Parish, Cumnock some of the Parishioners were past pupils of our Sisters [ Sisters Marian Dewhurst, Austin and Geraldine were ones they mentioned but I am sure there were many more] they had very fond memories of them, so that was nice for me to hear.

Our purpose and objective is to raise the profile of the Missionary Vocation in England & Wales in Parishes, Schools, and Dioceses-through providing learning opportunities, events, talks and publicity, also to allow Missionaries to network with each other, the Bishops and other Charities.

In England I started in Grantham, then Rotherham and on to Doncaster talking at many masses. Always I was made very welcome by the priests and parishioners who would always meet me from the train and take me back on Sunday evening.

I really enjoyed my experience and I thank God that I am able to give the Appeals and that I was able to share a little of my experience in Zambia, and Cebu. A number of parishioners said how the reflection had touched them and

thanking God for the good work being done for the less privileged of our world, some of them also had spent some time working in Zambia.

Now I am preparing for next year when I hope to visit Edinburgh and Ayr in Scotland and Newcastle, Northampton and Leeds in England.

I shall  
as I

close

Lord Jesus, as the Father sent you into the World,  
So you send me to show all people your love,  
Let my hands be your hands, my words be your words,  
So that I may give your love to everyone I meet,  
And help to spread this love to the ends of the earth.  
Amen

“What you have done to the least of these.....you have done to me.”

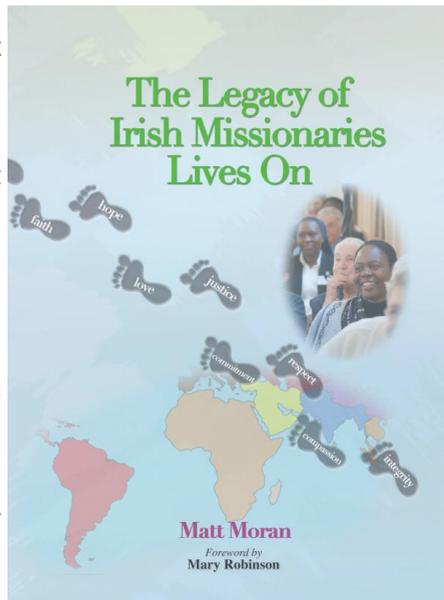
always do on my Appeals by saying the Missionary Prayer together.....

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## Book launch

This new book by Matt Moran (ex director of MISEAN CARA) writes specifically about Irish missionaries, obviously it goes without saying that the legacy of missionaries from all countries will live on. There are several references to the SSHJM in the book

The Legacy of Irish Missionaries Lives On is available in bookshops or online at [www.onstream.ie](http://www.onstream.ie). Profit from sales will go to World Missions Ireland for missionary activity in the global south.



# Ecology

## A compassionate response to suffering

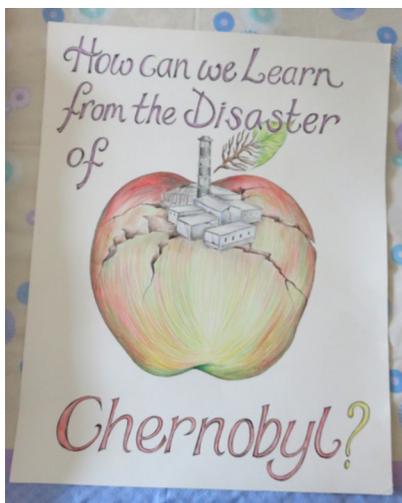
Sister Sarto in Cork is a woman of 'mature years' but she remains fully active in many groups and activities in and around Cork. One of Sarto's passions is her Chernobyl project.

For many of us (of a certain age group) Chernobyl is a well known name. It was the site of a terrible nuclear accident in 1986 causing huge social, health and economic problems for large populations in the Ukraine, Belarus and Russia.

Many groups throughout Europe offered what help they could, and still do, to the suffering people including the group in Cork. They still have annual exchange visits and fundraising activities.

One of the big outcomes for many individuals and groups was to look at our planet and its sustainability. How do we care for our home on Earth?

Sister Sarto can only do her bit and you should see what she does in our little house that was once used as a part of the Mother and Baby work of Bessborough.



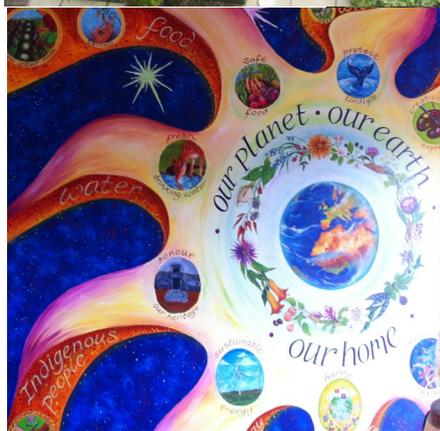
In the garden everything is organic and fruit and vegetables are delicious. Lettuces, cabbages, potatoes, carrots, green beans, apples and plumbs to name but a few are some of the fruits that are enjoyed by all the sisters and others. The raised beds were made from recycled railway sleepers. The green house is made from discarded windows. The patio flag stones are broken ones discarded by builders—I could go on.

In the garage the walls have been skilfully painted (by volunteers) to depict the cycle of life, the sacredness of water, animal and plant life.



Sister Sarto in her garden caring for her organic fruits and vegetables and proving how much can be done in a little space. Give new life

**RECYCLE!**



Our Planet -Our earth -Our home; detail of the mural painted in the garage of the house.



They say; “An apple a day keeps the doctor away”. Sister Sarto being super fit and more than eighty years old proves the rule.

*We congratulate Sister Sarto and pray that she continues to shine a much needed beacon of care and light on the care of our planet, and we are proud that she does it in our name.*



## *SACRED HEART COMPANIONS*

*Two of our Companions from Worksop give us a taster of their meetings.*

On Thursday 13th October at 6.30pm, the Worksop Companions in Prayer met. It was wonderful to see so many gathered in St Mary's church, especially given the inclement weather. Sr Elizabeth welcomed everybody and the service commenced with Sr Margaret exposing the Blessed Sacrament while we sang As I Kneel Before You.

The opening prayer and prayers to the Sacred Heart and for Vocations were said together, while the reflection on Mary, Mother of Mercy was read by one person. While we paused for reflection, we sang, or just listened to Make me a channel of your Peace, the beautiful hymn based on the prayer of St Francis of Assisi.

We said a decade of the Rosary, after which we listened to a most beautiful hymn, Pour out Compassion and Mercy, based on the writings of Mechtild of Magdeburg. It was a hymn I was unfamiliar with, but it moved me so much, I have had to find it, with a view to introducing it to the congregation at Blessed William Richardson in Kiveton Park!

Sr Elizabeth was delighted to enrol two new Companions during the meeting, Marjorie and Earnest, and we all welcomed them with hearty applause. The meeting concluded with Prayers of Intercession and Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament. We were given a reflection from Pope Francis to read at our leisure, plus a beautiful book giving the history of the Order.

Sr's Elizabeth and Margaret invited all back to the Convent for refreshments, where we were once again spoiled with the choice of delicious fare.

We pray that the strength of our prayers will bring peace to our troubled World and in the words of the beautiful hymn we listened to, 'If you seek out and find the stranger, and comfort the lonely of heart, and offer them your friendship, then my justice you impart' Amen

*Sue Halfpenny*

I am a Sacred Heart Companion, SHC, of the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in Saint Mary's parish Workshop. Earlier this year myself and fellow companions enjoyed a beautiful and spiritually uplifting renewal service hosted by Sister Elizabeth. The service offered the complete way of prayer that included three forms of prayer, vocal, meditation and contemplation and we had adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Following the banquet of prayer Sisters Elizabeth and Margret served the group with tea and cakes in their home. The whole evening was just beautiful. Several companions are also members or supporters of the St Vincent de Paul Society (including the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary). The aim of the S.V.P. is to tackle poverty in all its forms through the provision of practical assistance to those in need.

*Yours in Companionship of Prayer Nora Hayes.*



*In Uganda the Sacred Heart Companions help to support the residents at Guadalupe House, Pabo, by growing maize and vegetables.*

# Big Birthdays in Chigwell

Dermot Sheahan, who is an honorary member of our community in Chigwell celebrated his 95th birthday at the end of October and was joined by his niece Margo and nephew Michael for the celebrations.



Sister Barbara Dundon also celebrated a big day on arriving at her 80th birthday - she is really just a young thing and has many more years to go.

We hope that the Lord will bless her and care for her as she cares for His creation.



# Together in Mission.....



## 2nd Assembly of RENATE, 6th - 12th November 2016

We arrived in Rome to join a group of 130 people from 27 European countries speaking 19 different languages. The Renate Core group had obviously spent months organising and making the arrangements. We had many guest speakers and workshops given by different experts in the field. A young woman from The Netherlands, who had been trafficked and exploited, spoke to us very poignantly of her experience.

Dr. Anna Rowlands spoke on the Theology of the Work against Trafficking and also gave us much to think about with a daily Theological Reflection. We had the opportunity to visit one of two shelters which provides psychological support, skills training and reintegration programmes for young women who have been trafficked and exploited. These shelters are run by religious sisters who live in the same house with the young women. In this setting they share meals together and the sisters support the young women through their programme in a secure, family like environment.

The Assembly was a wonderful occasion to meet and interact with other participants and share the realities of human trafficking and exploitation in different countries. It was also a time to make contact with others and set up links to support one another and to share resources and materials, especially with those from Eastern European countries.

The importance of being able to forge these contacts was very obvious when during the week a young woman who had been trafficked, just arrived one of the Medaille safe houses in the UK. This young woman was from an Eastern European country and was extremely traumatised. The Medaille staff in the

UK safe house contacted one of the Medaille participants at the Assembly in Rome and within minutes had a sister, who was at the Assembly, on Skype talking to the young women in her language and reassuring her. It made all the difference.

One of the highlights of the week was our Audience with Pope Francis. Pope Francis gave a short talk. The full text follows this article. Pope Francis spent considerable time greeting each of us personally. It was a huge honour for everyone there.

During the final day of the Assembly, we worked through a process of discussion, sharing and reflection to bring a focus to the mandate which the Renate Core Group will implemented over the next five years.

The Assembly was a wonderful time together and we are energised by the huge strength that there is when people come together to work for a common cause - Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation.



*Sister Mary Mangan greeting His Holiness Pope Francis I*

**GREETING OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS  
TO THE SECOND EUROPEAN ASSEMBLY OF RENATE  
(RELIGIOUS IN EUROPE NETWORKING AGAINST TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION)**

*Clementine Hall  
Monday, 7 November 2016*

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*Dear Sisters and Brothers,*

I extend a cordial welcome to you, who are taking part in this Second Assembly of the Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation. I thank Sister Imelda Poole for her kind words of greeting on your behalf, and I offer my prayerful good wishes for the fruitfulness of these days of prayer, reflection and discussion. It is fitting that your Assembly takes place in Rome during this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. In this season of grace, all of us are invited to enter more deeply into the mystery of God's mercy and, like the Good Samaritan, to bring the balm of that mercy to so many open wounds in our world.

One of the most troubling of those open wounds is the trade in human beings, a modern form of slavery, which violates the God-given dignity of so many of our brothers and sisters and constitutes a true crime against humanity. While much has been accomplished in acknowledging its gravity and extent, much more needs to be done on the level of raising public consciousness and effecting a better coordination of efforts by governments, the judiciary, law enforcement officials and social workers.

As you well know, one of the challenges to this work of advocacy, education and coordination is a certain indifference and even complicity, a tendency on the part of many to look the other way (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 211) where powerful economic interests and networks of crime are at play. For this reason, I express my appreciation of your efforts to raise public awareness of the extent of this scourge, which especially affects women and children. But in a very special way, I thank you for your faithful witness to the Gospel of mercy, as demonstrated in your commitment to the recovery and rehabilitation of victims.

Your activity in this area reminds us of “the enormous and often silent efforts which have been made for many years by religious congregations, especially women’s congregations”, to care for those wounded in their dignity and scarred by their experiences (cf. *Message for the 2015 World Day of Peace*, 5). I think especially of the distinctive contribution made by women in accompanying other women and children on a deeply personal journey of healing and reintegration.

Dear friends, I trust that your sharing of experiences, knowledge and expertise in these days will contribute to a more effective witness to the Gospel in one of the great peripheries of contemporary society. Commending you, and all those whom you serve, to the loving intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy, I cordially impart my blessing as a pledge of joy and peace in the Lord. I will remember all of you in my prayers, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. Thank you.



*Sister Maria Holly greeting His Holiness Pope Francis I*

# Sister Mary Rose O'Meara RIP

## (1929 - 2016)

To listen to Sr. Mary Rose (Nora O'Meara) talking of her childhood and youth was like watching the filming of a very mischievous child, in a very happy large family, evolving into a confident pleasant young woman. Sr. Rose loved her family always and the strength of its faith in God. When God called her at only sixteen years of age to join the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary she came with these two powerful gifts - love and faith - and she lavished them on all whom she met in community and in her mission work.



Nora O'Meara's religious name, Sr. Mary Rose, encapsulated the layers of beautiful practical gifts God had bestowed on her. She could create and mend, and she always had the necessary tools and materials. She iced Christmas cakes exquisitely; she made slippers for Elizabeth; she created gorgeous christening robes and First Holy Communion dresses; she refurbished trousers and coats and furniture. The Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is an apostolic missionary congregation. Sr. Rose was never sent to foreign lands but her knitwear, cushions and sacred vestments for the missions took her craft skills to far-flung places.

Rose prayed, especially for priests and for the faithful departed. Her delicate rosary beads, made by herself, were in constant use. Her devotion to Our Lady, to the Holy Spirit, and to the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, were palpable. It was at Mass here in this (Roscrea) church that her last illness struck. From all this closeness to God sprang her joy in life. She lived life to the full, enjoying travelling, entertainment and television. Sr. Rose helped others to experience life to the full too. She baked bread and cooked for mothers and babies; she used her nursing training to care for people with special needs and the aged. Two women with special needs have known no other 'mother' than Sr. Rose. They write to her several times a year!

In recent years Rose suffered the frustration and isolation of partial deafness. She accepted that courageously as she accepted bravely and patiently her final illness. Just before coming to this Mass Sr. Vilma from El Salvador told

me she visited Sr. Rose one evening as she lay dying. Vilma found Sr. Rose praying: "Dear Jesus, good night. I will see you tomorrow. All is well." What a marvellous death-bed prayer! Rose has been called to her new life, to enjoy the Resurrection and the fullness of the love of the Sacred Heart, and to pray for all of us who must follow her. For the gift she has been to us we thank God and her family. May she rest in peace.

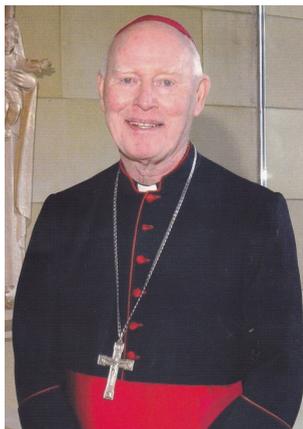
*Sister Simeon Pilkington*

## **Bishop John Mone RIP**

### **1929 - 2016**

It was with great sadness that the Congregation heard of the death of Bishop John Mone on 14th October. Bishop Mone and his family have been long associated with the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, as two of his Aunts were part of the congregation and more recently his cousin Sister Rosalee Dunn RIP.

Bishop Mone was also a great support when our Sisters, Sheila, Paul Mary and Catherine Burns first moved to Glasgow and even provided us with a house to use in Port Glasgow.



As well as being the Bishop of Paisley from 1988-1998, an auxiliary bishop of Glasgow and priest of that diocese, he was well known for his work with the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund (SCIAF) of which he was President, Justice and Peace, the Pioneer movement, the Society of St Vincent de Paul, Scotland's deaf community, and Lourdes pilgrimages

He is remembered as a man of great prayer and kindness. He was astute and dearly loved by the community, clergy and religious of Paisley Diocese. Rest in peace, Bishop John.

## With Thanks.....

**Sister Mary Rose's family** wishes to thank Roscrea and Cork communities for their care and kindness to Sister Rose. It is hard for us to know how to express our thanks to all staff at Sacred Heart Convent, Cork, for the wonderful care and concern they showed Rose during her last 6 months there. Thanks also to all who attended Rose's removal and funeral Mass. You will all be remembered in prayer by the O'Meara family.

The Meehan and Tobin Families would like to express their sincere thanks for all the Holy Masses, prayers and messages of sympathy on the death of Margaret Meehan R.I.P. The family greatly appreciated the support of all those who attended the Requiem Mass in Wexford, Ireland and in Wood Green Parish Church, London. Holy Mass will be offered for your intentions with gratitude.

**Sister Elizabeth Tobin**

The Conway family would like to thank all those who sent Mass cards, messages of sympathy and attended the funeral of Mary Conway.

**Sisters Sylvester, Mary Camillus and Jane Conway**

Sisters, I would like to thank you all most sincerely for your Mass Cards and prayers, also for the lovely gifts that I received for my Diamond Jubilee. Holy Mass has been offered in thanksgiving for all your kindness. May the dear Lord bless each and every one in the congregation. With love and prayers.

**Sister Patricia McKenna**

**Sister Eileen Hennebry** would like to thank most profoundly all those to sent Mass cards, gifts and good wishes on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee. Holy Masses have been offered for all your intentions.

I would like to thank each Sister who so kindly sent her Mass Cards, gifts and greetings on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee. All were deeply appreciated. Holy Mass will be offered for your intentions.

**Sister Elizabeth Tobin**

Caitriona MaManus and her husband David and all the family wish to thank you for your prayers and support during her illness. Caitriona is over her operation and is doing well. She is still having treatment and so would ask for your continued prayers.

**Sister Elizabeth Tobin**

I would like to thank all who sent Masses and prayers during my time in hospital. Mass will be offered for all your intentions.

**Sister Sylvester Conway**

## SOME LITTLE REMINDERS .....

- ◇ 29th November - Celebration of Mother Winefride Tyrell, Chigwell
- ◇ Advent Reflections - every day by email.
- ◇ December 10th perpetual Profession of Sisters Margaret Katabwa and Judith Nankamba, Lusaka, Zambia.
- ◇ Inter-chapter Gathering December 12th, Lusaka, Zambia.
- ◇ December 13th sister Gabriel Dunne 90th birthday, Cork.
- ◇ Christmas is coming and an opportunity to take a couple of photos of your ministry (there's always someone in the parish to help).
- ◇ Our Christmas card this year is from Pield Heath School, could you get me some for next years card from your missions please?
- ◇ We have calendars for ordering (now that you have seen how nice they are we are sure you will be wanting more)!

**Jubilarians 2017 see over the page.....**

## JUBILEES 2017

### 50 YEARS Golden Jubilee 22<sup>nd</sup> August

Sister Angelo Roncalli  
Sister Elizabeth Dawson  
Sister Margaret O Leary

### 60 Years Diamond Jubilee 2<sup>nd</sup> February

Sister Teresa Maunsell  
Sister Mary Romana  
Sister Mary Roddy  
Sister Mary Rooney  
Sister Johanna Mary Morrissey

### Diamond Jubilee on 28<sup>th</sup> August

Sister Edmund Campion  
Sister Myra Brenan  
Sister Bernadette Ward  
Sister Catherine Kennedy

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