

Issue no. 2

THE WORLD IS OUR HOME

P6

**OUR EUCHARISTIC
MISSION SENDING**

P8

**WINDOWS-MY
MISSION HERE
TWENTY NINETEEN**



FRANCISCAN MISSIONARIES OF MARY



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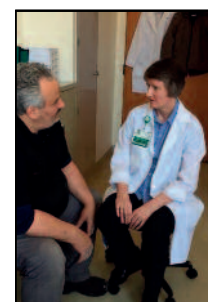
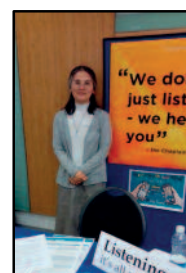
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Accompanying a patient undergoing palliative care

AGNES YOUNG A CHOI

FMM

Accompanying a patient undergoing palliative-care was one of the most memorable experiences I have ever had as a healthcare chaplain. The patient, Michael, an optimistic, kind and good man of forty years, was suffering from cancer but was doing very well and so, was confidently expecting to return home very soon. Karen, his wife, was with him continually during his treatment. They were married three years before in the church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Since one of Michael's wishes was to be baptised catholic, I contacted his future parish priest in order to arrange some preparatory instructions for his baptism when he eventually returned home. Unexpectedly, the day before his discharge from hospital, his condition health-wise deteriorated aggressively. I sensed that it had become an urgent situation and so I immediately called a priest in order that Michael could receive the sacrament of baptism and the anointing of the sick before dying. While the priest was baptizing him, his wife, his parents and I all noticed that he was smiling and his face was serene, calm and happy. At the same time the atmosphere in the room became very peaceful though perhaps rather sad. Next morning, when I visited him, bringing a candle to congratulate him on his baptism, I found his wife holding his hand as he was in unbearable pain and semi-conscious. We prayed together for him and following morning, he went peacefully to his Heavenly Father. The members of his family were greatly impressed by his gentle acceptance and trust in God's love in this difficult and sad experiences. Such loving and hopeful memories gave his family, especially his wife great a sense of peace and consolation. Two weeks later, when I went to his parish for his funeral, I saw the candle I had given him for his baptism alight on the altar during the funeral mass. After the funeral when I approached his wife Karen, she said to me, "thank you sister for what you did for Michael and I and our family. Your presence and accompaniment made all difference to our experience during Michael's illness and his final journey to God.

There are many ways of giving service to people in need but for me that of Healthcare Chaplaincy is one of the most necessary and rewarding form of caring for



others since it involves the spiritual and psychological welfare. As professionals, the aim of health care workers is to provide a high standard of spiritual, religious and emotional care for the patients, their families, visitors and all the members of health care staff all of whom may be experiencing stressful or life-threatening situations, regardless of their religion or belief. My main concern is with the Roman Catholic patients and staff in effective collaboration with three principal communities: the faith community, the healthcare community and the professional community in St. George's University Hospitals. In my ministry, I take care people from the cradle to the grave in the areas of pregnancy and childbirth, mental health, intensive and palliative care as well as the elderly. This involves the need to understand the individual in the particular context of his/her life as a whole within the wider context of influences such as the social, cultural, biographical, psychological and spiritual values beyond the actual pathology which healthcare practitioners may overlook. My main task is providing spiritual, religious and emotional supports in a non-threatening way towards for all concerned, so that through the challenging and demanding experience of illness and an extreme situation, they find a way of accepting and accompanying each other, particularly by supporting



Today, I met two patients, one after the other at an interval of one hour. The first one was an elderly man who had calmly received the rite of Viaticum and was preparing to meet his God. The second one was 4-day old baby boy, a new catholic who had just been baptised and so was ensured a loving welcome from God. This was a dramatic experience for me since both were beautiful witnesses to recognizing our identity as Saint Paul said "None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's (Rom, 13, 7-8)." The hospital to me is not only a place of work, but rather it has become a holy place where I experience God's loving presence within

belief systems across faiths and cultures. I firmly believe that my role as a Healthcare chaplain is not to solve problems, but to build up and strengthen caring relationships, respecting their human dignity and by simply being with them and listening to them in supportive ways as well as comforting them through prayer. To those of all faith or none, this usually helps to reduce anxiety and fears as well as helping them to find value, meaning, trust and inner-strength in their lives, especially during difficult times. For me, this is certainly one of the most cost-effective resources for increasing an atmosphere of peace and resignation for the patients, their families and staff. This is a 7day/24 hours service, in which I collaborate with other denominations and volunteers, such as Church of England, Pentecostals, Baptists, Humanists, Jewish as well as those of the Islamic, Buddhists traditions in a creative and constructive way as regards the effective division of labour.

According to the 31st Report of the Attitudes Survey from the Humanists in 2019, between 1983 and 2014, the percentage of the UK population describing itself as belonging to no religion rose from 31.4% to 60%. It is further noted that the population of the Church of England has dramatically declined from 40.3% to only 16.3%. Furthermore, the Humanists UK (2017) have announced that 69% of 4,000 British adults (73% of non-religious people) have expressed their opinion that in all fairness, the provision of spiritual care from non-religious carers should be included among the religious chaplaincy. This means that most people who claim to have non-religion wish to see none-religious carer rather than chaplains who are probably associated with Christianity. However, as I am working as a healthcare chaplain, I would like to suggest that in my experience all health care chaplains look beyond religions or beliefs in order to respond to the spiritual and human dignity of all patients in their times of need in hospital.

people and can see the beauty of human desire to discover the meaning and purpose of life in the mist of their pain and struggling due to illness, loss and our caring work in hospitals. I would like to finish this sharing with words which a cancer patient said to me "I know now where I came from and where I am going to..., and everything will be good whether I live or not. If I stay a little longer it will be good for my children, if I go to the eternal Father's house very soon it will be also good because I will be in the best place."



How Quickly The Years Pass By?

It is almost 10 years since I arrived to this province. It was a journey for me.

I still remember my first days: with little English I was trying to make sense of my new life. I spent one month in Putney, there I learned where my mission will be—, Aberdeen, Scotland. Honestly, I didn't know anything about the place. The 2-day trip by car from London to Aberdeen gave me time to admire the beauty of my new home. So I arrived in Aberdeen on Ash Wednesday, maybe not the best time to start a new chapter but the first few months were like walking through the desert for me. I began to learn English, and it was hard work. At first I felt I went backwards instead of progressing, but school gave me a really good chance to learn not only English but a little bit about Scotland too. What's more, I had a chance to meet students from all over the world. I am still friendly with some of them. I quickly learned that Aberdeen is a small city but actually it is global due to the oil industry.

During the summer time I visited Ireland and had a chance to meet sisters from this part of our Province. It was all overwhelming for me; I remember asking God to make my heart bigger so I could fulfil my mission.

I finished English school and passed FCE exam hoping I could start doing something. Soon after I started working in Our Lady of Aberdeen parish. Working with people, especially with children gives me confidence, that I can speak and be understood. I will never forget the day I expressed my thoughts to Caroline and she understood exactly what I said. At that moment, I felt I was on the top of the world.

Then I volunteered in the local charity called Blue Horizon. I was part of the youth project called "Street Bus". The charity had a bus, adapted inside for meeting with young people, we went twice a week to the local school grounds, in the evenings and opened our Bus to

welcome them. The aim of the project was to prevent young children from being influenced by drug gangs. I loved working in that project, but suddenly it came to an end due to the lack of funding.



My next mission was the University chaplaincy where I was working with students. I was there for 3 years with Sister Margaret, the Sacred Heart Congregation. During my mission in the University Chaplaincy I had opportunities to talk to young people from all over the world and share our faith. It was a privilege to journey with them and help them to discover God's love.

Since then I volunteered in the Catholic Primary School and in hospital chaplaincy. Working in school gives me a chance to develop my skills and gain new experience. Caroline and myself are running prayer groups in St. Peter's Church. We teach children in our parish and prepare laity to be catechists or Eucharistic ministers.

On Saturdays I work in Polish Schools too. I prepare children for First Communion. I see it as my mission to help Polish families integrate into the dioceses.

To sum up, I really enjoy working in both parishes, being with people, sharing faith with them and helping them to be more involved in the church. We have good friends around our housing estate, most of them are not Catholics but they are so open and good to us. We try to reach them, and as a result of that the group "Wifies", was formed. It is a Scottish name for women's group. We come together in each other's houses every month to chat and relax. It is a very enriching time. What's more I have opportunities to work with other Christians, especially in the hospital chaplaincy and in the school. It is a very fruitful experience for me.

I thank God for the chance to live and work in Scotland.

Wiesława Kunikiewicz fmm

Our Eucharistic Mission

Sending

the Spirit to forge in you the personal mystery that can reflect Jesus Christ in today's world.”¹



Roisin Hickey fmm

Recently at Sunday mass I noticed for the first time the words that come after the final blessing. The Priest told us to ‘Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord’! to which we all answered ‘Thanks be to God’! There

are other options for the Priest to choose from eg. ‘Go in peace to love and serve the Lord’ or ‘Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life’. But whichever line the Priest chooses, we are invariably told to ‘Go’. We are being sent out on mission with the Lord in our hearts. This got me wondering how can we *all* take to heart what we had just said ‘Thanks be to God’ to? How can we make these words real in our lives? How can we personally express this mission sending in concrete terms?

From the outset, we need to define what the word ‘mission’ could mean in this setting. I suggest that because each individual, whether old or young, rich or poor, healthy or sick, is being told to ‘Go’ and announce the Gospel, it must be something that we can respond to personally and uniquely out of our own reality, our own relationships, our own life’s journey.

I found the words of two people very helpful in an attempt to grasp what in fact it means to ‘Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord’. Firstly the words of St. Francis of Assisi who described our Christian mission in the following way: “Always preach the Gospel, and if necessary use words.” So, St. Francis is telling us that our very lives, our person is to reflect the Good News of the Gospel

Secondly, the words of his namesake Pope Francis in his encyclical *Gaudete et Exultete*. He says:-

“You too need to see the entirety of your life as a mission. Try to do so by listening to God in prayer and recognizing the signs that he gives you. Always ask the Spirit what Jesus expects from you at every moment of your life and in every decision you must make, so as to discern its place in the mission you have received. Allow

Always ask the Spirit what Jesus expects from you at every moment of your life and in every decision you must make, so as to discern its place in the mission you have received.

So, the key to discovering my own personal mission is found by taking a little quality time with Jesus as often as I can; a time to truly listen quietly with a welcome openness and to allow the Holy Spirit to work through me. This is the place where the strength will come to bring others to Him too. It’s true that often the first thing that comes to mind is “Surely God would never want to use me as a missionary”... But God knows exactly how we are and what we need. He knows us through and through and loves us deeply. He waits silently and humbly for us just to approach Him, talk to Him and listen to Him so that we can respond to His healing love in the depths of our heart.

This is often very hard to do in the midst of so many challenges bombarding us on every side, which can sometimes knock us off balance, even to the point of being uncomfortable to admit that we are people of faith. However, if we go back to the time of Jesus himself, we meet people who had similar struggles.

Let’s look at Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus for example. Both Joseph and Nicodemus were men of high standing in Jewish society and neither of them wanted to be ‘seen’ with Jesus for fear of the Jews. In fact, Joseph was actually a Pharisee, so if the other Pharisees knew that he was spending time with the very one they wanted to ‘get rid’ of, his very life would have probably been in

danger. Nicodemus on the other hand, was a particularly wealthy man who was also afraid to be seen with Jesus and only went to be with Him at night. In a sense you could call them ‘closet Christians’. But Jesus was very understanding and welcoming to each one of them. He was always willing to spend whatever time with them that they felt they could give. However, things changed when Jesus was crucified. Fear no longer dictated their behaviour and they truly found the courage of their convictions and ‘went public’ at last. Joseph the Pharisee from Arimathea, approached Pilate himself and asked for Jesus’ body in order to bury it in a newly hewn tomb that he owned. Nicodemus accompanied him with a huge amount of myrrh and aloes and they wrapped Jesus’ body with these spices in strips of linen according to the Jewish burial customs.² This was a momentous expression of how their relationship with Jesus grew in depth and

significance. Each of them had a unique bond with Him that renewed their hearts, simply by spending these quiet

¹ Gaudete et Exultete no. 29

² See John 19:38-42

times with Him as and when they could. Finally, feeling renewed and strengthened on a firm foundation of Jesus' healing presence in their lives, they were able to go and be plainly seen as His disciples.

This same Jesus is the Word of God made flesh; the fully human Son of God and through His Spirit He offers us a personal invitation to come to Him as He did to Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus over 2000 years ago. He is inviting us to take that time to meet Him quietly and to find the courage of our convictions; to come 'out of the closet' and be public Christians.

One of the most precious places we have where we can meet Jesus is in the Blessed Eucharist. As it says in the Catechism of the Catholic Church "...The Church' is the People that God gathers in the whole world. She exists in local communities and is made real as a liturgical, above all a Eucharistic, assembly."³

As Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, we cherish quiet times with Him in contemplation and adoration where we find the impetus of our missionary life. We 'come' to Him, sit with Him in quiet contemplation and adoration every day, and allow Him to strengthen us in His mercy to 'go' and share His love anew from day to day. The FMM Constitutions describe this movement in a very beautiful way:-

"The mystery of salvation is actualised in the Eucharist. From our Eucharistic celebration and adoration springs the contemplation and missionary dynamism of our whole life. The Christ whom we contemplate sends us out to our brothers and sisters in whom we discover His hidden presence. And our brothers and sisters send us back to the contemplation of Christ"⁴

The Eucharist is both the source and the summit of the whole Christian Life"⁵ and each one of us takes part in the celebration of the Eucharist in their own personal way. We don't all have the same relationship with Him, nor can we touch others in the same way, but we can certainly all 'come' to meet Jesus and spend time with Him and then in His strength and company we can 'go' to greet whatever and whomever the day brings to us.

This, I believe, is how we can, simply and very gradually allow ourselves to see the entirety of our lives as a mission and find the courage to take to heart those challenging words of the final blessing of the mass. We can 'Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord'...

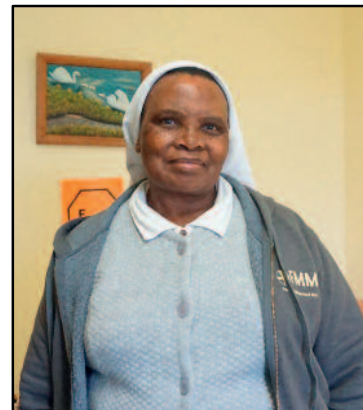
³ Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraph 1. The Church in God's Plan, Names and Images of the Church, art 752.

⁴ Constitutions of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, Art. 3

⁵ Vatican II Documents *Lumen Gentium* no. 11

I AM A MISSIONARY FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Agnes Nomazele fmm



My name is Agnes Nomazele and I am a Franciscan Missionary of Mary from South Africa. I was asked to come to Ireland to have mission life experience because I have not been to any other country for mission since I entered. This request shocked me due to my age so I had to take time to discern. During this time of discernment with the Lord, I became aware of my first "yes" which I pronounced when I first heard my calling.



Joan and Agnes

When this request was made of me, I was involved in prison ministry and I was enjoying it very much with my companion Sr. Susanna Lee. In the end I found myself accepting the challenge to try this mission life experience.

This time my "yes" was firm and I felt ready to throw myself into the "lion's den". But it was not so, on my arrival I was met with a warm welcome from sisters in the community. In fact the sisters in all the houses I visited were friendly and it did not take me long to feel at home.

I have settled into St. Joseph's Convent in Rush and I am trying to help with our elderly sisters where I can.

I am learning so much and feel privileged to be here. I am well and happy.

'GOD IS GOOD ALL THE TIME'

WINDOWS

My Mission Here Twenty Nineteen

By
Valerie Malone fmm



...Thus we make up in our
bodies all that has to be
undergone by Christ for the sake
of His body the Church....
(FMM Constitutions 2)

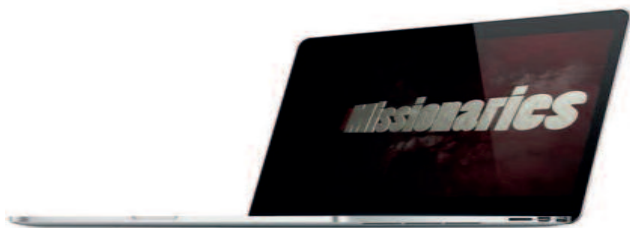
Wide Web I am in contact daily with people from all over the world exchanging about issues that affect all our lives. These largely fit into the categories of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.

This article is about using/cleaning windows, their other uses and cake! Why? Our FMM Province Journal editor, asked me to write about *My Mission Here*.

What is my mission here in St. Josephs Convent, Rush in 2019?

As I tip around the edges I see that this is like slipping into a big pool of water where some places are more shallow than others. As I feel the water wet my big toe I wonder where I should slip into the water? What should I say?

Im a youth worker by love and a social worker by training and am quite experienced in both. I have studied as much as many of my contemporaries with the FMM today. Most of whom are heavily involved in what is obviously missionary work in this province and further afield. At some level my mission can be summed up in the words *wordsmith* or *writer*. I believe that mission is everywhere and works on a continuum. Have I mentioned that I have always wanted to be a priest? I am using my computer and if that is not a window on the world what is?



Lets start here. In an article in *The Irish Catholic* some time ago Archbishop Eamon Martin wrote about *Digital Missionaries* – I find this a great phrase as it sums up accurately something of my mission. Through the *World*

Its an honour to be able to help people who are really struggling and make others aware of their plight. Sometimes I find it hard to believe the silent atrocities that happen in our so called civilised society. That Female Genital Mutilation is not against the law in lovely, leafy Connecticut, USA, for example. Thankfully this barbaric practice is increasingly against the law around the globe.

However such results are hard won - usually coming as the result of solid, sheer, hard, slog – often one email

at a time. I am a tiny part of this world-wide struggle, working with many organisations without whose guidance I would be stumped.

As some of you may have noticed I also write for *Inter Isle* (our FMM in-house journal) and sometimes am honoured to write eulogies following the death of our sisters who valiantly flew the FMM flag for the Lord in mission fields around the world, sometimes right here in Ireland.



Through writing letters to bereaved people I try to help those grieving for their loved ones. A practice informed by skills gleaned as a social worker. I also write for other publications including our local paper *Rush News*.

These words hopefully give some idea of my tangible mission here – a window on what I do. The icing on the cake so to speak.

Ah the cake!



In the early eighties I was studying for my final exams to qualify as a social worker, in Aberdeen, Scotland, when on Spy Wednesday

1985 I lost my eyesight. I can't help chuckling at the humour in this sentence.

Though, of course it also had serious repercussions. Preliminary visits to doctors in Glasgow (where I went for the final social work placement) ended with hospitalisation in a neurosurgical ward where there were many scary sounds, sights and smells including a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanning machine which revealed that I had a brain tumour. Two operations followed one to insert a shunt to relieve the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) around my brain followed a fortnight later by a very lengthy operation to remove a benign brain tumour.

More than twelve months later I returned to finish my social work studies: before making Final Profession on March fourteenth 1987. Originally assigned to Colombia after the surgeries etc when I asked my surgeon, Professor Teasdale if I could still go he said 'I'm not saying no Valerie. But if your shunt stops you can't be getting into a boat and going up the river.'

In any case superiors told me that South America was



out of the question. When I asked about North America there were smiles all round.

Also I easily got a visa with Unlimited Access or words to that effect emblazoned on it.

I was all set.

Or was I?

Just over a year, and three operations in quick succession for shunt malfunction later, saw an Irish nurse from the hospital urging me to return to Professor Teasdale. This advice was given with wings by due discernment and I returned to Glasgow soon afterwards.

Needless to say it was a blow from which it was hard to pick myself up.

Very soon after my return to Glasgow I was lying on my bed when I asked God what he wanted. What or whom was all this for: children, the poor, victims of disasters, who, what? He replied for priesthood and religious life. Now at this time the Church, priests and religious were seemingly held in high regard around the globe so I told God you must be mad. But O.K. If that's what you want I'll do it. As ever God knew what he was talking about!

Despite a further five successful shunt surgeries my health continued to disimprove. I won't bore you with the details suffice it to say that this thread continues right up to the present. I now live in St. Josephs Convent, Rush, which is wonderfully dedicated to the care of our sick and elderly sisters.



...Thus we make up in our bodies all that has to be undergone by Christ for the sake of His body the Church.... (FMM Constitutions 2)

The main ingredients in the cake are offering my pain and sufferings to the Lord for whatever He wants, knowing that he Knows Best! I asked for health that I might do great things, I was given sickness that I might do better things, I am amongst all creatures most richly blessed.

Like everyone I am called to share in the Death and Resurrection of Jesus ...A building which rises on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself, as the Cornerstone... (Ephs 2-20) Through His grace I share in the priesthood of Christ because it is the very function of the priest to offer gift and sacrifice.



Mission in USA



Margaret (left) with fmm sisters

I know the plans I have in mind for you – it is Yahweh who speaks – plans for peace, not disaster, reserving a future full of hope for you (Jer. 29:11). God's plans are truly amazing and when I reflect on my mission here in the US, I feel the depth of God's love for me ever more strongly and am filled with hope. God is the one who has led and guided me, and continues to do so, sometimes sending messengers to offer encouragement.

Dear to my heart is my home province of Ireland, England, Scotland and Malta. I particularly love the land of my birth and am grateful for my Celtic heritage which has instilled in me a profound sense of the sacred no matter where I am or whom I serve. Interested in missionary life, I came into contact with the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary while teaching in Dublin.

A missionary way of life, similar to any walk in life, when embraced fully and with faith can yield a rich harvest. My present ministry is that of healthcare chaplain, something I discovered by chance. While visiting our sisters in El Paso Texas, I accompanied Sr. Marie on her visits in the hospital, where she is a chaplain. During those encounters, a yearning to be with the sick and dying stirred in my heart. Sr. Marie encouraged me to pursue what I was beginning to feel might be God's will for me. At first I was reluctant to accept this call, feeling I had very little knowledge of anything to do with healthcare. After receiving my mission sending from the US Provincial Leader to the community in Chicago, Illinois, I prayed for guidance. My deep desire

was to follow God's will for my life. Currently we are five sisters in community, two from Vietnam, one from USA, one from The Philippines and myself from Ireland. We live in a suburb southwest of downtown Chicago.

As I began to settle into my new mission, volunteer opportunities became available as a teacher in a Catholic School, a team member at a food pantry run by Catholic Charities and a position as a Minister of Care at a local hospital. I embraced all of these ministries but the work in the hospital was my favourite. I felt it deeply satisfying and was very much at home with it. I wondered if perhaps this was what God was asking of me. Having something of the 'doubting Thomas' syndrome, I felt I needed more time to discern God's plan and so I decided to take a second volunteer position as a Minister of Care at another hospital. During my hospital experience, I got to know the Director of Spiritual Care and Mission and again she encouraged me to consider chaplain ministry. I applied for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) and throughout my training felt God's presence in the opportunities that opened before me. God was leading me.

People often ask 'how can you be around sick people all the time?' and then add 'I could never do what you do.' My reply is 'when we are answering God's call, when we are following our true vocation, we will have the strength and peace to do what is asked of us, whether that is to be a nurse, doctor, teacher, janitor, social worker, mother, father'. God will show us the way.



Being with patients and family members at significant moments in their lives is truly a joy and a privilege. As I listen to their stories, I hear such courage, resiliency, faith in the face of great challenges. I feel honoured and humbled with the trust that is placed in me. I make space for patients to share their hopes, joys, fears, concerns, particularly after having received a new diagnosis; perhaps there is a poor prognosis. A recent visit with a patient diagnosed with stage four cancer with metastases to the bone comes to mind. Sitting at the bedside and listening to the depth of his sharing moved me to tears. Here was a man, a beloved child of God, feeling some guilt over his lack of religious practices and now facing his death. He spoke eloquently about the blessings in his life and how he came to a place of knowing that he was loved. Upon leaving, his words to me were 'I didn't ask to see a chaplain on admission but I sure am glad you stopped by. Your presence has helped me more than you realize'. As a member of the healthcare interdisciplinary team I can be a support to patients and family members as they navigate difficult choices. Advanced Care Planning conversations are not always easy and some may not be ready for such discussions. It can be a struggle to face end-of-life questions. I am there as a pastoral presence, an attentive listener, an instrument of peace and hope, non-judgmental, willing to engage all faiths and none – an accompanying presence.

One never knows what each day can bring. I try to meet the spiritual and emotional needs of patients, family members and staff. Particularly challenging can be moments of intense grieving, especially when a death is unexpected. When a baby dies or perhaps a young person in the prime of life, emotions run high. Families may ask for a chaplain to be present when life support is discontinued. Gathering loved ones around the bed and offering some form of ritual can be a most tender experience. I feel privileged to be present and sense the sacred in those final moments of a person's life. Recently I had two encounters in ER, one a lady in her thirties who died of a heroin overdose; another a young man of twenty-four who collapsed and died at home. These kinds of cases are particularly challenging as families in the midst of their heartbreak deal with the police and the coroner. Staff are also affected by such tragedies. Remaining calm in the crisis and present to the needs of the other, providing time and space to listen is crucial. Supporting staff members is equally important. During these moments of intensity one feels very connected to one's colleagues and the need to be a supportive presence to one another is essential as we continue to serve. Chaplain Services are available twenty-

four hours a day, seven days a week. As members of the team we take our turn in covering the pager/ being 'on-call'. One must be ready to go no matter the time day or night. Good practices in self-care are necessary to avoid compassionate fatigue. Rest and relaxation are a must along with nourishing oneself spiritually. Returning home after a day's work to a supportive community is a real gift. Our ministry is never our own – we serve in the name of the community.

I continue to receive far more than I will ever give in my mission here in Chicago, Illinois. God has blessed me abundantly. I have grown through this ministry and feel much fulfilled. Truly a blessing. As an added bonus, I have been placed in a most beautiful city, the third largest in the US. Chicago with a population of 2.7 million is built on the shore of Lake Michigan. Its lakefront trail of 30.5 Km is



magnificent and the city has some very fine and gallant architecture. Each time I visit the city I am touched by its beauty. I never thought I would be engaged in hospital ministry as a chaplain, but God is a God of surprises and life as a missionary is full of adventure.

In the Lord I'll be ever thankful. In the lord I will rejoice. Look to God, do not be afraid, lift up your voices, the Lord is near, life up your voices the Lord is near (Taize chant).

In our daily comings and goings, to encounter the other, is to encounter Christ himself.

Sr. Margaret Culloty fmm

NEWS FROM ST. MARGARET'S CANNING TOWN

I sometimes think when I travel around London on the buses and tubes that a good percentage of the World's population live in London! The mixture of nations, cultures and languages reflect our global world in all its beauty and diversity. This diversity is also seen in our community with our many nationalities, including our precious younger sisters from Vietnam and Myanmar and the work that is done both inside and outside the community.

The sisters from St. Margaret's always maintained close links with the people of the Eastend of London and it continues today in different ways. Helen is very involved with the St. Francis Leprosy Guild. She also teaches English to the many foreign students who seek her help either by visits or the ubiquitous internet. Hoang Yen works hard with the large Vietnamese community and assists at the Vietnamese Parish in Mile End. She has numerous talents, and is often asked to arrange the flowers, help with the religious instruction of the young or do superb cooking for special occasions. Dominica with her flare for good menus for the older persons and their individual dietary requirements is also excellent at shopping. She prefers to shop in person rather than online so she gets the feel of the food. She is well known and liked by all the local shopkeepers. She also takes communion to the sick. Anne works in the Drop in Bereavement Centre as a counsellor. Lillian



keeps in contact by visits or phone calls with the older East Enders. She is often asked by different Parish groups if they could have their meeting in the Convent.

If you visited us on any day I think you would find a quiet hive of activity. The most important being the times of community prayer in the morning and evening including Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.



Sometimes workmen or visitors will remark on the silence of the convent and the welcoming atmosphere.

We are blessed in having a truly loving and caring staff who look after the needs of the frailer sisters including nursing care when needed. It is difficult to express in a few words our gratitude for all the help and assistance that we receive. The staff treat us as older but dearly loved relatives and share our sorrows, joys and our sometimes difficult and crusty moments! Reminding me of the seven ages of men in Shakespeare's *As you Like It* "***Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.***" We, in our turn, hold all the staff in our prayers and this is also very much appreciated. The day before Sr. Maureen Casey died after a long spell of dementia she told, her Muslim Carer, that she was "going home tonight" the gentle and pious Muslim was deeply moved.



Fay, Mary Rose, Ann



Many Sisters have “gone home” from here, each one in their own way. Perhaps Sr. Joyce was the most envied. She was a superb nurse and even into her late nineties would still be communicating with the older, sick or lonely friends of St. Margaret’s offering comfort, advice and a cheery word. Although very frail, her mind was sharp and active. On the day she died she had her bath in the morning, rested a little, had a small lunch in her room, then quietly went to meet her beloved Lord. Her funeral was a joyful occasion and many of her old friends came to say how much she meant to them and how they would miss her.

As we know joys and sorrows are part of life. On March 19th. Feast of St. Joseph we had very happy jubilee celebrations. Three Sisters, Mary Rose, Fay, and Anne celebrated their platinum jubilee, Philomena diamond and Agnes her silver jubilee. It was a wonderful time of great joy and sharing. The mass was in our big chapel here, presided over by Father Michael OFM, assisted by Fathers Simon and Joseph from Vietnam. Afterwards the celebrations were continued at the jubilee meal held in the convent. There was room at the tables for everyone and the buzz of excitement and love echoed around as relatives and friends met to talk and to share. The following week we had a second celebration for our staff working here. All enjoyed the tasty meal, the singing, and the sharing. The staff were also kind enough to appreciate the simple thanksgiving song sung and acted by Mary Rose, Fay and Anne. And perhaps these few words of the song, bring our present reality to the fore. (photo jubilarians)

As Pope Francis reminds us it is now time *to BE rather than to DO.*

*You now see before you three ancient old sisters,
With wrinkles and white hair and limbs that are weak.
We once were so active and youthful and smooth skinned
With strength in our footsteps so sprightly and quick.
But now we must realise that we need assistance and
Thank you, dear staff for the care that you give.
We pray for you often and ask that the dear Lord,
Will give you the graces of Peace, Love and Joy.*



from the left, Ann, Fay, Mary Rose, Philomena, Agnes in front, on the 2nd row, Frs. Simon, Michael ofm, Joseph.



Anne Miller fmm

Turning the Tide of Mission: *An Experience of Mission in Ireland*



Lumay, 3rd from the left in front

As one who loves working at the grassroots of communities and parish life and at the margins, after my studies and was missioned to Ireland, I wondered how and where in Ireland could I be a true missionary in a country that has produced and sent a large number of missionaries all around the world. Soon my doubts were dispelled, as I got involved in the Darndale Belcamp Parish and local community.

The tide has turned here in Ireland. Ireland and the Irish Church, over the years has given the universal Church and the world countless number of committed and dedicated missionaries who

selflessly gave of their gifts to reach out to the poor and suffering and those on the margins of society. For whatever reason or cause, God's hands were at work in this experience, because people got to experience God's unconditional love, lives were saved, human dignity was respected, disciples were formed, and the world became a better place. We must be grateful for these missionaries who gave their lives for the sake of the kingdom and in particular the FMM missionaries who first inspired me to mission work. The tide has turned coming from Asia, which was once mission lands, to Ireland as a missionary, which was once the land of missionaries. The tide

has surely turned. I am blessed and honoured to be part of mission here in Ireland today, and all that it means for the lives of the Irish people.

I work and minister in the Darndale Belcamp parish. Darndale was developed as a social housing experiment consisting of low-rise, courtyard-based houses to encourage stronger community links in large, and largely resettled, communities. Apart from these settled families, there is a number of Traveller communities (Camps)



in the area that are part of the parish community.

The Darndale parish faces many challenges as a community. Drugs, crime, broken families, unemployment, delinquency, to name but a few. I can speak freshly of a young man shot and killed just outside the main entrance of the Life Centre where my office is located and where I work everyday. This is just one of the recent experiences of this community. In the mist of all this chaos I am called and missioned to witness to the presence of God in all this and to help people experience the love of God amidst the chaos and negativity.

I try not to lose hope when sometimes my efforts seem to be minimal and small, I try to trust in God's hand of work by my presence when others share their fears and negativity

about working and helping the people of Darndale. I try to keep going, hoping and trusting despite the challenge of witnessing to an Irish church that is wounded and trying to gain credibility and trust.

I am encouraged, that all is not lost. The words of a young Irish Sportswoman, who plays International Hockey with the Irish team, Elena Tice, when she said, *"My faith is the biggest part of my life, it's more important than Tokyo of World Cups."* My own faith keeps me focussed on the little I can do to allow others to experience God and his love in the most difficult and challenging of situations. I was taught by a well-known Jesuit, Brian Grogan SJ, writer who speaks of the value of *"finding God in all things."* I too, am finding God in every situation and in every person by being present in the lives of the people and journeying with them in the midst



of chaos and the struggles of daily life. My experience of this community is that people are community spirited and support each other in their struggles.

The practical work and ministry have helped me connect with people and build trust. I have been helping in the preparation of our students for First Holy Communion and Confirmation. Giving these young people a sense of God, belonging to Church, and instilling Christian values in them. I go to visit the families of these children so that the values they are thought in church are supported at home. I also visit the sick at home and those families that have lost loved ones. These are very difficult times for families and they always appreciate the prayers and support. Just recently I visited a family who lost four members within a short period of time due to terminal illness. One member who is left has both legs amputated.

This family is trying to cope with life and offering support is challenging. On reflection I have learnt a lot in the process. Their faith is strong and deep. Life is precious and should be cherished every day.

Some of the experiences in the homes I visit are so difficult that words are not enough, and I don't know what to say, but a silent presence is most effective. So, I bring with me the listening God who is silent but offers a listening ear and a peaceful heart.

I have reached out to the travelling community to make them feel part of the whole community. There is sometimes a feeling of isolation and a clash between the settled part of the community and the travelling part of the community. Both has lots to offer to integration and slowly trust is being built.

During the Lenten and Christmas seasons I have brought both groups to participate in the Passion Play and Nativity Play. These have been very successful over the years. Our parish Feast Days have truly been Family and Community Days for the entire community. Two years ago, I introduced a Marian procession and out-door Mass. Though it was a challenge to start, once it was experienced, people felt encouraged to publicly express their faith.

I continue to create a welcoming space in our parish church, where all people can feel welcome.

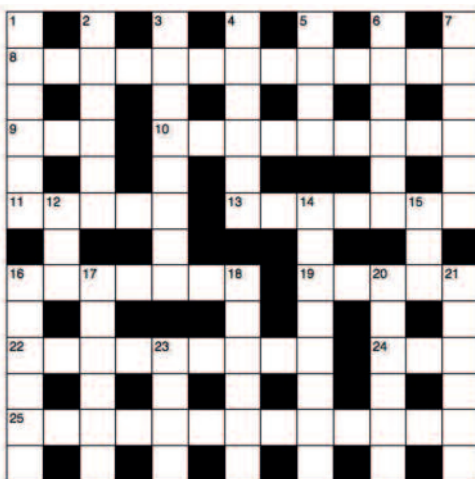
Decorating our church for the different Liturgies has given a fresh look to our place of worship. More and more people appreciate and participate in beautifying the church.

I never felt alone in my ministry in the parish. Many have volunteered their time and gifts. I appreciate our Sr. Teresa fmm and two other Sisters from other Congregations who come to help in the parish. However, much more help and support is needed. It is important that others give of their time and talents to build up the kingdom of God in Darndale.

I'm grateful to God for guiding and protecting and inspiring me in this mission. I'm truly blessed to be part of God's mission in this part of the world. I take this opportunity to thank my community in Perrystown and the FMM Sisters for their understanding, love and support and allowing me the freedom to be a missionary in Ireland today.

Lumay Thomas Fernando
fmm

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

- 8 Laban complained he had not been allowed to kiss them when Jacob fled with his family (Gen.31:28)(13)
 9 In favour of (3)
 10 'The child's father and mother — at what was said about him' (Luke 2:33) (9)
 11 Swagger (Psalm 12:8) (5)
 13 'Terrors — him on every side and dog his every step' (Job 18:11) (7)
 16 Bay bits (anag.) (7)
 19 Preach, address an audience, speak in public (5)
 22 Holy Communion (9)
 24 'On their way to-out the land, Joshua instructed them, "Go and make a survey of the land"' (Josh.18:8) (3)
 25 Joseph advised Pharaoh to appoint these to administer his grain storage plan (Genesis 41:34) (13)

Down

- 1 'Assyria's pride will be brought down and — sceptre will pass away' (Zechariah 10:11) (6)
 2 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in — with God and men' (Luke 2:52) (6)
 3 The descendants of Esau (Genesis 36:9) (8)
 4 The components of the crown that Jesus was made to wear before his crucifixion (John 19:2) (6)
 5 Colour of cloth which was to cover holy objects in the tabernacle when moving camp (Numb 4:6-12) (4)
 6 One of the gold articles plundered from the Midianites offered to the Lord by the Israelite army 'to make atonement' (Numbers 31:50) (6)
 7 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set — — ' (Jeremiah 31:29) (2,4)
 12 Ate (anag.) (3)
 14 'We ourselves... groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our — as sons' (Romans 8:23) (8)
 15 Abram's nephew (Genesis 14:12) (3)
 16 Rupture (Job 30:14) (6)
 17 'Yet to all who received him... he gave the right to — children of God' (John 1:12) (6)
 18 'I... asked him the true meaning of all — . — he told me and gave me the interpretation of these things' (Daniel 7:16)(4,2)
 20 Military units (Exodus 14:20) (6)
 21 'Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to — her to public disgrace' (Matt. 1:19) (6)
 23 Diva (anag.) (4)

STAFF PRAYER GROUP AT HMP BRIXTON



As we are celebrating the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, my first thoughts go to those men I meet on a daily basis, who are experiencing a new beginning and have risen from ashes, death, brokenness...to a new life. But there is also another group in our prison community who are a part of my great joy: Christian officers and non-uniformed staff, who I have come to know through our weekly ecumenical prayer group. I would like to tell you a few words about them.

The role of the Chaplaincy Team is not limited to prisoners, but also to staff – uniformed and non-uniformed. As Chaplains we have numerous interactions with prison staff and know how challenging their work is. Staff have to deal day-in day-out with prisoners struggling with various issues from gang affiliation and a history of violence, to mental illnesses, addictions and often personal histories of having been neglected and abused themselves. Staff have to be alert and vigilant all the time with ‘eyes at the back of their heads’. Each day they have to face prisoners’ anger, frustration and despair. This can be very demanding, especially if you want to serve those people as a disciple of Christ. For that reason, an ecumenical prayer group was formed for prison officers and other staff. We meet on Wednesdays. The group is formed of Christians from many different traditions, including

Anglicans, Catholics, Evangelicals, Baptists and Pentecostals.

I feel privileged to be part of this group, which represents the most real ecumenical experience I've ever had: despite our different traditions, we pray together as one Body. As we read and break the Word of God, we share our reflections and experiences, learning from each other **how to manifest the presence of Christ in this place**. If anyone is facing special difficulties we surround him or her with special care. Those who, for different reasons, can't attend our meeting will receive an email with the summary of our gathering and reflections.

One young officer who is part of our prayer group told me how scared he was at the beginning of his service in the prison. One morning as he felt very tense and distressed, he was greeted by the smiling face of another officer, also part of our group, who told him: “God bless you my brother”. These simple words were for him like a touch from heaven, as he realised that he was not alone and that God was by his side. He found peace, and a renewed determination to be the face of God in the difficult environment of our prison. This support in discipleship is what our prayer group is all about.



Janina Tuskowska fmm

PORTLETHEN



MOBILE MISSION

You may remember in 2004 the FMM'S were invited to start a mobile mission in Scotland by Bishop Mario Conti. Sr Joan Doyle then Provincial accepted the invitation and asked four Sisters to go there. (Sr Brenda, Sr Joan, Sr Cora, Sr Caroline) I remember my reaction when I was asked to go, I said I have been a nurse all my life, I've never done pastoral work, and Joan's response was "well just try? That was the key word "Try" and I must say I have never looked back. My experience has been a very positive one, not without its ups and downs but in all, a great learning experience that has helped me grow as a person.

We started off in Kemnay which is a village west of Aberdeen. It has a population of 3,830. This was the first time they had Sisters in the Parish, and the people were delighted. We worked there for nine Months, before moving to Fraserburgh, which is a town in Aberdeenshire with a population of 3,100. It is the biggest shell port in Scotland and one of the largest in Europe. The people were lovely and we continue to be in contact with them.

As you know the aim of the Mobile mission was to stay a few Months in each Parish and then to move to the next one. When we evaluated our situation in view of mobile mission, we realised that this wasn't realistic. In order to build up communities and core groups we would need to stay a lot longer in Parishes.

Bishop Hugh now bishop of Aberdeen asked us to move from Fraserburgh to Aberdeen and to live in the south side of the city, as he wanted the presence of Sisters in the area.



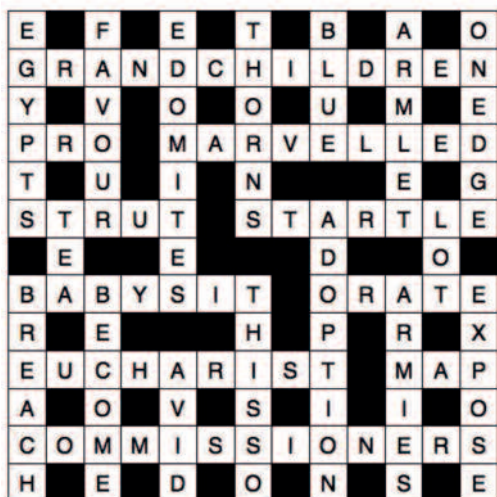
Sr Wiesia and myself are living and working in Portlethen also known as the "Granite city" for its many enduring grey stone buildings. It's a lovely city and well kept. We work in the Parish of Our Lady of Aberdeen, The Parish is growing fast due to the emigrant population and it is a privilege to help them integrate into Parish life. It is a very friendly and family oriented parish. Our aim is to respond to the needs of the local



people offering a ministry of presence among them, and helping to build up parish community, and establishing core groups. We have also branched out into two other parishes at the request of the Priests. There is a lot of work to be done and we are now in the process of a programme of evangelisation reaching out to lapsed Catholics and others who are interested in the Faith, this will be done at a diocesan level. Scotland is a real missionary territory and in some areas of the Diocese there are no Priests, or Sisters, so maybe in the future we can reach out to these areas." The harvest is great but the labourers are few?"

Sr Caroline Gaffney FMM

CROSSWORD SOLUTION



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Helen de Chappotin (Blessed Mary of the Passion)

Foundress of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary



Blessed Mary of the Passion (Helene de Chappotin de Neuville) was born in Nantes, France on 21st May 1839. She grew up in a Christian family and at a very early age she desired to enter religious life with the Poor Clares. It was there that, at the age of 21 she had a profound experience of God which would influence her whole life.

Unfortunately due to ill health she had to leave the cloister. Later she entered the Society of Mary Reparatrix and was sent to India on mission while she was still a novice. After years of fruitful ministry especially with the local women, very difficult

circumstances obliged her to leave for Rome. On 6th January 1877, she obtained from Pope Pius IX the authorisation to found the Institute of the Missionaries of Mary, with the great support of her companions who had remained in India. This Institute was dedicated to universal mission. She then had it affiliated to the Franciscan Order, and in this way rediscovered with joy the inspiration of the earliest beginnings. Contemplation and action, inspired by Mary's Yes and realised by the total offering of self for the Church and the world, is the spirituality which Mary of the Passion left to her daughters when she died at San Remo on 15th November 1943 at the age of 65. Pope John Paul II declared her Blessed on 20th October 2002.

Scotland

We have five communities in Scotland

Two in Glasgow
One in Renfrewshire One in Aberdeenshire

England

We have nine communities in England

Six in London
Two in Berkshire (Cold Ash) One in Cambridgeshire (March)

Malta

We have two communities in Malta

One in Marsa
One in Balzan

Ireland

We have six communities in Ireland:

Five in Dublin One in Limerick

