



The Holy Family of Bordeaux

in Britain and Ireland

Glory to God alone in Jesus Christ through Mary and Saint Joseph

September 2015

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Editorial

Creation Time ends on 4 October, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. Perhaps we did not pay much attention to it nor participate in any of the events organised around it in our areas. The refugee crisis may have been uppermost in our minds as the most serious issue requiring attention. But, all issues are interconnected.

While social unrest, armed conflict, religious persecution, poverty and hunger are driving forces compelling people to flee their own countries and look for security elsewhere, scientists, scholars and public figures have been demonstrating for some time now how climate change is a contributory factor to mass migration.

An example given is the situation in Syria where, from 2006 to 2011 large areas of the country suffered an extreme drought exacerbated, so climatologists say, by climate change. The drought led to increased poverty and mass relocation to urban areas. That internal displacement and the mismanagement of the drought by the regime, it is said, contributed to the social unrest that precipitated the civil war.

It follows that any real solution to the refugee crisis has to tackle root causes. *COP21* will take place from 30 November to 11 December 2015, in Paris. If we follow this closely and join in any positive action to make it a success we will be making our small contribution to the solution. In the meantime, we do what we can for refugees where we are.

That will be to think globally and act locally at the same time.



Message from Sr. Gemma (Unit Leader)

I WAS A STRANGER AND YOU WELCOMED ME

The news these days continues to be dominated by the refugee crisis unfolding on our very doorstep. The heart rending image of a tiny child lying face down in the surf at one of Turkey's main tourist resorts has been printed on the front pages of newspapers all over Europe, putting a human face on the dangers faced by tens of thousands of desperate people who risk life and limb to seek a new life in Europe.



What is our response in the face of such suffering? We may be gripped by a sense of helplessness and powerlessness. The problem is too big. Any small action on our part is but a drop in the ocean. Discussions in the media in Britain are often driven by hostility and suspicion and centre on the need to protect our borders and our way of life from what Prime Minister Cameron sees as "the swarms" of migrants who are coming to Britain to seek a better life. He told the BBC "everything that can be done will be done to make sure our borders are secure and make sure that British holidaymakers are able to go on their holidays". It is barely credible that Mr. Cameron views the inconvenience caused to British holiday makers as more tragic than the thousands of people drowning in the Mediterranean. The Foreign Secretary, Philip Hammond, endorsed this view of migrants a few days later when he referred to the "millions of marauding African migrants who pose a threat to the EU's standard of living and social structure".

We are talking here about human beings not insects as Harriet Harman, acting leader of the labour party, rightly said. By dehumanising people in such a way we seek to distance ourselves from their suffering. But in the process we dehumanize ourselves, becoming cold spectators incapable of empathy and a sense of solidarity with our suffering sisters and brothers.

What is Christ's call to us today? It is the call to love our neighbour as ourselves, to welcome the stranger. Our response to human desperation and migration is not to be fear and rejection but love and welcome. As disciples of Jesus we are to provide care and comfort to those who come to this land as strangers, seeking safety, hope, and a life with dignity. In doing so we are welcoming the Lord himself:

We encounter Christ through those we welcome. When we open the doors of our hearts and communities to refugees among us, we are welcoming Jesus. Jesus wanders with and among the world's 43 million displaced people, sailing across the oceans - undocumented, knocking on the doors of countries, grinding through asylum protection systems, seeking a home. The gift these refugees offer us is to open the door and discover the wonder of His presence greeting us.

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me..., just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:35-40)



Photo by Steve Kingston

Celtic Blessing for Hospitality

I saw a stranger yestreen
 I put food in the eating place
 drink in the drinking place
 music in the listening place
 and in the sacred name of the Triune
 He blessed me and my house
 my cattle and my dear ones
 and the lark said in her song
 often, often, often
 goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.

Parish Cells Movements - Rome gathering

On 12 April last, the Holy See officially recognised the “Cells” founded by the Italian priest, Don Piergiorgio Perini, and the Pontifical Council for the Laity formally approved the statutes. As a follow-up, about 5,000 members of the Parish Evangelising Cell movement from around the world gathered in Rome on Saturday, 5 September.

They were addressed by Pope Francis in the Paul VI Hall. Among them was a large contingent from Ireland including a group of 6 from Newbridge made up of 2 Holy Family Sisters, 2 Lay Associates, a Priest Associate and a layman. HF Lay Associates in Newbridge have taken up the promotion of Cell Groups as their outreach to the Parish with great enthusiasm.

In his remarks to those present, Pope Francis spoke about the importance of being a missionary and said above all this requires listening to the voice of the Holy Spirit who is at the heart of evangelization.

He also underlined how their daily work helps the parish community become a family, where, the Pope said, “we find the rich and multifaceted reality of the Church”, and where no one is judged.

He also added, that sharing time together, such as in the home “is a genuine experience of evangelization that is very similar to what happened in the early days of the Church.”

Finally, the Holy Father encouraged the group present to make the Eucharist the heart of their mission of evangelization, so that each cell is a Eucharistic community “where the breaking of the bread is to recognize the real presence of Jesus Christ in our midst”.

The Pope’s full address will be posted on the Holy Family Website.

History - Parish Cells Evangelisation - Ireland



In the 1980s, Longford born Mgr. Mike Eivers worked as parish priest in St. Boniface, Florida. He knew that the American church was going through, at best, a holding operation. As he prayed for direction in his own ministry, in part prompted by illness due to overwork, he observed vibrant and active churches which were dynamic, where growth and mission were strong features. None of them were Catholic.

They were largely Pentecostal. Churches. He decided to take a closer look at them and to determine their reasons for growth. As part of his research, he visited Korea to meet with Paul Yonggi Cho, who pastored a cell community of almost 1,000,000.

He drew a number of conclusions about these growing churches.

- * Each individual who participated had experienced a renewal of faith through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as at Pentecost. S/he remained expectant of God's intervention to guide them through life's events.**
- * People met in large assemblies. Worship was joyful, with a great degree of participation.**
- * More significantly, he observed, they also met in small house units. This enabled fellowship and friendship to be fostered. People knew they were welcomed. They were pastored and encouraged. It was an ideal and natural place where questions of the day, including personal questions, were shared and looked at in terms of God's word in the scriptures.**

And that

- * Prayer, the use of scripture, and the availability of teaching were important.
- * Participants had a strong commitment to evangelization, to sharing faith with family members, neighbours and work and leisure colleagues.
- * All provided leadership, and were active in ministry, in one way or another. The role of the pastor was influential in providing teaching and vision.

For Fr. Mike, the conviction of faith, the growth in numbers, the clarity of mission and the degree of participation, that he observed in these churches, stood in sharp contrast to the uncertainty, the dwindling congregations, the inward looking analysis, the politics and the passivity that marked so much of the American Catholic Church as he knew it.

He recognised that he could introduce all of the above conclusions to the parish where he worked. Then after further reflection and prayer, he initiated the parish cell system of evangelization. These cell groups answered a need and began to develop so quickly throughout the parish of St. Boniface that within a few years 550 parishioners participated in them.

Fr. Mike claimed that once he had provided initial training and built in ongoing supervision, his sense of responsibility for the parish decreased, as did his workload. He knew he was now surrounded by many co-workers. He claimed, 'of all the initiatives I have undertaken, cell groups yield the best fruit'.

News of this 'success' story spread rapidly. People were gathering in small groups. They were enjoying the experience. They were forming bonds of friendship. They were also coming to know Jesus in a personal way. They were growing in confidence and were beginning to find it somewhat easier to talk about their faith. Interest was also aroused when it became known that they had an ability to involve the lapsed and alienated.

In February 1987, Don Pigi Perini, parish priest in St. Eustorgio, Milan, visited St. Boniface with 10 parishioners to learn from this experience. They were so inspired by what they saw that today more than 1,100 people participate in cell groups in St. Eustorgio, which is in turn a catalyst for parish cell groups throughout Europe.



In 1990, for example, four parishioners from the parish of St. John the Evangelist, Ballinteer, Dublin visited the First European Seminar on cell evangelization in Milan. The impact was that at one time more than 300 parishioners were active in 31 cell groups throughout the parish of Ballinteer.



They also became part of the pastoral plans of such diverse parishes as Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, Callan, Co. Kilkenny and Doneraile, Co. Cork.

We, in Leixlip, are blessed to have as our Parish Priest, Fr. Michael Hurley, who is responsible for the introduction of the Parish Cell System of Evangelization to Ireland

The first cell meeting was hosted in Leixlip in July 2004, with the help of the cell members from St. John the Evangelist, Ballinteer.

SOLIDARITY WITH REFUGEES

In Britain and Ireland large numbers of people have come out in support of the thousands of refugees seeking asylum in Europe. At rallies in the capitals of both countries there was a Holy Family presence.

Up to 1,000 people gathered in Dublin on 4 September to express solidarity with people seeking refuge in Europe. Protesters heard calls for the Government to increase the numbers of refugees allowed into Ireland.

The chosen site, the Famine Memorial, was most appropriate as speakers evoked the suffering of the Irish people who had to flee their country to avoid starvation in the famine that halved the population.



A Syrian refugee, who has been in Ireland for 18 months, said he wanted to thank everyone who would welcome Syrian people to Ireland.

"I have never been back to my home. I miss my family, I miss my friends, I miss the soil, the stone and the trees of my home. If my homeland had been safe I would not have risked my life in the Sahara and on the Mediterranean."

His words are vividly expressed in the poem *Home*, by Somali poet Warsan Shire. (p. 6) read by a representative of the Migrant Rights Centre .

March in Solidarity with Refugees - 12 September

Tens of thousands of people marched through the streets of London for a rally in support of refugees, as similar events took place in other European capitals. It is thought to be the biggest national show of support for refugees in living memory, with a number of refugees leading the march to Parliament Square.

Holy Family Sisters Marie Power, Carmel Bateson, Gemma Corbett, Bridget Davis, Kathleen Diamond and Evelyn Hanley were among the crowd.



On Sandymount Strand - 13 September

Members of the public joined a coalition of NGOs on Dublin's Sandymount Strand on Sunday, 13 September in a solidarity event to welcome refugees to Ireland. They created a human "Refugees Welcome" aerial photo (p. 2) ahead of an extraordinary meeting of the EU Council of Justice & Home Affairs Ministers on Monday. Among the crowd were Srs Bernadette deegan, Claire McGrath (pictured below in vis jacket), Lil Meagher and Síle McGowan.



Head of woman
Famine Memorial on the Dublin Quays

“No One Leaves Home”

by Warsan Shire

no one leaves home unless
 home is the mouth of a shark
 you only run for the border
 when you see the whole city running as well
 your neighbours running faster than you
 breath bloody in their throats
 the boy you went to school with
 who kissed you dizzy behind the old tin factory
 is holding a gun bigger than his body
 you only leave home
 when home won't let you stay.
 no one leaves home unless home chases you
 fire under feet
 hot blood in your belly
 it's not something you ever thought of doing
 until the blade burnt threats into
 your neck
 and even then you carried the anthem under
 your breath
 only tearing up your passport in an airport toilets
 sobbing as each mouthful of paper
 made it clear that you wouldn't be going back.
 you have to understand,
 that no one puts their children in a boat
 unless the water is safer than the land
 no one burns their palms
 under trains
 beneath carriages
 no one spends days and nights in the stomach of a truck
 feeding on newspaper unless the miles travelled
 means something more than journey.
 no one crawls under fences
 no one wants to be beaten
 pitied
 no one chooses refugee camps
 or strip searches where your
 body is left aching
 or prison,
 because prison is safer
 than a city of fire
 and one prison guard
 in the night
 is better than a truckload
 of men who look like your father
 no one could take it
 no one could stomach it
 no one skin would be tough enough

Warsan Shire is a Kenyan-born Somali poet, writer and educator based in London. Born in 1988, Warsan has read her work extensively all over Britain and internationally, including recent readings in South Africa, Italy, Germany, Canada, North America and Kenya-

the
 go home blacks
 refugees
 dirty immigrants
 asylum seekers
 sucking our country dry
 niggers with their hands out
 they smell strange
 savage
 messed up their country and now they want
 to mess ours up
 how do the words
 the dirty looks
 roll off your backs
 maybe because the blow is softer
 than a limb torn off
 or the words are more tender
 than fourteen men between
 your legs
 or the insults are easier
 to swallow
 than rubble
 than bone
 than your child body
 in pieces.
 i want to go home,
 but home is the mouth of a shark
 home is the barrel of the gun
 and no one would leave home
 unless home chased you to the shore
 unless home told you
 to quicken your legs
 leave your clothes behind
 crawl through the desert
 wade through the oceans
 drown
 save
 be hunger
 beg
 forget pride
 your survival is more important
 no one leaves home until home is a sweaty voice in your ear
 saying-
 leave,
 run away from me now
 i don't know what i've become
 but i know that anywhere
 is safer than here



A TIME TO CELEBRATE

JOY, THANKSGIVING, ATONEMENT, HEALING, RECONCILIATION... These are some of the words in the Bible associated with Jubilee. Many of them were evoked during the celebrations marking Golden Jubilees in our Unit this summer, wherever and however they were celebrated.

MARIA CROWLEY'S GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION IN BRADFORD 9 July 2015

When we talked in community about how to celebrate Maria's Golden Jubilee she suggested that it should be simple and an occasion that would draw many people together of different faiths and none and of varied backgrounds and cultures where everyone would feel comfortable and be able to share food and celebrate - a real celebration of Eucharist!.

The day dawned with sun shining, blue skies and temperatures just right. Mass began at 2 p.m. in St Matthew's Church with that lovely hymn, "Teach me to dance to the beat of your heart. Teach me to move in the power of your spirit..." sung by Years 3 and 4 from St. Matthew's Primary School. Fr. John Newman and Fr. Martin (from South Sudan) concelebrated. Fr. John who had known Maria for 35 years said the first time he met her she was wearing a track suit ready to run in a sponsored marathon! He said she made him and everyone she met feel important and that she is an amazing person even though she doesn't see that herself.



Maria speaking in Mullinahone Church



Maria and Pat RSM at the celebration in Mullinahone

It was great to see Margaret White, a dear friend of ours who is totally dependent on oxygen, proclaiming the word of God with such power and to see Stephen up there doing the 2nd reading. Maria had supported him and his family through hard times. We were very happy that Maria's sister Pat (a Mercy Sister), her cousin John and wife Madeleine, our Selby Road sisters, Sr. Catherine (St. Joseph of Peace) and many other friends and parishioners were able to join us.

Following the Mass we all enjoyed the shared picnic in the School Field/Allotments. The vegetables and flowers were in full bloom as were the 250 children and staff who were all lined up to give their cards to Maria! For Maria it was a DREAM COME TRUE that so many friends of different nationalities and different faiths and none were able to share food together in the allotments. Many thanks to Katy Cox (Head teacher) and the staff at St Matthew's School for all the work that they did to facilitate this.

Around 5 p.m. we all made our way down to our house where many friends and parishioners joined us for champagne etc. and a sing song led by Steve White on his ukulele! This went on till late and as Elaine S left she was heard to say "This was the best party I've been at for a long time". These words echoed our feelings too.

I'll end with the Entrance Song of the Mass which has become the **THEME SONG** for this Jubilee!

“Teach me to dance to the beat of your heart.
Teach me to move in the power of your spirit.
Teach me to walk in the light of your presence.
Teach me to dance to the beat of your heart.
Teach me to love with your heart of compassion.
Teach me to trust in the word of your promise.
Teach me to hope in the day of your coming.
Teach me to dance to the beat of your heart.”

Teresa Edwards
Bradford Community



Jubilarians Srs. Anne Kearney and Maria Crowley and Srs. Bernadette Deegan, Teresa Edwards, Lil Meagher

CELEBRATION in NEWBRIDGE

On 29 August, all the sisters from the Irish communities who were able to come gathered in Togher’s Hotel, near Newbridge, to celebrate the Irish Jubilarians. Maria, who happened to be in Ireland celebrating with her family and friends here was also able to be present.

Fr. Joe McDermot, the outgoing Parish Priest of Newbridge and a very old friend of the community, presided at the Eucharist in the large room put at our disposal. This first act of thanksgiving was one of almost palpable communion in simplicity, joy, serenity, peace. Sr. Catherine Moran gave the homily/reflection. It is posted on our newly designed website, soon to go live.





Table companionship followed in an equally happy glow.

Then, joy was unconfined in the singing and dancing that started spontaneously after the meal.



It can be said without reservation: "It was good for us to be there."

FAREWELL TO CELINE AS SHE MOVES TO WOODFORD

Celine Nanayakkara became a member of the Bradford community 9 years ago when she came from Sri Lanka. This was her first community in our province, and she added great richness to our international experience. Celine found Yorkshire and Bradford very cold in the winter and she was well known for the number of coats and hats and scarves she wore. However after some adjustment she became involved in a variety of projects in Bradford.

Her ministries included First Communion children, a School Governor and help with reading at St Matthew's Primary School. She studied GCSE English and then was able to volunteer with ESOL English Classes for refugees and asylum seekers and Job seekers. She joined with other members of the Community in their involvement with BIASAN and cooked for Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Homeless people. She trained as a Hospital Chaplaincy visitor and visited patients in Bradford Royal Infirmary on a weekly basis and also as a volunteer helper for Mums and babies (National Childbirth Trust).

Celine contributed greatly to the life and community in Bradford. She used her skills in many creative ways and in particular she was able to offer a lot of support to those in Bradford from Sri Lanka who were seeking asylum.

On 20 July 2015, she left us. We thank her for all she has been and done for us here and we wish God's blessing on her new ministries in Woodford and look forward to hearing how she is getting on.

Celine, we hope you enjoy a much warmer climate and you will be able to shed some of the coats, hats and scarves.

Maria, Nasreen and Teresa
Bradford Community

LAY ASSOCIATES NEWS

MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN LAY ASSOCIATE LEADERS

On the morning of 1 September, fifteen *Holy Family* Associates – Lay and Religious – met in Crewe. They were the Presidents, Leaders and translators who had arrived the previous day from England, France, Ireland, Poland, Scotland and Spain for the European Lay Associate Leaders' meeting. The National Committees of the various countries take it in turn to host these four-yearly get-togethers and this year the honour fell to Britain. We were very pleased to be able to have the meeting in Crewe where we received a warm *Holy Family* welcome from Catherine Lavery HFB.



The National Committees of the various countries take it in turn to host these four-yearly get-togethers and this year the honour fell to Britain. We were very pleased to be able to have the meeting in Crewe where we received a warm *Holy Family* welcome from Catherine Lavery HFB.

With a word of greeting in the language of each country represented, Anne Connolly President of the Lay Associates of Britain, welcomed the participants to the meeting.

Then Pilar Garcia, Leader of the Spanish Lay Associates, conveyed greetings, support and

good wishes from Ana María Alcalde (Leader of the Religious Institute and Associates).

As it was the Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, the opening prayer which followed, combined that theme with an invocation to the Holy Spirit to guide us through the coming days. Then the work began and continued with great intensity for two days. The main purpose of the meeting this year was to prepare feedback for the forthcoming Council of the Family which will take place in Rome later this month. To that end, we evaluated the impact of the Fourth Family Congress, looked at steps taken to deepen our identity as ONE Family and reviewed specific areas where we notice a change of mind-set on national, personal, vocational-group and Family levels.

The great emphasis and thrust of the whole meeting was actually on the importance of deepening our awareness of being and acting as one Family. As France and Spain demonstrated, this is greatly facilitated by putting the Congress

recommendation into practice and setting up an inter-vocational group to look after common formation in the sense of organising meetings, assemblies, get-togethers etc. in which all Vocations would participate on an equal footing rather than as invitees.



Looking towards the future, we discussed possible ways of celebrating the bicentenary of the beginning of our Foundation in 2020, being more dynamic in promoting our Founder's cause and improving the effectiveness of the Council of the Family.



Each country also gave a presentation on the current situation of Lay Associates in their area including the main activities undertaken since the last Assembly in 2013.

Among a lot of other interesting information, we discovered the number of Lay Associates in each country: Britain, 248; France, 26; Ireland, 72; Poland, 3 with a family about to begin formation; Spain, 128. Towards the end of the second day, we discussed very practical matters such as finance and the dates of future meetings and assemblies.

The third day, as is the custom for these meetings, was spent sight-seeing. At 9.00 the group set out for Llandudno to enjoy some of the beauties of North Wales. After a 90 minute journey, we had coffee in *The George Hotel* over-looking the sea and then travelled to the summit of the Great Orme where we enjoyed a beautiful panoramic view. Those who came from warmer climes enjoyed especially the bracing sea breeze and the wind swirling around them.



Back in town, even though we were in Wales we enjoyed a typically English lunch of fish and chips at *The Cottage Loaf*. Then we were free to follow our own interests. Some headed for the pier, others for the promenade while the shops attracted some more. A few managed to negotiate all three. We are very grateful to Bert Suffield for organising such an enjoyable day.



After our evening meal in Crewe, the meeting was brought to a close by a prayer together and a sing-song led by Pedro Avila, President of the European Lay Associates and an accomplished guitarist. Everyone was very happy with the meeting.

While much hard work was done, the best part of it was meeting our sisters and brothers from the various countries and experiencing the joy of being one big happy *Holy Family*.

Anne Connolly, President Lay Associates Britain, and Áine Hayde HFB, National Leader



UPCOMING EVENTS - October 2015

October 2015						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 International Day of Non- Violence	3
4 Synod of the Family*	5 World Habitat Day	6	7 Cluster Meeting in Newbridge	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
18	19	20	21	22	23 HF Meeting in Newbridge on the Refugee Crisis	24
25 Synod of the Family ends	26	27	28	29	30	31

***Three women religious appointed by the Vatican as auditors to the Synod for the Family**

Sr. Maureen Kelleher, a Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, is an attorney running the Legal Aid Service office in Collier County, Florida, where most of her clients are farmers and immigrants.

Sr. Carmen Sammut, a member of the Missionary sisters of Our Lady of Africa, is President of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG)

Sr. Berta Maria Porras Fallas is a Costa Rican Capuchin

Thank you!

Sr. Maureen O'Mahony wishes to thank all the Sisters who sent her Masses, Birthday Cards, Prayers, all gifts for her 90th Birthday.
Holy Mass will be offered for your intentions.

Sr. Pauline Harney would like to thank each and everyone for their good wishes, prayers and gifts on the occasion of her golden jubilee. You are included in the Masses celebrated on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Carmelite Monastery in Kildare.
Praise the God of the Universe. Love and hugs.