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# **AGM 2017 REPORT**

## **Open Ground – a New Landscape**



ASSOCIATION OF  
LEADERS OF MISSIONARIES  
& RELIGIOUS OF IRELAND

**7 MARCH – 5 SEPTEMBER 2017**

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## **MEMBERS OF EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2017**

**President: Marc Whelan CspP**

**Vice President: Phyllis Behan RSC (to September 2017)**

**Geraldine Fitzpatrick SJG**

**Edmund Garvey CB**

**John Hennebry OSA**

**Rita Kelly MMM**

**Kathleen McGarvey OSA**

**Tom O'Connor SPM**

**Sally Roddy VC**

**Michael McCabe SMA (co-opted)**

**John Denny VMM (co-opted)**

**At AGM September 2017 the co-opted members will be presented for election.**

**There are two vacancies on the Executive**

- To replace Sr Phyllis Behan who has completed her term of Leadership
- To fill the 12<sup>th</sup> position

The Executive will then elect a new Vice President

CONGREGATIO  
PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE  
ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE

Vatican City, 24 August 2017

Prot. n. SpR.1620/16

Dear Fr. Whelan,

Enclosed please find the Decree of Erection of the *Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland*. The same Decree also formally suppresses *The Conference of Religious of Ireland* and approves the Statutes submitted, *ad experimentum*, for a period of five years.

Following your September meeting, we ask that you send a formal request for the granting of a dispensation regarding the participation of representatives of those Lay Organizations which formed part of *The Irish Missionary Union*. In that request, we ask that you also include the request that lay members may serve on the Executive Board of ALMRI

Given the fact that ALMRI would be the first such entity to count laity among its regular members with representation on the Executive Board, which requires a dispensation from the provisions of Canon 708 of the Code of Canon Law, a formal request must be presented in a "*Congresso*" of this *Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life*.

I take this opportunity to send heartfelt congratulations to you and to Sr. Phyllis Behan in being chosen first President and Vice President of this newly formed entity as well as to the other members of the Executive Council. It is my sincere hope that the Association experiences much success in carrying out its noble objectives.

Sincerely in Christ,

\* Jose Rodriguef Carballo, O.F.M.  
*Archbishop Secretary*

CONGREGATIO PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE  
ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE

Prot. n. Sp.R.1620/16

DECREE

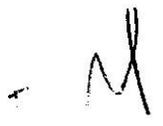
This *Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life* counts among its more important responsibilities that of the erection of Conferences of Major Superiors, the approval of their Statutes and the use and promotion of their collaboration in the best possible way (cf. Apostolic Constitution "Pastor Bonus", n. 109; canon 709).

The same Congregation follows with assiduous interest the development and activities of such Conferences in order to enable them to carry out the objectives assigned to them by Vatican Council II ("Perfectae Caritatis", n. 23) and ratified by the Code of Canon Law (canon 708) with ever greater efficacy.

*The Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI)* erected by this Congregation in 1960 and *The Irish Missionary Union (IMU)*, erected by the Conference of Bishops of Ireland in 1970, have decided to join in the formation of a new entity called *The Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland (ALMRI)*. This newly formed entity has presented its Statutes for approval by this Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

This *Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life*, after having attentively examined the documentation presented, by the present Decree, formally suppresses the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI), formally erects the Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland (ALMRI) and approves the Statutes presented in accord with the provisions of Canon 709, ad experimentum, for a period of five years

All things to the contrary notwithstanding. Given  
in Rome, August 24, 2017 \*

  
\* José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.  
Secretary  
Sincerely in Christ,



Fr. Sebastiano Paciolla, O.Cist



## Report from Secretary General, Liz Murphy RSM



**A New Landscape:** At the AMRI EGM in March I referred to the work of Paul Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson<sup>1</sup> who said there are three scenarios involved in the process of growth and transformation: (i) Falling apart, (ii) Learning to work together, and (iii) Muddling our way forward. Over the past six months as AMRI evolved and began to find its feet we have experienced all three scenarios. In March I also quoted Pope Francis who said the church today is like a “construction site” where various skills and talents are required. In calling forth an Executive I named architects who design, surveyors who measure and calculate, diggers and brick layers, plumbers, electricians and designers. In many ways these skills have all been accessed as the building became a more habitable office for those of us who work there, more welcoming for the many callers who have joined us for various meetings and gatherings, and we are supported by an effective Executive.

Those who write about mergers say that when two organizations become one, there will be a large number of changes required to existing processes as well as entirely new processes to be created. It is necessary to determine what to keep, what to combine and what to replace. Many process tweaks and updates are needed for months after transition to successfully integrate the new to ensure best practice. Six months into the new entity there is less haphazardness, thanks to the staff who have endured tremendous change as they transferred formally to AMRI from both CORI and IMU. Thanks also to the members of the Executive who have met regularly to shape the future of AMRI slowly but surely over the past six months. I am indebted to the many contacts who have gifted AMRI with their wisdom and direction – the Web Group, the Finance Advisory Group members, bank officials, auditors, former staff members, Members and Directors of Companies, Archbishops and Bishops, CPPP personnel, and our landlords – the Missionaries of Africa. As the poet Brendan Kennelly<sup>2</sup> (1976) said in his poem *A Giving*

*I give thanks  
To the giver of images,  
The reticent god who goes about his work  
Determined to hold on to nothing...  
I give thanks*

### AMRI STRUCTURES

AMRI is now a registered **Charity** and a **Company** limited by guarantee. The Constitution states that its main object is “the advancement of religion through the provision of a forum for

<sup>1</sup> Paul Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson (2000): *The Cultural Creatives*. Harmony Books

<sup>2</sup> Brendan Kennelly (1976) *New and Selected Poems*. Gallery Books

consultation and co-operation between catholic religious institutes, societies of apostolic life and missionaries and to provide support and promote the common interests of the member organisations in Ireland.” (No 3). It has other objects which include:

- Supporting the leadership of the member organisations and for the wellbeing of those who serve and support the mission of the member organisations; 4.1
- Raising awareness through member organisations and facilitating responses to current and emerging social justice issues; 4.2
- Fostering and facilitating effective and strategic pastoral care responses in key areas of need for vulnerable people in our time; 4.3
- Bearing witness to Jesus Christ and the Gospel through active participation in the mission of the Catholic Church within the Christian community and wider society respecting the different charisms of the member organisations; 4.4
- Fostering the faith community in its deep yearning to know God and to experience the hope and joy of the gospel, reaching out to those who find themselves on the margins and periphery of society and Church at home and abroad. 4.5

This Constitution guides the work of AMRI and directs the Executive to plan strategically to ensure compliance in terms of governance and finance. The staff implement the strategic plan.

AMRI is also a **Canonical** entity with Statutes recently approved by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL) that echo those in the Constitution. Its Identity statement reads:

The Association is a body which seeks to serve the leadership and thereby the membership of Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life. Its purpose is to encourage, support and facilitate leaders and religious generally and to provide an arena in which they can work together in the mission they hold in common. 2.1

With such sound structures now confidently in place, thanks to Rev Lemoncelli in Rome and Nicola Keogh L & P (Company Secretary) one thinks of Seamus Heaney’s (1966) poem Scaffolding<sup>3</sup>

*Masons, when they start upon a building,  
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;  
Make sure that planks wont slip at busy points,  
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.  
And yet all this comes down when the job’s done  
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.*

These structures leave AMRI better positioned to thrive in the constantly changing landscape of church and state in Ireland today. In collaboration with all our members, accompanied by good teamwork and careful planning AMRI can now take its place confidently and prophetically.

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<sup>3</sup> Seamus Heaney (1966): Death of a Naturalist. Faber & Faber

AMRI co-sponsors two other Companies: **COIMIRCE CLG** trading as **National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church** and **CCSS Ltd** trading as **Towards Healing**. New Members have recently been appointed by the AMRI Executive to both companies, and new Directors have been appointed to Towards Healing. Members meet with the four Archbishops who are the co-sponsors and attend the AGMs (Coimirce on 4 September 2017 and Towards Healing on 30 May 2017). Details on both of these are found later in this report.

## **COLLABORATION**

Many years ago Loughlan Sofield and Carroll Juliano (1987)<sup>4</sup> were writing about the importance of collaboration. They highlighted its value, the obstacles encountered, a spirituality for an apostolic-collaborative lifestyle and the skills required for anyone ministering collaboratively. AMRI cannot function in isolation. In these challenging times in Ireland which Breda O'Brien (2017)<sup>5</sup> has described as now a “more jaded and cynical place,” it has been heartening, over the past six months to collaborate with many partners, companions, and friends both nationally and internationally, as we continue to network and link with the many courageous and valiant men and women who are rebuilding the church and contributing to society today. Evidence of this is very evident in the following pages.

Where do we go from here and how? This is the first AGM of the very recently established AMRI. Jonathan Sacks (2009)<sup>6</sup>, a Jewish rabbi and social commentator, offers some guidelines in his book *The Home We Build Together*. He believes that the future of society is based on the ancient covenant between God and Abraham. He wonders if we want to live like people in a hotel as paying guests, as visitors in a large country house, or could we build ‘home’ where the gifts of different groups are brought together for the common good? This paradigm replaces old ones of singularity, isolation, individualism and the Irish ‘me féin’ approach. We will only know our way ‘home’ by trying to walk together into the future believing, like John O’Donohue<sup>7</sup> (2001) that

*Unknown to us, there are moments*

*When crevices we cannot see open*

*For time to come alive with beginning.*

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<sup>4</sup> Loughlan Sofield and Carroll Juliano (1987) Collaborative Ministry: Skills and Guidelines. Ave Maria Press

<sup>5</sup> Breda O’Brien in The Irish Times 26 August 2017

<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Sacks (2009): The Home we build Together: Recreating Society. Bloomsbury Academic

<sup>7</sup> John O’Donohue (2001) From the Beginning in Conamara Blues

**JUSTICE: Sheila Curran, RSM****OVERVIEW**

In 2015 the IMU/CORI Justice desk was interim with a focus on displacement of peoples. It had the following aims:

- ✓ To work on issues related to Asylum Seekers/Migrants/Refugees from both a national and international perspective as well as taking account the root causes including poverty, economic under-development, political instability, violence, and environmental degradation.
- ✓ To work closely with CORI/IMU members to create spaces for discussion and collaboration among members. Also to work with partner organizations to identify possible practical initiatives or common projects that might be undertaken to address the needs of people in the areas of migration, asylum seekers, and refugees.
- ✓ To work on and promote a process of theological reflection in the work for justice.
- ✓ To work with groups from other faith traditions and promote interfaith dialogue

**REVIEW OF WORK UNDERTAKEN FROM MAY 2016 – AUGUST 2017**

The activities undertaken by the CORI/IMU Justice Desk emerged from a survey which was conducted in October 2015 to which 52 member congregations

(out of 147) responded. A brief summary of these activities is now outlined:

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

In order to fulfil these activities, the Justice Coordinator has entered into a number of strategic partnerships including:

**Housing and Integration in partnership with the Irish Refugee Council.**

The housing of refugees and asylum seekers has been a challenging task for the Department of Justice and Equality and the Irish Red Cross since 2015. The Irish Red Cross (IRC) has been mandated by the Department of Justice and Equality to assist with the delivery and provision of accommodation and integration supports under the Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP). Numerous meetings between Faith Groups, NGOs, Minister Stanton TD and the Irish Red Cross have taken place over this period but a clear policy on housing and integration from the Government is still awaited. In the past month (July 2017) the IRC employed Eve Leonard as a Migration Programme Manager and she has been working on the IRC's accommodation placement options, leasing agreements and integration, and community supports. Our position is included in this and there are ongoing conversations as we continue to dialogue with them and other groups in our support of refugees and migrants.

The Justice Coordinator has been working with the Irish Refugee Council and our members on an integrated housing strategy. A number of congregations have generously offered a total of 16 properties for the housing of refugees as part of this strategy. The congregations are: St Patrick's Missionary Society, Loreto IBVM, Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, Sisters of Mercy South Central

Province, Franciscans, Order of Friars Minor, Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of the Apostle, Christian Brothers European Province and the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd. This is not simply a matter of handing over property. Most of the members of these congregations have also been providing logistic support to the families who are being housed in their properties. We are grateful for their enormous generosity. With the help of The Society of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (Northbrook Road), Mercy International Centre, the Lantern Centre and the Mercy Sisters in Maynooth we have recently secured emergency accommodation for an asylum seeker and her son.

### **Partnerships for Befriending and Language Support for Refugees**

**Spirasi Befriending Project:** The Justice Coordinator works closely with Deirdre Markey, co-ordinator of the Spirasi Befriending Project. This project is flourishing and there are currently over 35 Sisters and 2 men participating in it. A number of our members who are trained psychotherapists volunteer their services in Spirasi's Counselling Service. Spirasi is making a special appeal for male befrienders to think seriously about participating in this programme

**NASC and Doras Luimni:** The Justice Coordinator works closely with both of these organisations. Sisters are involved in befriending refugees or teaching English as a second language in Cork and Limerick through NASC and Doras Luimni. NASC, with the financial support from AMRI Solidarity Fund, produced an excellent short video entitled *Safe Passage on Family Reunification*. This can be viewed on the AMRI website: [www.amri.ie](http://www.amri.ie)

### **Support for English Language**

**Training:** English language support is vital for the integration of refugees and members are involved in providing English Language support with the following agencies: Irish Refugee Council, Columban Project, Lantern Centre, Doras Luimni, and NASC.

**ENAR:** AMRI is an active member of European Anti-Racism Network (ENAR).

### **Office for the Promotion of Migration**

**Integration:** The Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration contacted AMRI Justice with a request for our members to provide support for vulnerable refugee families in Galway, Cork, and Kerry. Thankfully, some of our members have responded to these urgent requests.

### **Justice for the Undocumented**

AMRI Justice has worked in conjunction with the Migrant Rights Centre on their campaign *Justice for the Undocumented*. MRCI estimates that there are between 20,000 and 26,000 undocumented migrants - including children and families



- living and working in Ireland. We are calling for the Irish Government to introduce a

scheme to allow undocumented migrants the chance to come forward and regularise their situation.

To mark St Patrick's Day the Justice Coordinator, who was one of the main speakers at the event, worked with the MRCI to organise a vigil in support of undocumented people in Ireland and the USA in front of the Central Bank of Ireland. We also helped to connect the MRCI with the Mayor of Boston and with Religious Congregations working with

undocumented migrants in the USA. This campaign continues.

### **Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference**

The Justice Coordinator works closely with Dr. Conn MacGabhann, the research coordinator for the Council of Justice and Peace, and also represents AMRI on the



Bishops' Commission for International and Social Affairs.

### **Dicastery**

#### **Promoting Integral Human**

**Development:** On the recent visit of Monsignor Figuerido from the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development with special responsibility for refugees and migrants Sheila gave a presentation on AMRI's response to the Refugee Crisis.

### **AMRI Refugee Solidarity Fund**

It was not the aim of the Justice Desk to become a funding agency. It happened by default! A number of congregations wanted to contribute financially to the integration of refugees into Ireland. As a result, the CORI/IMU Refugee Solidarity Fund was established. It is now known as the **AMRI Refugee Solidarity Fund**.

The aim of the fund was to contribute to the integration of Asylum Seekers, Refugees and Migrants to Ireland irrespective of religious affiliation. A small committee formed: Sr. Margaret Lynch, RGS, Fr. John Kilcran CSSp and Sr. Sheila Curran, RSM. Bro. Martin O Flaherty, CFC was a member of the committee until April, 2016. A funding application form was designed and the agreement was that funding would be

allocated to organisations rather than to individuals. The fund was managed by Sr. Catherina Tarpey OP, then Finance Secretary for CORI. The upper limit given to a single project from the fund was €10,000. There were 13 applications in total and €98,500 was distributed to: Spirasi: Befriending Project, Irish Refugee Council: Integration and Housing Project, Dun Laoghaire Refugee Project, Dublin City Interfaith Forum, Lantern Centre, Doras Luimni, Ruhama, Crosscare Refugee Service, Cultur Migrants Centre, Place of Sanctuary Waterford, NASC Cork, Welcome English Centre Cork Laois Community and Enterprise Development Partnership. These projects are currently sending in their reports. During the year congregations continued to send in money to this fund and there is now opportunity to offer a further round of funding.

## **INFLUENCING POLICY AND ADVOCACY**

### **The Irish Refugee and Migrant**

**Coalition:** On behalf of AMRI the Justice Coordinator is a founding member and plays an active role in this. We have lobbied the Government on a number of occasions. Our latest statement was issued for World Refugee Day on 20 June calling on the Irish Government to welcome and protect people seeking safety.

**Justice for Undocumented:** Presentations made on behalf of undocumented people for "leave to remain" in Ireland.

### **Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change:**

The Justice Coordinator sent in a submission to the Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change. See AMRI website.

### **Interfaith Dialogue**

Interfaith dialogue is a key area for the AMRI Justice Desk. The Justice Coordinator is an active member of the Dublin City Interfaith Forum (DCIF). In the wake of the Manchester tragedy members of the Forum went together to sign the Book of Condolences in the Mansion House in Dublin and had a simple prayer service. During World Refugee Week the Justice Coordinator was involved in the planning and organising of a ritual for remembering all migrants and refugees who lost their lives trying to reach Europe. This event took place at the Famine Monument on the morning of 20<sup>th</sup> June. In the evening we organised an event focusing on *Refugees: A Journey of Faith and Hope* in the Dublin City Council offices at Wood Quay. 60 people, including our members, attended this event. As a member of DCIF there was involvement with Dublin City Council in the organizing of an Inter-faith event on the 17<sup>th</sup> September entitled *Culture, Faith, Cohesion, Merging from Tolerance to Inclusion* at Wood Quay.

The AMRI Justice Desk is also a member of a network of Christian organisations working on the issues of forced migration including *Embrace NI* and the *Irish Council of Churches*.

**Amal Women's Association:** On 20 June AMRI hosted a conversation morning with two women from Amal Women's Association who shared on their work with the Syrian Refugees, Ramadan and the Eid festival. The women were grateful for the

donations from our members in support of the Eid project for Syrian Refugees.

### **Theological Reflection**

God says in Isaiah 43:18-19 "A new thing is happening ...can you perceive it." On-going theological formation together with theological reflection are essential in the work for Justice.

### **INSTITUTE FOR THEOLOGICAL PARTNERSHIP, UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER**

The Justice Coordinator is a Research Fellow with the University of Winchester and is working in partnership with them in developing modules for theological reflection.

### **Lenten Reflections**

The Justice Coordinator organised a series of Lenten reflections this year at Mercy International Centre, Dublin which was well attended.

### **AMRI NORTHERN IRELAND**



The Justice Coordinator was the key speaker at the AMRI Northern Ireland Annual Conference. The presentation - *A Christian Response to Forced*

*Displacement* - is available on the AMRI website.

### **FAITH UNDER FIRE: TELLING THE STORY**

The Justice Coordinator is working with Dr. Diane Kirby from University of Ulster, Belfast on a project entitled *Faith under*

**Fire.** This project involves Sisters who worked in conflict zones around the world, including inner city areas in the developed world, the UK, USA and Western Europe. The main aim of the project is to record the Sisters and their recollections, experiences and the challenges they confronted living and working with communities in troubled regions. The hope is that the material would also provide a valuable tool for theological reflection.

### LAUDATO SI' AND CATHOLIC INVESTING

Trocaire invited the Justice Coordinator to attend a conference in Rome in January 2017 on *Laudato Si' and Catholic Investing*. This work continues with Trocaire.

### SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

The Justice Coordinator has offered advice and support to members during the year. Material has been posted on the website and there is a specific mailing list for those who wish to receive on-going communication. If you wish to add your name to this list please send me an email.

### CONCLUSION

I have given a brief overview of the work that has taken place since the IMU AGM in May 2016 through the AMRI EGM in March 2017 and to date. The work of justice is essential to proclaiming the Gospel. Today the displacement of peoples challenges us to work for a world of inclusion. The degradation of the environment calls on us to see the interconnectedness of all of life. As AMRI moves forward into the future we will be challenged to hear and respond to both “the cry of Earth and the cry of the Poor”

in new and prophetic ways. Together we can respond to this challenge.

### QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Now that AMRI is formally constituted it is time to review the aims outlined in 2015 with a view to including other areas of justice such as “the cry of Earth,” the degradation of the environment and liaising with those involved with trafficking of people. The following questions are offered for your ongoing reflection in your congregations/societies and organisations:

1. **What is the status of the Justice Desk and what is its mandate?**
2. **Is it representative or consultative? Is it operational or just co-ordinating?**
3. **How do we link the work of the Justice desk in Ireland with that of our members working overseas? Can we be both global and national?**
4. **How does AMRI wish to engage with new theologies of our times?**

A huge thank you to all who have supported the work of Justice in the past year. Please feel free to contact me [sheila.curran@amri.ie](mailto:sheila.curran@amri.ie), on 087 3582111 or 01 5310055.



## EDUCATION Eithne Woulfe SSL

### OVERVIEW



Historically the CORI Education desk had a strong emphasis on Trail Blazing underpinned by a significant research capacity. Much of the current public

educational investment in reversing educational disadvantage in this country is predicated on this work. More recently, the focus has been on Catholic Education in a growing secular and competitive context. This has centered on Religious Education and Formation, and the development of new structures, (such as Trusteeship developments, the Catholic Schools Partnership), systems and partnerships. The overall aim to enable the sustainability of a vibrant Catholic Education sector in formal contexts (Primary, Post Primary, Third Level), and informal (Adult and Community Education) into a future, where this sector, is increasingly lay led and managed.

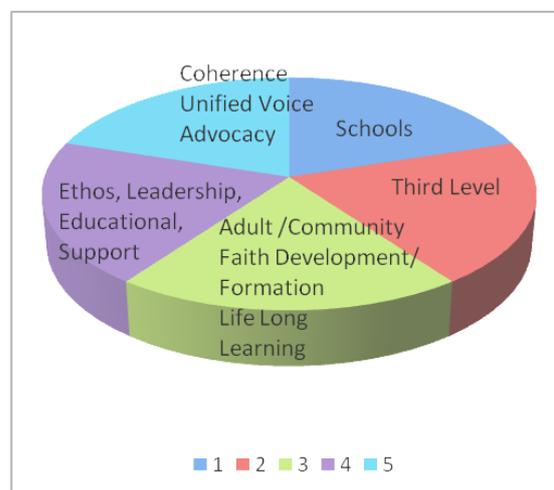
Thus the **Catholic Education Service Committee and Trust**, a joint CORI/Irish Episcopal Conference agency (CESC) currently comprising six Bishops and six religious leaders (AMRI), set up in 2010, has a remit for the strategic direction of Catholic Education at all levels in Ireland.

CESC priorities are:

1. To foster coherence in Catholic Education at a national level – further relationships between Catholic Bodies.
2. To provide a unified voice for Catholic Education in the public forum and with educational bodies and the Government.

3. To support the roles of Governance, Trusteeship and Management.
4. To support Catholic Educators in the core activities of learning and teaching to foster high quality lifelong learning and faith development for all learners.
5. Support the ethos of Catholic schools and educational leadership development (induction, in-service and quality assurance) in relation to ethos.

### CATHOLIC EDUCATION SERVICE



**The Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education (NICCE)** assumes a similar role for Northern Ireland.

### Update 2016/7

The Education Desk (CORI/now AMRI), a service assured on a part time basis, has focussed on:

- Restructuring of Post Primary Management/Trusteeship: Engagement with this process is in the pursuit of greater synergy and sustainability for Catholic Trusteeship and Management interests. This has included research on related Church structures and systems

across EU countries, where Catholic schools are largely publicly funded.

- Catholic Schools Trusteeship Service (N.I.) The establishment of the Catholic Schools Trusteeship service of Northern Ireland, as the executive arm of the Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education.
- Engagement with Statutory Bodies: The submission of written responses to the proposed changes to Primary school curriculum and to legislation on School Enrolment with particular reference to Primary schools in Ireland. This included a subsequent meeting with the Minister for Education and Skills on this issue, and its potential implications for faith support, ethos and R.E. in Catholic Primary schools.
- Catholic Schools Partnership: Engagement with the Catholic Schools Partnership on a promotion process for Catholic Education, and preparing for annual Catholic Schools Week.
- R.E./Formation: Participation in fora relating to curriculum development with particular reference to Religious Education and Formation.
- Active membership of the Council of Catholic Maintained Schools (N.I.), the Joint Managerial Body (JMB), Council of Management of Catholic Schools (CMCSS), and the Catholic Schools Partnership (CSP).

## **FUTURE MANAGEMENT AND TRUSTEESHIP STRUCTURES for POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN IRELAND**

The publication of the findings of a consultation process with trustees, school

Boards of Management in 2014, *Catholic Education at Second Level in the Republic of Ireland – Looking to the Future*, identified the urgent need to take a fresh look at current structures. The Catholic Education Service Committee (CESC) subsequently set up a project group to develop a strategic plan to this effect. This plan was accepted in principle by both the Irish Episcopal Conference and AMRI Executive in Spring 2017.

A number of consultation meetings were held with key stakeholders between April and June, with an invitation to respond in writing to the plan. This invitation yielded a rich spectrum of replies. An initial impression suggests that all respondents are agreed on the need for greater collaboration across the Catholic Post Primary sector and on the recognition of subsidiarity in any future structures. There is a desire for more information and clarifications. The responses have raised a number of questions which will be considered by CESC.

The Executive Committee of CESC is currently in the process of setting up an Implementation Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Gerry Lundy. Eithne Woulfe (AMRI) will act as executive secretary to the group.

## **NORTHERN IRELAND COMMISSION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION and CATHOLIC SCHOOLS TRUSTEESHIP SERVICE (N.I.)**

The Northern Ireland Commission for Catholic Education is a trustee body comprising the Northern Bishops, religious, diocesan vicars for Education, and ERST, a lay Trust. Directors have been meeting monthly and Members meetings are held at least twice a year.

NICCE has recently succeeded in setting up the Catholic Schools Trustee Service (N.I.) and appointed a CEO, Fintan Murphy, from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2017.

The new service will support trustees fulfil their responsibilities in Primary and Post Primary schools. The professional capacity which will be supplemented by voluntary service, will be funded through member subscriptions based on pupil numbers, and a Grant from the Department of Education, for specific areas of the services. The preparation of work plans for the new CEO is afoot. A key feature of the working process is to overtly integrate faith/Gospel values, and criteria into the 'what, and how' of the plans as they are developed, implemented and evaluated.

**The Future Trusteeship of Religious Schools:** Part of the giftedness of Catholic Voluntary schools is their being able to enhance the diversity of the Catholic family of schools in a diocese/country, as part of the mission of the church there. A number of new lay schools trusts are already set up as civil entities and PJPs of the Irish Episcopal Conference. This is a source of ongoing consideration among some religious across N.I. A recent meeting between the Conference of Religious of England & Wales (COREW) and the London based Catholic Education Service for England and Wales was informative on this matter in exploring possible ways forward.

**PRIMARY SCHOOLS, R.E., SACRAMENTALISATION – Paradigms? Reflection...**

The changing profile of Primary schools, families, and indeed Church affiliation means that the traditional tripod of family, school and parish, in handing on faith, is also fast disappearing. Many children, no longer attend Catholic schools and seek sacramentalisation. Undue reliance on the traditional role of schools by families may

possibly at times have contributed to a less than vibrant local and domestic faith community. This is true of both adults and young people. **But is it an opportunity to recast faith development and education at all levels, in homes, small communities, parishes, pastoral teams, schools, for adults, young people and children?**

The Sacramental preparation programme *Do This in Memory* will be revised and launched as part of the World Meeting of Families, with an **invitation to intergenerational catechesis**. The new catechetical programme for Catholic Primary schools has a strong emphasis on parental engagement – **can we build on this and support such adult and intergenerational catechesis/evangelisation somehow? Where and how relate to Diocesan and other Faith Development Services?** The models are there, many of them simple and can we translate and indigenise them in the name of the Gospel for an Ireland of today and the future? Indeed, many countries, familiar to members, promote a vibrant ministry of catechesis and evangelisation, through formation and support, with the help of some professional guidance. What seeds are awaiting planting, nurture, growth? Are there openings, needs, opportunities here in our time and place?

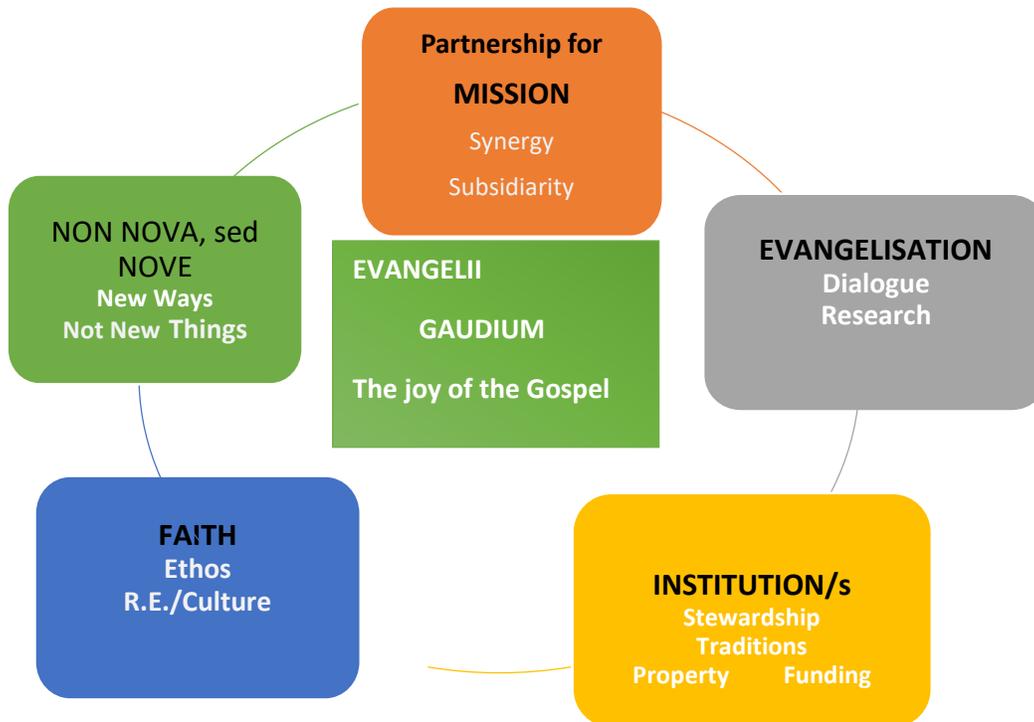
**Conclusion:** The 'how and where' of sharing and proclaiming the Gospel in our times have many guises, many unfamiliar, some time bound, others enduring.

The formal (churches, schools, etc) and informal setting have a place and as such, are to be supported and evaluated, in a context of integrity and capacity for mission.

Might priority be given to the identification and support of locations that actively enable vocational lay leadership?

## Questions for Consideration

1. **Evangelisation:** The face of Primary schools including traditional Catholic ones and parishes is changing. **What opportunities and challenges, with particular reference to R.E., Evangelisation, Sacramental preparation, do these changes offer AMRI members, associates, parishes and their communities?**
2. **Migrants:** The educational outcomes for new and aspiring *Irish* young people are unknown, and many have no right to public funding for post compulsory schooling. **Is there a danger that an underclass of 1<sup>st</sup> generation Irish and migrants is being created? Is a research project to track educational journeys of these cohorts of people desirable as a basis for advocacy, policy development, public awareness and a more inclusive society? Please comment and make suggestions.**
3. **Northern Ireland Trusteeship:** The Catholic Schools Trusteeship Service will offer much support to individual trustees, and is a coordinated One Church approach across dioceses, congregations, and the Edmund Rice Schools Trust (ERST). This includes responsibility for property issues and liabilities, including the vesting and ownership ones. **Amid these responsibilities, what are ways forward for other religious trustees in Northern Ireland?**
4. **Golden Jubilee of Free Education:** Free Post Primary schooling, and school transport in rural areas were introduced in 1967, and enjoyed rapid success, changing the face of Ireland for many. The Church (congregations and dioceses) made a huge contribution to the success of this project. **What and if so, how, might this story be recorded, celebrated?**





## Pat O'Donovan RSM

The Health Ministry Office, which was part of the CORI Structure, continued to operate within AMRI until my recent retirement on July 31, 2017.

### Health Ministry Office: Two Main Areas of Focus

#### (a) Support for religious orders and congregations in their efforts

- (i) to promote, protect and maintain the health and well-being of their members, and
- (ii) to provide appropriate and life-enhancing environments where ageing and vulnerable members are cared for, and where they have opportunity to continue flourishing as human persons until the end of their earthly lives;

The Health Ministry Office continued to offer support around care of members to Religious Orders and Congregations, on request, until the end of July 2017: Phone Conversations; Visits to the Health Office; Facilitation of reflection and planning sessions for leaders and care personnel regarding care of members;

#### (b) Collaboration with the Irish Episcopal Conference (IEC) on Health /Healthcare-Related Issues

Collaboration with the Irish Episcopal Conference (IEC), through membership of the Council for Healthcare of the IEC and the Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB): active participation in analyzing and addressing health-related and healthcare chaplaincy issues and concerns as they arise within the Irish healthcare system and within Irish society generally:



#### *The Council for Healthcare IEC*

Meetings of the Council for Healthcare were scheduled for September and November 2016, and for February, May and September 2017.

Sr. Pat O'Donovan, who is a CORI nominee on the Council for Healthcare IEC, is also responsible for the administrative and secretarial services needed by the Council.

Issues addressed by the Council during 2016/17 included:

- Drafting of *Catholic Code of Ethical Standards for Healthcare in Ireland*;
- Developments in Healthcare Chaplaincy;
- Pastoral Care of persons who suffer with dementia, and of their families;

### ***The Healthcare Chaplaincy Board (HCB)***

The Healthcare Chaplaincy Board is a sub-committee of the Council for Healthcare. The HCB is responsible for the Certification of Catholic Healthcare Chaplains and the Accreditation of Clinical Pastoral Education Programmes. It also has oversight for the promotion and development of Catholic healthcare chaplaincy throughout Ireland.



Chaplain certification interviews were held throughout the year. Re-accreditation site visits were arranged for the Clinical Pastoral Education programme at the Mater Hospital Dublin during the summer of 2016, and at St. John of God Hospital, Stillorgan in the autumn of 2016.

A Mass and Presentation of Certificates to newly certified chaplains was arranged during April 2017. This event took place at St. John of God Hospital, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin.

The *Standards for Certification for Catholic Healthcare Chaplains* are currently being revised.

### ***HSE Multi-Faith Healthcare Chaplaincy Professional Advisory Council***

Meetings of the HSE Multi-Faith Healthcare Chaplaincy Professional Advisory Council are normally held bi-monthly. Sr. Pat O'Donovan is a nominee of the Council for Healthcare (IEC) on the HSE Multi-Faith Healthcare Chaplaincy Professional Advisory Council. The Council is currently addressing the need for Standards of Practice for chaplains in HSE chaplaincy positions.

### ***Support Network for Catholic Healthcare Chaplains***

The Support Network for Catholic Healthcare Chaplains is an initiative of the Council for Healthcare. An Assembly for the Network was held at the Hilton Kilmainham Hotel in October 2016. The keynote speaker was Francis Campbell, Vice-Chancellor, St. Mary's University Twickenham. The title of his presentation was 'Catholic Healthcare in a Pluralist Society'. Meetings of the Liaison Chaplains from the dioceses were held throughout the year.

Coordinating the work of the Health Ministry Office has been a privilege and a source of personal and professional enrichment for which I am most grateful. Thank you.

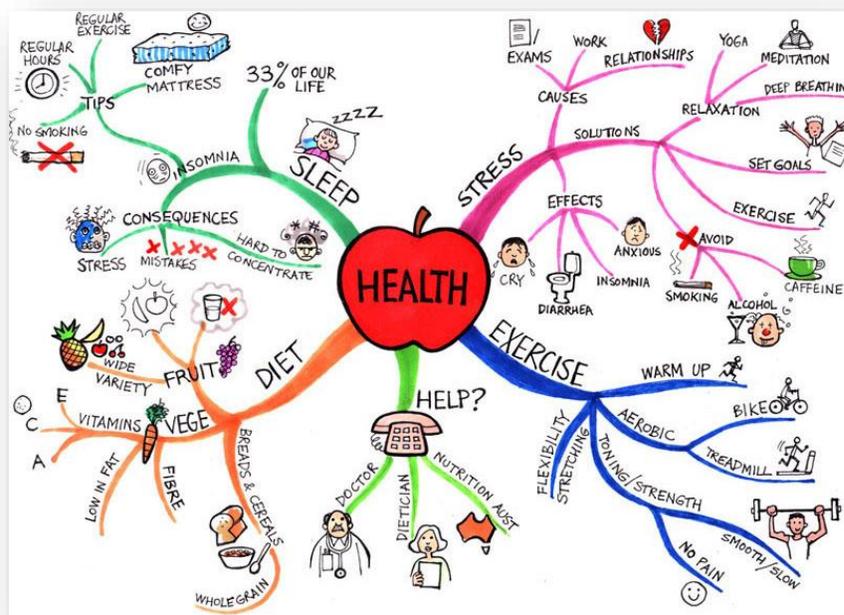


**All of us at AMRI join in thanking Sr Pat for her immense contribution to CORI for the past 5½ years. Not only has Pat served in the area of Health Ministry but also was acting Secretary General for some months. We wish her health and happiness into the future.**



## Questions:

- (i) How can AMRI support its members in providing care for the health and well-being of their members?
- (ii) Should AMRI (a) become actively engaged in important conversations around developments in health policy at national and international levels; and (b) offer support to religious orders/congregations and missionary societies/organizations who provide health care and social care within Ireland (in the voluntary and private sectors) and in countries abroad?
- (iii) How might AMRI be involved in health protection, health promotion and health care for migrants and refugees within Ireland and in countries where members have a presence?
- (iv) In planning for the next phase of the AMRI Health Desk/Office what are your recommendations for Pat's successor?



## Report from Jim Farrell, Lay Mission Coordinator



### Introduction

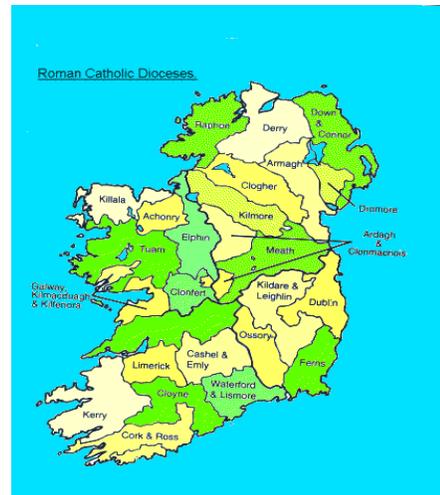
I took up the role as a Lay Mission Coordinator with the Irish Missionary Union (IMU) in July 2015. Much of my initial work was involved in building positive relationships with faith based organisations, the local dioceses, and making contact with many returned lay missionaries. This led to the setting up of Lay Mission Support Groups in various dioceses. The IMU's decision to support the role of Lay Mission Coordinator was a very important one. On transition to AMRI in March 2017 the work continued. The new entity is an exciting venture and I believe it will actively continue to support the recognition and promotion of the contribution of lay missionaries both at home and abroad.

### Lay Missionaries

Finding a way to utilise the skills and enthusiasm of returned lay missionaries in Ireland is a challenge which requires passion, patience and good positive networking with the local Church in Ireland. In order to meet this challenge, Lay Mission Support Groups have been set up in 6 dioceses so far: Down & Connor, Derry, Raphoe, Dublin, Kildare & Leighlin and Cashel & Emly. Contact to date has been made with over 200 returned lay missionaries and volunteers. The main purpose of these groups is to gather together returned lay missionaries and volunteers who have worked overseas in different

countries to discuss issues of common concern, and to facilitate them in finding a meaningful role in the Irish Church. Some of the core objectives of these lay mission groups include:

- to facilitate lay missionaries in finding a meaningful role within the Irish Church on their return to Ireland;
- to provide support for lay missionaries from the diocese going abroad with recognised lay mission organisations;
- to develop a community sense of support for lay missionaries in parishes, schools and youth organisations;
- to enable lay people to get the necessary theological and missiological education needed to be effective missionaries abroad, and to participate in Church activities on their return.



These groups can also act as a support network for those who are currently on overseas assignments and more especially upon their return to Ireland. Some returned volunteers and lay missionaries have reported that they find it difficult to talk about their faith and overseas experience with their peers in a more secular Ireland when they return. Many would like to become more involved in their parish and

diocese. Sometimes this can be difficult for a variety of reasons, hence the value of having a Lay Mission Support Group working closely with each diocese.

A recent example of this occurred in Cashel & Emly diocese where the first gathering for 20 returned lay missionaries and volunteers took place on Wednesday June 7th 2017 at an event hosted by Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly in his house in Thurles. It was a



great opportunity for people who had worked overseas to share their stories together and to

receive a hearty welcome and hospitality from Archbishop Kieran (SMA), a fellow missionary who has worked in Nigeria and Liberia. The feedback from the group was very positive and they are meeting again on September 6<sup>th</sup> to plan ahead for the future. Some of the other groups are already making plans to become involved in promoting October Mission Month either in their parishes or by offering to speak at Masses in their dioceses about their experience overseas on mission. These groups are working closely with **World Missions Ireland** through the Diocesan Pontifical Missions Societies directors. Anyone wishing to contribute or become involved in the development of Lay Mission Support Groups in dioceses are most welcome and can email me at [jim.farrell@amrie.ie](mailto:jim.farrell@amrie.ie) for more information.

### **Returned Missionaries**

Several programmes for returned missionaries had been established by Deirdre Ruane, an IMU employee, with funding from Misean Cara. This included a Transition programme for recently returned missionaries, retreats, Fit for Life

programme and a partnership with UCD. With the encouragement of Liz, our AMRI Secretary General, I got involved with some of these programmes from January 2017.

### **UCD partnership with AMRI**

UCD Volunteers Overseas (UCDVO) facilitated a number of IT Skills Exchange workshops for returned missionaries during the months of February and March 2017 at the UCD campus. On this course, 12 UCDVO volunteers who were preparing to travel to Tanzania to work on a computer education project, tutored 11 returned missionaries in IT skills. In return, missionaries shared their stories of working overseas to help the students prepare for their work in Tanzania. Students also got an insight from the returned missionaries about the challenges of working in another culture, tips on how to cope, and the importance of learning to engage with another culture.



On the final day of the programme, a story-telling event took place at UCD campus, where missionaries told of their own personal journey which brought them to work in many different countries in Africa and South America. A graduation ceremony followed with students presenting certificates to the missionaries on completion of their IT Skills Training Programme. We are deeply grateful to Zoe Liston from UCD for facilitating this intergenerational event.

### **Fit for Life**

A very popular Fit for Life programme for seasoned missionaries organised by AMRI has been taking place at the Blessed Sacrament Chapel Hall, Bachelor's Walk in

Dublin's city centre each Wednesday morning from 10am-11am with an average of 12-15 people attending each week. Those who have been attending have enjoyed the classes which are especially tailored to meet people's needs and of course it is an ideal opportunity to meet up socially and have a cup of coffee or tea. This programme will recommence in September and we look forward to having a 'full house' with energetic participants. Please ensure your returned missionaries are aware of this.

### **Coordinated Parish Promotions Programme (CPPP)**

The IMU in conjunction with the Irish Bishops engage annually in CPPP or a Coordinated Parish Promotions Programme. The five year plan from 2012-2016 had concluded so AMRI embarked on a new programme from 2017 – 2022. Not only had we a new calendar but we had to take new requirements into account, particularly in relation to Garda Vetting and Financial accountability. We held two CPPP meetings at the AMRI office on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017 with full participation from those involved. At the last meeting, two speakers were invited to address the gathering: Sandra Neville, Garda Vetting Officer for AMRI, and Lucy Masterson, CEO of Charities Institute Ireland. Sandra shared with the group the latest information on Garda Vetting procedures for those involved in delivering CPPP in dioceses in the south of Ireland. Lucy Masterson spoke about Fundraising, the Charity Legislation, and the safety implications for those who are collecting funds for congregations and missionary societies in dioceses in Ireland.

A new handbook on the Coordinated Parish Promotions Programme has been printed which is a valuable resource for those



involved. Work is underway to draw up specific guidelines for CPPP in dioceses in the north of Ireland. If you need copies of this book please contact me at AMRI 01 5310055

### **MISSION MONTH OCTOBER 2017**

October is Mission Month, and this year Mission Sunday will be celebrated globally on the **22<sup>nd</sup> October 2017**. World Missions Ireland, in conjunction with AMRI, will be coordinating this year's Mission Sunday Mass on RTE. The theme this year is ***Reach Out, Spread the Joy***. World Missions Ireland and AMRI are inviting missionaries to attend the Mission Sunday Mass which will broadcast on RTE on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2017. Numbers are limited. If you are interested in participating, please contact me on 01- 5310055 or [jim.farrell@amri.ie](mailto:jim.farrell@amri.ie).



### **Looking ahead**

- Two new lay mission support groups are being set up in the dioceses of Kerry and Meath during the month of September with hopes for another two groups to start up before Christmas 2017.

- Fit for Life classes for AMRI members resume in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel Hall, Bachelor's Walk, Dublin 1 on September 6<sup>th</sup> at 10am. If you or one of your returned missionaries would like to book a place, please contact me at 01 53 100 55 or [jim.farrell@amri.ie](mailto:jim.farrell@amri.ie). Classes cost €5, payable on the day.
- The next IT Skills Exchange workshop which will be organised by the UCD Volunteers Overseas (UCDVO), in partnership with AMRI, will take place early in 2018. If you are interested in getting involved in next year's programme, please me.
- Other events and activities are being planned for the remainder of 2017 and will be communicated to AMRI members on the website and through emails. We plan to have a special programme for newly returned missionaries in late September/October.

#### **Questions to consider as we move forward:**

- 1. How can AOTI members work with lay missionaries and faith volunteers who have returned to Ireland to give more life to the local Church here?**
- 2. How will Lay Mission Support Groups contribute to more lay people becoming involved in their local parish/diocese drawing on their overseas missionary experience?**
- 3. Are there other potential intergenerational opportunities in which missionaries can meet young people in Ireland?**

## RELIGIOUS LIFE FORMATION PROGRAMME (RFMP)

Sr Ann Concannon, SSL. Director



The Religious Formation Ministry Programme, based at Willow Park, Blackrock, is now beginning its 36<sup>th</sup> year, having sent off a group of 15 participants on June 9<sup>th</sup>. That was a particularly small group which brought its own blessings and challenges. But all the participants left with a sense that the programme had enabled them to grow and develop in significant ways, and felt more ready to help others on their journeys. Twelve

have already begun to work in initial formation in their congregations, but all will carry the fruits of RFMP into their ministries – in Benin, Cameroon, Fiji, Ireland, Kenya, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Zambia.

The beginning of the 2016-17 programme saw a very significant change in RFMP with the departure of Anne Harte Barry, who had been Director of the programme for 16 years. In those years, she had, with the collaboration of various team members, worked for the ongoing evolution of the programme so that it kept pace with developing trends while being faithful to the founding spirit. She has made a great contribution to the universal church.



This year we have a new model of team: two full-time (Ann and Tom) and two part-time members (Peter and Geraldine). This will bring both enrichment and challenge, but we are all aware of the importance of team in RFMP and are committed to making it work. All of us on the team are conscious of the privilege it is to be here, accompanying the participants on this journey which is a participatory experience, yet is unique for each of them.

The 2017-18 group has 26 participants, from countries ranging from Burkina Faso and Ghana in the west to Bangladesh in the east, and from Pakistan in the north to South Africa in the south! Most have come from congregations/orders/societies which have sent participants in the past, but there are a few completely new congregations this year.



We are blessed with our location in the grounds of Willow Park School in Blackrock, courtesy of the Spiritans. RFMP is still finding its place within AMRI, but that will unfold as the year goes on. We appreciate all that Liz Murphy, as Secretary General, is doing to help us make the transition from IMU to AMRI.

## GARDA VETTING Sandra Neville



**Contact details:** Email: [neville.sandra@gmail.com](mailto:neville.sandra@gmail.com) and  
Mobile: 087 9844779

The National Vetting Bureau Act ([www.vetting.garda.ie](http://www.vetting.garda.ie)) commenced in April 2016. The Document in relation to Church Personnel can be accessed on [www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie) under Standard 1 Page 20. AMRI offers a Garda Vetting service to affiliated congregations/societies/organisations who

wish to avail of this service. I am contracted by AMRI to conduct this service which is in keeping with the “promotion of religion” as outlined in the AMRI Constitution.

The vetting process is now done via the E Vetting system, which means it is all done online rather than through a paper application. While this may be seen complex and somewhat awesome it has become much more user friendly and less time consuming than previously. Over the past six months I have completed more than **420** applications for AMRI staff, for members, and for many staff employed or volunteering with the members of AMRI. I have also addressed one of the meetings of the Co-ordinated Parish Promotion Programmes (CPPP) personnel who had questions and queries about vetting for this particular service. It is important to note that any person undertaking promotion work must be Garda vetted. Good practice guidelines state that a person should be re-vetted every 3 years.

Many religious and lay missionaries may be involved in various forms of parish or local community related ministry and need to comply with the National Vetting Bureau Act. Each congregation requiring the service from AMRI should have a contact person who deals with the vetting process and who liaises with me. I call to the AMRI office very regularly and also I receive mail from the AMRI office almost daily. Invoices are sent from the AMRI office as are receipts. Please do not hesitate to contact Aoife at the AMRI office or myself on the numbers above.



## **FINANCIAL REPORT/UPDATE**

Reports and Financial Statements for the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI) for the period ended 31 December 2016 were presented by Mr Donal O'Brien (Walsh O'Brien Harnett) and approved at the CORI EGM on 7 March 2017. At that meeting the new Executive Council of the Association of Leaders of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland were authorized to prepare, complete and sign off the final set of accounts of CORI to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and to organize for the necessary bank accounts to be closed and to bring any other matters to closure. (Minutes No 4)

Reports and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2016 for Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland CLG formerly incorporated as Irish Missionary Union CLG were presented by Mr Philip Monahan (Keveny Monahan & Co) at the EGM of IMU on 7 March 2017. These have been circulated to members in advance of this AGM.

The responsibilities of the Secretary General through the Executive Council (Statutes 3.i, j, k) include

- Being responsible for financial control of the funds of the Association
- Preparing an annual budget
- Presenting an annual financial budget

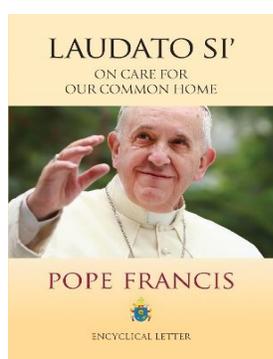
While awaiting the formal appointment of a Finance Committee a Finance Advisory Group was convened to examine both the Governance and Financial situation of the new entity. The group membership included Tom O'Connor from the AMRI Executive, Liz Murphy Secretary General, Stephen Synott (Chairperson) and Linda Downes (Secretary) of the Association of Bursars of Ireland (ABRI), Paddy Hennessy (former Chairperson of ABRI) and Ann Doyle, congregational Treasurer of the Sisters of Mercy. ABRI had been formed "under the auspices of CORI" in 1993 and is seeking to continue "under the auspices of AMRI". The Advisory Group has met with members of Act to Prevent Trafficking (APT) whose accounts are named as CORI Anti-Trafficking Group, and with the Director of the Religious Formation Ministry Programme to regularize their positions in the new AMRI. This work is ongoing.

AMRI inherited no fewer than 16 bank accounts held in a variety of banks. Some were in current or deposit accounts, others in Select Fixed Term deposit accounts. Some were held in banks in

the south of Ireland and two in Northern banks. It has taken enormous time and energy to work with bank officials in re-naming former IMU accounts, closing CORI accounts, opening some new AMRI accounts, dealing with office and staff credit cards, becoming familiar with ibanking, learning Sage, dealing with payroll, and managing the day to day income and expenditure. Sincere thanks is owed to Aoife as Office Manager in handling the day to day finances. We are employ an accountant one day per month. Pay roll and HR are outsourced.

In addition, there was the work on devising a new method for funding **Towards Healing** post 2017 when the existing Memorandum of Understanding expires in December. I deeply appreciate the co-operation and generosity expressed both by the funding congregations and the supporting congregations in pledging monies for a new budget based system of payment. Huge gratitude is also extended to the congregations who have gifted either money towards the Refugee Fund or property. (See Sheila's Justice Report)

The Finance Manager for the Finance and General Purposes Council of the Irish Hierarchy, based in Maynooth, has become a familiar figure as AMRI shares funding for or contributes towards Coimirce, Towards Peace, the Health Council, the new Youth Ministry role on the Council for Pastoral Renewal & Adult Faith Development, etc. Requests are already surfacing for funding for the World Meeting of Families 2018. It will take some time still to develop a sound financial and stewardship strategy for the future of AMRI to ensure compliance with both Company and Charity regulations. As yet no membership fees have been determined for 2017 – a matter of decision for this AGM.



In relation to managing the finances of AMRI, what it has inherited, how it holds monies, and how money will be directed in the future Pope Francis in *Laudato Si*<sup>8</sup> directs us towards **The Common Good** in Chapter 4 and **Towards a New Lifestyle** in Chapter 6.

“In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters.” (#158) We are able to take an honest look at ourselves, to acknowledge our deep dissatisfaction, and to embark on new paths to authentic freedom.” (#205)

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<sup>8</sup> Pope Francis (2015) *Laudato Si' On Care for our Common Home*



## COMPANY UPDATES

### COIMIRCE



The Company COIMIRCE was first incorporated in December 2008. Its founding Members were the four Archbishops, the Episcopal Secretary of the Irish Catholic Bishops Conference, the Director General of CORI, the Executive Secretary of the IMU and nominees of both CORI and IMU Executives. With the amalgamation of CORI and IMU it was necessary to revisit legally the founding document to accommodate the changes. This entailed much detailed work and led to a delay in the Annual General Meeting. This will now take place on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September. New Members from AMRI have been formally nominated and confirmed: Marc Whelan CspP, President of AMRI, Liz Murphy RSM, Secretary General AMRI, John Hennebry OSA and Geraldine Fitzpatrick SJG from the AMRI Executive.



The Directors of the Company are appointed by the Members and are the members of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland. To date no new Directors have been appointed by AMRI. Fr Paul Murphy, Sr Colette Stevenson and Fr Edward Grimes are current Directors.

The Memorandum and Articles of Association state the main objects of the Company:

- to provide advice, services and assistance in the furtherance of the development of the safeguarding of children within the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland and
- to monitor compliance with legislation, policy and best practice, and
- to report on these activities annually.

The Company is based in offices at New House, St Patrick's College, Maynooth. Funding for COIMIRCE for the past years has come from the combined resources of both CORI and IMU. AMRI received a bill recently and paid €124,171.00 as 30% of the costs to COIMIRCE following completion of their 2016 audit. This is a slight reduction on the cost for 2015. Audits of all congregations and dioceses are now complete and a revised review process is being planned for 2018 in addition to ongoing training. John Morgan (Chair) and Teresa Devlin (CEO) met with the Executive on 3 August and invited some AMRI members to be involved in examining this review process.

## TOWARDS HEALING



The Company trading as Towards Healing was established in February 2011, sponsored by the four Archbishops and persons from both CORI and the IMU who together are the Members of the Company. Its aim is to meet the support needs of survivors of Religious, Institutional and Clerical Abuse and their families. The service took over from the Faoiseamh service, which provided counselling from 1996 to 2011. Its 2016 Report states that since 1996 a total of 5,470 people have been supported by both Faoiseamh and Towards Healing and a total of 365,820 counselling sessions have been provided to adult men and women who have experienced physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect in childhood, perpetrated by a priest, brother religious sister, or volunteer or employee of the Catholic Church. Numbers seeking the support of Towards Healing are showing a decline in the past recent years as outlined in the 2016 Annual Report.

Due to the amalgamation of CORI and the IMU new Members were nominated and approved prior to the AGM which was held on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2017. Deep gratitude goes to Fr Peter Rodgers (CORI) and Mr Vincent Kenny (IMU) for their service. They have been replaced by Sr Liz Murphy and Ms Sally Roddy. Sr Paula Molloy and Sr Phyllis Behan are continuing as Members. New Directors appointed by AMRI Executive include Fr John Hughes OSA and Sr Noreen Shankey SSL, joining Fr Eamon Aylward who is continuing. Thanks are also expressed to Sr Peggy Collins RSM who has served as a Director.

A **Memorandum of Understanding** is in place in relation to the funding of Towards Healing until end of December 2017. To date congregations and dioceses have been billed for the service provided. At a combined meeting of IMU and CORI in February 2017, prior to the formal establishment of AMRI, the agreement was to move towards a budget system of payment with AMRI members accountable for 70% of the costs and the Diocesan bishops paying 30%. This was based on the service being provided heretofore. AMRI took responsibility for accepting pledges of funding from both contributing and supporting congregations for 2018 and 2019 based on previous patterns. Two members of the AMRI Executive are now working with Bishop John Fleming in developing a new legally binding **Memorandum of Understanding** between AMRI, the IEC and Towards Healing in terms of future funding of the service. This will be addressed at the AGM.

## AMRI/IRISH EPISCOPAL CONFERENCE ‘ONE CHURCH’ COLLABORATION



### TOWARDS PEACE

While this is not a formal Company structure it has to date been established by the Irish Episcopal Conference (IEC) and the former CORI. The service, based in an office at Columba House, Maynooth, offers spiritual support for survivors of abuse by Catholic church personnel in Ireland. It has a voluntary Board of Management of two lay men, four lay women, a religious Sister, four clergy and two Bishops. Sr Marianne O'Connor, who was Chairperson of the Board, has recently retired from this position. Fr Pat Lucey OP has been representing CORI. Towards Peace has two part-time staff members. Funding for the service is provided by the IEC and by voluntary contributions of approximately €70,000 sought from religious some years past. A request from the Committee for further funding from the religious was requested to provide additional staffing hours. Neither the IEC nor the Executive of AMRI supported this request. AMRI's decision is to pay the 2016/2017 fees of approximately €30,000 from present resources. The Secretary General has met with the staff and a **Service Report: January 2016-June 2017** was recently forwarded to the AMRI office. Discussions have taken place in the past year between Towards Healing, Towards Peace and the National Safeguarding Office and they have developed a paper *A Compassionate and effective Church response to victims of clerical child abuse*. Copies of this are available at the AMRI office.

### INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY

At the request of Archbishop Eamon Martin in 2015/2016 Fr Peter Rodgers, Fr Hugh McMahon, Sr Evelyn Green and Sr Josephine Murphy gathered with Sr Cait O'Dwyer, Fr Hugh Lagan and Fr Tony Mullins to reflect on the importance of developing resources around Integrity in Ministry. A number of facilitated workshops took place involving male and female religious of various age groups and ministering in a variety of ways. Workshops for clergy have also taken place. More recently Sr Liz Murphy was invited to join this group and was asked to convene 12 religious from Northern Ireland who would be willing to reflect on the process to date. This gathering took place at Dromantine on 10 July. There will be further developments around this in the coming months.

### COORDINATED PARISH PROMOTION PROGRAMME (CPPP)

In conjunction with the Irish Bishops this is a formal programme involving religious and missionaries in promoting their missions within the various dioceses. See Jim's Report for the detail on the Co-ordinated Parish Promotions Programme which is conducted by religious and missionaries in the various Dioceses following a 5 year plan.

### COMMISSIONS/COUNCILS

Staff members and other religious/missionaries are involved in a number of IEC Commissions and Councils e.g. National Mission Council, Council for Health Care, Council for Pastoral Renewal and Faith Development, Council for Immigrants, Council for Education, etc.

## COLLABORATORS

AMRI is linked directly and indirectly with many collaborators best expressed in this diagram. As the Gospel says “we call you friends” and we welcome you to our first AMRI AGM. We enjoy your companionship, appreciate your support and look forward to ongoing engagement together. Our international contacts with Conference of Religious of England & Wales, with UCESM and with UISG keep us updated and informed and we value this contact and support.



We extend a warm welcome to Fr Timothy Bartlett and his team from World Meeting of Families 2018 who are joining us at the end of our AGM. We appreciate their huge undertaking and we wish them every blessing as this special year unfolds for all of us.

We, the religious, missionaries, contemplatives, lay colleagues and partners look forward to collaborating and participating in the various programmes, and to being involved in a variety of ways leading to this special event. *“The next year offers an ideal opportunity for a national conversation on the priority the family deserves in our lives, in the Church and in social and political policy.”* (The Irish Times 29 August 2017)

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE – A Sufi Story

Rather than dwell on the past out of which AMRI has come to birth and rather than predicting any clear direction for our future, allow this Sufi story as told by Joan Chittister (1986)<sup>9</sup> to inspire a vision for the future and to hold our future in hope.

*Once upon a time – among an ancient people – an only child of a family of thread makers was orphaned. Wandering nomad weavers took the boy into their tribe for a while but, for lack of means, eventually had to sell him as an apprentice to a family of shipbuilders. In their situation, the shipbuilders trained him to make masts.*

*Mastmaking was a good trade, in very great demand in this sailing town.*

*The young man liked the work; but years later, while on a business voyage for the mastmakers, this same young man – once an orphaned spinner, once an abandoned weaver and now a satisfied mastmaker – was shipwrecked on a primitive island.*

*And in this place the people lived in wait for the fulfilment of a promise that God would help them save their religious treasures from ruin by the hostile environment. All other foreigners were to be rejected.*

*“Are you the one for whom we wait? Are you the one who will save our religious treasures?” they asked.*

*At that very moment the young man understood both his past and his future. He took the memory of his experience as a spinner of thread and made rope; he took the memory of his experience as a weaver and he made cloth; he took the memory of his experience as a mastmaker and made long, strong, poles. And out of all these memories, he fashioned a vision of a tent which saved the values of that people.*

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<sup>9</sup> Joan Chittister (1986) Winds of Change: Women challenge the Church. Sheed & Ward





