

# Annual Report

2025-2026

Gospel Leadership  
Social and Ecological Justice  
Towards a Synodal Church  
Collaboration and Services

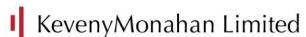


ASSOCIATION OF  
LEADERS OF MISSIONARIES  
& RELIGIOUS OF IRELAND



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Designed By: Janice Kelly



## President's Message

**Fr. Joe McGee MSC**

President, AMRI

*In a video message to the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in the United States, Pope Leo XIV highlighted the beauty of different communities, charisms, and histories that work together to “make the mission and mystery of the Church visible in our world.” The Pope stressed the importance of fostering unity within and among religious communities. I believe that fostering and supporting such unity within and among our congregations here in Ireland is surely the ongoing challenge facing AMRI in the 21st century.*

In addition to the regular meetings of the AMRI Executive Council, we also gathered on two separate days in the earlier part of 2026 to reflect on the role of the Executive. While not over committing ourselves beyond diaries that are already packed with community obligations, our desire was to rediscover how the Executive could be of greater service to the wider community of religious across Ireland. We began by reflecting on the potential current needs of AMRI members - whether leaders may need more appropriate, private and confidential spaces to gather together and share their experiences of leadership; to listen to one another; to be encouraged by one another, and to build relationships. We considered topics that might emerge for sharing in such settings such as the experience of leading through change, leadership as ministry, finding joy and confidence in leadership, deepening the experience of synodality

through co-responsibility, supporting younger religious, integration experience of religious from overseas, and letting our charism live on as our memberships diminish.

It was proposed that the AMRI Annual General Meeting would be the obvious place to further explore the above reflections and to open up discussion on how best to reshape AMRI for the future. For this reason, the organising committee has allotted the second morning of our AGM to exploring at least some of the above realities. This of course has implications for the incoming Executive who are already highly committed in the leadership of their own congregations, societies or orders. While we are very grateful to those who give their time generously to the various sub committees of AMRI, if we are to explore further any of the above, we will need the help and expertise of others from the wider AMRI membership. We considered seeking the support of former leaders who may be more available and willing to share their experiences.

### ***Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk of Abuse***

Safeguarding continues to dominate our conversations with the Executive and in many of our communities and leadership teams. The RSM report touches on all aspects of safeguarding. While this report acknowledges the very positive advances

we have made over recent years as a Church, it nevertheless challenges us to continue to examine our policies and procedures, so that we constantly guard against any possible complacency. The frequent meetings with the IEC (*Irish Episcopal Conference*) during the past year have largely dealt with matters of safeguarding as we endeavour to work together as one church with one voice and one approach to all safeguarding matters. It is challenging for the President and Executive members to speak on behalf of all Religious on this topic, while at the same time respecting the vast experiences and the painful journey that each Congregation must make. During the year we have met on occasion with DLPs from different congregations to hear their voices as we continue to engage with the Bishops Conference and to support each other on this long and complex road to healing.

### ***RSM – Report: Independent Strategic Review of Child Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland***

This report was received by AMRI and the Bishops' Conference in December 2024. A working group consisting of representatives from AMRI, IEC, Safeguarding Managers, the National Board, Towards Healing and Towards Peace was established to examine the report and to make recommendations to AMRI and the IEC, who are the sponsoring bodies and whose responsibility it will be to implement the recommendations of the report. Four main areas have been identified for consideration, and four groups were set up to study each: Governance, Care of Vulnerable Adults, Communication, and Outreach to Survivors. In June 2026, AMRI Leaders gathered and were made aware of the outcomes so far and the various recommendations that are being put forward. A very animated discussion ensued. Further dialogue will need to take place throughout the coming year.



Sr. Barbara Murphy CJ, Vice-President AMRI  
and Fr. Joe McGee MSC, President of AMRI.

### ***Commission of Investigation***

The Commission of Investigation into the Handling of Historical Child Sexual Abuse in Schools, was set up in July 2025 to investigate how concerns or allegations of child sexual abuse were managed in day and boarding schools in Ireland, including special schools, between 1927 and 2013. As distinct from the Scoping Inquiry, this investigation will refer not only to religious run Catholic schools, but to all schools across the State. In his most recent communication on April 21st 2026 the Chair, Mr. Justice Michael McGrath stated that the Commission is now in its establishment phase. Whenever the next phase is announced, it will demand attention for some religious who ran schools during the given period. In the meantime, we can only wait and see what comes our way. It's difficult to prepare for something that we are not fully sure what the demands will be. Terms of Reference are available on the government website. It would be advisable for us to study these with our Safeguarding personnel.

### ***IRS – Irish Religious Stewardship***

At previous AGM's in 2024 and 2025, the inspiration behind IRS and the needs required for the establishment of IRS were carefully explained. Other meetings were held in the intervening periods to further

clarify and explore the setting up of this entity. I wish to thank the small working group who have worked tirelessly, engaging with similar entities in France, Belgium, Australia and Canada. At this stage seed funding has been raised thanks to the different congregations, orders and societies who have donated. After completing a thorough process, a "Company Limited by Guarantee" (CLG) has been established and is in the process of being registered as a Charity with the Charity Regulatory Authority (CRA) in Ireland. This company has been given the name: Irish Religious Stewardship (IRS). While we are sure that IRS can carry out its role in accordance with Irish Company and Charity Law, it is the desire of all concerned to have IRS recognised and approved by the Holy See and constituted as a Public Juridical Person in Canon Law. To move forward, three members of the working group secured a meeting in Rome on Monday 3rd of August 2026, with four senior figures in the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. We used the opportunity to explain more fully the role of IRS in the service of Religious Life in Ireland at this time. We explained its relationship to AMRI, and to the individual religious institutes while recognising its necessary relationship to the Holy See. We were well received and assured that the Dicastery would give earnest consideration to the proposal. The working group now awaits responses from these two key bodies, the Dicastery and the Charities Regulatory Authority, which hopefully will be affirmative and will facilitate us to proceed. In the meantime, a job description for a CEO is being finalised, with hopes to employ a suitable candidate in the very near future.



*Sr. Barbara Murphy CJ, Fr. Joe Mc Gee MSC and Martin Kennedy, Solas Bride Meeting of Members*

### **Religious Formation Ministry Programme – Loreto House**

After more than forty wonderful years Loreto House finally closed its doors in June 2026. On Saturday 6th June, many of us enjoyed the final celebratory virtual get-together of participants, presenters and staff, past and present. Led in true Loreto House style, this was a most appropriate and fitting concluding ritual for the widely acclaimed international programme that has served the church in so many ways for the past four decades. Special thanks must be given to the last serving Loreto House Team: Sr. Jennifer Burke RJM, Sr. Angèle Nkamsi MSHR and Br. Donal Kirk CFC, who worked tirelessly this past year and made valiant efforts to ensure that the programme was brought to its conclusion in such a fitting manner. Hard work indeed. Gratitude also to the Marist Brothers for generously facilitating the 'Loreto House' programme on the campus of Marian College on Landsdowne Road.

### **Conclusion**

I trust that you will enjoy reading this year's annual report, which I am delighted to present to you as an accurate, and even modest, account of the work of AMRI during this past year. I thank particularly the AMRI staff, who together with those members who work on our committees, are constantly available to the membership in key areas of our common mission. With their efforts, the wider membership is kept abreast of developments in Justice, Peace and Ecology; Vocations; Lay Mission; Ongoing Formation; Synodality; anti-trafficking, the exploration of a common archive, as well as financial accountability and budgeting. On behalf of the Executive, I want to thank our staff and committee members for their generosity, good will and commitment. I wish to acknowledge the work of the Vocations Ireland Committee who have recently presented a suitable candidate to be appointed as Vocations Coordinator for AMRI.

It would be remiss of me not to extend a special word of gratitude to our Secretary General, Gerard Gallagher. He is always available to me and keeps me abreast of the different areas of my responsibility that I must attend to as President. He is tireless in his efforts to visit communities across Ireland and beyond. He participates in so many different diocesan and religious events, as the key representative of AMRI. He is fully accountable to the Executive at each meeting and takes on board the suggestions and directives of the Executive. He is the vital link and point of contact between AMRI and the various church bodies including the IEC with whom AMRI continues to network. Regarding the challenge of obtaining visas for our non-Irish members, he has been relentless in negotiating with political leaders at the highest level. His guiding hand in the upkeep of the AMRI website and the production of the much-valued regular newsletter communication is much appreciated. Gerard would agree that he could not do his work without the kind and professional support of the staff in the AMRI office.

In conclusion, I return to Pope Leo's address to religious women in the U.S. He said that *"All Christians are called to be builders of Christ's communion, formed in a synodal Church in which everyone cooperates in the same mission according to their own charism and ministry."* He broadened his address to all women and men in religious life, and called all of us to be experts in synodality through our experiences in community life. The Holy Father's sentiments must encourage us to work together in the coming year, as we endeavour to take up the challenge to navigate Religious Life in the 21st Century.



# AMRI at a Glance



## Collaborating and Connecting

- Irish Episcopal Conference
- National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland
- Towards Healing
- Towards Peace
- Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life
- Misaan Cara
- Belonging Without Boundaries Ecumenical Group
- SafeBirth4All Coalition
- Irish Palestine Solidarity Campaign
- Social Justice Ireland
- National Mission Council
- Union of the European Conferences of Major Superiors
- Other National Conferences of Religious
- Missio Ireland
- Communicators for Women Religious
- Catholic Youth Ministry Ireland (CYMI)
- National Synodal Pathway
- Trócaire
- Irish Refugee Council
- Eco-Congregations Ireland
- Gaza Pilgrimage and Solidarity Group
- Aid to the Church in Need

## Our Vision

Inspired by the Good News of Jesus, our vision is a creative and compassionate living of religious and missionary life in a synodal Church, responding with hope to the signs of the times, to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

## Our Mission

Our mission is to provide leadership and support to our members, to foster collaboration, and to promote spirituality, social justice and sustainable living on a shared journey of faith.

## Our Aims

### Leadership

Provide leadership development and governance support.

### Social and Ecological Justice

Work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

### Towards a Synodal Church

Contribute to the re-visioning of a different Church through synodality: communion, participation and mission.

### Collaboration and Services

Develop AMRI as a collaborative organisation, a membership network and service provider for members.

### Strengthening AMRI

Strengthen the AMRI secretariat and committees to ensure delivery of the strategic plan (2022-7), *A Future with Hope*.



## Secretary General's Overview

**Gerard Gallagher**  
Secretary General

*In this year of Franciscan celebrations celebrating the 8th centenary of the death of St Francis of Assisi, I am reminded of the words spoken to St Francis of Assisi to 'Rebuild my Church.' As we embark on the second quarter of this century, these words provide the guidance to lead us all forward. I have read many articles and publications on religious life all trying to define where we are and where are we moving towards. Words like re-founding, re-weaving, re-framing, re-igniting, re-focusing have been used to illustrate the direction of religious life and Church. Ultimately, the best mission statement I think is 'Rebuild My Church'. This is our common purpose and shared mission at whatever stage of life we are living in.*

My observation working with AMRI is that change is a constant feature. As religious life is recalibrated towards change, it is great to witness how some difficult decisions are made and carried out. This is the role of leadership. I have witnessed how many leaders are grappling with the demands of their role whilst continuing to lead and manage various priorities that face them. Letting go is important, even though it is not easy.

***We must leave behind everything that holds us back and isolates us'***

Pope Leo XVI, 7 June 2026 to Spanish Bishops

As you read this report, you will observe that the past year in AMRI has been a busy one. You will notice that some activities are ongoing. You will read about projects and programmes that are ending as well as new developments. The theme of Hope percolates throughout the various work of AMRI and our Members. The team here in AMRI, whilst reduced in numbers, continue to work hard to support all our Members in their leadership roles.

### **Ongoing work of the Executive Council**

Throughout the year I have worked closely with the Executive Council of AMRI. My thanks to Fr. Joe and Sr. Barbara for their support and guidance as they assist with the essential work of AMRI. On top of their congregational commitments, they have attended extra meetings with Bishops or in relation to the IRS (mentioned elsewhere in the Presidents report). This year, we also welcomed some new members to the Executive. Our key committees and working groups continue to support the work of the Executive. We also held two 'retreat' sessions with Lucy Franks Consulting to monitor our work and fine-tune the next strategic steps for the

AMRI Executive.

### **IRS - Irish Religious Stewardship**

The Executive Council are continuing to support the ongoing development of the Irish Religious Stewardship initiative. You can read about this in the Presidents report.

### **Evolving Leadership**

During the summer of 2026 many congregations held various conferences and chapters. In turn this can lead to a change of leadership. This ebb and flow of leadership entails grappling with many new challenges.

I am extremely conscious of the workload that many in leadership are burdened with. In my encounters with those in leadership I am struck by the pressures that they continue to face. The aging demographic of those in religious life is a common reality that is being faced with realism. Whilst there are currently no accurate statistics, we know that the age profile of congregations is aging.

### **Leadership and Membership Services**

Regular readers of our newsletter will notice that throughout the year we endeavour to visit leadership teams. I have been in the four provinces of Ireland to meet with various leaders. It is important for me to listen to each of them. AMRI hosted a series of regional meetings with leaders in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Knock as well as on online meetings with our Contemplative communities. We also hosted a workshop in Mount St. Anne's for New Leaders.

It is equally important for leaders and members of their congregations to become familiar with the services



*Younger Religious attending weekend in Ballyvaloo Retreat Centre*

and supports that AMRI continues to respond to.

### **Loreto House – The End of an Era**

The Executive Council of AMRI had to make the difficult decision to close up the Religious Formation Ministry Programme (RFMP). Loreto House has made a significant impact on the universal church over the past 42 years. As you will read in Sr. Jennifer's report, the RFMP team both led the programme with joy and yet practically had to plan to cease the programme. Regrettably, the issue of obtaining a visa to come to Ireland became more complicated and less certain. At times participants were delayed on entry into Ireland and this impacted on the commencement of the course.

I'd like to express my appreciation to Sr. Jennifer, Sr. Angèle and Br. Donal for the grace and dignity in how they both responded to this decision. I met with the participants on numerous times throughout the year. In May, the team hosted a moving ceremony of celebration to mark the ending of Loreto House. I'd like to express my thanks to the Marist Brothers for accommodating

the programme in its final year in Lansdowne Road.

### *Safeguarding*

Members of AMRI attended at the National Safeguarding Conference held in Athlone September 2025. Since last year's publication of the strategic review of child-safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland (referred to as the RSM report) further work has been carried out. An implementation group has been set up with a number of Bishops, members of AMRI Executive, DLP's, National Board. In June, AMRI held a meeting of members in Solas Brid, Kildare to outline the progress of this work. We also continue to work closely with the CEO of the NBSCCCI, Aidan Gordon, who also has attended Executive Council meetings.

### *Towards Healing*

One of the challenges of my role is the collection of money owed to Towards Healing. Following RTE reports into Blackrock College in 2024, there was an increase in the number of people availing of this service. Subsequently, AMRI wrote to all Members for extra funds to cover a shortfall in funding. Thank you to all who responded to this call.

AMRI hosted a webinar with Towards Healing where they presented their budget and plans for the year. This transparency helps.

After the Scoping Inquiry into abuse in Secondary Schools, the Government has established a Commission of Investigation into the Handling of Historical Child Sexual Abuse in Schools. It is chaired by Justice Michael Mac Grath and will investigate how school authorities, religious orders, and State bodies responded to allegations of abuse. To date no contact has been made to AMRI or its Members.

I also attend the Liaison Committee for Towards Peace. This is a very important

service supported by AMRI and the IEC. Elsewhere you can read Una Allen's report on this service.

### *Minister for Religion Visa Update*

I am frequently contacted by some religious for assistance into issues they can encounter in the Visa application process. AMRI hosted a webinar with an immigration lawyer who made a presentation on both the process and what needs to be prepared in advance. This was well attended and received. AMRI has been in touch with the Department of Immigration to highlight cases where there are delays or lack of clarity. The process is backlogged. AMRI held a meeting in July 2026 with Minister Brophy to discuss some of the issues. He indicated that he is willing to continue to see what he can do with the wider application process and not just for Minister of Religion Visa.

### *Jubilee*

In 2025, AMRI led two Jubilee Pilgrimages. We led a group of religious to the Jubilee of Youth in July, noted in last years report. In October, we led a group of Religious to Rome for the Jubilee of Consecrated Life. The Irish Embassy to the Holy See and the Dicastery for Consecrated Life invited the Daring to Hope exhibition as part of its official programme of events. Thanks



*Fr. Tim Lehane SVD, Sr. Clare Donnelly OCD, Minister Colm Brophy, Gerard Gallagher*

to the Pallotines for their support. The group was hosted for mass with Archbishop John Kennedy, Secretary for Discipline for the Doctrine of the Faith, hosted the group for Mass.

I'd like to express appreciation to Her Excellency Frances Collins as she concludes her term as Ambassador to the Holy See for her support of AMRI and all Irish Congregations based in Rome.

The Irish Embassy and UISG hosted a Founders Event on founders whose cases are progressing towards canonisation. We heard presentations from the Loreto Sisters, Sisters of Mercy, Presentation Sisters, Poor Servants of the Mother of God. Later in the week our pilgrims attended a number of Papal events.

### *AMRI is Turning 10 Years Old*

AMRI will mark its own Jubilee in 2027 to mark its 10th year. More details will emerge as to how this will be marked and celebrated.

### *Finance and Subscriptions*

A key piece of work is Finance. Without the generosity of members and our subscriptions the work of AMRI could not continue. We have now created a method for people to pay online to AMRI as well as consider a donation or legacy to AMRI. The work of fundraising is new to AMRI and this will take on greater importance when we begin to make proposals in regards the Shared Religious Archive.

### *AMRI Committees and Working Groups*

Elsewhere in this report you can read references to the various committees of AMRI that assists with its ongoing work. This year the Governance Committee met to oversee the welcome of new members to AMRI and our various compliance policies. You will read about work in the Shared Religious Archive project. These



*Members of UCESM meeting in Croatia*

committees are made up of volunteers who serve and contribute immensely to the work of AMRI.

### *UCESM & CoRew*

I was delighted to attend with Associations from all over Europe the UCESM conference in Croatia, Religious Life and the cultures – the Consequence of our Life and Mission, in the Spring of 2026.

Toni Pyke and I attended the Conference of Religious of England and Wales for their AGM, exploring, New Realities, Challenges and Possibilities: Migration, Asylum, Refugees and Trafficking — Their Impact on Our Mission.

Throughout Europe there are common issues of concern and engagement, including visas, age demographics and new challenges such as adapting to the digital age and outreach to younger people.

### *IEC- AMRI - Partnerships and Collaborations*

AMRI continues to meet with the Irish Episcopal Conference. Various topics of interest are discussed. It continues to be a good platform for dialogue and consultation. I am grateful to those who serve in various capacities on the various committees and boards associated with

it, see section at the back of this report on Gratitude for Service.

### Synodality

Elsewhere you will read of the work and progress of the upcoming National Synod. AMRI is a key supporter of this work. I am grateful to the AMRI representatives on the National Steering Committee. The AMRI Lay Mission Committee has also focused strongly on the upcoming Synod. Several of the committee participated on some of the working groups. You can read more about this work elsewhere in this report. We also welcome Sr. Pat Murray CJ and Sr. Mary Barron OLA, who attended the Universal Synod in Rome to be keynote contributors at our 2026 Conference.

### New Members Update

It was observed at our AGM last year that there are gaps in the Membership of AMRI. This includes new congregations who are a new presence here in Ireland. I have spent the past year getting in touch with some of them to invite them to consider applying for membership of AMRI. This is a slow process. I am grateful to the Governance committee in AMRI who assist in this process. It is a sign of hope to meet these young communities who are here to work on a new mission in different parts of the island. We will welcome several at our AGM in the Autumn.

### Inter-congregational Formation

Following our conference and AGM last year AMRI convened a working group to look at the question of intercongregational formation for new religious. I am pleased to see how this is progressing. This new programme will start later in 2027.

### Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation

In the spring of 2026, AMRI hosted its first Justice Conference in Kimmage. Thanks to Toni Pyke for her work on this important collaboration and consolidation of the justice work of AMRI

with members. Creating these spaces are important for networking and being a prophetic voice of challenge in the public square.

### Vocations Ireland

As you will read elsewhere in this report, Vocations Ireland has continued its outreach and vocation promotion. A recruitment process was initiated with AMRI and Vocations Ireland committee to appoint a new co-coordinator of vocations ministry. I was very happy to support them at several events including the National Ploughing Championships. I continue to meet with the Vocations Ireland committee on a regular basis. In 2027, Vocations Ireland will host their annual conference.

### Out and About

I was delighted to attend the APT AGM. There is great work and advocacy being carried out by this vibrant group. You can read their report elsewhere. I also attended a conference in the Loyola Institute in November reflecting on Faithful Justice Today. I joined various congregations on the Climate protest, mentioned in the Justice, Peace and Ecology report. I also took an opportunity to teach a session on Youth Ministry as part of the Mission and Ministry, department in Maynooth for those studying in this programme. Trocaire



Sr. Eileen O Connell O.P, Bro. Martin Kenneally FPM and Toni Pyke, AMRI

has also invited AMRI to several events in addition to their annual lecture.

### New Innovations

AMRI continues to develop its now annual gatherings such as our Memorial Service and Advent prayer month. In November, AMRI organises a memorial service to pray for those who have departed in the past year. We display their names and remember each of them for their immense contribution to faith and culture here in Ireland and overseas. It is important that everyone is remembered for their contribution during their lives. During Advent and Lent, we developed a series of workshops held mainly in AMRI and some online. These were well received and it was great to welcome many people to AMRI in Kimmage. We will continue this series later in October 2026 with a series of workshops around the theme of Mission.

### Communication News

The role of Communications in AMRI has been adapted. While we source out design and website support, AMRI has oversight for the generation of content for the website, newsletter and social media. Our communications committee are a key reference group when it comes to matters such a press statements. Throughout the year we published approximately two newsletters per month.

AMRI has been invited to be part of the Board of Intercom, assisting the flow of information of Religious Life into this widely read publication. I continue to sit on one of the working groups for the RSM that will be tasked with developing a communications strategy. When available, I attend the Communicators for Women Religious (CWR) meeting, who have continued to offer various workshops and training.



Missionaries attending the Mission Awareness Programme gathering in Kimmage

### Address Book

Currently we are updating our Address Book for Members. This is only made available to Members and is not for wider circulation.

We will also be adding a 'Members Only' section to our website. This will be a portal to contain key information for leaders. Information that does not need to be circulated in the public domain.

### Mission Awareness Programme - MAP

In December, we invited all those who take part in the Mission Awareness Programme (MAP) to AMRI. This year we also invited Archbishop Kieran O' Reilly SMA to join this gathering where we debrief and hear of the testimony of the work in parishes all over Ireland. This is a key programme of animation, reminding parishes that we continue to be a missionary Church.

### Returned Missionaries

I am glad to report that AMRI will continue to offer several events for Returned Missionaries. Many participated in workshops throughout the year. In December 2025, Scratch Films were invited into AMRI to meet with some missionaries post the showing of the documentary: *The Last Irish Missionaries* in August 2025. AMRI continues to be contacted to arrange formation and induction for returned

missionaries. With limited resources we will endeavour to assist.

### Mission Sunday

AMRI continues to collaborate with Missio and Misean Cara on the annual Mission Sunday televised Mass hosted on RTÉ.

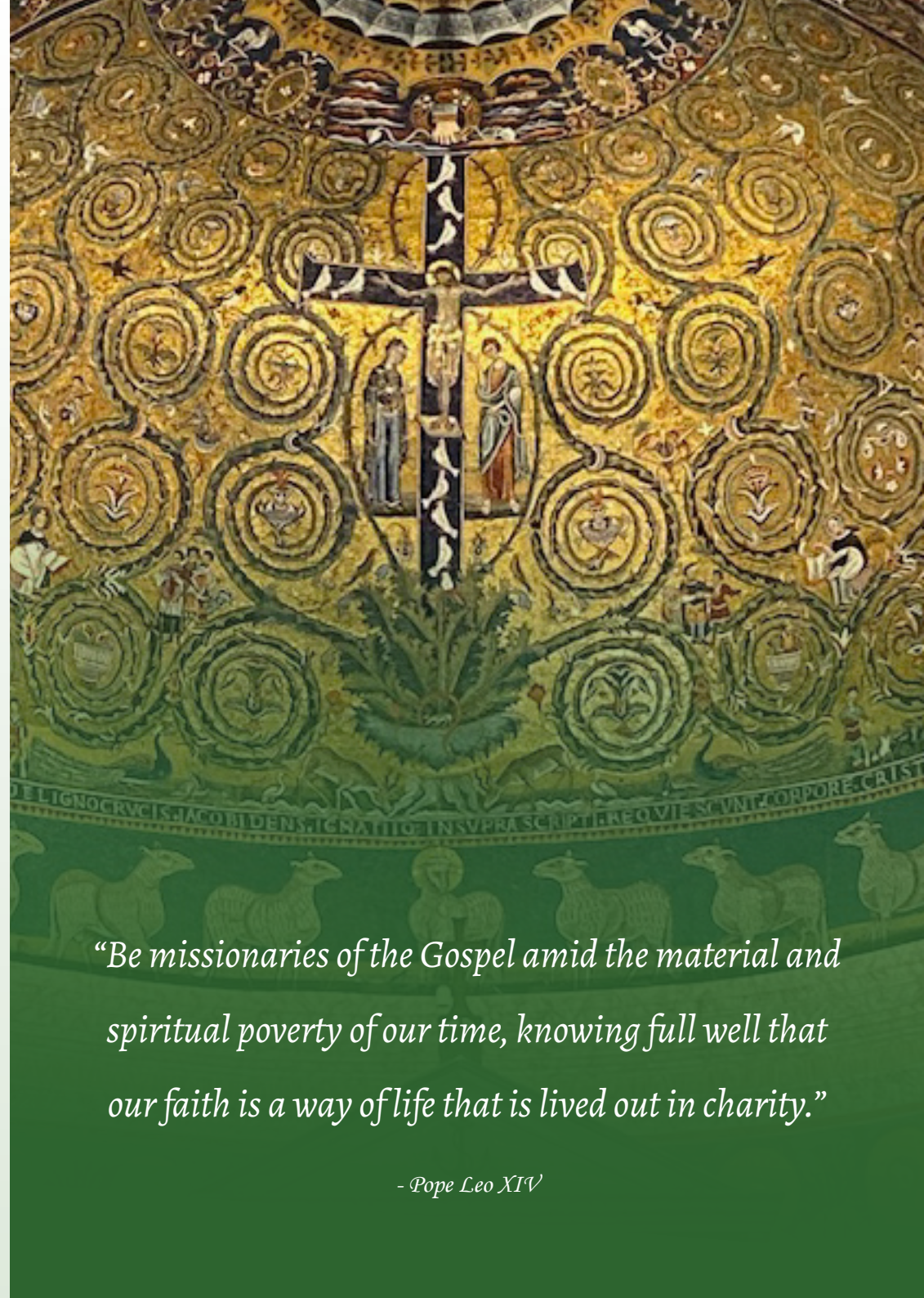
### Gratitude

I'd like to express my gratitude to the Missionaries of Africa for their continued support to AMRI as we said goodbye to them as our landlords after many years. Also I'd like to express appreciation to the Spiritans for their gracious welcome to their campus in Kimmage. It has been a joy to work and settle into this new space.

In all the work I lead on, I could not do it without the team in AMRI. Their commitment to our members and attention to detail is to be credited. There is a sense of joy and purpose in all that is done in the name of AMRI. We hope that later in 2026 we will be boosted with some new staff members.

I'd like to express my thanks to outgoing members of the Executive Council who have served with distinction and generosity.

Finally, a word of appreciation to our outgoing Papal Nuncio Archbishop Luis Mariano Montemayor to Ireland on his retirement as Nuncio to Ireland. He attended one Conference of AMRI and has met with the myself and the President of AMRI during his tenure. We wish him well and look forward to working with his successor.



*"Be missionaries of the Gospel amid the material and spiritual poverty of our time, knowing full well that our faith is a way of life that is lived out in charity."*

*- Pope Leo XIV*



## Religious Formation Ministry Programme

**Jennifer Burke RJM**  
Director of RFMP



*The 2025-2026 academic year was indeed a unique one for the Religious Formation Ministry Programme, because the doors of the affectionately*

*known “Loreto House” finally closed after forty-four years of commitment to being a beacon in the area of formation.*

The difficult decision taken by the AMRI Executive to close the RFM Programme was officially announced on 29th May 2025, which facilitated one year of preparation and transition towards ending. While the year was tinged with sadness and farewells, it was also full of gratitude and celebration. We appreciated this opportunity to acknowledge the very best of the Loreto House spirit and all that it has contributed to people's lives over the years, while walking intentionally towards closure.

Journeying towards closure did not prevent us from also journeying towards a new location! Once again this year, the Religious Formation Ministry Programme found itself on the move! This sense of being a nomadic, pilgrim people has been a constant in the life of Loreto House for

the last few years and saw the RFMP Team organise for the third time in 2 years, another move of the entire Programme! In July 2025, we packed up all our belongings yet again and moved from a premises in Stillorgan on the grounds of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart Campus, to the grounds of Marian College on Lansdowne Road, where the Marist Brothers generously accommodated us.

There we prepared to welcome the 2025-2026 group of fourteen participants (eleven women religious and three religious priests) hailing from D.R. Congo, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Netherlands, Nigeria and Uganda. It is worth noting that the ever-increasing difficulty of obtaining a Minister of Religion Visa in Ireland (one of the factors contributing to the ending of the Programme) prevented a number of potential participants from joining the group. Nonetheless, these fourteen were privileged to be the very last “Loreto House” group, and began to experience the Programme in all its richness when it began in earnest on 18th September 2025.

The four pillars of human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation, are the threads constantly being woven together to create the unique RFMP tapestry. They provide the Programme with its inner dynamism and outer framework, offering participants the space in which

to grow, develop and find their voice within a synodal model of Church. Each step of the journey invites participants to deepen their self-awareness, to embrace emerging theologies, to broaden their knowledge base and to develop skills for the challenges of mission today.

One of the highlights of the first term, was the invitation to participate in the AMRI Annual Conference in the Tullamore Court Hotel on 1st October 2025. This was a new avenue that opened up for the Programme and turned out to be a wonderful occasion for everyone involved. Not only were we all enthused by Michael Conway's passionate and challenging presentation on Hope; but the day also provided opportunities for the participants to introduce us to their respective leadership teams, and for the other conference delegates to witness something of the diversity of the Universal Church and to savour something of the life and energy of the spirit of the RFM Programme. Such opportunities for interaction and sharing ensured that it was a positive and mutually enriching event for all.

A second significant moment during the first term was our Pilgrimage to Glendalough, which took place on 10th October 2025. This annual outing is an integral part of the Orientation module. It is a unique opportunity for our group of participants to be at once immersed in the richness of the beauty of the Irish landscape and the depth of Celtic spirituality. No doubt, it is a day for making memories.

The first term unfolded with its particular emphasis on personal development grounded in the underlying philosophy of the RFM Programme which states that in order to journey with others, one must have made the journey themselves. With a strong focus on experiential learning, the first few months

of the Programme gave participants the opportunity to actively engage in workshops which explored areas such as Synodal Leadership, Enneagram, Transactional Analysis and Self-Esteem. As ever, core topics such as Focusing, Listening Skills, Life's Healing Journey, Family of Origin and Group Process, were very much a part of the journey.

After Christmas, the second term broadened the outlook and challenged participants to encounter “the other” by embracing Training for Transformation; by Building Community; by developing Spiritual Accompaniment skills and by engaging with people from different faith traditions, different sexual orientations and different social backgrounds. The RFMP Team is deeply appreciative of so many people who make these personal, face-to-face encounters real.

A key element of this exposure is the Pastoral Placement experience, which is made possible by the collaborative relationship the RFM Programme has developed over the years with many organisations working to empower the marginalised and bring about social change in quiet and unassuming ways across Dublin city and county. As a token of our appreciation this year, during the well-established social gathering which takes place at the end of the outreach experience, a certificate of appreciation



*Loreto House students attending the AMRI AGM 2025*

was presented to the representatives of each of the organisations, in recognition of the warmth and generosity with which they have unfailingly welcomed RFMP participants into the hearts of their teams and clients over the years.

The third and final term began with an eight-day directed retreat in the Manresa Spirituality Centre. The focus then moved specifically to preparation for formation ministry, before culminating in a time dedicated to moving towards a new beginning.

The testimony of our RFMP participants was recognised through their participation in the Mission Sunday Mass televised on RTE on 19th October 2025. A further notable presence was during the SMA/OLA Annual Pilgrimage to Knock which took place on Saturday 23rd May 2026. As we acknowledge the generosity of the SMA Fathers who invited the RFMP participants to join the pilgrimage, we rejoice with them and the OLA Sisters on the celebration of 170 and 150 years respectively of their foundations.

While the RFM Programme continued as normal for this year's group of participants, there was also a deep awareness of the fact that this was its final year, coupled with a strong desire to live that moment of transition with depth and intentionality, celebrating the rich and inimitable spirit of "Loreto House" that has brought life and transformation to countless individuals and that continues to bear fruit throughout the world. This was achieved by journeying towards closure, as though on a pilgrimage, with different milestones along the way.

Among these milestones, was an invitation for past participants from all over the world to take a stroll down memory lane and recall their "Loreto House" moments. These stories were published on the website and became the source of much joy and remembering. This proved to be a successful initiative that encouraged many



people to put pen to paper and gradually saw a veritable treasure trove of memories emerge.

Without doubt, the highlight of the "pilgrimage" towards the closure of the RFM Programme was the Zoom Gathering that took place on Saturday 6th June 2026. Almost two hundred members of the broad Loreto House family (past and present participants, past and present team members, and guest speakers) met on Zoom for a time of reflection, sharing and encounter.

As we bid farewell to the Religious Formation Ministry Programme, we salute in a very special way the Directors and Team Members who brought the very essence of the Loreto House spirit to life each day in their accompaniment of the participants; in their witness to a synodal way of being; and in their modelling of shared leadership.

We remember all the participants spread throughout the world, who through their commitment and creativity in ministry today, ensure that the seeds of the RFM Programme continue to bear fruit in the four corners of the world. They are the hope that although the doors of Loreto House are now closed, its values and vision are still alive and active.

We also take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the many religious and lay guest speakers who over the years generously shared their knowledge, wisdom and expertise with our

participants.

We acknowledge too the support of the Congregations, Societies and Dioceses who entrusted their finest members to the Religious Formation Ministry Programme adventure; as well as AMRI and its members.

It was with great sadness and regret that Loreto House closed its doors. We trust that its spirit lives on in the witness of the over 1,000 religious women and men throughout the world who, since its foundation in 1982, have made the transformative RFMP journey and who have experienced that **"the one who looks outside, dreams; the one who looks inside, awakens."** (Carl Jung)



Sr. Jennifer, Br. Donal and Sr. Angèle at the closing prayer for Loreto House

### From the introduction of the Religious Formation Ministry Programme Zoom Gathering 6th June 2026

*"The very essence of the Loreto House journey cannot be captured or tied down or planted – the deepest spirit of the experience is ever-moving, ever-growing, ever-transforming..."*

*We realised that you carry the charism, if you like, the seed of Loreto House in your heart...*

*It was planted there the very first day you crossed the threshold, whether that was in 1982, 1992, 2002 or just now in 2025... It is a seed that encourages you to find your voice; that calls you to radical freedom; that challenges you to continually evolve...*

*It is a seed that embraces our giftedness and our vulnerability; that recognises that we are deeply connected; that stretches our concepts of ourselves, of others, of God and of universe...*

*"Leaves don't drop, they just let go" - so says the song, some of you may be familiar with.*

*The song says:*

*"God speaks in rhyme and in paradox..."*

*"A tree is what a seed contains..."*

*"To die then live is life's refrain..."*

*And so, while at one level, later this month, we will close the door of Loreto House for the final time...*

*At another level, the door of Loreto House can never be closed or contained...*

*As you listen now, know that the ever-fertile seed of Loreto House is in you...*

*It is of the Spirit...*

*It is flowing; moving; stirring; inspiring...*

*It is living; dying; changing; birthing...*

*Let go and make a space for this seed to grow..."*



**Toni Pyke**

Justice, Peace & Ecology Coordinator

## Justice, Peace and Ecology

*“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.” Helen Keller*

*An important lesson from my Liverpool heritage is the understanding that ‘you’ll never walk alone’. In today’s rapidly shifting global realities of war, conflict, escalating violence, rising inequalities, disregard for human rights and international law, threats to democratic values and democracy, contempt for ‘the other’ and disregard for our common home, this wisdom is critical for our survival as a human species. It underpins the work of the AMRI Justice Desk and helps to drive an agenda intertwined with the fabric of Catholic Social Teaching. All that we do at AMRI is undertaken in partnership with others. During this reporting year there have been many initiatives and alliances that together respond to various social and ecological injustice realities that threaten our fragile planet.*

### AMRI Justice Conference 2026

A collaborative approach was reflective in the AMRI Justice Conference: Advancing Justice, Peace and Care for Our Common Home, held in April this year at Kimmage Manor parish hall, which was attended by 70 participants across religious congregations and civil society. The Conference built on last year’s Justice Symposium and was organised in partnership with the Dominican Sisters Cabra, the Presentation Interprovincial

Justice Desk and the Kiltegan Fathers. Keynote speaker Seán Farrell, CEO of Trócaire, presented the stark reality of war and conflict across the world, juxtaposed with the brutal experience of the decline in humanitarian supports and increasing incidences of violence and poverty. He gave testimony to the commitment and partnership of Irish missionaries throughout the world who have, and continue to, work tirelessly reaching those living at the margins of our societies. This was further articulated by David Donoghue, former Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN in New York and co-facilitator of the negotiations on the UN 2030 Agenda, who reiterated the criticality of the focus of the Agenda to ‘Leave No-One Behind’ and the power of advocacy where ‘even small, persistent interventions can shape global agreements’. He encouraged



Presenters at AMRI Justice Conference

civil society to continue to engage through various UN mechanisms and highlighted the value of multilateralism.

Róisín Markham of the Irish Doughnut Economics Network introduced participants to the framework of Doughnut Economics as developed by Kate Raworth of Oxfam GB. She talked of a “safe and just space” for people and planet to flourish, where an economy meets everyone’s needs without exceeding the earth’s limits. Dr Kevin Hargaden of the Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice reflected on Pope Leo’s encyclical Dilexi Te highlighting 3 key points: i) that the “preferential option” for the poor is not optional, 2) that justice and spirituality are intrinsically linked, and 3) the importance of the continuity of our witness. The talks have been recorded and can be found on the AMRI website. The conference was featured in The Tablet, Intercom and The Way.



### AEFJN (Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network) Ireland Antenna.

The Ireland AEFJN antenna is an active collaboration of 8 congregations and AMRI, which currently includes the Presentation Sisters, Our Lady of the Apostles, Dominican Sisters Cabra, Spiritans, Salesians, Medical Missionaries of Mary, Presentation Brothers and recently, the Bon Secours.

The group meets each month on Zoom to plan at least 3 informative webinars on key justice issues that impact on the continent of Africa as a result of EU policy and practice. This year we hosted webinars on, i) Power in Your Purse: From Consumer to Caregivers this Christmas; ii) Mind Our Earth: Our Mined Earth: The Impact of Extraction on our Planet, iii) No Justice Without Climate Justice: An EU Presidency for the Common Good. AEFJN has a subscribers list of over 600 and up to 100 participants attend each webinar from around the world.



### Belonging Without Boundaries (BWB)

BWB is an ecumenical group representing various Christian denominations. We meet each month online to explore the ways in which we can counter the narrative and ideology of the ‘far right’ and their misuse and misinformation of Christian scripture and symbols in seeking to consolidate their agendas that fuel racism in Ireland. We are currently a collective of 9 Christian groups representing Catholics;

Methodists; Church of Ireland; Anglicans; the Council for Migrants and Refugees, Justice & Peace of the Irish Episcopal Conference; CrossCare; the Dublin Interfaith Forum, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI). This year we have strengthened links with the Schools Trusts, Schools of Sanctuary and Froebel teacher training college. After developing and sharing an informational leaflet for distribution across parishes, churches and groups to inform and remind Christians of our responsibilities in “welcoming the stranger”, we next concentrated on the public face of BWB by developing a new logo and banner and strengthening links, collaboration and strategic focus.



## SafeBirth4All Coalition and Campaign to End Obstetric Fistula

A pioneering initiative of AMRI began with supporting the work of one of its members in raising awareness of the traumatic realities of the preventable birth injury, obstetric fistula. A unique approach to this response is in advocating on behalf of the women and girls living with or at risk of obstetric fistula, through a lens of human rights and human dignity. The initiative expanded with the addition of the Medical Missionaries of Mary who have decades of experience and wisdom in ministering to those impacted by obstetric fistula across Africa. This partnership led to the formation of the SafeBirth4All coalition and campaign and was subsequently joined by Misesan Cara. After an immersion visit to Madagascar, the World Council of Churches developed a Guide for Churches on the Prevention of Obstetric Fistula. This resource has been translated into Portuguese, Malagasy, French and in response to the prevalence of obstetric fistula in northern Nigeria, this year the Hausa translation of the guide was launched, with the aim of reaching both Christian and Muslim communities and to facilitate interfaith engagement for wider impact. There are ongoing plans to develop translations in Igbo, Yoruba, Efik, Chichewa and Twi. Advocacy work is ongoing at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva working in collaboration with the World Council of Churches, Geneva for Human Rights and Rights Proof.

SafeBirth4All hosted its second annual Conference at Marino Institute of Education. The hybrid meeting brought together 150 participants on-line from around the world and in person. The conference brought together a diverse range of participants from those attending for general interest, surgeons, funders, representatives from faith-based organisations,



NGO staff, and advocacy groups. Keynote speaker was Sr. Sylvia Ngozi Ndubuaku, West African Area Leader for the Medical Missionaries of Mary who talked of Hope, Healing and a World Without Obstetric Fistula. The year also included a field visit to Malawi to gather information and best practice on the prevention of obstetric fistula.

In November, a concert fundraiser was hosted by the Firhouse Singers at St. Mary's College, Rathmines raised over €4,000 to support the campaign to end fistula. At a strategic level, this year the coalition has focused on its governance structure to consolidate its strategic focus and partnership alignment into the future.



Toni Pyke Presenting at CoREW

## Impact Investing Interest Group

A group of interested congregations met throughout the year to explore social impact investing, how it works, discuss some of the benefits and challenges and explore the ways in which we can collaborate in contributing towards a more sustainable and just world into the future. The group met 4 times during the year. One meeting focused on impact investing and aligning faith and mission with investments presented by John O'Shaughnessy, Treasurer & Chief Investment Officer with the Franciscan Sisters of Mary in St Louis. John shared the congregation's journey from traditional, socially responsible investing to a comprehensive impact investing approach to their investments and longer-term outlook. Additional meetings included inputs from various social impact investing funds, including Oikocredit.

## Other Collaborative Initiatives

This year, the AMRI justice desk was privileged to share the positive contribution of a collaborative approach to its work at various events, including: a keynote presentation at the Conference of Religious of England and Wales (CoREW) at their annual AGM and Conference in Northampton UK; input into the Kerry Diocese Lenten Webinar series on Justice as it relates to Catholic Social Teaching; presenting at a workshop with participants at the Religious Formation Missionary Programme ('Loreto House') on the work of AMRI Justice and in collaboration with the Dominican Sisters Cabra in raising awareness and promoting Doughnut Economics.

The celebrated photographic exhibition, Daring to Hope: Irish Religious Sisters Embracing the Unknown 1923-2023 was exhibited in its entirety at the Basilica of San Silvestro in Capite, hosted by the Irish Pallottines at the request of



AMRI Pilgrims in Rome for Jubilee Pilgrimage, pictured with Ambassador Frances Collins

the Embassy of Ireland to the Holy See, during the Jubilee of Consecrated Life. The exhibition was featured as part of the official programme of Jubilee events by the Dicastery for Consecrated Life and Dicastery for Evangelisation. During this time, a seminar marking four Founders' causes underway for sainthood at UISG included an input from the AMRI Justice desk about the exhibition and the work of Irish Religious sisters at home and abroad.

In responding to the escalating violence in the Middle East, AMRI supported the work of Sr. Bridget Tighe fmdm who was ministering in the Holy Land. Sr. Bridget is supporting Palestinian artisanal crafters who no longer have a market for their crafts and are economically challenged as a result of the ongoing bombardment and violence in the region. With sales of beautifully crafted ornaments, AMRI was able to support the project with nearly €2,000.



### *Blogs, Statements and Social Media*

In response to the recent riots in Northern Ireland, AMRI issued a public statement of its solidarity with those impacted by the violence and those working in the background to restore calm and build peace. AMRI continues to raise awareness and advocate on behalf of the people of Palestine, attending public marches and writing articles and opinion pieces. One article was recently featured in the Irish Catholic.

AMRI Justice Desk collaborates with Act to Prevent Trafficking, Eco-Congregations Ireland, Lex Innocentium and other groups on issues of peacebuilding, ecology and human rights.

This year the AMRI Justice desk collaborated more broadly within AMRI, taking part in regional meetings across the country, meeting leadership teams focused on the wider programme of work. The relocation to Kimmage Manor has supported the collaborative efforts of AMRI, enabling a sense of welcome and community and facilitating additional spaces for gathering.

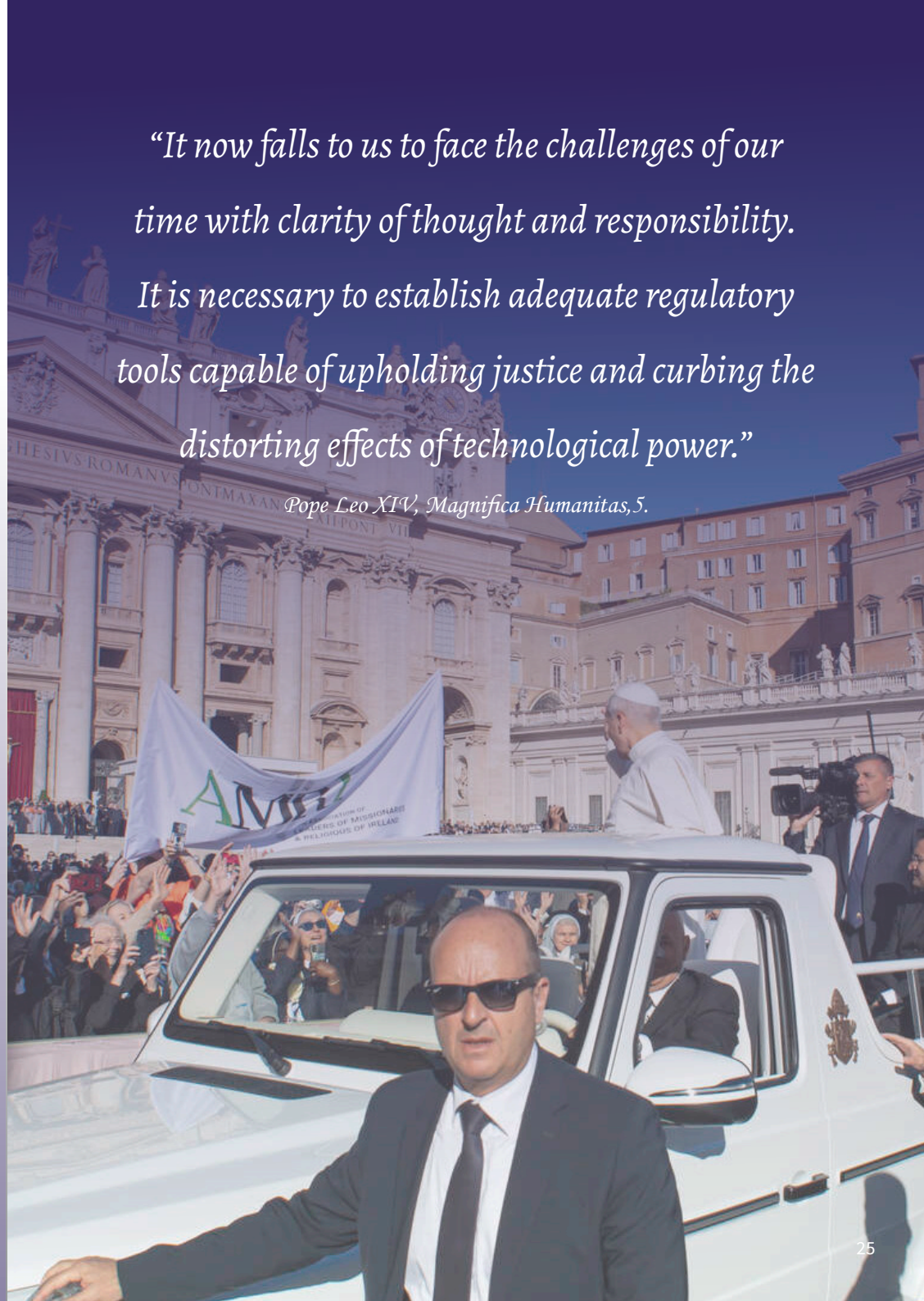
All of the above are included in the AMRI website [www.amri.ie](http://www.amri.ie) or our social media – Facebook and Instagram, which is regularly updated. For more information about any of our collaborative initiatives or to get involved please get in touch: [justice@amri.ie](mailto:justice@amri.ie)



*“It now falls to us to face the challenges of our time with clarity of thought and responsibility.*

*It is necessary to establish adequate regulatory tools capable of upholding justice and curbing the distorting effects of technological power.”*

*Pope Leo XIV, Magnifica Humanitas, 5.*





## Act To Prevent Trafficking

**Sr. Denise O'Brien, LSU**

Chairperson, APT Steering Team



**Act to Prevent Trafficking (APT), have had a busy year celebrating its 20th anniversary. A highlight during the year was a pilgrimage to Paris, where it was initially agreed to establish APT.**

**We celebrated with liturgy in Notre Dame Cathedral and broke bread together each evening as we shared memories of the last two decades. A truly privileged and joyful few days. In December, we celebrated with Mass in Kimmage Manor Parish and later in St. Luke's Parish in Mulhuddart. Both were very joyful occasions and provided the opportunity to raise wider awareness of human trafficking. These events were complemented by the "APT at 20" webinar, which reflected on the many years of progress, while highlighting the ongoing challenges.**

### **The reality of human trafficking in Ireland**

Human Trafficking and exploitation is an international crime. It is not a new reality, but it is a growing one globally, surpassing that of the drugs trade. Ireland is a destination country as well as a country of transit. Gender based violence in Ireland is described as an 'epidemic',

'but one where visibility, understanding, and responses are finally evolving'. The mission of APT is particularly urgent in the Irish context, where human trafficking remains largely hidden, yet widespread. Evidence indicates that trafficking for sexual exploitation occurs across every county, often "hidden in plain sight," with victims frequently moved around the country to meet demand – a demand that is fuelled by pornography and is facilitated by internet use and social media. Despite increased awareness, significant gaps remain in victim identification, protection, and prosecution.

Human trafficking is explicitly addressed under three specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 5, Target 5.2 - Gender Equality: eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls, including trafficking and sexual exploitation; Goal 8, Target 8.7: Decent Work and Economic Growth - eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, and human trafficking, while prohibiting



child labour; and Goal 16, Target 16.2 - Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, focusing on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and torture against children.

These goals require working in partnership with others. The year has been one of growing in partnership with other groups working on matters of justice, exploitation and the care of people.

APT work under the auspices of the Association of Leaders of Missionary Religious in Ireland (AMRI), and we are part of a wider international networks including RENATE (Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation) and Talitha Kum, the global network of religious sisters dedicated to combating human trafficking. This ensures that APT's work is both locally grounded and globally connected.

We are currently reviewing and updating our cAPTives programme for schools, a key initiative designed to raise awareness of human trafficking among students across Ireland. This programme aims to equip young people with the knowledge to recognise risks and vulnerabilities, helping to prevent exploitation before it occurs.

### **Raising awareness of human trafficking**

The APT Ireland website - [www.aptireland.ie](http://www.aptireland.ie) - has been updated to include support materials for the teachers, communities and other stakeholders.

The APT Facebook page – Aptireland – is constantly being updated.

APT members continue to speak to parishes and groups and have met with religious in formation to provide training on the issue



of Human Trafficking. During the year, APT were invited to take part in a training in AI (artificial intelligence) hosted by Renate, to understand the ways in which AI is being used to exploit women and girls for trafficking.

An important development in APT's advocacy this year

has been its contribution to Ireland's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process at the United Nations. It is a work of collaboration with our partners helping to bring critical issues of human trafficking, victim identification, and systemic gaps to international attention. The UPR represents a significant opportunity to place APT's work at the forefront, ensuring that Ireland's commitments to human rights are scrutinised and strengthened. In the coming months work will be carried out in Ireland and in Geneva to progress this review, seeking to improve processes by bringing serious issues of trafficking to the attention of the Irish Government through the UN process.

In late 2026, APT look forward to hosting a national conference.

After 20 years, APT Ireland stands as a testament to the power of collaboration, faith-based action, and persistent advocacy. While much has been achieved, the organisation remains committed to ensuring that human trafficking is no longer hidden, but confronted with urgency, compassion and collective resolve.

**Thank you for your support throughout those 20 years.**

*Thank you to all who support us in this work. If you would like to get involved in the work of APT, please contact [info@aptireland.org](mailto:info@aptireland.org)*

# Vocations Ireland



*“Continue to read the signs of the times with the gaze of your founders and foundresses.” Pope Leo XIV speaking to Religious Institutes Sept 2025*



*What an interesting year we have had and what an exceptional situation we currently find ourselves in. It is only right and fitting that we first express our*

*heartfelt gratitude to Margaret Cartwright who retired as our Director of Vocations Ireland in December 2025. We thank Margaret for her many years of faithful commitment to the work of Vocations Ireland. Her dedication, guidance, and unwavering service have inspired countless lives and nurtured many on their journey of faith. Her compassion and wisdom have been a true blessing to our community and to all those discerning their calling. Margaret’s tireless devotion has planted seeds of hope and vocation in the hearts of many, leaving a legacy that will continue to bear fruit for years to come.*

Prior to advertising Margaret’s position, it was agreed, that to build upon the excellent work of the last number of years and to enable Vocations Ireland to move forward, it was necessary to carry out a review of the work and vision of Vocations Ireland and of the role of the Director. The results of this survey carried out with members and associates of Vocations Ireland, have been used to guide the drawing up of a job description that addresses the current context and realities. In turn, this will ensure recruitment of the right person to

the role. We are most grateful to the large number of Congregations and Institutes that took part in this work which enabled a concise job description to be drawn up.

Presentation Brother Kevin Mascarenhas took on the role of Chairperson of the Vocations Ireland Committee in May 2025. In May this year he unfortunately had to step down from the committee due to congregational commitments. The committee appointed Sr. Eileen O’Connell OP as chairperson to complete the 2-year term, and Anne-Marie Whelan, Director of Vocations and Associates with the Sisters of Bon Secours, as acting secretary of the committee until a new person is appointed. While we await the appointment of Margaret’s successor, the work of Vocations Ireland continues and is currently shared among the committee members.

Throughout this past year, we have been encouraged and inspired by many opportunities to meet youth and young adults. We have engaged with various religious congregations at different events throughout the country. These included



school retreats, Transition Year events, Career Fairs, Ploughing Championships, Higher Options and Youth 2000 retreats. These events were very positive experiences for the religious who took part. This year has demonstrated that many young people are searching or are aware of God in their lives. It is so encouraging to hear them ask searching questions about their faith. During this past year too, there has been an increase in schools asking religious to come to their schools and provide retreat days, and some teachers have looked for resources to teach about vocations.

These are wonderful opportunities for us to help in planting seeds of vocation!

Students, teachers and other stand holders have asked for prayers. They thanked us for our presence at the Higher Options and at the Ploughing Championships, noting that it was so important for young people to have something to think about other than the pressures of studies and to be able to talk to others who can listen, encourage and offer support. They acknowledged the Vocations Ireland stand as a place of calm and joy.

Each activity provided different forms of fulfilment, creativity, skill development and empathy, while guiding them towards an understanding of their values and how they can contribute to the world around them. There is always opportunity for reflection and purposeful engagement at these events.

It is worth noting that if a congregation is a member of Vocations Ireland, it is essential to support these events through the presence of sisters or brothers. We continue to receive numerous suggestions on how to promote vocations, but we also need the presence of religious men and women at events to enable this work. Vocation Directors do not have to attend all events themselves however, we encourage them to invite other members of their congregation to attend some of the events. These can be opportunities for great encounters, for meeting people of all ages, and for creating new spaces for dialogue.

In March 2026 we were saddened to hear of the sudden death of Fr. Colm O’Mahony OSA who had served on the board of Vocations Ireland for many years. We are grateful for all the work he put in to fostering vocations and send our continued prayers to his family, community and many friends. May he rest in peace.

We are most grateful to the Congregations who wish to continue to pay donations to Vocations Ireland. These donations enable us to continue to support the outreach of Vocations Ireland to a series of events and initiatives, such as hosting stands for the Ploughing Championships, the Higher Options, retreats and Transition Year events. Vocations Ireland also purchase ‘giveaways’ such as highly sought after prayer cards, pens, wristbands and medals, all to promote vocations.

As the committee of Vocations Ireland, we commit to clear communication, active engagement and ongoing reflection, to ensure continuity, enhance effectiveness, and support Vocations Ireland in achieving its long-term objectives.

#### **Vocations Ireland Committee:**

Sr. Eileen O’Connell OP (Chair), Sr. Jeanne Bott (OSB), Sr. Patricia Murphy (SP), Sr. Suzanne Nguyen (FMM), Fr. Jim Noonan (OCD), Fr. Cyril Odia (SDB), Fr. Michael Troy (OCarm), Anne-Marie Whelan (Sisters of Bon Secours)





## National Synodal Team

Fr. Tim Lehane SVD Sr. Angèle Nkamsi MSHR

*AMRI is represented on the National Synodal Team by Fr. Tim Lehane SVD and Sr. Angèle Nkamsi MSHR who joined the team in November 2025 after Sr. Ann Codd pbvm went on mission to Pakistan.*

This year (2025-2026) is the fifth and final year of the mandate of this team. After the listening phases of the process, this is the Year of Action and marks a time of practical engagement and collaboration in the different dioceses, congregations and groups as we reflect together on what synodality means in practice. A period for identifying practical actions which emerge from the seven priorities are outlined in the Baptised and Sent document. Also a time to identify what is already happening within our different Church structures that can be supported and resourced, with renewed collaboration. The Team recognises that religious are actively involved in their local community pastoral activities, and in sharing the different experiences and insights which can enrich the national process.

Following the Pre-Synodal Assembly of October 2025, the Team continued to hold its monthly meetings, engaging in the national tasks outlined for the year. These were structured into eight phases each with a timeline for completion.

**Phase 1:** Formation of the Working Groups (31 March 2026)

**Phase 2:** Data Gathering and Research by the Working Groups (30 April 2026)

**Phase 3:** Development of Practical Recommendations and Submission to the NST (31 May 2026)

**Phase 4:** Completion of the Proposals in Relation to Church Teaching (31 July 2026)

**Phase 5:** Consolidation of Proposals for the Draft Preparatory Document (14 August 2026)

**Phase 6:** Submission and Review (21 August 2026)

**Phase 7:** Preparation of the National Preparatory Document (17 September 2026)

**Phase 8:** National Synodal Assembly (17 October 2026)

## Working Groups

To support this shared work, the Team invited people involved in each of the seven priorities:

- Those with local pastoral responsibility or experience
- National representatives from relevant areas of ministry
- Members of the National Synodal Team
- Others who can offer theological reflection, pastoral, scriptural, canonical, and other relevant areas of expertise.

## Purpose and Focus of Each Working Group

The seven working groups are in place and operating within their terms of reference. Each group consists of those pastorally or academically involved with the relevant skills and experience who can help gather the fruits of actions already taking place. They work towards learning from those pilot initiatives around each priority, researching and discerning actionable steps at both national and local levels. The hope is that this process will provide concrete recommendations for implementation, which will feed into the agenda and preparatory materials for the National Synodal Assembly in October 2026.

## Baptised and Sent in Lent

As part of raising awareness of the Baptised and Sent, as well as the Lenten preparation, and the Synodal Assembly of October 2026, the National Synodal Team created a set of reflective resources entitled Baptised and Sent in Lent. This resource, structured across 5 weeks, was launched on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord and during five Thursdays of Lent, members of the Team facilitated Zoom engagements using this resource for reflection and prayer.

## National Synodal Assembly

This important event will take place on Saturday, 17 October 2026 in City North Hotel, Co. Meath and in preparation for this, the Team met at Drumalis Retreat Centre in Larne, Co. Antrim between 20 – 22 May 2026. The Assembly is intended to receive inputs from the Year of Action, together with recommendations from the seven working groups. Delegates will then deliberate and agree on practical steps for implementation, while strengthening the national sense of shared mission and co-responsibility. It will also contribute to preparations for the evaluation phases of the Universal Synod (2027 - 2028). AMRI continues to encourage all members to actively participate at any local events held on the Synodal Pathway.



**The Synodal Pathway**  
of the Catholic Church in Ireland



## Lay Mission Committee

**Shane Halpin**

Chairperson, Lay Mission Committee

***The Lay Mission Committee (LMC) continued its work during 2025 and early 2026 with a particular focus on representation, co-responsibility, and the development of lay ministry structures within the Irish Church.***

A workshop took place in Kimmage Manor in June 2025 to discuss the creation of a Lay Representative Forum. This gathering extended beyond the core committee and invitations were issued to all interested parties and organisations involved in lay engagement. The meeting was facilitated by Sr. Anne Codd.

It was agreed that the LMC continue to explore the establishment of such a forum under the AMRI umbrella, given AMRI's existing remit as it relates to laity and lay mission. This provides an important opportunity to discuss and develop ideas regarding the form that such a structure might take and where it might best sit with the Catholic Church in Ireland and within wider European lay networks.

A small working group was tasked with determining the next steps and engaging in further conversations with Julianne Moran of the Irish Synodal Pathway. It was recognised that the Synodal Pathway offers an ideal framework through which the concepts of representation and co-responsibility can be advanced.

Following the publication of Baptised and

Sent by the Irish Bishops, the committee agreed to workshop a collective response and submit feedback to the Kilkenny Synodal Assembly held in October 2025. This assembly brought together representatives and delegates from dioceses and various church groups to discuss and discern priorities for the Catholic Church in Ireland, informed by local listening sessions and the Universal Synod process. The assembly identified seven national priorities for renewal within the Irish Church:

***Belonging*** – a Church of welcome, inclusion and safety where each person finds a home in community and in Christ

***Co-Responsibility and Lay Ministry*** – empowering all baptised, women and men alike, to share responsibility for leadership and mission through new models of ministry and decision-making

***Family*** – supporting families as the domestic Church and strengthening their connection with parishes and schools

***Formation and Catechesis*** – promoting lifelong, Christ-centred faith formation rooted in prayer, liturgy, and sacramental life

***Healing*** – acknowledging wounds within the Church, especially those caused by abuse, and committing to accountability, justice, reconciliation, and safe spaces for all.

***Women*** – recognising and supporting the gifts, leadership, and co-responsibility of women at every level of Church life

***Youth*** – engaging young people authentically, listening to their experiences, and encouraging meaningful participation in leadership and mission

Representatives of LMC attended the assembly and presented the committee's feedback through their participation, listening, discernment and contribution processes. Following extensive discussion, the assembly of bishops, diocesan representatives, religious, and lay groups agreed to focus on these seven key priorities and established working groups tasked with developing proposals and recommendations to help realise them within the Irish Church.

Given the outcomes from Kilkenny, the LMC agreed to focus its efforts on supporting the Co-Responsibility and Lay Ministry Working Group as a practical means of advancing its goals. In February 2026, the committee met to consider possible ways forward and to identify frameworks through which it could maximise its contribution and influence at national level. In early 2026, the Chair and Gerard Gallagher were appointed to the Working Group on Co-Responsibility and Lay Ministry. They have since begun a process of discernment and deliberation aimed at developing practical proposals for the implementation of co-responsibility within the Church in Ireland. These proposals will be submitted to the National Synodal Team for further refinement and are expected to be presented to the 2026 Synodal Assembly for discussion and possible ratification by the Irish Catholic Bishops' Conference.

The committee recognises this as a significant and potentially transformative moment for the future of lay representation and involvement within the Church in Ireland. If adequately supported and implemented, these proposals could contribute to meaningful and lasting change in how co-responsibility and participation are lived within the Irish Church. The committee looks forward with hope and anticipation to the next stages of this important process.



Members of AMRI Lay Mission Committee  
#attending the Pre-Synod in Kilkenny.  
L-R Jim Farrell, Carmel Gallagher,  
Shane Halpin

***“Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, in order to bring praise to God.”***

— Romans 15:7



## Association of Bursars of Religious Institutes

**Linda Downes**  
Chairperson, ABRI

*“Given what is at stake for humanity and future generations, MB [Mensuram Bonam] makes a fervent ‘call to action’ for faith-based, faith-consistent, faith-inspired investing based on the light of the Gospel, and the guidance from Church teaching”. Mensuram Bonam 2022 p.6*



**The 2026 ABRI Conference took place from 20–22 April in Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre, Newry. Once again, we gathered for three days of learning, reflection, discussion and networking. The**

**conference theme, “Embracing Change, Inspiring Care”, reflected many of the challenges and opportunities currently facing religious as we plan for the future while remaining faithful to our mission and values.**

The Executive Committee working alongside our sponsor Marsh developed a programme that addressed a broad range of issues relevant to bursars and their teams, while also ensuring ample opportunity for us to connect with colleagues and share experiences.

### **Inspiring Keynote Address**

The conference opened with a keynote address from psychologist, author and broadcaster Maureen Gaffney, whose

presentation explored the theme “Embracing Change, Inspiring Care”. Drawing on her extensive experience in psychology, leadership and public policy, Maureen encouraged us to approach change with confidence and resilience. Her insights into emotional intelligence, transformational leadership and the importance of maintaining purpose in times of transition provided an inspiring start to the conference.

### **Informative and Practical Sessions**

On Tuesday morning, we heard from Rob Meaney and Cian Hurley of Mercer Ireland on “Investment Governance: Guiding Change, Inspiring Impact.” Their presentation examined responsible investment practices, governance considerations and the evolving investment landscape, offering practical guidance for us seeking to align financial stewardship with mission and values.

The afternoon session focused on one of the most significant developments affecting everyone today: Artificial Intelligence. Mark Kelly, founder of AI Ireland, delivered an engaging presentation entitled “Artificial Intelligence: Understanding the Technology Shaping Our World.” We gained valuable insights into the opportunities and challenges presented by AI, together with practical considerations

for its responsible use within organisations. Mark left us with a 21-day daily use plan encouraging us to use AI even once a day to help build a habit.

On the final morning, a panel discussion on “Governance in a Time of Change – Legal and Financial Perspectives” brought together Alice Murphy of Mason Hayes & Curran, Ronan O’Brien of Walsh O’Brien Harnett and Lucy Franks of Lucy Franks Consulting. The panel explored governance, compliance, leadership and strategic planning in a rapidly changing environment, providing us with a broad range of perspectives and practical advice.

The conference concluded with a Regulatory and Legal Review presented by Niamh Callaghan of Mason Hayes & Curran. This session provided an important update on current charity law, governance requirements and regulatory developments affecting religious congregations.

### **Engaging Workshops**

Three workshops ran throughout the conference, allowing everyone to explore issues of particular relevance to their work and encouraged discussion and reflection while providing practical tools and resources for us in their day to day lives: Thinking Ahead: Future Care Planning with Valerie Smith of the Irish Hospice Foundation; HR and People Governance with Susan Gorman of SGHR Consultants, and Mindfulness with Teresa Larkin of The Sanctuary.

On Tuesday night during dinner, Simon Morgan & friends joined us for some musical entertainment. After lunch we headed back to the office full of new ideas, practical insights and renewed confidence to meet the challenges and opportunities facing our congregations in the years ahead.

Our sincere thanks to Marsh Ireland who provided sponsorship for a third year. We are also grateful to the staff of Dromantine Retreat and Conference Centre for their excellent hospitality and professionalism, which contributed greatly to the success of the event.





## Administration and Finance

*Anne Donnellan  
& Emma Gilbert*

### Administration

Our Office Administrator provides essential administrative support for many of AMRI's key activities, including the Annual Conference and the Annual General Meeting (AGM). She also serves as Recording Secretary to the Executive Council and is the primary point of contact for AMRI members, responding to enquiries by phone and email.

In addition, she manages the Garda Vetting service on behalf of AMRI members. This service continues to expand as increasing numbers of congregations register with AMRI as Garda Vetting affiliates. At present, 55 congregations are registered, and between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2026, a total of 863 individuals were processed through the service.

The Garda National Vetting Bureau now requires all affiliates to have a clear understanding of their responsibilities for identity verification and the secure retention of documentation.

### Accounts

The Accounts Administrator continued to oversee the day-to-day financial administration of AMRI, preparing quarterly management accounts, processing subscriptions, payroll, banking and donations, and liaising with the external auditor. Working closely with the Secretary General, she also prepared the annual budget and maintained accurate records of income and expenditure across the Association.

The Finance Committee met regularly throughout the year to review the financial position of the Association and to ensure appropriate financial controls and reporting arrangements remained in place. During 2026, the Committee continued to focus on improving financial reporting and supporting the ongoing financial sustainability of AMRI.

AMRI remains grateful for the continued support of its members through their annual subscriptions, which enable the Association to continue its work in service of religious in Ireland.'

## Volunteering with AMRI



*Mary O'Reilly, OSC*

Volunteering with Vocations Ireland and AMRI has been a deep learning and enriching experience for me that has broadened my understanding of vocation ministry in Ireland. Through this work I have had the privilege of engaging with many Religious Congregations and Leaders and witnessed to their dedication and hope for the future in this mission.

My involvement has allowed me to contribute in vocations events, prayer initiatives and national gatherings where I experienced many young people with a genuine desire to explore their faith more deeply and to consider how they can best serve.

Volunteering has also been a time of personal growth for me developing many skills and have grown in confidence, discovering that my own gifts can support others in their discernment journey.

Despite challenges facing religious life today my experience of working with Vocation Ireland and AMRI has been energising and hopeful. Vocation ministry in Ireland is ALIVE, evolving, and full of possibility. I am grateful to be able to play a small part in it.



*Denise Boyle, fmdm*

For some months now, I have had the privilege to volunteer with the AMRI Team in their relatively new offices in Kimmage Manor. During this time, I assisted with the Lenten talk series which, underpinned by scripture were informative and addressed key issues in religious life and the Irish church today. The depth of talent, experience and knowledge demonstrated by the speakers, reflected the extensive pool of wisdom within the membership of AMRI.

Then followed the annual justice conference organised by the AMRI Justice, Peace and Ecology Coordinator, Toni Pyke, generously supported by the team. It was an excellent day, with 75 participants, from a variety of NGOs who collaborate with AMRI and were keen to hear the speakers from the broader Irish community. The honest discussion regarding the challenges facing our country, within the context of a volatile and fragile world, called for both an urgent personal and collective response.

With a small committee of AMRI members, we are organising a variety of events to run through October, Mission Month. An integral part of this is the programme we are collaborating on for Returned Missionaries. In summary, I am grateful for the opportunity to work within a dedicated and professional team, where honesty, openness and good humour underpin the working day.



## Towards Peace Spiritual Support Service

Una Allen  
Coordinator

*If we do not transform our hurts, we will almost certainly transmit them.*

- Richard Rohr

*Towards Peace offers spiritual support to anybody who has been abused, physically emotionally, sexually, spiritually, in a religious/church environment on the island of Ireland. It provides a safe space where people who have been hurt can connect with their own spirituality, their sense of God and the Sacred – their own journey towards peace.*

Funded by AMRI and the IEC the service is free and is also available to the families of those who have been affected.

The service has been established primarily as a resource both for and with survivors. Research shows that abuse by members of the Church has a major impact on a person's spiritual well-being. Towards Peace is a response to a request from a number of survivors, who despite having received counselling, are still struggling at some deeper level of themselves.

Support is largely provided through spiritual accompaniment. This is a shared experience. There is no sense of the spiritual companion bestowing knowledge or answers or attempting to bring the survivor back to Church; rather it is a journeying together, unpacking the hurts and the wounds that may have lain dormant for years. Equally Towards Peace is

a resource for a devastated, sometime fearful Irish Church, perhaps experiencing compassion fatigue but also in need of understanding and healing, to be able to suffer-with those who are hurting, and to companion those who seek hope in a loving God. The story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus demonstrates that it is not about the magic of instant transformation. We all must go through a healing process; we must first face, listen, share and process the wounds of the past before we can endeavour to recognise anew the indwelling Spirit – the God within.

The Towards Peace panel of spiritual companions comprises men and women, lay people religious and clergy. Based countrywide they are fully trained, qualified and experienced. They are committed to ongoing specialised training and regular professional supervision. All Towards Peace spiritual companions are members of AISGA (All Ireland Spiritual Guide Association) and abide by the AISGA Code of Ethics.



The numbers who access the service are relatively small but for those who do engage feedback is very positive. There is no doubt that over time survivors of abuse can and do rediscover their spirituality and transform the spiritual vacuum left in the aftermath of such hurt.

In recent years the service has sought to broaden its remit and in June 2025 held the first day of recollection for victims and survivors of abuse. In September of 2026 the Oversight Committee is planning a 'Solidarity with Survivors' event. Participants will include, victims and survivors, their families and advocates, spiritual companions, safeguarding personnel, members of the local parish, invited church leaders and members of Towards Peace.

We see this as an opportunity to acknowledge the wrong that was done to so many people in the past, offer our support to them, and commit ourselves to a present and future where all people are welcomed and treated with the dignity and respect, they deserve.

*Along with the ongoing fundamental element of spiritual accompaniment, Towards Peace also offers:*

- Support over the phone and by email of survivors, their family members, and those who seek to support them;
- Consultation with survivors and survivor support organisations toward service development;
- Recruitment of spiritual directors who meet the Towards Peace criteria;
- Design and provision of specialised training to spiritual companions;
- Design and provision of training for interested parties;
- Development of Website and Facebook page for Towards Peace;
- Promotion of the service within the Church, secular support organisations, and wider society;
- Ongoing contributions to conferences, publications and events about the work of Towards Peace;
- Contribute to the Head to Heart module in Seminarian Formation;
- Outreach to survivors overseas;
- Awareness work with Church personnel about the spiritual impact of trauma in general, and more specifically the spiritual and theological impact of primary and secondary trauma due to abuse in a Church context.

Towards Peace continues to work closely with the National Board for Safeguarding Children and with Towards Healing. The coordinator is a member of the Victim/Survivor subgroup, charged with implementing recommendations from the RSM Strategic Review of Child Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland and was the convener the working group on healing for the upcoming meeting of the National Synod in October 2026.

*Towards Peace is very grateful for the continued support from AMRI.*



## Shared Religious Archive

Over the past number of years, there have been some discussions around a Shared Archive for Religious congregations. With diminishing numbers of religious in Ireland and a changing religious landscape it is now approaching the time for congregations to begin to work together to ensure their legacy and story is protected for future generations. It is important to work towards safeguarding the various collections with appropriate care and respect.

There are now emerging generations in Ireland who have had no contact with religious congregations. The social impact on Irish culture of religious life in Ireland in the 19th and 20th centuries can be seen in and through the various religious archives

AMRI hosted a webinar on updating interested congregations where things have progressed. AMRI is now actively looking to identify a potential space for a location of an archive.

The Archive committee – working group used the services of a professional fundraiser to make one proposal for funding from an international institution. We also held meetings with one university that has expressed interest in the possibility of collaborating on this project.

During the summer of 2025 we moved a number of archives, which included the Irish Missionary Union (IMU) and Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI) collection to a new temporary facility.

We are drawing up legal agreements for receiving future archives that may be at risk or in need to relocate. A meeting in late 2026 will be hosted by AMRI and its Archive Working Group to outline potential next steps for congregations that wish to enter this emerging process.



*“This, dear young people, is the virtue that  
will change history the most.*

*You can change history!*

*Do it with love!*

*Thank you very much.”*

*– Pope Leo XIV, 6<sup>th</sup> June 2026*

# Gratitude For Generous Service to AMRI

*In gratitude for all who have contributed to their time and talent to AMRI through their service as Executive Council Members, Committee Members and as Representatives to other organisations during 2025-26.*

## Executive Council

Joe McGee MSC (President), Barbara Murphy CJ (Vice-President), Irene Balzan MMM, Brendan O' Rourke CSsR, Jim Noonan OCD, Ndidi Anozie MSHR, Janet Nutakor OLA, Shane Halpin Viatores Christi, Anne Marie Dixon OSU, Philip O Halloran MHM, John Harris OP, Coirle Mc Carthy RSM, Michael O' Sullivan MAfr, Clare Donnelly OCD

## Justice, Peace and Ecology

**SafeBirth4All Coalition:** Misean Cara, Rights Proof Association, Medical Missionaries of Mary

**Belonging Without Boundaries Ecumenical Group:** A collective Christian coalition representing Catholics, Methodists; Church of Ireland; Anglicans; the Council for Migrants and Refugees, Justice & Peace of the Irish Episcopal Conference; CrossCare; the Dublin Interfaith Forum, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI).

**Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network Ireland:** Presentation Sisters, Our Lady of the Apostles, Dominican Sisters Cabra, Spiritans, Salesians, Medical Missionaries of Mary, Presentation Brothers, Bon Secours.

**Justice Conference Planning Team:** Lara Kelly, Brian O'Toole, Seamus O'Neil SPS, Gabriel Dolan SPS.

**Social Impact Investing Group:** Seamus O'Neil SPS

**General Support and Planning:** Denise Boyle FMDM

## Communications

Joe McGee MSC, Michelle Robertson, Pat Coyle, Finbarr Tracey SVD, Gerard Gallagher

## Finance Committee

Ray Dwyer FPM (Chair), Linda Downes, Donal O'Brien, Paddy Hennessy SBD, Michael O'Sullivan MAfr, Emma Gilbert and Gerard Gallagher

## Governance Committee

Irene Balzan MMM (Chair), Aidan Mc Grath OFM, Nicola Keogh, Gerard Gallagher

## Irish Religious Stewardship Working Group

Joe McGee MSC (Chair), Aidan Mc Grath OFM, Nicola Keogh, Gerard Gallagher, Carmel Murtagh SHCJ, Uainín Clarke SSL, Dermot O'Leary CFA, Cara Nagle RCE, Avril O'Regan RLR, Brid Liston FCJ, Anne Marie Dixon OSU

## Lay Mission Committee

Shane Halpin (Chair), Angie Escarsa (Secretary), Jim Farrell, Carmel Gallagher, Sally Roddy, Denise Flack, Carmel Flynn, Gerard Slattery

## Vocations Ireland Committee.

Eileen O'Connell OP(Chair), Jeanne Bott OSB, Patricia Murphy C.S.S.P, Suzanne Nguyen FMM, Jim Noonan OCD, Cyril Odia SDB, Michael Troy O.Carm, Anne-Marie Whelan representing Sisters of Bon Secours

## Act to Prevent Trafficking (APT)

Denise O'Brien LSU and the APT Steering Committee

## Synodal Working Group

Angèle Nkamsi MSHR, Tim Lehane SVD

## Visa Working Group

Tim Lehane SVD, Gerard Gallagher, Jennifer Burke, RJM

## Catholic Education Service

Michael Troy O.Carm, Jennifer Burke RJM

## Association of Bursars of Religious Ireland Executive Committee

Ms. Linda Downes Chairperson, Mr. Neil Morris Vice Chairperson, Ms. Doreen Cronin Secretary, Ms. Paula Fullen Bursar/Treasurer, Fr. Gerhard Osthuess SVD Deputy Bursar/Treasurer, Sr. Marian Harte ABRI committee member, Mr. Garry Lyons ABRI committee member

## Towards Healing

**Members:** Sheila Devane MMM, Tim Lehane SVD, David Gibson CFC

**Directors:** Hugh Lagan SMA, Christina Goodman CJ, Ryan Holovalasky CSsR

## Towards Peace

Hugh Lagan SMA, Gerard Gallagher

## IEC-AMRI

Joe McGee MSC, Barbara Murphy CJ, Michael O'Sullivan MAfr, Ndidi Anozie MSHR, Gerard Gallagher

## Intercom Magazine

Gerard Gallagher

## National Board for Safeguarding

Phil O'Laoide, Nuala O'Gorman RSM

## National Mission Council

Denise Flack VC, Gerard Gallagher, Bridget O'Driscoll O.P, Michael Kelly SPM, Bro Martin Kenneally FPM, and Ms. Denise Flack Viatores Christi

## UCESM

Joe McGee MSC, Barbara Murphy CJ, Gerard Gallagher

## St Luke's Institute

Gerard Gallagher

## Council for Management of Catholic Secondary Schools & Catholic Education Partnership

Michael Troy O.Carm

## Secretariat of Secondary Schools

Patricia Bourden, Michael Troy O.Carm

## Catholic Education Service Trust

Michael Troy O.Carm

## National Vocations Council

Anne Marie Whelan representing Bon Secours Sisters.

## NRVC International Coordinator

Coordinator of Vocations Ireland

## Coimirce

Archbishop Eamon Martin, Archbishop Dermot Farrell, Archbishop Kieran O'Reilly, Archbishop Francis Duffy, Joe McGee MSC, Michael O'Sullivan MAfr, Barbara Murphy CJ, Ndidi Anozie MSHR

# Rest In Peace



## Fr. Kieran O'Mahony OSA

The death took place of Fr. Kieran O'Mahony OSA after a period of illness. Kieran was a keynote speaker at our Annual Conference in 2024.

He was a gifted scripture scholar who traveled and taught all over Ireland. He specialised in the writings of St Paul. He was immersed in History, Liturgy, Music, Archaeology. As a lecturer he was able to speak and teach with clarity. He was able to connect Scripture to life, politics and current affairs. The past came alive through Kieran in his teaching and writing.

Our ways are not Gods way. He lived well and died well. He was a gift the whole Church in Ireland and beyond. He will be greatly missed by his Confrères in the Augustinian Community. A true ecumenist and follower of the Gospel. May he rest in peace.



## Sr. Brigid Reynolds S.M.

Sr. Brigid Reynolds passed away peacefully on the 3rd January 2026 at St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin. Sr. Brigid was a staunch advocate for social justice who devoted her life to challenging and combatting inequality, poverty and social exclusion. Sr. Brigid, a Marist Sister, worked with the Conference of Major Religious Superiors, later renamed the Conference of Religious of Ireland (CORI) before establishing the NGO Social Justice Ireland in 2009, alongside Seán Healy SMA, also at CORI.

Sr. Brigid's life and tireless activism is testament to her commitment to human dignity, human rights, social justice and the common good towards a just future for all.



## Fr. Colm O'Mahony OSA

Fr. Colm passed away on 29th March 2026. Fr. Colm was the vocations director for the Augustinians in Ireland; student master for the pre-novitiate; and prior and bursar of the Drogheda community. He served as an Executive Member of Vocations Ireland.

# Diary Dates - 2026-2027

## 2026

### September

|                                     |                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 15 <sup>th</sup> - 17 <sup>th</sup> | Vocations Ireland at the National Ploughing Championships, Tullamore                    |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup> | Vocation Ireland host a stand at the Higher Options, RDS Dublin                         |
| 21 <sup>st</sup>                    | AEFJN Webinar: No Justice Without Climate Justice: An EU Presidency for the Common Good |

### October

|                                             |                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept - 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct | AMRI Annual Conference and AGM - Tullamore            |
| 7 <sup>th</sup>                             | Mission Awareness Programme Meeting Kimmage           |
| 15 <sup>th</sup>                            | One-day Seminar for Returned Missionaries             |
| 18 <sup>th</sup>                            | Returned Missionaries: RTE Mission Eucharist, Thurles |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup>                            | Returned Missionaries: THE NEW MISSION TO IRELAND     |

### November

|                                                               |                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 <sup>th</sup>                                               | AMRI's Annual Remembrance Service for Deceased Religious and Missionaries - Kimmage Manor |
| TBC<br>*Refer to <a href="http://www.amri.ie">www.amri.ie</a> | Youth 2000 Regional Retreats                                                              |
| 10 <sup>th</sup>                                              | APT 20th Anniversary Conference, IHREC Event Centre, Dublin 7                             |
| 14 <sup>th</sup>                                              | National Climate March, Dublin                                                            |
| 24 <sup>th</sup>                                              | AEFJN Advent Webinar                                                                      |

## December

|                                                               |                                         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| TBC<br>*Refer to <a href="http://www.amri.ie">www.amri.ie</a> | Youth 2000 Christmas Retreat, Newbridge |
| TBC<br>*Refer to <a href="http://www.amri.ie">www.amri.ie</a> | AMRI Advent Workshop Series             |

## 2027

### January

|                  |                                                                 |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 21 <sup>st</sup> | Meeting of Religious Retreat Houses and Centres of Spirituality |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|

### February

|                                                               |                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 8 <sup>th</sup>                                               | Feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita |
| TBC<br>*Refer to <a href="http://www.amri.ie">www.amri.ie</a> | AMRI Lenten Workshop Series        |
| TBC                                                           | Regional Meetings for AMRI Members |

### March

|                  |                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| 8 <sup>th</sup>  | International Women's Day |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> | Easter Sunday             |

### April

|                                     |                                          |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 24 <sup>th</sup>                    | AMRI Annual Justice Conference, Maynooth |
| 19 <sup>th</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup> | ABRI Conference                          |
| 22 <sup>nd</sup>                    | Earth Day                                |

### May

|                  |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 26 <sup>th</sup> | SafeBirth4All Conference |
|------------------|--------------------------|

Sign-up for the AMRI newsletter, check out the AMRI website [www.amri.ie](http://www.amri.ie) and follow us on Facebook and Instagram to keep up-to-date on all AMRI updates and events.



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