



In all things to love and to serve
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Irish Jesuit Mission Office Newsletter

Issue 12 – Summer 2014

Contents

- A Life of Fortunate Opportunities
- Happy, Busy and Irish in Zambia
- Man of Many Talents
- Searching for a Deeper Meaning to Life
- Mission News

Vision

A just and humane world based on Gospel values and Ignatian Spirituality.

Mission

The Irish Jesuit Mission Office supports Jesuit works in the service of poor and marginalised people, particularly in Africa and Asia.

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A Life of Fortunate Opportunities



Eddie Murphy SJ is Chief Librarian at Arrupe College, Zimbabwe.

Eddie knew from a young age what he wanted to be when he grew up. The priesthood was the road he wanted to take and he never doubted that it was the right path. Born in 1938 into a peaceful and loving Catholic family in Ballina, Co. Mayo, he retains a sense of calm and optimism describing his life as "...an unfolding of unusual and fortunate opportunities."

From boy to man

Upon leaving Clongowes Wood College, County Kildare in 1956, he entered the Society of Jesus. Donal Sullivan SJ was Master of Novices at the time, while serving his term of office as President of the Arts Council of Ireland. Donal inspired an appreciation of art in the novices

under his care: the students gained insights and knowledge outside of the norm. Eddie smiles recalling that when he emerged after the two years of noviceship, a relative remarked he "...went in a boy and came out a man."

Off to University College Dublin (UCD) then to study Science in 1958. The class number had doubled as a result of a wave of interest in the subject following the success of the Soviet Union's Sputnik 1 – the first artificial Earth satellite. The Space Race had begun! There were 30 scholastics reading across the various disciplines simultaneously, enthusiastic and eager to share their knowledge. Eddie recalls UCD scholastic life as a very exciting time.

Life and languages abroad

Immediately after his final exams and with only a weekend to study French, he left for France to study Philosophy at Le Puy and Chantilly as a scholastic. It was a very formative period in a cosmopolitan environment, he admits, for a young man from rural Ireland. Work experience – "Regency" – followed in Zambia from 1964

A Word from the Director



Thank God for a good summer and it is wonderful to experience the warmth and freshness of the air!

We welcome home many of our missionaries from Chad, Hong Kong, South Sudan, Zambia and Zimbabwe. May it be a time of refreshment for

them in mind and body here in Ireland.

The summer edition of our newsletter tells stories from some of our missionaries. It gives an insight into their lives and work and shows how God labours with them and through them touching the lives of so many people. Your support of them and their work bears fruit in plenty.

During these months we join in prayer with Pope Francis and with all people of goodwill for peace in our world. We mourn with the relatives and friends of the victims of the downed airliner in Eastern Ukraine. The violence and loss of life in the Middle East touches all our hearts.

Pope Francis' prayer can be the prayer of each one of us:

"And so we ask the risen Jesus, who turns death into life, to change hatred into love, vengeance into forgiveness, war into peace. Yes, Christ is our peace, and through him we implore peace for all the world. May the God of peace arouse in all an authentic desire for dialogue and reconciliation. Let us pray in silence for peace."

We wish you a blessed summer. Thank you for all your support of our mission and missionaries.



PRAY FOR PEACE

to 1967 just before the country's independence. Most schools were for Europeans then, although the Jesuits still maintained one for Zambians, previously opened in 1949. But as copper mining is an important industry in Zambia, there was an urgent need to educate students in the Science subjects. To prepare for his teaching work, Eddie went to live a traditional lifestyle in the bush and to learn the local Tonga language.

A further four years as a Theology student followed in Ireland, with the final year completed in Uganda. It was a wonderful and challenging time to study Theology. He recalls it "as a time of great change within the Church as a result of the Second Vatican Council that was known for its renewal of Catholic doctrine in a modern timeline and perspective".

Eddie the librarian and book lover

Ordination was only six weeks away when Eddie underwent a psychological test to help determine the work he was best suited for – a librarian! No surprise as he has always loved books and spent many hours in libraries.

After his ordination in 1970, he spent 30 years as a self-taught librarian and set up the first library in the Zambia/Malawi Province while teaching in Lusaka. On to Hekima College, Nairobi, Kenya in 1983 as the first Jesuit Theolgate there. He remembers: "It was a great team to be on!" He set about acquiring books from Jesuit libraries around the world, writing letters of request and was invited to visit some to choose books. Nine colleges in the US and six in Europe contributed generously to his library project. The thriving library of today is built on twenty years of work with many of its books on the internet.

Eddie identifies a potential problem however in a growing knowledge gap between rich and poor. Recognising this, UNESCO has given developing countries free access to 1,700 online journals. But he believes there needs to be much more access for poorer people to progress towards improving the access to information.

Happy to bloom where planted

In 2004, he was on the move again to Arrupe College in Harare, Zimbabwe, where he still works. Eddie lives in a House of Formation in the college for students of Philosophy from countries all over Africa and considers himself as "the Zambian contribution" to the community.

This year is a special one; Eddie celebrates 50 years on the continent of Africa. His motto is "Always to be happy to bloom where I am planted!"



Left: Charlie Searson. Center and right: members and leaders of the local Pioneer Association, Chikuni, Zambia

Happy, Busy and Irish in Zambia and Malawi

Charlie Searson SJ is National Chaplain of the Pioneers and National Secretary of AP in Zambia.

Charlie was raised over Searson's public house in Baggot Street, Dublin and educated in Loreto on the Green and Belvedere College.

He was ordained in the church of St. Francis Xavier, Gardiner Street, Dublin on the 15th June 1980, having lived in the parish as a scholastic for four years previously and two afterwards. He maintains that "those six years of mixed community and sacramental activities laid the basis for my approach to future mission work in Zambia and Malawi".

Charlie describes his present responsibilities in three areas of work in Zambia and Malawi; the Pioneers, the Apostleship of Prayer and prison service.

Faith and addiction linked in the Pioneer organisation

This is cutting edge work – alcohol addiction is a global problem. Charlie is a Pioneer himself for years and has a very real sense of mission working with the National Network on Alcohol Harm Reduction. A new government policy has been drafted and is presently awaiting approval and implementation by the cabinet. Charlie outlines the approaches adopted by the Jesuits to limit alcohol abuse and explains that they are rooted in the work of the Irish Jesuit Fr. Cullen SJ, the founder of the Pioneer Total

Abstinence Association. They are based on prayer, lifelong fasting from alcohol, education in schools advising students not to drink until 18 years of age, and a uniform with badge communicating the Pioneer's commitment, especially when socialising.

Joyful service to God and others in the Apostleship of Prayer

Ten million Catholics worldwide start the day with a prayer offering it to Jesus and praying for Pope Francis' intentions. But prayer is not enough. They choose one of the Pope's 24 annual intentions and become involved in making it a reality: job finding and creation for people out of work is an example.

"The internet offers immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity. This is something truly good, a gift from God."

Pope Francis

Charlie goes on to explain that the Apostleship of Prayer has been re-created to encompass three new areas: Spirit-led Action; the Eucharistic Youth Movement; Going Digital. For example, the use of Whatsapp free mobile messaging service is extensive in Zambia and Malawi.

Pope Francis has reminded

Catholics that the internet is "a gift from God". To mark the 48th World Communications Day, he said: "Media can help us greatly in this, especially nowadays, when the networks of human communication have made unprecedented advances. "The internet, in particular, offers immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity. This is something truly good, a gift from God."

Charlie is enthusiastic in its use. He produces a regular email message for Apostleship of Prayer members that encourages prayer and action.

Prison service

He describes involvement with the Zambian Central Prison in Lusaka as "a challenging, joyful and rewarding experience". On the first Sunday of the month, Charlie says Mass there which is attended by inmates of various religions. Although built for 300 it now houses 1,200 prisoners: the government is under pressure to build a new one.

Visiting the Mental Forensic Prison is another regular activity. It houses 22 inmates and is in a neglected condition. Following pressure on the government to renovate it, a group of University of Zambia engineering students, led by their Professor, are working on plans and fundraising for this major project.

Charlie Searson describes himself as a happy, busy, Irish priest! Later this year he looks forward to celebrating 50 years with the Society of Jesus.

Man of Many Talents

Fr. Murt Curry SJ is Programmes Officer at the Jesuit Missions Office in Dublin.

Born in Donegal and brought up in Galway, Martin – known as Murt – served as an altar boy and from a young age was unwavering in his conviction that the priesthood was his calling. Educated by the Jesuits at Coláiste Iognáid – affectionately known as The Jes – Murt went on to teach Maths and Science there as a young Jesuit.

Hanging around boats

Outside the classroom, he recalls that his love of sport and the great outdoors often found him on the playing fields and down by the river “hanging around boats” at Coláiste Iognáid Rowing Club. Murt rowed for his school winning the Four’s (number of rowers in a boat) Championship, and later continued his involvement with the Club for 14 years.

Following his Jesuit Tertianship, he took charge of the rowing club from Fr. Eddie Diffley SJ and started girls’ rowing in the school. In 1989, two girls’ eights rowed in the inaugural Women’s Junior 18 eight Championships in the Galway Regatta; ‘The Jes’ won!

The Club went from strength to strength with some students going on to row for Ireland at junior and senior international levels. Murt believes that “Rowing promotes friends for life”. His contribution to Irish rowing is celebrated in the Fr. Murt Curry Cup, a prized annual trophy for Women’s Junior Fours Championship.

Studies, science, maths and music

As a Jesuit he studied Biochemistry at University College Dublin in 1972 and continued taking degrees in Philosophy and Theology at Milltown Institute, winding up with a Masters at Berkeley in California.

Eighteen years were spent in Galway where Murt taught Maths and Science. As a music lover and violinist, Murt recalls with a smile his strong support of the annual school musical which is still a highlight of the school year there. The students loved it; it was great fun! Then followed six years in Crescent College, Limerick, teaching Maths, Science and Religion.

A Sabbatical year well spent

During a Sabbatical year in 2005, the



call of the great outdoors led Murt to Spain to walk the full Camino de Santiago. From the Pyrenees to Finisterre, the pilgrimage covered 500 miles in 30 days. He remembers the walk as “...a wonderful time for beautiful sunsets and quiet reflection.”

The year out continued with four months in a parish on Long Island in the Bahamas. Being the only priest with six churches and very poor communities, there was not much time there for reading or reflection.

Murt found himself back on the water again, this time on the Nile in Africa en route to South Sudan. The following months were spent teaching Maths through English in Nimule, South Sudan, a refugee camp on the border of Uganda. Although there were 35 languages amongst the students there, the teaching language was English.

The Sabbatical year wound up in Zambia in 2006, visiting the various Jesuit mission works and preparing for his next position of project writing at the Irish Jesuit Mission Office in Dublin, Ireland.

Back to the office

Project writing – composing official funding applications for Jesuit works – along with field trips to the Jesuit East Africa and Zambia/Malawi Provinces, keeps Murt very much in touch with people living in developing regions. He observes that a new joined-up approach has been adopted now, from the national to the European to the international, to



ensure that Mission works become more efficient and have lasting beneficial effects on the lives of developing communities. For example, the Irish Jesuit Mission Office (IJMO) is now a member of the worldwide Jesuit Xavier Network of mission offices and Jesuit NGOs. Murt attends meetings on behalf of the IJMO.

Home is in Rathmines, Dublin, where Fr. Murt lives as a local Superior leading and encouraging young Jesuits coming to study from the African, Asian and European

Provinces. He explains that his job is to ensure that they progress with their studies, live and share in Jesuit community life and take responsibility for their own lives and decisions.

But it doesn't stop there. He is also consultant to the Irish Provincial and manager of the Jesuit house and grounds in Wicklow. Any free time that remains sees Murt playing golf or hiking in the hills, revisiting and enjoying the great outdoors!

Searching for a Deeper Meaning to Life

Fr. Seán Coghlan SJ is Residence Minister, House and Hostel Treasurer of Ricci Hall Community, Hong Kong.

Seán Coghlan, originally from Limerick where his sister Kathleen still lives, has spent most of his life in mission work in Hong Kong. He is fluent in Chinese having prepared for his work there by learning the language for two years beforehand.

At the Jesuit Wah Yan College

Seán recalls his time serving as Principal in the Jesuit Wah Yan College, in Hong Kong from 1988 to 1996. He describes Wah Yan as offering an holistic, liberating and transformative Catholic education “aiming to produce students that will contribute to the welfare and happiness of all, particularly the poor and neglected”. He became Warden of the Students' Hostel in Ricci Hall and worked in this position for 13 years, from 1997 to 2010.

During his teaching years, Seán enjoyed teaching English and Religious Studies. He explains that Religious Studies was based on the Catholic tradition but tended to stress the values within it rather than “straight” doctrine. Seán stresses that this wider approach ensured that students of different religions, or none, were more comfortable in class and did not feel they were being indoctrinated. As a result, his classes were regularly well attended.

Searching for a deeper meaning

Seán takes an active interest in Hong Kong matters and comments on the problems of a decreasing population and present/future demographics; the figure is now at 0.9 children per couple with far more male babies than



Seán and his sister Kathleen on a visit to the Jesuit Mission Office in Dublin, May 2014

female. In 2047, Hong Kong will return to complete integration with China and he expects this will lead to further changes.

Seán reflects that the search for a deeper meaning to life for some young Chinese has seen a renewed interest in the Catholic Church. He gives an example, “The Hong Kong University Students' Union Catholic Society now provides many of the instructors for Catechumen classes run in Ricci Hall at the University.”

He finishes with a smile, recalling that “This year 3,500 people were baptised on Easter Saturday night alone”. A cause for celebration!

Mission News

● Jesuits Near and Far

This summer we welcome home with great joy Irish Jesuit missionaries on leave – Peter Carroll, Gerry Clarke, Seán Coughlan, Clive Dillon-Malone, John Moore, Eddie Murphy, Jerry O’Connell, Richard O’Dwyer, Charlie Searson – some of whom have contributed to this newsletter.

Please remember in your prayers Gerry Keane our sole missionary in Singapore, Tom McIntyre who is under nursing care in Hong Kong, and Jimmy Hurley who is recovering from a period in hospital there and will be 70 years in the Society of Jesus on the 11th of November this year.

● Causes for Celebration

Michael J. Kelly celebrated his 85th birthday in Zambia in May while Charlie Searson will enjoy marking 50 years in the Society of Jesus.

● Out in Africa

Brid Dunne, Mission Office Development Education Coordinator, visited Jesuit mission works in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda during the month of July. She has plenty of news to share and will update us all during the coming weeks.

● The Mission Office is Moving

Later this year the Mission Office will move into its former home at 20 Upper Gardiner Street and vacate its present premises at Upper Sherrard Street. We will keep friends and supporters informed.

● South Sudan Appeal

The Irish Jesuit Mission Office, with other Mission Offices around the world known as the **Xavier Network**, is responding to an Emergency Appeal for

South Sudan. Should you wish to make a donation to our missionary work there, please see details below.

● Thanksgiving Mass

Mass will be celebrated in Dromantine Retreat Centre outside Newry, Co. Down on the 20th September 2014 for all our missionary friends and families. All are welcome.

● Malawi, Loyola Jesuit Secondary School Update

Thank you for your kind generosity towards the construction of Loyola Jesuit Secondary School in Kasungu, Malawi. The opening has been postponed until September 2015. The kitchen facilities have been delayed and Fr. Peter Henriot there says they certainly need to be up and running before the students arrive!

The postponement will give extra time for completion of all the Phase One construction and a head start on Phase Two. Much of the remaining preparation – curriculum design, preparation of teachers, details about boarding, funding – of getting the school underway will now have more time to be organised as a result.



Classroom block next to Administration Block, Loyola Secondary School. Kasungu, Malawi.

Thank you for your continued support!

If you would like to make a donation to our missionary work, please make cheques payable to:
Irish Jesuit Missions and post to Irish Jesuit Missions, 28 Upper Sherrard Street, Dublin 1,
Tel. +353 (0) 1 836 6509

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