

PARTNERS IN FAITH WINTER NEWSLETTER



PARTNERS IN FAITH

Summer School 2015

A great highlight of the year is always our reflection days where a large group of people gather to listen to a chosen speaker on a particular theme and to spend a day in the company of like minded partners in faith. There is always a wonderful, inspiring atmosphere at these gatherings and 2015 was no exception to this with a marvellous gathering in June to celebrate **Brigid; Inspiration for a New Ireland**, in the wonderful setting of the new Brigidine Centre in Co. Kildare.

The day was led by Dolores Whelan, who is a dedicated follower of Brigid and her wisdom for our time. In the afternoon, Margaret Walsh, Brenda Kindregan and Terry Hennessey facilitated beautiful workshops based on the traditions and customs of Brigid, all connecting to our overall theme for the day.

Go mbeirimid beo ar an am seo aris.



Events and activities of Partners in Faith from July to December 2015

Confirmation Workshops

Over the last year or two, Partners in Faith have been invited to work with parents of children who are preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation. This year we have had further discussions with Marino parish and Sruleen Parish in Clondalkin about how best we can support parish teams in working with parents on exploring their own faith development as they accompany their child on the road to receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. We are excited about a series of workshops in both these parishes where we will have the opportunity to support and listen as parents share the joy and challenges of exploring faith values with each other and their children at this significant time.

Margaret Alyward Centre

The Margaret Alyward Centre has become a home away from home for our team as we have had the privilege of running a series of workshops there during the year. We are always welcomed with open arms by Brenda and the team and the place lends itself to providing an ideal setting for the work that we do with groups. Our workshops included the following themes and were run over a number of weeks during the year.

1. *Gods Dream for People.*
2. *Jesus Story, Our Story.*

3. *God in our Everyday Lives.*

4. *Making Space for Wisdom.*

We are always humbled and enriched by the sharings and insight that come from these gatherings and as facilitators we are deeply grateful for meeting with such wonderful partners in faith. The integrity with which the participants reveal their life story in and through our scripture based programme, is truly *Good and Joyful News*.

Prayer Guides

In April of this year, we were asked by the Dublin Diocese to facilitate a day of self care for prayer guides which was held in Clonliffe College. As the prayer guides give freely of their time to accompany people in various parishes on their faith journey, it was felt that a day of nurturance and reflection was something that might support them in their ministry. We based our gathering on the story of the Samaritan Woman and the journey to the well. It was a gentle, prayerful experience and was enjoyed by all. We wish the prayer guides every blessing in their ministry. May they continue to feel the presence and power of the spirit in the great work that they do.



Easter and Christmas Rituals at the Wisdom Centre

We always enjoy putting on these rituals for the residents and friends of the Wisdom Centre. They offer an opportunity for people to come together in a safe setting and to pray a little, sing a little and to share memories of what this time means for them. They enjoy the chance to be with friends, to remember times from long ago and to receive a little gift to help them connect to the spirit and gift of these



times. We look forward to planning our Christmas ritual in Sophia in the month of December.

Remembrance Service

When people move on from this world, it is nice to remember them at a ritual with family and friends. We are often called to organise one for people living at Sophia and we are delighted to be able to facilitate conversations and prayers for the people that are deceased and for the families that are left behind coming to terms with their loss. We add a very personal touch to these rituals with a favourite poem, prayer or song and encourage the family to bring along symbols of their loved one's life to use in our service. We always include a strong message of hope through a scripture passage, that comforts people in listening to gospel stories, where Jesus speaks of the promise of resurrection and eternal life in the presence of his love and protection.

Winter Reflection Day

The theme of homelessness and refugees seeking shelter in our country has been a very live issue for us in Ireland throughout all of this year. As Partners in Faith, we wanted to open a conversation about the need to listen and to find a response that was adequate given the seriousness of this crisis worldwide. We invited Fr. Peter McVerry to lead us and are looking forward to our forthcoming Reflection Day on Saturday 5th December at the Sophia



Fr. Peter McVerry

Centre, Cork Street. Fr. Peter McVerry has been working with vulnerable young adults in Dublin for the last 40 years. During this time he has campaigned tirelessly for their rights. As a social activist, Peter is a strong advocate for those who have no voice in society. We are very much looking forward to this day of reflection titled “To reveal the God of Compassion, we have to be the Compassion of God.”

Further details at info@partnersinfaith.ie or (01) 453 5348.

Archdiocese of Dublin
OFFICE OF EVANGELISATION & ECUMENISM

“Tracing Gospel Sparks” Workshop – Archdiocese of Dublin

This is our third year to be involved in days organised for Dublin Pastoral Areas by Rosemary Lavelle and the team from the Office of Evangelisation. We also facilitated a workshop in Bishop Raymond Field’s pastoral area which explored the theme “Parish Pastoral Councils and Prayer in Action.” A large crowd of people gathered and following a keynote address, a selection of workshops were offered to participants on the day. Our workshop, which we delivered twice during the day is

called “Tracing Gospel Sparks”. In it, we took a passage from scripture and asked the groups to reflect on the message of the gospel for us today. A series of questions stimulated conversations in the smaller groups and the Gospel sparks ignited a very interesting and valuable sharing. We were delighted with the response and feedback from these groups and look forward to further opportunities to continue to offer the work of Partners in Faith to those who are working in parish ministry.

Making Space for Wisdom

Each year Gemma McKenna puts together a marvellous series of leaflets to help us on either our Advent or Lenten journeys. In these leaflets, Gemma traces the Gospel readings of the season and offers some questions to stimulate a reflection on how these times can be of personal and communal benefit in understanding our faith journey more deeply.

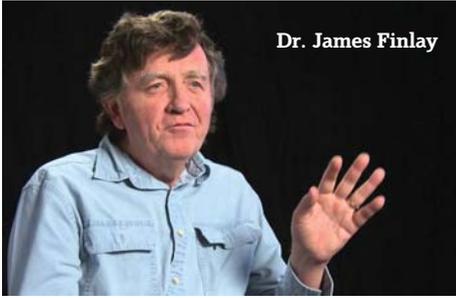
This advent “Making Space for Wisdom “ is available at a cost of 5 euro to help with printing and posting. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like a copy of these leaflets.

Making Space for Wisdom

Four Advent Gospel Reflections for small groups.

2015





Dr. James Finlay

Partners in Faith Retreat Day

The team attended a day long seminar led by Dr. James Finlay at Milltown Conference Centre this summer. The content revolved around the contemplative life of Thomas Merton and his writings. It was a wonderful day and a great opportunity to meet and share the journey with others.

Trustee Members of Partners in Faith

Each year we meet on a regular basis with our committed and supportive members of our Trustee team. The work of Partners in Faith could not happen without their support, encouragement and guidance for which we are truly grateful.

Funders

Partners in Faith is funded by the support of generous groups and individuals who believe in our work and help us continue to spread the message of this organisation in a very real and experiential way, particularly with individuals on the margins of our society.

This Christmas we want to wish a special blessing to the friends, trustees and funders of Partners in Faith. We are forever grateful to you for your support and encouragement and while funding is always an issue of concern for our organisation, we have never lost hope and will continue to share the message of hope

and courage with those we meet along the way. May you and those that are dear to you experience the light and blessing of the coming of the Christ child in all of us.

Nollaig faoi shean agus faoi mhaise agaibh go leir agus gach beannacht orainn uilig don bhliain nua.

*O Mary, Dave agus Deirdre.
(Foireann Partners in Faith)*



PARTNERS IN FAITH

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**Beannachtaí na Nollag
agus síocháin na
hathbhliana dár gcairde ar fad.**

**Happy Christmas and
a peaceful new year
to all friends of
Partners In Faith.**

