



Heart to Heart

sscc Lay Associates Newsletter

April-Oct 2014

Firstly, apologies from me for the long delay since our last newsletter. As some of you may know my Mum died in June and we have had several family issues which have taken up a lot of my time. Hopefully things will start to settle down a little now. Secondly, I would like to thank those who have emailed various snippets to include in this (limited) edition of our newsletter – there would be no newsletter without you!
Ann

Fr Pearse's mother Teresa Mullen, died 23rd October at her home in Donegal. Her funeral Mass was held in the church in Donegal Town on Saturday 25 October. I know you will remember Pearse and his family in your prayers at this time.

Please also pray for Di and Joe Wilsons daughter-in-law who is seriously ill at the time of writing this newsletter.

Secular Branch

"Since its origin the Congregation has had a secular branch. Its members commit themselves to live the mission and the spirit of the Congregation, and it has its own Statutes approved by the Holy See".

Constitutions, art. 9.

The decree approving the Secular Branch of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, says that the Secular Branch **"is an Association of Christ's Faithful, whose members share in the charism and in the mission of the Institute, according to their own vocation."**

Secular Branch consists of lay Catholics (women and men) committed by faith to build a better world, according to **the charism of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary**. With this charism the members of the Secular Branch are drawn to "contemplate, live and proclaim" the love of God manifested in Jesus, precisely there, in the circumstances of their world.

Knowing that in this way we are not alone. The **Spirit of Jesus** always precedes us. In addition, we walk with the Church, the People of God, with SSCC brothers and sisters, aspiring to contribute to building a more just world in solidarity with the poor.

The joy of living and sharing the mission received by our Founders, makes one to compromise, after a period of formation, with the Secular Branch, through a **promise**. This is done first for one year and then for three years, renewable indefinitely.

Secular Branch is found in almost all countries in which the brothers and sisters of the Congregation work. In 2012, the total number of members was around **700**.

Accepting to be a member of the Secular Branch of the Congregation is to accept loving the world as God loves it and as his Son Jesus has manifested it in his Gospel. The world, especially the poor and dispossessed, need your hands to **"lengthen"** the hand of God, so that his love can reach out and touch all humanity.

"As lay persons, they share in the mission of the Congregation according to their own vocation: to live and spread the Gospel and build a more just world, realizing the Kingdom of God in the Church and the world of today"

(Art. 2, Statutes of the Secular Branch)



SS.CC Secular Branch (England) Retreat Weekend, Buckden Towers 26-28 September

The Secular Branch in England held its annual retreat weekend at Buckden Towers Retreat Centre in Cambridgeshire on the Weekend of 26th to 28th September.

There were approximately 20 Secular Branch members in attendance, including two members from Ireland; we were also joined by Sr. Elizabeth Smith ss.cc. and the weekend was directed by Fr. Fergal Maguire ss.cc.

The theme of our weekend was “The New Evangelisation” and how as Lay Members of the Congregation, by reference to our Rule of Life, we could live out our individual and collective call to evangelisation within our own realities and place in the world.

Time was spent during the weekend reflecting on specific scripture passages and sharing our thoughts with each other. Time was also spent in periods of adoration and in the celebration of the Eucharist. Fr. Fergal gave us much to think about and reflect upon.

Once again, it was a much valued and enriching period, when Secular Branch members around the country can come together to share time with each other and grow in community.

Mike

Charlotte has added: Fr Fergal asked us to think about these points in connection with Our Rule of Life:

- 1)
Community
Service
Contemplation
Sacrifice
Love

On the reflection of our second session:

- 2)
Post Christian society
Reasons for new evangelisation
Living in post Christian society ie Christians disconnected from faith
New culture
New media
Confusion about need to evangelise

- 3)
Post Christian society
Personal conviction
Community
Word of God
Liturgy & sacraments
Courage & creativity



Yvonne Downey, Mary Genockey from Clondalkin and Charlotte McGowan from Daventry



Fr Fergal - what would we do without the computer?