

I R E L A N D

Annual Report 2007



L'Arche International is a Federation of 131 member communities, established as independent entities in 34 countries. The 131 communities encompass 5000 people with and without an intellectual disability, who share their lives in homes, workshops and day programs.

People with an intellectual disability often have the remarkable capacity to touch others. They are particularly welcoming and spontaneous, and their sensitivity allows them to bring us together, to enrich and challenge us as human beings. L'Arche is convinced that our societies are in need of these qualities and that people with an intellectual disability can be real teachers who are able to lead us back to the essential.



Veda making jewellery, L'Arche Cork

Cover: Front Cover: David Ainscough at work in L'Arche Cork's woodwork project, who died on Oct. 18th 2007.

David, it hurts to say goodbye to you, whom we love so dearly. Yet we trust that you are happily resting in the arms of your beloved God.

Inset left to right: Mary at the loom in L'Arche Kilkenny; craft weekend L'Arche Belfast; and Marathon fundraising, L'Arche Dublin

Illustrated throughout the report are items created in L'Arche workshops and craft activities

The L'Arche prayer

Father,
Through Jesus our Lord and our Brother
We ask you to bless us;
Grant that L'Arche be a true home
Where the poor in spirit may find life,
Where those who suffer may find hope.
Keep in your loving care all those who come.

Spirit of God,
Give us greatness of heart,
That we may welcome all those you send;
Make us compassionate
That we may heal and bring peace;
Help us to see, to serve and to love.

Oh Lord,
Through the hands of you little ones
Bless us;
Through the eyes of those who are rejected
Smile on us.
Oh Lord,
Grant freedom, fellowship and unity to all your people
And welcome everyone into your Kingdom.
Amen.



"The Communities wish to secure for their members, education, work and the therapeutic activities which will be a source of dignity, growth and fulfilment for them."

Charter of L'Arche: 3:2

Chairperson's Report

The theme of our Report this year is work. Work brings dignity and meaning to all our lives particularly when it involves a group project such as the establishment of our first L'Arche Cafe in Callan, Co Kilkenny. This Cafe is the fulfillment of a long held dream brought to fruition by the wonderful work of a dedicated team of people. It was officially opened by the Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney TD on Oct. 4th 2007. Congratulations to all involved.

Indeed everyone working in our workshops can be justly proud of their produce. They are always of top class quality and represent hours of dedicated hard work. The fruits of your labour in the form of a candle or a card can announce L'Arche to a wider community in a wonderful way.

The photograph of the late David Ainscough on the cover of this Report, engrossed in work, is a fitting tribute to this gentle man of our Cork Community. David died suddenly on Oct. 18th 2007 and his passing leaves a huge void in Suaimhneas his home and Le Chéile where he worked - particularly the Garden Project.

In March we welcomed home Declan Coughlin, as our new Community Leader in Cork. Declan has worked in L'Arche for many years both in Cork and New Zealand. We wish him well in his new position.

One of our priorities this year was improved communication at all levels of our organisation.

We had our first joint meeting between the Regional Council and Central Committee in Kilkenny in April and I am continuing to meet with all our local Committees.

An inaugural meeting of our Northern European Committee members was held in Krakow in May. It was a great success and gave us all inspiration to work together as a Federation.

Solidarity is an important aspect of who we are, particularly solidarity with our communities in Africa. Fostering this solidarity in a practical way was another priority this year.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the wonderful leadership, Anne O'Sullivan, our Regional Co-ordinator, has given to the Region over the last year. She is an inspiration to us all.



Joan Costello, Chairperson of L'Arche Ireland



Opening of Café L'Arche in Callan, Co. Kilkenny: Minister for Health & Children, Mary Harney TD, Dr. Pat Crowley, Chairperson of L'Arche Kilkenny and Tom Maher, Chairperson of Kilkenny County Council

A thought from the Regional Coordinator

I would like to reflect a little on an aspect of our mission and its relevance for our world today.

Part of the mission of L'Arche is to work together to build a more human society. This is a project at once enormous and little. The enormity of changing the world is too much for a small organisation to contemplate. The enormity of changing ourselves is sometimes like that too. If you are like me, you will often wake in the morning with good intentions for changing your behaviour in the day ahead – to pray more, to eat less, to exercise more, to act more kindly to those I meet, to live and work more slowly – there's a big menu to choose from. Really the changing of oneself is a project of infinite proportions. It will never end. I for one am sorely tempted to dump it as a project and just accept myself as I am, faults and all. But that is hard too. It's a trap I find myself in. How can I make a more human world?

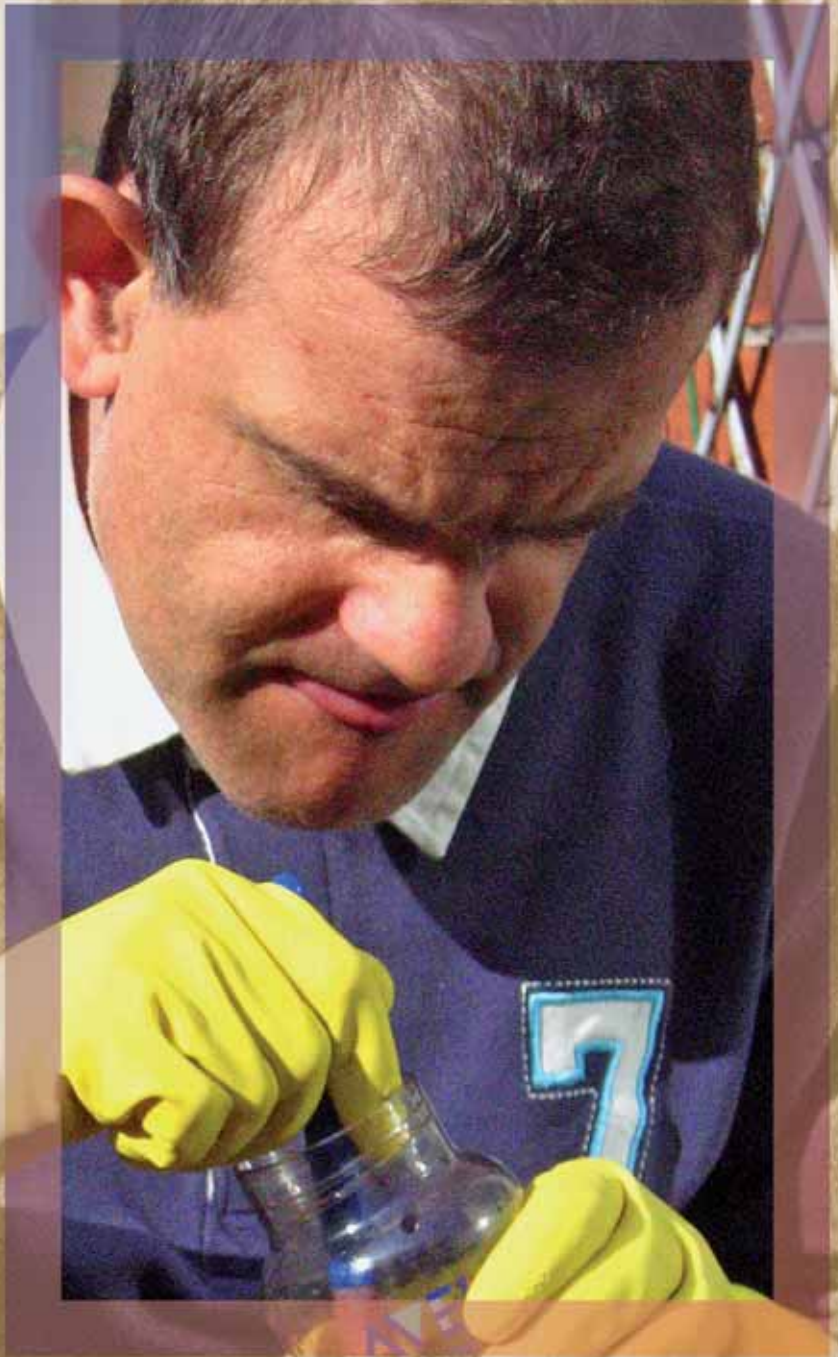
I can't even change my own little world.

A poster I saw many years ago said – “You want to change the world? You can do it - one heart at a time – starting with your own”

L'Arche is based on this very simple, but not easy idea. The underlying dream is that the change is contagious and that in time the light will spread and overcome the darkness, as in John's Gospel, Chapter 1. It's a matter of becoming aware in my daily life of how my heart can be changed, of how the “Change the World Project” that is L'Arche's - is mine and that I can make a difference by living my daily life with more awareness, that I can do that with those around me, that all of us can do it together. So, tomorrow morning

**Anne O'Sullivan
Regional Coordinator, L'Arche Ireland**





Larry, L'Arche Belfast

"We seek to be communities where people whatever their race, religion, culture, abilities, or disabilities, can find a place and reveal their gifts to the world."

Jean Vanier



Marie, L'Arche Cork



What work means to me

Helen Ryan, member of L'Arche Cork

I look forward each morning to working in the workshop in L'Arche Cork. It is good to meet up with everyone and I enjoy all the activity that is going on.

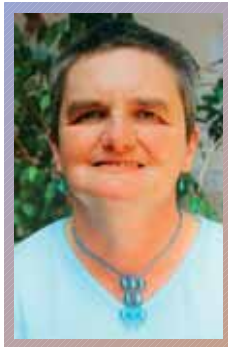
My project is printing where I work with Mary, Marie, and Clare. We are learning to work together as a team. I like making cards and batiks and my goal is to be able to put covers on the notebooks, as I find this quite hard to do.

I enjoy getting back massage and Reiki from Claire and working with Jackie in the Lifeskills Project learning about healthy eating and working on projects.

One of my favourite things made in the work shop is the jewellery. There are so many nice pieces.

My work in the printing occupies me but it doesn't fulfil me as much as when I worked in a nursing home caring for the elderly. I don't feel able to work outside L'Arche again, but I could see myself helping those in L'Arche who may need care in the future.

Helen displays jewellery from L'Arche Cork workshop



Community Growth

A stroll through the L'Arche Belfast allotment

Scott Shively, member of L'Arche Belfast

It's a fine September day, and I am making a tour of our allotment – a 12 by 14 meter plot generously given to us by a local farmer. I take a moment to recollect the season's horticultural successes and failures, and realize that although the former well outnumbered the latter, there is no way that we will keep our community fed through the winter on our modest harvest.

However, as I stroll about, I see more than just the crops. I see the compost bin that Larry and Gregor built together out of old pallets. I see the potato beds which Helen, Rebecca, and Octavia dug up together last Saturday. I see the rockery flower beds that nearly everyone in the community had a hand in

constructing. And I realize that perhaps the most important fruits of this garden are not peas, potatoes, or even strawberries, but the community we experienced through our labours in it.

Garden project, L'Arche Kilkenny. Left to right: John, Mickey, Róisín and Mick

Jean Vanier retreat

Niamh Morris, a friend of L'Arche and Faith & Sharing, and currently a student in Maynooth co-ordinated a retreat for young people this year in Trosly, France, where the founder of L'Arche, Jean Vanier lives. Here is her account of that experience. A further retreat of this nature is planned for 2008 and Niamh will be one of the co-ordinators. We are very grateful to Niamh for her support in this way. For further details contact niamhmorris@gmail.com

On the morning of June 11th 2007 last, a group of thirty young people, all based in Ireland, met in Dublin Airport for the start of what would be a four day adventure in a small village, Trosly, in France. Some of us had met before, through L'Arche or the Retreat with Jean Vanier in Maynooth last year, but for many, it was a leap into the unknown. Some didn't know where Trosly was or even who Jean Vanier is. But no matter, by the time we reached La Ferme (the Retreat House in Trosly) friendships were already forming, and a sense of excitement growing about the Retreat.

And we weren't to be disappointed. As a leader, I had

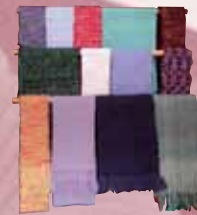
worries about whether the group would come together, and whether we would find the Retreat worthwhile. I needn't have worried! To hear Jean speak in such a small setting is quite amazing. He is a man who has so much to say to young people about our hopes and dreams, about the path that God has laid out for us, about the disappointments that life can bring. The Gospel message of love that he speaks of, while gently delivered, is challenging and thought provoking. And to help us to think about it more, we met in small groups. What a blessed experience of sharing our stories and listening to others share theirs.

Our days in Trosly were busy – we met with Jean on several occasions, including a great questions and answers session. We had morning and evening prayer, and a Washing of the Feet liturgy led by Fr. Phil Kearney. But there was plenty of time for having a chat, getting to know the other participants, going for a walk or just soaking up the peaceful atmosphere of La Ferme.

What will I bring from the Retreat? Jean's talks, the singing, praying together, eating together, sharing together, having fun together. I don't think any of us will forget in a hurry the hilarious dramatisations of Gospel passages on the final night. To say that artistic licence was taken is a bit of an understatement!

What I will remember most is just being together. Over the course of a few short days we became a Community. And like any Community when its members depart, the only question we were asking was – when do we meet again?





Pauline, L'Arche Cork



“The Word became flesh to communicate to us human beings caught in the mud, the pain, the fears and the brokenness of existence, the life, the joy, the communion, the ecstatic gift of love that is the source of all love and life and unity in our universe and that is the very life of God.”

Jean Vanier

ODF News, Sponsored cycle

One hundred and something miles across Clare on a bike!? – I’d rather you than me!

In April 2007 twenty remarkable people: core-members, assistants, friends of L’Arche and others interested in a good weekend, came together in solidarity to offer a hand of support to L’Arche in Africa. For the fourth year running, a sponsored cycle has been organised in Ireland in aid of L’Arche in the developing world.

This year’s cycle, in aid of L’Arche Zimbabwe and Uganda, began at the village of Sixmilebridge, Co.Clare. Early on Saturday morning we set off with the road taking us through the Burren, up the Corkscrew, on to Lisdoonvarna and finally to Doolin where we spent the first night. Sunday brought us



past the Cliffs of Moher and many of the by-roads of Co. Clare until we arrived back at Sixmilebridge that evening for food and a pint together before going our separate ways – I felt more than a little sad that it had to end so soon.

L’Arche Kilkenny and L’Arche Cork gave huge support this year- providing mini-buses and drivers to ferry bicycles and bicyclists around for the weekend, as well generous sponsorship. At a L’Arche Kilkenny community gathering, a cheque for €3000 was handed over to Tim Kearney (Zone Director of L’Arche in Northern Europe). The money raised from this year’s cycle will help to fund the building

L'Arche Financial Report

L'Arche Ireland Financial Report For Republic Of Ireland
Year Ended December 31st 2006

Income	2006		2005	
		€		€
Government Funding	85%	2,463,528	83%	2,054,736
Workshop Sales	1%	28,617	1%	29,738
Donations & Events	6%	186,449	6%	155,501
Bank Interest & Inv Inc	—	7,628	—	4,085
Zone Income	—	—	—	—
Subscriptions	2%	55,650	3%	75,883
Day Service Capitation	2%	51,401	2%	35,455
Other Grants	—	10,357	—	—
Other Income	4%	114,587	5%	115,489
Total	100%	2,918,217	100%	2,470,887
Expenditure				
Pay/Allowances	60%	1,662,032	63%	1,610,291
Living	11%	303,986	11%	272,277
Property	11%	303,440	10%	256,588
Transport	5%	134,569	5%	138,213
Administration	5%	136,590	5%	124,873
Workshops	2%	61,297	3%	73,528
Training/Formation	3%	96,392	4%	97,241
Regional/Zone	2%	42,454	1%	18,536
Other	1%	23,932	(-2%)	(60,487)
Total	100%	2,764,692	100%	2,531,060
Surplus / (Deficit)		153,525		(-60,173)

L'Arche Belfast is a Limited Company with Charitable Status so it's financial statement is not part of this report. However, in terms of the structures of the International Federation of L'Arche, L'Arche Belfast is part of the Region of L'Arche Ireland

We would like to extend our appreciation to you who continue to support us through your friendship, practical help and your financial contribution. Without you we would not be able to continue to do the work we do. Thank you very much.

of second homes in both the Zimbabwe and Uganda communities.

Hopefully, these L'Arche Ireland cycles will continue in the future. Anyone can come along; they remain dependent on people's interest and support. If you are interested in taking part or supporting the 2008 cycle, you can contact me at ulickobeirne@yahoo.ie.

Ulick O'Beirne, a former assistant in L'Arche and currently a student in NUI Maynooth, has been organising sponsored cycles for L'Arche ODF for the past number of years. Here is his account of how this year's sponsored cycle went. We are very grateful for Ulick's support in this way and for his friendship.



Donations in the Republic of Ireland

If you are a PAYE taxpayer, a donation of €250 in any one tax year is eligible for tax relief which will be refunded to L'Arche, making your donation worth up to 43% more! If you are a self-assessed tax-payer, a donation of €250 from taxable income could allow you reduce your tax bill by the top rate of tax. For further information please contact the L'Arche Secretariat at 056 7725283 – email: admin@larche.ie

1. If you would like to make a direct once off donation to L'Arche Ireland or set up a Standing Order for L'Arche Ireland through your own bank, our details are the following:

Name of account:

L'Arche Ireland Subscriptions Account, Bank of Ireland, 103 Upper Leeson Street, Dublin 4.

Acc. number: 13661756. Branch Code: 90-01-72

Please let us know that you have lodged a donation or have set up a Standing Order so that we can issue you with a receipt.

2. If you wish to send a donation by cheque please use the following address: L'Arche Ireland Secretariat, Cluain Aoibhinn, Fairgreen Lane, Callan, Co. Kilkenny.

Tel. 056 77 25283. Email: admin@larche.ie

We will send a receipt for all donations received by cheque.

Donations to L'Arche Belfast

If you would like to make a direct donation to L'Arche Belfast you can do so by contacting their office at 0044 28 90221377 (use the prefix 048 instead of 0044 28 when telephoning for the south of Ireland) or by email to belfast@larche.ie for the attention of the Finance Co-ordinator. Where possible all donations are personally acknowledged and receipted.

Gift Aid A system of Gift Aid is in place, which enables L'Arche Belfast to claim back tax at a rate of 28% on all donations, which have been gift aided. Further information on gift aid may be had from the L'Arche Belfast office.



Above: presentation of cheque for 3,000, proceeds of sponsored cycle in aid of L'Arche Uganda

Left: Patrick and Roman, L'Arche Kilkenny



Katie, L'Arche Dublin

L'Arche Ireland

Board of Directors

Chairperson: Joan Costello

Treasurer: Billy Holmes

John Heuston

Eileen Houlihan

Kathryn Hutton

Patrick Crowley, *Chairperson – Kilkenny*

Brendan O'Leary, *Chairperson – Cork*

Susan Ferguson, *Chairperson – Dublin*

Regional Co-ordinator

Anne O'Sullivan

Community Leaders

Kilkenny: Greta McIlveen – *acting community leader*

Cork: Declan Counihan

Dublin: Helena Lewis – *acting community leader*

Belfast: Maria Garvey



“My joy is to announce how people with disabilities can be a source of transformation for us all and a road to the heart of God and so teachers of peace.”

Jean Vanier

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