



Annual Report 2009

Chairperson's Report

The highlight of the last 12 months has been my attendance at the L'Arche Federation Assembly meeting in Kolkata, India. It was a wonderful celebration but also an important affirmation of our vision of solidarity in the world. Experiencing the difference L'Arche can achieve in somewhere as poor as Kolkata was humbling. The welcome and joy the Indian core



members brought to our meeting was uplifting. Many of these core members had been abandoned as children and have now grown up into life-giving and -receiving adults. These were the people bringing us all together in a spirit of global solidarity.

The Assembly represented 135 Communities from different religious faiths and traditions throughout the world. What a tribute to L'Arche's founder, Jean Vanier, that after just 45 years his open, inclusive vision has inspired people from so many different cultures. Our difference being seen not as a threat but an enrichment.

My year was, however, also greatly saddened by the passing of Sr. Aileen Waldron. Sr. Aileen worked with me on the Central Committee before becoming the Community Leader of L'Arche Dublin. She was a strong, warm woman with a great spiritual faith and gentle humour. I remember her with fondness and give thanks for her work and commitment to L'Arche.



Our Communities have had a good year and are thriving despite government cutbacks and continuing financial difficulties. This has been achieved by the heroic efforts of everyone at every level in our Communities. More than ever, we need financial support from friends and supporters. Our Identity as a faith based Community organisation will be threatened without adequate independent financial resources. I would, therefore, urge all who read this report and who are inspired by L'Arche's vision to give some financial support no matter how small. Every contribution makes a difference.



Financial Report

	2008	%	2007	%
Income	€		€	
Government Funding	2,987,999	85%	2,690,650	85%
Workshop & Café Sales	117,905	3%	116,979	4%
Donations & Events	217,491	6%	199,614	6%
Bank Interest & Investment Income	29,393	1%	17,103	0%
Subscriptions	—	0%	—	0%
Day Service Capitation	102,851	3%	82,306	3%
Other Grants	62,064	2%	19,204	1%
Other Income	414	0%	27,817	1%
	3,518,117	100%	3,153,673	100%
Expenditure	€		€	
Pay / Allowances	1,939,213	63%	1,942,209	64%
Living	243,328	8%	265,402	9%
Property	419,380	14%	375,341	12%
Transport	94,005	3%	79,466	3%
Administration	161,817	5%	154,028	5%
Workshops	99,006	3%	105,611	3%
Training / Formation	91,662	3%	75,543	3%
Regional / Zone	13,861	1%	39,252	1%
Total Expenditure	3,062,272	100%	3,036,852	100%
Excess Income over Expenditure	455,845		116,821	

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

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 €62.50

more if you are on the standard rate of tax and €173.73 more if you are on the higher rate of tax! If you are a self-assessed tax-payer only, 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

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.
Account 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.

Alternatively you can send a cheque to: L'Arche Ireland Secretariat, Cluain Aoibhinn, Fairgreen Lane, Callan, Co. Kilkenny.

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 by telephone at 028 90 221337 (use 048 instead of 028 when telephoning from the south of Ireland) or by email to info@larchebelfast.org.uk 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.

L'Arche Sligo Project Group



Meetings/New Members

The group meets on the fourth Friday of every month in the Knights of Columbanus Hall (behind St Michael's Family Life Centre) in Sligo.

If you would like to become involved in any way or receive a regular Newsletter giving an up-date on the work of the Project Group please contact: Catherine Moloney (Chairperson), 9 Rathanna, Pearse Road, Sligo. 087 6455650

Funding

The group will have to fund the preparatory stage of the foundation of a L'Arche Community and to this end they are actively fundraising.

Statutory revenue and capital funding will be available only when the community opens its doors to nominated people with intellectual disabilities. In the current climate of economic cutbacks, it will be a huge challenge for the group to find the necessary resources to found a new community and any help that you can

L'Arche has for some years now, been supporting a group of people in Sligo, who came together with a desire to further the mission of L'Arche. Over many years this group of people from Sligo and the surrounding area has kept alive the hope for a community in Sligo and has been steadily working towards that goal. L'Arche has given its official approval to the group to move forward towards founding L'Arche in the Sligo area.

The Project has opened a small second hand Charity Shop open in Sligo town. This shop will accept any good quality second hand items that you may want to give away.

The shape of the future community is likely initially to encompass a home and/or a Work/Day Programme in response to the needs of people with intellectual disabilities in the locality. The Project Group will work closely with the local office of the HSE. The group is actively working on identifying a suitable site or house in which to start the community.



In the photographs, clockwise from top left: Sr. Jacinta, Catherine, Niall, Sean, James, Fergal Sr. Regina; Barbara, Niall, Mary and Geraldine at a birthday celebration; Fergal and Barbara at the 'Day of Recollection' in Dromahair; Geraldine – L'Arche Sligo; Sean, James, Catherine, Niall, Regina and Jacinta with Jean.

give will be much appreciated Please send donations to: L'Arche Sligo Project, c/o Ms. Pat Harris (Treasurer), River Lodge, Ardvarney, Riverstown, Co. Sligo.

Cheques made payable to L'Arche Sligo. Bank details for direct donations to the following account: L'Arche Sligo c/o AIB Stephen Street, Sligo. A/C. No.08352-090.

Regional Coordinator's Report

A busy year! In our communities the pace of life seems to accelerate. We assistants like to think that we live at a slow pace, echoing that of our core members. It is not so. We live at the fast pace of the world around us. The dual nature of our work in the world, of providing a service of care and support of the highest standard to our core members, married to our membership of an international organisation with high ideals, means that busyness is a permanent characteristic of our lives together. It is not evident what the effect on the core members is of this busyness. They continue to be an example to us, with their capacity for living in the present moment, unfailingly welcoming and forgiving and always up for a cuppa and a chat, no matter what's going on around them.



L'Arche is an idealistic organisation. We want to change the world – to make it a more human place, where all are welcome and all are made to feel important. This is our dream and we work awfully hard to make it real in our particular local patches throughout the Federation of L'Arche. The Federation General Assembly in Kolkata last year was an amazing event that exemplified the unity in diversity that we hold dear. Joan has written of the experience elsewhere in this report.

In Corrymeela in early November, L'Arche Belfast and Corrymeela hosted an event attended by people from L'Arche Ireland and L'Arche UK together with many other friends and fellow-travellers. It was a true celebration of unity – we were together in a Harvest Fest expressed through worship, song, dance, poetry, art and drama. Difference was not the important focus, but rather the humanity that binds us together. It was a tiny glimpse of unity; the unity that we all long for; that is at the heart of God, however we conceive of that mystery.

Our lives continue apace. We welcomed many new assistants this year from far and near. Likewise we bade good-bye to many who graced us with their presence and their generous spirits and who have returned to their own place bringing the gifts that they received and in turn healing their particular part of our planet.

And that is our work – the healing of our poor fractured human world, where disunity rather than unity is the reality, where the preciousness of each human being is forgotten, where so many are alienated from their humanity, We do it through trying to live loving lives, trying to treat each one as precious, trying to be better, more loving people. Having this as our ideal and intentionally structuring our lives to that end is what our work is. In reality we do not live anything spectacular – perhaps we accompany someone more physically needy to the toilet; perhaps we sit at a desk adding figures to make our accounts balance or lead a prayer session. No matter what the job is, big or small, we are on a journey together. It's this sense of being bound together by a set of values that enlivens our hearts and spirits and of being led by those among us who do not need a set of values but are instinctively living them out through their gentle healing presence; this is what makes L'Arche worthwhile.

Sponsored Cycle

in aid of L'Arche Overseas Development Fund (ODF)

Each year L'Arche Kilkenny organises a sponsored cycle in aid of the L'Arche ODF. In 2009 the Community raised €2,000 with the help of local friends and members from the other L'Arche Communities in Ireland. In 2010 they plan another such outing and are hoping that even more people will come and join them on their 2 – 3 day tour somewhere in Ireland.

If you are interested in taking part or in helping to organise this event please contact: Bob McLoughlin – 0851482028

