

Dear Friends and Family,

It has been a while since we last wrote to you. Our silence is in the spirit of 'Less is More'. We noticed that in the pressure of getting the Newsletter out monthly we had lost some of the joy of feeling connected with you. Without the time deadline and the pressure to be perfect it's lovely to be writing this letter to you.

AS HAPPY AS LARRY....

Our man, Larry celebrated his 40th birthday in October. He hired himself a dress suit, and bought a black shirt and a red tie. He looked fantastic. In Larry's own word - everything was 'nice' but 'Red Shoes' would have been 'nice' too!! We've got to scout for a pair for Christmas.

His speech:

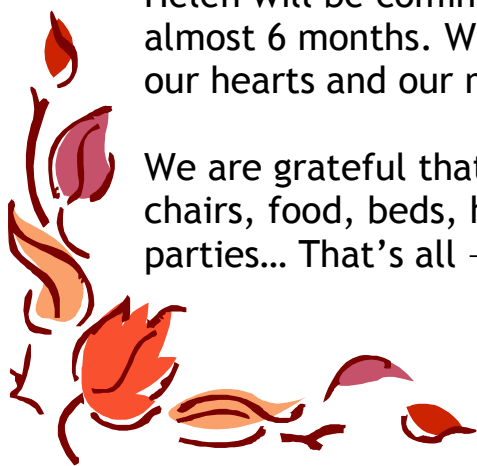
"Happy Man - Thank You."

These four words started me thinking about the connection between happiness and gratitude. Those of you who have lived with Larry will instantly recognize how that connection is fully alive in him. He is a wee man with few words and big wisdom. He knows the world in terms of what he sees. He trusts what he knows and he is grateful for everything that he lays his eyes on - the things that most of us take completely for granted. He prays in lists!! When it's his turn to pray at table or during our community prayer times he looks around him and begins:

*"Thank you for plates, knives, forks, floors, walls, ceiling, cooker, dinner, dvds, tv, tv license, beers, friends, tables, chairs, that's all.
Amen."*

This is a happy time in our community and we are grateful. Soon Helen will be coming home from hospital where she has spent almost 6 months. We have been preparing our walls, our tables, our hearts and our minds so that it will be a real homecoming.

We are grateful that we have walls, floors, ceilings, tables, chairs, food, beds, heat, money, friends, families and birthday parties... That's all - Amen.



In other L'Arche news:

A note from Scott about his trip to India for L'Arche International meeting:

"As I took my last anti-malaria tablet this morning, I realized that it's been a full month since I have returned from the L'Arche International Federation meeting in Kolkata, India. The memories are still quite fresh: the hair-raising cab rides through crowded city streets, the shocking poverty which inspired Mother Theresa to try to make a difference in the world, the heat and humidity, and the overwhelming experience of being in a city with a population several times larger than that of the island of Ireland. And that all happened before I got to the meeting!

It was great to meet people from so many different communities, and to hear that we are not alone in our struggle to find a way to live community in a world that is increasingly ruled by regulation. I met many old friends, and made many new ones. I heard many stories about communities in all corners of the world, and the people who live in them. I left at the end of the week full of inspiration and new ideas for how we can build new connections with both with other L'Arche communities, and within our own local community. I also left with a particularly nasty tropical illness, which wiped me out for a good two weeks after my return. I am grateful to be part of a community which not only allowed me to be away in India for ten days, but also gave me two weeks in which to recover from the experience!"

In Scott's absence, we were able to see a true leader arise: Thomas lead our team meetings with enthusiasm and ease. He took pride in leading meetings and was ever gracious in being willing to train Larry to lead as well! Watch out, Scott... Thomas is vying for your job!

We also have some welcomes in order:

- Leslie joins us in the office and brings much organisational support and a warm smile to our community.
- Heather and Jana have finally joined us and are welcomed as the newest assistants in the Ember.

Community Wish List

Anyone who knows anyone who could give us straw bales to winter up the garden we would be sooooo..... grateful. We are still desperately needing straw.

If you happen to be doing winter cleaning, Gosia would love to take a small desk off of your hands and Faythe and James are desperate for curtains to help winterize their home.

Every Sunday night at 6:00pm- All are welcome for Dinner and Prayer at the Ember! A big thank you to Sister Rita for being so faithful to join us.
Shively-Blinn baby is due on December 7th, 2008- keep Megan and Scott in your prayers as they wait the arrival of their wee baby.
AGM December 9th, 2008- We will be gathering in the Rosetta hall of St. John's church at 7:30pm.

We hope this wee letter has found you all well and are continually grateful for your support and friendship.

With love,
your friends in L'Arche Belfast