



## News & Views – March 2008



### Quote

*You never really leave a place or person you love, part of them you take with you, leaving a part of yourself behind."*

*Anon.*

### Dates for your Diaries

There will be no Visitor's Evening this month but we hope that some of you can join us in our celebrations during Holy Week. We will have our usual Pilgrimage to the Giant's Causeway on Holy Thurs (20<sup>th</sup>), a walk behind the cross with our local churches on Good Friday followed by 'stretch soup' and homemade soda bread in The Ember and the Dawn Easter Day Service in Lady Dixon Park on Easter Sunday. Please ring the office and let us know if you would like to join us for any of the above events. We will also be leading the Holy Week Retreat this year in a number of Bangor Churches (Carnalea area). There will be a session each evening of Holy Week starting on St. Patrick's Day evening. For further information on this retreat please contact the office (028 90 221337)

### Birthdays & Anniversaries March 2008



We celebrate you, and the gifts you bring into our world – we give thanks that you are part of our lives

8<sup>th</sup> Petr Kroutil  
20<sup>th</sup> Martha Santa Cruz  
20<sup>th</sup> Martha Blaser  
21<sup>st</sup> Susan Hughes  
26<sup>th</sup> Malcolm Johnston

### Welcomes & Farewells



Gwen left the office with one big leap on Friday, Feb. 29<sup>th</sup>. We miss her already.

Nadi (originally Nadja) is coming back for Easter and we are excited.

Murray will have officially handed over his role at the end of March but will continue in all sorts of other roles from April 1<sup>st</sup> so not goodbye but adieu – and we will be celebrating the adieu one of these days so watch this space folks!!!

### Update:

Thank You (X 50) to all of you who came to the 'Leap with L'Arche' party on Friday night. It was one of the best in a long time. Once again we rejoice in the friendships that are such an enduring gift for us. People came from far and wide and we mingled. My Mom who came from Mitchelstown for the festivities was able to tell me things about the community that I didn't know before – such was the quality of our mingling!! Thank you to one and all who helped to make it such a memorable evening. The food, the music, the flowers, the decoration, the presentation, the gifts, the venue, the organisation were amazing. A special thanks to Debbie, Gosia and Gwen who were the event planners! As for your generosity – The Noah's World Fund grew by over £1,000 and there is more on its way. I am happy that our celebration will be a cause for more celebration in different parts of the world.

**The Dream:** Together in community we dream of "a world ... where people, whatever their race, religion, culture, abilities or disabilities can find a place and reveal their gifts" – Jean Vanier, Founder of L'Arche

**Musings:** Gwen chose the quote this month as she has done for the past two years. I guess it's her way of letting us all know how she feels about leaving. Not leaving at all really but moving on to a new place carrying all of us in her heart and leaving a little part of herself behind. Today that little part that she leaves behind doesn't seem like enough because we really miss her.

Isn't it always a bit like that? We take so much for granted about one another when we assume that things will go on forever as they have. What we loved about one another in the beginning we soon begin to see as ordinary and as time goes on we may even begin to look for more where we were once enough. That looking for more can sometimes lead to struggles in our relationships that make us fragile. Fragility leads to scarcity and scarcity makes community impossible. Forgiveness for simply being ourselves, warts and all, is all we really need to make us feel like we are loved and love creates community. Often it's only when we know that something is ending that we really begin to appreciate it again and see the greatness of it anew.

Someone once told me that the best way to live a happy life is to contemplate my death every morning before putting my feet on the floor. At the time I thought it was the most morbid thing I ever heard but now I'm beginning to see it as great advice.

Just imagine how I would look into the day if I considered that it might be my last one? I certainly wouldn't spend it in the office in front of my computer. I would want to spend as much time as I could with the people I love – my family, my friends and my community. I wouldn't want to waste a single minute

When I think of Holy Thursday I can understand why Jesus wanted to wash his friends' feet. If I knew that I was leaving those I love I can imagine wanting to show them in the million small acts of the day how much I loved them. I can imagine laughing 'til I was bent over about something completely silly, eating ice-cream sodas in tall glasses with long spoons and walking beside the sea. I can imagine writing notes to thank people for the gifts that they gave and sending birthday cards that people would get before their birthdays. I can imagine making phone calls to the people that I think about often but never find time to contact. I can imagine taking time for chatting and long cups of tea and knitting. I can imagine reading poetry and painting watercolours.

If I really thought that my life might end tomorrow – just imagine what a glorious life I would have today. The thing is... it could be my last day and won't I be sorry that I spent so much of it worrying about tomorrow!

Carpe Diem - Happy Easter Everyone.

### *Together we Pray*

*Loving God  
You call us into being  
and give us our mission,  
Thank You  
for the gift of one another,  
Thank You for our journey  
together in L'Arche.  
Help us to grow  
in our response to you,  
Listening to your voice within us,  
Seeing You around us,  
Delighting in our gifts,  
Forgiving one another  
for our failings,  
Welcoming tomorrow  
in Faith, Hope and Love.  
Amen*

We give thanks:

- For the gift of one another and the friends who fill our lives with so much love.
- For the birth of Baby Lucy Pierce (to Jono and Vicki). Though you are tiny and fragile Lucy we know that God will touch the hearts of many through your life. The world is truly blessed because you are among us.

We ask:

- For blessings on L'Arche Kilkenny and on Greta McIlveen as she takes up the role of Community Leader.
- For blessings on Kevin and Ana Birmingham Doran and their family as they strive to discover the new direction of their lives.
- For peace in our hearts, our communities and our world

### Connection Points

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