



88TH ANNUAL REPORT

ICC 2010

THE IRISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

CONNECT, COMMUNICATE, COLLABORATE & PROMOTE

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ICC CONSTITUENT COMMUNIONS 2010

	Year Joined ICC	
Antiochian Orthodox Church	2005	www.belfast.antiochian.org.uk
Church of Ireland	1923	www.ireland.anglican.org
Greek Orthodox Church in Britain & Ireland	1997	
LifeLink Network of Churches	1998	Dissolved August 2010
Lutheran Church in Ireland	1972	www.lutheran-ireland.org
Methodist Church in Ireland	1923	www.irishmethodist.org
Moravian Church, Irish District	1923	www.moravian.org.uk
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	1923	www.presbyterianireland.org
Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church	1923	www.nspresbyterian.org
Religious Society of Friends	1923	www.quakers-in-ireland.ie
Rock of Ages Cherubim & Seraphim	2001	
Romanian Orthodox Church	2004	
Russian Orthodox Church in Ireland	2003	www.stpeterstpaul.net
Salvation Army (Ireland Division)	1965	www.salvationarmy.org



PRESIDENT'S —*Observations*

WRITER
Most Rev. Richard Clarke

To say that we are as a country in a period of transition is an understatement of grotesque proportions. Whatever the future may hold for Ireland - north and south - we can know with utter certainty that it will be radically and painfully different.

We face social, political and economic dislocation, trauma and readjustment on a truly massive scale, as communities and as individuals. How a distinctively Christian voice can be heard in such a dissonant setting, whether from the different Christian traditions or from such collaborating bodies as the Irish Council of Churches or the Irish Inter-Church Meeting, will be crucial not only for believers, but also for non-believers. But that Christian voice must be neither clichéd nor facile. Part of the role

of the Irish Council of Churches at this time is to find that voice and to use it effectively.

Since our last Annual General Meeting, the ICC has seen a number of important changes. Following the decision to re-fashion the role of the senior staff member of the ICC as primarily strategic and less representational, it has been good to welcome Mervyn McCullagh as Executive Officer. Mervyn has very quickly settled to his tasks with great insight and considerable verve and, in company with his colleagues Karen Kelly, Philip McKinley and Adrian Cristea, gives the ICC an energetic freshness of style and approach. On behalf of the Executive Committee and indeed the whole Council of Churches, I thank Mervyn, Karen, Philip and Adrian for

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The Christian voice must be neither clichéd nor facile. Part of the role of the Irish Council of Churches is to find that voice and to use it effectively.

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their dedication and aplomb in forwarding the work of the ICC.

I take this opportunity also to thank Rob Fairmichael who, amidst the re-organisation of the ICC, left our staff. Again I thank him for his many years of diligent and meticulous work for both the ICC in general, and also with its boards and sub-committees.

To all those who give of their time, skills and energy to the work of the ICC, I express grateful and sincere thanks. But in particular, my immediate predecessor as ICC President, Rev Tony Davidson, has been a tremendous encourager and guide to me, and I hope he knows how much I value his support and friendship.

At last year's Annual General Meeting, I spoke of how I see the ecumenical project as having three inter-dependent strands.

The first is to connect - as best we can - all the different constituent traditions of the ICC (and the Irish Inter-Church Meeting) with one another and to ensure that none feel alienated or subordinate.

The second is to further by all means possible the Christ-given task of bringing towards a greater unity our different Christian traditions;

The third is to show to the many people beyond the walls of our separateness from one another that Christ is not divided and that his love for the world is not fragmented, but impartial, total and for all humankind. The task continues but, in everything we do, we must surely measure all our endeavours against those yardsticks.

HONORARY TREASURER

— *Report* *Year 2010*

WRITER
Robert Cochran

Staff changes

As reported last year, several staff changes were taking place in early 2010. Karen Kelly returned to resume the Administrator position, while in mid-year Mervyn Mc Cullagh was appointed to the Executive Officer post. In addition, Rob Fairmichael left during the year. So we end the year with two staff based in Belfast, and two in Dublin (Philip McKinley and Adrian Cristea). However, despite these significant changes, the system has bedded down very well and is operating smoothly. It seems to me that we should seek to maintain this level of staffing into the future if at all possible.

Financial Structures

The rationalisation of the previous multitude of bank accounts has been completed, and that, along with the newer accounting system and the increased use of on-line banking, is making life a lot simpler. The change-over to our new auditors also took place during the year, and the accounts being presented to the AGM have been produced by them.

The internal structuring of the accounts has also progressed during the year, with a clearer demarcation of the items relating to the running of the offices and the staff costs, and how these costs are then split between ICC and IICC. And associated with that, those costs which are directly related to the core activities of ICC and of IICC are also now more transparent.

While this re-structuring is necessary and useful in itself, it is also an important prerequisite for moving to a more streamlined legal structure, and in preparation for the imminent

implementation of the Charities Act. The new layout of the Accounts being presented to the AGM this year reflects these issues.

Financial Situation

Also during the year, some long-term tenants in Elmwood Avenue moved on. This presented us with an ideal opportunity to undertake some necessary re-decoration work in the building, and there is now a good facility available for renting to suitable tenants. Acquiring suitable tenants will be one important way in which we can help reduce the costs of running the organisation.

All of the changes outlined above will have a beneficial effect over the longer term in helping to curtail costs, even if that has only had a limited effect to date. So we end the 2010 year still with a deficit, even though the yearly amount is reducing in value, and thus we are still eating into our reserves. Nevertheless the 2010 end-year deficit in the order of £7500 (not including expenditure from provision for repairs and maintenance as in previous years) is still a considerable improvement (almost 50% less) than the 2009 deficit of over £14000.

Nevertheless, it is imperative that the financial stability of ICC (and IICC) is secured for the foreseeable future. While the gap to be bridged is not huge, nevertheless this will be difficult, given the current economic climate, but if we have a clear vision of the role and importance of ecumenism in Ireland, we can make that happen.



EXECUTIVE OFFICER —*Report*

WRITER
Mervyn McCullagh

If the printing press was the technology that spurred the transfer of information which fuelled the Reformation and the Counter Reformation, the transient nature of new communication media such as Twitter, Facebook and Text messaging could be considered the most significant force for change in the post-modern era.

The changing landscape of church life today in Ireland is characterised by the rapid rise of migrant and independent churches in Ireland and decline in established churches. It is due in part to increased social mobility, immigration and changes in the nature of work patterns. But, more significantly, one of the characteristics of these churches is that they communicate and connect effectively with their members by rigorously utilising these contemporary technologies.

The rapid pace of the communication of ideas through virtual technology has, in much of Asia, Africa and Latin America, spurred to strengthen communities long left behind in the communications race. In Europe, ironically, it has acted to bolster an increasing scepticism towards established ideals and is dramatically changing an already threatened concept of community. Religion is one of its victims as we live in a generation which has moved beyond an understanding of any overarching narrative that defines our behaviour. Christianity faces a virulent and organised attack by concerned atheists, society has been taught to be terrified of radicalised religion in any forms and increased secularism has ensured that what is considered radical is often basic traditional religious belief and practise.

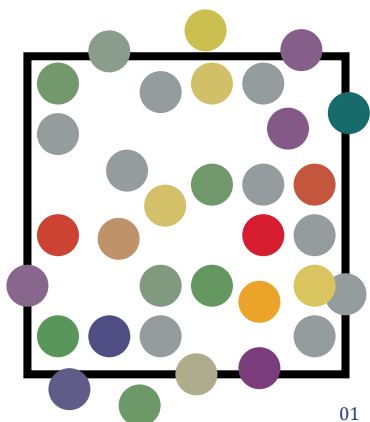
How churches keep up to date with these paradigm shifts in social attitudes while at the same time maintaining universal core values of Christ's salvation, truth, ultimate judgement and revelation will perhaps be the greatest challenge of the next decade.

Christianity has always been able to adapt and change. The very notion that we can translate our Bible and develop culturally relevant forms of religious practise globally is indicative of this. Christ's re-telling of the salvation narrative in the context of his resurrection as he walked to Emmaus is an exact example of applying post-modern principles to established norms. In the post modern era we can delight in our diversity, hold to our unique identities but need never move from our essential core belief in Christ.

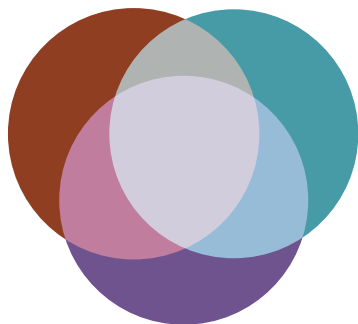
Crucially we all need to engage relevantly and meaningfully with society. The symptoms of lack of engagement are the oft cited cases of declining numbers, finances, concerns for ministerial health and reduced representation in the media and with government. The challenge is thus to find a means for the churches to engage in the public square, in the language and forms of contemporary society.

The future of Ecumenism

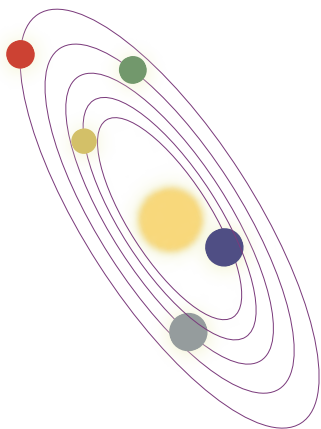
Many would say that ecumenism has run its course. We know what to talk about and what not to talk about. The boundary lines are clearly drawn and provided they are maintained, relationships will always be excellent. But many others would long for deep rooted understanding to grow beneath the healthy exterior.



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All organisations are judged on their ability to adapt to change. As society shifts, ecumenism and inter-church collaboration must adapt also. Perhaps the old models have indeed run their course, though this is understandably painful to the many who have set ecumenism and full visible unity as their life's task.

Ecumenism in a traditional sense can perhaps be seen as a closed set model. One defines the outer boundaries of what is acceptable and attempts to work with all those within those boundaries in the hope of one day becoming one. Unfortunately this model fails as prevailing ideologies collapse and as new social and theological issues force us to question who is inside and who is outside. It is then these issues of contention that become the focus of attention, not the cooperation that exists within. This model of ecumenism becomes exclusive and divisive.

Another model is to seek points of intersection and to focus predominantly on what we have in common in the hope those will increase and our differences decrease. The obvious criticism from the outside is that this form of ecumenism leads to a compromise of intrinsic beliefs and a willingness to be liberally understanding to avoid being exclusive.

Perhaps a contemporary model is that of gravity. In a gravitational system all bodies maintain their independence, their unique identity and travel at their own pace. However at the same time, they are irresistibly attracted to the same set of forces that ensure that they stay in orbit. Thus rather than seeing the core values of Christ as reasons to exclude,

Christ is in fact the eternal centre around which we all revolve. By engaging with other churches from a position of assurance and self-confidence, without fear of compromise or division we can build meaningful deep rooted relationships and seek effective collaboration maximising each others' strengths.

The business world has for some years been applying these principles with strategic alliances around shared aims being now very much the norm. We are all familiar with the airline map which shows that a particular airline can fly you anywhere around the world. In fact a significant number of these flights are operated by partner carriers. This indicates high levels of collaboration and trust and demonstrates abilities to reconcile complex issues of finance, security, customer services and other core values. In practise the network of strategic alliances is so extensive that it appears seamless to the customer.

In Luke's gospel the disciples argue as to who is the greatest. Christ responds by saying "Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest". (Luke 9:48) Is it possible that we as churches, can serve each other in all of our ministries so as to show a united face of Christ to an increasingly unbelieving Ireland?

Strategy

The President's vision for the ICC is to connect, to communicate, to collaborate and to advance. To realise this vision we need a multi-stranded approach:

- Collaborative planning so we can realise a shared vision
- Strengthen existing multi-party partnerships
- Engage nationally and locally
- Assist in developing networks and connections where required
- Compile and provide accessible accurate data and information about our churches.
- Have a clear mechanism for resolving conflict
- Reflect upon and evaluate our work together and adapt accordingly
- Have clearly defined yet flexible structures within which we can work

We also need to have three major audiences in mind:

- Our members and internal networks
- Civil and Public Society
- Other Christian movements on the island.

Since I took up this role in August these strategic points have formed the basis of the work of the staff team as we seek to serve the member churches of the ICC. Our administrator (Karen Kelly) works tirelessly to connect and coordinate our work with member churches. Our Ecumenical Officer (Philip McKinley) has a specific role to build relationships at a local level, to plant the seeds of local inter-church collaboration and to strengthen existing initiatives. While our Integration Officer (Adrian Cristea) has been working to connect the work of the ICC with many of the newly emerging churches and migrant-led churches throughout this island. Their work in mapping, building relationships, listening and learning continually prove to be a valuable resource for us all. A fuller description of their work is found in their reports.

It has been a privilege to meet with many of you and to begin the process

of building the relationships that enable our work to be meaningful. As well as meeting with member churches and carrying out the ongoing work of the ICC Executive and the Irish Inter-Church Committee, I have been meeting with many of our partners such as Churches together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI), other ecumenical instruments, Christian Aid, Evangelical Alliance and the Irish School of Ecumenics and sharing in a range of initiatives through the churches. We have also been meeting with and learning from many of the new and independent churches that now have a strong presence in Ireland. We seek to connect with them and see what possibilities for future membership or co-operation may exist.

We were saddened to hear news that The Life-Link Network of churches dissolved in August. They are looking at a different model of network for their constituent churches and

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have asked that the door to cooperation and dialogue remain open. We wait with interest to see how this develops.

Our Fora and Boards have legitimised, high level and wide ranging representation. They meet regularly to discuss Theological, Societal and International affairs. The Irish Inter-Church Meeting on Education was an engaging and relevant day that caught much media interest as education is becoming one of the defining issues of post-conflict Northern Ireland.

We are becoming better at speaking to the media on issues of shared concern both political and social and we offer our thanks to the church press secretaries for all their help and advice.

Many in the Muslim community in the Republic were particularly moved by our press release condemning the planned Koran burning in Florida and indeed one mosque in Dublin

invited us to attend a service where they spoke specifically on the outreach of love of the Irish churches at that time. We were also invited to attend the Irish Abrahamic-Faith leaders dialogue in Farmley house followed by a lunch with the President of Ireland.

Future Challenges

Presently our website speaks well to our own internal networks. However, we need to develop a web presence that meets all the needs of our organisation, assists in the sharing of data and information and speaks clearly to the world at large. The recently launched CTBI Connect site offers many potentials for discussion, meeting, collaborative document development and video conferencing that will prove an invaluable resource for our networks and fora. While there are many great benefits from this involvement, it is contingent upon us having a clear identity and a strong existing website.

There is definitely confusion in the public's mind about the distinctions between our structures and as to the role of our organisation which we must address. We are in the process of rebranding the ICC and the IICM with a view to updating our image, holding to our traditional values but demonstrating contemporary relevance and organisational cohesion. We have contracted the consultants Hamill Bosket Dempsey to guide us through this process.

Following on from this we will look again at our models of membership and funding structures. Further to the Council's decision last year to incorporate the Council we continue to work with our solicitors to seek the most appropriate legal model for the ICC in the context of current legislation. We have re-painted and re-carpeted the Inter-Church Centre at 48 Elmwood Avenue and are now in a position to rent out our boardroom and seek new tenants.

Thanks

I am indebted to the valuable support and visionary guidance of our President, Bishop Richard Clarke and to all the members of the Joint Management Committee for their time, attention, pastoral and indeed practical support. Can I also take this opportunity to extend my thanks and appreciation to my predecessor Michael Earle for establishing solid foundations from which we are now able to build. To all of them, I offer my heartfelt thanks, not least for the privilege of having this role.

It is an exciting time for us to build cooperation together. I look forward with the leadership of all of our members to seeing how we continue to realise this vision together.

Captions

- 01 Closed set model
- 02 Seeking points of intersection
- 03 Gravitational model
- 04 Inter-Church Centre Staff, Philp McKinley, Adrian Cristea, Karen Kelly and Mervyn McCullagh
- 05 ICC Executive August 2010

2010: TRANSITION AND CHANGE

WRITER
Karen Kelly

In the twelve months since I returned to the role of administrator at the Inter-Church Centre, I have seen an enormous amount of change happen, not least in the way of staffing changes.

I said farewell to Michael Earle in January when he hung up his General Secretary's boots. However, during the year Michael never felt too far away as e-mails and postcards came through from Christchurch, Taize, South Africa, Spain – always with something to say of lessons on the journey. Michael also paid a visit in the summer when he kindly helped to archive in the Inter-Church Centre. Michael's care for others has always been plain to see and he frequently asks after many people connected with ICC/IICM when in touch.

Even though I officially said goodbye to Jennifer Fernandez as Administrator in January, that really wasn't goodbye. Jennifer is a character and has many wonderful talents. She has been a fantastic support to me this year, particularly in the area of training on a new accounts system. Jennifer has gone over and above the call of duty to help with this period of transition right through 2010 and for this, I am greatly in her debt!

Rob Fairmichael's departure in June following his redundancy saw the end of an era at the Inter-Church Centre. Rob was very much

at the heart of the Inter-Church Centre for 17 years, worked on many inter-church activities, doing valuable work in that time. Rob has a lovely way of making people feel really welcome and included. The Inter-Church Centre hasn't been quite the same without the bicycle out the back, the herbal tea in the cupboard or Rob's smiling face. Rob you are missed!

One of the things I have enjoyed immensely during this time of transition is working alongside Adrian Cristea and Philip McKinley in the Dublin office. These two gentlemen do fantastic work for our organisation and always with a smile on their faces. It has been wonderful to engage as a staff team and grow in understanding of how best we can support one another.

In June, the recruitment process for an Executive Officer was a flurry of activity. Bishop Richard Clarke graciously took many phone calls from me as ads were placed, application forms sent out and received and a date set for interviews. I tried my best to keep the interview panel going with tasty treats during a long day in the hope that they would find an Executive Officer to keep me company in the office! And that they did. Mervyn started in August and... I was about to say the rest is history... but more accurately: the rest is in his report!

All in all 2010 has been a year of huge change, with many challenges but also many blessings. I believe God doesn't waste a single day that we offer to Him and He has certainly used this last year to teach me many things. Who knows what he will teach us in the year to come.



ECUMENICAL OFFICER — Report

Preface

Philip McKinley is working part-time for the Irish Council of Churches (ICC) and the Irish Inter Church Committee (IICC) to strengthen local ecumenism in Ireland. He is based in our Dublin office.

WRITER
Philip McKinley

One Christmas, a number of years ago, my grandmother gave me a present of Trivia Pursuit, which contained a question, ‘What two religions are at war in Ireland?’

Now rather than judging the question, instead I believe it serves as a sobering reminder not only of how we are perceived by others, but also the extraordinary baggage of history we have to face in Irish Christianity.

However, I believe we are also in the midst of an extraordinary change in the ecclesiological landscape and dynamic of Irish Christianity caused by a number of forces. In the words of Archbishop Diarmuid Martin, Ireland is undergoing a ‘revolution of its religious culture’. My task as Ecumenical Officer is therefore to encourage churches, particularly at local level, for this is where the heart beats strongest, to work together to face the complexities of our past and to journey together in the challenges of the future.

My focus is ‘strengthening local ecumenism in Ireland’. It is a new post for the Irish Council of Churches, both by focussing on local contexts but also by being based in Dublin, although still serving the whole island.

Therefore over the past year I have tried to achieve this goal in a number of ways.

Firstly I have tried to both provide good quality information on ecumenical endeavour in Ireland. This has primarily been achieved through a ‘Directory of Local Inter-Church Groups’. This resource, the first of its kind, documents 239 groups, from small Bible studies, to large national organisations, who all contribute to the varied and fascinating strands of ecumenism in Ireland.

I have also tried to increase public awareness by communicating good news stories through books, newspaper articles, academic journals, press releases and letters to editors.



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Secondly, I have tried to build the capacity of local ecumenical groups and leaders, by helping them re-envision their work and mission. I have spoken to a number of groups such as the Ballina Churches Together, Irish Church Music Association, Clontarf Churches Together, Magis Ireland (Jesuit Centre for Young Adults), Cork Ecumenical Standing Committee, St Patrick's College, Maynooth and the Irish Peace Centres. I have also visited a number of groups and events, such as the Glenstal Conference, Oak House Galway, Greenhills Conference, Dublin Council of Churches, Focolare Mariapolis Limerick, Diocese of Galway Clerical Retreat, and met individually with many leaders within the church and the ecumenical movement.

Thirdly, I have worked to assist Christian initiatives, organisations and churches build healthy networks with one another.

This includes groups that wish to connect more fully with a broad range of ICC member churches, such as Spirit Radio, Evangeli-

cal Alliance and the Irish Peace Centres. It also however includes connecting with churches with whom the Irish Council of Churches is seeking to building relations, such as evangelical and pentecostal churches.

Fourthly I worked to strengthen existing partnerships between churches, connecting with groups such as Alpha Ireland, Focolare and the Network of Diocesan Directors of Ecumenism within the Roman Catholic Church. I also supported established inter-church initiatives such as an ecumenical young adult trip to Taizé and the Ecumenical Prayer Tent, at the

National Ploughing Championships in Athy, organised between the Archdiocese of Dublin and the United Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough.

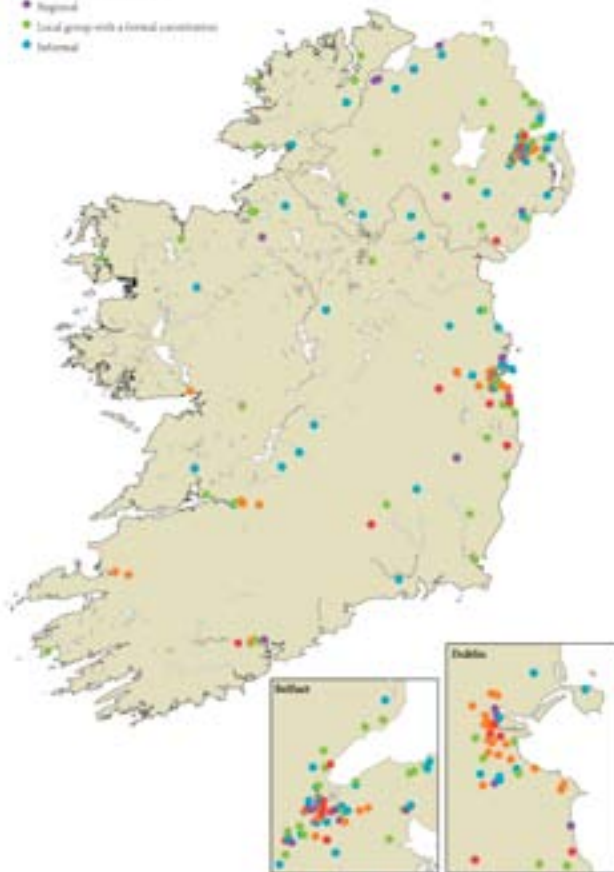
Rather than simply just assisting existing initiatives, I have also tried to create new ones, particularly at a local level. Three such groups included Irish Gospel Musicians, Blanchardstown Churches Together and South Donegal Clergy Fraternal.

Local initiatives also require a national focus. Therefore I have supported national ecumenical initiatives between churches. These include being a member

STRUCTURE

- Local Social Organisation Strategy
- Official national structure
- Regional
- Local group with a formal constitution
- Informal

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of the Church of Ireland Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue, a member of the IICC Theology Forum and being part of a small group discussing plans for the Eucharistic Congress in 2012. I am also part of a planning group to develop an Irish School of Ecumenics Adult Education Group for the Republic of Ireland and I teach part of the Irish School of Ecumenics module in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute to prospective ordinands. I am also involved in supporting two national initiatives, the re-launch of the Student Christian Movement in Ireland and the Irish Peace Centres 'Breathing Space' programme.

Finally, I work as part of a team within the ICC and attend a number of IICC and ICC meetings and events. I was particularly involved in communications for this year's Irish Inter-Church Meeting on education.

For 2011, I hope to use the 'Directory of Local Inter-Church Groups', as a basis for action. I will visit and encourage initiatives in a number of areas where gaps appeared in my research. These include Kildare/Carlow; Tipperary and Clare/Limerick.

I will also continue to provide information and research on ecumenism, for instance determining how many churches practice the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. I will continue to network a number of church groups, such as those involved in church communications and youth work. I will also encourage ecumenical groups to reach out to the totality of new Irish Christianity, to embrace Orthodox, Evangelical and Pentecostal churches where possible.

Captions

- 01 An ecumenical young adult trip to Taizé. Fr Damian McNeice (Archdiocese of Dublin), Most Rev Dr Diarmuid Martin (Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin), Ven Ricky Rountree (United Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough) and Mr Philip McKinley
- 02 Some of the results of the Inter-Church Directory
- 03 Ringing the bells in the Ecumenical Prayer Tent, in the National Ploughing Championships, Co Kildare.
- 04 Addressing the 3000 delegates at the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Annual Conference in Dublin



INTEGRATION OFFICER —*Report and Reflections*

WRITER
Adrian Cristea

Preface

The Parish Based Integration project ran from January 2007-July 2010. It was coordinated by Adrian Cristea through the Irish Inter Church Meeting and culminated in the launch of the 'Affirmations on Diversity' document.

Adrian is now heading up the Irish Council of Churches Integration programme working to support the integration of migrant communities through the development of a Dublin City Inter-Faith Forum in partnership with POBAL and Dublin City Council

Often immigrants, in facing the trauma of resettlement, seek emotional and ethnic recognition in neighborhood and church. If they can't identify with established religious groups or churches, they often initiate churches of their own. This highlights the need for flexibility in our churches to allow immigrants to develop affiliation at their own pace. The social work and understanding directed towards immigrants by religious organisations in Ireland help to develop vibrant religious communities.

Churches in Ireland are major contributors to the successful resettlement of migrants and refugees, but are not equally attentive to the language and religious cultural needs of migrants. Within the Catholic Church there are exceptional individuals devoted to the pastoral care of migrants, with an in-depth knowledge and experience of migration and its

implications. They are a vital resource to the Catholic Church first, and, second to the Irish Inter-Church Meeting. I believe that their understanding and advocacy should be listened to and adopted into mainstream church activity that is well resourced and supported. Advocacy without resources and direct hierarchical leadership will not develop at the rate necessary to respond to today's societal changes. Also, advocacy must be backed by positive diocesan action that is monitored and evaluated in a well managed strategy dedicated to welcome and inclusion for new communities. The immigration and integration issue is not merely a challenge: it is an opportunity to lead. However, I hope that in response to this project, we will feel a greater need to speak out in a united voice, in a more active response to the challenges posed by immigration in Irish society today.

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A new model is emerging: the multicultural parish, driven by the increasing diversification of immigrant groups. It is a model for the future.

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The other mainstream churches of the Irish Inter-Church Meetings are meeting the needs of newcomers on their doorsteps in various ways. They show great flexibility in understanding and responding to the complex needs of immigrants. This project has identified Methodist, Presbyterian and Church of Ireland congregations who are leading by example. Their invaluable experience both positive and less positive have been documented and can and should be shared by those congregations and parishes seeking to welcome the newcomers within their midst. Each congregation should develop its own ways of encouraging the process of integration. Often great outcomes take place as a result of an ecumenical approach.

During its initial timeframe, the Parish Based Integration Project delivered the following:

- Developed comprehensive knowledge of best practice from church communities who have been leading the way and have developed suitable resource materials.
- Provided a wide range of support material relevant to the specific objectives of

the project through web and printed media. This also included information and links to relevant State agencies, NGOs, and the EU.

- Developed training material for local faith communities. Such material covers a range of integration issues, inter-cultural understanding, anti-racism, assistance in developing mutual understanding and trust, practical ways of assisting integration at a local level etc.
- Visited local church communities to provide integration advice, assistance, facilitation, training and other practical support as required.
- Provided a focus for co-ordination and sharing of resources and experiences between the agencies and committees of the individual churches.
- Developed and distributed the Affirmations document which informs and drives intercultural plans, processes and programmes for our Churches/communities as they move forward in providing necessary practical and pastoral responses to migrants' needs.

The primary focus in all these activities was on the local community, both new and indigenous. Integration is a two-way process and the focus must be equally on both sides. Emphasis was also placed on how the indigenous element of a community can address its fears, uncertainties, prejudices and how they can mobilise local resources to stimulate an inclusive culture within their community.

In addition, the project provided periodic briefings to church leaders at high level through The Irish Inter-Church Meetings. This is important to ensure that the lessons learned from this project feed into the working, thinking and decisions of each individual church.

One of the main challenges lying ahead for our churches is to avail and implement the resources we've developed. A new model is emerging: the multicultural parish, driven by the increasing diversification of immigrant groups. It is a model for the future as our Churches become more diversified.

On a personal note, I believe that the greatest contribution of immigrants to Ireland will be to its social wealth through the solidity of their value systems; the values embedded in loyalty to the extended family, the practices of emotional expression, the commitment to the work ethic, the care and the love for the aged and the building of community through the sharing of food around the table. To our churches, immigrants have brought a sense of holiness and a sense that faith is not to be privatised. Faith should be in the public arena and a part of the culture of multicultural Ireland.

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International Profile

The project was invited to give a presentation at the Anna Lindh Forum in Barcelona. The Anna Lindh Foundation is an organisation shared and resourced by over forty Euro-Mediterranean countries bringing people together to promote dialogue between cultures and respect for diversity. The Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) also invited us to give a presentation on the project's work and findings, including recommendations for better co-ordination and common strategy in migration, integration, racism and interculturalism amongst church members in Ireland.

Some 35 representatives met in Brussels to discuss recent developments in the work of churches and other communities of faith in the integration of migrants and the ethnically inclusive ministry of churches.

Network of Orthodox Churches in Ireland

Leaders and representatives of the Orthodox churches in Ireland have now held three meetings during the last two years and after each meeting there was a unanimous wish of having these meetings on a more regular schedule, perhaps on a quarterly basis. There were also suggestions for organising a Eucharistic liturgy sometime in the near future and the compilation of a directory of Orthodox churches in Ireland. The group which consists of almost all Orthodox churches in Ireland is keen to continue to meet and worship together and to participate in ecumenical and inter-religious events. The project played a key role in initiating and facilitating these meetings and will continue to support this network.

New Project

As we evaluated the Parish Based Integration Project and sought funding for the next phase of the project from POBAL we started to explore the possibilities of developing networks with the other faiths. This involved responding to an invitation from the Office for Integration of Dublin City Council to lead a workshop on Inter-faith and integration with a number of follow on events. The new project has now been approved and I am privileged to work with Dublin City Council, the Office of the Minister for Integration, POBAL and the Irish Council of Churches to see what the various faith communities in Dublin City can now bring to the Integration agenda.

I consider myself blessed to have had the opportunity to meet and work with exceptional people in this field. I am greatly indebted to them for sharing their expertise, knowledge and time to support and help me to deliver the objectives of this project. Without their kind encouragement and guidance, it would have been impossible to deal with the challenges posed by getting a project such as the Parish-Based Integration Project completed.

Captions

- 01 Adrian Cristea, Archbishop John Neill, Mary White (Minister for Integration), Sr Joan Roddy, Rev Fr Godfrey O'Donnell at the Dublin launch of the "Irish Churches' Affirmations on Migration, Diversity and Interculturalism"
- 02 Dr Scott Boldt
- 03 Rev Fr Irenaeus du Plessis, Sr Joan Roddy, Adrian Cristea, Denise Wright and Lord Mayor of Belfast Pat Convery.
- 04 Adrian Cristea

03



04





BOARD OF OVERSEAS AFFAIRS

—*Report*

WRITER
Rev Colin Campbell

Preface

The Board of Overseas Affairs (BOA) has its origins in the Standing Committee on World Mission of ICC which first met in January 1974. When the work of ICC was reorganised in 1979 a Board of Overseas Affairs was established with a World Mission Committee as a constituent part.

The world as we see it is always undergoing change. Aside from political unrest from different parts of the world, earthquakes, tsunamis and other natural disasters are ever evident. Change has also been taking place within the Board of Overseas Affairs.

Since 2007 the ICC has been investigating the option of moving the BOA into the structures of the IICM. However, in early 2010 the IICM decided that the time was not right for such a transfer and the proposal was put on hold.

The Board was re-organized with Colin Campbell taking over as Chair, Jim Campbell working as Secretary and invitations sent to churches and groups who could contribute, support or benefit from its work.

Apart from the Board's stated terms of reference, I felt that our work needs to educate, update and inform the member churches and wider community of what is happening in different parts of the world, with a focus on Asia,

Africa and the Middle-East, South America and Europe. We also need to share our knowledge and experience and give support where possible whether through prayer or encouraging financial aid.

Some of these ideas were developed during the last year. 2010 has been a highly significant year in the life of the World Church in that it was the Centenary of the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh which gave such impetus to World Mission in the 20th Century. In addition to the main event in Edinburgh, the organizers of the celebrations called on Christians in all nations to hold a local celebration of the centenary.

In Ireland the World Mission Committee of the BOA undertook to organise the Irish event.

A study day was held on the theme, "A World on the Move – Migration and Mission".

The theme was chosen to focus the churches' attention on the



The Board of Overseas Affairs aims to:

- 01 Bring a Christian judgement to bear on international affairs;
- 02 Help in the education process in Ireland regarding International Affairs;
- 03 Co-ordinate concern and action for world mission;
- 04 Stimulate and maintain contacts with Churches outside Great Britain and Ireland;
- 05 Work with agencies involved in overseas development, especially Christian Aid

fact that many migrants have settled in Ireland in recent years and now regard it as their permanent home. Dr Afe Adogame from Edinburgh University, a world authority on migration and mission, led the study day for church leaders focusing on three areas

- How we welcome the stranger within church and society;
- Issues involved in cross-cultural worship;
- Witnessing in culturally sensitive ways to those from non-Christian backgrounds.

The Middle East has continued to be a focus of concern and Professor Cecil McCullough has been attending the new grouping

in London that has taken over the work of the Middle East Forum of the CTBI. Churches have been concerned about the well-being of the small Christian communities in many countries of the Middle East. Paul Hoey has continued to represent the Board at the Global Mission Network of CTBI.

A close interest has been maintained in Christian Aid which provides detailed reports at each meeting of the Board and it calls on members churches to redouble their efforts to support "our" relief and development at this time of economic difficulty.

I would like, on behalf of the Board, express our thanks to those whose period of service on the Board came to an end in June. In particular, gratitude is due to Norman Taggart who monitored the situation in Sri Lanka for many years and Terry McMullan who carried out the same role for the Sudan.

I would also record our thanks to Rob Fairmichael who served as secretary to the Board for many years. His deep interest in its work and his enthusiasm and meticulous work are deeply appreciated. The new Board now look forward to the challenging years ahead with interest and enthusiasm.

Captions

- 01 Dr Afe Adogame speaking at "A World on the Move – Migration and Mission" in October 2010.
- 02 A discussion group at the study day in October 2010



CHURCH IN SOCIETY —Forum

Preface

The Church in Society Forum (CSF) is a forum of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting which exists to inform, advise and support the Irish Inter-Church Meeting, its member churches and associated bodies in relation to societal issues

WRITER

Eileen Gallagher

I was honoured to be invited to chair the Church in Society Forum in spring 2010 but I hasten to add not overjoyed, as I reflected on what I could bring to this task and on the nature of CSF itself.

Doubts which I had about taking on this role were displaced by a nagging conviction that the socio-political dimension of the Gospel impels Christians to take whatever steps they can, however humble and apparently insignificant, to contribute to building the Kingdom of God and the transformation of communities. It was with this imperative in mind that I took on the role of chair of CSF which is one vehicle offering opportunities for the implementation of Gospel values of justice, peace, mercy and compassion in our

communities. In the forum we were immediately faced with the task of translating this ideal into a practical programme of work for 2010/2011.

A first task was to plan the Irish Inter-Church Meeting for October. In light of an ongoing debate North and South about the relationship between faith and schooling we set about designing a conference under the title '*The Churches and Education: Context, Vision and Values*'. This conference took place on 21 October, was attended by more than seventy delegates and heard a range of speakers, including some speaking from an experiential perspective

Caption

01 Most Rev Richard Clarke, Prof Tony Gallagher and Cardinal Sean Brady at the Irish Inter-Church Meeting

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The socio-political dimension of the Gospel impels Christians to take whatever steps they can, however humble and apparently insignificant, to contribute to building the Kingdom of God and the transformation of communities.

”

The day provided an interesting smorgasbord of ideas but can only hope to be one small contribution to what needs to be an ongoing dialogue about the role of churches in education at this time when scarce public resources have to serve a community of diverse religious and ethnic identity. Documentation based on input and reflection at this conference is presently being prepared.

Given that by autumn 2010 CSF had a largely new membership it was felt that the time was right for a serious reflection on the purpose of the forum and future direction.

A November day of reflection, facilitated by Professor Patrick Murphy allowed forum members to consider its purpose, and

function. It was suggested that the Church in Society Forum has been less effective than it might be because of deficiencies in the way it engages with the existing structures and that it was essential that the forum use these structures properly in order to establish clear communications with IICM and ‘get purchase’ for the proposals on societal issues which it is putting forward.

The January 2011 meeting of CSF focussed on a work programme for 2011 /2012. A number of proposals were examined and a consensus reached on making work on social deprivation, at a time of economic recession, a key piece of research for CSF. This will be carried out with a view to formulating recommendations and opening up opportunities for their implementation.

IICM Contributors included;

- 01 Bishop Donal McKeown, Auxiliary Bishop of Down and Connor;
- 02 Dr. Kenneth Fennelly, Secretary to the Church of Ireland Board of Education for the Republic of Ireland;
- 03 Dr. Sheelagh Drudy, Adjunct Professor of Education at UCD;
- 04 Rev. Robert Herron, Chairperson of the Transferor Representatives’ Council in Northern Ireland;
- 05 Dr. Emer Smyth Programme Coordinator of Education Research at the ERSI in Dublin,
- 06 Ms Marie Murphy, teacher and diocesan advisor in the diocese of Cork and Ross and
- 07 Ms. Barbara McDade, Director of Programmes for the Board of Youth and Children’s Ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

Some suggestions were also put forward for a second strand of work for CSF in the coming months. A decision about these will be made at the next meeting.

Prior to 2010 the Inter-Church Committee on Social Issues did very valuable work in the area of social justice and it is hoped that in its new guise as Church in Society Forum it will continue the task of making concrete our Christian commitment to Gospel values. It is my hope that CSF will contribute to a praxis model of theology.

I want to express sincere thanks to the members of CSF, staff at the Inter-Church Centre and members of IICC for the welcome, support and affirmation extended to me over the past year.

THEOLOGY —*Forum*

WRITERS
*Gillian Kingston &
Rev Prof Brendan Leahy*

Preface

The Theology Forum is a forum of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting. It is co-chaired by Ms. Gillian Kingston and Rev Prof Brendan Leahy

The Theology Forum aims to:

- 01 Create spaces for the Irish Inter Church Meeting (IICM) and its member churches and associated bodies to dialogue on theological issues and concerns that advance ecumenical relationships between the member churches of IICM
- 02 Resource the member churches with statements identifying the common ground and outstanding theological differences between the churches
- 03 Relate to overcoming divisions and deepening the cause of Christian Unity
- 04 Address the contemporary Irish context
- 05 Address world wide trends in bilateral and multilateral dialogues
- 06 Offer theological perspectives on issues referred by IICC or IICC's

The Theology Forum gathered for the first time on Wednesday February 3rd, 2010, at Clonliffe College, Dublin. Most of us arrived in the usual manner – car, train, whatever, but we have one intrepid member who hops on to his motor bike in Limerick and rides up the N7/M7 to attend meetings. To the best of my knowledge, he has a record of 100% attendance.

The Forum has met four times during 2010. Its membership spans a wide range of traditions and includes Society of Friends, Methodist, Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and Romanian Orthodox. This is as it should be – the mix is rich and the discussion inclusive.

We are very grateful indeed to Philip McKinley for acting as secretary to the Forum and we want to take this opportunity to thank him most sincerely.

The Forum had been presented with terms of reference by the Irish Inter-Church Meeting and it has been working within this framework.

Time has been spent reflecting on issues requiring an ecumenical approach. These include

- Theology and Education
- Faith and Culture
- Christian Formation
- The image of God in the church and the world
- The notion of Christian hope, in the contexts of environment, justice and post-conflict situations.

The Eucharistic Congress, to be held in Dublin in June 2012, has occupied our thoughts and we were pleased to welcome Fr Kevin Doran, Secretary General of the International Eucharistic Congress, to speak about the theme, Communion with Christ and with one another, and to outline the planning process and the program.

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) has recently established a Faith and Order Reference Group (FORG). The Chair of this group is the Rt Revd Richard Clarke (C. of I.) and other members of the Group include the Most Revd Michael Jackson (C. of I.), Gillian Kingston (MCI) and the Revd Prof. Brendan Leahy (RCCI).

The Forum is tasked with organising the Irish Inter-Church Meeting on alternate years to the Church in Society Forum. Time has been spent in exploring an appropriate theme, identifying speakers and developing a programme for the day. The theme will focus on hope, with particular reference to the decade of centenaries upon which Irish society is about to embark. It is hoped to include among those attending, people for whom this might be a formative experience. We are grateful to the Principal of Edgheill Theological College, the Revd Dr Richard Clutterbuck, a member of the Forum, for extending the hospitality of the College for this event.

Though there are tasks to be undertaken, the Forum is clear that its very existence and the gathering together of members of the churches for theological discussion are, in fact, ends in themselves. We are grateful for the opportunity afforded to us for this exercise.

Captions page 23

- 01 Rev Jan Mullin and Ms Gillian Kingston
- 02 Attendees at the Four Nations Women's Concerns Meeting

01



WOMEN'S LINK —Report

Preface

Women's Link meets to further communication and exchange of ideas between women's groups throughout Ireland

WRITER
Joyce Bond

Committee meetings were all held in Belfast due to inclement weather conditions, under the chairmanship of Winnie Moffett, President Women's Link.

At our January committee meeting we said farewell and made a presentation to Michael Earle to thank him for his help and support to Women's Link during his time as General Secretary ICC.

Our committee records grateful thanks to ICC for their ongoing support, to Mervyn McCullagh and to the staff at The Inter-Church Centre.

There were many events within our church organisations throughout 2010 and these were recorded in our *Newslink* magazine.

The Fellowship Day 2010 was held in Gracehill Moravian Church, Co. Antrim. Gillian Kingston (Rep. Ireland) and Rev. Jan Mullin (Northern Ireland) addressed the theme 'Called to Serve'.

Roberta Thompson led a Prayer Walk through Gracehill. A presentation of a Study Bible was made to Marian Woods (former Committee

member/President and member of ICC Executive committee).

The 4 Nations Women's Concerns Meeting was held at Childhaven, Millisle, Co. Down, in October where worship, news of activities by women CYTUN (Wales), NEWS (Scotland) CTE (England) and ICC Women's Link (Ireland) were shared and discussed; Winnie Moffett was nominated as Irish administrator for The Pauline Webb Fund – a fund to assist women who wish to have ecumenical experiences outside of their denomination. Mervyn McCullagh (Executive Officer to ICC and IICM) led the Bible Study and spoke of how Jesus encouraged the role of women in his ministry and how Jesus is the bedrock of confidence for women's ministry today. Delegates visited Friendship House sponsored by Presbyterian Women. Wales is to host the next 2011 meeting.

The 2011 Fellowship Day will be held in Edenderry Methodist Church, Portadown, on Saturday 16th April (10.00 – 4.00pm) Theme: 'For such a time as this'. Speakers: Mervyn McCullagh (IICC) and Mrs Alison Cadden.



02



AICCMR — Report

WRITER
Sr. Joan Roddy

Preface

The All-Ireland Churches' Consultative Meeting on Racism represents the broad spectrum of churches in Ireland today and provides an all-island focus and vision to complement the work of other Christian agencies in the field.

It reports to the Church in Society Forum.

“Working for God’s Kingdom through an emphasis on the equality of all people (Gal 3.28)”

Central to the All-Ireland Churches' Consultative Meeting on Racism (AICCMR) is its commitment to support and challenge Churches and Christians in Ireland to create a welcoming and sustaining environment for people of all cultures and ethnic origins. The call to embrace diversity and to promote integration is a challenge both within Churches and in the relationships of Churches with the wider community.

In the course of the past year AICCMR has attempted to include better representation from the Churches new to Ireland, with a special focus on issues of concern particular to those Churches. Among issues identified was the difficulty in finding appropriate spaces for worship. A specific concern related to the right of Immigration Authori-

ties to enter Church buildings/environs to check on the immigration status of members of the congregation. Since the Irish State was due to be examined this year in relation to its compliance with the UN Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD), AICCMR arranged for a consultation to be held with pastors of migrant communities so that their views could be represented in the non-governmental organisations' Shadow Report which was presented to UNCERD in conjunction with the Government Report.

Continuing its efforts to open up further channels of dialogue, AICCMR is organizing a one day gathering in Dublin (22 March 2011) bringing together representatives of new and established Christian Churches in Ireland. It is hoped that this event, Listening and Learning – Exploring Inter-Church Connections, will offer the opportunity for Church leaders from the longer established Churches and migrant-led



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the role of Churches in highlighting the dignity of every human person, and the rights which flow from this, has a new urgency

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Churches, new to Ireland, to develop a deeper understanding of the challenges posed by the diversity now present in Irish Christianity, to learn from each other and to create new networks. Because of restrictions for some people in crossing the border into the Republic, a similar gathering will be held later in Belfast.

In the present economic and political environment, the role of Churches in highlighting the dignity of every human person, and

the rights which flow from this, has a new urgency. In the year ahead, the work of AICCMR in continuing to open up paths toward greater solidarity among Churches needs to continue. While struggling themselves to grow in solidarity, Churches, individually and together, must challenge and support society to become – for every person – a place of hospitality, inclusiveness and participation.

AICCMR aims to

- 01 Promote contact with Christian churches which are outside the existing inter-church structures, especially migrant led churches.
- 02 Organise educational, networking and symbolic events which challenge, inform and support the churches and others in society
- 03 Maintain a familiarity with relevant church and government policy issues and monitor policies and practices in the areas of inter-culturalism and of racial justice, in both jurisdictions on the island.
- 04 Share relevant news, developments, ideas and events
- 05 Support and challenge the churches and Christians in Ireland to create a welcoming and sustaining environment for people of all cultures and ethnic origins which will embrace diversity, difference, and integration. This includes both inside the churches and how they relate to their local communities



CHRISTIAN AID —Report

Preface

The Irish Council of Churches is a member of Christian Aid and Christian Aid is responsible to all of its member bodies for its work. Margaret Boden is the CEO of Christian Aid Ireland, and sits on the ICC Board of Overseas Affairs (BOA).

WRITER

Margaret Boden

Captions

- 01 Before the Haiti earthquake, Figaro Alourdes (left) worked as a street food vendor in Port-au-Prince. Christian Aid partner APROSIFA recruited her as a food distributor, providing free hot meals to hundreds of vulnerable people.
- 02 Labour TD Joan Burton receives the 'Tax of Life' report from Margaret Boden with its author Sorley McCaughey and Dr Dereje Alemayehu, Christian Aid, East Africa.

Looking back on 2010 the year seemed to be dominated by serious disasters which affected the lives of millions of people. The Haiti earthquake devastated the capital Port-au-Prince. The enormous task of clearing rubble and re-building still continues. Chronic food shortages in West Africa did not make the headlines as hunger does not present a dramatic media image, whilst the floods in Pakistan which swept people, homes and their livelihoods away were brought to our screens for a few short weeks. Christian Aid staff from Dublin were in Haiti and West Africa, whilst our membership of the ACT alliance (Action for Churches Together) proved particularly effective in Pakistan.

Aid effectiveness and impact are the new buzz words in the NGO (Non Governmental Organisations) world. It's right that overseas aid and development should be monitored and evaluated so that tax payers' money through government funding and voluntary donations from our Churches and the general public can be seen to be making

a difference. A frequently recurring question we receive is along the lines of 'how do we know our money is getting there?' and 'how do we know it's making a difference?' Eradicating poverty is our main goal, which in Christian Aid's strategic plan is expressed as "Turning Hope into Action". Our Annual report, available on line, at www.christianaid.ie breaks this into several different spheres of activity.

One example of our impact on 'secure livelihoods' will be shared widely during Christian Aid Week in May. For many years Christian Aid has supported and worked with a women's coffee producing co-operative in Nicaragua. The aim is to help provide secure and sustainable livelihoods for the whole community. Through developing an income generating project where the spin offs would include a whole spectrum of benefits such as education for the children; a quality product; involvement of the whole farming community and improved living conditions used money entrusted to us to leverage great results.



Development is not a quick fix and results do not happen overnight. However Soppexxca is now the proud supplier to Bewleys who signed a contract with them in 2010 and again in 2011. 25% of Soppexxca's coffee now comes to Ireland. Christian Aid is continuing to work with Soppexxca in order to develop the production of cocoa and the involvement of male farmers. Meanwhile there are already positive indications that life has improved and that hope for their future is bright.

We also continue to challenge the structures and systems that keep people poor. Gathering momentum is Christian Aid's "tax justice" campaign. "An effective tax system would ultimately move developing countries away from a reliance on aid to a more sustainable and predictable flow of revenue". Christian Aid's "Tax of Life" report published in May 2010, and available from both Dublin and Belfast offices, goes on to describe how the abuse of transfer pricing and false invoicing between 2005 and 2007, meant that Ethiopia, Lesotho,

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Development is not a quick fix and results do not happen overnight.

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Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia lost just under €82 million in tax revenues to Europe or the United States.

As the economic context within which we find ourselves leads to uncertainty about Irish government funding, cut by 20% in 2009, we continue to be appreciative of our Churches support and the generosity of their response to our ongoing development work as well as sudden onset emergencies, none of which we can predict. Christian Aid Week continues to be the biggest fund-raising event in the calendar year and in 2011 this takes place between

the 15th and 21st May. Resources for Churches are available from Dublin, Belfast and Cork offices and all Churches are encouraged to take part by the new Chair of Christian Aid Ireland. The Right Revd. Trevor Williams says "Your prayerful support for seven days in May can make a lifetime difference for others."



DR DAVID STEVENS — *Appreciation*

WRITER
Rt Rev Trevor Williams

Preface

Prior to Corrymeela, David worked for the Irish Council of Churches for 27 years and was General Secretary from 1992-2003 and joint secretary of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting.

David died on Pentecost Sunday 2010. His untimely death after a short illness brought to an end a life committed to Reconciliation and Christian Unity. He was an elder in the Presbyterian Church and a dedicated ecumenist. Since 2003 he was leader of Corrymeela, an ecumenical Christian community committed to peace-building in Northern Ireland and further afield.

Canon Bill Arlow was ICC General Secretary when David joined as a staff member. The Dutch Northern Ireland Advisory Committee had just been formed. It ran conferences for clergy groups, neighbourhood groups, police officers and politicians, providing a safe space where people could learn from each other. It was through this Dutch connection that David met Roel Kaptein and together they studied the work of Rene Girard whose writings on rivalry, scapegoating, conflict, violence

and the birth of culture were to become fundamental to David's analysis of Northern Ireland.

Although his doctorate was in Chemistry, David was one of Ireland's leading lay theologians. He read widely and his analytical mind enabled him to provide an insightful analysis of Northern Ireland politics and the community dynamics which gave rise to the 'Troubles.' He was a key member of the "Faith and Politics Group", which published a series of influential pamphlets, reflecting theologically on the Northern Ireland conflict. His own 'beginners guide' to the complexity of Northern Ireland affairs – A Briefing Paper on Northern Ireland – was an essential resource for those from elsewhere wishing to understand the conflict.

David had the ability to write with accuracy and clarity on highly complex theological and political issues in a very

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His writings will continue to be a valuable resource for those wishing to understand Northern Ireland and how the Gospel relates to its many problems.

”

accessible manner. His writings will continue to be a valuable resource for those wishing to understand Northern Ireland and how the Gospel relates to its many problems. His book “The Land of Unlikeness: Explorations into Reconciliation” (Columba 2004) is essential reading for Irish School of Ecumenics’ Reconciliation Studies students. As Gladys Ganiel of the ISE has said, “Stevens was one of the people who was instrumental in putting the much more demanding task of reconciliation (as opposed to co-existence or ‘benign apartheid’) in Northern Ireland’s public realm.”

He was much more than a theoretician. He led practical projects within the Irish Council of Churches addressing the needs of the inner city, peace education, immigrants and asylum seekers and the integration of new Christian Churches and denominations. David was

a founding member of the Community Relations Council and continued to serve on its central committees in a variety of capacities. He was a member of the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights (1990-1996 and 2002-2008). He was a commissioner for the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. As well as his commitment to Corrymeela since its early days in the 1960’s he was honorary treasurer of Voluntary Service Belfast.

David was a modest man with an incisive mind and warm heart. Those who worked for him in ICC appreciated his support and encouragement. He was a loyal friend to many in the Churches and elsewhere.

Following David’s death the extent of his influence was revealed by the numerous condolences that were received. Among them were these words from Rev Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit, General Secretary of the World Council

of Churches said “With others in the international ecumenical community who have had the privilege of walking with David, we would like to honour and celebrate the faith, integrity and passion that David shared with many and to a wider world. His constructive analyses, theological insights on forgiveness, reconciliation and peace, and great compassion enabled him to guide churches and lead communities to approach conflict resolution with honesty, courage and love. His work mirrored his profound involvement in the plight and the potential of the people of Northern Ireland..... His life of ministry is an inspiration.... We stand with all who hold David Stevens in high regard”

The Irish Council of Churches assures David’s wife Mathilde, and children Thomas and Naomi, of our prayers as they bear a greater loss than we can express.

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Woman's Link Representative

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