

# DEFINITORY NEWS

Issue No. 2012-2

Franciscan Province of Ireland

February 2012

The meeting was held in Gormanston College on 12—14th February 2012. All members were present, apart from Eugene Barrett who was in La Ceiba, Honduras, representing the Province at the episcopal ordination of Michael Lenihan. Prayer and liturgies were led by Pat Lynch, who also chaired the meeting.

## Friaries

**Brussels:** A letter of Agreement between the Franciscan province of Ireland and the Brussels General Vicariate of the Archdiocese of Mechelen-Brussels on the coordination of the three Sunday services in the English-speaking churches in Brussels, has been signed.

**Drogheda:** The Regional Superior of the FMDMs, Sister Anne O'Brien, has signed and returned the renewed Lease Agreement between the Province and the FMDMs in relation to the friary.

**Gormanston:** The Definitory met with the Gormanston Fraternity to continue a conversation about the forthcoming move to La Verna. The friars will have completed the transfer by the beginning of next school year. A wide ranging discussion took place covering many practical issues such as the future use of the castle, the financial situation of the college, the presence and role of friars in the college into the future. The Gormanston fraternity will continue to administer the Church and will continue their pastoral outreach to the people of the area.

The Definitory then met with Conor O'Brien, Chair of the Board of Management who gave an update on various issues relating to the college. The Deputy Principal has taken sick leave and will be absent until Easter. Vincent Dunne has been appointed Acting Deputy Principal, following an interview process. Measures to improve marketing include the appointment of a Development Committee under the leadership of Luke Monahan, member of the Board. In the afternoon the Definitory met with Ulic Troy, Rector and Dermot Lavin, Principal. Dermot spoke about the importance of the Franciscan presence in the college and thanked the friars for their enthusiastic

involvement. Ulic spoke of his work in the college and the various issues as he sees them. It was agreed that the college would seek to renew the links between Gormanston and St. Francis High School at Nharira, Zimbabwe.

**St. Isidore's:** Hugh reported on the annual meeting of the joint Commission on St. Isidore's. This was attended by Hugh, Mícheál Mac Craith, Frank Walter and Allan De Corte (deputizing for Gian-Carlo Latti). Two topics were discussed. (i) The return of the MSS and rare books to St. Isidore's as soon as possible. (ii) The need to complete the work of renovation in the front of the building. Hugh discussed this with the Minister General during his visit to the Provincial School in Rome. The General Bursar has assured us that this work will begin as soon as possible.

## Provincial Committees

**Formation:** Pat Lynch reported on the recent meeting of the **Vocations's Committee** in Ennis. Friars will be present at the Divine Mercy conference in the RDS on 18—19 February and again at the Eucharist Congress in June. Pat had the opportunity to address the Guardians at their recent meeting and gave them practical measures they could implement. The Franciscan Vocations facebook was launched recently. It was agreed that our friars in initial formation should attend the forthcoming meeting of young Franciscans in Poland in August.

The recent **Guardian's meeting** (31 January—2 February) was reviewed: the participants were happy with the event and made some recommendations for future meetings. A day-meeting for bursars will be organised soon by Kieran Cronin, Provincial Bursar. On **ongoing formation** Kieran reported that the Theology for Friars series is going well and over 20 attended the last session with

Sr Margaret Taylor. The series will continue with input from Jim Corkery at the end of the month. Applications for the Provincial Retreat are coming in and there could be up to 20 attending. Joe MacMahon reported that Bishop Donal Murray has agreed to provide input at October's cluster meetings.



## PSAG

Joe Condren reported on the recent meeting of the committee. A new card containing the Safeguarding and Code of Behaviour guidelines is now ready to be sent to the friars.

## Communications

The Report of the meeting of the Provincial Communications Board on 25 January was tabled and discussed. The Definitory expressed their thanks to the Board and are pleased that the website is soon to be upgraded.

## Substantial Topics

In response to a study being conducted by the General Curia, a substantial amount of time was spent reflecting on recent departures from the Order. The Curia is conducting a worldwide survey of all friars who left the Order from 1997 to 2009.

## Other Matters

**Franciscan Matters:** The annual statistical report on the personnel and locations of the friars prepared for the General Curia was distributed. Including novices, there are 145 members of the province, with 101 of these in Ireland, 21 in Zimbabwe and 23 elsewhere.

Hugh informed the meeting of his time at the General Curia for the meeting of new Provincials and Custodes. Participants were requested to have the friars look at the mandates from the General Chapter 2010. A serious concern is the issue of identity in the Order: in many entities there is a danger of the friars becoming de facto diocesan priests. There is an urgency to re-examine our charism through the prism of evangelizing mission and a suitable way of doing this is through reflection on the series of booklets being issued by the Curia. The Provincial Office will compile a response to the questions in the document on the Moratorium. Guardians are requested to submit any community reflections on the Moratorium document to Provincial office before the end of June.

## Sick & Infirm

We remembered the sick friars especially those who have been ill or infirm over time: Alexis King, Matthew McDonald and Sebastian Tighe and those who have been ill more recently: John Kealy and John Harty.

## Deceased

Patrick O'Brien (Father of John) and Martin O'Dea (brother of Egbert)

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting of the Definitory will be held in Merchants' Quay, 26—28 March 2012, beginning at 7pm on the 26th.

