

DEFINITORY NEWS

Issue No. 2012—3

Franciscan Province of Ireland

March 2012

The meeting was held in Merchants' Quay on 26—28 March 2012. All members were present. Prayer and liturgies were led by Eugene Barrett, who also chaired the meeting.

Friaries

Multyfarnham: The partnership between the Province and Irish Autism Action was formally launched at the Mansion House, Dublin on 2 April, World Autism Day. Several friars took part and speakers included Hugh and Keith Duffy, Patron. Irish Autism Action will be using approximately half of the old college building as a diagnostic and assessment centre and a National Centre of Autism in Ireland. The remaining half is being used by LARCC.

Rossnowlagh: Some members of the La Verna Centre Committee (Paschal McDonnell, Joe Conroy and Claire O'Shea) joined the meeting and made a power-point presentation on the refurbishment and extension work they are proposing to undertake. They outlined the mission and purpose of the Centre, the duties of the Board, the extent of the renovation and building works, the work plan and the programme of events they plan to put on. When everything is completed the Centre will be able to cater for 60 people and accommodate 38.

Liturgy

The Minutes of the meeting of the Liturgy Committee were tabled and discussed. The members of the Definitory were impressed by the high level of energy displayed in the tasks to be undertaken and the decisions made by the committee.

Missions & Evangelisation

Bernard Jones joined the meeting for this session and presented detailed budget requirements by the Custody for the first three months of 2012. Hugh and Bernard shared their impressions of their recent visit to Zimbabwe. There is a lively spirit among the friars and the numbers are increasing. There is growing cooperation with the South African province in the area of initial formation (the latter sends its novices to Gandachibvuva and its philosophy students to St. Bonaventure's College, Lusaka). Hugh reported on the recent Board meeting of Holy Trinity College which he attended in Harare. HTC now has 50 students and is growing and is beginning to provide courses for the education of the laity.

Provincial Committees

Formation: Joe MacMahon gave an account of his visit to **Canterbury** and of the recent meeting of the **Interprovincial Secretariat for Formation and Studies** which took place in London.

Niall O'Connell joined the meeting and gave a report on the recent meeting of the **Adult Faith Formation Committee**. The meeting reviewed a number of programmes but decided that we should develop a programme that is compatible with the Irish Hierarchy's pastoral on adult faith formation and with a Franciscan flavour. Niall then outlined the content of the proposed programme and plans to test it at a series of regional meetings in May. The finalised programme will then be launched at the cluster meetings in October.

Kieran Cronin brought the meeting through the minutes of the recent meeting of the **Ongoing Formation Committee**. Kieran is happy with the way the Theology for Friars series went. On average about 15—16 friars attended. So far 15 friars have signed up for the Provincial Retreat in Ballyvaloo and it will be open to the English friars and Irish Capuchins as well. If any friars still wish to join the retreat, please give your names to Kieran Cronin as soon as possible. Two dates have been proposed for the celebration of the Year of St. Clare which will take place in Multyfarnham.

The programme for the **Guardians' Meeting**, 14—16 May, was arranged.



Finance

Tracy Comerford made a presentation ahead of a meeting of the Finance Committee which would engage in a more detailed examination of the 2012—14 budgets. Her update covered the Provincial Office budget, the property projects and Gormanston College. The Riverbank redevelopment is proceeding well and is within budget. The La Verna renovation is at present within budget though there could be an overrun and there is a delay of about 3—4 weeks. Unfortunately, Merchants' Quay has to apply for a full planning permission process for the work on the plant room, damaged in last October's flooding, which means that it will not be completed until October.

It was decided that a meeting of the local Bursars will be held in May.

Health Care

The new Healthcare Committee held its first meeting recently. Colette is well advanced in organising a short up-skilling course for friary cooks at Cloughjordan House intended to introduce them to and encourage them to use healthy cooking menus in the friaries. A similar course could be arranged for friars who are interested. Guardians are being urged to release the cooks for the event.

Substantial Topic

The topic chosen for this meeting's reflection was the recently issued *Summary of the Findings of the Apostolic Visitation in Ireland*. The Definitory focused on the section dealing with religious and having examined each of the observations concluded that the province has complied with them. There is nothing further we can do for the moment and will return to the topic again when more detail emerges.

Cultural Heritage

Joe MacMahon gave an update on the work of the Micheál Ó Cléirigh Institute which includes funding research scholarships, the holding of weekly seminars, the cataloguing, conservation and digitization of MSS and incunabula, and the development of interdisciplinary programmes within UCD, with other institutes in Ireland and abroad. A number of studies are being prepared for publication including work by Benignus Millett, Pat Conlan and a translation of the history of the Irish friars in Prague. The Mellon Foundation is funding a comprehensive assessment of the potential of the OFM/UCD collection. The Institute continues to fundraise in the US to ensure that it can continue its work.



Building works at La Verna, Gormanston.



Other Matters

Franciscan Matters:

The appointment of **Aidan McGrath** as Commissario Deputato on the Special Commission for the dispensation from the obligations of priesthood and diaconate by the Congregation for the Clergy was warmly welcomed.

MQI: Hugh reported on the meetings of the Board and of the Board with the Executive held in St. Francis Farm on the 26th March. The Riverbank project is progressing well and the past year in the fundraising department was a positive one for growth. Soon practical arrangements will be made for the transition of the services into the Riverbank sometime in June. On the negative side, statutory funding continues to decrease and some staff issues remain to be resolved. Gabriel Kinahan and Richard Kelly continue to provide a very important link between the friars and MQI through their work in Pastoral Care and Counselling.

Request for Financial Aid: The Custos of the **Custody of St. Anthony in the Philippines** asked for financial help to repair the damage following the earthquake in Negros Oriental in early February. It was decided to make a donation to the relief fund.

Award Medal: Niall O'Connell has requested that May Barnes be awarded the Provincial Medal in recognition of her long service in Merchants' Quay. This was approved.

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, Fiachra Ó Ceallaigh, Philip Deane and John Harty.

Deceased: Furse O'Dea (brother of Egbert) and Joe Stanley (brother of the late Tony).

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Definitory will be held in Merchants' Quay, Monday 30 April—Wednesday 2 May 2012. This will include the annual Joint Definitory Meeting with the English Province.

