

NATIONAL NEWS

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See Brother Noel's
speech to National
Conference enclosed.

Sri Lanka – update from Bro Noel Corcoran

Dear Colleagues,

Having recently returned from Sri Lanka to take up the position of Regional Leader of the Brothers of Charity in Britain/Ireland (St. Joseph's Region) I would like to give you some information regarding the work of the Congregation in that country.

The first Brothers from Ireland went to Sri Lanka in November 1989 to begin a Service for young adults with an Intellectual Disability. They built a small centre approximately 20kms from Colombo and the first trainees were admitted in late 1991. Six were residents and the remainder attended on a day basis. Today there are 60 trainees and those in residence live in a house in the community.

A smaller centre opened in Negombo catering for 30 trainees and a crèche was opened for young children with an intellectual disability in Tudella. The Crèche provides services for 60 children who attend on a staggered basis. None of these services receive any state funding and are completely dependent on funding from St. Joseph's Region.

In 2004 a local Congregation of Brothers named the Society of St. Joseph amalgamated with our Congregation adding 20 new members to our numbers in Sri Lanka. These Brothers were mainly involved in Education and the running of Orphanages. They had their own schools but these were taken over by the Government in the sixties. We therefore inherited four Orphanages, which are completely dependent on donations from benefactors and donor agencies with some help from the Pontifical Missionary Society in Rome. Not all the boys are orphans; some come from poverty stricken families who would not be able to pay for a proper education. By coming to us they are enabled to attend school in the city.

Schools in the villages are very poor and have a huge shortage of teachers. It is important to note that the benefactors and donors only pay the subsidies during the school year and not during school holidays. Also if a boy leaves the funding ceases. This unpredictable source of funding makes it very difficult to employ co-workers to help run the Orphanages. There is one Brother in each orphanage and he is literally on duty 24 hours a day as his duties also include teaching in the school. We have been looking at ways to put the running of the Orphanages on a sounder financial footing, so far without success.

The Brothers of Charity Congregation is this year celebrating the 200th anniversary of its foundation and we in this Region are hoping to find ways of doing something positive to assist with the funding of the orphanages on a long term basis.

Any ideas on how we might do this would be very welcome.

The fantastic response we received from Ireland, the UK and other countries following the tragic tsunami of the 26th December 2004 was unprecedented. We ourselves were able to embark on the building of 50 houses for people who were made homeless and who lost everything. When I was leaving 40 of these houses were completed and most were occupied. We also had the task of building a new orphanage to replace the one which was badly damaged. Fortunately, 'Misereor of Germany' agreed to finance the building costs and the new home is practically completed. Although promises of help poured into the country many of the promises were not kept and there are still people living in very bad conditions in tents and corrugated iron huts. It is believed that it will take another two years before all the needs are met.

Sincere thanks to all who helped in any way during that traumatic period. Of course the war situation is not helping things and over the past few months thousands of people have had to flee their homes for safer areas. We have had many requests for help from these refugees and when I was leaving we were looking after 50 families with very little resources being provided locally.

Finally, I would like to thank all our co-workers for the efforts they have always put into the continual improvement of the Services and I pray this will continue. Hopefully we will meet in the not too distant future.

Bro. Noel Corcoran fc
Regional Leader

The Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney T.D., announced on the 16th January 2007 that she had set up a Commission on Patient Safety and Quality Assurance. The Commission will be chaired by Dr Deirdre Madden, BL, a leading expert on medical law and ethics. It includes nursing and medical representatives, management representatives and, importantly, two representatives of patients and carers. It will report to the Minister within eighteen months.

The Minister has asked the Commission to develop proposals for:

- greater accountability within our health system for performance in relation to patient safety;
- more effective reporting of adverse clinical events and complaints in order to learn from them and ensure that the rest of the health system learns from them;
- a clearer role for patients and carers in feeding back on care received;
- ways to ensure health care practice is consistently based on what has been shown to work in other centres;
- a statutory system of licensing of public and private providers of health care; and
- better integration of the work of the different regulatory bodies in the health system in order to achieve a joined up approach and a sharing of best practice.

Source: Department of Health & Children Press Office.

Ed note: It will be interesting to see if the statutory system of licensing might affect our services—will let you know how this develops.

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FORUM—Limerick

The National Partnership Forum (NPF) provided a platform for discussions between the Unions and Management of the Limerick Services on the future of the Bawnmore Centre. The first meeting of the group, chaired by John O'Dowd, took place in Bloomfield House, Mullingar, on December 8th 2006. The purpose of the meeting was threefold:

- 1 to provide the Brothers of Charity Services (BOCS) with an opportunity to brief trade union representatives on proposals relating to the future of Bawnmore Services,
- 2 to give trade unions an opportunity to make an initial response to these proposals, and
- 3 to give both parties an opportunity to identify key issues to be discussed or negotiated and to discuss what procedures they might use for handling this development.

The meeting was attended by Matt Merrigan and Karen O'Loughlin and local members of SIPTU and senior managers of the company. Unfortunately, due to work commitments, the INO was not represented but have indicated their intention to be involved in the process. Eamon Naughton of the NPF also attended and gave his full support to the initiative. Matt Merrigan opened the meeting and referred to the importance of management/union cooperation in the development of services such as those provided by the BoCS. Bob Sillery outlined the hopes the Brothers of Charity had for moving services from Bawnmore to the community where they could deliver the types of person centred services in which they believed. He outlined the basis of a five-year plan that the unions and staff could support and that could form the basis of submissions for the funding required to enable the plan. There ensued lively discussion on various aspects of the proposed change and the following was agreed.

1. A working party representative of management and unions would be set up to facilitate the plan.
2. Discussion would take place within the representative groups in relation to the plan.
3. Full time union officials and senior management personnel would actively participate in the discussions.
4. Some issues may have to be resolved through the established industrial relations machinery.
5. The next meeting would be held in early February 2007.

All the parties expressed a wish that the initiative would succeed to the benefit of all participants and looked forward to further discussions.

Article: R Sillery, Chief Executive
Brothers of Charity Services Limerick

MESSAGE AT THE START OF THE JUBILEE YEAR IN THE SAINT BENEDICT PROVINCE FROM BRO LUC MAES PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR

200 Years of Charity in Action

Dear Friends,

Nearly 200 years ago, on 28th December 1807, our founder Peter Joseph Triest and his Brothers of Charity took up the care for the elderly at the Byloke in Ghent, Belgium. Since then that small congregation has grown and spread all over the world, wherever we find places where people are in need of care. Today, after 200 years, we look back and we are thankful for the many expressions of our loyal Caritas. We look towards the future with confidence.

We see a congregation and an organisation in which a group of brothers and thousands of co-workers worldwide, experts with a person centered focus, continue to support their neighbours who are living in difficult conditions.

This is hopeful!

We see a growing group of associate members worldwide together with the congregation who want to live and work very explicitly from their vocation as a Christian in the spirit of the congregation.

This is hopeful!

We see worldwide in that congregation that there is still a dynamic which makes brothers, associate members and co-workers relieve new affliction.

This is hopeful!

We see worldwide in our congregation that there is a deep lingering reflection about our deepest sources: the Gospel of Jesus, the inspiring figure of Vincent, the charisma of our founder Peter Joseph Triest (1760-1836), the history and the work of the congregation. These sources are a treasure, the gospel tells us, from which old and new things always appear.

And this too is hopeful!

As the 200 years of charity in action: This is an important moment for us all:

- to consciously halt and dream;
- to consciously look back with great respect for all the good things that have happened during the past 200 years within the congregation and organisation. Thanks to many brothers and co-workers who by trial and error and with a certain tenacity brought us to where we are today.
- to be aware of the *motto* we have carried deep within ourselves as a congregational organisation from the beginning: *'whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me'* (Mt 25, 40).

The presence of Jesus in the places of prayer within our facilities, but also the hidden Jesus, always present in the most vulnerable of neighbours, in our classrooms and in our services. Continuing to realise this deep rooted motto, will eventually lead us to profound human happiness. 200 years of Charity in Action: In this jubilee year, 'the ones who are entrusted to us' should occupy centre stage.

This jubilee year should be brimming with sincere appreciation for the dedication of brothers, associate members and co-workers. Our services should become more of a community in which solidarity, helpfulness and the quality of life grow.

The joy and the gratitude for God's care for every one of us should prevail. I dream that in this jubilee year every service gives shape to '200 years of charity in action' in its own, creative way.

Let us continue to be vigilant, because the history of the congregation also teaches us this: "Whatever happens: we are in God's hands and that is good!"



THE DOON PROJECT Limerick

In keeping with our philosophy of ensuring that people attain as personalised a lifestyle as possible, we continue to offer service users of Bawnmore a life more in keeping with their wishes. During 2006, 19 people moved from the centre to more appropriate housing in Limerick City. A small complex has been developed in Doon, Co. Limerick, which will offer an alternative lifestyle to 12 Bawnmore residents with high dependency requirements. The development consists of three 4-bed houses with a common area and is part of an integrated County Council development of affordable and voluntary housing, including housing for the elderly. The completion of the project will result in numbers in Bawnmore declining from 140 to 98 in less than 3 years. Whilst it is planned that numbers will decline to less than 40 over a further 3 year period, it is quite obvious that this can only be achieved through the provision of adequate funding by the HSE.

Original Article: R Sillery, Chief Executive,
Brothers of Charity Services Limerick

(Ed)

INCORPORATION—BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As you are all aware the Brothers of Charity Services became incorporated as Companies on the 1st January 2007. This is the result of five years of planning and hard work by many people within the organisation. The Congregation appointed each Company Board's Directors and appointed the Chief Executives as Company Secretary. Each Company has their own Corporate Strategy, based on the National Company (Brothers of Charity Services Ireland) Strategy and Vision, which will determine the direction of the services into the future.

The Brothers of Charity Services are owned and directed by the National Company whose Directors are members of the Congregation. The National Company has been established to act as a corporate entity representing the Congregation of the Brothers of Charity Services in Ireland. There is one National Board and six Local Boards — one for each region of the services. The National Board will provide the ethos and guidelines which are to be followed by the Local Boards and will delegate the task of overseeing compliance with such ethos/guidelines to the Board of Directors of each Local Company.

The day to day management of the Company is a matter for the Chief Executive.

Limerick Directors

S. De Burca (Chairperson)
M. Browne
S. Hayes
G. Lyons
G. O'Byrne
J. Roe

Roscommon Directors

D. O'Donnell (Chairperson)
M. Ahern
M. Allen
T. Farrell
D. Morris
P. Naughton

Southern Directors

C. Riordan (Chairperson)
T.P. Crosbie
M. Keogh
A. Leahy
T. O'Dwyer
R. Pierse

Robert Sillery (Company Secretary/
Chief Executive)

Marian Keigher (Company
Secretary/Chief Executive)

Una Nagle (Company Secretary/
Chief Executive)

Galway Directors

M. Reen (Chairperson)
A. Broderick
D. Hannon
M. Keys
M. O'Grady
E. Walsh

South East Directors

J. Stokes (Chairperson)
C. Brazil
C. Egan
R. Fitzgerald
M. Freyne
D. O'Carroll

Clare Directors

S. Costelloe (Chairperson)
R. Crimmins
A. Haverty
A. Malone
D. Ó Criodáin
G. Quinn

Patrick McGinley (Company
Secretary/Chief Executive)

Johanna Cooney (Company Secretary/
Chief Executive)

Mary Kealy (Company
Secretary/Chief Executive)

The Brothers of Charity Services Ireland

Bro. N. Corcoran (Chairperson)
Bro. A.T. Hassett
Bro. D. Kerins
Bro. J. Killoran
Bro. V.W. Manning
Bro. J. O'Shea
Bro. J. Rackley

Winifred O'Hanrahan
(Company Secretary/Chief Executive)

Team Based Performance Management (TBPM)

The Brothers of Charity Services South East, Brothers of Charity Southern Services and Brothers of Charity Services Galway, have implemented Team Based Performance Management, which is a national initiative introduced by the Health Services Executive Employers Agency (HSEEA). The background to the introduction of TBPM for the health service is the National Health Strategy. The **National Health Strategy** “Quality and Fairness – A Health System for You” recognised that the delivery of the changes envisaged for the Health Services required a new approach to ‘people management’ throughout the system. A key target was the development of an **‘Action Plan for People Management’** which was produced by the Department of Health and Children and the HSEEA in consultation with the National Partnership Forum. The Plan, published in 2002, was developed in consultation with key management and trade unions. One of the seven themes of the Plan is to **‘Develop Performance Management’**. In the National Partnership Agreement 2003 – 2005 – **‘Sustaining Progress’** it was agreed that the Performance Management System should be unit or team based. Effective team working is at the heart of a quality health service and for this reason a team based approach to performance management was adopted.

What is Performance Management?

Performance Management is defined as a *“strategic and integrated approach to delivering sustained success to organisations by improving the performance of the people who work in them and by developing the capabilities of teams and individual contributors.”*

The Advantages of Performance Management

- Aims to ensure team and individuals are clear of their role
- Linked to Service Plan and Strategic Plan.
- Promotes partnership and two-way communication
- Promotes openness and discussion
- Recognises the contribution of individuals and teams to service delivery
- A system for involvement, feedback and recognition.

The Role of the Line Manager/Team Leader

The introduction of Performance Management should not be seen as an “add on” to the relationship between a Line Manager and his/her team. The process simply puts more structure and focus on what is already an integral line management role.

The Team Leader initiates and leads the process, helps team members clarify jobs and objectives and provides feedback on achievement. The Team Leader also sets in place actions to support performance improvement.

TBPM should not be seen as something unusual or additional in the relationship between the line manager and his/her team rather it should be viewed as an integral component of the line manager’s role, namely, in clarifying the scope and objectives, providing feedback on achievements and supporting performance improvement.

The Benefits being achieved:

- More focused approach to planning and review
- Clarity on priorities and actions
- A chance for personal development
- Leadership skills are being developed by team leaders
- Teamwork with different disciplines
- More professional and formal approach to work.

Pilot Sites were set up within each Company and Initial Awareness Sessions were held to inform the Service Executive and all staff about TBPM. Pilot teams have set their objectives, and are formally reviewing their performance in relation to the achievement of their objectives on a quarterly basis. The next step in the process will be to introduce Team Based Performance Management to all other teams within each Company.

Information supplied by: Elizabeth Tyrrell, South East, & Rebekah Santos, Southern Services.

BROTHERS OF CHARITY

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We would love to hear from you
suggestions/ articles

NOTICE BOARD

We would love to hear from all Companies about innovative projects, new practices and experiences, this will enhance the sharing of information throughout Companies. Please send you articles to the editor by e-mail.

If you have any comments on the content and tone of this newsletter I would like to hear them, please e-mail me.

What's New?

Note: The name of the National Company has been changed to:
"Brothers of Charity Services Ireland Ltd".
This is the company under which the National Secretariat will operate.

Hope you enjoy the new look "National News" which has changed its colours to match the incorporated uniform of navy and grey for all our headed paper, complement slips and business cards. Note that the vision statement from your own company can be placed on your complement slips. All other paper must follow the template set.

The Editor reserves the right to edit all articles submitted to National News.



Currach Launched in Boyle - Roscommon

The slipway beside the Gazebo in Lough Key Forest Park was the venue in December 2006 for the launch of a splendid Currach made by people who are with the Brothers of Charity Services at the Mantua Art Centre. John Gallagher, chairman of Boyle & District Angling Club launched the Currach after it was blessed by Fr. Gerry Hanley, P.P. in the presence of a large number of happy Boyle people and members of the Brothers of Charity organisation. The craft has been appropriately named "Claddagh". The boat is light, sea-worthy, easy to manage and a credit to instructor Mark Redden and all of those who spent Thursday nights since September learning how to make her. The launch was the high point of a most pleasant afternoon in the Park. Boyle Marching Band added spectacle and dance and played festive tunes. The Angling Club members once more showed the special part they play in our community by providing a shelter Marquee and assistance at the pre-launch. Everyone enjoyed the non-alcoholic champagne from Carol of Daly's Lounge, Bridge Street, a lucky few enjoyed a trip around Castle Island with James Candon and the warmth of the appreciative gathering on the calm Sunday in December.

Article supplied by: Brothers of Charity Services Roscommon.

The National Conference was a great success and congratulations to all involved. A conference report will be available by end of June. Don't forget to read the insert which contains Bro. Noel's directional and uplifting speech to the Conference.



Love & Respect in Every Action