

Visiting the Irish Region May 2016

Attending a local Team meeting in Dublin was one of the highlights of our recent trip to Ireland, the first of our ventures abroad to visit and support our Transatlantic Super Region. During this meeting, we also came to the realisation of the level of commitment we have undertaken when accepting this role... when someone gave thanks, during the prayer, to couples who are prepared to dedicate their time to Teams.

It is a daunting thought – we have five years ahead of us in role as Super Regional Couple - five years in which to continue the wonderful work Teams are doing across our whole region and to find ways in which to support existing and new Teams.

The Irish Teams certainly made this easy with their generous hospitality and kindness. We were fortunate to stay with Breda and Tony Preston, the Regional Couple with many years of experience in Teams and to meet their family. We had the chance to explore Glendalough, renowned for an early medieval monastic settlement founded in the 6th century by St Kevin in glorious sunshine and missed the rain which poured when we returned to our car! Attending a Regional Meeting in the O'Connell School in Dublin, gave us the opportunity to meet Sector Couples and Father Peter Sexton, Regional Chaplain. We were inspired by the variety of Sector events, including an event in Dublin in recognition of the centenary of 1916, which included a Museum tour and stroll around St Enda's park. Many of the Sectors have also organised retreats which have been well attended.

We are excited about the World Meeting of Families, planned for the 22 to 26 August 2017 in Dublin, which the Pope has expressed a desire to attend, and offers a fantastic opportunity for Teams to make their presence felt. Perhaps a date to put in your diaries!

Following the Regional meeting, we attended the monthly Team meeting of Team 32, hosted by Mary and Hugo Gallagher. The warm welcome we received was memorable – we immediately felt at home with all the couples - a feeling we are beginning to get accustomed to as we visit more and more Teams. One faith, one direction and the unifying effect of the Teams' Movement is evident throughout the Super Region. It was interesting to note the differences between the Team meeting and that of our own Team, in the order of events, whilst still maintaining the core elements and enabling us to join in at every step. We found the sharing and prayerfulness particularly uplifting and enjoyed the singing at the end of the meeting.

Our journey continued with a trip to the National Marian shrine at Knock. The Shrine is beautifully placed and well designed to cope with many visitors. While we were there, it was very peaceful and not too busy and we were fortunate to be able to attend two masses – one a mass including anointing of the sick and one evening mass where I had to step in as Eucharistic Minister – rather unnerving but also extremely uplifting. We also had the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and pass through a door of Mercy just outside the Chapel of Reconciliation, as well as attending a Guided Prayer session, which was similar to the Team's approach to the monthly meditation on Scripture.

A couple of days relaxation in Donegal followed, where we were blessed with sunshine – in fact the whole week we spent in Ireland was warm and sunny, an absolute delight. Our trip culminated in one night in Belfast, where Brendan and Moyra Bunting greeted us warmly and took us on an interesting tour of the city and shared a meal with us at Belfast Castle.

We returned to London, invigorated and inspired by the kindness, generosity and spirit of Team's prayerfulness and hospitality in the Irish Region. We will continue to hold the Region in our prayers and look forward to our next meeting.

Dzidzia and Piotr July 2016



Belfast Castle with Moyra and Brendan Bunting



Irish Regional Meeting, Dublin May 2016



The Door of Mercy, Knock Shrine.