

Presentation Ireland Ministries Annual Review 2014



Special 15th Anniversary Edition

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Shining a Light of Hope and Hospitality

The Lantern Community Project, George's Quay, Cork

The Lantern is a new community centre in Cork set up by Presentation Ireland Ministries. It was formally launched by the deputy Lord Mayor Cllr Kenneth O'Flynn.

The Lantern Community Project developed from the *We Made This* Community initiative, which was based in South Presentation convent. This year saw the project relocate to a new premises on 14 George's Quay, (rumoured to be the house that Nano Nagle's sister lived in).

The project co-ordinator is Norma Roche who says: 'In essence the *Lantern Community Project* is about building resilient individuals and communities'.

A Place of Welcome

The Lantern is first and foremost a place of welcome and inclusion. We have an open door policy where people can drop in for a cup of tea and a chat. We foster a friendly relaxed atmosphere with no pressure on people to feel they have to do a course. Simply meeting and talking is what's important. We are fortunate to have a number of volunteers from the Bridge Recovery Group who are the welcoming face of the Lantern.

Outreach

Like Nano Nagle, we believe it's important to go out to people, especially those who may be feeling isolated or alone. To this end we have developed an outreach programme. Conor Dervan was appointed outreach worker in December.



At the launch: Damien Murray, Noel O'Callaghan, Tony Manning, Denis O'Sullivan, Johnny McGrath, Kieran Kealy, Johnny McGrath, Norma Roche, Sharon O'Connell & Eoin Garde

Director's Message

Welcome to this annual review on the work of Presentation Ireland Ministries as we celebrate 15 years of ministry development.

In 2014, we continued to innovate to meet needs in our society with new projects in social inclusion and in ecology. Our work is making a real difference in the lives of the people we are privileged to serve. We, in Presentation Ireland Ministries, are encouraged and inspired by the people we work with, and together take the steps towards building a better world.

More from David Rose, Director of Presentation Ireland Ministries on page 2 inside ...

The main focus of this work is to reach out to men who are living alone and to work with separated fathers. Through the outreach work, we now have two men's groups in the centre that offer support and social activities and eventually self-directed learning opportunities. We are grateful to the Nagle Solidarity Fund for providing funding for the outreach worker post and to Cork Education and Training Board for tutor hours for the learning opportunities.

Learning Opportunities

This year more than 160 women and men participated in various community education courses within the centre. We collaborate



with the Social and Health Education Project (SHEP Cork) which is enabling us to roll out a comprehensive Life Skills Programme which incorporates, Personal Development, Effective Communication for Better Relationships, Stress Management, Men's Health & Well Being, Women's Health & Well-Being, Coping with Grief, and Loss and Change. We also collaborated with Cork City Partnership to roll out a Parent to Parent course.

We offer a significant number of creative arts opportunities which have empowered participants through a different medium to gain confidence, skills, and develop their artistic ability through Ceramics, Painting, Mosaic making, Drama, Movement and Dance, Arts & Crafts.

These courses have proved to be an integral stepping stone for participants to re-engage with the wider community and to experience a positive learning experience. This has led to some accessing more formal education opportunities.

A New Location

We moved off the South Presentation site to 14 George's Quay. We held a 'relocation party' which was attended by nearly 250 people who are linked with the project. It was a celebration to acknowledge the achievements and difference that the project has made to the people involved. There was singing, dancing, food, art activities, face painting and art activities for the kids, photography exhibition and video montage, and plenty of fun.



At the launch: Deputy Lord Mayor Kenneth O' Flynn, David Rose, Sr Anne Coffey, Srs Nano Brennan & Sheila Kelleher



Young People

The Greenmount Youth Project is hosted within the Lantern and is an important partner with us in providing for the needs of young people. It runs an after school programme for children from the two local DEIS schools and the worker also runs small developmental group work sessions with older primary school children and first years from the local secondary schools.

- The Youth Café runs every Monday and Wednesday night and is resourced by Foroige volunteers. There are currently 30 young people participating in the Café.
- The drugs worker also does one to one work in the centre with concerned people whose family members may be mis-using alcohol or drugs.
- Foroige's 'Big Brother Big Sister' programme also operates in the centre whereby suitable adult volunteers are matched with young persons for mentoring.



Influencing Public Policy

The Lantern has also taken a more proactive approach regarding policy development and influencing change. We hosted a meeting (40 in attendance) for the European Anti-Poverty Network in Cork regarding the Social Inclusion Forum. The Lantern's co-ordinator Norma Roche and one of the members of the project represented Cork at the Social Inclusion forum in Croke Park last April with the Minister of Social Protection present.

We were also involved in organising and facilitating the Cork 'Claiming our Future' event called 'A Declaration for a New Republic' (50 in attendance) in association with Ballyphehane Community Development Project.

We participated in the President's Ethical Debate 'Voices for a Renewed Ireland' which drew on grassroots experiences from projects like ourselves to inform the President's ethical focus for his presidency term.

Feeding into local policy and networks is another important aspect of the work, so that we are sharing our experiences and examples of good practice and ensuring that they inform local policy.

We are actively involved in a number of structures such as Cork Community Health Network, Cork Healthy Cities, Cork Citywide Education Network, EcCoWell, Project Refocus, Substance Misuse Forum with Cork City Garda Division.

Groups

The writers group had a very busy year with the publication of a book titled 'Easy Going Writing', a collection of 46 original texts. This was an overwhelming success and we're now

Director's Message *cont'd*

2014 was a year of success which included:

- The establishment of *The Lantern Community Project* as a new welcoming and learning space in Cork city,
- The development of new education programmes in ecology for primary and secondary schools and in teacher training;
- On-going support and leadership to iScoil online learning programme for early school leavers, resulting in recognition of the model and commitment of funding by the Department of Education;
- Progressing work to help address the pressing issue of sustainability for Presentation centres and projects.

It was a sad year for us as well. We were stunned and shocked by the untimely deaths of Sr Imelda Carew and Sr Paula Buckley. Imelda had been on the staff of Presentation Ireland as programme leader for human rights and ecology prior to moving to the leadership team. Paula was a member of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation group. Both were hugely active in ministry development and their loss is very keenly felt by colleagues and friends at Presentation Ireland. These two wonderful women were an inspiration to all of us who work for social justice and sustainable living.

On behalf of the management, I would like to thank the many volunteers who give generously of their time and talents on boards and in our services without whom we would not be able to function. We are grateful for the dedication and

commitment of our staff who ensure the people we serve are at the heart of our services.

We would also like to express our gratitude to Srs Anne Coffey and Margarita Ryan for their unstinting dedication and commitment on the management committee and who have completed their terms of office.

On behalf of us all, a special word of gratitude and deep appreciation to Sr Nano Brennan, who has completed her term as chairperson. Nano generously provided the inspirational leadership, commitment and insight that enabled us to make a difference, to live our vision of a more compassionate, just and sustainable world.

We would also like to acknowledge the generosity, good wishes, prayers and support of all the Presentation Sisters, in whose name we carry out our work.

We hope you enjoy reading this report and we welcome your feedback and comments which can be sent to presirl@iol.ie.

David Rose
Director

Our People in 2014/15

Management: Srs Nano Brennan chair, Anne Coffey, Angela Leahy, Joan O'Reilly, Margarita Ryan, Grace Redmond, Anne Codd.

Staff: David Rose Director, Hilary Goff, Administrator, Katy Egan & Lucy O'Hagan Ecology, Norma Roche & Conor Dervan The Lantern.

looking at publishing a second edition as the first edition is almost sold out.

The New Beginnings group continue to meet on a weekly basis. This group developed from two courses in early 2013 called 'Caring for our Well-Being'. Each member of the group has flourished within the project and feels part of something unique and special.

The Narcotics Anonymous women's group continue to meet every Monday night, with between 10 to 30 women. This is the only women's NA group in the city.

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The Cork Migrant Centre

We are delighted to be sharing the space with the Cork Migrant Workers Centre which is led by Sr Jo McCarthy. This is a drop-in centre providing free confidential accurate and up to date information and support to migrant workers and their families from all across the world who are living in Cork city and county. The centre supports the rights of all immigrants with special focus on the empowerment and inclusion of immigrants at risk of poverty, social exclusion, exploitation and discrimination.

Support to English, Polish, Spanish and Russian speakers can be provided over the phone or in person by calling in to the office during opening hours: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 10.00 to 15.00. English classes are provided on Tuesdays and Thursdays mornings. ■

For more information see www.lanternproject.ie



New Ways in Educating for Sustainable Development



We are at a critical moment in history, where human action is compromising our planet's ability to sustain life. Today we face a multitude of environmental, social and economic challenges from climate change to resource exhaustion.

Presentation Ecology envisions a world where human rights and the rights of nature are held in balance: a world where human activity brings about conditions on the planet that support the lives of all species and ecological systems.

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In seeking to bring about this future, Presentation Ecology was established with the aim of providing innovative learning programmes for sustainable development, and to add value to the work of Presentation centres, schools and communities in the area of ecology.

We especially work in collaboration with Mount St. Anne's Retreat and Conference Centre, and Nano Nagle Centre for Heritage, Spirituality and Ecology, Ballygriffin, Co Cork.

Katy Egan is the ecology officer and has led the development of four new ecology education programmes:

- Take Learning Outside is our teacher training programme;
- Wild Thinking & Sustainable Skills is our young people's programme adaptable for both schools and youth groups;
- Just Change is our adult and community education programme
- Biomimicry Workshop is a schools based science and ecology programme mainly for transition years.

Take Learning Outside

Take Learning Outside is a teacher training programme for primary school teachers. It is recognized by the Department of Education for in-service training. This is a week-long learning event on how to create your own outdoor classroom for your school.

Participants learn a range of activities and skills that are cross curricular from environmental education to maths and science, current research on place based learning, experiential education and the benefits of nature connection work.

Participants can choose from a variety of fun but practical skills such as growing your own food, cooking outdoors and natural art to take back and use in the classroom.

In 2014 Presentation Ecology hosted the primary school teacher training course in two locations:

- Mount St. Anne's Retreat and Conference Centre in July 1st – 5th.
- Nano Nagle Centre, Ballygriffin in August 18th – 22nd.

Thinking Wild

Wild Thinking is our youth programme for primary schools, youth groups, and family days.

We have a number of exciting workshops available for different ages. From bugs and birds to campfires and shelter building, participants engage in activities to enrich their experience of the natural world. All our activities are curriculum linked and designed to encourage critical thinking, problem solving, creativity in a really fun and dynamic way.

Wild Thinking is way more than just knowing the names of trees! It's about really experiencing the natural world and learning how nature is not just out in the parks and mountains but how it surrounds us everyday in our lives.

Wild Thinking 2014 was run in the Bellarmine Youth Club, Dublin, with the Glencullen environment after school group.

Sustainable Skills for Secondary Students

Sustainability is not just a theory or an idea that exists in the abstract, it needs to be lived and explored within our own lives. Thinking in systems and understanding ecological systems is already a key skill required within our economy and necessary for many jobs. Our sustainable skills course for secondary school students blends current theory and practical hands on skills in a diverse workshop series relevant to student lives.

Topics include

- Climate Change
- Cosmetics in our Environment
- The lifecycle of Materials
- Renewable Energy and Green Economy
- Food, organics, waste and sustainability
- What's in a label?
The secret life of clothes

Sustainable Skills 2014 was run in St. Mary's Mercy Secondary, Mallow and in Kildare Town Community School.





Biomimicry

Biomimicry is a scientific approach to designing technologies and systems that are sustainable, economically viable and beautiful. Biomimicry is the process of looking to natural systems and species for ideas and methods for our own technologies. It is emerging as one of the most effective and innovative design processes.

Biomimicry brings together experts from a variety of disciplines allowing them to collaborate on a single project, engineers, city planners, architects, scientists, biologists, designers, artists, geographers and many more. Due to this variety of applications, biomimicry is an excellent cross curricular topic, as well as a perfect avenue for group work and cooperation.

It is a fascinating area to study and a very useful skill for all students no matter what field of study or work they pursue in the future.

Biomimicry in 2014 was run in St. Mary's, Mercy Secondary, Mallow; St. Mary's Presentation High School, Midleton and Presentation Secondary School, Mitchelstown.

Just Change

Just Change is a community programme that works with different local community groups to facilitate positive, sustainable change within their area. Projects vary from installing rainwater harvesters to community gardens and Men's Sheds. We have previously run the Just Change Programme with community groups in Tipperary Town, Ballingarry and Mountmellick.



Ecology family fun day

Total number of people that Presentation Ecology engaged with in 2014 was 458.

Summary of Programmes Delivered in 2014

- A transition year biomimicry course (30 students)
- Three Transition Year Sustainable Skills courses (45 students)
- Two teacher training weeks (50 participants)
- Two Wild Thinking youth club series (30 participants)
- One Family Nature day at Mount St. Anne's (38 participants)
- Two Halloween Family Nature days at Mount St. Anne's (70 participants)
- One Halloween Family Nature day at Nano Nagle Centre Ballygriffin (30 Participants)
- Climate change workshops with a school in Clonakilty (45 participants)
- Nature day workshop with infant school in Charleville (90 Participants)
- Two workshops with Learning Landscapes (40 Participants)
- Biomimicry workshop in the UK (30 Participants)

Other Activities Delivered

- In a new departure, we provided a number of days of ecology education consultancy to Doneraile Development Association to develop an education programme for Doneraile Park.
- Family Nature Days – The first family nature day and the three Halloween days were booked out and had extremely high demand. They were held on the mid-term breaks.
- Katy Egan presented a workshop on 'Biomimicry' at the Lindley Trust Annual Festival of Outdoor Learning in the UK. The Linley Trust promotes excellence in the field of outdoor education. The Festival is a great continuing professional development opportunity for outdoor professionals, teachers and youth workers.
- Presented two new environmental education workshops for educators: 'Improvisation in Nature' and 'Nature Journaling' at the Burren Beo Learning Landscapes Festival. Burrenbeo is Ireland's very first landscape charity.

Interns

We worked with two interns under the JobsBridge Scheme. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Alexandra Foley and Brona Dunne who contributed to the overall operation of Presentation Ecology. Both found the placement with us to be a very positive experience. Lucy O'Hagan is our current intern.

Conclusion

2015 promises to be an even more exciting year for our work in ecology with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Bill 2013 due in the Dail, the international UN Conference on Climate Change and a new Encyclical on the Environment from Pope Francis. ■

www.facebook.com/EcopresIreland
<http://ecopresireland.com>

Government supports *iScoil* to enable young teens return to education

Education Minister Jan O'Sullivan has committed €200,000 to support *iScoil* to help young teenagers who are out of school to return to education.

'I have been looking at how *iScoil* could provide education to some of our vulnerable children', said Ms O'Sullivan.

'In particular, students who are not yet 16, but are suffering from mental health difficulties that keep them out of school for long periods, or have been expelled from school and are finding it difficult to find a new school place, still need to be provided with an education,' said the Minister.

iScoil is an innovative and award winning programme for early school leavers.

iScoil is an innovative and award winning programme for early school leavers. It works to provide a safe environment where young people can re-engage with education, pursue their interests, learn and gain accreditation.

In *iScoil* each student is unique and the programme is tailored to his or her individual needs. Our vision is based on each young person realizing his or her right to education. Students are also supported to progress back to school, to other training/education provisions, to college and to work. In this way the project focuses on re-engaging young people with learning and our education system.

iScoil was born out of the belief that all young people inherently want to learn but not all are 'school shaped' and thus can become disengaged. There can be many reasons behind such disengagement but they typically include issues such as: anxiety, phobia, behavioural issues, bullying, social disadvantage, medical conditions and family situations.

iScoil continues to evolve. It now works in partnership with a number of youth centres locally where students can access the *iScoil* learning platform in a blended centre (i.e. face to face learning blended with online learning) with the support of a youth worker rather than at home. *iScoil* is working with local centres in Longford, three in Limerick, Newbridge, Carlow, Tullamore and Mullingar.



Minister Jan O'Sullivan TD

iScoil Students 2013-2014

Total number of students – 56 students

Gender

27% Female, 73% Male

Location

55% At-Home, 45% Blended Centre

Awards achieved in the year September 2013 to 13 August 2014

32% Certificate of Achievement

52% 1-3 Fetac Certificates

9% 4-6 Fetac Certificates

7% None

Progression

33 young people progressed from *iScoil* and 23 remained online for September 2014.

Of the 33 who progressed:

23% Youthreach

21% School

18% Solas

14% Community Training Centre

3% Employment

6% HSE Care

9% Seeking educational provision (September 2014)

6% Unknown

Presentation Ireland Ministries set up *iScoil* and continues to offer support. *iScoil* is now a separate company and registered charity. For further details see: www.iscoil.ie ■

15 Years of Ministry Development

Presentation Ireland Ministries celebrates its 15th anniversary. In 1999, the Presentation Sisters Leadership Teams recognised the need for strategic thinking and planning for the development of Presentation work in Ireland and established Presentation Ireland Ministries to assist them with the task of planning for the future.

Following large scale consultations with the sisters and lay colleagues, a plan for ministry was formed. This was updated and resulted in a number of new initiatives: **iScoil**, the **Lantern Project**, **Presentation Ecology**, research on educational disadvantage and seven local projects in lifelong learning and outreach.

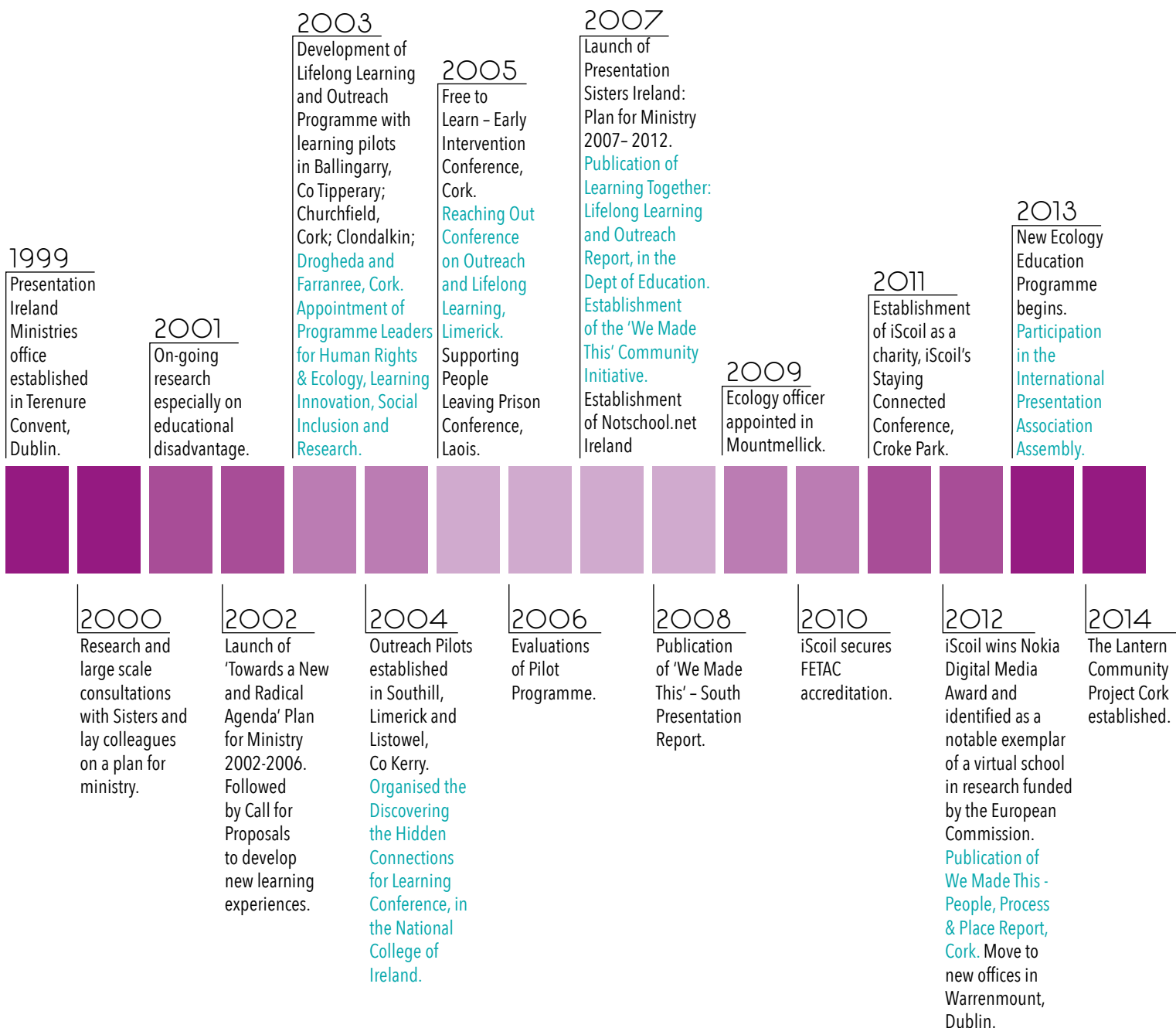
Our work flows from a spirituality of social justice based on the life of Jesus and the example of Nano Nagle. The

Gospel values: 'to bring good news to the poor and to care for the earth', shape our mission, which is to promote a more compassionate, just and sustainable world.

Our approach to ministry is to work with people in innovative and inclusive ways. We believe that small, well thought out actions can make a big difference. We are inspired by the people we work with, by their energy, creativity and enthusiasm. We work with people of all faiths and cultures.

Working together, we help people to have a say and to design responses to unmet needs in our communities as a way for a better future to emerge. We try to use the learning from our work to influence public policy to promote inclusion and fairness. ■

Here is a snapshot of some of the highlights of the past 15 years



Better Together – Collaboration for Sustainability

In 2013, the Provincial Leaders invited representatives from staffs and boards of Presentation centres and ministry programmes to participate in a conversation to explore the benefits of greater collaboration, the resources and supports needed for innovation and growth, and to look at the sustainability of our work into the future. The Leaders asked Presentation Ireland Ministries to facilitate this conversation.

Engaging in collaborative work is crucial for the sustainability and even survival of Presentation ministry. In the words of Charles Darwin: 'In the long history of humankind, those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed'. With the high age profile of the sisters and diminishing resources, we are coming to a critical moment in the life of Presentation mission and ministry in Ireland.

'In the long history of humankind, those who learned to collaborate and improvise most effectively have prevailed.'
– Charles Darwin

The overwhelming challenge facing all of our ministries is one of sustainability. We have reached a tipping point. We either allow our work to wither on the vine or we can take it to a new and deeper level

over the next decade. Coming together to address these challenges is the way forward. The Congregational Gathering 2012 calls us to:

... collaboration as our way of being in community and ministry, and in all our structures of leadership.

Two seminars for Presentation ministries were held last year one in Mount St. Anne's and the other in Nano Nagle Centre, Ballygriffin. The response from participants was overwhelmingly positive.

There have been follow up conversations which have helped to shape the focus of what needs to be addressed. Five core areas were identified as the keys to sustainability. These are:

- To agree an over-arching vision and core values for all Presentation work
- To develop a new unifying brand, logo, and communications strategy that expresses the vision and work
- To develop an induction, ethos and values programme for management, staff and volunteers
- To develop a fundraising & resourcing strategy
- To determine the best organizational structure to hold and develop collaborative actions into the future.

These are the common challenges facing all of our centres and projects. Maintaining service to people on the margins, protecting our fragile planet and promoting a spirituality of communion are core themes in all our ministries.

Presentation Ireland Ministries has presented a report on the process to date to the new Leadership Teams, who are committed to addressing sustainability and securing the future for Presentation ministry.

Participant Organisations in the Collaboration Process

- iScoil
- South Presentation Company Ltd, Cork
- The Lantern Community Project, Cork
- Challenge to Change
- Global Education Experience
- Presentation Ecology
- Mount St. Anne's Retreat Centre
- Nano Nagle Centre, Ballygriffin
- Nagle Community / Presentation Justice Network, Mountmellick
- Warrenmount Community Education Centre, Dublin
- Nano Nagle Centre, Waterford
- Provincial Leaders
- Provincial Bursars
- Presentation Communications
- Migrant Worker Centre, Cork
- Clann Credo
- Representative from Congregational Leadership ■

